How can we make the Capital Region a better place by investing in transportation? CDTC recently approved a twenty-five year transportation plan—“New Visions 2040”. The New Visions Plan supports keeping our highways and bridges in good condition; providing high quality transit service, and building what we call “complete streets” designed for cars, as well as for walking, bicycling, and transit.

New Visions describes the transportation investment needed for sustainable economic growth. The region has many assets: good transportation, strong urban areas, affordable and diverse housing, good schools, colleges and universities, ease of mobility, modern air and rail facilities, cultural and recreational opportunities and a clean environment.

CDTC remains committed to the maintenance, repair, reconstruction and right-sizing of the existing freight and passenger transportation facilities. And we must plan for new technology: self-driving cars, self-adjusting traffic signals, smart phone apps, ridesharing, carsharing, and bikesharing will have tremendous impacts on future transportation. These impacts include decreasing congestion, providing transportation to more seniors and people with disabilities, reducing traffic crashes, and more.

(Continued on page 6)
In March 2015, the Town of Clifton Park adopted new zoning for the area known as the Town Center, located in the vicinity of Northway Exit 9. The zoning implements that Town’s previously adopted Town Center Plan following nearly two years of development. The planning work behind the Town Center Plan and its related zoning were funded through CDTC’s Linkage Program.

The new zoning code incorporates Form Based principles, which regulate building and site design in several zoning districts and allow more flexibility with building uses than traditional Euclidean zoning. This type of zoning is becoming more common in communities of all types looking to legally allow areas with mixed uses, particularly closely placed structures with commercial on the first floor and residential or office uses on upper floors.

While still relatively new, the Town has already enhanced its development review process by creating review sheets for each district. The review sheets provide information to the Planning Board, Planning Staff, and applicant in a simple format to clearly show what the requirements are for each district and whether or not they have been met.

To view the language of Clifton Park’s Town Center Zoning, visit http://bit.ly/1eDnwxM.

### Linkage Projects Funded in 2015

**Albany Waterfront Bikeway Connection Feasibility Study**—CDTC and the City of Albany will conduct a feasibility study for linking the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail and the soon to be completed Albany County Helderberg Hudson Rail Trail in the City’s South End Neighborhood. ($70,000)

**Bethlehem Delaware Avenue Complete Streets Feasibility Study**—CDTC and the Town of Bethlehem will undertake a complete streets feasibility study on Delaware Avenue from Elsmere Avenue to the Normans Kill Bridge. ($60,000)

**Schenectady Urban Bike Infrastructure Master Plan**—CDTC and the City of Schenectady will update the City’s current Urban Bike Route Master Plan. ($75,000)

**Troy Bicycle Facilities Guidelines**—CDTC and the City of Troy will develop a detailed set of bicycle facility guidelines to create a cohesive bicycle network throughout the City. ($30,000)
In October 2014, CDTC in partnership with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the City of Albany initiated the I-787/Hudson Waterfront Corridor Study. The study is an integrated transportation and land use planning effort that intends to identify short and long term strategies that:

- Improve access to the Hudson River
- Support waterfront revitalization and economic development opportunities
- Integrate concepts from previous studies with fresh ideas through an involved stakeholder process
- Support multi-modal transportation objectives (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, motor vehicle, truck)
- Guide future planning
- Improve transportation, community, and environmental compatibility
- Account for life-cycle costs of roads and bridges
- Explore potential reductions in infrastructure maintenance costs over time

The primary study area is bounded on the north by Watervliet (I-787 Exit 9), on the south by the Port of Albany (I-787 Exit 2), on the east by the Hudson River and on the west by Route 32 (Broadway) as shown by the red lines on the map.

(continued on page 5)
CDTA Vanpool Program

CDTA supports Capital Region vanpools by partnering with national vanpool provider, vRide. A vanpool is a group of 5-15 people who commute together on a regular basis in a roomy, comfortable van. People who have at least a 30 minute drive or travel more than 15 miles one-way to work and who maintain a relatively consistent work schedule are perfect for vanpooling. One person volunteers to be the driver/coordinator, and the group determines their daily route including one or more designated pick up locations, such as Park and Ride lots or shopping centers. Depending on mileage and van type, the monthly fare is between $800 and $1,700 including maintenance and insurance. However, CDTA is sponsoring $600 or 50% (whichever is lower). Price per person is then between $35 and $125 per month. In most cases, vanpoolers save over $1,000/year compared to driving alone. For more information, contact us, or vRide at 800-VAN-RIDE.

CDTC’s ADA Working Group

Signed into law 25 years ago this past summer, the Americans with Disabilities Act or ADA, is a civil rights statute prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities in all areas of public life. Title II (28CFR Part 35) of the ADA of 1990 requires State and local governments to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from programs, services, and activities. These requirements focus on providing accessibility by addressing and eliminating structural barriers associated with public facilities.

Legal requirements under Title II of the ADA include the development of local government ADA Transition Plans. A Transition Plan is designed to:

- identify physical obstacles that limit the accessibility of an agency’s programs or activities to individuals with disabilities;
- describe in detail the methods that will be used to make the facilities accessible; and
- specify a schedule for correcting access deficiencies.

Pedestrian facilities are considered a program. This means that an ADA Transition Plan must include an inventory of pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks and curb ramps.

CDTC’s ADA Working Group was formed in 2015 to help foster a consistent municipal approach to meeting ADA requirements across the region. Members of the group currently include: the cities of Albany, Cohoes, Rensselaer, Saratoga Springs, Schenectady, and Watervliet; the Towns of Bethlehem, Halfmoon and Wilton; Rensselaer County; CDTA; NYSDOT; FHWA and a disability rights advocate.

The plan must identify the public officials responsible for its implementation and must be updated periodically until all accessibility barriers are removed. ADA Transition Plans help protect against liability issues; FHWA has made it clear that absence of a plan could make a community or agency vulnerable to court action.

The plan must identify the public officials responsible for its implementation and must be updated periodically until all accessibility barriers are removed. ADA Transition Plans help protect against liability issues; FHWA has made it clear that absence of a plan could make a community or agency vulnerable to court action.

The Working Group will continue to meet over the next year to work toward development of common solutions to ADA challenges and to:

- identify resources for developing/implementing ADA Transition Plans
- facilitate development of required municipal self-evaluations and inventories of pedestrian rights of way
- identify opportunities for future collaboration and shared cost services projects.

I-890 Ramp Reconfiguration

This NYSDOT project proposes to reduce the number of fatalities and injuries in crashes in the vicinity of I-890’s Big Circle and Little Circle in the Town of Rotterdam and City of Schenectady. This is the area of the entrance and exit ramps from Erie Boulevard and Washington Avenue. The project will prevent drivers from quickly cutting across multiple lanes of traffic by increasing the distance over which drivers can merge. After extensively evaluating design alternatives, NYSDOT selected the alternative that removes the small circle including the bridge.

Construction is expected to begin in Spring 2016 and will cost approximately $4.450 Million.
Complete Streets Educational & Technical Assistance Workshops

Many communities in the Capital District have developed, and/or are in the process of developing, Complete Streets policies, which direct roads to be built for all users including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and freight. New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo signed the Complete Streets Act (Chapter 398, Laws of New York) on August 15, 2011, requiring state, county and local agencies to consider the convenience and mobility of all users when developing transportation projects that receive state and federal funding. In spite of local and state regulations favoring Complete Streets, many of our local governments have faced challenges when developing and implementing their policies. CDTC’s first Complete Streets Educational & Technical Assistance Workshop Series will help our transportation planning practitioners and decision makers identify and overcome Complete Streets policy and implementation barriers.

These free, one-day workshops will be highly interactive in nature, with the goal of building local capacity to implement Complete Streets approaches, and strengthening relationships between transportation practitioners, other departments, and the community. Key decision makers, stakeholders, and agency professionals will learn how to more effectively balance the needs of all users and routinely create and maintain Complete Streets.

The workshops will be made available to our local governments through a competitive application process, described below. There is no local cost share; however, host communities will be required to assist with meeting logistics, including securing a meeting space and ensuring key stakeholders will be in attendance.

For questions regarding the Complete Streets Educational & Technical Assistance Workshop Series, contact Chris Bauer of the CDTC staff at (518) 458-2161 or email cbauer@cdtcmpo.org.

I-787/Hudson Waterfront Corridor Study (cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

Following several months of internal work reviewing existing conditions and previous planning studies, the project team launched the first round of major public outreach in June 2015. This first round was intended to gather input on what is most important to those who live and work in the study area. To assist with public communication, a project website was launched and an informal survey was conducted, resulting in nearly 80 responses. In addition, two public workshops were held in Albany and Watervliet at the end of June, attracting over 125 participants. The workshops included a formal presentation as well as activity stations that allowed for additional input on specific topics such as the types of strategies that are most important to the public and a “map your ideas” station where participants could post on a map specific ideas or make suggestions. Over 136 specific ideas were gathered through the “map your ideas station” in addition to over 30 comment cards.

The study team is also conducting a stakeholder survey in August to gather additional input from study area entities that have a special interest, ranging from businesses to environmental groups. All of the ideas submitted through the workshops and various surveys are being cataloged and utilized by the project team to help guide the development of the short and long term strategies.

The project team will be spending the late summer/early fall developing specific strategies and will be going back out to the public for input on those ideas in Late Fall 2015. For more information about the study, visit the project website (www.787waterfrontstudy.blog

Northway Exit 4 Project

This NYSDOT project involves access improvements between Interstate 87, also known as the Adirondack Northway, Wolf Road, and the Albany International Airport, and will cost about $22,299,497.

The primary objectives aim to improve mobility and economic development:

♦ Improve access between I-87 and the Albany International Airport without precluding future I-87 improvements, and without impacting I-87 operations between Exit 2 and Exit 5.
♦ Improve access between I-87 and Wolf Road without precluding future, I-87 improvements, and without impacting I-87 operations between Exit 2 and Exit 5.
♦ Improve intersection operating conditions in the existing Exit 4 area and address safety concerns
♦ Eliminate the structural deficiencies associated with the I-87 northbound and southbound bridges over Albany-Shaker Road by providing bridges with a 50-year minimum service life. The bridge work is in construction now.

The following secondary objective will be considered during the evaluation of design alternatives:

♦ Improve system connectivity between the existing pedestrian/bicycle facilities on Wolf Road and the facilities constructed as part of the Albany-Shaker/Watervliet-Shaker Road projects.
The New Visions 2040 Plan (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

Transportation Safety
New Visions offers an integrated approach to reduce risk for all users of the transportation system — especially bicyclists, pedestrians, children, and the elderly. CDTC will examine traffic safety data, identify high crash locations, identify characteristics across roadway systems that are common to locations with a crash history, analyze potential mitigation measures and solutions, and develop a competitive funding process to make these improvements. Where the data may not be available, CDTC will work to educate all users to “coexist” and to develop strategies to improve safety.

Transit Service
New Visions begins with our regional transit provider – CDTA’s - 5-year Transit Development Plan. Beyond 5 years, CDTC will examine future population growth trends, forecast transit ridership, and identify future needs. This will improve a variety of transit services for the Capital District, increase mobility and support economic development and smart regional growth. Transit should accomplish multiple objectives, including transit-oriented and urban development, neighborhood revitalization, and community connections.

Traffic Congestion
New Visions explores ways to manage congestion and ease daily commutes by using existing technology such as incident and traffic information systems, and new technology such as traffic routing systems, new traffic signal monitoring technology and someday automated vehicles. The Plan also encourages support for more transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel, carpooling, vanpooling, carsharing and bikesharing, which can all reduce the number of vehicles on our roads.

Complete Streets
New Visions endorses local Complete Street policies, which encourage streets that are designed and operated for all users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit users, freight deliveries, children, elderly and people with disabilities. A properly designed “Complete Street” will improve safety, encourage walking and biking, slow traffic, improve air quality, promote local business, and even encourage social interaction.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation
New Visions encourages incorporating bicycle and pedestrian accommodations into highway and bridge construction and city, village, and town plans. It also provides for recreational opportunities through creation of bike/hike trails. The health and recreational benefits of bicycle and pedestrian facilities are well documented.

Environmental Quality
New Visions supports energy conservation and air quality in the region by advocating sustainable development patterns and site design, urban reinvestment, and community-based land use planning. New Visions also encourages transit, bicycle, & pedestrian, carpooling, carsharing, and bikesharing investments & strong participation in the U.S. Department of Energy Clean Cities program.

Freight Movement
New Visions advocates congestion management and infrastructure investments that will support the movement of goods throughout the Capital District. Freight movement is about how goods get to doorsteps and store shelves, but it is also about freight’s positive impact on the regional economy, growth, and employment.

Environmental Justice
New Visions ensures that both the positive and negative impacts of transportation planning conducted by CDTC and its members are fairly distributed and that defined Environmental Justice populations do not bear disproportionately high and adverse effects. Eliminating, reducing and mitigating conflicts between land use, development and transportation are critical strategies to promoting environmental justice.

Human Services Transportation
New Visions works with the many human services transportation providers in our area to identify the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low income. CDTC then works to improve services for these transportation disadvantaged populations by identifying gaps and overlaps in services, and providing recommendations and funding for improvements.

Local Communities
New Visions acknowledges the importance of land use & development, and of reducing conflicts between them and transportation. CDTC sponsors the Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program, which provides funding for cities, towns, & villages to prepare & implement community-based transportation & land use plans consistent with New Visions principles.

Public Participation
CDTC seeks public participation and input in every stage of the planning process. The New Visions Plan received public input from the 9 New Visions committees and their members; public meetings held in each of the 4 Counties; meetings with stakeholder groups; our website, surveys, and polls; social media; and other CDTC projects’ meetings.

Highways and Bridges
New Visions makes a strong commitment to keeping the region’s highway and bridge system in good condition, providing billions of dollars for highway rehabilitation, reconstruction, and design and for bridge maintenance, repair, and replacement by 2040. Maintaining and replacing our existing infrastructure will be our highest priority, requiring most of our existing resources. New highways and bridges will need to compete for less available funding.
In November of 2013, CDTC formed a Bridge Working Group to address questions and concerns raised by the Planning Committee in response to the paradigm shift from routine replacement or rehabilitation of bridges to an emphasis on more affordable preservation under the MAP-21 Federal transportation legislation and New York State Department of Transportation’s “Preservation First” strategy. The Bridge Working Group, comprised of members representing four counties, local cities, NYSDOT, and CDTC, discussed various issues related to bridge preservation approaches and the funding and programming of repairs.

CDM Smith’s recently completed Bridge Report and database is enlightening and informative regarding the state of the Capital District region’s bridges. There are 389 bridges within CDTC’s jurisdiction that are owned and maintained by the local municipalities (counties, cities, towns, and villages). 92 of these bridges, or nearly one-quarter, have been found by previous NYSDOT inspections to be “structurally deficient,” a term which describes bridges that have some load-carrying elements in poor condition due to deterioration. These bridges are not unsafe or they would not be in operation. However, their structural deficiency signals a need for investment that is often higher in priority than bridges that are in better condition. An additional 123 bridges – over 30% - are judged to be “functionally obsolete,” a broader term which describes a bridge that is no longer optimally fulfilling its role within the transportation system, often because needs or geometric design standards have changed since the bridge was constructed.

CDM Smith made repair recommendations on 189 of the bridges in the region, totaling $80.5M in need over the next ten or more years. Of these, 137 bridges are considered candidates for preservation, valued in total at $42M in repairs. 52 bridges were found to be beyond preservation and would likely require more full-scale replacement. Of special interest, among the four counties of the region, the greatest number of bridges is located in Rensselaer County. Consequently also the largest volume of recommended bridge repairs – $39.5M devoted to 87 bridges – is in Rensselaer County.

While the Bridge Report provided by CDM Smith to CDTC and the Bridge Working Group confirms that bridges remain safe, increased levels of investment will be needed moving forward in order to ensure that conditions do not worsen and that delayed repairs do not result in even larger future expenditures for repairs and maintenance. The Bridge Report and database will help guide municipalities and CDTC in understanding conditions, risks, and repair strategies in order to facilitate prioritization and rational programming of future bridge stabilization and repair work. The intended end result is that limited resources will be put to most effective use in stabilization of the Capital District region’s bridge assets within a comprehensive and objective bridge management program.

One major outcome of the Bridge Working Group sessions was the concept of a mechanism to assist local bridge owners in identifying longer-term bridge preservation needs. Such an effort required strong technical information on bridge conditions, strategies, and costs to be created and assembled in support of the planning efforts of local bridge owners. As a result, consultant CDM Smith was selected to contract with CDTC for a study entitled “Identification of Bridge Preservation Candidates, Treatments and Costs for Locally-Owned Capital District Bridges.” The consultant was tasked with the review and evaluation of the most up-to-date existing information on structural conditions, as well as with selective field investigation of bridges and assessment of individual critical bridge elements.

Walk to School Day

October 7th is National Walk to School Day. The first National Walk to School Day was in 1997 and aimed to build awareness for the need for walkable communities. Each year, more and more Capital Region schools participate in the event, and its sister event, Bike to School Day in May.

Communities interested in participating should visit www.walkbiketoschool.org to register their school and get started planning their event. Walk to School Day can be a catalyst for ongoing efforts to increase walking and bicycling to school all year and complement Safe Routes to School projects and programs.

As part of CDTC’s bicycle and pedestrian education campaign, Capital Coexist, thousands of activity books, comic books, and reflective wristbands have been distributed to schools in the region. Organizers planning events should email jceponis@cdtcnpo.org to request materials and loot for their students.
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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