

# Delaware Avenue Hamlet Enhancement Study



# Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Purpose of the Project
- Delaware Avenue Through the Decades
- Complete Streets: Transportation and Design
- Delaware Avenue Today
- Vision for Tomorrow
- Next Steps

# Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome
- Steering Committee
- Town of Bethlehem Staff
- Capital District  
Transportation Committee
- Consultant Team

# Purpose

- Identify transportation and land use design treatments that will help to strengthen Delaware Avenue's main street character, consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan and the CDTC New Visions Plan for Transportation
- Reinforce and enhance architectural style, pedestrian scale and aesthetics of the area
- Respect and strengthen the residential neighborhoods

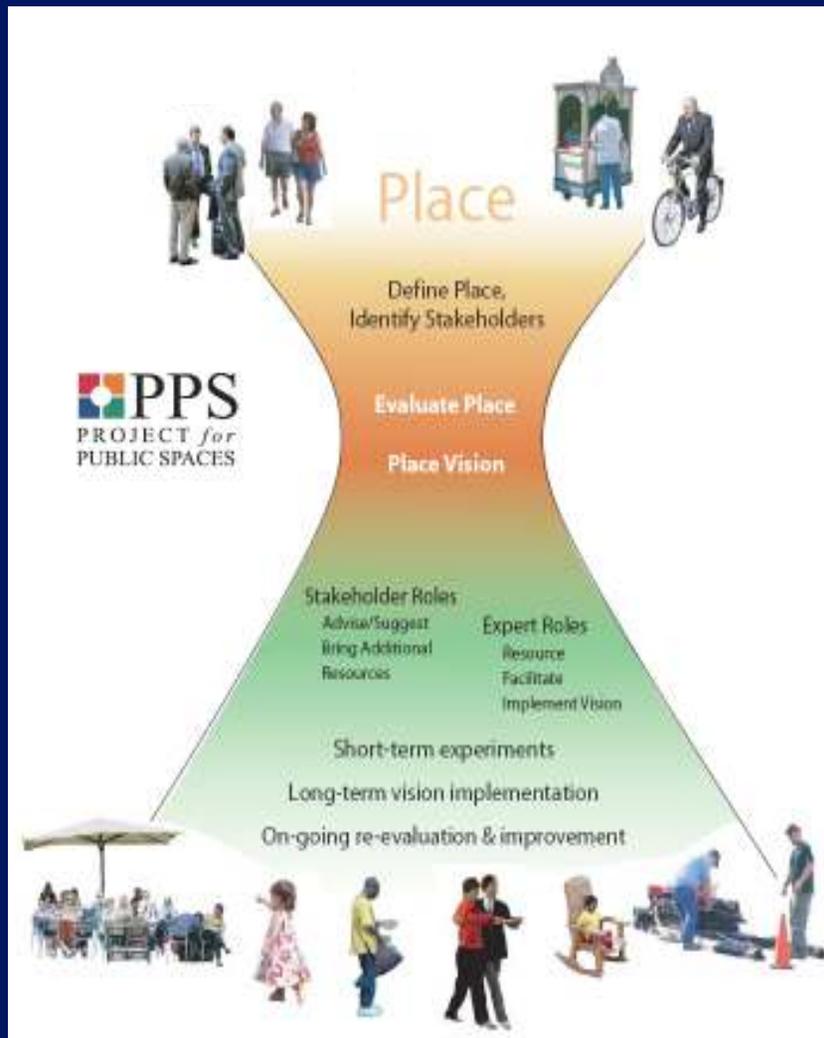
# Purpose

- Provide for safe and convenient corridor travel and access especially for walkers, cyclists and transit users
- Develop a plan to enhance the corridor
  - Land Use
  - Streetscape and Building Design
  - Transportation: Operations and Management
  - Business Environment

# What Will Be Produced?

- Urban Design Guidelines
- Streetscape Guidelines
- Parking And Circulation For Vehicles And Bicycles
- Transportation Improvements
- Arterial Management Strategy

# Planning Framework



- Town Comprehensive Plan
- Ongoing Open Space Planning
- CDTC New Visions For a Quality Region
- CDTA 100 mile BRT Initiative

# New Visions

- Capital District Transportation Committee
- CDTC New Visions For A Quality Region
  - Preserve and Manage System Performance
  - Manage Congestion
  - Protect Our Investment
  - Develop the Region's Potential
  - Link Transportation and Land Use
  - Plan and Build for All Modes
- BIG Ticket Initiatives
  - CDTA Bus Rapid Transit 100 Miles

# Town Comprehensive Plan

- Improve mobility
- Maintain and enhance pedestrian connections
- Provide bicycle facilities
- Enhance gateways
- Increase walkability
- Employ traffic calming
- Encourage the use of transit
- Develop hamlet master plans

# 1965 Master Plan

- Widen Delaware Avenue to four lanes through Elsmere and Delmar and west to the Town line
- Continue Adams Street North across Kenwood Avenue and the railroad into North Street and across McCormack Road to connect to New Scotland
- Widen Hudson Avenue and extend it to Cherry Avenue
- Eliminate parking in the Delmar business district
- Make Paddock Place a landscaped pedestrian mall with parking areas on each side
- Make Kenwood one-way west from the Four Corners to Adams Street and one-way East from the Four Corners to Adams Place
- Consider closing Kenwood Avenue for one block on each side of Delaware Avenue to allow for further commercial expansion

# Delaware Avenue Through The Decades







ADAMS HOUSE

1908



NOW TOWN HALL  
CAN YOU NAME THE PEOPLE  
HOW ABOUT THE HORSE

*FOUR CORNERS DELMAR*



*Looking West from Grove St. Old Saloon on Corner.*









# What Makes a Great Place?

- key attributes
- intangibles
- measurements



© 2003

### Builds & Supports the Local Economy

- Small-scale entrepreneurship
- More quality goods available
- Higher real estate values
- Local ownership, local value
- More desirable jobs
- Increased currency velocity
- Greater tax revenue
- Less need for municipal services

### Nurtures & Defines Community Identity

- Greater community organization
- Sense of pride and volunteerism
- Perpetuation of integrity and values
- "Mutual coercion,  
mutually agreed upon"
- Less need for municipal control
- Self-managing

### Fosters Frequent & Meaningful Contact

- Improves sociability
- More cultural exposure, interaction
- Exchanges and preserves information,  
wisdom, values
- Supports barter system
- Reduces race and class barriers
- Feeling of interconnection

# Place

### Creates Improved Accessibility

- More walkable
- Safe for pedestrians
- Compatible with public transit
- Reduces need for cars and parking
- More efficient use of time and money
- Greater connections between uses

### Promotes Sense of Comfort

- Visually pleasing
- Generally stimulating
- Sense of belonging
- Greater security
- Better environmental quality
- Feeling of freedom

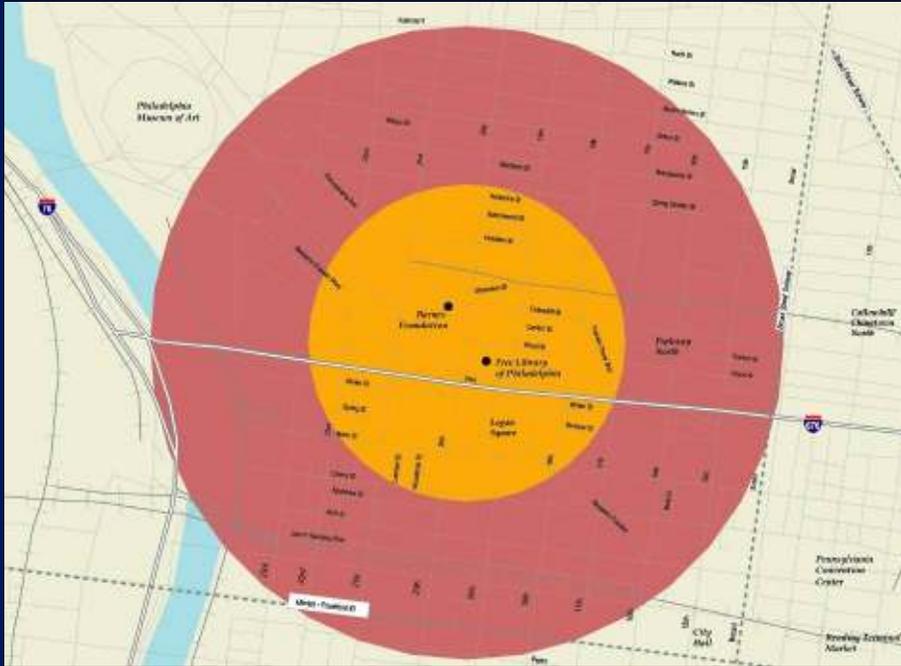
### Draws a Diverse Population

- More women, elderly, and children
- Greater ethnic and cultural pluralism
- Encourages a range  
of activities and uses
- New service, retail,  
and customer niches
- Variation and character  
in built environment
- Encourages community creativity

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## The Benefits of Place

# Distance Means Less Than Time



Distance-Based Boundaries



Time-Based Boundaries

# Land Use Keys

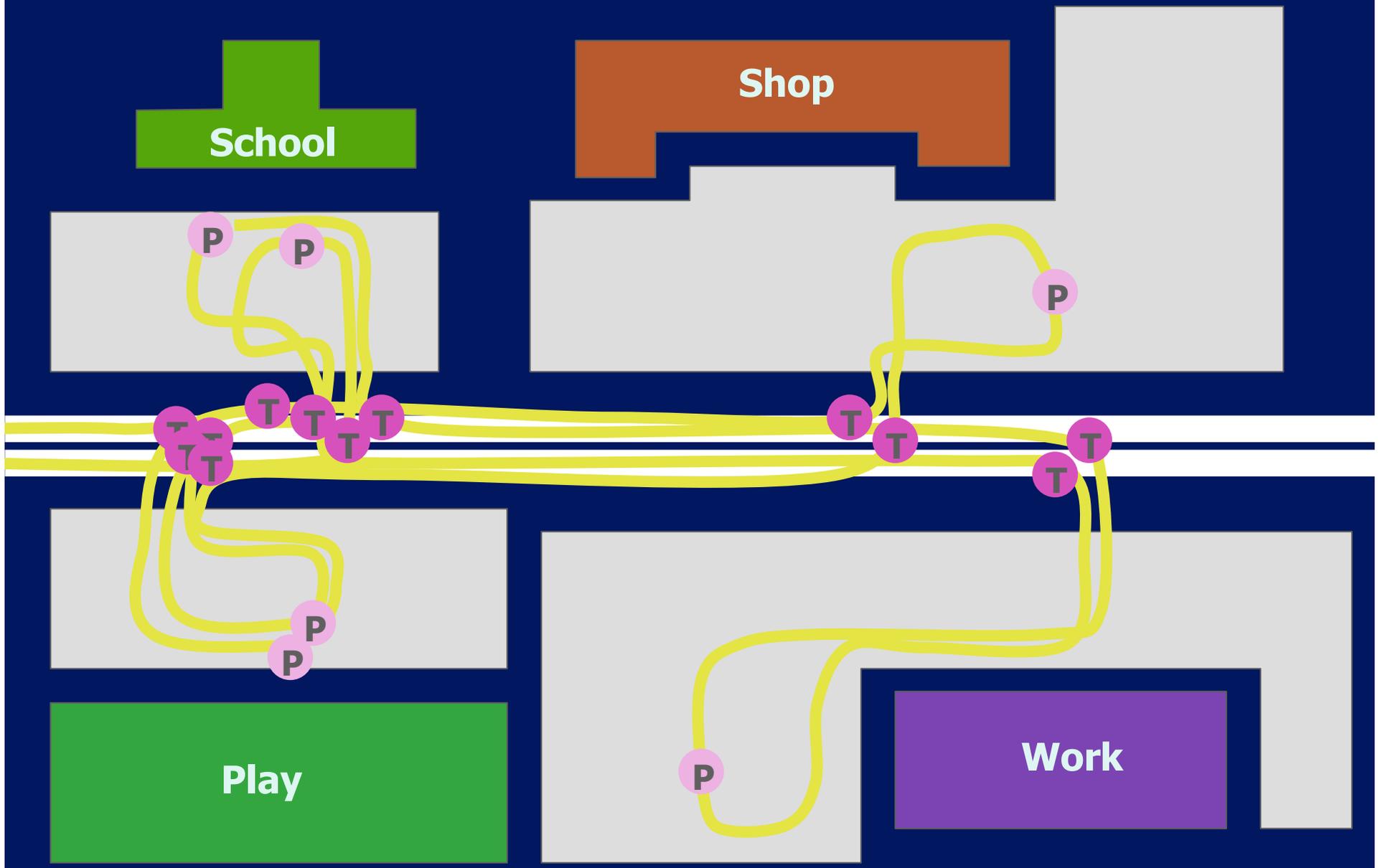


24 units per acre

- **Encourage** mixed uses: retail first floor, office residential above
- Moderate to high density
- **Encourage** public facilities, theaters, recreational uses, and parks
- **Discourage** land uses that are highly dependent on automobiles for accessibility

Source: Central Petaluma Specific Plan, April 2002 Draft

# Conventional Development



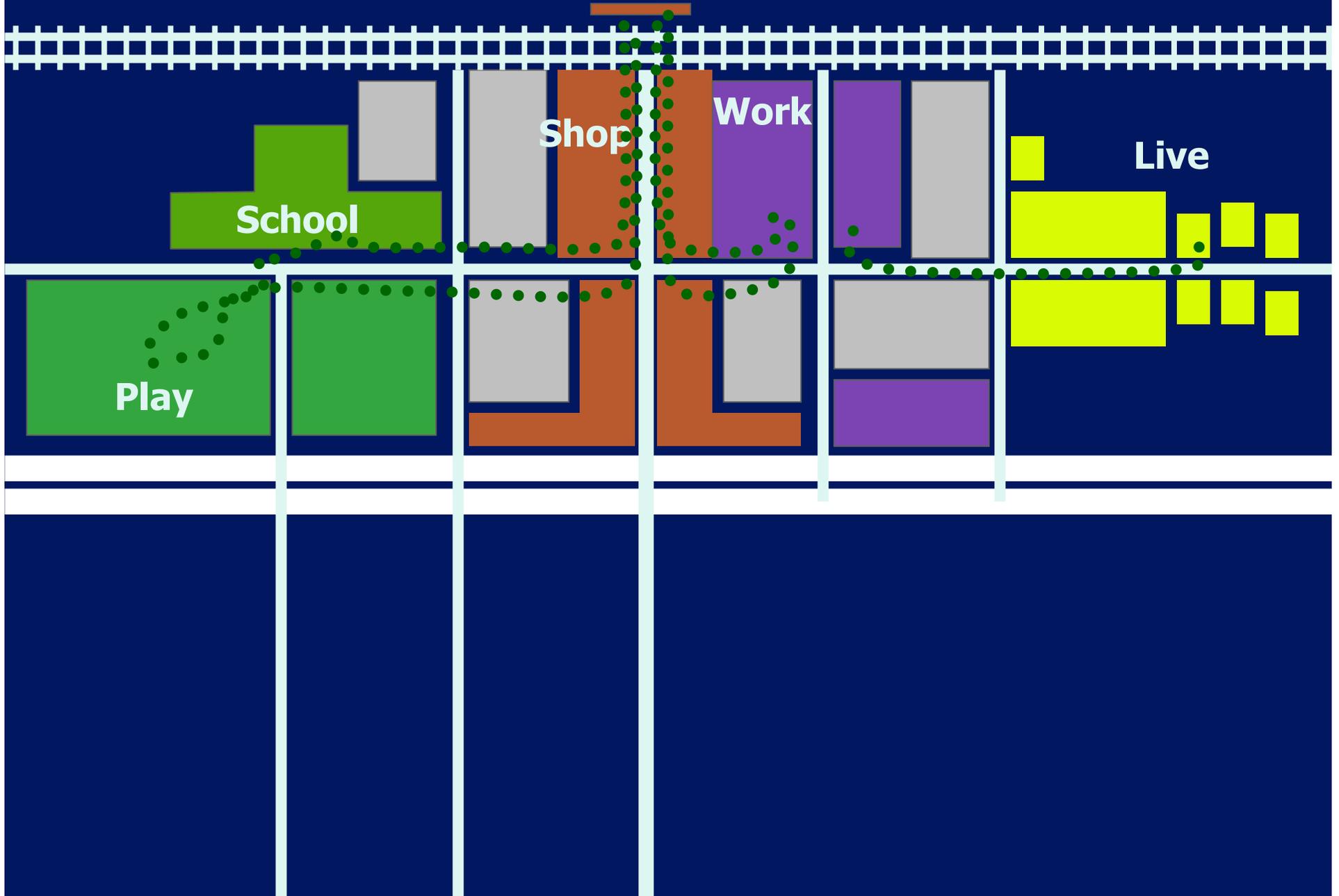
# Mixed Use, Park Once District



## Results:

- $< \frac{1}{2}$  the parking
- $< \frac{1}{2}$  the land area
- $\frac{1}{4}$  the arterial trips
- $\frac{1}{6}^{\text{th}}$  the arterial turning movements
- $< \frac{1}{4}$  the vehicle miles traveled

# Add Transit and Housing = TOD



# Transportation Keys

- Establish a walkable and pedestrian/ bicycle-oriented district
- Minimize street widths
- Calm traffic
- Match the transit to the community



Source: Central Petaluma Specific Plan,  
April 2002 Draft

# Transportation Priorities

1<sup>st</sup> Pedestrians

2<sup>nd</sup> Bicycles

3<sup>rd</sup> Transit

4<sup>th</sup> Private Auto - Local

5<sup>th</sup> Private Auto - Through

6<sup>th</sup> Trucks

# Parking

1. Know what's being used:
  - Friday Midday = 72%
  - Saturday Midday = 78%
  - 60 – 70 empty spaces
2. Understand that every parking space costs more than \$10,000 and uses more than 200 sf
3. If those costs aren't worth it:
  - ✓ Share all parking
  - ✓ Manage spaces based on demand

# Transit People Can Use

- ✓ Frequent
- ✓ All Day
- ✓ Fast and Reliable
- ✓ Easy to Figure Out, Access, and Use
- ✓ User Amenities



These are the characteristics that make a bus appealing, but there's no copyright on good transit.



**Complete the Streets**

[www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org)

# What Are Complete Streets?

Complete Streets are designed and operated so they are safe, comfortable, and convenient for all users – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

# Why Do We Need to Complete the Streets?



# Americans Want to Walk and Bike More

**52%**  
of Americans  
want to bike  
more than  
they do  
now.



# Americans Want to Walk and Bike More



**55%** of Americans would prefer to drive less and walk more.

STPP Poll

photos: Dan Burden, pedbikeimages.org

# About 1/3 of Americans Do Not Drive

This includes:

- 21% of Americans over 65.
- All children under 16.
- Many low income Americans who cannot afford automobiles.



# Streets Are Inadequate



**NO SIDEWALKS**

# Streets Are Inadequate



TOO NARROW TO SHARE WITH BIKES

# Streets Are Inadequate



**TOO DANGEROUS TO CROSS ON FOOT**

# Streets Are Inadequate



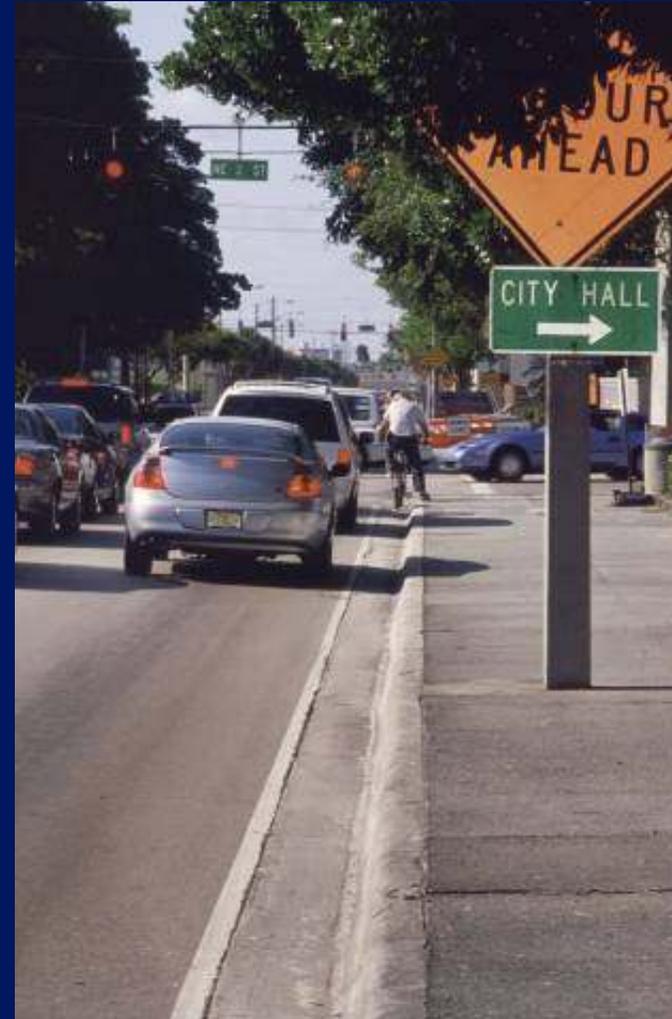
UNINVITING FOR BUS RIDERS

# Streets Are Inadequate



**INACCESSIBLE FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS**

# Streets Are Inadequate



NO ROOM FOR BIKES OR PEDESTRIANS

# Streets Are Inadequate



NO ROOM FOR PEOPLE

# Streets Are Inadequate

- **25%** of walking trips take place on roads without sidewalks or shoulders
- Bike lanes are available for only about **5%** of bike trips

# Top Complaints Are Incomplete Streets

## Pedestrians

- Too Few Sidewalks
- Insensitive Drivers
- Poor Surface

## Bicyclists

- Too few bikeways
- Insensitive Drivers
- Traffic Too Close

# Incomplete Streets



This bridge provides the only access across the Fox River to Cary, Illinois.

In 2000, 17-year-old Nate Oglesby died trying to cross it on his bicycle; two teens had died previously.

US 14, Cary Illinois

# Complete Streets



Nate's family won a wrongful death lawsuit and the community pressed the Illinois DOT to retrofit the bridge - *at a far greater cost than doing it right the first time.*

US 14, Cary Illinois

# Benefits: Safety

Designing intersections for pedestrian travel can reduce pedestrian risk by **28%**.



King/Ewing 2003

# Benefits: Older Americans

- 50% of Americans will be over 55 in 2030.
- More than half of older Americans walk regularly.



Photo: Michael Ronkin, ODOT

# Benefits: Older Americans

- **21%** of Americans over the age of 65 do not drive.
- More than **50%** of non-drivers stay at home on a given day because they lack transportation options.



Photo: Michael Ronkin, ODOT

# Benefits: Encouraging Healthy Activity

- Walking and bicycling help prevent obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and colon cancer.
- Residents are **65%** more likely to walk in a neighborhood with sidewalks.



# Benefits: People with Disabilities

- 20% of Americans have a disability that limits their daily activities.
- Complete Streets feature curb cuts and other designs for disabled travelers.
- Complete Streets reduce isolation and dependence.



# Design Places That Attract People



- Active uses for the first 15-20 feet of building height
- Smaller blocks
- Bring buildings up to the sidewalk
- Public space/green space in any breaks of building line

# Pedestrian Realm

- Design Considerations
- Safe and Comfortable
- Street Trees
- Sidewalk Width
- Sidewalk Paving
- Sidewalk Lighting
- Plantings
- Street Furniture
- Bike Parking
- Transit Stops



# Design Principles

## Principles

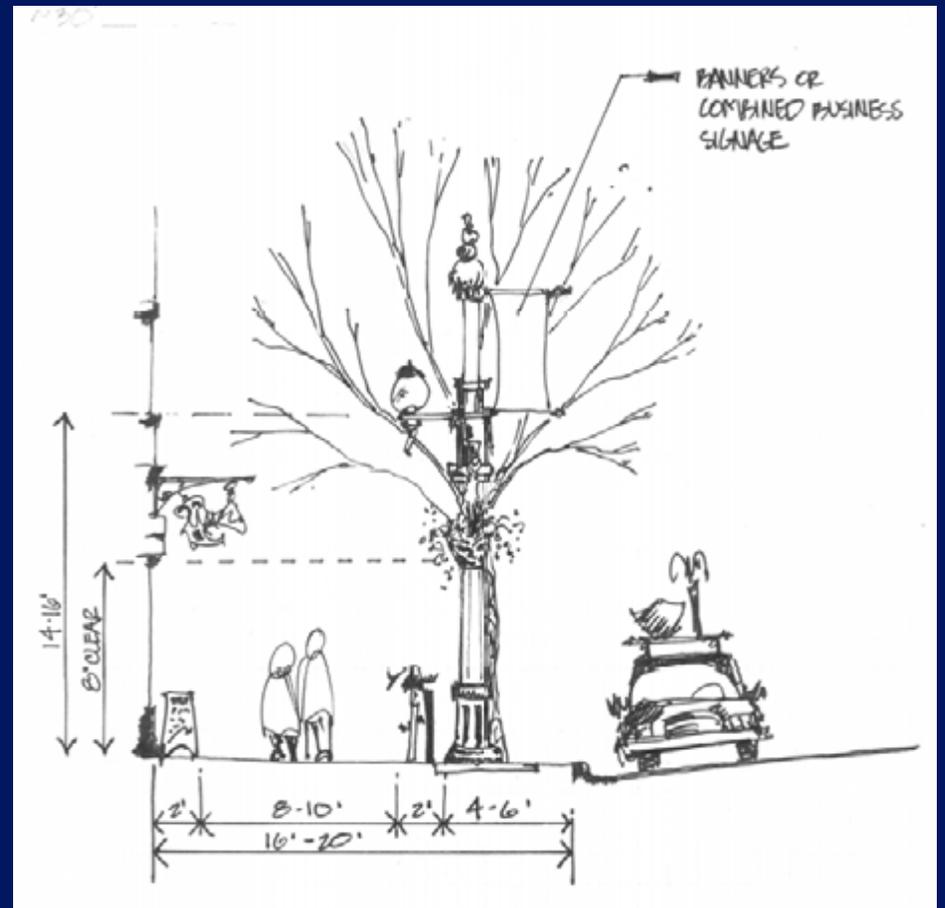
- Separation from Traffic
- Define the Edges
- Stimulate the Eye
- Transparency
- Comfort
- Visibility and Safety



# Street Trees



# Sidewalk Width



# Sidewalk Paving



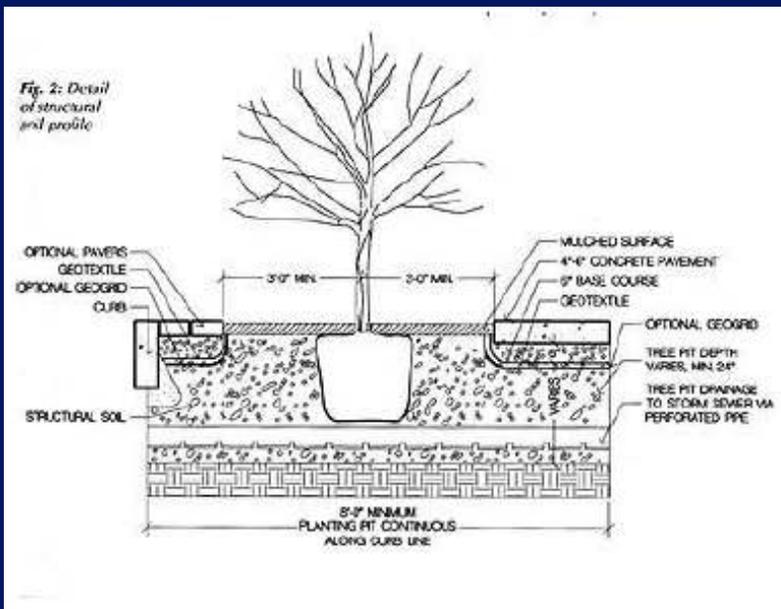
# Sidewalk Paving



# Sidewalk Lighting



# Plantings



# Plantings



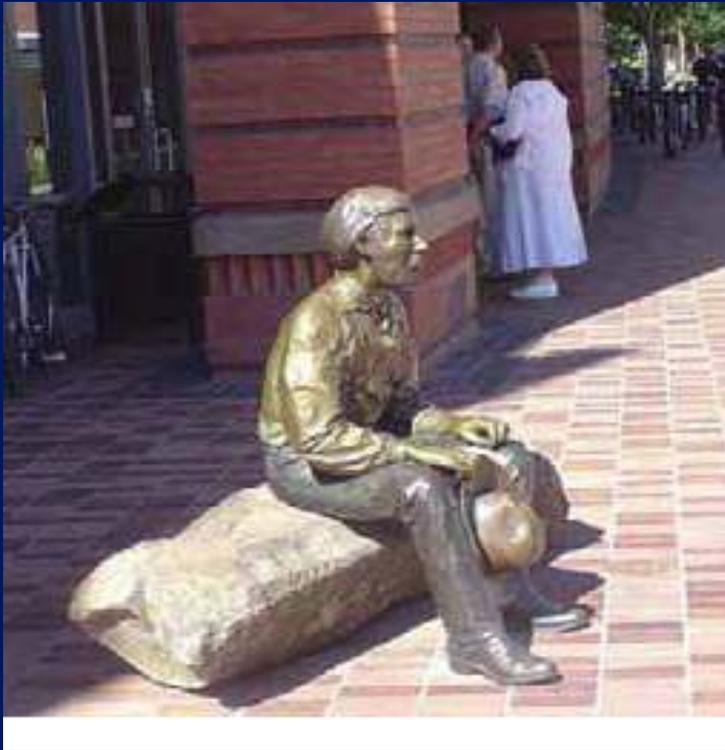
# Street Furniture



# Street Furniture



# Public Art



# Outdoor Dining



# Gateways



# Circulation

- Street Hierarchy and Function
  - Arterial Street
  - Collector Street
  - Parking Street
  - Local Access Street
  - Alleys
- Convenience and Access
- Traffic Calming
- Gateways and Edges
- One-way streets
  - Signals
  - Roundabouts



# Transit Stops



# Parking

- Office Parking
- Retail Parking
- Residential Parking
- Enforcement
- Allocate with Uses
- Catalyst for Redevelopment
- Transportation Demand Management

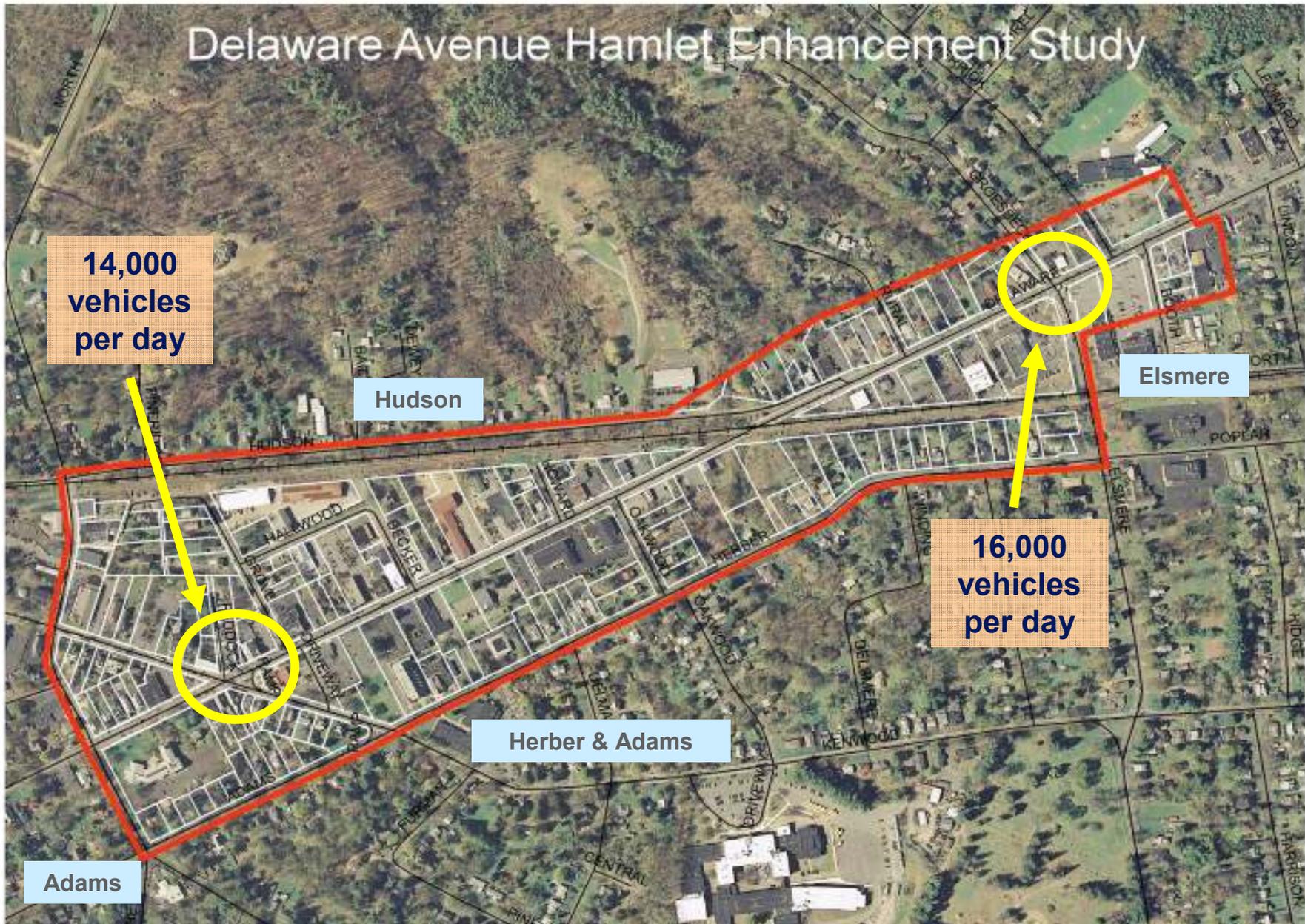


# Bike Lanes and Parking



# Delaware Avenue Today

# Delaware Avenue Hamlet Enhancement Study



14,000  
vehicles  
per day

Hudson

Elsmere

16,000  
vehicles  
per day

Herber & Adams

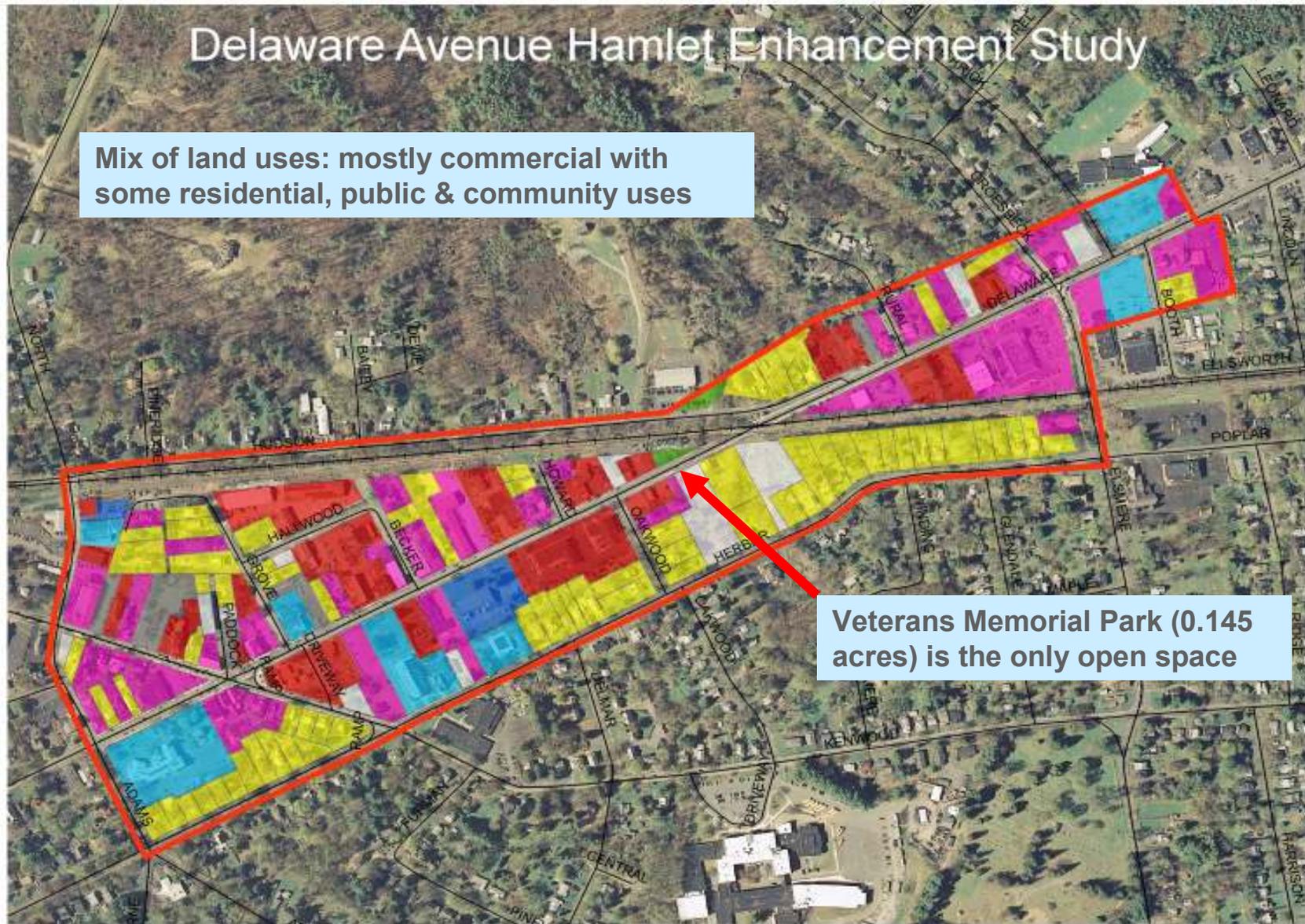
Adams

Figure 1 - Study Area Boundary

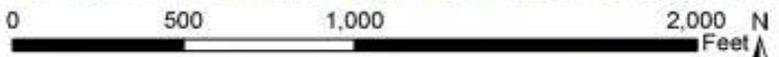
— Study Area Boundary — Streets —+— Railroad

# Delaware Avenue Hamlet Enhancement Study

Mix of land uses: mostly commercial with some residential, public & community uses



Veterans Memorial Park (0.145 acres) is the only open space



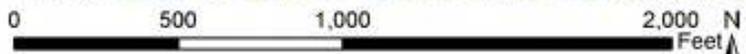
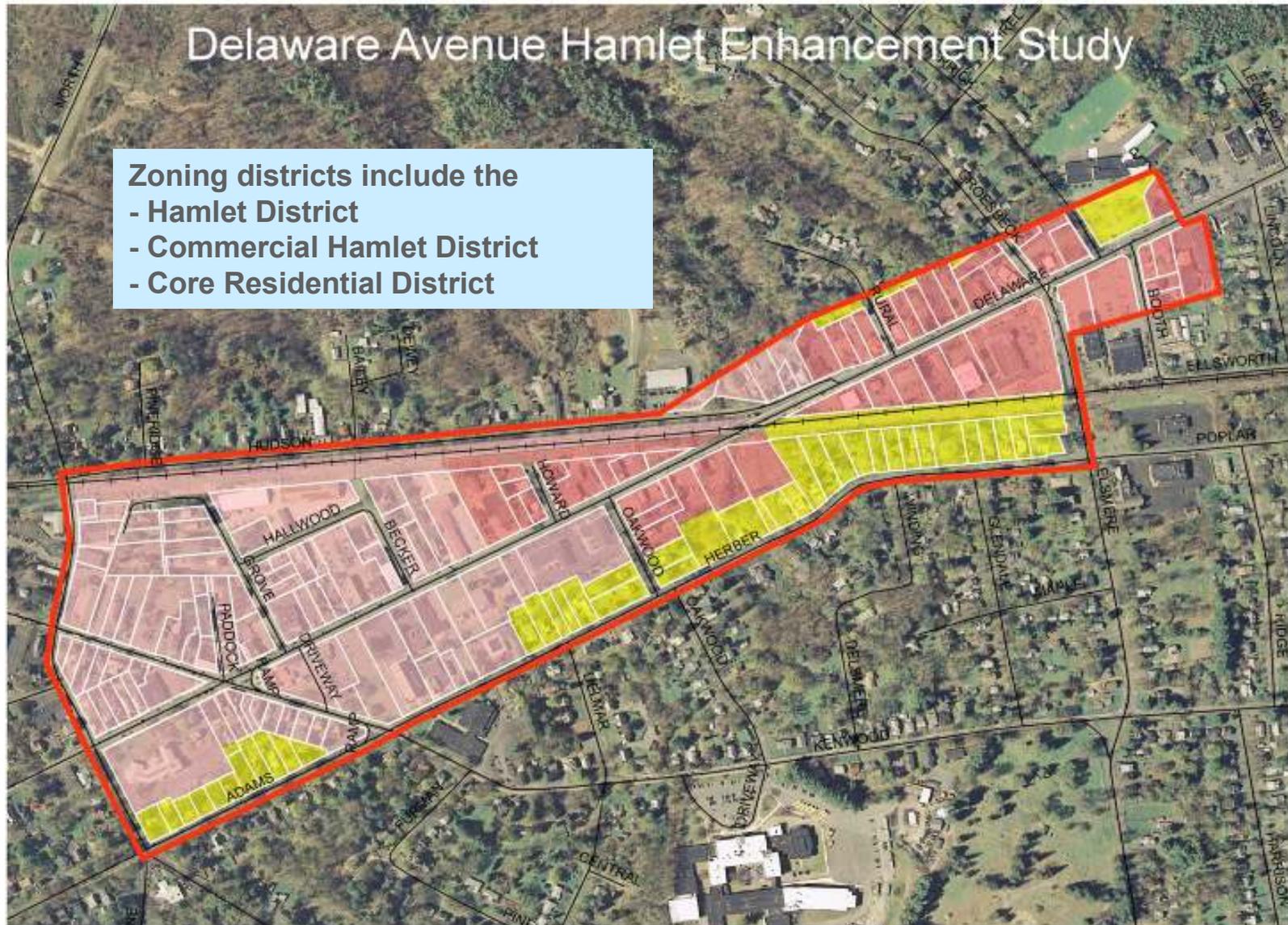
**Figure 2 - Land Use**

- Study Area Boundary
- Residential
- Commercial
- Streets
- Mixed Use
- Recreation & Entertainment
- Railroad
- Community Services
- Parking Lot
- Public Services
- Vacant Land

# Delaware Avenue Hamlet Enhancement Study

Zoning districts include the

- Hamlet District
- Commercial Hamlet District
- Core Residential District



**Figure 4 - Zoning**



# Pedestrians

## Poor Pedestrian Environment

- Too many driveway curb cuts
- Poorly marked parking
- People drive very close to the sidewalks
- Sidewalk widths don't meet ADA
- Curb ramps don't meet ADA
- Few traffic signals mean few formal crossings
- Drivers stop for pedestrians 50% of the time

# Other Modes

## Bicycling

- Cyclists ride in the street until they get to Delaware Avenue, where they ride on the sidewalk
- Numerous driveways
- Changes in parking areas
- Roadway geometry

# Transit

- Used by residents to commute to Albany
- CDTA Routes 18 (331,005 riders annually) and Route 19 (33,000 riders annually)
- This is the 13<sup>th</sup> highest ridership route (after the main trunk routes)
- Highest ridership of neighborhood routes across the system
- Mostly transit through-route rather than an origin or destination

# Parking & Rail Trail

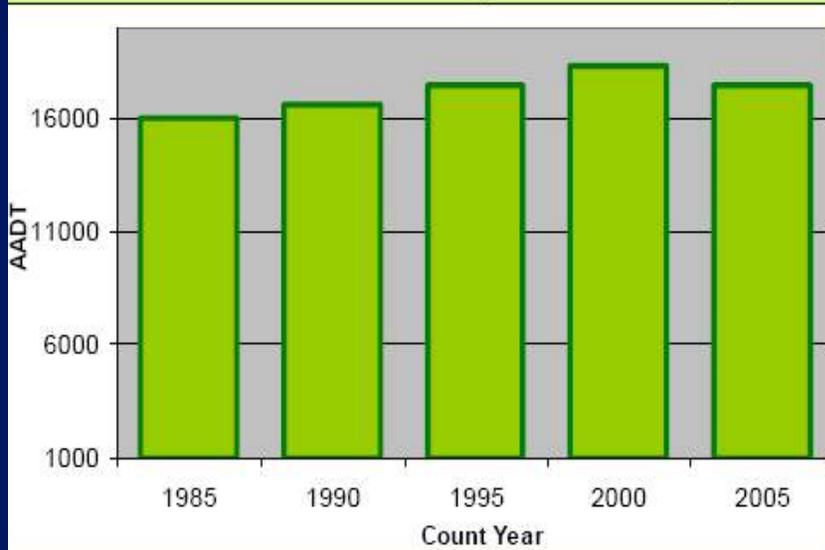
## Parking

- Variety of parking choices
- Most park in front of businesses rather than parking lots
- Municipal lots at Adams Street and Kenwood Avenue are underutilized

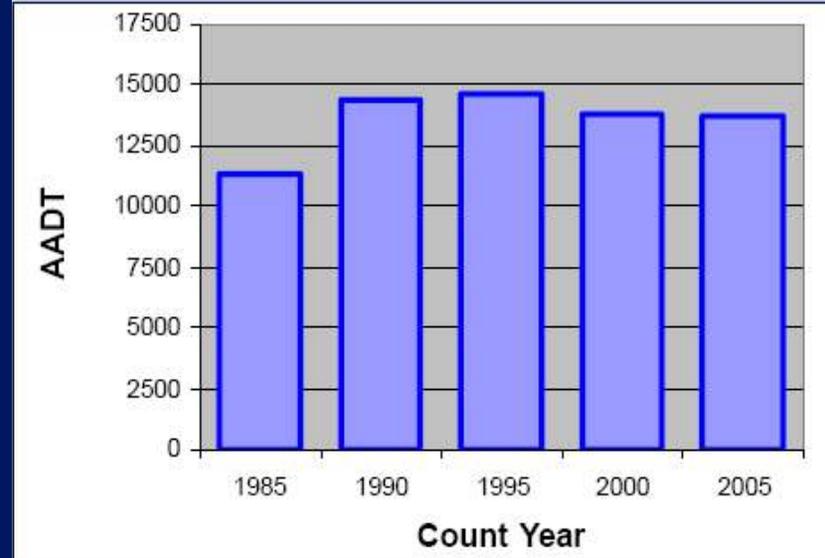
## Rail Trail

- Old Delaware and Hudson railway added to 9.3 mile trail between Port of Albany to the Village of Voorheesville.

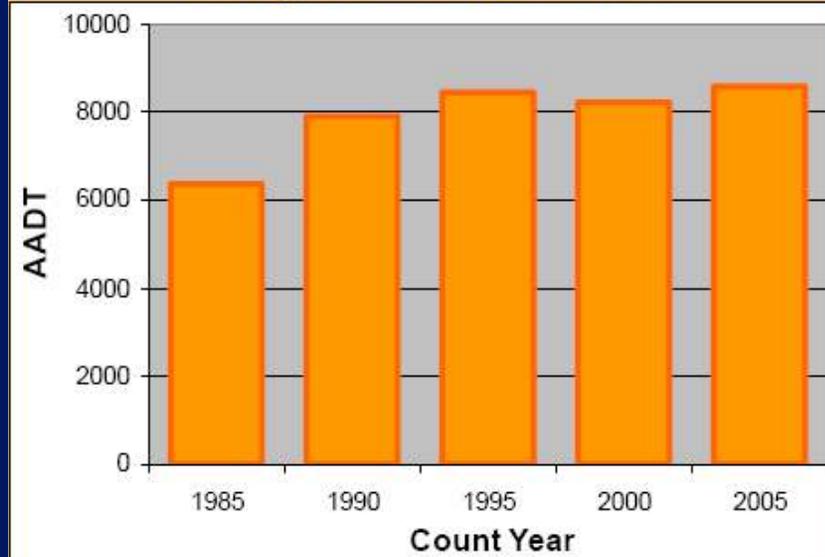
**Elsmere Ave - US 9W (Southern Blvd)**



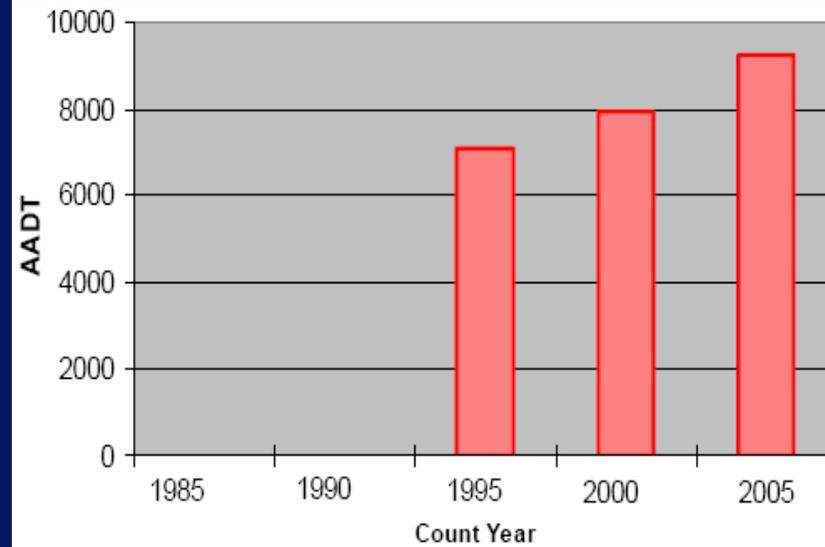
**Kenwood Ave - Elsmere Ave**



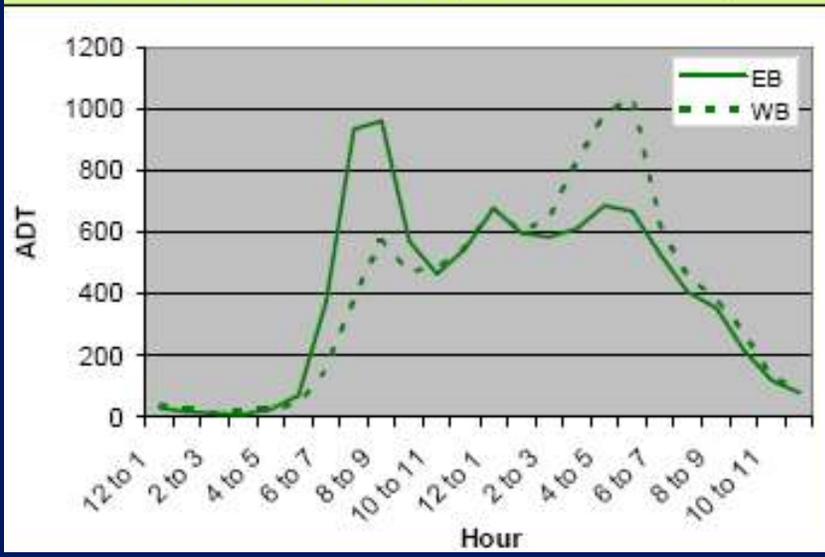
**Cherry Ave - Kenwood Ave**



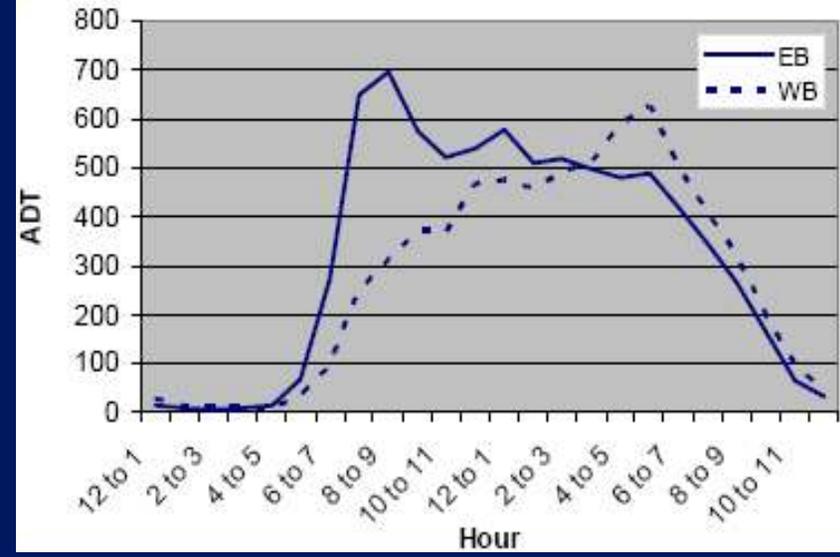
**Van Dyke Rd - Cherry Ave**



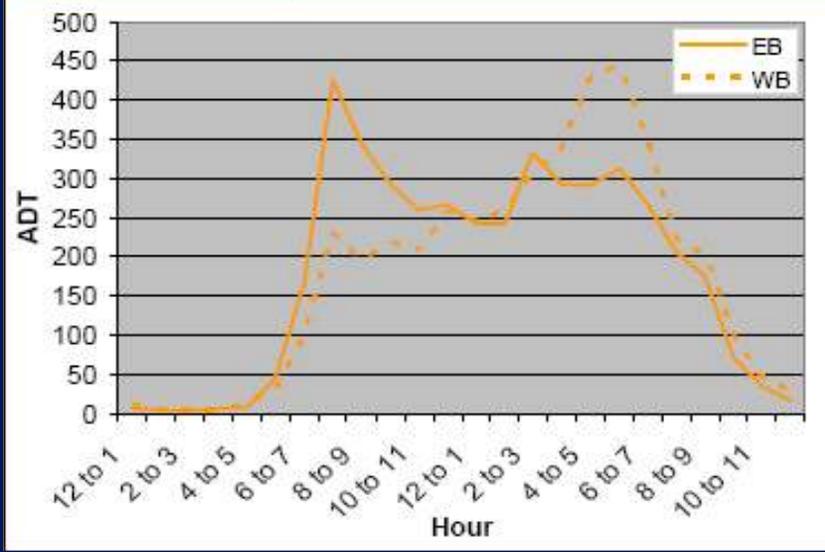
### Elsmere Ave - US 9W (Southern Blvd)



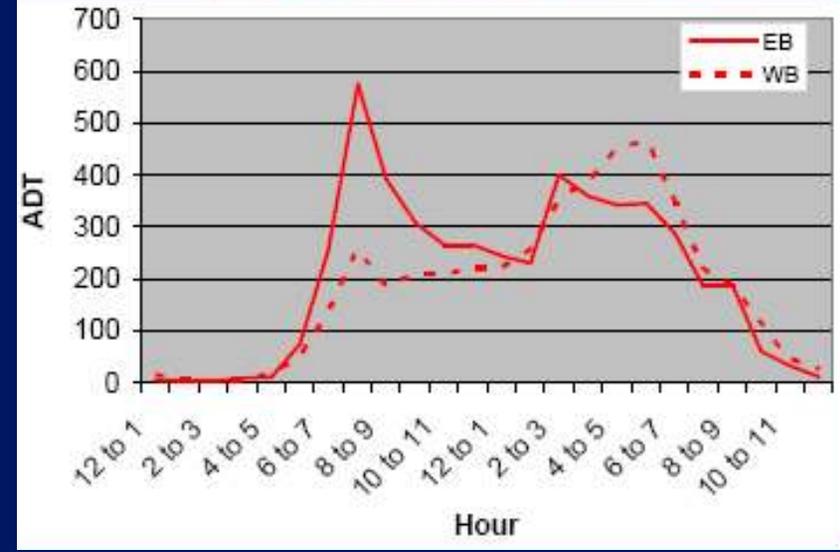
### Kenwood Ave - Elsmere Ave



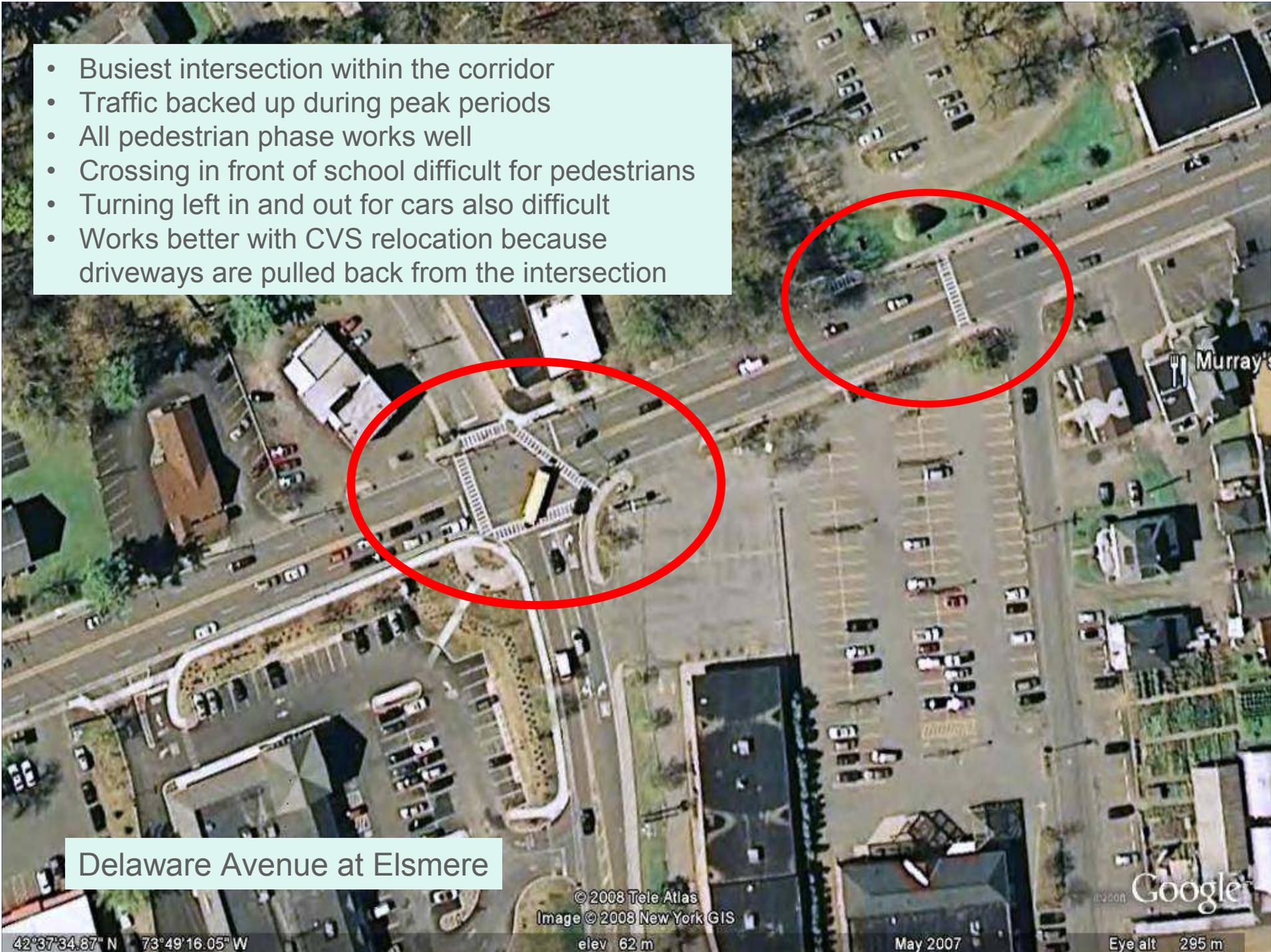
### Cherry Ave - Kenwood Ave



### Van Dyke Rd - Cherry Ave



- Busiest intersection within the corridor
- Traffic backed up during peak periods
- All pedestrian phase works well
- Crossing in front of school difficult for pedestrians
- Turning left in and out for cars also difficult
- Works better with CVS relocation because driveways are pulled back from the intersection



Delaware Avenue at Elsmere

© 2008 Tele Atlas  
Image © 2008 New York GIS

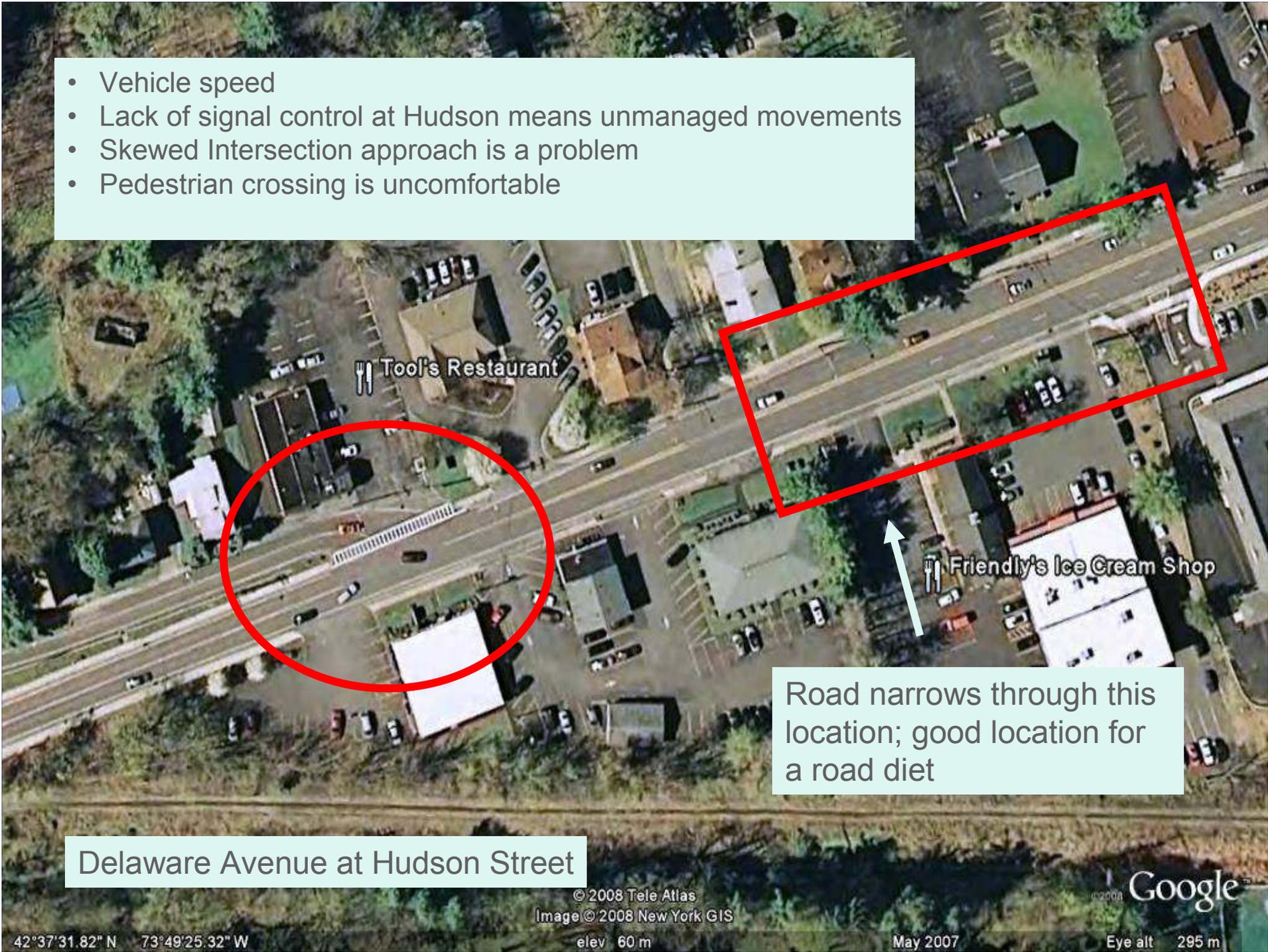
elev 62 m

May 2007

Google

Eye alt 295 m

- Vehicle speed
- Lack of signal control at Hudson means unmanaged movements
- Skewed Intersection approach is a problem
- Pedestrian crossing is uncomfortable



Delaware Avenue at Hudson Street

Road narrows through this location; good location for a road diet

- Poorly designed pedestrian crossings
- Narrow intersection at Adams to channelize cars
- Vehicle decisions need to be made at the intersection
- Protect residential areas from higher-speed vehicles

Kenwood Avenue at Adams Place

© 2008 Tele Atlas  
Image © 2008 New York GIS

elev 66 m

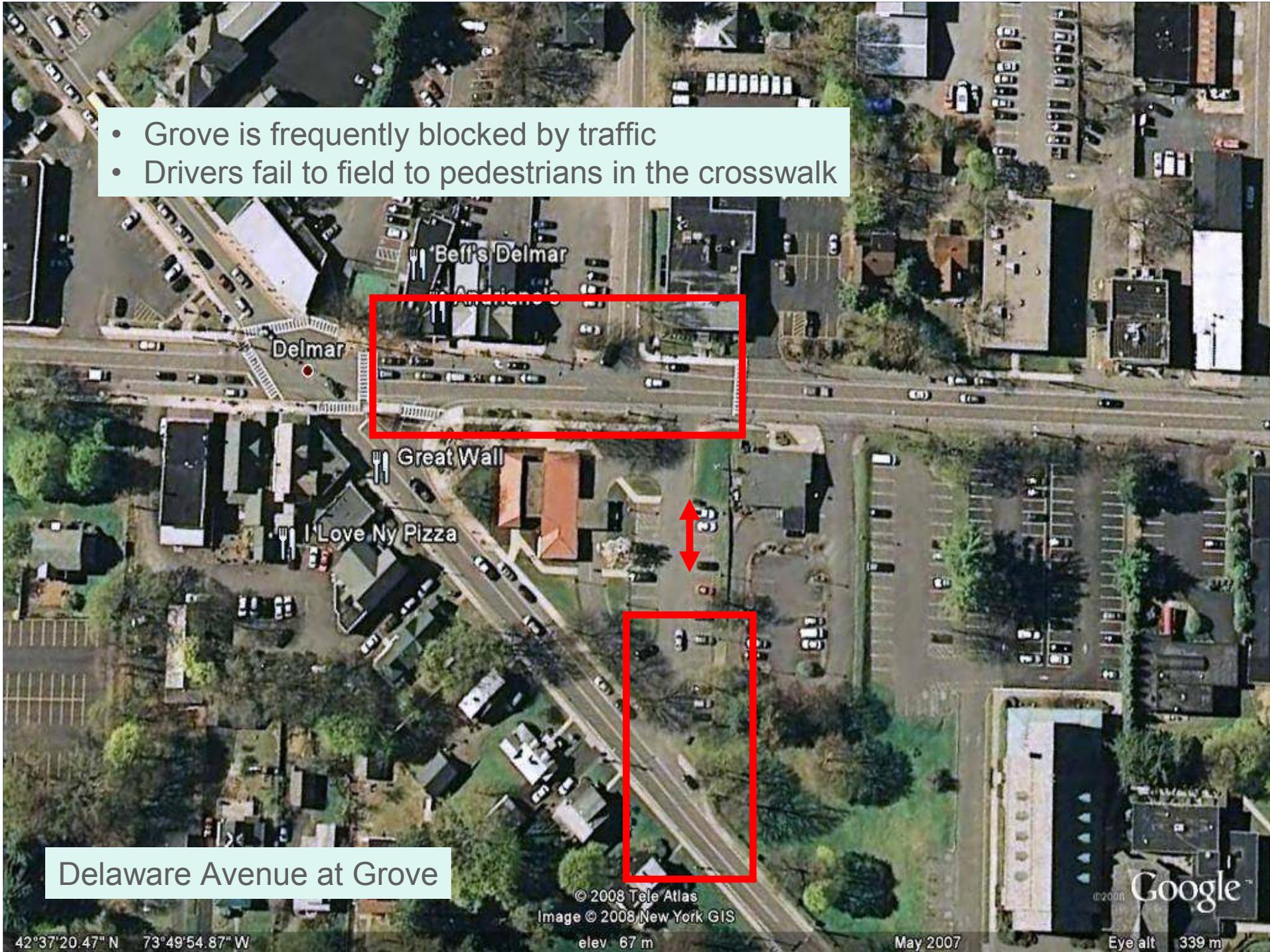
May 2007

Google™

Eye alt 391 m

42°37'19.24" N 73°49'51.70" W

- Grove is frequently blocked by traffic
- Drivers fail to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk



Delaware Avenue at Grove

© 2008 Tele Atlas  
Image © 2008 New York GIS

elev 67 m

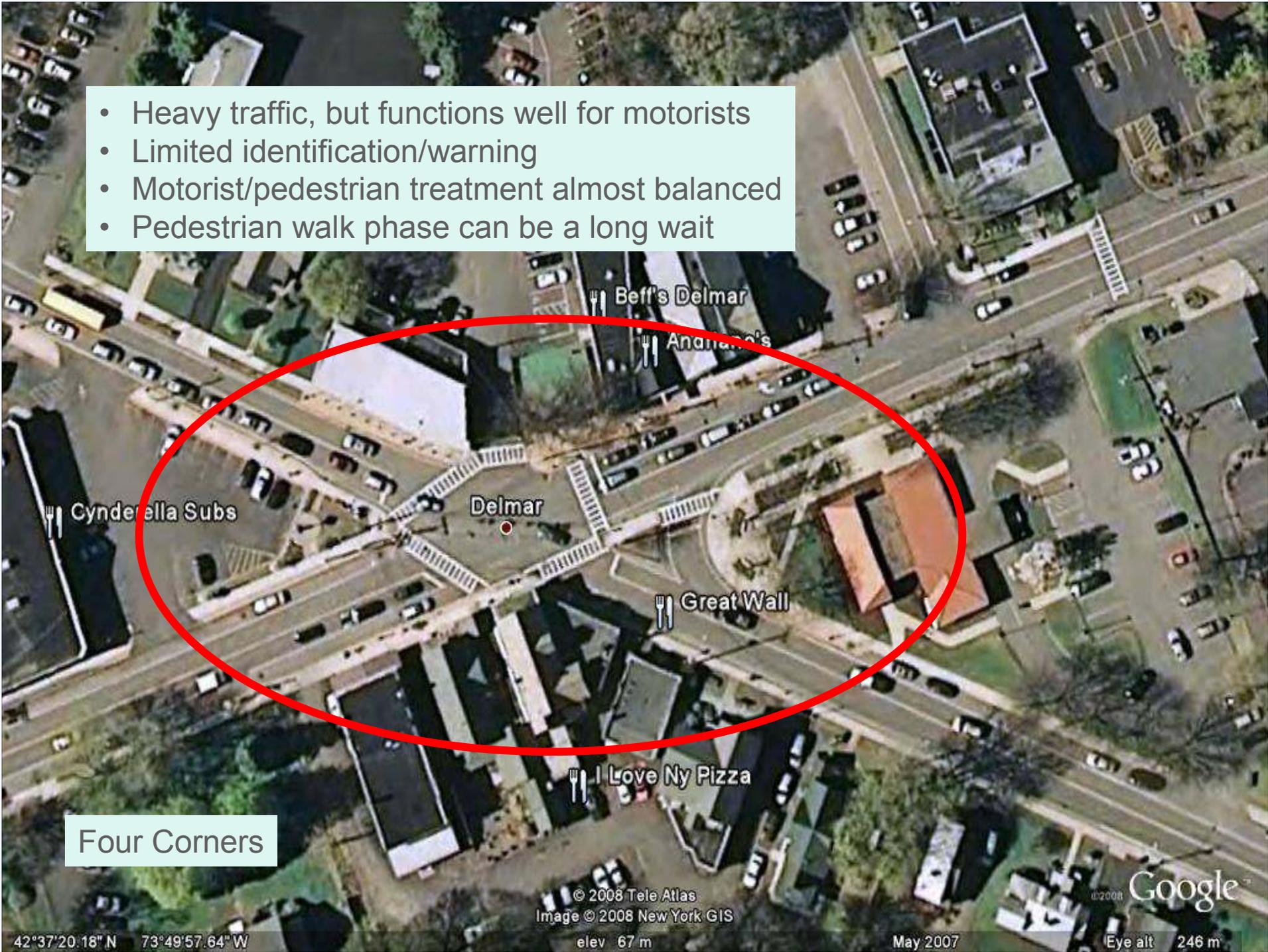
May 2007

Google

Eye alt 339 m

42°37'20.47" N 73°49'54.87" W

- Heavy traffic, but functions well for motorists
- Limited identification/warning
- Motorist/pedestrian treatment almost balanced
- Pedestrian walk phase can be a long wait



Four Corners

© 2008 Tele Atlas  
Image © 2008 New York GIS

elev 67 m

May 2007

© 2008 Google

Eye alt 246 m

- Intersection works well for motorists
- Intersection is difficult for pedestrians to cross

Delaware Avenue at Adams Street

Image © 2008 New York GIS

© 2008 Tele Atlas

elev 224 ft

May 2007

© 2008 Google

Eye alt 900 ft

42°37'17.53" N 73°50'04.97" W

- Vehicle traffic is backed up during the afternoon peak
- Few “gaps” in traffic to facilitate travel across Kenwood
- No marked cross walks for pedestrians

Kenwood Avenue at Adams Street

Image © 2008 New York GIS

© 2008 Tele Atlas

elev 222 ft

May 2007

Eye'alt 900 ft

42°37'21.90" N 73°50'06.43" W

Google



- Consider use of medians
- Formalize pedestrian signs and markings



- Road diets or other methods to narrow the street



WATCH FOR CYCLISTS  
THE ROAD IS THERE  
TO SHARE





- Improving streets can be temporary or permanent while achieving the same safety goals



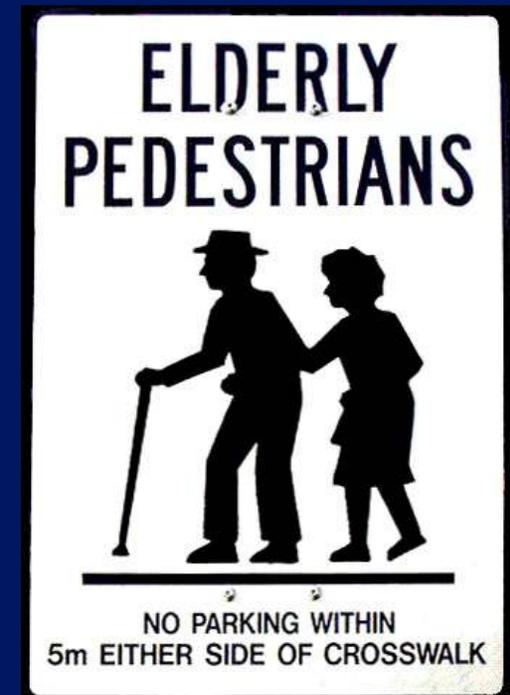
- Formalize the crossing area for safety





- Create a gateway treatment; allow drivers to locate themselves before the intersection.
- Create designated left turn bays.
- Absorb additional space with curb extensions.







# Today's Land Use Pattern

# Four Corners



**Well-defined streetscape**



**Design elements are at a pedestrian scale**

# Four Corners to Oakwood



Parking on sidewalk



Parallel parking or  
sidewalk?

# Four Corners to Oakwood



**Poorly defined  
sidewalk area**



**Attractive plantings &  
good pedestrian  
circulation**

# Oakwood Place to Hudson



**Railroad Bridge: Future Gateway Element**

# Oakwood Place to Hudson



**Green space and  
connection to the future  
rail trail**



**Define transition  
areas**

# Hudson to East Edge



**No landscape planting**



**Large curb cut**

# Hudson to East Edge



**Street tree blocks storefront signage  
and window**

# Hudson Avenue



**Informal trail connects  
to Delaware Avenue  
side streets**



**Informal parking area**

# Adams Street



**Residential with front lawns, mature trees and sidewalks and grass buffer strip**

# Historic Resources



**Delaware Avenue was originally built of unique yellow brick cobblestones.**

# Visioning

- **How long have you lived here?**
- **Is this the future you imagined?**
- Places change by chance, or by choice
- Visioning identifies the future you prefer
- It expresses possibility and an ideal future you hope to attain together
- It focuses on what is unique in a positive way

# Think Multi-Modal

How does Delaware Avenue work for a:

- Pedestrian
- Bicyclist
- Transit User
- Driver
  - Commuter
  - Resident/Shopper

# Principles

- Accessibility
- Community support
- Connectivity/Complete Streets
- Green space
- Public Space
- Collaboration
- Consistency
- Main Street Identity
- Harmony
- High Expectations
- Efficiency
- Equity and Inclusiveness
- Land use
- Multi-Modal/Inter-Modal
- Parking
- Pedestrian Priority
- Safety
- Sustainability
- Transit Supportive

# Measures

- You are confident cars will yield and/or stop as you use a crosswalk.
- The most elderly member of your family has enough time to cross the street without fear of tripping.
- You can find a public space to meet friends or take a break that is both shady when hot outside and warm and sunny when it's cool
- You feel the streetscape makes the Avenue beautiful

# Measures

- You drive less. You drive more slowly.
- You know where the bus stop is and can find out the schedule and route serving each bus stop.
- You look at a new building and think “nice job.”



# Measures

- Every member of your family walks or bikes to their most frequent destinations:
  - Your elementary school age child walks to school.
  - Your twelve year old safely rides her bicycle on Delaware Avenue.
  - Your elderly mother walks to church.
  - Your teenage son walks arm and arm with his girlfriend along the sidewalk.
  - You push a baby carriage everywhere you want to go.
  - You walk to work or walk to the bus to work.
  - Your Aunt in a wheelchair can window shop without assistance at the curb.

# Next Steps

- Schedule
- Deliverables
- Next Meeting
- Materials On Web Site

