

June __, 2023

6/16/23 DRAFT

Mr. Gerald Charleston
ITS Regional Coordinator
NYS Department of Transportation Region 8
Hudson Valley TMC
200 Bradhurst Ave, Unit 1
Hawthorne, NY 10532-1626

Re: Access Highways Change Request – NY State Highway Routes for City of Hudson

Dear Mr. Charleston:

As Chair of the City of Hudson Ad Hoc Truck Committee, and representative of the City of Hudson, I am writing to request information regarding the process for changing Access Highways within the City of Hudson. The committee is considering a change to one of the New York State Access Highway routes that enter/leave the City of Hudson. Specifically, the City of Hudson is considering requests the removal of one of the two NY State access highway routes—2.5 miles of NY 9G/23B—that enter/leave the City of Hudson. In addition to this change, we are also reviewing the prohibition of requesting that trucks-trucks over 48 feet in length be prohibited from entering the City unless they are making local deliveries. This letter provides information concerning these matters.

By way of background, in September of 2022, the City of Hudson’s Common Council formed an **Ad Hoc Truck Committee** to follow up on the Truck Study and facilitate changes in the current Truck Route. Our Committee includes membership from the Common Council, the Columbia County Board of Supervisors, and the community, and is comprised of the following individuals:

- Margaret Morris, Chair / First Ward Council Member
- Linda Mussmann, Fourth Ward Supervisor
- Amber Harris, Third Ward Council Member
- Mohamed Rony, Second Ward Council Member
- Abdus Miah, Second Ward Supervisor
- Dewan Sarowar, Second Ward Council Member
- Donna Streitz, Community Member

Our stated objective is: *“To improve the health, safety, and quality-of-life outcomes for Columbia County residents, move the truck route away from densely populated neighborhoods with housing and amenities close to the road. Identify and move the truck route to the most cost-effective alternate route which reduces residential impacts for Columbia County residents.”*

Requested Changes Under Consideration

As per the NYSDOT Qualifying and Access Highway Manual, there are two NY State Designated Truck Access Highway routes that enter and leave the City of Hudson. See the attached pages 28 and 34 of the manual (Attachment 1). We are considering removal would like to request removal of a portion of NY 9G/23B referenced on page 28 as follows:

- “NY 9G: Western junction of NY 9G/NY23 overlap (Rip Van Winkle Bridge Approach) to the L&B Products terminal, a distance of 2.5 miles, in the City of Hudson and the Town

The purpose of this route was to provide reasonable access for trucks to/from the L&B Products terminal which was located west of Third Street. Route 9G becomes Third Street within the City, and which opened in 1982. L&B Products terminal has long since closed, following its bankruptcy in 2003. This route travels through the two most densely populated wards in the city. Additionally, minority populations represent 73% of the population in one of these wards. The overall minority population for the City is 46%.

In addition to this change, we are ~~considering a request requesting~~ that trucks over 48 feet in length be prohibited from entering the City unless they are making local deliveries. Many streets within the city are less than 30 feet wide, barely meeting the 20-foot-wide requirement when parked vehicles are taken into consideration. These larger trucks create a significant safety issue for the residents. I am attaching a video that shows two of these trucks at the intersection of Park Place and Warren Street, which is in the center of the City. One of the trucks mounts the curb as it navigates the turn.

Background

The City of Hudson received funding from the NYSDOT for a feasibility study (Study), secured by Assembly member Didi Barrett, to evaluate alternatives to the current State Truck Route which has existed since before the 1950s. The current Truck Route has enormous residential impacts to the City of Hudson, and significant concerns exist regarding the negative health impacts to residents and the environmental impacts of truck traffic (and related emissions and wear) on city streets, as well as social economic impacts of truck traffic on urban streets. The Study was conducted in 2020 by MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C., and its final report—The Feasibility Study City of Hudson Truck Route Traffic Study Columbia County NY—was issued August 2021. As reported by MJ Engineering:

“The social and economic impacts of truck traffic upon the City’s business district and neighborhoods are especially worrisome... The community must contend with the particularly noxious influences of high truck volume such as noise, odors, dust, congestion, and visual degradation. In the City of Hudson, pedestrian traffic is very important to residents and visitors. Through truck traffic typically directly and negatively affects business and quality of life within the City. Diesel exhaust from truck traffic is a complex mixture of gases and fine particles. In an urban area such as Hudson, the narrow streets and tall buildings make it much harder for the gases and particles to dissipate in comparison to a rural setting with wider streets and less buildings. When the exhaust cannot dissipate, it causes an unhealthy environment for pedestrians in the city.”

Air quality studies have shown greater levels of truck traffic-related air pollution (TRAP) at homes in areas closest to the road, thus are particularly problematic in heavily populated urban areas such as the City of Hudson.

As you know, the size and volume of trucks and truck loads have significantly increased since the truck routes entering/leaving Hudson were established. Also, as reported by MJ Engineering

Mr. Gerald Charleston
New York State Department of Transportation
June __, 2023
Page 3 of 3

in the Truck Study report, the City of Hudson has an enormous volume of truck traffic flowing through its streets, and city streets are not designed to handle large trucks.

Information on the process for making these changes ~~Your attention to this critical issue is~~ greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, would like additional information, and/or would like to get a copy of the MJ Engineering Truck Study report, please let me know. My contact information is provided below.

Best regards,

Margaret Morris
First Ward Council Member, City of Hudson
Chair of Hudson Common Council Ad Hoc Truck Committee
Mobile phone: 516 708 5295 / email: margaret.morris@cityofhudson.com

cc:

Tom DePietro, Common Council President
Kamal Johnson, City of Hudson Mayor
Michael Hofmann, City of Hudson Mayoral Aide
Ad Hoc Truck Committee:
Amber Harris, Third Ward Council Member
Abdus Miah, Second Ward Supervisor
Linda Mussmann, Fourth Ward Supervisor
Mohamed Rony, Second Ward Council Member
Dewan Sarowar, Second Ward Council Member
Donna Streitz, Community Member