



DARE TO DO MORE

Office of the President

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**LaGuardia Community College
Summary of Traffic Study Prepared by
Philip Habib & Associates**

BACKGROUND

LaGuardia Community College, located in the Long Island City section of Queens, is situated on the south side of Thomson Avenue and spans several blocks. With over 50,000 students, more than 2,500 faculty and staff, as well as 5 high schools with more than 2,000 students located in the immediate vicinity of the College, this is a high pedestrian area. The College also confronts excessive car and truck traffic as it sits near ramps to and from the Queensboro Bridge, Midtown Tunnel and the Long Island Expressway. As a result, Thomson Avenue experiences heavy traffic volume during a significant part of the day and evening, coinciding with student travel patterns on area sidewalks.

On March 11, 2013, an accident resulted in a pedestrian fatality of a high school student. This followed many years of growing awareness and deep concern about pedestrian safety, particularly as the College and surrounding community have seen an increase in population. The tragic death spurred the College to engage Philip Habib & Associates, one of the city's premier traffic engineering firms, to assess pedestrian safety and recommend changes to reduce potential pedestrian/vehicular conflicts.

The study, done over a period of six months, sought a detailed traffic analysis for both safety and operation. The study measured hourly traffic volume along Thomson Avenue and at key intersections, as well as assessed signal timing, lane markings and curbside parking regulations. In addition, accident data available from the New York City Department of Transportation was reviewed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to identify locations along the Thomson Avenue corridor between Skillman Avenue and Van Dam Street where improvements to the street network are possible to improve both pedestrian and vehicular safety in this heavily pedestrianized zone in Long Island City. Three recommendations were advanced and are recommended as the most feasible pedestrian changes and include:

- **Widen the Sidewalks Along Thomson Avenue.** Sidewalk widening—expanding the sidewalks on Thomson Avenue by eliminating the southernmost eastbound lane--would increase pedestrian circulation while allowing eastbound and westbound traffic to continue to smoothly flow. This would create an essential buffer between vehicular traffic and the busy pedestrian traffic along Thomson Avenue.



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- **Create Sidewalk Bulb-outs in Key Intersections.** Sidewalk bulb-outs placed at intersections along Thomson Avenue would increase the queuing space for pedestrians, narrow the crossing distance and reduce conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.
- **Modify Existing Signal Timing and Phasing at Select Intersections.** This would increase “green-time” for pedestrians without diminishing the existing green time for through traffic along Thomson Avenue.

For a full copy of the traffic study or for further information, please contact Shahir Erfan, Vice President of Administration at 718-482-5501 or Claudia Chan, Government Relations Manager at 718-482-5005.