II. PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

A. PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the West Dover Connector Project, being undertaken by the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), is to improve mobility across the Norfolk Southern Railroad for all travel modes to and from the west side of Dover, reduce congestion at key intersections and locations in the study area, improve connectivity of the roadway network for regional through and local travel, reduce through traffic volume on local streets, and improve safety including emergency service access.

B. PROJECT NEEDS

Existing and future traffic congestion as well as existing and projected growth in the greater Dover area point to a number of deficiencies and needs in the existing transportation system on the west side of Dover. These conditions include deficiencies and needs in the areas of: system linkage and continuity, through traffic impacts on local streets, emergency service accessibility, safety, and consistency with previously established and current planning context. Each of these elements is described in the following subsections.

System deficiencies and needs have been identified which impair multimodal mobility in the project area.

i. Existing and Future Traffic Congestion

An analysis of 2003 traffic conditions indicates failing movements at many intersections within the study area during peak travel periods (Figure II-1). Additionally, long traffic queues (or back-ups) form during peak hours at intersections and include the stop-controlled approaches at Wyoming Mill Road and Hazlettville Road/North Street, North Street at West Street, and Queen Street at West Street.

An analysis of future traffic conditions (future year No-Build) indicates greatly deteriorated conditions in terms of the level of service and delay at study area intersections. Intersections will experience extensive queuing or back-ups due to additional traffic volumes related to the forecasted increases in population, households and employment.

By 2015, six out of ten signalized intersections and twelve out of fifteen stop-controlled intersections analyzed within the study area will operate at LOS “E” (near failing conditions) or LOS “F” (failing conditions) as shown on Figure II-2. By 2030, nine of the ten signalized intersections analyzed in the study area will have near failing or failing conditions (LOS E or F) as shown on Figure II-3. All unsignalized intersections studied, with the exception of Railroad Avenue at Southern Boulevard will also operate at failing levels of service.

Table II-1 compares intersection level of service (LOS) for the 2003 existing and 2015 future No-Build conditions for the evening peak hour. Table II-2 compares intersection level of service (LOS) for the 2003 and 2030 future No-Build conditions for the evening peak hour.

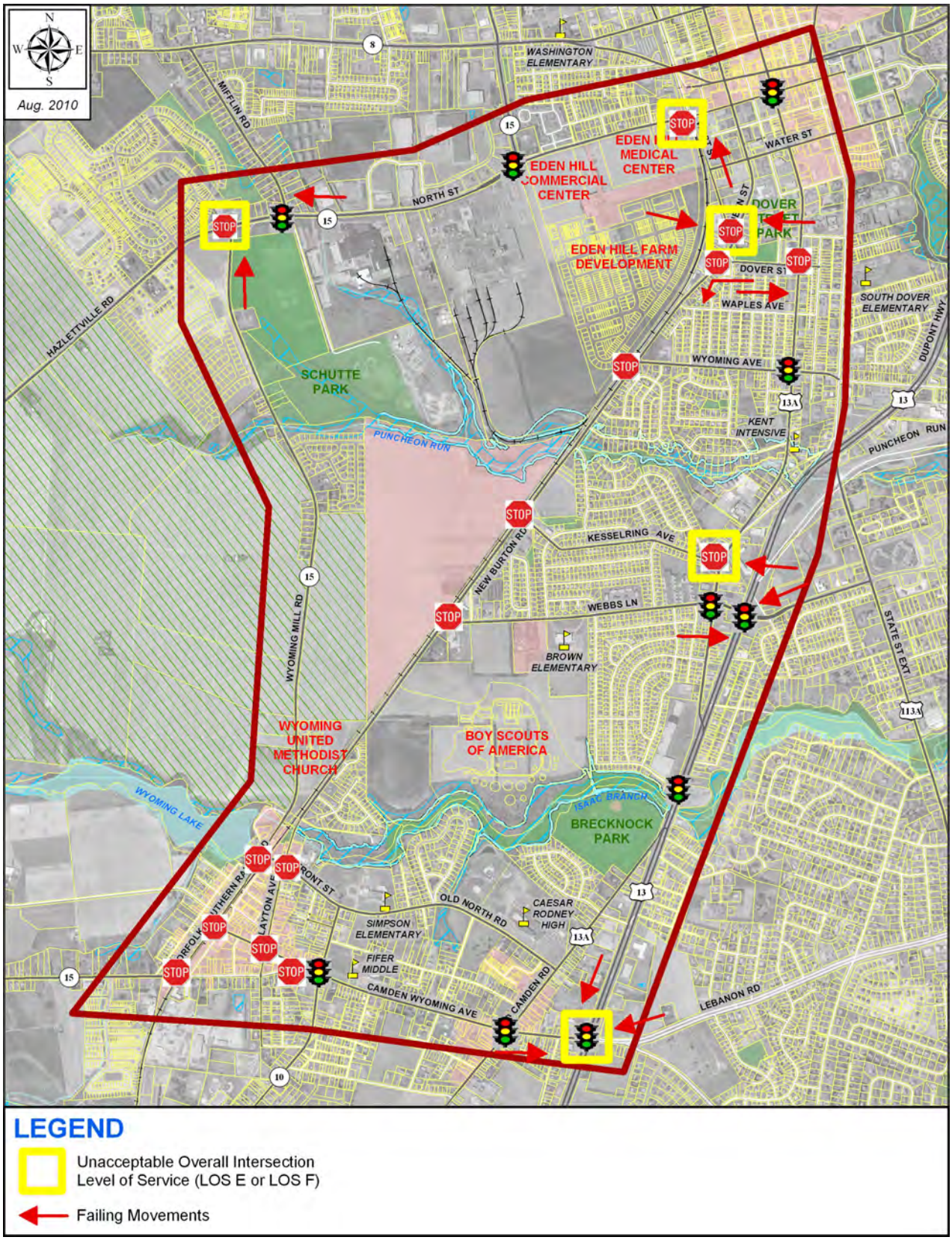

Figure II-1: 2003 Traffic Conditions

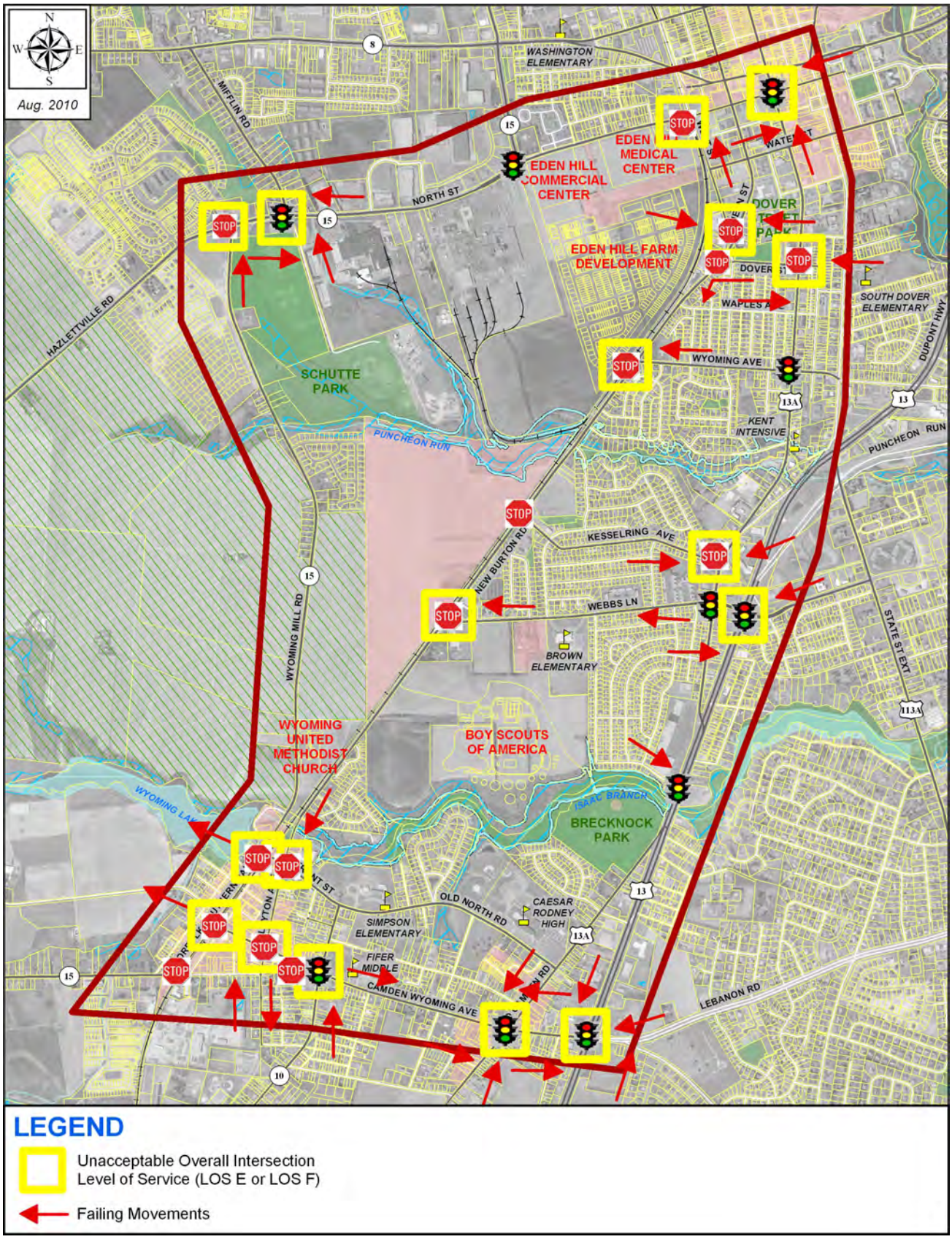

Figure II-2: 2015 Traffic Conditions

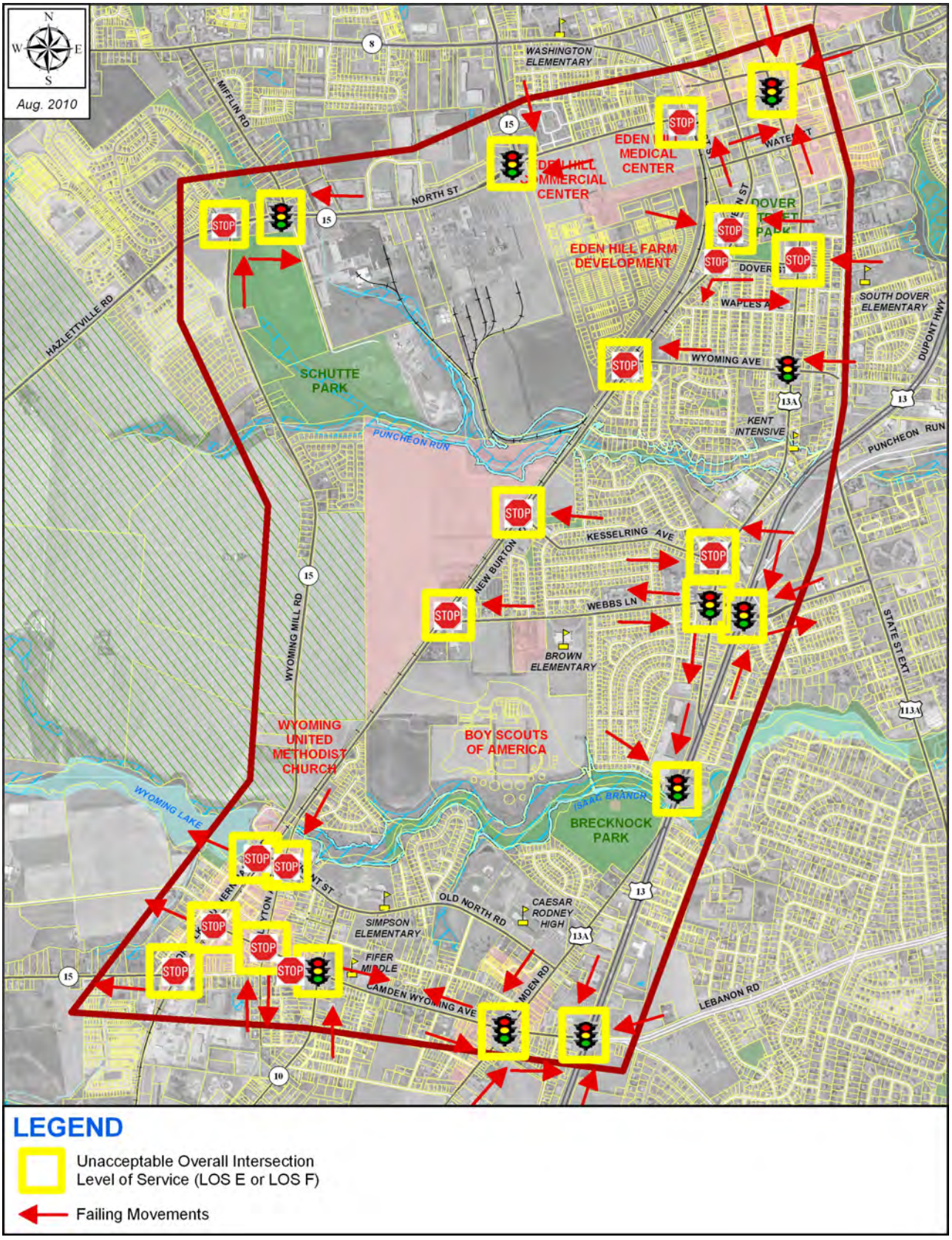

Figure II-3: 2030 Traffic Conditions

Table II-1: 2003 Existing Condition and 2015 Future No-Build Condition Intersection LOS

Intersection		2003 Weekday PM Peak Hour		2015 Future No-Build Weekday PM Peak Hour	
		Approach LOS	Overall LOS	Approach LOS	Overall LOS
Saulsbury Road @ North Street (Signal Controlled)	SB	B	**B**	C	**C**
	EB	B		C	
	WB	A		B	
North Street @ West Street (Stop Controlled)	NB	F	**F**	F	**F**
West Street @ Queen Street (Stop Controlled)	EB	E	**F**	F	**F**
	WB	F (Driveway)		F (Driveway)	
New Burton Road @ Dover Street (Stop Controlled)	WB Right	B	**C**	C	**D**
	WB Left	F		F	
New Burton Road @ Wyoming Avenue (Stop Controlled)	WB	C	**C**	F	**F**
New Burton Road @ Kesselring Avenue (Stop Controlled)	WB	C	**C**	C	**C**
New Burton Road @ Webbs Lane (Stop Controlled)	WB	C	**C**	E	**E**
Front Street @ Layton Street (Stop Controlled)	NB	B	**C**	C	**F**
	SB	C		F	
	EB	B		C	
	WB	B		C	
Hazletteville Road @ Wyoming Mill Road (Stop Controlled)	NB	F	**F**	F	**F**
Mifflin Road @ North Street (Signal Controlled)	NB	C	**C**	D	**E**
	SB	A		C	
	EB	D		F	
	WB	D		F	
US 13 @ Charles Polk Road (Signal Controlled)	NB	A	**B**	B	**C**
	SB	B		D	
	EB	D		E	
Webbs Lane @ Governors Avenue (Signal Controlled)	NB	B	**B**	B	**D**
	SB	B		D	
	EB	B		C	
	WB	C		E	
Kesselring Avenue @ Governors Avenue (Stop Controlled)	EB	D	**E**	F	**F**
	WB	E		F	
Wyoming Avenue @ Governors Avenue (Signal Controlled)	NB	B	**B**	B	**B**
	SB	C		B	
	EB	B		C	
	WB	C		C	

Intersection		2003 Weekday PM Peak Hour		2015 Future No-Build Weekday PM Peak Hour	
		Approach LOS	Overall LOS	Approach LOS	Overall LOS
Webbs Lane @ US 13 (Signal Controlled)	NB	C	D	D	E
	SB	D		C	
	EB	E		F	
	WB	F		F	
Dover Street @ Governors Avenue (Stop Controlled)	EB	E	D	F	E
	WB	C		D	
North Street @ Governors Avenue (Signal Controlled)	NB	B	C	F	F
	SB	B		C	
	EB	B		F	
	WB	C		F	
Front Street @ Railroad Avenue (Stop Controlled)	WB	C	C	F	F
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ Railroad Avenue (Stop Controlled)	WB	C	C	F	F
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ Layton Street (Stop Controlled)	NB	C	C	F	F
	SB	D		F	
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ Alt. US 13 (Signal Controlled)	NB	B	B	F	F
	SB	C		F	
	EB	A		D	
	WB	B		D	
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ Route 10 (Signal Controlled)	NB	C	C	F	E
	SB	B		C	
	EB	C		E	
	WB	A		B	
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ Southern Boulevard (Stop Controlled)	NB	B	B	C	C
Railroad Avenue @ Southern Boulevard (Stop Controlled)	NB	-	A	-	C
	SB	A		C	
	EB	B		C	
	WB	A		C	
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ US 13 (Signal Controlled)	NB	D	E	F	F
	SB	E		F	
	EB	F		F	
	WB	E		F	

Note: Red indicates failing or near failing approach movement or overall intersection operation.

Table II-2: 2003 Existing Condition and 2030 Future No-Build Condition Intersection LOS

Intersection		2003 Weekday PM Peak Hour		2030 Future No-Build Weekday PM Peak Hour	
		Approach LOS	Overall LOS	Approach LOS	Overall LOS
Saulsbury Road @ North Street (Signal Controlled)	SB	B	**B**	F	**F**
	EB	B		F	
	WB	A		D	
North Street @ West Street (Stop Controlled)	NB	F	**F**	F	**F**
West Street @ Queen Street (Stop Controlled)	EB	E	**F**	F	**F**
	WB	F (Driveway)		F (Driveway)	
New Burton Road @ Dover Street (Stop Controlled)	WB Right	B	**C**	C	**D**
	WB Left	F		F	
New Burton Road @ Wyoming Avenue (Stop Controlled)	WB	C	**C**	F	**F**
New Burton Road @ Kesselring Avenue (Stop Controlled)	WB	C	**C**	**F**	**F**
New Burton Road @ Webbs Lane (Stop Controlled)	WB	C	**C**	F	**F**
Front Street @ Layton Street (Stop Controlled)	NB	B	**C**	C	**F**
	SB	C		F	
	EB	B		D	
	WB	B		D	
Hazletteville Road @ Wyoming Mill Road (Stop Controlled)	NB	F	**F**	F	**F**
Mifflin Road @ North Street (Signal Controlled)	NB	C	**C**	D	**F**
	SB	A		C	
	EB	D		F	
	WB	D		F	
US 13 @ Charles Polk Road (Signal Controlled)	NB	A	**B**	B	**F**
	SB	B		F	
	EB	D		F	
Webbs Lane @ Governors Avenue (Signal Controlled)	NB	B	**B**	D	**E**
	SB	B		E	
	EB	B		E	
	WB	C		F	
Kesselring Avenue @ Governors Avenue (Stop Controlled)	EB	D	**E**	F	**F**
	WB	E		F	
Wyoming Avenue @ Governors Avenue (Signal Controlled)	NB	B	**B**	B	**C**
	SB	C		C	
	EB	B		C	
	WB	C		D	

Intersection		2003 Weekday PM Peak Hour		2030 Future No-Build Weekday PM Peak Hour	
		Approach LOS	Overall LOS	Approach LOS	Overall LOS
Webbs Lane @ US 13 (Signal Controlled)	NB	C	D	E	F
	SB	D		F	
	EB	E		F	
	WB	F		F	
Dover Street @ Governors Avenue (Stop Controlled)	EB	E	D	F	F
	WB	C		E	
North Street @ Governors Avenue (Signal Controlled)	NB	B	C	F	F
	SB	B		F	
	EB	B		E	
	WB	C		F	
Front Street @ Railroad Avenue (Stop Controlled)	WB	C	C	F	F
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ Railroad Avenue (Stop Controlled)	WB	C	C	F	F
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ Layton Street (Stop Controlled)	NB	C	C	F	F
	SB	D		F	
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ Alt. US 13 (Signal Controlled)	NB	B	B	F	F
	SB	C		F	
	EB	A		F	
	WB	B		F	
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ Route 10 (Signal Controlled)	NB	C	C	F	F
	SB	B		D	
	EB	C		F	
	WB	A		B	
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ Southern Boulevard (Stop Controlled)	NB	B	B	D	D
Railroad Avenue @ Southern Boulevard (Stop Controlled)	NB	-	A	-	F
	SB	A		D	
	EB	B		E	
	WB	A		F	
Camden-Wyoming Avenue @ US 13 (Signal Controlled)	NB	D	E	F	F
	SB	E		F	
	EB	F		F	
	WB	E		F	
Note: Red indicates failing or near failing approach movement or overall intersection operation.					

Unavoidable circling of traffic due to a lack of proper roadway system linkage and connectivity will further deteriorate future traffic conditions within the study area. Thus, there is a need to reduce traffic congestion, where possible, at key study area intersections.

Three historic districts located within the study area experience traffic congestion partly due to through traffic volumes: the North Street, Camden and Wyoming Historic Districts.[1] The North Street district has been identified as a district of historic significance by the Delaware State Historic Preservation Plan. The plan has identified eight architectural resources of historic significance on North Street as shown on the following figure (source: DelDOT Architectural Resource Survey for North Street (98-045-01), January 2000).

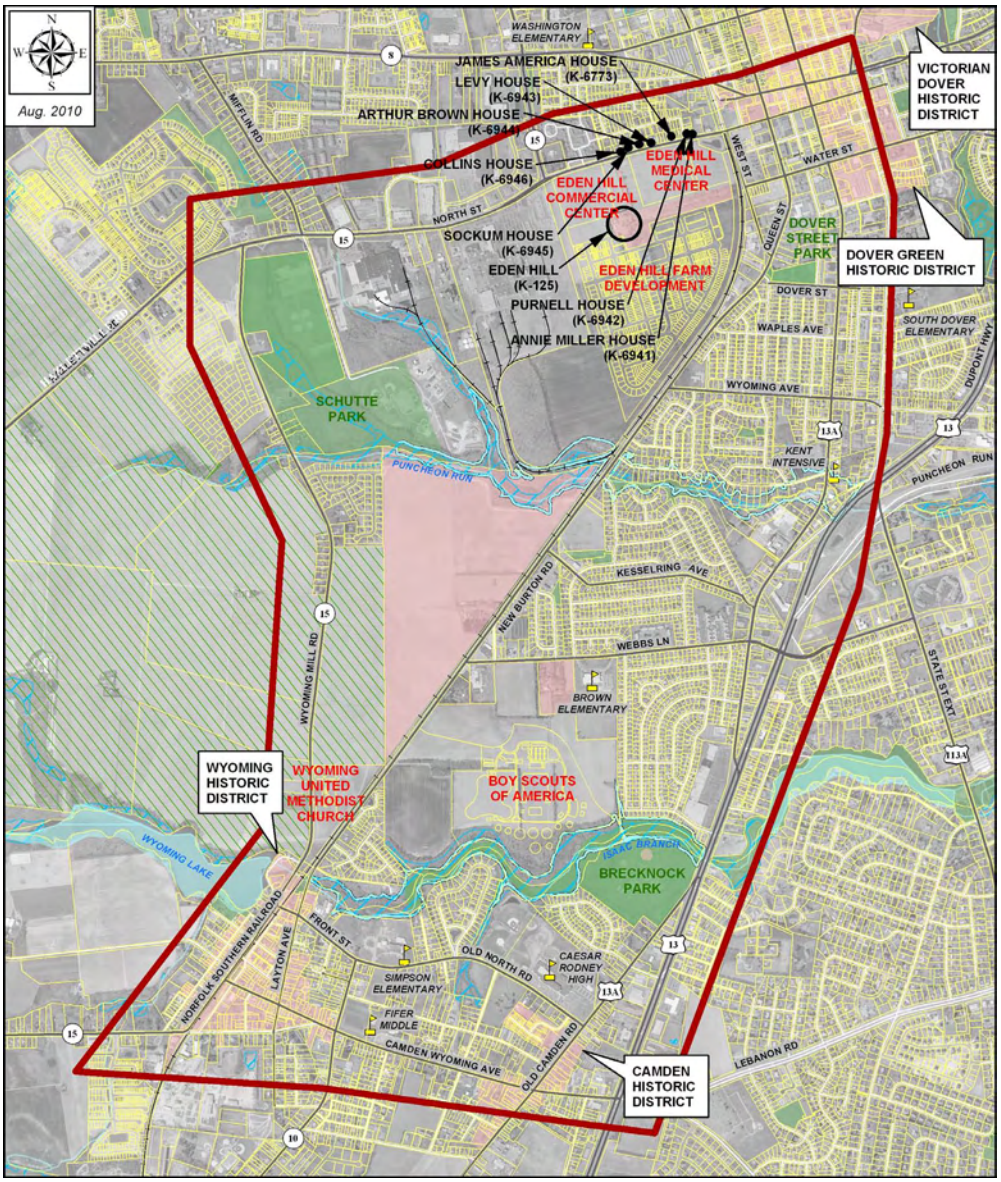

Figure II-4: North Street, Camden, Wyoming, and Other Historic Districts

[1]. Other historic properties and districts in the study area are discussed in Chapters IV and V. These properties and districts are generally less affected by traffic and traffic congestion due to their locations.

Due to lack of direct connection between Saulsbury Road (SR 15) and US 13, currently all the southbound traffic on Saulsbury Road needs to turn either east or west into the North Street historic area. The traffic studies conducted for the West Dover Connector project indicated that this traffic consists of both through and local traffic, the former comprised of higher than average percentages of heavy vehicles. This mandatory use of North Street by existing and projected future traffic volumes, thus, has direct impacts on the North Street historic area.

Southbound Saulsbury Road traffic that turns right onto North Street intending to connect to US 13 uses Wyoming Mill Road and then Camden-Wyoming Avenue to reach US 13. Camden-Wyoming Avenue is a part of the Camden Historic District that was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. Sixty-five buildings on both sides of Camden-Wyoming Avenue and Main Street in Camden are part of this historic district. Some of these historic buildings on Camden-Wyoming Avenue are in very close proximity to travel lanes. Besides traffic congestion issues present in this area, heavy vehicle traffic on Camden-Wyoming Avenue may have negative impact on the foundations of the historic buildings within this historic district. Traffic studies conducted for the West Dover Connector project indicated North Street and Camden-Wyoming Avenue carry high percentage of heavy vehicle traffic volumes (9% and 11% respectively) and these are significantly higher than generally what other roadways of similar functional classification carry. The Wyoming Historic District which is bounded by Front Street, Rodney Avenue, Southern Boulevard and Mechanic Street in the Town of Wyoming also experiences some of this traffic problem.

These conditions indicate a need to reduce the through traffic burden on roadways in the North Street, Wyoming and Camden Historic Districts to the extent possible.

ii. Projected Growth

The greater Dover area experienced significant population and household growth and robust growth in employment during the 1990s. By 2000, approximately 32 percent of Kent County's total population and households were located within the greater Dover area. Even more outstanding has been the growth in the number of jobs within the greater Dover area, demonstrating the importance of this area as a significant employment center in the region. By 2000, approximately 50 percent of Kent County's total number of jobs was located within the greater Dover area. This area experienced 31% of the employment growth in Kent County between 1990 and 2000.

As contained within DelDOT's Statewide Travel Demand Model, demographic forecasts for the area expect continued growth. Growth trends, especially for employment are expected to continue into the foreseeable future. The rate of forecasted growth in employment in the greater Dover area (21%) will outpace that of Kent County (19%).

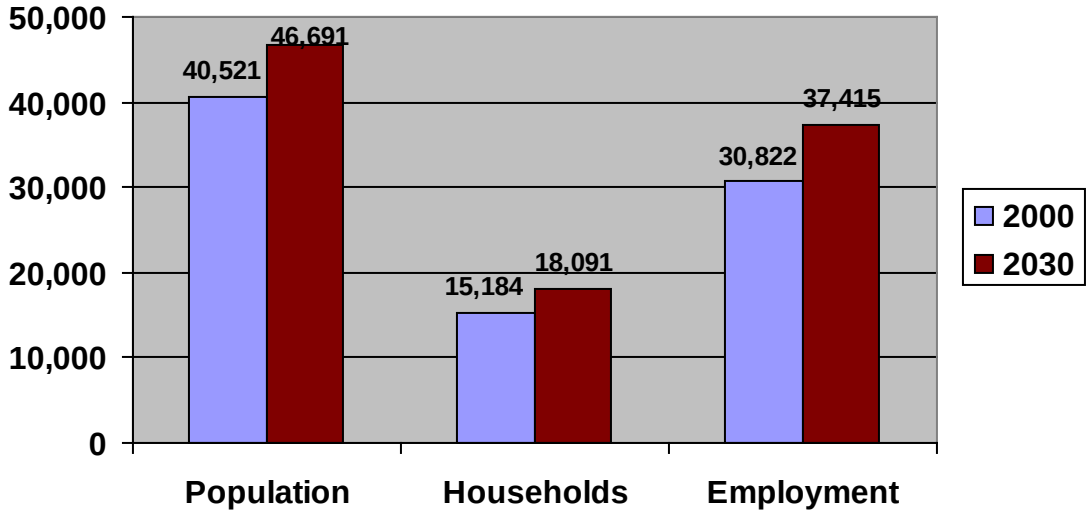

Figure II-5: Population, Household and Employment Forecasts

The projected growth in demographic attributes like population, housing and employment has direct co-relation with growth in traffic volumes on the study area roadway network. Roadway segments and intersections in the study area have experienced significant traffic growth in the last two decades and are forecasted to experience significant growth in traffic volumes over the next two decades as well. As previously noted, the 2030 future No-Build showed that all but three of the study area intersections analyzed would fail or nearly fail with excessive traffic delays.

Further underscoring the need to accommodate future growth, the West Dover Connector study area lies within the designated Kent County Growth Area. This is the county's primary growth management strategy to direct growth and development to this area, where it can be supported by infrastructure and public services in order to create new and support existing communities.

At the state level, Delaware's *Strategies for State Policies and Spending* sets the state's policy framework to coordinate land use decision-making with the provision of infrastructure and services. The *Strategies for State Policies and Spending* identifies land within Delaware as Investment Level 1 through Investment Level 4 and lands out of play, indicating the appropriateness of growth.[2] As shown in Figure IV-9, the overwhelming majority of the land area within the West Dover Connector study area is designated as Level 1, where state policy encourages development, redevelopment and investment. The Level 1 areas are the highest priority for state investment and spending. As a result, growth is expected to occur in the West Dover Connector study area and infrastructure to support it must be planned.

[2]. Levels 1 through 3 identify which areas of the state are most prepared for growth and where the state can make the most cost-effective infrastructure investments, such as schools, roads and public safety. In the Level 4 areas where development is not currently preferred, the state will make investments that will help preserve a rural character such as, investments to promote open space and agriculture. Out-of-Play lands are those that generally cannot be developed because they are Federal- or State-owned protected lands, parklands, development rights have been purchased, or State or local regulations prohibit development.

The greater Dover area, and within that, the West Dover Connector study area, are vital to Kent County's economy, the City of Dover's economy, and the economies of the Towns of Camden and Wyoming. Efficient, effective and safe transportation infrastructure that provides for through and local travel movements on the west side of the City of Dover is vital for continued growth, economic health and quality of life. Thus, there is a need to accommodate future growth as it relates to the generation of travel.

iii. System Linkage and Continuity

System linkage and continuity has to do with the configuration of the roadway network and how it is used by travelers to get to and from destinations. The existing roadway system on the west side of the City of Dover, especially west of New Burton Road, lacks the connectivity of a grid system that is essential for effective traffic circulation in an urbanized area. The West Dover Connector study area falls within the urbanized area boundary. Under existing conditions, the study area roadway system does not efficiently collect and distribute traffic from the local streets to the collector roadways to the regional arterial system. Figure II-6 shows the functional classification map of roadways within the study area and surroundings.

Saulsbury Road (State Route 15) is a minor arterial highway of regional significance. State Route 15 (SR 15) connects towns in New Castle County, Kent County and Sussex County. In the City of Dover, McKee-Saulsbury Road (SR 15) is a designated truck route serving the industrial areas on the west side of Dover. Within Dover, SR 15 connects and serves major commercial areas and industrial sites such as the Enterprise Business Park, Kraft General Foods, Proctor and Gamble, and Greentree Shopping Center, among others. In northern Dover, importantly, McKee-Saulsbury Road (SR 15) connects to Scarborough Road for a direct connection to State Route 1 (SR1).

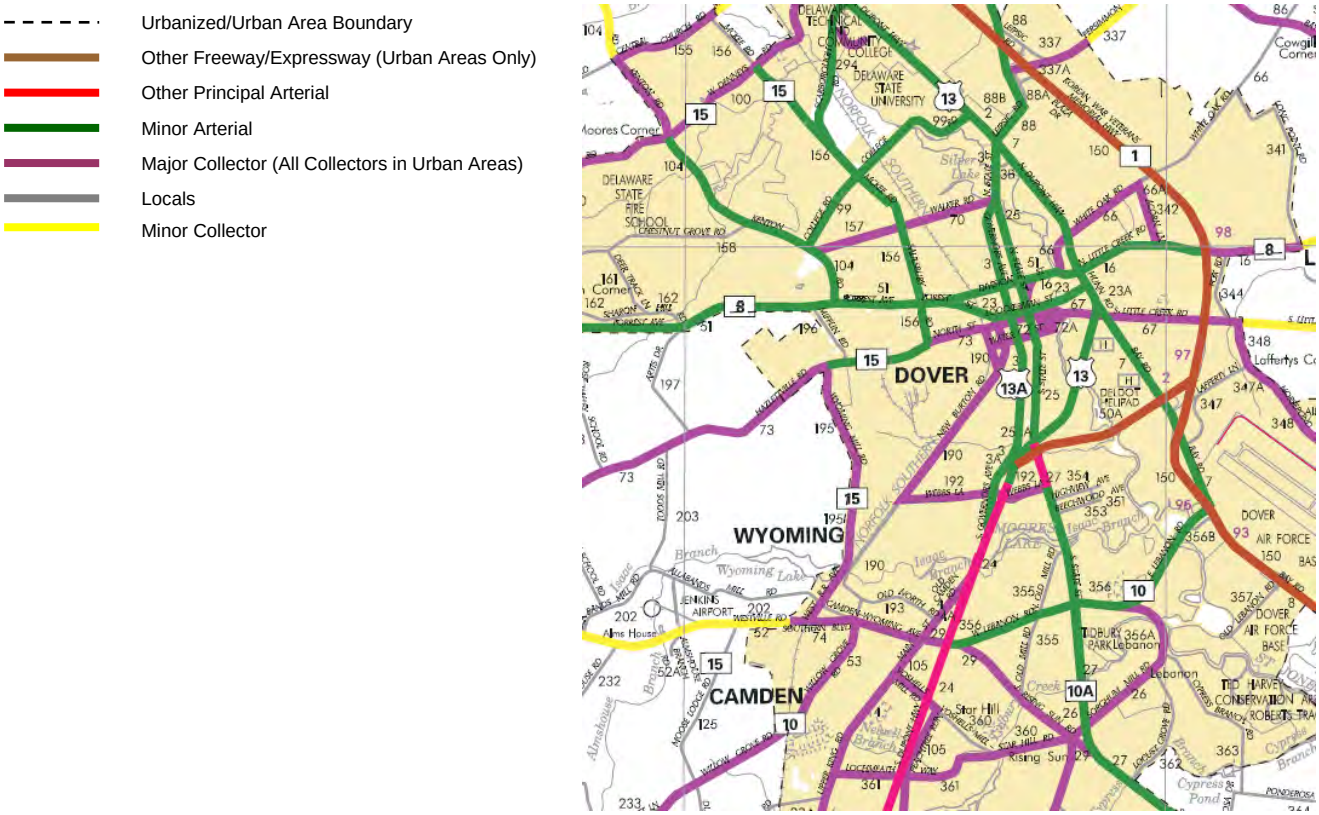

Figure II-6: Functional Classification Map
(Approved December 28, 2005
by the Federal Highway Administration)

According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the function of a minor arterial is to interconnect other principal arterials and higher classification roads, to provide access to smaller developed areas and to link cities and towns. To the north of the study area SR 15 handles this function well. However, within the study area Saulsbury Road does not provide a through connection; it disperses traffic onto lower classification roadways such as collectors and local streets rather than providing a connecting link to other principal arterials such as US 13 that are in the study area. Due to the lack of a continuous roadway facility for traffic on the Saulsbury Road corridor, this traffic must make circuitous travel movements either around Eden Hill Farm to the east or around Schutte Park to the west using lower order collector and local roadways.

Based on license plate survey studies done for the West Dover Connector project, approximately one-third of this traffic does not have an origin or destination on these local streets and instead is traffic destined for US 13. This through traffic creates conflicts in the use and function of the local roadway system. As a result, there is a need to provide a direct connection from Saulsbury Road to US 13 for through traffic movements.

Residential, school and business interests have expressed concerns regarding “cut-though” traffic using local neighborhood streets to access US 13. Traffic studies conducted for the West Dover Connector confirmed that roadways between New Burton Road and US 13 currently experience cut-through traffic (Figure II-7). Of the traffic heading south down Saulsbury Road and the traffic heading

east on North Street, **38%** use the following roadways, all of residential character, and either locals or collectors, to reach US 13:

1. Wyoming Avenue 17% (a local street)
2. Webbs Lane 8% (a collector)
3. Dover Street 7% (a local street)
4. Kesselring Avenue 5% (a local street)
5. Waples Avenue 1% (a local street)

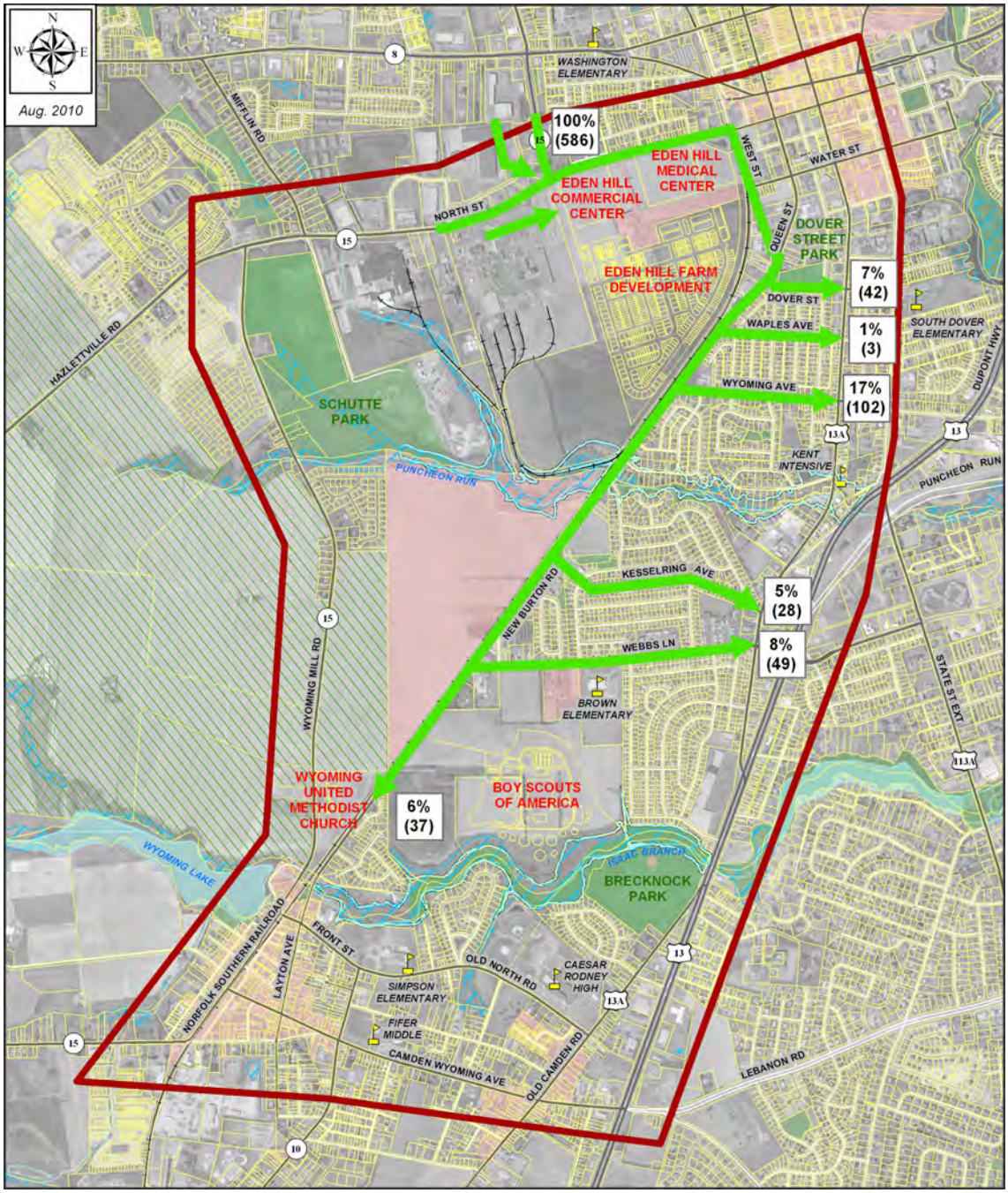

Figure II-7: Cut-Through Traffic Using New Burton Road

In addition to the above cut-through traffic, license plate studies also showed that **34%** of the overall southbound traffic traveling on Wyoming Mill Road cuts through to Main Street/US 13 using the following roadways (Figure II-8):

1. Old North Road: 12% (a local street)
2. Camden-Wyoming Avenue: 22% (a major collector which is a backbone of the Camden Historic District)

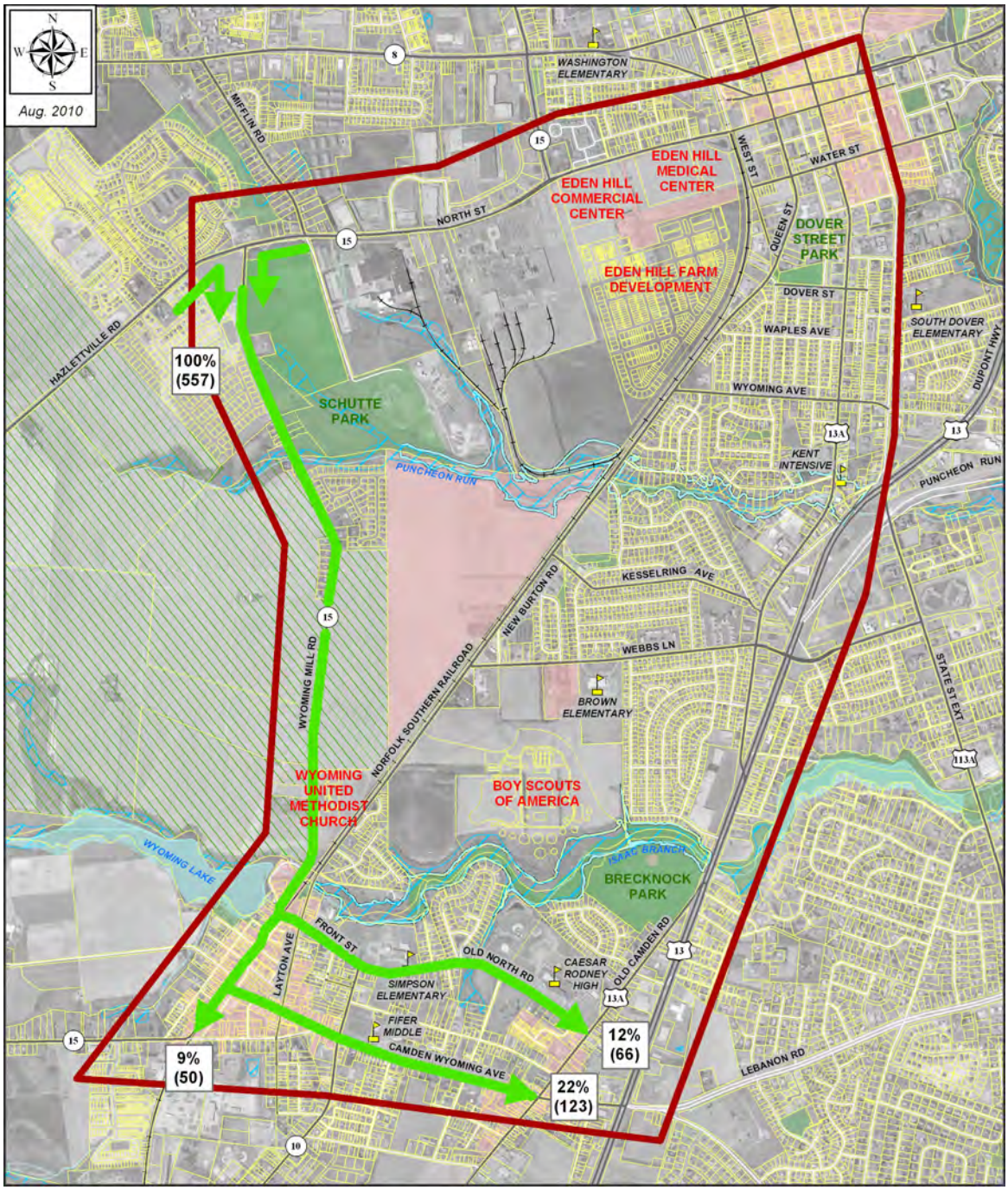

Figure II-8: Cut-Through Traffic Using Wyoming Mill Road

Thus, there is a need to reduce through traffic volumes using lower classification roadways in the study area to access US 13.

As growth and development continues on the west side of Dover, through and local traffic conflicts will worsen and the need to provide the appropriate roadway connectivity in the street grid system will increase. Within the study area, future development of large undeveloped land parcels west of New Burton Road is likely given that this area is located within Kent County's Growth Zone. Access and connectivity will be needed for traffic generated by future development of these parcels.

In addition to roadway connectivity issues, circulation for residents and businesses across the Norfolk Southern Railroad is restricted by the limited number of railroad crossings in and near the study area. Within the Town of Wyoming, two at-grade crossings of the railroad have been closed (the Third Street crossing and the Broad Street crossing), thus eliminating two crossing options and affecting mobility across the railroad. Within the study area on New Burton Road/West Street, the most immediate southernmost crossing location is at Front Street, and the immediate northernmost crossing location is at North Street. The distance between these crossings is approximately 2.9 miles, limiting efficient traffic circulation in the study area across the Norfolk Southern Railroad. This great distance adds travel time and length to trips trying to reach origins or destinations on either side of the railroad. Thus, there is a need to provide additional circulation across the Norfolk Southern Railroad.

To summarize, with existing and forecast traffic congestion and the expectation of continued growth in the greater Dover area and in the study area, several transportation needs have been identified to address deficiencies in system linkage and continuity:

- A direct connection to US 13 for through traffic;
- Reduced cut-through traffic on lower classification roads;
- Access for traffic generated by future development in the study area; and,
- Improved circulation across the Norfolk Southern Railroad.

iv. Emergency Service Accessibility

The lack of travel options across the Norfolk Southern Railroad limits the options available to emergency service personnel, especially in accessing the hospital from points west of the railroad, as the hospital lies to the east of the railroad. The distance between the northernmost and the nearest southern at-grade crossings in the study area is approximately 2.9 miles. This distance limits efficient traffic circulation in the study area across the Norfolk Southern Railroad. As a result, time and distance for some emergency service trips (fire, police, and rescue trips to the hospital) are lengthened. These conditions indicate a need to improve emergency service accessibility across the Norfolk Southern Railroad.

v. Safety

Rail Crossings

Of the total at-grade railroad crossings in Kent County (28), four of the at-grade crossings in the study area are ranked high in terms of Federal Railroad Administration collision prediction value: the at-grade crossing on Southern Boulevard ranks 4th, the at-grade crossing on North Street ranks 7th, the at-grade crossing at Camden-Wyoming Avenue ranks 8th and the at-grade crossing at Front Street ranks 11th, in terms of highest collision prediction values. As development continues in the greater Dover area and the level of rail and vehicular traffic grows, safety at rail crossings in the study area will become an even greater concern. Delaware Code Title 17 Highways indicates that any new railroad crossing on state highways must be grade-separated. A grade-separated crossing of Norfolk Southern Railroad will significantly improve safety for multiple travel modes such as motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.

Intersections

Generally speaking, the probability of crashes increases with the volume of turning movements at intersections. Accident data for the three-year period (1/2007 to 12/2009) indicate that Saulsbury Road at North Street has a significant number of crashes (31 crashes). Within the last several years, this signalized intersection was reconfigured from a "T" configuration to a four-leg alignment with the new intersection approach serving only the Eden Hill Farm residential development. Since this approach only provides access into the Eden Hill Farm residential development and does not provide a through connection to the network of streets and highways in the study area, there are and will be heavy turning movements which are a contributing factor to crashes at this intersection. As traffic volumes at this intersection will increase in the future with continued growth and development in the greater Dover area, this intersection will continue to experience high crash potential in the future due to heavy turning movements.

Roadways

Traveler safety can be affected on a roadway by the composition of traffic (through traffic and local traffic), the configuration of roadways, and the presence of intersecting streets and driveways. When through and local traffic mix, conflicts can occur as the former is trying to move through the network while local traffic is navigating within the network, making turns specifically to access land uses adjacent to a roadway. Differences in travel speed between through and local traffic can also create conflicts. As described under B.iii, the separation of through from local traffic and the distribution of that traffic to a hierarchy of streets and highways are desirable. A roadway with limited intersections and driveways minimizes potential conflict for through travelers and provides for efficient travel. In contrast, a roadway with frequent driveways and intersections introduces traffic movements to and from those access points that can create conflict with mainline or through traffic.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

Within the study area, a need has been identified to better support bicycle and pedestrian travel modes and to improve safety for pedestrian and bicycle travel. The lack of continuous pedestrian facilities and the lack of compatible shoulder widths, bicycle lanes and multi-use trails, can foster unsafe travel conditions. Parks, schools, and other community facilities are not connected by facilities that provide for safe and convenient travel by pedestrians and bicyclists. As stated in the City of Dover Comprehensive Plan Update, "From the People-For the People" (2003, amended 2005), and reiterated in the recent 2008 Comprehensive Plan, bikeways and pedestrian ways along collector and arterial streets in Dover are fragmented. The Plan notes that there are some "Share the Road" signs posted to increase motorists' awareness of the presence of bicyclists and pedestrians. The Plan states that the City of Dover lacks a completely interconnected transportation system; however, the city now requires that sidewalks be constructed or, as an alternate to sidewalks, a paved, multi-use path may be provided through a waiver process.

The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the MPO for the West Dover Connector study area, is in the process of developing a Regional Bicycle Plan for its MPO region within central Delaware. The plan will identify existing bicycle facilities within the region as well as opportunities for future bicycle trails, lanes and other bicycle facilities. Work on the plan began in the fall of 2009; the plan is expected to be released early 2011.

In the West Dover Connector study area, there is a multi-use path on the south side of North Street between Wyoming Mill Road and the Norfolk Southern Railroad. Eden Hill Farm is being developed with a multi-use path along the site's perimeter. A stated priority of the Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee of the Dover City Council is to have a bicycle route and facility established within the study area to connect Schutte Park to Brecknock Park as part of a proposed Capitol Bike

Belt. This priority points to the need to develop a transportation improvement that arises from the West Dover Connector as a bicycle route to facilitate this connection.

DelDOT prepared a Delaware Bicycle Facility Master Plan in October of 2005 in order to define and implement a statewide system of designated, on-road bicycle facilities. The Master Plan identifies a hierarchy of bikeways to account for mobility needs including statewide bicycle routes, regional bicycle routes and connector bicycle routes, as described below. From that effort, Bicycle Maps were developed for each county, including Kent County. A number of these bikeways are present within the study area according to the March 2008 map for Kent County displayed on Figure II-9.

- Statewide Bicycle Routes: These provide north-south connections between counties and between Maryland and Pennsylvania. These routes provide crossings over Interstate 95 and the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. Portions of Delaware Bicycle Route 1 are within the study area.
    - Within the study area, Delaware Bicycle Route 1 follows State Route 15 north toward the town of Wyoming, passing through the core of the town on Railroad Avenue West. The route remains on State Route 15 north of Wyoming following Wyoming Mill Road. Bicycle Route 1 meets the western outskirts of Dover and proceeds east on Hazlettville Road before heading north on Saulsbury Road (State Route 15).
- Regional Bicycle Routes: These routes provide direct connections between municipalities and major activity centers. Two regional bicycle routes are present slightly north of and south of the study area.
    - Route K-3 is an east-west 24-mile regional bicycle route north of the study area which travels on State Route 8 through Dover to State Route 15. The east-west route connects the City of Dover to the Maryland border to the west with the Little Creek Wildlife Area and Delaware Bay to the east.
    - Route K-4 is an east-west 16-mile regional bicycle route south of the study area which travels entirely on State Route 10 from the Maryland border through Camden and Wyoming to US Route 113 in the vicinity of Dover Air Force Base. This bicycle route provides direct access to Delaware Bicycle Route 1 in the towns of Camden and Wyoming.
- Recreational Connectors: These routes provide connections to local activity centers and recreational centers. Within the study area, there are a number of recreational connectors.
    - New Burton Road between Water Street in Dover and Wyoming Mill Road.
    - US Route 13 within the study area.
    - Hazlettville Road between Westville Road and Wyoming Mill Road.
    - North Street between Saulsbury Road and West Street.
    - Camden-Wyoming Avenue between Wyoming Mill Road and Southern Boulevard.

With the presence of statewide and regional bicycle routes and recreational connectors in the study area, bicyclists can be expected to be on roadways within the study area pointing to the need to develop a transportation improvement that arises from the West Dover Connector as a bikeway.

Further supporting the need to improve travel for bicycle and pedestrian modes within the study area is the recent adoption of a “Complete Streets” policy by DelDOT. The Complete Streets policy’s purpose is to ensure that DelDOT system modifications are routinely planned, designed, constructed, operated and maintained in a way that enables safe and efficient access for all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motorists). A transportation improvement that arises from the West Dover Connector project will need to be consistent with DelDOT’s Complete Streets policy.

In addition, the West Dover Connector project should be consistent with FHWA Livability Initiative. The initiative's aim is to improve the relationship between infrastructure and community needs, specifically to improve a community's 'livability,' to enhance the environmental sensitivity of roads and bridges and to help develop multi-modal transportation options. By improving travel for bicyclists and pedestrians and connecting parks to each other and to residential areas, a transportation improvement that arises from the West Dover Connector project will support sustainable growth and increase transportation choices.

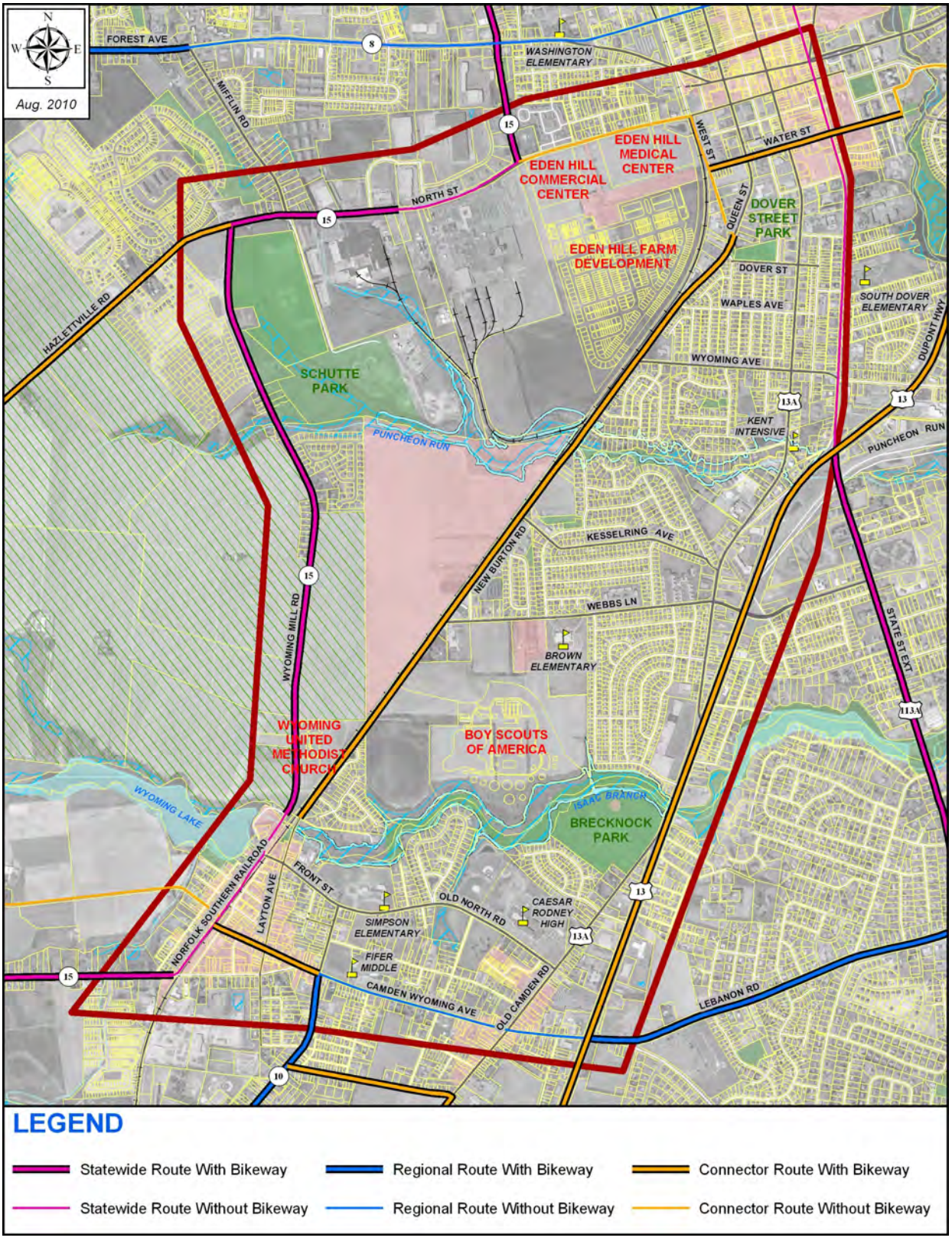

Figure II-9: Kent County Bicycle Routes

vi. Previously Established and Current Planning Context

This section describes the planning context for the West Dover Connector that is in place. A transportation improvement that arises from this project should be consistent with the previously established and current planning context.

Various descriptions of a West Dover Connector (or Saulsbury Road extension to New Burton Road) have been part of the City of Dover's comprehensive plans dating back to the 1960's and continuing through the 2003 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Dover.

The most recent 2008 City of Dover Comprehensive Plan (adopted February 9, 2009 with final November 23, 2009 amendments) supports the West Dover Connector as a recommendation under the plan's third goal of "Develop and Expand Alternate Modes of Transportation," and emphasized the continued collaboration of DelDOT, the Dover/Kent County MPO, private property owners, elected officials, neighborhood associations, and school organizations on the plans for the connector roadway.

The Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee of the Dover City Council identified the extension of Saulsbury Road as its number one priority on its list of unfunded transportation projects to be studied in calendar year 2003 and it has remained on this priority list over time. In 2010, the Committee identified the West Dover Connector Project on its list of priorities for top transportation projects.

Developing a West Dover Connector transportation improvement is also consistent with the planning of the Dover/Kent County MPO. In 2004, the Dover/Kent County MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) recommended studying the extension of Saulsbury Road due to persistent and fast-paced growth that contributes to existing and forecast future traffic congestion in the area. The most recent Dover/Kent County MPO's LRTP, adopted in January 28, 2009, identified the West Dover Connector Project as a Committed Project with completion by 2020 and the project is contained in the MPO's current 2011 – 2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and is shown as a Committed Project.

Finally, six Principles of Livability were developed in 2009 to be implemented through initiatives of the U.S Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Transportation (USDOT) and the Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). These principles are aimed to support the growth and development of existing communities by coordinating federal investment in housing, transportation, water infrastructure and land use planning through planning grants to metropolitan areas. FHWA conducts activities to support USDOT's role in the Livability Initiative. Transportation investments such as the West Dover Connector will enhance the livability of the west side of Dover by enhancing access to housing, jobs and other opportunities, such as parks, and by providing for increased transportation choice by increasing safety and providing facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.