

# Seventh Avenue at West 23rd Street

The intersection of Seventh Avenue and West 23rd Street has had one of the city's highest rates of crashes involving pedestrians, including many senior citizens. Truck traffic, critical to businesses in Chelsea and the Fashion District, is heavy in the area. West 23rd Street and Seventh Avenue also have heavy pedestrian volumes and traffic signals allowed turning drivers and pedestrians to proceed simultaneously.

As part of the Safe Streets for Seniors program, DOT worked with Manhattan Community Board 4 and other

community stakeholders to develop a set of safety improvements. Of specific concern were visually impaired pedestrians accessing the nearby VISIONS service organization. DOT worked with VISIONS staff and clients to ensure that their needs were met.

In the completed project, DOT installed two planted pedestrian safety islands on Seventh Avenue, increasing the visibility of pedestrians and shortening crossing distances. To reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians and turning vehicles, a left turn lane was placed

between the island and the curb. Left turns were prohibited altogether from 23rd Street (westbound) to Seventh Avenue (southbound), eliminating the simultaneous conflicts of crossing pedestrians and oncoming traffic. To help people with visual impairments, DOT also installed Audible Pedestrian Signals (APS) at all four corners, and worked with stakeholders in the community to select the audio cues.

Designed with a focus on the needs of seniors and the visually impaired, intersection safety improvements led to a 61% reduction in crashes causing injuries.

Left-turn signal reduced conflicts between turning vehicles and pedestrians in crosswalk

Safety islands improve visibility and shorten crossing distances

Audible signals let visually-impaired pedestrians know when it is safe to cross

Facing south on 7th Avenue between West 23rd and West 24th Streets

- Total crashes with injuries down **61%** [statistically significant]
- Crashes with injuries to vehicle occupants down **77%** [statistically significant]
- Crashes with injuries to pedestrians down **68%**
- The average delay for a vehicle to clear the intersection declined by **7 seconds**

Average Vehicular Delay (seconds)

Location	Before	After
23rd Street Eastbound	41.5	34.0
23rd Street Westbound	23.5	31.4
7th Avenue Southbound	22.1	11.9
Overall Intersection	28.0	20.9

Crashes with Injuries  
7th Avenue at West 23rd Street

	Before* (three previous years)			After
<b>Total Crashes with Injuries</b>	10	15	10	4.5
<b>Number of Crashes with Injuries to:</b>				
<b>Motor Vehicle Occupants</b>	4	5	4	1
<b>Pedestrians</b>	5	9	5	2
<b>Bicyclists</b>	1	1	1	1.5

\*Before columns show the crash history for each of the three years immediately prior to project implementation. After column shows number of crashes since implementation (through May 2013) at annual rate. See page 46 for further information on crash data source and analysis methodology. The sum of the three specific categories may not equal "Total Crashes with Injuries" because some crashes involved injuries in multiple categories.