

Virtual Public Workshop

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is a DeIDOT public workshop?

Public workshops serve as a way for DeIDOT to explain upcoming projects to local communities. They are also a way for DeIDOT to hear the opinions of residents, businesses, and elected officials.

What is a “virtual” public workshop?

A virtual public workshop is a Web page that includes information about a proposed transportation project with an added bonus: the public is able to submit a project-specific questionnaire or survey directly online.

What is a “live” public workshop?

The virtual public workshop replaces or is in addition to the tradition of live public workshops. At a live workshop, people drive to a location close to the proposed project, where they can review material such as display boards, pamphlets, etc. Also the DeIDOT project manager, other DeIDOT staff, and outside firms talk to constituents and answer questions about the project. Attendees have the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions. They also can fill out a public comment form, which they can hand in at the workshop or mail in later.

What is included in a virtual public workshop?

The project’s description, design plans, detour routes, and current photographs (as available) will be posted on DeIDOT’s Web site with the added feature where the public can submit project-related comments online.

The project manager and other staff review all comments. As much as possible, there will be a multimedia component where a DeIDOT representative will explain the project through an audio or video feature (all created in-house). There is also the future possibility of making the virtual workshop interactive.

Is a virtual public workshop more convenient?

Yes! Project information is more accessible online than a onetime workshop. A typical live public workshop is limited to the hours of 4 to 7 p.m. on a weekday. The virtual public workshops are a more convenient way to learn about upcoming transportation projects. Constituents can read and review the design plans 24 hours per day, 7 days per week from the comfort of their personal computer. Plus, there is no need to worry about inclement weather or a power outage forcing the workshop to be rescheduled.

While there will be deadlines to submit comments at www.deldot.gov, constituents will have several days to several weeks to review the proposals before the due date.

How is this cost efficient?

This thrifty feature at www.deldot.gov will save thousands of dollars per year because it replaces often sparsely attended live workshops. DeIDOT held about 50 live workshops in 2008.

Cost savings include:

- Staff and outside firm time
- Facility rental fees
- Fuel
- Less printed materials
- Smaller carbon footprint because staff and community members aren't driving to a location; less printed materials; etc.

What types of projects will have the virtual public workshop feature?

This new feature will apply to projects on a case-by-case basis. However, most smaller road and bridge projects would have virtual workshops instead of live ones. Live workshops in facilities closer to higher-profile projects like Indian River Inlet Bridge and Route 301 will continue, with the possible addition of a coinciding virtual workshop. These meetings are more popular and better attended, warranting the expense of a live workshop.

How will I know when there is a live or virtual public workshop?

DeIDOT informs the public about upcoming projects in many different ways:

- DeIDOT Web site
- Zip code mailings
- Door-to-door visits
- Neighborhood postings
- Targeted meetings with stake holders
- Press releases
- Newspaper advertisements

What if I don't have Internet access?

Those who do not have Internet access may call DeIDOT at (800) 652-5600 or (302) 760-2080 to learn about projects and ask questions. Comments will still be accepted by postal mail addressed to DeIDOT Public Relations, P.O. Box 778, Dover DE 19903. Businesses and residents directly impacted by projects will continue to receive notification by postal mail.