

301 US 301 Project Development



Each project DeIDOT undertakes is evaluated for its ability to meet project purpose and need, project goals and objectives and engineering standards, while being responsive to public and environmental resource agency input.

Public Involvement

Community Participation

In addition to the public workshops, DeIDOT has conducted numerous meetings with communities, businesses and individuals to provide information and listen to comments and concerns.

The Project Office has been open since early July three-days a week at differing times to be "customer convenient". It has been beneficial for the general public and the Project Team. The Office has been visited by nearly 450 people and serves as a meeting place, a place to ask questions, provide assistance and obtain information.

A comprehensive user friendly Project Website has been created as another means to communicate with the public. The site's value is demonstrated by its use. As of January 2006 the site has had over 1,000,000 hits.

Nearly 2,500 people attended the June, September and December Public Workshops.

Nearly 2,000 people provided written comments on the alternatives and almost 7,000 people signed petitions in support or opposition to various alternatives.

The Project Team has held approximately 30 community meetings. Each community meeting attracted between 30 and 200 people. The communities that the Project Team has met with are:

- Airmont
- Midland
- Chesapeake Meadow
- Dickerson Farms
- Fox Hunter Crossing
- Grande View Farms
- Lea Earra Farms
- Matapeake
- Middletown Village
- Mount Hope
- Post and Rail Farms
- Springmill
- Summit Bridge Farms
- Summit Farms
- Summit Pond
- The Legends
- Westside Hunt
- Back Creek (to be scheduled)

Major Community Themes

In addition to the issues being address at these workshops, the Project Team has heard the following themes:

- The situation is bad and we need relief as soon as possible.
- Something definitely needs to be done to address congestion, safety and truck traffic.
- Impact proposed communities, rather than existing communities.
- Separate local and through traffic and keep long distance truckers off our local roads.
- The more direct the route, the more likely it will attract through traffic and the less costly it will be.
- Impacts on people and existing communities should be given the same consideration as Impacts on the environment.
- Using the existing US 301 alignment will divide Middletown and isolate existing communities from the rest of Middletown.
- An elevated highway near an existing community causes unacceptable noise, light and visual impacts.
- Every effort should be made to avoid impacts to community facilities such as Summit Airport, schools and churches.
- Whatever you do, please fix the curve just south of the Summit Bridge.
- If you direct all traffic to SR 1, you will overload SR 1.
- The SR 1/I-95 interchange needs to be fixed before this new road is built.
- It's not fair to make those who had nothing to do with creating the problem bear the brunt of the negative impacts of the new road.
- If the new road is a toll road, will you be able to control traffic that will want to avoid the toll?
- The public outreach has been great but will our voices make a difference?

Major Resource Agency Themes

- Alignments which have less impacts to high-quality wetlands are viewed more favorably than those with greater impacts to high quality wetlands.
- Alignments which have greater impacts to Delaware's rare and endangered species, their habitat, or natural areas are viewed less favorably than those which avoid or have less impacts.
- Alignments that directly impact Delaware's historic and cultural properties or National Register properties are viewed less favorably than those that avoid these resources.
- Alignments which have impacts to active farmland, prime agricultural soils, agriculture districts or properties under easement are viewed less favorably than those with little or no impacts.

Resource Agency Coordination

DeIDOT meets regularly with the agencies with interest or regulatory authority over environmental resources in the project area. The agencies work together to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to their respective resources. Agencies include:

- The US Army Corps of Engineers:
 - ▶ Regulate environmental protection, navigation, flood control, disaster response, and military construction.
 - ▶ Work toward a national goal of "no net loss of wetlands." The Corps works to restore existing wetlands, or to create new ones.
 - ▶ Issue permits for discharge of dredged or fill material into navigable waters at specified disposal sites.
 - ▶ Make decisions on whether to grant, deny or set conditions on permits to construct in wetlands, The Corps is required to consider "all factors in the public interest," including economic development and environmental protection.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) develops and enforces regulations that protect human health and the environment.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats.
- The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) protects and manages Delaware's vital natural resources and habitats, protects public health and safety, and provides quality outdoor recreation.
- The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) works to protect and preserve Delaware's cultural resources. They are concerned about impacts to Delaware's historic and archaeological resources.
- The Delaware Department of Agriculture works to sustain and promote the viability of food, fiber, and agricultural industries in Delaware. In part, this is accomplished by working to preserve and protect farmland through the Farmland Preservation Program, agricultural districts and easements.

Agency Meetings

Resource Agency Meetings	Meeting Dates	
Meeting	April 14	
Cultural Resource Field View with SHPO	April 25	
Meeting and Field View	May 23	
Meeting with SHPO	June 8	
Field View with the Corps of Engineers	June 15	
Field View with EPA and the Corps of Engineers	June 23	
Meeting with SHPO	June 29	
Meeting and Field View with Agencies	July 12	
Field View with the Corps of Engineers	July 19	
Meeting with SHPO	July 28	
Field View with DNREC	August 8	
Field View with the Corps of Engineers	August 9	
Meeting with SHPO	August 10	2
Jurisdictional Determination Review with the Corps of Engineers	August 19	0
Meeting and Field View with Agencies	August 23	5
Meeting with DNREC	August 31	
Field View with Agencies	September 8	
Meeting with SHPO	September 13	
Meeting with DNREC	September 22	
Presentation to Agencies (PLUS)	October 5	
Fieldview with SHPO and New Castle County	November 4	
Meeting with Agencies	November 8	
Jurisdictional Determination Review with the Corps of Engineers	November 9	
Potential Wetland Mitigation Sites Review	November 16	
Meeting with Agencies	December 8	
Meeting with DNREC	December 8	
Jurisdictional Determination Review with the Corps of Engineers	December 21	
Jurisdictional Determination Review with the Corps of Engineers	January 5	2
Jurisdictional Determination Review with the Corps of Engineers	January 10	0
Meeting with Agencies	January 17	0
Meeting with DNREC	January 25	6