



DELAWARE

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS RELEASE

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June 16, 2005

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Route 301 Project Directive: Get It Done Workshops set for June 20, 21

Middletown – The Department of Transportation (DelDOT) is moving forward with an aggressive public process that will result in the selection of a final alternative for an improved U.S. Route 301 by the end of this year.

To help develop, evaluate and select a final alternative for an improved U.S. 301 south of the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal, DelDOT is holding the first of several sets of public workshops on June 20 and 21 in Middletown.

- On Monday, June 20, the workshop will be held at Middletown Fire Hall, West Green and South Scott streets.
- On Tuesday, June 21, the workshop will be held at Brick Mill Elementary School, 378 Brick Mill Road.
- Both workshops are scheduled from 4-7 p.m. and will cover the same information. Brief presentations are scheduled for 4:15 p.m. and repeated at 5:15 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. Informational boards and other elements will elaborate on the alternatives suggested.

The purpose of the project is to address existing congestion and deal with significant safety issues along the 301 Corridor. In the past nine years, traffic on 301/896 has grown by as much as 50 percent south of the C & D Canal, and as much as 30 percent of that traffic is generated by tractor-trailers. Meanwhile, between October 1999 and September 2004, there were 17 fatalities and 1,200 reportable crashes.

U.S. 301 has also emerged as a regional, through-traffic alternative to I-95 between Richmond, Va. and Wilmington, Del.

"This corridor has been studied and analyzed so we have good information to start with," said Mark Tudor, DelDOT Project Director for the 301 project. "It's time to act now. Alternative corridors that may be available today to address project needs will become more costly, with significantly greater impacts, if the decision on this project is delayed. As a department, we have a mandate from DelDOT Secretary Nathan Hayward and Gov. Ruth Ann Minner to 'Get it Done.' The Project Team is committed to working with the public to determine the best alignment for a new Route 301."

Selection of a final alternative is expected within the next six months. With that goal in mind, the public's involvement is vital. More workshops will be held later this year.

Although the US 301 Project Development Phase is just beginning, it builds upon a number of planning efforts for the US 301 Corridor over the past 40 years. The two most recent efforts occurred in the 1990s. The US 301

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Corridor Study sought an improved connection from US Route 301 at the Maryland/Delaware border, west of Middletown to I-95. As a result of this study, DelDOT announced that the Ridge Alternative, south of the C & D Canal, and the existing Route 896 corridor north of the Canal would be the location for the advancement of any future highway improvements. The Greater Route 301 MIS (Major Investment Study) was designed to evaluate additional opportunities for regional transportation planning and the integration of transportation and land use to address the movement of people and goods. The MIS recommended east-west capacity improvements south of the canal to get to SR 1 and recommended evaluation of capacity improvements in the 301 corridor both along the existing Route 301 alignment and a Ridge Alternative corridor. This resulted in renewed efforts to preserve land along the Ridge Alternative for future highway improvements.

The 301 Project Development effort will build upon those previous studies.

DelDOT is making every effort to keep the public informed about the 301 Project Development. A Web site, www.us301.org and hot line at 866-485-9988 has been established for the public.

Interested persons are invited to express their views in writing, giving reasons for support of or in opposition to, the proposed project. **Comments will be received during the workshop or can be mailed to DelDOT Public Relations, P.O. Box 778, Dover, DE 19903 by July 21.** For further information contact Public Relations at 1-800-652-5600 (in DE) or 302-760-2080 or write to the above address.

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