



STATE OF DELAWARE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
800 BAY ROAD
P.O. BOX 778
DOVER, DELAWARE 19903

SHAILEN P. BHATT
SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Natalie Barnhart,
Director of Transportation Solutions

VIA: Don Weber,
Chief Traffic Engineer 

FROM: Mark Luszcz, 
Assistant Chief Traffic Engineer

DATE: August 28, 2012

SUBJECT: Shared Lane Use Marking Policy

DeIDOT considers and implements when possible appropriate bicycle facilities on all projects. Larger projects such as widening projects, new alignments, new property access points, etc., typically include either a separate bicycle lane, shared use path, or both. On maintenance type projects such as re-paving, the opportunities for new facilities are limited. Within the existing roadway limits, roadway striping modifications are investigated, in addition to signing modifications. Successful recent examples of this latter category include Glasgow Avenue in the Glasgow area and U.S. 13 through Dover.

We have received several requests to include the new "shared lane marking," also known as the "sharrow," on existing roads and within the limits of re-paving projects. We are currently considering and implementing Sharrows in some downtown, urban corridors that include on-street parking. However, at this time, DeIDOT is opposed to installing Sharrows on roads without parallel parking. We are hopeful the bicycling community in Delaware will understand the following reasons for our position.



We have reviewed the research on these markings, and it was primarily conducted in downtown locations that included on-street parking. At this point in time, we will consider using the sharrow in these situations. DeIDOT will soon install Sharrows in downtown Dover as part of a re-paving project. The City of Wilmington has installed a few on Market Street already. Despite the allowable 35 mph posted speed limit in some applications, we are not aware of any research related to Sharrows on suburban corridors without on-street parking. We have concerns that lack of public awareness and lack of research will lead to unintended consequences, such as sideswipe vehicle crashes, if Sharrows are applied in areas beyond those for which research was undertaken.

Since Delaware drivers are not yet familiar with Sharrows, DeIDOT is working on a public relations effort related to Sharrows, to help educate the public. In the research we reviewed, a significant number of drivers and bicyclists surveyed did not understand the intent of the sharrow. Many thought it indicated an exclusive bike lane while others thought it meant that bikes have priority.

At this time we will consider the installation of Sharrows primarily in downtown areas with on-street parking. Once Delaware bicyclists and drivers become familiar with these installations and after public relations efforts take hold, we can consider more widespread installation of these markings. Once public relations efforts have been made, we plan to identify a suburban corridor without parking to use as a pilot project for Sharrows that we can monitor.

ML: sb