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## Almost 800 Residents Attend Route 301 Workshops

By: Mark Tudor

**Middletown** – The two U.S. Route 301 Public Workshops held June 20 and 21 drew 784 interested residents, including 412 on Monday and 372 on Tuesday. All of us at the Department of Transportation (DelDOT) were extremely pleased at the turnout because DelDOT is committed to moving forward with an aggressive public process that will result in the selection of a final alternative for an improved U.S. Route 301.

To help develop, evaluate and select the final alternative, DelDOT needs public input on the five main alternatives (two have two options each) presented at both workshops. While this first set of workshops is concluded, we encourage residents to continue to provide comments. **The deadline to comment is July 21.**

Residents can view the alternatives and provide comments by:

- Stopping by the U.S. 301 Project Development office in the Middletown Square Shopping Center, 723 North Broad St. It opens July 7. Hours are Monday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Thursday from 3-7 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. At the office, the previous Workshop boards will be on display along with other information.
- Visiting the project Web site at [www.us301.org](http://www.us301.org). Project information and the boards from the Workshop can be viewed.
- After viewing the alternatives, residents can comment via the Web site, by calling 866-485-9988, e-mailing [dot-public-relations@state.de.us](mailto:dot-public-relations@state.de.us), or writing to DelDOT Public Relations, Attn: U.S. 301 Project Development, P.O. Box 778, Dover, DE 19903.

Turnout both nights was remarkable. Residents began converging on the workshops as early as 3:30 p.m. and a steady flow followed right up to 7 p.m. each night. While each attendee had specific questions about how their property or business might be affected, the general indication was that Route 301 needs improvements.

We always learn something new at workshops, especially where we get such an incredible turnout. We are going through all the comments now and I know we'll have an even better sense what direction we need to go once that process is complete.

The project schedule includes another set of Public Workshops in September when the initial alternatives are narrowed down and more detail is developed. Other workshops are scheduled for November and January.

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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.

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