

Five Points Transportation Study Virtual Open House Q&A

- Is there a construction timetable set for New Road Canary Creek bridge replacement project?

Current Phase: Design and Planning

Project Timeline: Construction Start Date: 2024

2020 Virtual Meeting is available on the project website:

<https://deldot.gov/projects/index.shtml?dc=details&projectNumber=T201907301>

- Can you explain the proposed Rt 9/Minos Conaway improvement?

The project will consist of the installation of a southbound right-turn lane on Minos Conaway Road approaching Route 9, keeping stop sign as the primary control. A project is proposed in the FY 21 - 26 CTP

- Is there a preliminary design plan prepared for the Nassau Road to Old Orchard road connection? If so, will it be displayed on website?

Design is progressing. A public workshop is planned for Summer 2020. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2022. Yes, the plans will be updated on the project website:

<https://deldot.gov/projects/index.shtml?dc=details&projectNumber=T201609601>

- In the Minos Conaway grade separation plan there was a proposed trail head located West of Rt1 at the Lewes/Georgetown trail. Is that trail head still part of the plan? If so, why is the trail head not located East of Rt1 where parking already exists.

The trailhead is still proposed at the location west of the Nassau Bridge across from the Lewes Senior Center. This location was selected because we had the land to build the facility adjacent to the new road alignment. There is not enough land to build a facility on the east side of the bridge. What space is available is proposed for future development by the property owner.

- Please explain the Federal approval of the CTP to be pursued this fall. I thought the CTP was funded by the DE Transportation Trust Fund.

The development of the Capital Transportation Program (CTP) is governed and regulated by both state and federal code. Per federal regulation 23 CFR 450.216 (a)-(o), each State is required to develop a Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Delaware refers to the STIP as the CTP. This plan is developed in cooperation with Delaware's three Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), WILMAPCO, Dover/Kent MPO, and Salisbury/Wicomico MPO, along with Sussex County. These entities, in turn, gather input from their local constituents so that the adopted CTP is the result of a grassroots effort. The latest federal transportation spending authorization, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Pub. L. No. 114-94) requires each state to develop a STIP containing at least four years listing of projects. Though the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recognize only the first four years of the STIP, Delaware includes six years in order to accommodate a longer period of fiscal planning and management.

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- Is the Five Points construction project fully funded by the state or will it be influenced by state budget limitations going forward?

At this moment, the Five Points Transportation Study is funded through the Fiscal Year 2021. There is no way to know if the project will be impacted at some point, but right now DelDOT is maintaining schedules for all current capital projects.

- How can we get DelDOT to start another recommendation this year? I think it's important to start work on Recommendation D-2 (Study the feasibility of potential connections for walking and bicycling between existing neighborhoods, along streets, and to trails) now.

The Five Points Transportation Study Working Group has the opportunity to advise DelDOT and Sussex County regarding recommendations that should be advanced. That said, DelDOT is initiating an SR 1 Low-Stress Bikeway Study to identify bicycle routes along both sides of Route 1, along with opportunities to cross the highway. That study will play a critical role in providing better connections for walking and bicycling. In addition, Sussex County is requiring connections on a case by case basis for new developments and asking for connections to existing infrastructure if it is available.

- How far to the west on Route 24 will the four lanes extend?

Dualization of Route 24 will extend to west of the Love Creek Elementary School and Beacon Middle School.

- Will the 41 homes on Plantation Road that will be affected by widening the road receive compensation from DelDOT?

DelDOT provides compensation for any necessary property acquisitions based on an independent appraisal. DelDOT's Real Estate office will reach out to affected property owners well in advance to discuss the process.

- How will Saddle Ridge be affected by Route 24 going from four lanes at Love Creek Elementary School to two lanes outside the development? Will you put a traffic light at entrance to development? Turning left will be very difficult.

Route 24 is one lane in each direction with a center left-turn lane at the Saddle Ridge development. In the westbound direction, the right-most thru lane becomes a dedicated right turn lane into the Saddle Ridge development. The eastbound lanes widen to two lanes approximately 200' east of the development entrance. As such this location is not in a four-lane section. A traffic signal is not warranted at this location at this time based on existing and future traffic volumes.

- Is there any hope for retaining vestiges of rural character in the area, or are we inevitably becoming an urban center?

The Sussex County Comprehensive Plan was developed with the goal of preserving rural landscapes while still promoting a responsible level of growth. Detailed information on the comprehensive plan can be found on the County website.

- If a subdivision is proposed in or near a flood plain, such as one proposed in Mulberry Knoll near Arnell Creek, what does DelDOT do with the roads in and around the subdivision?

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All construction, whether it is a private development or a public roadway, must comply with applicable floodplain regulations.

- How do you see the traffic pattern change on Old Orchard Road once the Five Points intersection changes?

A detailed study of potential changes to the Five Points intersection itself has not yet been undertaken. It is a longer-term recommendation of the Five Points Transportation Study. However, a detailed study was conducted in 2019 to understand how two current DelDOT projects – the SR 1/Minos Conaway Road grade separation and the relocation of Old Orchard Road – will impact traffic in the area. The study, which can be found on the Five Points website, noted that most of the growth on study area roadways, including Old Orchard Road, will be due to new development rather than the change in travel patterns resulting from construction of those two DelDOT projects.

- Can Church street be closed at Rt. 9, so cars can't turn from Church Street onto Rt. 9? I believe the long-range plans call for Church St. to be closed, so do it now to enhance safety and traffic Flow.

Church Street will be closed to through traffic as part of the Plantation Road Phase 1 project.

- Will Minos Conaway be evaluated for future improvements ie bike lanes/paths and signage as further improvements are implemented in the corridor?

Yes, a study is proposed as recommendation C-7, which is to “study the feasibility of improving Minos Conaway Road with appropriate lane widths, shoulder widths, turn lanes, curvature, etc.” A curve compliance study was completed in February 2019 and signage improvements were implemented in March 2019. A preliminary concept is being considered as part of the Henlopen TID study.

- Has the final design been developed for Plantation Rd changes as they affect properties in Henlopen Landing? Henlopen Landing has been waiting for a plan that will restrict the use of Salt Marsh Blvd. Do you have an update?

Henlopen Landing has asked for Salt Marsh Boulevard to be restricted to public access. DelDOT is working with the community on that effort and it will be completed as part of the Plantation Road Phase 1 project.

- In the IMPLEMENTATION PLAN STATUS REPORT how do we correlate these items with the projects in the CTP?

Recommendations adopted by the Five Points Working Group that appear in the implementation plan have a comment section on the right-hand side that reflect their status. Any project that has been added to the Capital Transportation Plan (CTP) has a reference to it within the comments section. There were existing projects from the CTP that were developed prior to the Five Points Transportation Study that were included in Section A. These projects had already been moving forward but because they fell in the Five Points study area, were added as reference. Not all recommendations in the implementation plan need to be added to the CTP.

- Why is the Nassau School Project not mentioned in the list of projects? There is a preliminary plan to have a connector road from Route 1 to Route 9. Following up on the above - the Best property has been acquired towards Five Points improvements and includes the school.

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This would be part of the Plantation Road Phase 1 project, which is currently in design. Construction is expected to begin in 2022. The School is part of the Best property and DeDOT has conducted some minor updates including adding a new roof, adding cedar shake siding, and removing a bee colony from within the walls. DeDOT is working on a path forward with the State Historic Preservation Office regarding the future of the school.

- Why aren't all projects that say in progress or complete not on the DeDOT Project website?

A recommendation is different than a project. If the recommendation was an achievable objective that didn't require a full, stand alone project then we are able to complete the change or update more quickly with different funding mechanisms across different sections within DeDOT. Summary line items sometimes allow for funding other updates based on how their program is moving forward during any given year.

- What is the status of the widening of Plantation Road between Mulberry Knoll and Rt. 24?

Phase 1 of the Plantation Road project, between Route 9 to Robinsonville Road, is in design and moving to construction in 2022. Phase 2, between Robinsonville Road and Route 24, is currently in design. DeDOT is looking at the possibility of widening Plantation Road to four lanes as part of that design effort. As the preliminary design is developed, it will be brought to the public for input.

- For recommendation B-13 (Study alternatives to both meter and slow southbound traffic approaching Five Points), the implementation plan says Complete but I still think people are driving too fast. Isn't there anything else that can be done?

Unfortunately, DeDOT is seeing speeding up and down the state. We are working with State and local law enforcement efforts to try to address the problem. There are radar speed signs throughout the Route 1 corridor. However, Route 1 is a wide-open flat highway and without making significant changes to the character of the road, we will continue to see speeding. To continue to address this problem, DeDOT would like feedback from the public. We will be conducting a Safety Summit, which will be done virtually, and we ask that everyone attend and provide us with ideas that will help with this issue.

- A traffic signal is needed at Clay Road and Kings Highway. How long until we can get a signal there?

DeDOT has started a design concept at this location. We don't have a schedule yet, but we will be doing public outreach over the course of the next few months.

- So many recommendations are tied to the TID study. How does the TID affect the implementation of a recommendation?

Any of the Five Points Transportation Study elements that fall within the Henlopen TID will be coordinated with additions to the CTP.

- What initiatives are being undertaken by the County now related to Five Points?

As site plans come through the Sussex County pipeline, we are following the requirement in the Zoning Code to require interconnectivity within commercial developments and, on a case-by-case basis, for residential developments based on size and impacts to the area. Additionally, Sussex County and DeDOT are working to update their Memorandum of Understanding so that they can better coordinate land use and transportation decisions as they come up for review.

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- What is the County doing to promote interconnections between developments?

County Code provides limited opportunities to require interconnections between residential developments as a condition of approval. Emergency response access can provide additional connectivity if possible. The County is looking at strengthening requests, especially with adjoining parcels. DelDOT has regulations that require interconnectivity for State-maintained roads.

- What's the status of the extension of Mulberry Knoll Road? Is there a timetable for the construction of the extension of Mulberry Knoll Rd?

This project is currently being developed as a study to determine if the road can be extended north to Route 9. This was recommended as part of the Henlopen TID. The funding for this study will begin in Fiscal Year 2021. It is not part of the current CTP.

- What is the current status on the Henlopen TID? Is the county ready to adopt?

Details regarding the Henlopen TID financial requirements are still being ironed out between DelDOT and Sussex County. They hope to have the TID agreement on the County's agenda this fall.

- Will there be an overpass over Coastal Hwy from Rt 9 Eastbound? When would work start on the roundabout?

Recommendation E-1 of the Five Points Transportation Study includes study of a grade separation at Route 1 (Coastal Highway) and Route 9. Because of the high cost and significant property impacts associated with a potential grade separation, DelDOT is proceeding with smaller improvements first. The combined benefit of these improvements, including the roundabout that will be part of the Plantation Road Phase 1 project, is expected to allow the grade separation to be deferred for some time. Construction of the Plantation Road Phase 1 project is scheduled for 2022.