



# ***US 301 Project Development***

## **2008 BOND BILL EPILOGUE LANGUAGE**

### **Report to the General Assembly**

**Spur Road & Alternatives to the Spur Road**

**Public Workshop Comments**

**Recommendation on How to Proceed with the Spur Road Segment of the  
Project**

***April 30, 2009***



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Response to Bond Bill Epilogue Language**

This report contains the Department of Transportation's response to the 2008 General Assembly Bond Bill Epilogue language, *"The Department shall report to the General Assembly on the comments received at the public workshops and make recommendations on how to proceed with this (Spur Road) segment of the (US 301) project no later than May 1, 2009."* The Epilogue language clearly states that alternatives for the Spur Road and current traffic data should be developed and presented at a workshop.

### **US 301 Project**

The US 301 project has two segments:

- US 301 Mainline from the Maryland / Delaware State Line to SR1 south of the C & D Canal/ Roth Bridge
- Spur Road from the US 301 Mainline, south of Armstrong Corner Road, to south of the SR 896 Summit Bridge over the C&D Canal

### **Alternatives to the Spur Road**

The Department developed three alternatives to the Spur Road:

- No Spur Road, No Upgrade of Existing US 301 (No Build)
- No Spur Road, Upgrade Existing US 301 (identified in Bond Bill)
- No Spur Road, Limited-Access Highway along existing US 301

The three alternatives were evaluated and discussed, along with the Spur Road, at community and stakeholder meetings prior to the public workshop. The same information was presented at a March 23, 2009 public workshop.

### **Pre-Workshop Activities**

In the weeks leading up to the workshop several steps were taken to ensure that the public was aware of the workshop, its purpose, what would be presented and how the results would be used. These steps included:

- Publishing the Public Notice in local newspapers
- Conducting press briefings with the local newspapers
- Mailing 14,000 public workshop announcements, including to all of the 19709 zip code
- Contacting potentially impacted communities and property owners and conducting meetings, if requested
- Posting information on the project Web Site ([www.us301.deldot.gov](http://www.us301.deldot.gov))
- Briefing State, County and Town elected officials

## **Public Workshop**

The public workshop was very well attended (almost 450 people), and we received many excellent comments from over 280 individuals, as well as communities. This outpouring of interest demonstrates the public's continuing interest in the project and the areas where they live, work and recreate. Residents of the area stated their commitment to continue to work with the Department as the project moves through design and construction. The public comments from the pre-workshop activities and the workshop itself indicate that:

- There is greater support for the ROD approved Spur Road than for any of the alternatives to the Spur Road
- There are concerns, suggestions and questions that need to be addressed, as the project advances through design
- As with many of the State's major transportation projects, improvements are wanted, but "not in my back or front yard"
- There is objection to more study and delay

## **Public Workshop Comments**

The Department received approximately 235 comments by the comment period deadline of April 3, 2009, related to the Spur Road or the Upgrade of Existing US 301 that are summarized as follows:

- 115 comments supported the Spur Road, with 63 of those comments also opposing the Upgrade of Existing US 301. In addition, 32 separate comments opposed the upgrade of Existing US 301.
- A petition was signed by 400 members of the Springmill community supporting the Spur Road and opposing the Upgrade of Existing US 301.
- A petition was signed by 117 members of the Summit Pond community supporting the Spur Road and opposing the Upgrade of Existing US 301.
- A comment was submitted on behalf of the Board for the Fox Hunter Crossing community supporting the Spur Road and opposing the Upgrade of Existing US 301 (124 homes).
- A majority of the comments received in support of the Spur Road and in opposition to the Upgrade of Existing US 301 were from the communities of Summit Pond, Springmill or residents/businesses along Existing US 301.
- 81 comments opposed the Spur Road, with 71 of those comments also supporting the Upgrade of Existing US 301. In addition, 2 separate comments supported the upgrade of Existing US 301.
- A comment was received from the President of Lea Eara Farms and Summit Farms on behalf of the 257 homes in those communities opposing the Spur Road and supporting the Upgrade of Existing US 301
- The majority of comments received in opposition to the Spur Road and in support of the Upgrade of Existing US 301 were from the communities of Chesapeake Meadow, Summit Bridge Farms, Westside Hunt and property owners impacted by the Spur Road.

A summary of the comments received is included on pages 12-14 of this report. All comments are contained in the Project Notebook.

## Department's Evaluation

As will be seen in the body of the report, the Department considered the following in arriving at its recommendation:

- Public Workshop Comments
- Updated Traffic Forecasts
- Ability of Spur Road and Alternatives to the Spur Road to meet Project Purpose and Need
  - Manage traffic, i.e. remove thru traffic, especially trucks, from local roads
  - Improve safety
  - Reduce congestion
- Impacts to Community, Business, Cultural and Environmental Resources
- Project Costs and Funding Options
- Ability to accommodate and support economic development in southern New Castle County

## Department's Recommendation

Based on the detailed evaluation of the Spur Road and the three Alternatives to the Spur Road, the Department reaffirms its initial decision that the Green North + Spur Road, best meets the transportation and development needs of the rapidly growing Southern New Castle County area. The Department believes the Spur Road best manages traffic by maximizing the removal of thru traffic, especially truck traffic, from local roads in the project area, thus improving safety and reducing congestion. Additionally, the Spur Road has less community and environmental impacts than the other two Build Alternatives (Alternatives 2 – the Upgrade of Existing US 301 and Alternative 3 – Limited Access Highway Along Existing US 301). A majority of the comments received prior to and at the March 23<sup>rd</sup> public workshop and during the subsequent comment period supported the Spur Road.

Alternative 1 (No Spur Road and No Upgrade of Existing US 301), a No Build alternative, does not meet project purpose and need. There was virtually no public support for Alternative 1.

Alternative 2 (No Spur Road and Upgrade of Existing US 301 from Ash Boulevard to Mount Pleasant) does not best meet the project purpose and need, because it does not remove thru traffic, especially truck traffic, from existing US 301, from the existing/New US 301 interchange, north of Armstrong Corner Road to Summit Bridge. Safety on this section of existing US 301, even with the upgrade from Ash Boulevard to Mount Pleasant, would not be improved as significantly as compared to providing the median-divided limited access Spur Road. Alternative 2, the Upgrade of Existing US 301, results in greater property impacts to residences and businesses than the Spur Road. There was public support for Alternative 2, but less than the support expressed for the Spur Road.

Alternative 3 (No Spur Road and new limited access highway along existing US 301) does meet project purpose and need, by providing a median divided limited access roadway, similar to the Spur Road, but its location along existing US 301 results in significantly greater impacts on community, business, and natural environmental resources than the Spur Road or the Upgrade of Existing US 301. There was virtually no public support for Alternative 3.

The basis for these conclusions is detailed on the following *Pages 17-24* and in *Appendix B*.

## **Project Funding Option**

Since the start of the most recent US 301 Project Development effort in 2005, the funding goals and objectives have been,

- To implement the US 301 project while minimizing impact on the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) and Statewide Capital Transportation Plan (CTP);
- To not negatively affect the Department's strong bond rating or capacity to sell bonds to fund CTP projects; and
- To have those who use the new US 301 highway pay for it.

A funding concept that primarily utilizes bonds, supported by toll revenues, best meets the funding goals and objectives.

Projections indicate that approximately 74% of the toll revenues will be paid by out-of-state vehicles and 26% by in-state vehicles. Approximately 39% of the toll revenues will be paid by trucks, most of which will be traveling through the area.

## **Next Steps**

The Department recommends proceeding with the Green North + Spur Road Alternative. This alternative was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in their April 30, 2008 Record of Decision (ROD). This final approval cleared the way for the Department to secure FHWA authorizations to begin the acquisition of right-of-way and preparation of final design (construction/bidding documents), which were received in June 2008 and September 2008, respectively. Subject to availability of funding, the Department recommends completing final design and right-of-way acquisition for the entire US 301 project. This will ensure we are ready to go to construction when the economy recovers and we have an improved opportunity to sell long-term bonds, supported by toll revenues.

## **Public Workshop Notebook**

A CD of the Public Workshop Notebook is in the "cover-pocket" of this report. The notebook contains all materials prepared prior to the workshop; summaries of the pre-workshop community meetings; workshop PowerPoint presentation, workshop handouts and sign-in sheets; each comment received at the workshop and during the comment period, a summary of those comments and other workshop related materials.



## I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to respond to the 2008 General Assembly Bond Bill Language, noted below, regarding the Spur Road segment of the US 301 Project. This report presents alternatives to the Spur Road, current traffic data developed by DelDOT and presented to the public at both pre-workshop meetings and the March 23, 2009 public workshop, and comments received at the workshop and subsequent comment period. The Department's analysis of the Spur Road alternatives is also presented along with the Department's recommendation on how to proceed with the Spur Road section of the project.

Please note that this report does not include analyses and recommendations for a number of additional items presented to the public, along with the public comments received on those items, including several Spur Road studies and potential refinements to the proposed New US 301 Mainline. See *Section V, Continuing Public Outreach*.

### **2008 General Assembly Bond Bill Language**

*"The General Assembly directs the Department to implement the US 301 Corridor project in Phases, beginning with the US 301 mainline section. Before expending funds for the final design and construction of the Spur Road segment of the project, the Department will convene public workshops on the Spur Road segment. At the workshops, the Department will present information and alternatives for the Spur Road, including the upgrading of the existing US 301. The most current traffic data available at that time shall be presented to the public at the workshops. The Department shall report to the General Assembly on the comments received at the public workshops and make recommendations on how to proceed with this segment of the project no later than May 1, 2009."*

Although the Bond Bill Language requested that DelDOT conduct Public "Workshops", DelDOT decided that in order to minimize costs, a single five-hour workshop would be conducted rather than two three-hour workshops on successive days, as was the case in the previous six rounds of US 301 workshop sessions. Also, pre-workshop community and stakeholder meetings provided additional opportunities to present information and secure input. This input was invaluable to the Department in refining the public workshop presentation materials.

### **Purpose of Pre-Workshop Activities and Public Workshop**

- The primary purpose of the pre-workshop meetings and public workshop was to obtain public input regarding:
  - The Spur Road and Alternatives for the Spur Road and
  - Current traffic data
- DelDOT took advantage of the opportunity, offered by the pre-workshop meetings and the workshop, to also present:
  - Results of additional Spur Road studies (alignment, median width and design speed)
  - Improvement options for the sharp curve on SR 896 south of Summit Bridge
  - Potential refinements to the New US 301 Mainline

## II. BACKGROUND

The US 301 Project Development effort began in early 2005. A comprehensive public outreach and involvement program has been an integral element of this project, from the beginning. The Department started by developing a Project Purpose and Need document and a Potential Range of Alternatives that were presented to the public at workshops on June 20 and 21, 2005. Over 800 people attended these workshops and over 450 comments were received. During July and August, community meetings were held with a number of communities impacted by the Potential Range of Alternatives.

Public workshops were subsequently held on September 12, 13 and 19, 2005 at which the Range of Alternatives was presented. Approximately 1,100 people attended these workshops and over 1,050 comments were received.

On December 5, 6 and 7, 2005, the Department conducted public workshops at which the Recommended Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study (ARDS) were presented. The five ARDS included the Yellow Alternative, the Brown Alternative, the Green + Spur Alternative, the Purple + Spur Alternative, and the No Build Alternative. The Green and Purple Alternatives included a Spur Road to the Summit Bridge to account for the traffic data that showed approximately one third of all traffic had an origin or destination north of the Summit Bridge. Additionally, both the Brown and Green Alternatives had both a north and south option. Over 525 people attended the workshops and over 500 comments were received. During January and February, 2006, community meetings were held with a number of communities affected by the ARDS. The Spur Road was presented at these community meetings and specific questions about the Spur Road were asked by those affected communities.

On February 22 and 23, 2006, the Department conducted public workshops at which the ARDS (including the Green North + Spur) and issues from the December, 2005 workshops were presented. One of the specific issues presented at the February, 2006 workshops was "What is the purpose and need for the Spur Road?" Approximately 400 people attended these workshops and approximately 50 comments were received.

On April 10 and 11, 2006, the Department conducted public workshops at which the Refined ARDS (including the Green North + Spur) were presented. Approximately 350 people attended these workshops and approximately 150 comments were received.

On January 8 and 9, 2007, the Department conducted public workshops/hearings at which the Recommended Preferred Alternative (Green North + Spur) and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement were presented. Approximately 450 people attended these workshops, approximately 45 people provided oral testimony, and 120 comments were received.

In May 2007, the Department announced the selection of the Preferred Alternative for the US 301 Project, Green North + Spur Road.

In November 2007, the Final Environmental Impact Statement was circulated, with the Green North + Spur Road indicated as the Preferred Alternative.

On April 30, 2008, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the Record of Decision (ROD) for the US 301 Project and the Selected Alternative, Green North + Spur Road. This is the final FHWA approval of the selected alternative and is necessary in order to secure FHWA authorization to begin final design (preparation of construction contract/bidding documents) and the acquisition or right-of-way.

In June 2008, FHWA approved right-of-way acquisition for the US 301 Project Selected Alternative, Green North + Spur Road.

In September 2008, FHWA authorized the Final Design (preparation of construction contract documents) for the Selected Alternative. While right-of-way acquisition and final design activities are underway on the New US 301 Mainline section of the project, neither activity has been initiated on the Spur Road section of the project, due to the 2008 General Assembly Bond Bill Epilogue language.

Since the December 2005 workshop, the Spur Road has been “part and parcel” of the US 301 Project Development effort and was included in all public outreach activities. Outreach included an interactive website that was available from the initiation of the project. As of March 2009, the site had 138,746 visits and 3,618,656 hits. Many meetings were held with communities, property owners and elected officials. In addition, newsletters, press releases, briefings and media coverage were part of the process. The public and the Department have benefited greatly from this extensive public outreach effort. The Department will continue this effort as it moves forward through design and ultimately construction.

### III. PRE-WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

Prior to the public workshop in March 2009, a number of activities were undertaken, including developing and analyzing alternatives for the Spur Road, updating the traffic projections, conducting Spur Road studies, considering refinements to the New US 301 Mainline, developing improvement options for the SR 896 sharp curve south of Summit Bridge, providing public notice for the workshop, briefing elected officials, meeting with property owners and businesses, and conducting a series of pre-workshop community meetings.

#### ***Development of Alternatives, Options, and Refinements***

- The Department developed the following alternatives for the Spur Road, along with their advantages and disadvantages, costs, and impacts:
  - Record of Decision (ROD)/Federally-approved Spur Road
  - Alternative 1: No Spur Road – No Upgrade of Existing US 301
  - Alternative 2: No Spur Road – Upgrade of Existing US 301 (noted in Bond Bill)
  - Alternative 3: No Spur Road – Limited-Access Roadway along Existing US 301
- The Department updated the traffic projections, based on the Wilmington Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (WILMAPCO) November 2008 land use projections and the EIS traffic projection with consideration of current Westtown development projections.
- The Department developed improvement options for the sharp curve south of Summit Bridge, involving flattening the curve and removing the existing traffic signal, as a separate project.
- The Department undertook additional Spur Road studies (alignment options, typical sections, median width, and design speed) and developed potential refinements to the New US 301 Mainline.

#### ***Public Notice***

- Public notice of the workshop was published in the News Journal on February 24, 2009 and in the Middletown Transcript on February 26, 2009, indicating the workshop would be conducted from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2009 at the Middletown Fire Hall.
- 14,000 Workshop 'FYI' flyers were mailed to all residences and businesses in the Middletown zip code (19709) and those individuals on the project mailing list who live outside 19709.
- FYI flyers were provided to the towns of Galena and Cecilton, Maryland.
- Letters were sent to the Delaware and Maryland members of the Toll Diversion Working Group.
- Letters were sent to property owners and businesses located along Existing US 301 that would be affected by the alternatives for the Spur Road.
- The US 301 website ([www.us301.deldot.gov](http://www.us301.deldot.gov)) was updated to include the public notice and the FYI flyer.
- A Draft Workshop PowerPoint presentation was placed on the project website on March 19, 2009.

**Note:** *Copies of the public notice and 'FYI' flyers are included in the Public Workshop Notebook.*

### ***Community Meetings Conducted During the Three Weeks Preceding the Workshop***

- The Department’s presentation at the community meetings included the purpose of the pre-workshop meetings and upcoming workshop; the date, time and location of the workshop; a review of the project purpose and need; the ROD approved Spur Road and alternatives for the Spur Road; the current traffic data based on November 2008 land use projections from WILMAPCO; EIS traffic data with consideration of current Westown development projections; improvement options for the sharp curve south of Summit Bridge; and the results of the recent Spur Road studies (alignment options, typical sections and design speed). If a community expressed an interest, the Department presented the “Potential Refinements to New US 301 (Green North Alternative). The Department also discussed current project cost estimates, current funding, schedule and recommendations to minimize toll diversions. Finally, the Department noted the various ways in which the communities could submit comments, and informed them about the comment deadline of April 3, 2009.
- A question and answer session followed the Department’s presentation.
- Approximately 350 people attended the following pre-workshop community meetings.
  - Airmont & Mount Hope <sup>1</sup>
  - Lea Eara Farm and Summit Farm <sup>1</sup>
  - Summit Bridge Farms <sup>1</sup>
  - Spring Arbor <sup>1</sup>
  - Chesapeake Meadow, Dickerson Farms, Mid Farms and Fairview Farms <sup>2</sup>
  - Residents, Property Owners and Businesses along Existing US 301 <sup>2</sup>
  - The Legends <sup>2</sup>
  - Summit Pond <sup>2</sup>
  - Springmill <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A verbal summary of the PowerPoint was presented.

<sup>2</sup> The draft Workshop PowerPoint was presented.

- Pre-workshop meeting summaries and attendance sheets are included in the Workshop Notebook.

### ***Additional Communities Contacted but not Expressing an Interest in a Pre-Workshop Meeting***

- Middletown Village
- Westside Hunt
- Fox Hunter Crossing
- Matapeake
- Crystal Run Farm
- Post & Rail Farms

***Others Contacted/Meetings Conducted***

- The Department contacted/met with numerous property and business owners in the project area.

***Elected Officials' Briefings***

- State, County, and Town elected officials were briefed, prior to the workshop, on the materials to be presented at the workshop.
- Senators Bethany Hall-Long and Bruce Ennis, and Representatives Richard Cathcart and Quinn Johnson attended many of the pre-workshop community meetings.

## IV. PUBLIC WORKSHOP

### ***Time/Date/Location/Attendance***

- The workshop was conducted from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2009 at the Middletown Fire Hall.
- Almost 450 attended the workshop.

### ***Handout Materials***

Public Notice

Comment Form

Impact Matrices

Display Boards (13)

Right-of-Way Brochure

Cultural Resources Brochure

Landscaping Handout

### ***PowerPoint Presentation***

The Department delivered the PowerPoint presentation, which included an orientation to the workshop, a review of the material being presented at the workshop, and where the information could be found in the display hall, at 3:15 p.m., with the same presentation repeated at 4:15 p.m., 5:15 p.m., 6:15 p.m., and 7:15 p.m. Approximately 250 people attended the PowerPoint presentations. An overview of the presentation can be found in the prior section ***“Community Meetings Conducted During the Three Weeks Preceding the Workshop.”***

### ***Comments Submitted***

- The public submitted comments in the following ways:
  - Completing written comment forms at the workshop
  - Through the project website: [www.us301.deldot.gov](http://www.us301.deldot.gov)
  - Through email to: [dotpr@state.de.us](mailto:dotpr@state.de.us)
  - Mail to: DelDOT Public Relations: P.O. Box 778, Dover, DE 19903
  - Fax to: DelDOT Public Relations: 302-739-2092

Many excellent comments, suggestions, and questions were provided by the public. As a result, the Department will evaluate this input and work with communities, businesses and property owners, in an effort to address their comments and concerns and further reduce project impacts. Examples include an additional option to fix the sharp curve south of Summit Bridge that reduces impacts on the Lea Eara Farms community and refinements that better mitigate visual and noise effects on the Summit Bridge Farms community.

### ***Comments on the Spur Road or the Upgrade of Existing US 301***

The Department received approximately 280 comments at the workshop or during the comment period. The majority (235) were focused on the Spur Road or the Upgrade of Existing US 301:

- 115 comments supported the Spur Road, with 63 of the 115 comments opposing the Upgrade of Existing US 301. In addition, 32 separate comments opposed the upgrade of Existing US 301.
- A petition was signed by 400 members of the Springmill community supporting the Spur Road and opposing the Upgrade of Existing US 301.
- A petition was signed by 117 members of the Summit Pond community supporting the Spur Road and opposing the Upgrade of Existing US 301.
- A comment was submitted on behalf of the Board for the Fox Hunter Crossing community supporting the Spur Road and opposing the Upgrade of Existing US 301 (124 homes).
- A majority of the comments received in support of the Spur Road and in opposition to the Upgrade of Existing US 301 were from the communities of Summit Pond, Springmill or residents/businesses along Existing US 301.
- 81 comments opposed the Spur Road, with 71 of the 81 supporting the Upgrade of Existing US 301. In addition, 2 separate comments supported the upgrade of Existing US 301.
- A comment was received from the President of Lea Eara Farms and Summit Farms on behalf of the 257 homes in those communities opposing the Spur Road and supporting the Upgrade of Existing US 301
- The majority of comments received in opposition to the Spur Road and in support of the Upgrade of Existing US 301 were from the communities of Chesapeake Meadow, Summit Bridge Farms, Westside Hunt and property owners impacted by the Spur Road.

### ***Some of the comments in support of the Spur Road***

- Spur Road is in the best interests of most residents and businesses.
- Spur Road does a better job of achieving the goals of the project by separating trucks from local traffic and placing them on a freeway with no traffic lights.
- Although the Spur Road is more costly than upgrading Existing US 301, the Spur Road does a better job at addressing future needs due to the growth expected in the Middletown area.
- The Spur Road was already decided – stop wasting time and money revisiting the issue simply because a few people who live near the Spur are unhappy.
- The Spur Road is the safer roadway.
- The Spur Road will help alleviate congestion on Existing US 301.
- The Spur Road will reduce traffic on Choptank Road.
- The Spur Road affects less wetlands than upgrading Existing US 301.
- The Spur Road has less impact on properties and the environment.
- The Spur Road is consistent with what has been discussed in the area for years and years; let's not start this whole process all over again.



- The Spur Road can be paid for with toll revenues whereas upgrading Existing US 301 will require state funds.
- The Spur Road will lead to less air and noise pollution.
- The Spur Road will have less impact during construction.
- The Spur Road is the right decision, but more berms/barriers should be constructed along the communities affected by the Spur Road.

***Some of the comments in opposition to the Spur Road***

- The Spur Road affects too many communities and properties.
- New traffic volumes show a reduction in the amount of traffic using the Spur Road; these data are difficult to understand.
- The Spur Road is inaccessible to many of the communities that would be adjacent to it.
- We should wait until the impact on traffic volumes of the northbound weigh station is determined.
- Cars and trucks will avoid the tolls thereby reducing vehicle traffic and impacting the funding element of the Spur Road.
- The Spur Road is too expensive and eliminating the Spur Road will save the state of Delaware millions of dollars.
- The Spur Road will change the character of the countryside
- If you *must* do a Spur Road, it needs to be moved farther away from Summit Bridge Farms and the design speed and the median should be reduced.
- The Spur Road will have increased noise impacts.
- The Spur Road is not consistent with “Livable Delaware” principles.
- Fixing the Summit Bridge curve is a separate project and therefore should not be used as a reason to support the Spur Road.
- See how new construction on Existing 301 works before moving forward with the Spur Road; additionally, lower the speed limit and add additional law enforcement to force trucks to a different route.

***Some of the comments in support of the Upgrade of Existing US 301***

- Will be less expensive than the Spur Road.
- Even with the Spur Road will still need to upgrade Existing US 301 at some point in the future.
- Will alleviate traffic problems before, during and after construction of Mainline US 301.
- The new traffic volumes show that upgrading Existing US 301 is adequate to handle the projected traffic.
- Will have less impact on farmland.

***Some of the comments in opposition to the Upgrade of Existing 301***

- Would have too many impacts on businesses, properties and the environment.
- Will not alleviate heavy truck traffic mixing with local traffic and school bus traffic.
- Accessing businesses and communities from a four lane highway does not make any sense.
- Would lead to continued congestion, deterioration of existing roads and infrastructure and a less safe roadway.
- Would increase the number of traffic lights.
- Too many u-turns would be needed to access properties and businesses.
- Would bring the roadway too close to the community of Springmill, affecting the stormwater ponds, affecting several homes, affecting access to and from the community and bringing additional noise and air pollution.

## V. CONTINUING PUBLIC OUTREACH

The Department requested that communities located adjacent to the New US 301 Mainline and Spur Road form small focus groups to work with the Department during the final design and construction phases of the project. Many communities have agreed to this request. This effort will include discussing with the individual focus groups questions and comments raised by the individual communities during the pre-workshop community and stakeholder meetings, at the workshop and during the subsequent comment period, along with efforts by the Department to address these comments. The comments received during the pre-workshop community and stakeholder meetings, at the workshop and during the subsequent comment period can be found in *Sections II, VIII and IX of the Public Workshop Notebook*. These meetings will be part of the continuing public outreach effort for the project.

## VI. TRAFFIC FORECASTS

### Summary of Traffic Forecasts for the US 301 Project

- The 2005 DelDOT traffic forecasts were based on the then current (2003) WILMAPCO land use, which included approximately 10,000 daily trips from the Westown area.
- In 2004, the Westown development proposal was approved by the Town of Middletown and projected 130,000 trips per day from the Westown Traffic Impact Study (TIS).
- For a major investment project such as New US 301, the Department considered it essential to include the traffic resulting from the full growth potential in the Westown area and the current approved WILMAPCO land use in the remaining areas of southern New Castle County, in evaluating the US 301 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) alternatives.
- The 2005 Draft EIS forecasts, assuming a 2003 WILMAPCO land use and 130,000 trips per day from the Westown TIS, resulted in a projected 22,500 vehicles per day, including 2,000 trucks per day, in 2030, on the Spur Road.
- The current (2009) DelDOT forecasts are based on the November 2008 WILMAPCO-approved land use, which includes 32,000 daily trips from the Westown area and projects 12,300 vehicles per day, including 800 trucks per day, in 2030, on the Spur Road. However, the current forecasts do not include the total current Westown TIS projections.
- The current TIS forecasts project 136,000 trips per day, in 2030, from Westown development:

Time Period	New Trips
2003-2005	7,000
2005-2008	42,000
Under Construction	2,000
Approved	12,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>63,000</b>
Remaining Potential Trips	73,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>136,000</b>

- As noted in the table above, growth in Westown is occurring faster than projected (63,000 trips from parcels that have been constructed, are under construction, or have been approved, in Westown, versus 32,000 trips by 2030, assumed in the latest November 2008 land use forecasts).
- Based on the current Westown development plans,
  - The 2030 Draft EIS traffic forecasts appear to represent an “upper bound” for the traffic projections in the study area, in the event that Westown fully develops by 2030.
  - The current 2030 traffic forecasts do not reflect full build-out of the Westown development. Therefore, they appear to represent a conservative “lower bound” for the traffic projections.
- The Spur Road can be expected to carry between 12,300 and 22,500 trips per day in 2030, including 900 to 2,000 trucks per day, depending on the amount of development completed in Westown by that time.  
The Department believes it is essential to consider the full potential for development in the Westown area, whether it occurs before or after the design year 2030, when evaluating a major investment project such as New US 301.

## VII. ANALYSIS OF SPUR ROAD AND ALTERNATIVES TO THE SPUR ROAD

The Department developed the Spur Road and each of the Spur Road Alternatives to a preliminary engineering level of detail (horizontal/vertical alignment, typical sections, cross sections, preliminary drainage/storm water management, limit of disturbance, etc.). Each was evaluated as to their ability to meet project purpose and need, their impacts on communities, businesses, cultural and environmental resources, their costs and funding options and their ability to accommodate and support economic development in southern New Castle County. The project purpose and need is to: 1.) Manage traffic, i.e. remove thru traffic (especially trucks) from local roads; 2.) Improve safety; and 3.) Reduce existing and future congestion.

Based on the detailed evaluation of the Spur Road and the three Alternatives to the Spur Road, the Department concludes that the Record of Decision Alternative, Green North + Spur Road, best meets the transportation and development needs of the rapidly growing Southern New Castle County area. The Department believes the Spur Road best manages traffic by maximizing the removal of thru traffic, especially truck traffic, from local roads in the project area, thus improving safety and reducing congestion. Additionally, the Spur Road has less community and environmental impacts than the other two Build Alternatives (Alternatives 2 – the Upgrade of Existing US 301 and Alternative 3 – Limited Access Highway Along Existing US 301). A majority of the comments received prior to and during the March 23<sup>rd</sup> public workshop and the subsequent comment period supported the Spur Road.

Alternative 1 (No Spur Road and No Upgrade of Existing US 301), a No Build alternative, does not meet project purpose and need. There was virtually no public support for Alternative 1.

Alternative 2 (No Spur Road and Upgrade of Existing US 301 from Ash Boulevard to Mount Pleasant) does not best meet the project purpose and need, because it does not remove thru traffic, especially truck traffic, from existing US 301, from the existing/New US 301 interchange, north of Armstrong Corner Road to Summit Bridge. Safety on this section of existing US 301, even with the upgrade between Ash Boulevard and Mount Pleasant, would not be improved as significantly as compared to providing the median-divided limited access Spur Road. Alternative 2, the Upgrade of Existing US 301, results in greater property impacts to residences and businesses than the Spur Road. There was public support for Alternative 2, but less than the support expressed for the Spur Road.

Alternative 3 (No Spur Road and new limited access highway along existing US 301) does meet project purpose and need, by providing a median divided limited access roadway, similar to the Spur Road, but its location along existing US 301 results in greater impacts on community, business, and natural environmental resources than the Spur Road or the Upgrade of Existing US 301. There was virtually no public support for Alternative 3.

The basis for these conclusions is detailed on the following *Pages 18-24* and in *Appendix B*.

The following table provides a comparison of the Spur Road and the Alternatives to the Spur Road in the categories of project Purpose & Need, Property Acquisitions, Natural Resources, and Funding.

<i>Comparison of the Spur Road and Alternatives to the Spur Road</i>				
	<b>Spur Road</b>	<b>Alternative 1</b> No Build	<b>Alternative 2*</b> Upgrade Existing US 301	<b>Alternative 3</b> Limited Access along Existing US 301
<b>Purpose &amp; Need</b>				
Removes thru traffic, especially heavy truck traffic, from:				
Existing US 301, MD/DE Line to Armstrong Corner	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Existing US 301, Armstrong Corner to Summit Bridge	Yes	No	No	Yes
Improves Safety on Local Roads	Yes	No	Partial	Yes
Addresses Congestion/Accommodates Full Westown Development	Yes	No	Partial	Yes
<b>Property Acquisitions</b>				
Residential Acquisitions/Relocations	0	0	5	12
Partial Residential Acquisitions	0	0	12	9
Partial Acquisition of Commercial Businesses	0	0	15	1
Total Acquisition of Commercial Businesses	0	0	1	1
Partial Acquisition of Agricultural Properties	8	0	6	9
<b>Natural Resources</b>				
Wetland Impacts (acres)	1.23	0	1.92	13
Forest Land Impacts (acres)	6.7	0	1.1	11.2
<b>Funding</b>				
Construction Cost (\$millions) – Preliminary Estimate	105	0	65	165
Funded with Toll Revenues	Yes	-	No	Yes
Impacts on State Transportation Trust Fund/Other Transportation Needs	Partial	No	Yes	Partial

\*Specifically mentioned in the Bond Bill Language

### ***ROD Approved Spur Road***

The Spur Road provides a 2-lane, median divided, limited access highway from New US 301, in the vicinity of Armstrong Corner Road to Summit Bridge. An interchange is provided with Choptank Road/Bethel Church Road providing access to and from the north, i.e. Summit Bridge.

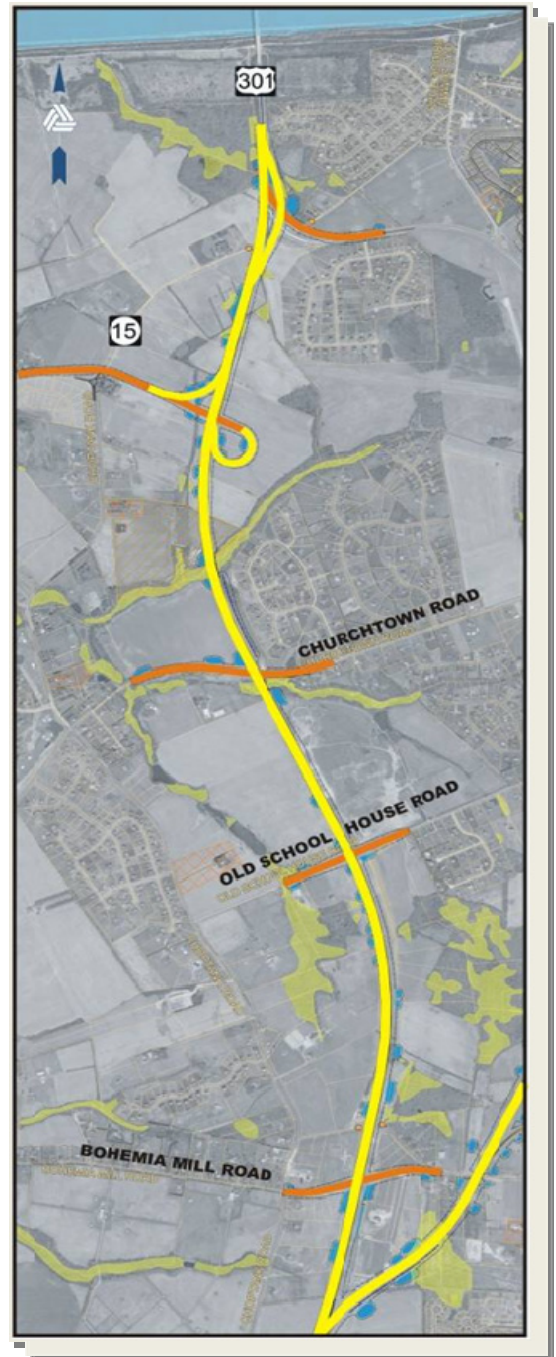
While the Spur Road is estimated to cost \$105 million (preliminary cost estimate), is located adjacent to the Chesapeake Meadow and Summit Bridge Farms communities, and impacts agricultural properties including a property with an agricultural easement (Steele Farm), the Spur Road best meets the project's purpose and need of managing truck traffic, improving safety, and addressing congestion.

The Spur Road provides a limited access highway for thru truck traffic from the MD/DE line and the Westown area to Summit Bridge, removing a projected 12,000 to 22,000 vehicles per day (vpd), including 900 to 2,000 trucks per day, in 2030, from local roads (Existing US 301, Choptank Road, etc.). Removing this traffic from local roads will improve safety and reduce congestion. The Spur Road will accommodate the full potential for growth in the Westown area.

The Spur Road would be funded by toll revenues from vehicles using New US 301 and the Spur Road (74% of the toll revenues will be paid by out-of-state vehicles and 26% of the toll revenues will be paid by in-state vehicles). Approximately 39% of the revenues are projected to be paid by trucks, most of which are passing through southern New Castle County. In contrast, the Upgrade of Existing US 301 would be funded by state or a combination of state and federal funds, thus having a greater impact on the Statewide Capital Transportation Plan (CTP).

The Spur Road, a median divided limited access highway, best meets project purpose and need and requires fewer residential relocations than an Upgraded Existing US 301 (0 versus 5), impacts fewer properties (35 versus 64), and has less impacts on wetlands (1.23 versus 1.92 acres).

While Alternative 3, a limited access roadway along existing US 301 from north of Armstrong Corner Road to Summit Bridge meets project purpose and need, its location along existing US 301 results in greater impacts to residential homes (12 versus 0), greater wetland impacts (13 versus 1.2 acres), and is



more costly than the Spur Road (\$165 versus \$105 million). Securing the necessary environmental permits would be extremely difficult for Alternative 3, due to its significant impact on wetlands.

The Spur Road is projected to be used by 55-61% Delaware vehicles and 45-39% out-of-state vehicles in 2030, depending on the ultimate development build-out in Westtown at that time.

The Spur Road received more support than the Alternatives to the Spur Road, at both the pre-workshop community meetings, at the public workshop and during the comment period.

The Spur Road is recommended, as it best meets project purpose and need and provides a key element of the transportation infrastructure necessary to accommodate existing and projected growth in southern New Castle County and results in less impacts on community, business and environmental resources than Alternatives 2 and 3.



***Alternative 1: No Spur Road – No Upgrade of Existing US 301 – “No Build”***

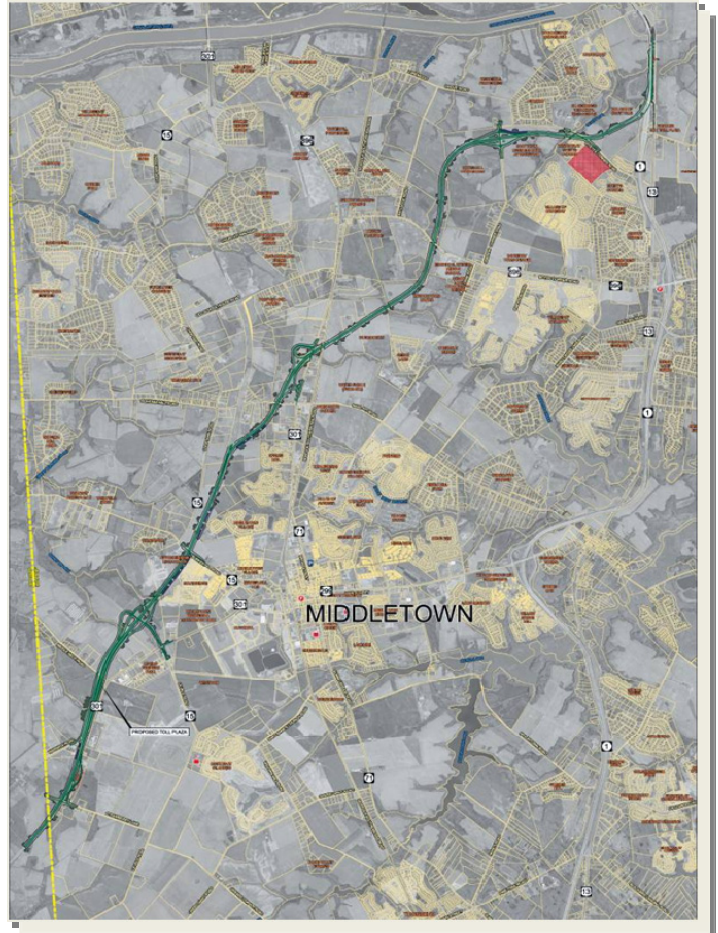
While this “No Build” alternative would eliminate the impacts associated with the Spur Road and the Upgrade of Existing US 301, and reduce project costs, Alternative 1 is a “No Build” Alternative that does not meet project purpose and need to:

- remove thru traffic, especially truck traffic, from local roads in the Middletown area (27% trucks at MD/DE line),
- improve safety on local roads (five (5) fatalities on Existing US 301, south of Summit Bridge, in 2007), the need to address existing congestion (sections of Existing US 301, 1-lane in each direction) and projected congestion,
- plan for and accommodate the extensive growth approved and planned in the Westown area, and
- provide an alternate route to Summit Bridge during incidents and emergencies.

Alternative 1 does not provide the transportation infrastructure to accommodate planned economic growth in southern New Castle County.

Alternative 1 received virtually no support at the pre-workshop meetings, the public workshop and during the subsequent comment period.

Alternative 1 is NOT recommended due to its failure to meet project purpose and need.



**Alternative 2: No Spur Road – Upgrade of Existing US 301 (specifically mentioned in Bond Bill)**

Alternative 2 would eliminate the impacts associated with the Spur Road, reduce overall project costs (from \$105 million for the Spur Road to \$65 million for the Upgrade of Existing US 301), and would improve capacity and safety along existing US 301 from Ash Boulevard to Mount Pleasant.

However, Alternative 2 does not best meet project purpose and need because it does not remove thru traffic, especially truck traffic, from Existing US 301, between the Existing/New US 301 interchange north of Armstrong Corner Road, and Summit Bridge. Safety on this section of Existing US 301 would not be improved as significantly as compared to the Spur Road option. Alternative 2 is projected to result in an additional 12,000 to 22,000 additional vehicles per day (vpd), including 900 to 2,000 trucks per day, (depending on the level of development at that time in the Westtown area) on local roads in the area in 2030. This traffic would experience at-grade intersections, traffic signals, and driveways, as compared to being on the safer limited access Spur Road.

The Upgrade of Existing US 301 would be funded by \$65 million in state or a combination of state and federal funds, thus having an impact on the Statewide Transportation Program, i.e. Capital Transportation Program (CTP), while the safer limited access Spur Road (\$105 million) would be funded by toll revenues, i.e. those using New US 301 and the Spur Road (74% of the toll revenues are projected to be paid by out-of-state vehicles).

Additionally, Alternative 2 requires the total acquisition of 5 homes and 1 business versus none for the Spur Road; requires the partial acquisition of 15 businesses, 12 residential properties, a church, and property along the front of the Springmill and Middletown Village communities. Alternative 2 requires the partial acquisition of 6 agricultural properties, as compared to 8 for the Spur Road. Alternative 2 has greater wetland impacts than the Spur Road (1.93 versus 1.23 acres), but less forest land impacts (1.1 versus 6.7 acres).



Alternative 2 received support at the pre-workshop community meetings, but less support than the Spur Road. The majority of the Alternative 2 support was from communities located along the Spur Road (Chesapeake Meadow, Summit Bridge Farms, Westside Hunt) and property owners impacted by the Spur Road.

Alternative 2 is NOT recommended because it does NOT best meet project purpose and need of managing traffic, especially heavy truck traffic, improving safety, and reducing congestion. Alternative 2 does not best accommodate projected economic development and growth in southern New Castle County. Alternative 2 results in greater impacts to community, business and environmental resources than the Spur Road. Alternative 2 would not be funded with toll revenues, but with state or state and federal funds, thus having an impact on the Capital Transportation Plan (CTP) and other statewide transportation needs.

### ***Alternative 3: No Spur Road – Limited Access Roadway along Existing US 301***

Alternative 3 shifts the Spur Road from its current (Ridge Route) proposed location to the east, generally following the alignment of Existing US 301 from north of Armstrong Corner Road to the Summit Bridge. While Alternative 3, a limited access highway, would meet project purpose and need (manage truck traffic, improve safety, and address existing and future congestion along the local roadway network), it results in serious impacts to properties and environmental resources.

Alternative 3 requires the acquisition of 12 homes (Spur Road requires no residential acquisitions).

Alternative 3 impacts 13 acres of wetlands (Spur Road impacts 1.2 acres). It is likely that the Environmental Resource and Regulatory Agencies would not concur/issue permits for Alternative 3 because of its significant impacts on wetlands.

Further, Alternative 3 would impact future potential expansion plans at Summit Airport; therefore the Federal Aviation Administration, which has funded expansion planning at the airport, will likely object to Alternative 3.

Finally, Alternative 3 is the most costly option, at \$165 million versus \$105 million for the Spur Road.

There was virtually no support for Alternative 3 at the pre-workshop community meetings, the public workshop, or during the subsequent comment period.

Alternative 3 is NOT recommended due to its extraordinary impacts on residential properties and the natural environment, impacts on Summit Airport expansion, and its significant cost.



## VIII. TOLL DIVERSION

During the pre-workshop community meetings and at the public workshop, concern was raised about possible diversion of traffic, particularly trucks, from New US 301 onto local roads, as a result of New US 301 being proposed as a toll facility. This topic was previously addressed by the Toll Diversion Working Group, which included representatives from Delaware and Maryland.

Eight (8) Recommendations (See *Appendix C*) were unanimously agreed upon by the Working Group and subsequently approved by the DeIDOT Secretary of Transportation and Maryland State Highway Administrator, in order to minimize toll diversion and to keep traffic, especially thru truck traffic, on New US 301 and the Spur Road and off local roads. For additional details regarding the efforts and recommendations of the Toll Diversion Working Group, refer to:

[http://www.deldot.gov/information/projects/us301/pages/toll\\_diversion\\_wg.shtml](http://www.deldot.gov/information/projects/us301/pages/toll_diversion_wg.shtml).

## IX. DELDOT RECOMMENDATION

After considering the comments received during the pre-workshop meetings; the comments received at and after the workshop (by email, on-line, mail, and fax); comments received from the Environmental Resource and Regulatory Agencies; and the Department's analysis, **the Department recommends retaining the Record of Decision (ROD) Alternative – Green North + Spur Road.**

The ROD approved Spur Road alternative best meets project purpose and need by managing truck traffic, improving safety, and addressing congestion, in a cost effective manner, while minimizing impacts to communities, businesses, and the natural environment. Furthermore, a majority of the comments received during and after the March 23<sup>rd</sup> public workshop indicated significant support for the Spur Road.

The provision of a median divided, limited access Spur Road from New US 301, in the vicinity of Armstrong Corner Road, to Summit Bridge will remove (in 2030) 12,000 to 22,000 vehicles per day, including 900 to 1,800 trucks, depending on the level of development in the Westown area at that time, from local roads such as Existing US 301 and Choptank Road, making the local roads in the Middletown area safer and less congested. The Spur Road would accommodate the long-term significant growth planned in the Westown area.

The ROD approved Spur Road has considerably less impacts on homes, residential properties, commercial businesses and wetlands than the Upgrade of Existing US 301. While the ROD approved Spur Road is estimated to cost more than the Upgrade of Existing US 301 (\$105 versus \$65 million), the Spur Road would be funded by toll revenues, thus reducing impacts to the State Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) and statewide transportation needs that compete for those funds. An Upgrade of Existing US 301 will have to compete with other statewide needs for available funding.

Although not the basis for the recommendation, should the Spur Road be eliminated from the ROD-approved/selected alternative an additional public workshop/hearing would be required as well as continued coordination and consultation with the Environmental Resource and Regulatory Agencies and preparation of additional environmental documents. These actions would result in a delay of one to two years which would increase costs and likely cause great concern and frustration to the members of the public who have participated in the process to date and who support the results of the Department's efforts over the past 3 years. The public strongly expressed concern with further delays and resulting increased costs during pre-workshop meetings, at the March 23, 2009 public workshop, and in the submitted comments.

From the outset of the latest US 301 Project Development effort in 2005, the funding goals and objectives have been,

- To implement the US 301 project while minimizing impact on the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) and Statewide Capital Transportation Plan (CTP);
- To not negatively affect the Department's strong bond rating or capacity to sell bonds to fund CTP projects; and
- To have those who use the new US 301 highway pay for it.

A funding concept that primarily utilizes bonds, supported by toll revenues, best meets the funding goals and objectives.

Projections indicate that approximately 74% of the toll revenues will be paid by out-of-state vehicles and 26% by in-state vehicles. Approximately 39% of the toll revenues will be paid by trucks, most of which will be traveling through the area.

The Department recommends proceeding with the Green North + Spur Road Alternative. This alternative was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in their April 30, 2008 Record of Decision (ROD). This final approval cleared the way for the Department to secure FHWA authorizations to begin the acquisition of right-of-way and preparation of final design (construction/bidding documents), which were received in June 2008 and September 2008, respectively. Subject to availability of funding, the Department recommends completing final design and right-of-way acquisition for the entire US 301 project. This will ensure we are ready to go to construction when the economy recovers and we have an improved opportunity to sell long-term bonds, supported by toll revenues.

The US 301 project is a transportation initiative of which the entire state can be proud. After 40 years of debate and indecision, the Department led an effort that culminated in the selection of an alternative (Green North + Spur) that satisfies a growing transportation need in southern New Castle County. This result was accomplished with the support of the majority of local residents and State and Federal Environmental Resource and Regulatory Agencies.

# Appendices

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## ***Appendix A - Traffic Forecasts***

The original DelDOT forecasts for the project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) were developed in 2005 using:

- WILMAPCO's 2003 approved land use projections (10,000 trips in 2030 from the Westown area )
- Westown's 2004 development proposal as described in their 2005 Traffic Impact Study (TIS) (130,000 trips from the Westown area)

In response to the Bond Bill Language, DelDOT recently developed revised forecasts using WILMAPCO's November 2008 approved land use projections (32,000 trips in 2030 – from the Westown area, which do not include the full build-out of Westown and related TIS traffic).

### **WILMAPCO's Forecasting Process**

WILMAPCO generates land use forecasts on an annual basis for regional transportation planning purposes. Prior to 2008, WILMAPCO's forecasts were updated on a tri-annual (every three year) basis. Land use forecasts are developed by the WILMAPCO Data and Demographics Subcommittee and approved by the WILMAPCO Council for the purpose of producing an annual, trend-based allocation of population, households and employment to Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs). Once completed, the forecasts comprise the land use component of the DelDOT Travel Demand Model for regional planning activities, and for evaluating air quality conformity to satisfy federal requirements.

The TAZ forecasts stay within the countywide totals set each year by the Delaware Population Consortium.

- The subcommittee performs a zone-by-zone review and allocates population, households and employment considering all active/pending/preliminary development plans that are available from municipalities and the county land use department.
- The University of Delaware Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research assists in the TAZ allocation effort.

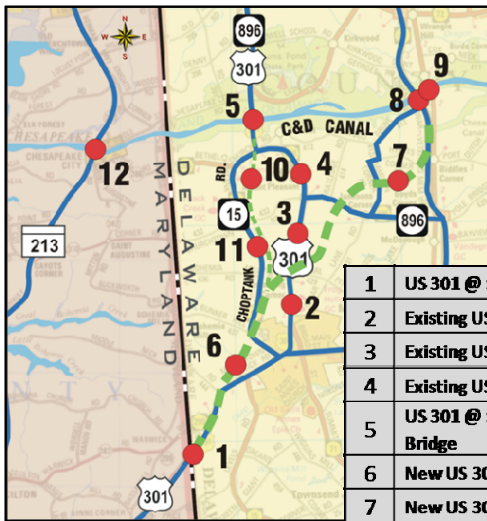
### **US 301 Forecasting Process**

While considering the regional context, the US 301 Department developed traffic forecasts that focused specifically on the rapidly developing Middletown/Odessa/Townsend (MOT) area, as well as the long-distance (Interstate) travel characteristics of motorists using the US 301 corridor. To develop travel forecasts for the US 301 project, the Department utilized the DelDOT Travel Demand Model based on the most current WILMAPCO land use forecasts, then closely examined the land use projections for the MOT area, and examined the balance of traffic flow between I-95 and US 301.

- On a project level, one of the primary objectives in making traffic forecasts is to ensure that the proposed alternatives will adequately accommodate potential future traffic demand in the 2030 design year and beyond. Some of these factors are:
  - The MOT area has experienced the highest rate of growth in the state in recent years, and several major developments (Westown, Eastown, Whitehall, Bayberry, etc) are continuing to progress through planning, design, and in some cases, construction stages despite the current economic downturn.

- For a major investment project such as US 301, it is essential to consider potential growth beyond the 2030 design year and the effects of the potential development actually occurring sooner than anticipated.
- Because of these factors, the US 301 Department presented a range of potential traffic volumes in 2030 at the public workshop, showing both WILMAPCO’s current estimate of development in 2030, as well as potential volumes if the Westown area fully develops, as currently planned.

The following table compares DelDOT’s prior (Draft EIS) traffic forecasts with DelDOT’s current forecasts.



	2005 Existing	2030 Draft EIS Forecasts (2003 WILMAPCO Land Use Data + Westown TIS data)		Current 2030 Forecasts (2008 WILMAPCO Land Use Data)	
		w/ Spur	w/o Spur	w/ Spur	w/o Spur
1 US 301 @ State Line	11,400	16,800	14,500	26,800	25,600
2 Existing US 301	21,900	22,100	28,200	24,800	26,200
3 Existing US 301	19,900	21,300	27,900	15,200	22,500
4 Existing US 301	23,200	27,900	37,200	31,000	39,300
5 US 301 @ Summit Bridge	28,600	59,500	53,900	50,800	47,600
6 New US 301	-	56,700	42,000	34,200	27,100
7 New US 301	-	43,500	45,300	27,700	28,100
8 SR 1 @ C&D Canal	65,700	104,300	106,300	110,000	112,400
9 US 13 @ C&D Canal	11,500	19,600	19,700	26,600	26,700
10 Spur Road	-	22,500	-	12,300	-
11 Choptank Road	3,400	5,100	12,900	7,500	9,000
12 MD 213 @ C&D Canal	15,000	21,000	23,500	24,400	25,100

### Current DelDOT 2030 Forecasts

The most recent traffic forecasts for 2030 indicate:

- Increased traffic volumes in 2030 at nearly all key locations throughout the study area when compared to existing volumes (2005)
- Increased volumes on US 301 at the state line when compared to the Draft EIS forecasts (due to refinements to the latest DelDOT traffic model)
- Lower volumes, when compared to the Draft EIS forecasts on several roads, including:
  - The Levels Road interchange ramps with New US 301
  - New US 301 north of Levels Road
  - Existing US 301 between the interchange of Existing and New US 301, north of Armstrong Corner Road and Mt Pleasant
  - The Spur Road

Based on recent discussions with the Town of Middletown, rapid development continues in Westown, even during the economic downturn - with several development projects under construction and numerous others in the design stage. The Town of Middletown has indicated that the scale of the ultimate build-out has actually increased from the assumptions contained in the 2005 Traffic Impact Study, due to additional retail development replacing other proposed uses and the addition of four (4) new parcels which are likely to be developed. These changes will result in even more traffic.

	2030 Trips Assumed in the 2003 WILMAPCO Land Use Forecasts	2030 Trips Assumed in Westown TIS, June 2005	2030 Draft EIS Forecasts ('03 WILMAPCO Land Use + Westown TIS)	2030 Trips Assumed in Current 2008 WILMAPCO Land Use Forecasts	Estimated 2030 Trips based on latest Westown Development Plans
<b>Total Daily Trips from Westown</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>127,000</b>	<b>131,000</b>	<b>32,100</b>	<b>136,000</b>

According to data provided by the Town of Middletown, the following approximate trips have and will be generated by Westown development:

Time Period	New Trips
2003-2005	7,000
2005-2008	42,000
Under Construction	2,000
Approved	12,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>63,000</b>
Remaining Potential Trips	73,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>136,000</b>

**Note:** Growth in Westown is occurring faster than projected (63,000 trips from parcels that have been constructed, are under construction, or have been approved, in Westown, versus 32,000 trips by 2030, assumed in the latest 2008 land use forecasts).

Based on the latest Westown development plans,

- The 2030 Draft EIS traffic forecasts appear to represent an “upper bound” for the traffic projections in the study area, in the event that Westown fully develops by 2030.
- The current 2030 traffic forecasts do not reflect full build-out of the Westown development. Therefore, they appear to represent a conservative “lower bound” for the traffic projections.

The Spur Road can be expected to carry between 12,300 and 22,500 trips per day in 2030, depending on the amount of development completed in Westown by that time. The increase on other roadways in 2030, should the Spur Road not be constructed, might also be described by a range, again depending on the amount of development completed in Westown by that time.

### **Summary of Traffic Forecasts for the US 301 Project**

- The most recent land use forecasts (2008) show increased growth (both population and employment) in the MOT area for the year 2030 compared to the 2003 forecasts, but do not account for the potential full build-out of Westown as currently approved and planned by the Town of Middletown
- While the most recent land use forecasts show increased development in the MOT area, the forecasts also reflect decreases in the projections for total population and employment countywide, which could somewhat alter travel patterns throughout the county
- Even considering these factors, the latest 2030 traffic projections, even without the full build-out of Westown, result in over 12,000 motorists per day using the Spur Road
- Further expansion (e.g. build-out) of Westown beyond what is assumed in the current 2030 forecasts will result in additional traffic – both in Southern New Castle County and north-south across the C&D Canal (for example, on New US 301, the Spur Road, Existing US 301, and Choptank Road)
- The 2030 EIS Forecasts – based on land use assumptions made in 2003 and including full build out of Westown – indicated over 22,000 trips on the Spur Road
- If the Spur Road is removed from the US 301 project nearly all future traffic growth associated with Westown (before and after 2030) would occur on existing roads: Existing US 301, Choptank Road, etc. and on New US 301

## ***Appendix B – Comparison of Spur Road and Alternatives to the Spur Road***

The Department developed the Spur Road and each of the Spur Road Alternatives to a preliminary engineering level of detail (horizontal/vertical alignment, typical sections, cross sections, preliminary drainage and storm water management, limit of disturbance, etc.) and evaluated each of the alternatives regarding their ability to meet project purpose and need, along with their community, business, cultural, and natural environmental impacts, costs, and funding options, as summarized on the following four pages of this section and the comparison table on *Page B-6*.

The Department concluded that the Spur Road best meets the project purpose and need and the transportation/development needs of the rapidly growing Southern New Castle County area.

The project purpose and need is to:

- Manage traffic, remove thru traffic (especially trucks) from local roads
- Improve safety
- Reduce existing and future congestion

A majority of the comments received, during and after the March 23<sup>rd</sup> public workshop, indicated support for the Spur Road.

Alternative 1 does not meet project purpose and need. Alternative 2 does not best meet project purpose and need and results in greater impacts than the Spur Road. While Alternative 3 does meet project purpose and need, it also results in significant impacts to community, business, and natural environmental resources.

Pages B-2 through B-5 include a description, along with the advantages and disadvantages of the Spur Road and Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 to the Spur Road.

## FEIS/ROD Approved Spur Road

### Description:

The Spur Road provides a 2-lane, median divided, limited access roadway (one lane in each direction), from New US 301 in the vicinity of Armstrong Corner Road to Summit Bridge, including:

- North serving trumpet-type interchange between the Spur Road and Bethel Church Road Extended
- Y-type interchange with SR 896, south of Summit Bridge
- Overpasses of the Spur Road by Armstrong Corner Road, Old School House Road, and Churchtown Road
- Visual earth berm west of the Chesapeake Meadow community

### Advantages:

#### Manage Truck Traffic:

- Provides a limited-access highway (Spur Road) for thru-truck traffic from MD/DE Line to Summit Bridge
- Places 900 to 2,000 trucks per day, in 2030, on a safer limited-access highway (Spur Road), removing them from local roads

#### Safety:

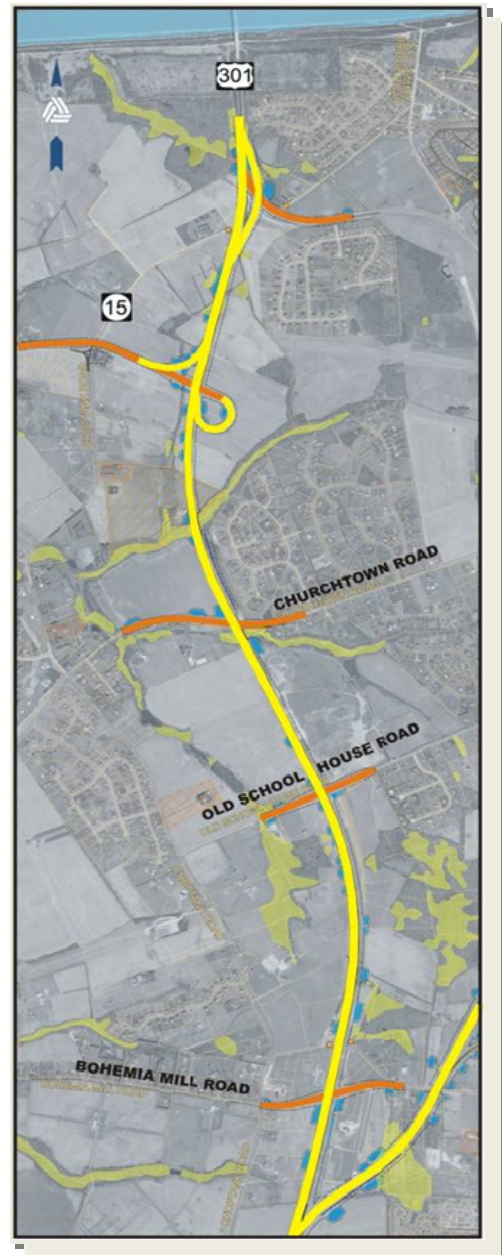
- Improves safety by moving regional traffic (especially trucks) to the Spur Road from local roads
- Reduces the projected traffic (2030) on Choptank Road and Existing US 301/SR 896, thus improving safety
- Places from 12,000 to 22,000 vehicles per day in 2030, depending on the level of Westown development completed at that time, on a safer limited-access roadway (Spur Road), removing those vehicles from local roads (Existing US 301 and Choptank Road)

#### Congestion:

- Provides an alternative route (Spur Road) should there be an incident on SR 1 north of the Biddles Toll Plaza, or on New US 301 between Middletown and SR 1
- Accommodates full potential for growth in Westown area

### Disadvantages:

- Cost - \$105 million in Year of Expenditure Dollars (Preliminary Estimate)
- Located within 600' of existing communities of Chesapeake Meadow & Summit Bridge Farms
- Impacts agricultural properties including a property with an agricultural easement



## Alternative 1: No Spur Road - No Upgrade of Existing US 301 -- "No Build"

### Advantages:

- Eliminates Spur Road impacts
- Reduces overall project costs (Preliminary Cost Estimate for Spur Road is \$105 million)

### Disadvantages:

#### Manage Truck Traffic:

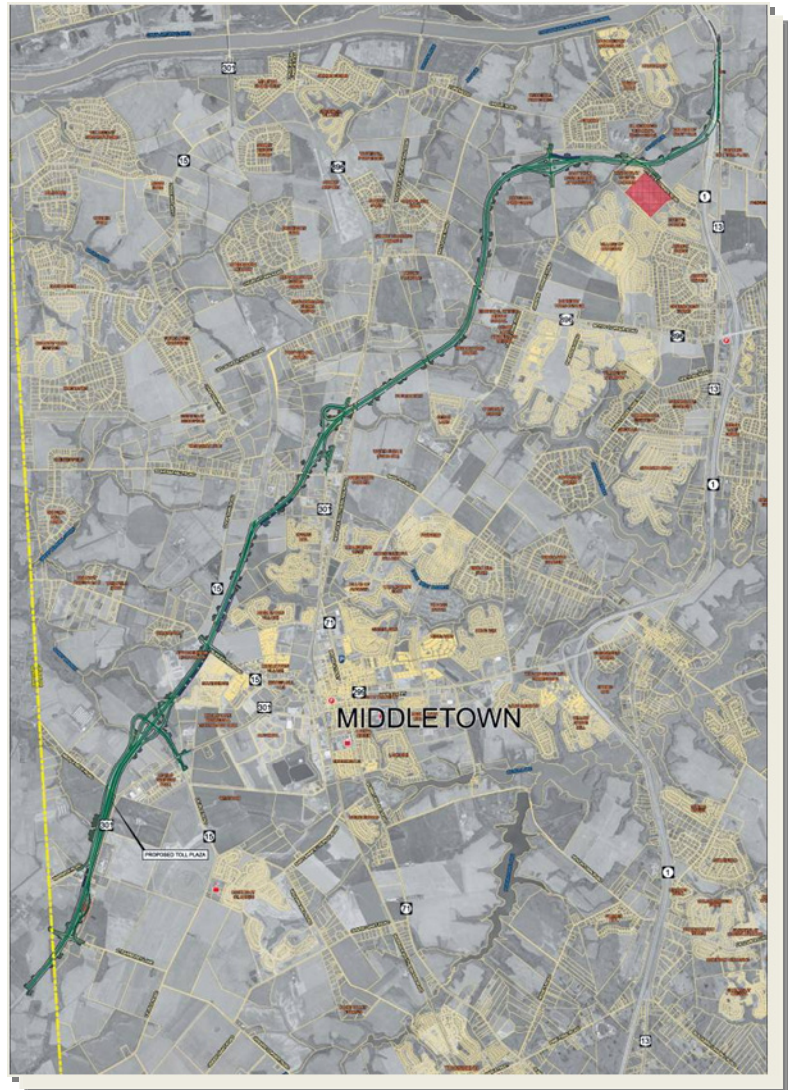
- Does not manage truck traffic since thru-truck traffic (to and from Summit Bridge) would use Existing US 301 from the new interchange between Existing and New US 301 (north of Armstrong Corner Road) and Summit Bridge, thus not separating regional traffic (especially trucks) from local traffic

#### Safety:

- Would not provide any safety benefits for traffic heading to and from Summit Bridge

#### Congestion:

- Does not reduce traffic on Existing US 301
- Does not reduce traffic on Choptank Road
- Does not provide a limited-access highway to Summit Bridge
- Does not accommodate full potential for growth in Westtown area







### Alternative 3: No Spur Road - Limited Access Highway along Existing US 301

#### Description:

Provides a Y-type interchange between New US 301 and an upgraded Existing US 301 – which would be converted into a limited access roadway to Summit Bridge. The freeway-type road would extend north along the west side of Existing US 301 to the vicinity of Summit Airport. The Spur Road would then cross Existing US 301 extending north along the east side of Existing US 301 and then curve west and north to Summit Bridge

#### Advantages:

- Manages Truck Traffic, Improves Safety and Congestion by providing a Spur Road-type roadway along Existing US 301:
- Since Alternative 3 is a limited access highway, it would be expected to provide benefits similar to the recommended Spur Road, including the management of truck traffic and improved safety and congestion:
- Provides a direct limited-access highway for thru-truck traffic to and from Summit Bridge
- Places more vehicles on a safer limited-access roadway, removing them from local roads with at-grade intersections, traffic signals and driveway access

#### Disadvantages:

- Costs associated with Alternative 3 would exceed those of the Spur Road, i.e. approximately \$165 million versus \$105 million (Preliminary Cost Estimates)
- The impacts to properties along Existing US 301 would be extraordinary, including Summit Airport, and their expansion plans, 12 homes and the Shoppes at Mt. Pleasant
- Potential Section 4(f) impacts (historic resources) at Mt. Pleasant Farm, due to proximity to Norfolk Southern Railroad
- Significantly greater impacts to natural resources than the Spur Road
- 13 acres of wetlands impacted as compared to 1.2 acres for the Spur Road
- 11.2 acres of forest impacted as compared to 6.7 acres for the Spur Road



### ***Appendix C - Toll Diversion Working Group***

During the pre-workshop community meetings and at the public workshop, concern was raised about potential diversion of traffic, particularly trucks, from New US 301 onto local roads, as a result of New US 301 being a tolled facility. This topic was previously evaluated and addressed by the Toll Diversion Working Group, which included representatives from Delaware and Maryland.

Eight (8) Recommendations (see appendix) were unanimously agreed upon by the Working Group and subsequently approved by the DelDOT Secretary of Transportation and Maryland State Highway Administrator, in order to minimize toll diversion and to keep traffic, especially thru truck traffic, on New US 301 and the Spur Road and off local roads.

#### Recommendations:

1. Commence a Traffic Monitoring Program to collect traffic data at 13 specific locations on roads in DE and MD before/after the opening of the proposed Weigh and Inspection Stations on US 301 and before/after the opening of the proposed Mainline US 301 toll plaza
2. Evaluation and implementation of additional truck restrictions on ten (10) specific local roads in Maryland and Delaware
3. Enhance the existing truck restriction signing on three specific routes
4. Consider various measures along MD 282 from Cecilton to Warwick to address excessive traffic speeds
5. Construct and operate a reasonable number of Virtual Weigh Stations (VWS) at appropriate locations as determined by the traffic monitoring program (At a minimum VWS's should be installed in both directions on MD 213 south of Cecilton.)
6. Provide enhanced truck enforcement:
  - Delaware should provide additional staffing at their future northbound weigh and inspection station to better match the proposed staffing of Maryland's southbound station
  - Both states should provide sufficient dedicated enforcement to adequately monitor all VWS's and all truck restrictions on local roads
  - Maryland should explore increased funding for staff & equipment to support the Maryland State Police in their enhanced truck enforcement efforts
  - Similarly, DelDOT should seek additional funding for truck diversion enforcement
7. Consider closing the median opening on US 301 at MD 299, providing U-turn locations on US 301 north and south of the intersection
8. Consider posting truck length restrictions on MD 213

As the foregoing recommendations suggest, the Toll Diversion Working Group's concern was more focused on the impact of the truck weigh stations (Northbound US 301 in Delaware (to open in 2009) and Southbound US 301 in Maryland (opened in 2008)) than with tolls on New US 301.

See [http://www.deldot.gov/information/projects/us301/pages/toll\\_diversion\\_wg.shtml](http://www.deldot.gov/information/projects/us301/pages/toll_diversion_wg.shtml) for the details of the Toll Diversion Working Group effort and results.