



DELAWARE

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS RELEASE

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## DelDOT Announces U.S. Route 301 Recommended Preferred Alternative

**Middletown** – The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) – in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers -- will hold public hearings Jan. 8 and 9 to present to the public the refined retained alternatives, including a recommended preferred alternative for a new U.S. Route 301. Simultaneously, DelDOT announces the publication of a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the project.

DelDOT is recommending the **Green North + Spur Road** (with Interchange **Option 2A** in the Armstrong Corner Road area and Spur Road **Option 3B**) after evaluating the public comments and input from five rounds of workshops held between June 2005 and April 2006, analysis and refinement of the alternatives by the Project Team, and consulting with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other federal and state environmental resource and regulatory agencies.

The hearings will be held Jan. 8 and 9 beginning at 4 p.m. at the Middletown Fire Hall, 27 W. Green Street, Middletown. Presentations will be held every half hour beginning at 4 p.m. and concluding at 6:30 p.m. Testimony may be given directly to a stenographer beginning at 4 p.m., and a traditional public hearing will begin at 7 p.m. There will be a sign up sheet to speak available at the hearing and at the project Web site at [www.us301.org](http://www.us301.org). Written comments will also be accepted until Feb. 3, 2007. The complete public notice is available at [www.us301.org](http://www.us301.org).

### **DETAILS OF THE RECOMMENDED PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

**The Green North + Spur Alternative** would provide a four-lane, limited access tolled highway constructed on new location, extending north from the Delaware/Maryland state line to north of Armstrong Corner Road, west of Middletown, then continuing generally northeast and interchanging with Route 1 north of the Biddles Corner Toll Plaza and south of the C&D Canal. Interchanges would be provided at Levels Road, existing U.S. 301 north of Armstrong Corner Road, and Jamison Corner Road. A two-lane, limited access spur roadway would extend from south of Armstrong Corner Road to just south of the Summit Bridge.

**Interchange Option 2A** would provide an interchange between New US 301 and existing US 301, approximately 1,000 feet north of the existing intersection of Armstrong Corner Road and existing US 301.

**Spur Road Option 3B** would provide a directional “Y” interchange between the Spur Road and SR 896, south of Summit Bridge. Bethel Church Road would be extended east to a north-serving interchange with the Spur

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Road. The existing sharp curve on SR 896, south of Summit Bridge, would be improved to current design standards and the existing traffic signal on the sharp curve would be removed.

Go to [www.us301.org](http://www.us301.org) to view the recommended preferred alternative.

### ***BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE***

The Green North + Spur Road has a number of significant advantages in comparison to the other three alternatives, including:

- The greatest public support from those who have expressed comments
- Can be constructed with the least impact on the traveling public and at a lower cost
- Attracts the greatest volume of traffic to new U.S. 301 and provides greatest relief to local roadways, including Cedar Lane Road, Boyds Corner Road, Route 299, and existing Route 301.
- Along with the Brown alternative, results in the greatest reduction in daily traffic on Choptank Road, when compared to the No Build option in year 2030 (15,200 to 5,100)
- Low impacts on existing and planned communities, schools and businesses
- Similar natural environmental and cultural (historic) resource impacts
- Avoids direct impacts to Middletown Baptist Church property and New Covenant Church

Earth berms would be provided, where feasible and prudent, to provide visual screening between adjacent communities and new roadways. In addition to providing visual benefits, the earth berms would also significantly reduce or eliminate noise impacts for the following communities: Southridge, Middletown Village, Springmill, Chesapeake Meadow, Ratledge Road, and Airmont.

### ***DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT***

DelDOT and the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) have also circulated a draft environmental impact study (DEIS) for public comments on the 301 project. The document presents the social, economic and environmental effects for all of the Build Alternatives and the No Build Alternative. Copies of the DEIS have been provided to all federal, state, and local resource agencies, elected officials, community organizations, and a number of other directly affected parties. The document is available on the project Web site at [www.us301.org](http://www.us301.org) and at the following locations: DelDOT, 800 Bay Road in Dover and 250 Bear-Christiana Road in Bear; U.S. 301 Project Office, 723 North Broad Street, Middletown (*Thursdays 3-7 p.m., and Saturdays 9 a.m.-1 p.m. from Nov. 16 through Feb. 3, 2007, not including holiday hours*); Federal Highway Administration, 300 South New Street, Room 2101, Dover; New Castle County Government Offices, 87 Reads Way, New Castle Corporate Commons, New Castle; WILMAPCO, 850 Library Avenue, Suite 100, Newark; and, Appoquinimink Public Library, 118 Silver Lake Road in Middletown. Call 866-485-9988 or go to [www.us301.org](http://www.us301.org) for dates and times to view the DEIS.

### ***PATH FORWARD***

DelDOT will consider the input from this sixth round of public workshops, the results of the Project Team's continuing detailed evaluation and the results of continued consultation with the environmental resource and regulatory agencies, in reaching an informed decision on a final preferred alternative, the next step in the project development process. A decision is anticipated on a preferred alternative in the spring of 2007, along with circulation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approval (Record of Decision) is anticipated in the summer of 2007.

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. As much as 30 percent of that traffic is generated by tractor-trailers. Meanwhile, between October 1999

and September 2004, there were 20 fatalities and 1,200 reportable crashes. More recently, between September 2004 and July 2005, 3 more fatalities have occurred on Route 301 south of the canal.

Although the U.S. 301 Project Development effort has moved forward expeditiously, it builds upon a number of planning efforts for the U.S. 301 Corridor over the past 40 years.

To comment and for more information:

- Visit the project Web site at [www.us301.org](http://www.us301.org).
- Call 866-485-9988, e-mail [dot-public-relations@state.de.us](mailto:dot-public-relations@state.de.us), or write to DelDOT Public Relations, Attn: U.S. 301 Project Development, P.O. Box 778, Dover, DE 19903.
- Visit the U.S. 301 Project Development Office in the Middletown Square Shopping Center, 723 North Broad St. Call 866-485-9988 or go to [www.us301.org](http://www.us301.org) for business hours.

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