

PROJECT HISTORY, VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

301 US 301 Project Development

Project History

1960-1990 - Early Studies

- Area changes from rural agricultural to suburban residential.
- Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) traffic volumes and congestion increase.
- Public interest in identifying and preserving potential roadway corridors to address needs.

1990 - 1994 - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

- Study area centered on US 301/SR 896 corridor.
- Alternatives identified and evaluated.
- DeIDOT Preferred Alternative selected (December 20, 1994).
 - Ridge Alternative (South of C&D Canal)
 - SR 896 Corridor (North of C&D Canal)
- DEIS Need for Improvements:
 - Study Area population projected to increase 65% and employment to increase 104% (1990 to 2020)
 - Regional thru-traffic to increase 2% per year
 - Result - significant congestion in the Study Area



1995-2000 - Major Investment Study (MIS)

- Prepared adhering "to the principles of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, including the consideration of alternatives and their environmental effects".
- Included informal Resource Agency study updates.
- Included public involvement: Stakeholders Steering Committee and Public Workshops.
- Emphasized multi-modal transportation solutions.



Vision

- The US 301 Project Development effort envisions a future for the greater Middletown / Odessa Area where:
 - The character and quality of life in the greater Middletown/Odessa Area have been enhanced and the area continues to be a safe and attractive place for residents to live, work and play and visitors to enjoy.
 - Businesses and housing have been preserved and improved and community services enhanced.
 - The historic, archaeological, agricultural and natural resources in the greater Middletown/Odessa Area have been protected while growth, both economic and residential, has been sustained.

Goals

- The end result of the US 301 Project Development effort will be a more efficient transportation infrastructure for the greater Middletown/Odessa Area that meets the following goals:
 - Support responsible and sustainable land development and economic growth while accommodating the anticipated growth in local, seasonal and through traffic.
 - Avoid negative impacts from transportation improvements to natural, cultural and historic resources.
 - Provide a limited access, through traffic route to points north and south of the project area.
 - Separate through (regional) and seasonal traffic, particularly trucks, from local traffic.
 - Preserve and enhance capacity on the existing road system.
 - Enhance the local road network and create a comprehensive transportation system that accommodates the needs of all modes of transportation serving the residents of the greater Middletown/Odessa Area.
 - Identify, in a timely manner, a preferred corridor for roadway improvements that minimizes impacts on existing natural, cultural and community resources and that is compatible with existing and planned economic development.
 - Optimize the use of transportation improvements included in DeIDOT's Capital Transportation Program (CTP) and WILMAPCO's Regional Transportation Plan in addressing project purpose and need.

Objectives

- The US 301 Project Development effort will pursue the following objectives in order to achieve the long term Vision and Goals. The Objectives will be used to develop, evaluate, compare and refine the improvement options.
 - Overall Transportation and Mobility/Accessibility
 - Separate local traffic from through traffic, especially truck traffic, and seasonal traffic.
 - Provide more travel options for residents.
 - Enhance facilities and services for pedestrians, bicycles and transit.
 - Provide improved operating conditions on area roadways.
 - Congestion
 - Provide additional capacity where needed to reduce traffic congestion.
 - Designate appropriate roadways for local and through (regional) traffic to limit negative traffic impacts on neighborhoods.
 - Improve traffic ingress and egress.
 - Safety
 - Improve safety by providing effective truck routes, improving access management and accessibility for emergency services, and adding pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
 - Separate through traffic, especially truck traffic, from local traffic, where possible.
 - Land Use Planning
 - Accommodate planned growth and the resulting traffic.
 - Continue to coordinate transportation improvements with existing and proposed land use patterns and utility systems.
 - Be consistent with Delaware's Strategies for State Policies and Spending, the Governor's Livable Delaware Initiative, DeIDOT's Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan, WILMAPCO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the New Castle County Comprehensive Plan, Middletown and Odessa's Comprehensive Plans.

Objectives

- Intergovernmental Coordination
 - Maintain the high level of cooperation and coordination among New Castle County, WILMAPCO, Middletown, Odessa, DeIDOT and other state agencies regarding the linkage between land use and transportation.
 - Comply with federal and state agency environmental and historic resource regulations and requirements.
 - Coordinate project efforts with the Maryland Department of Transportation and Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's Counties in Maryland.
- Environment
 - Where feasible, avoid adverse affects to farmland, historic, archaeological and natural resources.
 - Develop minimization and mitigation measures where avoidance is not feasible.
 - Balance environmental, economic and transportation benefits and impacts in the identification of alternatives and the recommendation of improvements.
- Aesthetics
 - Maintain and enhance the character of the greater Middletown/Odessa Area.
 - Use context sensitive design and construction techniques to minimize and mitigate impact.
 - Employ a full range of aesthetic options in addressing transportation needs.
- Public Outreach
 - Undertake comprehensive public outreach efforts to obtain and sustain citizen input.