
Downtown Dover Pathways Student Pop-Up, Bus Tour, and Partners Meeting 2

January 24, 2024
Dover, DE

Attendees

Marilyn Smith	Dover/Kent County MPO
Malcolm Jacob	Dover/Kent County MPO
Mike Petit de Mange	Dover/Kent County MPO
Michelle Vinson	Dover/Kent County MPO
Helen Wiles	Dover/Kent County MPO
Diane Laird	Downtown Dover Partnership
Tina Bradbury	Downtown Dover Partnership
Ken Anderson	Downtown Dover Partnership
Jordan Resh	Downtown Dover Partnership
Heather Saint	Bayhealth
Lynn Andrews	Bayhealth
Dina Vendetti	Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce
Chris Asay	Citizen
Chris Neaves	Citizen
Robby Sheehan	Citizen
Dennis Spence	Citizen
Dawn Melson-Williams	City of Dover
Jed Hatfield	Colonial Parking
Humaira Nabeela	Delaware Department of Transportation
Terrell Holmes	Delaware State University, Downtown
Quiana Hutchins	Delaware State University, Downtown
Tremica Cherry-Wall	Delaware Transit Corporation
Cathy Smith	Delaware Transit Corporation
Catherine Jenkins	Kent County Tourism Corporation
Linda Parkowski	Kent Economic Partnership
Reginald Daniell	NeighborGood Partners
Jeff Riegner	Kittelsohn & Associates
Tara Hofferth	Kittelsohn & Associates

DSU Student Pop-Up Event

Overview: We hosted a pop up in the College Center outside the dining hall from 10 am to noon.

Student Commuting Preferences

- Most students do not have a bike.
- A few students walk into downtown, but most tend to drive.
- Reasons for not walking: too far, inaccessible, lack of safety and lighting, no businesses that interest student body, “there is no reason to go there.”
- Some students feel that it is not safe to walk outside the campus “bubble.”
- Most students and staff choose to drive for convenience and security.
- The nursing students have class in Johnston Hall – they typically drive there.
- One student mentioned biking on the sidewalk because it does not feel safe to bike in the street.
 - He said that the sidewalk condition can make biking challenging.
- Students and staff said they are unsure what kinds of businesses and restaurants are Downtown.
 - More advertising and incentives are needed, such as bringing back First Friday or having a monthly student discount day.
- Some main campus students come to the Downtown campus because the dining hall is better.
- One shuttle per hour carries students from Main Campus to the Downtown Campus
 - Most people do not currently bike from one campus to the other.
 - One student said that he does bike because it is faster than the shuttle; he bikes on the sidewalk along US 13 to reach Downtown.
- Running is challenging due to the frequent breaks at busy roads, red lights, etc.

Study Considerations

- There are five residence halls that are part of the Downtown campus.
- Some students expressed interest in a shared bike or scooter system.
- There were suggestions to repair sidewalks.
- April Community Day would be a great time to advertise this study. (Dr. Quiana Hutchins will be in touch about this). This would also be a good time for restaurants to offer food samples.
- Other events like food truck festivals and farmers markets in Downtown could be a draw for students and staff.

Bus Tour

Overview: We travelled clockwise, stopping at the intersection of Water Street and New Street, then stopping at New Street and Reed Street, and then at Division Street and Bradford Street. The tour ended at the library, where the group discussed Lookerman Plaza.

Water Street / New Street

- Lighting is an issue.
- Flooding can be an issue, especially in the summer.

Reed Street

- Some parts of Reed St are one-way, and some are two-way – consider how the bicycle facility will work with that changing configuration.
- There are concerns about security around New Street and Reed Street.

Partners Meeting

Purpose: After the bus tour, the group gathered in the Dover Public Library for a presentation and discussion of the bicycle and pedestrian network.

Bicycle Network

- Chris said the intent was to connect the existing North Street path south one block on West, then east on Bank Lane.
- North Street may be too narrow and high-volume for a bicycle boulevard.
- In response to Diane's question, Tara and Jeff noted that parallel streets are better for bicycle facilities as compared to Lookerman Street through the Downtown core.
- Curb-to-curb dimensions – the team looked at these but didn't map them.
- Rob said there needs to be a good connection between Bayhealth and the DSU nursing building.
- He also suggested that separated bike lanes be provided on Governors Avenue between DSU and the hospital.
 - Attendees noted that this may require a lot of impacts to highly used parking.
- Chris sees New Street as a good option; he doesn't feel uncomfortable riding it.
 - Jeff cautioned that it's important to make sure routes feel comfortable at all times of day.
 - Heather drives Queen Street and New Street and has experienced several issues, even in a car.
 - There may be fewer security issues on Queen Street than New Street.

Pedestrian Network

- Dennis asked about considerations for people with disabilities.
 - All recommendations will need to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
 - The team's surveys did not explicitly ask about disability.

- Project recommendations will likely include upgrades to intersections specifically to address ADA compliance.
- Reginald asked about including the intersection of Division and West; this intersection falls outside the activity centers being looked at by this study.
- It was suggested that the intersection of State Street and Kings Highway be incorporated into the intersection improvements at State and Lookerman Streets.
- Helen said that the intersection of Lookerman and Bradford Streets would benefit from crossing improvements.
- Heather suggested including Governors Avenue and Water Street if it's not being addressed by the Family Court project.
 - Kittelson will verify street / intersection improvements being implemented by the Family Court project.
- Diane suggested decorative crosswalks at Division and Bradford Streets.
- Mike noted that some agencies may require mountable curb in median islands, which might defeat the purpose of protected people standing on the median.
 - The report should state that vertical curb is preferred.
 - Eastbound and westbound left turns could likely not occur at the same time if the median option is implemented at Division and Bradford Streets.
- Heather likes the curb extension option at Division and Bradford Streets.
 - More room for people to wait on the corner.
 - Division already weaves back and forth too much.
 - Terrell agreed.
- Dawn said that speed humps are not allowed in the City due to a firefighter injury that occurred many years ago.
 - Jeff suggested the plan should recommend revising that policy; speed humps are exceptionally effective and inexpensive, so they should be in the toolbox. They can be designed to create a speed profile that is safe for emergency responders.
- Heather and Dawn noted that the eastbound right turn lane on Water Street at Governors Avenue is essential.
 - There doesn't seem to be much interest in bicycle facilities in Water Street as opposed to Bank Lane.
 - It's still important to provide better pedestrian access on Water Street.
 - Mike added that the transit center should be connected to the rest of the city by bike.
 - Chris said there's a bike path (or wide sidewalk) along West Street.
 - Dawn noted that Queen Street is wide at Bank Lane and might be difficult to cross.
 - Diane likes green paint for bicyclist crossings.
 - Dennis said vehicle queuing needs to be better understood.

Lookerman Plaza

- Options:
 - Wider medians
 - Better crosswalks

- Change in materials so drivers would be “guests” in the pedestrian space
- Separated bike lanes
- Full redesign
- Many people cross at Federal Street even though there’s no crosswalk.
- Dawn agreed that the pavement is much too wide.
 - She referred to Transforming Downtown Dover recommendations at Lookerman, State, and Kings Highway.
- Dennis asked about features that shouldn’t be impacted.
 - The Christmas tree was mentioned by many attendees.
 - Clock.
 - Memorial plaza.
- Diane said this is an “anchor” for the whole area.

DSU Main Campus

- Two options to consider:
 - Bicycle facilities along College, McKee, and Salisbury Roads and North Street
 - Trail from College Road to Buttner Place (still a gap south of Walker Road)
- Chris likes the trail option.
- Dawn said that a shared use path is being developed on West Street.
- She added that security is a concern at the Electric Department.
- One DSU student we heard from today rides on the US 13 and State Street sidewalk between campuses.
- Dawn said there was a past study for the six-leg intersection at Governors Boulevard and Bradford and Ross Streets.
- Chris thinks a shared use path along US 13 is a possibility.

Dover Air Force Base

- Chris said there’s already pretty good wayfinding.
- Mike noted there’s a crosswalk across Route 10.