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Community Ideas Sought for Newark Bicycle Plan

The community is invited to share their ideas for bicycling in Newark at a public meeting on Wednesday, June 26, 7 p.m., at the Newark Bike Project on 7 South Main Street (formerly Elkton Road), Newark, DE. The Newark Bicycle Plan is being developed by the City of Newark, WILMAPCO, and the Newark Bicycle Committee to make bicycling a more safe and convenient choice for transportation and recreation for people of all ages and abilities.

At the public meeting, the community will:

- Get an overview of the Draft Newark Bicycle Plan
- Discuss what programs & policies can promote safer bicycling
- Brainstorm ways to encourage more people to bicycle and education the community about where and how to ride
- Learn about suggested bike routes and other improvements and offer additional ideas
- Tell planners top priorities for improvements

In addition to the public meeting, an ongoing Bicycle Plan Online Workshop is available at www.wilmapco.org/bikenewark. Here, participants can review the draft plan, fill out a survey, and add ideas to the map including where they would like more bike racks, locations where it is challenging to ride and recommended bike routes.

Recommendations will include bicycle routes and other infrastructure, education and safety programs, programs to encourage cycling, and maintenance programs. Development of the plan is being done in coordination with the update of Newark's Comprehensive Plan with an anticipated completion this fall. Example goals and recommendations include:

Improve bicycle transportation network.

Recommendations include a mix of on-street and pathway projects. This May, City of Newark implemented the top priority short term recommendation of adding sharrows (shared pavement markings) to Main Street.

Encourage adequate and secure bicycle parking at all major trip destinations.

Bicycle racks throughout the downtown and University are being added or upgraded based on public and committee input. In addition, Newark is currently revising bicycle parking requirements in the zoning codes based on the draft plan.

Improve safety for bicycling through design, maintenance, and enforcement practices.

The draft plan recommends safe design and maintenance best practices, enforcement measures and educational and promotional programs. Programs like the DelDOT led bicycle safety checkpoints and Newark Bike Project are helping to ensure that bicycles are fully functioning, have lights for nighttime use, and that cyclists are better informed about the laws and techniques for safer cycling.

The City of Newark is the region's only League of American Bicyclists Bicycle Friendly Community and is a place where bicycling is popular for both transportation and recreation. Four percent of Newark residents bicycle to work (2007-2011 American Community Survey) and 65 percent in Newark households engage in bicycling for recreation (Delaware Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan survey). For more information, visit www.wilmapco.org/bikenewark or call 302.737.6205.

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WILMAPCO is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for New Castle County, Delaware, and Cecil County, Maryland that is responsible for coordinating transportation planning in the region and involving the public to ensure that transportation projects will meet its needs. For more information about WILMAPCO visit www.wilmapco.org, call 302-737-6205, or call toll-free from Cecil County at 1-888-808-7088.

