Complete Streets in Delaware: A Guide for Local Governments

written by
Marcia S. Scott, Associate Policy Scientist
Claire M. Beck, Graduate Research Assistant
Brandon Rabidou, Graduate Research Assistant

prepared for
Delaware Department of Transportation

This work was sponsored and funded by the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT). The contents of this report reflect the views of the authors, who are responsible for the facts and accuracy of research. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official view of DelDOT.
Preface

In today’s car-dominated society, many people live in communities that lack accessibility, connectivity, well-maintained pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and accessible public transportation. To address this issue, a national movement to “complete the streets” is gaining momentum at the state and local levels. Delaware officially joined this initiative with an executive order signed by Governor Jack Markell in April 2009 to create a Complete Streets Policy. The Policy, implemented by DelDOT in December 2009, ensures that new and modified roads are routinely planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to allow safe access by all users.

Delaware’s Complete Streets Policy will result in a comprehensive, integrated, connected, safe, and multimodal transportation network with a variety of transportation options. While DelDOT is designing and constructing streets with all users in mind, Delaware local governments have authority for local land-use plans and policies, which may in discord with state policy. Local government officials can support Delaware’s Complete Streets Policy by developing land-use plans and policies to provide more balanced transportation systems and create healthier, active communities.

As the Director of the Institute for Public Administration, I am pleased to provide this publication—Complete Streets in Delaware: A Guide for Local Governments. The document is intended to help Delaware towns, cities, and counties achieve complete streets by evaluating the extent to which their community vision, plans, policies, design standards, and facility maintenance practices are consistent with complete-streets principles, and:

• Create safe and inviting road networks for all users.

• Transform a vision for complete streets into plans, policies, design standards, and maintenance practices.

• Ensure that transportation facilities are constructed and maintained to ADA standards.

• Visualize how to balance the needs of all roadways users and transform existing roadways to complete streets.

I hope this resource will inspire Delaware local governments to incorporate complete-streets principles and concepts within comprehensive plans and policies—i.e., subdivision, unified development, and zoning codes. Local land-use and policy decisions, which are aligned with the state’s Complete Streets Policy, will result in communities that are more accessible, livable, and multimodal for Delaware residents and visitors.

Jerome R. Lewis, Ph.D.
Director, Institute for Public Administration
Acknowledgements

The University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration (IPA) prepared Complete Streets in Delaware: A Guide for Local Governments. IPA is a public service unit within the College of Arts & Sciences’ School of Public Policy & Administration.

To meet the needs of local governments, IPA offers training programs, technical assistance, and resources for Delaware local government public officials. One resource is IPA’s online Toolkit for a Healthy Delaware: Bringing Communities and Health Together. A Complete Streets section of the Toolkit was added in July 2011. This section provides an overview of complete-streets principles, benefits of complete streets, the State of Delaware’s Complete Streets Policy, Delaware local government complete-streets implementation strategies, information on technical and funding assistance, and before-and-after complete-streets visualizations. This resource may be viewed online (www.ipa.udel.edu/healthyDEtoolkit/completestreets).

Funding from the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) made this research possible. IPA acknowledges the professionals, scholars, and colleagues, who supported the research and the “Planning Complete Streets” (Planning 209) workshop held on June 9, 2011.

Institute for Public Administration

Principal Investigator and Project Manager
Marcia S. Scott, Associate Policy Scientist

Authors
Marcia S. Scott, Associate Policy Scientist
Claire M. Beck, Graduate Research Assistant
Brandon Rabidou, Graduate Research Assistant

Technical Assistance and Editorial Review
Mark Deshon, Assistant Policy Scientist
Nicole Frost, Undergraduate Public Administration Fellow

Delaware Department of Transportation

Ralph Reeb, Assistant Director, Division of Planning
Roberta Geier, Assistant Statewide & Regional Planning Director
Anthony Aglio, Statewide Bicycle Coordinator
Marco Boyce, RLA, Planning Supervisor

Delaware Center for Transportation T² Center
Matheu J. Carter, PE, Municipal Engineering Circuit Rider

Nemours Health and Prevention Services
Patti Miller, Senior Policy Analyst
# Table of Contents

*Section*  

**Executive Summary**  

1. Why Complete Streets?  
   1-1. Problem Statement  
   1-2. Consequences of an Unbalanced Transportation System  

2. What Are Complete Streets?  
   2-1. Definition of Complete Streets  
   2-2. Complete Streets as One Approach to Community Livability  

3. What Are the Benefits of Complete Streets?  
   3-1. Safety  
   3-2. Health  
   3-3. Environment  
   3-4. Smart Mobility  
   3-5. Inclusive Physical Environments  
   3-6. Walkability and Economic Vitality  
   3-7. Responds to Housing Market Preferences  

4. What Are Characteristics of Complete Streets?  
   4-1. Complete Streets Are Flexible  
   4-2. Complete Streets Are Accessible  
   4-3. Complete Streets Provide Multimodal Transportation Options  
   4-4. Complete Streets Are Vibrant Centers of Activity  
   4-5. Complete Streets Have Common Features and Design Elements  
   4-6. Summary  

5. What Is the History of Complete Streets?  
   5-1. National Complete Streets Movement  
   5-2. Federal Role in Completing the Streets  
   5-3. State Leadership Role in Complete Streets  
   5-4. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Complete Streets  
   5-5. Local Governments and Complete Streets
# Table of Contents (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. What Is Delaware’s Complete Streets Policy?</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-1. History</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-2. Delaware’s Complete Streets Policy</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-3. Walkable, Bikeable Delaware</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-4. Funding Assistance for Complete-Streets Projects</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. How Can Delaware Local Governments Implement Complete Streets?</strong></td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-1. Community Vision</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-2. Local Government Plans</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-3. Local Government Policies</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-4. Design Standards</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-5. Facility Maintenance</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8. How Are Delaware Local Governments Progressing Toward Complete Streets?</strong></td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-1. Delaware Local Government Support of State Policy</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-2. Delaware Local Government Comprehensive Plans and Complete Communities</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-4. Delaware Local Government Policies and Complete Streets</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9. How Can Delaware Local Governments Learn More About Complete Streets?</strong></td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-1. IPA’s Professional Development and Training for Local Governments</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-2. IPA’s Toolkit for a Healthy Delaware</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-3. Complete-Streets Section of Toolkit for a Healthy Delaware</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-4. Before-and-After Visualizations</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendices**

iv