Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware

Strategic Promotion and Dissemination of the Online Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox

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Preface

In fiscal year 2012, the Institute for Public Administration (IPA) at the University of Delaware initiated the Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware project, in collaboration with the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) and Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC), to develop a broad framework to plan for complete communities in Delaware. Initial and subsequent phases enabled IPA to host two Delaware Complete Communities summits in 2012 and 2013, facilitate ongoing planning-education training and specialized workshops, and launch the online Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox (completecommunitiesde.org) in 2014.

The Toolbox has three major sections and is designed to build local-government capacity to develop complete-communities planning approaches, community-design tools, and public-engagement strategies. In fiscal year (FY) 2015, the Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware Phase IV project initiated strategic Toolbox promotion and dissemination to publicize aspects and features of the website and determine what content is useful and which features need to be modified or augmented. Since initiating the Toolbox marketing plan, page views have almost doubled and users are viewing more pages per session and staying on the site longer.

We sincerely appreciate the time commitment and support of those who contributed to the success of this project. We hope our work will help Delaware local governments build livable and resilient communities while preserving the many characteristics that make each community unique, healthy, and prosperous.

Jerome R. Lewis, Ph.D.

Director, Institute for Public Administration
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Executive Summary

In January 2014, the Institute for Publication (IPA) at the University of Delaware launched the online Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox (completecommunitiesde.org). The website was designed to be visually appealing and provide three major sections of resources to build local-government capacity to develop complete-communities planning approaches, community-design tools, and public-engagement strategies. Since January 2014, more than 20 new content areas have been added.

When the Toolbox was first introduced in 2014, the official “launch” and promotion of the site was delayed to direct attention to the state’s new Downtown Development Districts initiative. The Toolbox project team took advantage of this downtime and used it as an opportunity to request feedback on the functionality and content of the Toolbox and to develop a full promotional strategy for the Toolbox.

In FY 2015 (July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015), the Toolbox generated 5,187 sessions and attracted nearly 4,000 new visitors (77%) and over 1,000 returning visitors (23%). Based on metrics for top “landing pages,” or the web page where a user enters the website, the most popular topics included streetscaping, transit-oriented development, public engagement, and visual preference surveys. The affiliated YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/user/CompleteCommunities) featured 35 videos. In FY 2015, 3,684 videos were viewed.

This Phase IV project initiated strategic Toolbox promotion and dissemination to publicize aspects and features of the website and determine what content is useful and which features need to be modified or augmented. In August 2015, social media campaigns for Twitter and Facebook were launched. The Delaware League of Local Governments, Sussex County Association of Towns, Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association, Newark Rotary, and Delaware Institute for Local Government Leaders all featured presentations on the Toolbox. A presentation is scheduled for the Delaware Municipal Web Developers Group in 2016. Since initiating the Toolbox marketing plan, page views have almost doubled, and users are viewing more pages per session and staying on the site longer.

FY 2016 is on track to surpass FY 2015 engagement levels. In fewer than six months (July 1, 2015–December 5, 2015), the Toolbox generated 3,198 sessions and attracted nearly 2,328 new visitors (73%) and 870 returning visitors (27%). The most popular topics included streetscaping, economic development, transit-oriented development, and benefits of mixed-use development. The YouTube channel now has 37 videos, with an additional 974 views. The top five videos are Proposed Delaware Avenue Cycle Track (two versions); Rural Land Management Tools: Transfer of Development Rights;
Designing Better Places: Section 1; and Park and Recreation Master Planning. With the implementation of social media strategies on Facebook and Twitter, engagement on both platforms has more than doubled. The Facebook page has earned 70 more likes (followers) and reached as many as 53 of those followers at any given time (compared to six prior to the campaign). Similarly, project tweets are viewed as much as 6,000 times, compared to 1,000 times prior to the campaign. Most notably, stakeholders are actively engaging with posts, by retweeting and replying to posts.
Needs Assessment

Project History

Website Development

The online Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox (completecommunitiesde.org) was originally launched in January 2014, two months after the successful Complete Communities Delaware Summit 2013 was held the previous November. The home page of the website was subsequently redesigned to feature a scrolling banner and more prominently showcase the three major sections of resources intended to build local-government capacity to develop complete-communities planning approaches, community-design tools, and public-engagement strategies.

When the Toolbox was first introduced in 2014, the official “launch” and promotion of the site was delayed to focus attention on the newly introduced Downtown Development Districts initiative. The Toolbox project team took advantage of this downtime by using it as an opportunity to add additional content to the site and improve site functionality.

Initial Launch

In November 2014, the project team sent an email (see Figure 1: Survey and Launch Email) announcing the Toolbox launch to the Complete Communities Summit listserv. This email included a link to a survey asking stakeholders to comment on the functionality and content of the Toolbox. The email was sent to 563 people that included planning professionals, elected officials, planning commission members, and other practitioners. The email generated an “open” rate of 39.8 percent—the industry average is 22 percent. In the same month, the Delaware League of Local Governments Executive Director Carl Luft invited Marcia Scott and Sarah Pragg to present the Toolbox at the November league meeting. The attendees were introduced to Complete Communities planning principles and were given a visual tour of the website (see Figure 2: Delaware League of Local Governments Program Details from Meeting on November 13, 2014 and Figure 3: Sample Slides from Presentation to Delaware League of Local Governments on November 2014). Attendees were also invited to take the online survey (see Figure 4, Figure 5, Figure 6).

Survey Results

While more than 500 people were invited take the survey, the response rate was very low. Only 15 people responded; and therefore, the results of the survey cannot be considered statistically significant. However, one trend is worth noting. When asked about preference for ways Toolbox content is presented, responders ranked “Scrolling banners on Toolbox’s home page” and “Photos
and/or illustrations” as first and second choices. Consistent with best practices for web design, it is clear that visual content is crucial to the success of the website.

**Website Overview**

**Purpose**

A “complete” community promotes healthy lifestyles, economic growth, and sustainability through an integrated approach to transportation, land-use, and community design. The online *Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox* is a resource for community leaders and local government officials to utilize:

- Complete-communities planning approaches in five key areas of land-use and development.
  1. Complete Streets
  2. Efficient Land Use
  3. Healthy and Livable
  4. Inclusive and Active
  5. Sustainable and Resilient

- Community-design tools to create places that are dynamic and reflect community changes, oriented toward people not cars, reflective of a town’s architectural and cultural heritage, visually attractive and enjoyable, accessible and inclusive, and economically vibrant.

- Public-engagement strategies to foster communication with residents about community development plans.

The resources within the *Toolbox* are researched, developed, and written by IPA undergraduate and graduate Public Administration Fellows and vetted by IPA professional staff prior to being uploaded to the website. The resources are presented in multiple formats, including written text, visual presentations, infographics, photos, videos, and ArcGIS Story Maps to appeal to both trained planners and engaged citizens, all of whom utilize various learning styles. Wherever possible, the best practices highlighted on the website showcase communities in Delaware.

**Usage and Target Audience**

Confirmed in conversations with our stakeholders, the website is primarily utilized by citizen planners and local government officials in the following five ways to:

1. Educate their clients, citizens, colleagues, or other stakeholders.
2. Refresh their own understanding of planning approaches.
3. Learn new skills for planning or public engagement.
4. Find inspiration and inventive solutions for upcoming projects.
5. Review featured Delaware best practices.
With this in mind, the promotional strategy should target municipal leaders and “complete communities” champions in Delaware, knowing that if they find the Toolbox to be a useful resource, they will share the resources with colleagues and citizens.

Municipalities that have implemented complete-community planning approaches and show interest in continuing to do so include Newark, Middletown, Elsmere, Wilmington, Dover, Smyrna, Milford, Bethany Beach, Rehoboth Beach, Lewes, and Georgetown.

The following organizations and training programs were identified as stakeholder groups for the purpose of promoting the Toolbox.

- Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA Delaware)
- Bike Delaware, Inc.
- American Heart Association
- Sussex Outdoors
- Sussex County Association of Towns (SCAT)
- Delaware League of Local Governments (DLLG)
- Governor’s Council on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
- Delaware Coalition for Healthy Eating and Active Living (DE HEAL)
- IPA’s Delaware Institute for Local Government Leaders
- IPA’s Delaware Planning Education Program
- IPA’s Municipal Clerks Certificate Training Program
- Delaware Association of REALTORS® (DAR)
- Municipal Web Developers Group

**Challenges**

**Project Evolution**

Completecommunitiesde.org faced a branding challenge because many members of the target audience are familiar with the site for hosting pilot community research in 2012 and summit information in 2012 and 2013. They did not know the website had been transformed into a content-rich resource. At a presentation to the Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) on December 8, 2015, a member noted with surprise that the website had changed significantly since the 2013 summit, underscoring the need to communicate to our audience how much the website has evolved (see Figure 7 for a sampling of slides presented to Delaware APA).
Methodology

Promotional Plan

Once IPA received a “notice to proceed” from DelDOT, the project team prepared an internal Toolbox promotion plan. This plan described strategies to be undertaken in successive stages consisting of (1) planning and curating content, (2) initiating a promotional “soft launch,” (3) conducting a promotional “full launch,” (4) presenting the Toolbox to stakeholder groups, and (5) commencing the long-term promotional strategy. Tasks associated with each stage were identified. A thematic content calendar was prepared to provide a monthly action plan for disseminating and highlighting key content areas of the Toolbox via various social media platforms. The internal Toolbox promotion plan was updated in June and September 2015 to refine the thematic content, social media schedule, analytics monitoring, and outreach plan—including presentations to stakeholder groups.

Promotional Messages

The promotional “full launch” of the Toolbox was conducted over a period of six months, with the goal of promoting IPA’s online Delaware Complete Communities Toolbox. The strategy focused on four specific messages:

1. Use the Toolbox—First and foremost, IPA’s project team wants to encourage stakeholders to visit the Toolbox and explore the content.

2. Share the Toolbox—Second, IPA’s project team wants stakeholders to share links to Toolbox content with colleagues, clients, and community members who would find it beneficial. In the same manner, IPA’s project team will encourage stakeholders to add a link to the Toolbox on their agencies’ websites.

3. Provide Feedback—Third, IPA’s project team wants the Toolbox to be an effective and helpful resource. Throughout the promotional campaign, IPA’s project team will welcome comments on how to improve the site and its content. Initially, IPA’s project team was asked to establish a working group to evaluate the Toolbox. However, IPA’s project team sought to engage directly with stakeholders throughout the outreach campaign to strengthen relationships, rather than limit feedback to a smaller group.

4. Stay Connected—Fourth, IPA’s project team will use social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube to connect with a broader audience, which may not be accessible through traditional in-person meetings, and feature new content and best practices of the Toolbox.
Promotional Tools and Design Improvements

To aid in promoting the Toolbox, several marketing pieces were developed including a business card, flyer, and tabletop presentation board (Figure 8, Figure 9, and Figure 10). In addition to marketing materials, IPA’s project team also implemented design improvements to enhance the functionality of the Toolbox. A website rotating banner was added to the home page to showcase new Toolbox content (Figure 14). The visual hierarchy of the website home page was improved to better highlight the Toolbox content. A new image was designed for the website header that includes a toolbox icon (see Figure 15). The Toolbox content was moved to the primary horizontal menu and highlighted in green. In addition, the social media icons were enlarged and linked directly to each social media page. The photo gallery was also reorganized to better showcase the variety of publicly available images on Google Photos.

Outreach Methods

In the process of developing the promotional strategy, there were three distinguishable methods of outreach: (1) presentations to stakeholders, (2) social media, and (3) articles in stakeholder publications. The strategy implementation calendar details activities for each month of the project (see Figure 16).

Presentations to Stakeholder Agencies

Presentations to stakeholder agencies are understood to be the most effective method of outreach as they provide the opportunity to highlight key components of the Toolbox and answer questions from the crowd. The full list of identified stakeholders is listed on page 5. A list of stakeholder meetings that contributed to each phase of outreach activities is provided (see Table 1).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group/Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th># Attending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Clerks Certificate Training Program</td>
<td>9/19/14</td>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware League of Local Governments Meeting</td>
<td>11/17/14</td>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Clerks Certificate Training Program</td>
<td>4/10/15</td>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DelDOT Research Showcase</td>
<td>5/5/15</td>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 Walkable, Bikeable Delaware Summit</td>
<td>5/7/15</td>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>100+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex County Association of Towns Meeting</td>
<td>9/9/15</td>
<td>Georgetown</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Web Developers Group</td>
<td>9/17/15</td>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware Institute for Local Government Leaders</td>
<td>10/2/15</td>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government Leadership 101: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Ethics for Local Officials</td>
<td>11/13/15</td>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware League of Local Governments Meeting</td>
<td>11/17/15</td>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware APA Annual Meeting</td>
<td>12/8/15</td>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newark Morning Rotary Club</td>
<td>12/17/15</td>
<td>Newark</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social Media Campaign**

Social media provides an outlet to highlight content and connect with a more regional or national audience that might not be accessible through traditional in-person meetings. Making connections on a wider scale adds credibility to the project and also increases visibility of project work.

Knowing that the majority of the Delaware Complete Communities Toolbox audience would be targeted in a professional capacity through a state agency or local government connection, social media posts were scheduled during business hours (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in the morning or afternoon). Facebook posts included strong visuals and longer messages that could highlight detailed content of the Toolbox (see Figure 17: Complete Communities Facebook Page). Twitter posts included shorter questions and statements related to Complete Community themes (see Figure 18: Complete Communities Twitter Page). Every second, on average, around 6,000
tweets are posted on Twitter. Therefore, wherever possible, our posts included Twitter handles of stakeholder agencies and relevant hashtags to better catch the attention of target audience members (see Tables 2 and 3 below).

**Table 2: Relevant Social Media Hashtags**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Hashtags</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#urbanplanning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#cplan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#econdev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#smartgrowth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#netde</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Search Tool: [http://hashtagify.me/hashtag/urbanplanning](http://hashtagify.me/hashtag/urbanplanning)*

**Table 3: Sample of Identified Twitter Accounts to Follow**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Handle</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>@CityofNewarkDE</td>
<td>cityofnewarkde.us</td>
<td>Official account for the City of Newark, Delaware.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@NextCityOrg</td>
<td>nextcity.org</td>
<td>Nonprofit organization with a mission to inspire social, economic, and environmental change in cities by creating media and events around the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@StreetsblogNet</td>
<td>streetsblog.net</td>
<td>National blog network for sustainable transport, smart growth, and livable streets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@smartgrowthUSA</td>
<td>smartgrowthamerica.org</td>
<td>Advocates for people who want to live and work in great neighborhoods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@completestreets</td>
<td>completестreets.org</td>
<td>Organization that integrates people and place in the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of our transportation networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@westsidegrowsde</td>
<td>westsidegrows.org</td>
<td>A coalition that aims to grow neighborhoods, businesses, public places, and people on Wilmington’s West Side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@APA_Planning</td>
<td>planning.org</td>
<td>An independent, not-for-profit educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@ArtsDelaware</td>
<td>artsdel.org</td>
<td>Organization that nurtures and supports the arts to enhance the quality of life for all Delawareans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@DelawareForests</td>
<td>dda.delaware.gov/forestry</td>
<td>State agency that helps Delawareans manage and improve their forest resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@technicallyDE</td>
<td>technical.ly/Delaware</td>
<td>Statewide tech news and events group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@DEGreenways</td>
<td>delawaregreenways.org</td>
<td>Nonprofit organization that preserves and enhances Delaware’s natural, scenic, historic, cultural, and recreational resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@Bike_DE</td>
<td>bikede.org</td>
<td>Nonprofit organization that aims to make cycling a safe, convenient, and fun transportation option in Delaware.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@DelawareGlobal</td>
<td>global.delaware.gov</td>
<td>Promotes business in Delaware.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@DARTfirststate</td>
<td>dartfirststate.com</td>
<td>Official account for the Delaware Transit Corporation (DART).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@DEREALTORS</td>
<td>delawarerealtor.com</td>
<td>The Delaware Association of REALTORS sponsored the Complete Communities Summits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, both Twitter and Facebook posts promoted new content and videos (see Table 4, 5, and 6 below).

**Table 4: Content Added in FY 2015 through December 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Americans with Disabilities Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit Improvement Districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkable Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infill and Redevelopment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-Use Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning for Aging-Friendly Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation Master Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placemaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Development Districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS Story Maps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Building Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Land Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5: Videos Added in FY 2015 through December 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Month Uploaded to YouTube</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware</td>
<td>December 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating the Complete Communities Toolbox</td>
<td>December 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADA Short Audit Demo</td>
<td>December 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving from Smart Growth to Sustainable and Complete Communities</td>
<td>November 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Built Environment and Healthy Communities</td>
<td>November 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits and Economic Implications of Complete Streets Policies</td>
<td>October 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkable Communities</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed Delaware Avenue (Newark, Del.) Cycle Track: A Cyclist’s Perspective</td>
<td>January 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Improvement Districts</td>
<td>January 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation Master Planning</td>
<td>December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Building Practices</td>
<td>December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-Use Development</td>
<td>December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infill Development</td>
<td>December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Land Management Tools</td>
<td>October 2014 (5 videos)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 6: Thematic Social Media Content Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Community Building and the Built Environment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>What Completes a Community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Rise of Urban Town Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Changing Demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Complete Communities in Delaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Getting Started</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introducing the <em>Toolbox</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Planning Tools Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Community-Design Tools Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Public Engagement Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Engagement Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Best Practices in Planning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Downtown Development Districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Transit-Oriented Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Planning for Aging Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>What Makes a Walkable Community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Best Practices in Community Design Tools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Better Models for Development in Delaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Secrets of Successful Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Design Principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Designing Better Places Videos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Best Practices in Public Engagement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>CommunityViz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Charrette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Visual Preference Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Seasons Greetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Poll: Reflecting on 2015, Best Tools in the Box</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Features in Stakeholder Publications

Stakeholder endorsements impact the perceived credibility and quality of a product. To further promote the Toolbox, IPA’s project team asked stakeholders to endorse the website by featuring it on their websites and in their publications. For example, the Office of State Planning Coordination links directly to the Delaware Complete Communities Toolbox from an icon on its home page (see Figure 19). Delaware’s Municipal Web Developers Group included an article about promoting the Toolbox on its website (see Figure 20). The Toolbox has also been featured in several articles in TranSearch, a newsletter published by the Delaware Center for Transportation at the University of Delaware (see Figure 21).
Tracking Performance

To measure the impact of this promotional effort and document its performance, IPA’s project team utilizes Google Analytics to track traffic and understand how users engage with the website and specific webpages. Google Analytics monitors website traffic through a variety of metrics including user site visits, page views, bounce rate, average time on site, pages per visit, and percentage of new visits. In addition, each of the project’s social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) has its own analytical insights.

Activities Prior to Campaign Launch

In FY 2015 (July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015), the Toolbox generated 5,187 sessions and attracted nearly 4,000 new visitors (77%) and over 1,000 returning visitors (23%). Based on metrics for top “landing pages,” or the page where a user entered the website, the most popular topics included streetscaping, transit-oriented development, public engagement, and visual preference surveys.

The affiliated YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/user/CompleteCommunities) featured 35 videos. In FY 2015, 3,684 videos were viewed. The top five videos include the Proposed Delaware Avenue Cycle Track (two versions); Designing Better Places: Section 1 – Introduction and Prospect-and-Refuge Theory; Community Engagement in the 21st Century; and Rural Land Management Tools: Transfer of Development Rights.

Activities After Campaign Launch

FY 2016 is on track to surpass FY 2015 engagement levels. Thus far, from July 1, 2015 to December 5, 2015, the Toolbox generated 3,198 sessions and attracted nearly 2,328 new visitors (73%) and 870 returning visitors (27%). The most popular topics included streetscaping, economic development, transit-oriented development, and benefits of mixed-use development. The YouTube channel now has 37 videos, with an additional 974 views. The top five videos are Proposed Delaware Avenue Cycle Track (two versions); Rural Land Management Tools: Transfer of Development Rights; Designing Better Places: Section 1; and Park and Recreation Master Planning.

Social Media Performance

With the implementation of social media strategies on Facebook and Twitter, engagement on both platforms has more than doubled. The Facebook page has earned 70 more likes (followers) and reached as many as 53 of those followers at any given time (compared to six prior to the campaign). Similarly, tweets are viewed as much as 6,000 times, compared to 1,000 times prior to the campaign. Most notably, stakeholders are actively engaged with posts, especially on Twitter, as shown in Figure 22: Complete Communities Twitter Notifications.
### Table 7: Facebook Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>As of 7/26/15</th>
<th>As of 12/22/15</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page Likes</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>135%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Reach</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>783%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8: Twitter Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>As of 7/26/15</th>
<th>As of 12/22/15</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tweets</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>506%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followers</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>186%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>1,740%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impressions</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>500%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 9: Sample Facebook Posts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>Visit the Public-Engagement Strategies section and learn how to achieve public involvement, educate citizens, engage community members, and gain input from stakeholders to plan for complete communities. <a href="http://bit.ly/tMQyhtA">bit.ly/tMQyhtA</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/2</td>
<td>Geographic Information System (GIS) technology helps stakeholders visualize, analyze, and communicate about important community planning decisions. CommunityViz® used this technology for a case study on @SussexCountyDelaware and the @CityOfMilford to create composite scenarios that served as the basis of a land use master plan. <a href="http://bit.ly/1HAelfH">bit.ly/1HAelfH</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/11</td>
<td>Public Engagement Plans (PEP) outline how to involve the public in a planning project by describing goals and objectives while identifying specific approaches and tools. A great example of a public engagement plan currently being used in Delaware is @WilmingtonAreaPlanningCouncil’s Public Participation Plan. <a href="http://bit.ly/1XCF4tR">bit.ly/1XCF4tR</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/21</td>
<td>@Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization’s 2014 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Virtual Video Tour includes an overview of TIP features, clickable map pins on a Google map, and video tours of eleven sites. <a href="http://bit.ly/1MQNLOo">bit.ly/1MQNLOo</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 10: Sample Twitter Posts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/2</td>
<td>Learn how GIS technology helped Community Viz® create a land use master plan for Sussex County and @MilfordDE. <a href="http://bit.ly/1HAelfH">http://bit.ly/1HAelfH</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 12/7 | **Tweet 1:** Charrette-style planning is a collaborative session where a group of designers draft solutions to a design problem  
**Tweet 2:** See how the @townofsmyrna has benefited from the NCI System™ [http://bit.ly/1l2ui4h](http://bit.ly/1l2ui4h) #NetDE #smartgrowth |
| 12/11 | Learn the Ten Principles of Local Government Public Engagement! #smartgrowth [http://bit.ly/1Ik6eEg](http://bit.ly/1Ik6eEg) |
| 12/18 | @Dartfirststate uses high-tech and high-touch engagement by providing website users with Google Transit Maps and virtual tours |
| 12/28 | Ever heard of @bubbl_us? It’s an easy-to-use platform for collaborative brainstorming and mind mapping—great for public engagement! |
Path Forward

Since initiating the Toolbox marketing plan, page views have almost doubled, and users are viewing more pages per session and staying on the site longer. However, the marketing strategy contract ends on December 31, 2015. After this date, all of the momentum promoting the Toolbox will come to a halt. With the social media accounts going quiet and promotion efforts ending, this could suggest to our stakeholders that Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware is no longer a priority.

To continue building local-government capacity to develop complete-communities planning approaches in Delaware, the next phase of this marketing plan should continue with little disruption. A calendar year 2016 (CY 2016) project proposal for “Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware, Phase V: Support, Development, Promotion, and Maintenance of the Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox” has been submitted to DelDOT. This phase will continue to build on the existing momentum to increase exposure of the online Toolbox. It will provide for opportunities to add online content, improve curation techniques, expand outreach via social media, and enhance web presence and content. Work areas include the following:

**Enhance Web Presence**

- Implement search engine optimization of website.
- Improve mobile navigation.
- Research and implement the use of content marketing tools for nonprofits.

**Enhance Content Presentation**

- Develop videos, infographics, and illustrations to further explain/promote Toolbox concepts.
- Develop a series of GIS Story Maps that showcase best practices with regard to complete communities implementation strategies in Delaware.
- Enhance video/graphic development and visualization tools.

**Continue Toolbox Promotion Techniques**

- Email marketing to Complete Communities mailing lists for each addition to the Toolbox (monthly or quarterly).
- Continue building social media presence and followers to highlight existing and new Toolbox components.
- Distribute flyer showing Toolbox content and features to stakeholder groups.
- Feature in upcoming stakeholder newsletters (DCT’s TranSearch, WILMAPCO’s Transporter newsletter, Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Journeys newsletter,
and the Delaware Chapter of American Planning Association newsletter).

- Presentation of Toolbox functionality to/at:
  - Local stakeholder groups
    - Governor’s Council on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
    - Delaware Coalition for Healthy Eating and Active Living (DE HEAL)
    - Municipal Web Developers Group
  - Institute for Public Administration training events
    - Delaware Planning Education Program
    - Municipal Clerks Certificate Training Program

**Continue to Track Performance Metrics**

- Use Google Analytics to track website traffic, understand how users engage with the website and specific webpages, and document performance.
- Assess and compare over time user site visits, page views, bounce rate, average time on site, pages per visit, and percentage of new visits.
- Track performance of our social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) to understand how users engage with the social media and the website.
- Analyze and utilize the Google Analytics and social media interaction data to improve website marketing and social media strategies.
Appendix: Samples of Promotional and Outreach Material

Figure 1: Survey and Launch Email

The Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox is designed to help build capacity of Delaware local governments to develop complete-communities planning approaches, implementation tools, and community engagement strategies.

The Institute for Public Administration (IPA) at the University of Delaware invites you to explore and evaluate the toolbox’s design and content.

Your feedback is important to us. Please take a moment to complete a quick survey on the design and content of the site.

Visit the survey here, or paste this URL into your browser: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QTPHYWY

The production and design of the website was made possible by funding from the Delaware Department of Transportation in partnership with the Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination.

Thank you for your continued support and interest to build attractive, inclusive, efficient, healthy, and resilient places in Delaware!

Marcia Scott, Policy Scientist
Institute for Public Administration
School of Public Policy & Administration
University of Delaware
msscott@udel.edu
302-831-0581 phone/voice-mail

Bookmark Us. Like Us. Follow Us.
Visit our website for more info on Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware and upcoming events.
Like us on Facebook to find out what’s happening with Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware.
Follow us on Twitter for updates on current Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware.
**Figure 2: Delaware League of Local Governments Program Details from Meeting on November 13, 2014**

**DELAWARE LEAGUE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**
**MONTHLY DINNER MEETING**
**THE DUNCAN CENTER**
**500 W. LOOCKERMAN STREET, 5TH FLOOR, DOVER**

***********************************************************************

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2014**

**REGISTRATION/SOCIAL HOUR: 5:30 P.M. – 6:15 P.M.**

**DINNER: 6:30 P.M. – 7:15 P.M.**

**PROGRAM: 7:15 P.M.**

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**PROGRAM:**

The University of Delaware Institute of Public Administration is working to promote a plan for Complete Communities in Delaware. This is a resource for all towns and cities, and is a demonstration of a valuable online program. A Complete Community embraces smart growth principles. Tools in this program are designed to engage and educate local leaders on strategies to plan for and manage growth, better design communities, spur reinvestment in older neighborhoods, protect resources, understand links between land use and transportation planning, promote economic development, and combat sprawl. Be sure to bring your managers and planning professionals to this presentation.

Attached is a description of the presentation.

---

**Presentation to the Delaware League of Local Governments**

**November 13, 2014**

**Presenter(s):** Marcia Scott, IPA Policy Scientist and Sarah Pragg, IPA Policy Specialist

**Title of presentation:** Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox

**Brief presentation description:**

The University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration (IPA) is working to advance a framework to plan for Complete Communities in Delaware. A Complete Community embodies Smart Growth principles and has five essential elements: complete streets, efficient land use, healthy and livable attributes, inclusive and active, and resiliency and sustainability.

IPA launched an online Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox ([http://completecommunitiesde.org/](http://completecommunitiesde.org/)) to build local government capacity for complete-communities planning approaches, community-design tools, and public engagement strategies. The Toolbox is designed to engage and educate local leaders on strategies to efficiently plan for and manage growth, better design communities, spur reinvestment in older communities, protect resources, understand links between land use and transportation planning, promote economic development through placemaking, and combat sprawl.

Marcia Scott will provide an update on the planning for Complete Communities in Delaware project. She will explain the organization of the online Toolbox and how content is being developed to engage and inform users—particularly Delaware local governments. IPA’s Sarah Pragg will give DLLG members a live tour of the online Toolbox. She will highlight interactive features and different ways that Toolbox content is presented and interactive features. DLLG members will be invited to explore the Toolbox and take a survey to provide input and suggestions for future changes and improvement. The survey may be accessed at: [www.surveymonkey.com/s/QTPHYWY](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QTPHYWY)
Figure 3: Sample Slides from Presentation to Delaware League of Local Governments on November 2014
The Institute for Public Administration (IPA) at the University of Delaware would like your feedback on the Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox. We will use your input to assess future changes to the site and possibly develop new or additional content to meet the needs of users. Your participation is voluntary. Please be assured that all survey responses will remain confidential and outcomes will be reported in the aggregate only.

If you would like more information about this survey or Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware, please contact Marcia Scott at msscott@udel.edu.

1. **After visiting the Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox, how likely are you to explore the Toolbox?**

   - Extremely likely
   - Very likely
   - Moderately likely
   - Slightly likely
   - Not at all likely

2. **How engaging is the design of the Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox?**

   - Extremely engaging
   - Very engaging
   - Moderately engaging
   - Slightly engaging
   - Not at all engaging

3. **What improvements would you make to the design of the Toolbox?**

   [Blank space for input]
Figure 5: Survey on Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox, Page 2 of 3

4. Is the Toolbox easy to navigate?
   - Extremely easy
   - Very easy
   - Moderately easy
   - Slightly easy
   - Not at all easy

5. Did you have any technical issues when using the Toolbox (i.e., slow to load, broken link)?
   - 
   If yes, please describe your technical issue

6. How would you rate the quality of the content?
   - 
   If you rated the quality "poor," please explain

7. How well does the Toolbox communicate Complete-Communities planning approaches, community-design tools, and public engagement strategies?
   - Extremely well
   - Very well
   - Moderately well
   - Slightly well
   - Not at all well
8. Rank your preferences for ways Toolbox content is presented (with 1 being the highest and 8 the lowest)

- [ ] Videos
- [ ] Narrated PowerPoint presentations
- [ ] Self-guided PowerPoint presentations
- [ ] Written descriptions of Toolbox concepts
- [ ] Links to downloadable, in-depth electronic documents (.pdfs)
- [ ] Links to downloadable, short planning briefs (.pdfs)
- [ ] Scrolling banners on Toolbox’s homepage
- [ ] Photos and/or illustrations

9. What additional topics would you like to see covered in the Toolbox?
Figure 7: Sample Slides from Presentation to American Planning Association in December 2015
Figure 8: Business Card

Figure 9: Informational Flyer

CompleteCommunitiesDE.org

A “complete” community promotes healthy lifestyles, economic growth, and sustainability through an integrated approach to transportation, land-use, and community design.

The Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox is a resource for community leaders and local government officials to utilize:

- **Complete-Communities Planning Approaches** in 5 key areas of land-use and development:
  1. Complete Streets
  2. Efficient Land Use
  3. Healthy and Livable
  4. Inclusive and Active
  5. Sustainable and Resilient

- **Community-Design Tools** to create places that are dynamic and reflect community changes, oriented toward people not cars, reflective of a town’s architectural and cultural heritage, visually attractive and enjoyable, accessible and inclusive, and economically vibrant.

- **Public Engagement Strategies** to foster communication with residents about community development plans.
A “complete” community promotes healthy lifestyles, economic growth, and sustainability through an integrated approach to transportation, land-use, and community design.

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- **Public Engagement Strategies** to foster communication with residents about community development plans.

**www.completecommunitiesde.org**
Figure 11: Digital Buttons

![Digital Buttons Image]

*Complete Communities*
attractive, inclusive, efficient, healthy & resilient places
*CompleteCommunitiesDE.org*

Figure 12: Getting Started YouTube Video

![YouTube Video Screenshot]

Link: https://youtu.be/U1BsPF51q0U
Figure 13: Navigating the Toolbox YouTube Video

Link: https://youtu.be/Mh79Z53wkyg
Figure 14: Website Rotating Banner Examples

Figure 15: Website Header
Figure 16: Calendar of Implementation

Month 1: July

Planning & Content Curating/Initiate Full Launch

☐ Confirm that Google Analytics are running for site
☐ Update photo gallery
☐ Identifying publication schedule
  - IPA
  - DE APA Newsletter (Summer 2015 or Summer 2016)
  - Bike Delaware (Weekly Digest, sent on Sundays)
  - DCT-TranSearch (Summer/Fall Issue)
  - Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Journeys (Fall 2015 or Spring 2016)

☐ Organizing social media schedule
  - Email
  - Twitter
  - Facebook

☐ Update website design to better highlight toolbox
☐ Update PowerPoint presentation to reflect website changes
☐ Prepare first article
☐ Develop Story Map of best practices
☐ Contact local stakeholder groups to get on calendar to make presentations
☐ Contact SCAT to get on calendar to make presentation at September meeting
☐ Contact organizations that can provide links to Toolbox on websites:
  - Clerks/Local Gov’t MailChimp lists
  - MWDG
  - OSPC
  - WILMAPCO
  - Dover/Kent County MPO
  - DLLG
  - Delaware HEAL
  - Sussex Outdoors
  - UD’s Get Up and Do Something
  - Nemours
  - DE Heart Association
  - DelDOT
  - All DE Local Governments
  - Delaware Center for Transportation
  - Bike DE
Month 2: August

Implementation

☐ Feature story in August newsletters
☐ Email blast with official announcement
☐ Begin social media promotion
☐ Prepare and publish flyer and business cards
☐ Prepare online PowerPoint/YouTube video tutorial

Month 3: September

Commence “Long-Term” Promotional Strategy

Tasks

☐ Initiate social media content
☐ Set up MailChimp monthly messages
☐ Schedule release of new content
☐ Begin monitoring analytics
☐ Build “case studies” of communities using these tools
☐ Add completed samples to folder shared drive
☐ Distribute flyer and business card at planning trainings and other events
☐ Prepare for presentation to SCAT

Month 4: October

Continue Promotional Strategy

Promotional Tasks

☐ Monitor and refresh social media content
☐ Identify and schedule outreach opportunities
☐ Look for trends in analytics
☐ Prepare and present Toolbox at Delaware Institute for Local Government Leaders

Month 5: November

Continue Promotional Strategy

Promotional Tasks

☐ Monitor and refresh social media content
☐ Identify and schedule outreach opportunities
☐ Look for trends in analytics
Month 6: December

Wrap up Promotional Strategy

Promotional Tasks

☐ Prepare for presentation to Delaware APA
☐ Prepare for presentation to Newark Morning Rotary Club
☐ Monitor and refresh social media content
☐ Look for trends in analytics
Figure 17: Complete Communities Facebook Page
Figure 18: Complete Communities Twitter Page
Figure 19: Button on Office of State Planning Coordination Website

Figure 20: Feature on Municipal Web Developers Group Website

http://mwdg.delaware.gov/2015/09/17/complete-communities-delaware-project-site/
Strategic Promotion and Dissemination of the Online Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox

Figure 21: Article in the Delaware Center for Transportation’s Newsletter, *TranSearch*

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**Delaware Local Government Guide to Transportation Improvement Districts (TIDS)**

*BY MARCIA S. SCOTT, IPA POLICY SCIENTIST*

*PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMES PERNOL, DELDOT*

Local communities are the backbone of Delaware’s economy and economic growth depends on a well-maintained transportation network that efficiently moves goods and people. Transportation infrastructure (highways, roads, bridges, and capital for transit systems) has largely been funded by an indirect user fee, in the form of gasoline taxes, at the federal and state levels. However, gas tax revenues have declined significantly in the last decade as a result of less driving, increasing fuel efficiency of cars, and decreasing purchasing power. In addition, federal and state transportation trust funds have experienced substantial shortfalls due to inflationary costs, limited resources, substantial increases in construction costs and debt financing, and declining revenues. It is estimated that only 40 percent of what is necessary is being invested to meet surface transportation infrastructure needs at all levels of government.

Many states are eyeing or have adopted alternative funding mechanisms, including TIDs, to supplement traditional transportation revenue streams. As a transportation-based impact fee, TIDs are designed to achieve fair-share mitigation of transportation impacts. TIDs provide a way to equitably distribute the costs of development-related growth and long-term transportation infrastructure improvements to the private sector that benefits from the facilities, rather than costs being absorbed by the general public.

TIDs can also be an effective tool to ease land development pressures and prepare targeted growth areas for market-ready redevelopment. Economic development and growth can bring jobs and additional revenue to a community. However, unintended consequences of poorly planned growth include sprawl, traffic congestion, environmental problems, and increased costs for necessary public services and transportation infrastructure. A TID provides a framework for managing transportation impacts of development in areas intended for growth. A TID can attract business investment by expediting preconstruction phases and leveraging state and federal funds for improvements to state-owned transportation assets.

In Delaware, the Department of Transportation (DelDOT) recently adopted amendments to its existing regulations regarding subdivision streets and state highway access, which revise Traffic Impact Study (TIS) regulations and expand TID regulations. The new regulations provide a proactive and comprehensive approach to fund long-range transportation system improvements on an area-wide basis. Intergovernmental coordination is the key to the success of creating a TID and integrating land use and transportation planning. The new rules stipulate that TIDs are to be created by agreement between DelDOT, the relevant local government(s), and possibly the federally designated MPO responsible for coordinating transportation planning and programming in the proposed TID area. There are several avenues for a Delaware local government to plan for a TID. It may be considered as part of an update/revision to a local government’s comprehensive (land use) plan. A TID may also be proposed in conjunction with the development of an area-wide master plan, which provides more detailed planning for infrastructure than a local government’s comprehensive plan.

To help Delaware local governments better understand DelDOT regulations that govern the process to plan for and establish a TID, the Institute for Public Administration (IPA) at the University of Delaware recently developed an electronic publication, *Transportation Improvement Districts: A Guide for Delaware Local Governments*. Funded by the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), the guide discusses the purpose, benefits, and TID planning framework in Delaware. It also provides a step-by-step process for Delaware local governments to follow to create TID(s) and two best-practice examples for planning (City of Newark) and implementation (City of Dover) of TIDs in Delaware. The publication may be downloaded from IPA’s website at www.ipa.udel.edu/publications/transportation.html.

The downloadable guide is also part of a comprehensive set of online tools on TIDs within the Complete Streets element of IPA’s online Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox (http://completecommunities.udel.edu/planning/complete-streets/tid). The Toolbox provides user-friendly information and resources for local governments on complete communities planning approaches, implementation tools, and community engagement strategies.
Figure 22: Complete Communities Twitter Notifications
The University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration (IPA) addresses the policy, planning, and management needs of its partners through the integration of applied research, professional development, and the education of tomorrow’s leaders.