

Delaware Avenue Gets More Lanes...Bike Lanes

Much of Delaware Avenue in Newark is now six travel lanes. Two vehicle lanes and a sidewalk on either side have now been joined by two bike lanes. The Delaware Avenue Separated [Bikeway](#) opened the second week of November, providing a dedicated pair of bicycle travel lanes from Orchard Road to Library Avenue.



Complete streets is a concept or policy that envisions the street environment as safe, efficient, and convenient for all modes of use, rather than the traditional focus on just motor vehicles. The policy was first adopted in 1971 and while Delaware came to the game a little later, the Delaware

Department of Transportation (DeIDOT) has shown its commitment to the policy in many projects, initiatives, and project development.



At least by Delaware standards, Newark is a busy place much of the year. The state and municipally maintained streets are full of cars and trucks and many of the sidewalks bustle with throngs of pedestrians. Bicyclists are seen in both the vehicle lanes and on sidewalks. There are an unusual number of skateboards and motorized scooters mixed in as well. Over time, the vehicle travel lanes are thick with vehicles more of the time, the sidewalks sometimes experience pedestrian gridlock, and cyclists don't always fit in either lane.

There was an eastbound bike lane along Delaware Avenue, but it lacked a westbound lane and travel in both directions was sketchy at best.

For many years, stakeholders like DeIDOT, WILMAPCO, the City of Newark, the University of Delaware, and Bike Delaware have worked on and developed potential solutions. Skip ahead, skip ahead, and many meetings and head scratchings later, work began on the bike facility in late November of last year.

The bike lanes run together on the north side of Delaware Avenue for some of its length and then are separated by vehicle travel lanes along the rest; regardless, they are physically separated from the vehicle travel lanes and the sidewalks. The combined two bicycle lanes range 7-10' wide. New or modified vehicle signals highlight a yield condition and dedicated bike signals are installed at six intersections along the route to regulate cycling access, just as traditional signals do



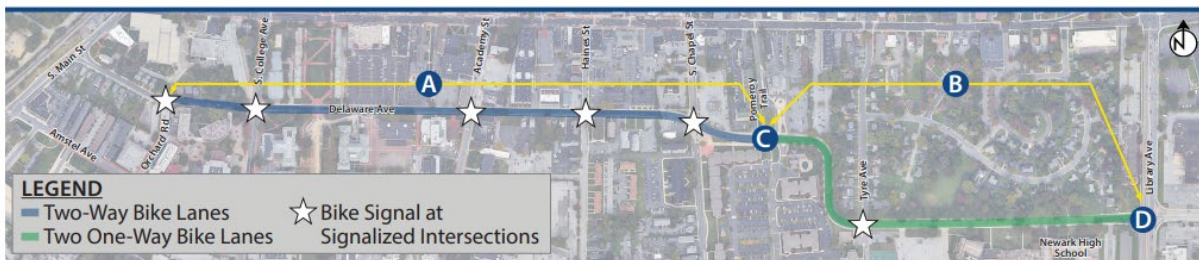
for motor vehicles, reducing the potential for conflict between the three modes of travel. Where bike lanes conflict with intersections and driveway entrances, green-colored pavement highlights the facility, so all users know to be vigilant. The workshop boards (found on the project description [website](#)) illustrate the configuration and features as they vary along the route.

 Delaware Department of Transportation
CONTACT US:
delawareaveseparatedbikeways@delaware.gov

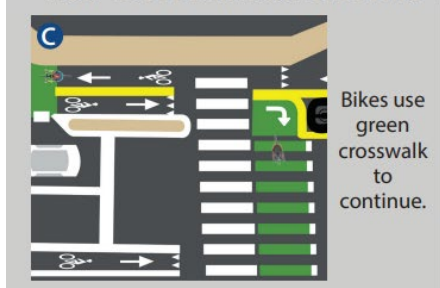
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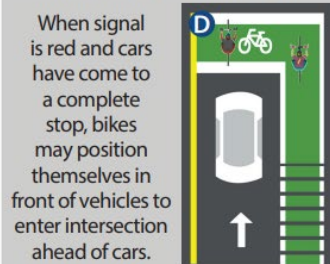
 Delaware Avenue
SEPARATED BIKEWAYS
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HOW TO USE BIKE LANE CROSSING



HOW TO USE BIKE BOX



BIKE SIGNAL MEANING



Once the bike signals were activated, the bikeway was [opened](#) for travel and uniformed police officers helped orient all road users to the new facility, particularly at the pedestrian crossing at the Green. Officers handed a flyer to cyclists (and interested pedestrians) and fielded questions. Rules for all road users (drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians) are important for the success of the added travel lanes and enforcement will consist of monitoring and guidance for now, followed by warnings being issued to users not adhering to the signals and rights-of-way, and if needed, citations in the future.

So, if you are in the area, keep a sharp eye out for the new travel patterns in this “six-lane” highway, and make sure you mind the rules of the road, regardless of your mode of travel.