

1 **7. Public Safety**

2 **7.4 Sidewalks, Crosswalks, and Bike Lanes**

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4 ***Vision Statement – Sidewalks and Crosswalks. The sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes in***
5 ***the Town are safe for everyone, especially for children, seniors and persons with mobility***
6 ***challenges.***

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8 **7.4.1 Current Situation**

9 The Town has sidewalks along Coastal Highway (SR-1), and a short distance along King Charles
10 Ave. (SR-1A) between Houston and Saint Louis Sts. There are 16 crosswalks along Coastal
11 Highway between Collins and Bayard Aves., about half of which are controlled by traffic lights.
12 There is a bike lane through Town along Coastal Highway that is significantly broader than the
13 dedicated DelDOT bike lanes along Coastal Highway north and south of Town.

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15 **7.4.2 Critical Issues and Plan Objectives and Recommendations**

16 There are major safety-related issues with the existing sidewalks. Foremost of these results from
17 the sidewalks being narrow and interrupted by power line poles. There is insufficient space in
18 many areas of the sidewalks for the number of people using them, as well as children on bicycles
19 and families with strollers and mobility impaired persons in wheel chairs. This is true during the
20 day when the streets are full of beachgoers, in the evenings when the restaurants and bars are
21 active, and in the early morning when the bars and restaurants let out and there is a lot of vehicle
22 traffic on Coastal Highway. Patron occupancy in the Town’s restaurants is approximately 9,000,
23 patrons who are leaving these establishments around 1:00 am and moving onto the sidewalks of
24 Coastal Highway in the seven blocks between Dickinson Ave and Saulsbury St. A potential
25 pathway to broadening sidewalks and improving overall pedestrian safety is to eliminate the
26 parking of delivery trucks along Coastal Highway and splitting space currently used for
27 deliveries between a reduced dedicated bike lane and an expanded pedestrian walkway.

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29 Additionally, the sidewalks contain obsolete curb cuts that provide an uneven surface along the
30 length of the sidewalk in some areas, that poses a tripping hazard to many who reasonably expect
31 a uniform surface, and the special surfacing for vision impaired persons has deteriorated or is
32 missing at many intersections along Coastal Highway.

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34 Many of the crosswalks are at intersections on SR-1 that do not have traffic controls. Crossing
35 Coastal Highway at these intersections is dangerous because the high volume of traffic seen
36 during the summer tends to not stop for pedestrians about to enter the crosswalk area. Crossing at
37 controlled intersections is often frustration because the interval between stop lights for traffic
38 along SR-1 is long and the crossing signals are short. This tends to “encourage” pedestrians to
39 cross in the middle of the block when they see an opportunity, rather than proceeding to the next
40 intersection.

1 Automotive congestion is only one of the problems facing Dewey Beach. The Town also has
2 experienced ever increasing numbers of pedestrians and bicyclists, skate boards and hover
3 boards, and scooters in recent years. Of particular concern is the way in which these modes
4 interact and compete with automobiles and trucks. Although the Town has sidewalk and bike
5 lane infrastructure along Coastal Highway, the bike lanes are also used extensively for large
6 delivery trucks. The result is that cyclists are forced to merge into and ride in busy, and often fast
7 moving travel lanes.

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9 A second issue with respect to the bike lanes is that there is no physical barrier between these
10 lanes and the vehicle travel lanes, as employed in other jurisdictions to separate different modes
11 of transportation to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety.

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13 **Obj. S/C - 1 *The sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes in the Town are safe for***
14 ***everyone, especially for children, seniors and persons with mobility challenges.***

15 High-priority recommendations to continue providing for a walkable community and to
16 provide for the health safety and welfare of the population include:

- 17 • The Town should work with DelDOT and Delmarva Power to improve the
18 sidewalks along Coastal Highway such that they are suitable to provide for the
19 safe use by the volume of pedestrian and bicycle traffic typical during the summer
20 season;
 - 21 • The Town should work with DelDOT to eliminate obsolete sidewalk curb cuts
22 and to repair the textured surfaces of sidewalks at those intersection where
23 needed;
 - 24 • The Town should investigate various approaches to encourage driver's to yield
25 way to pedestrians entering crosswalks and to discourage J-walking, perhaps
26 through the use of permanent fencing along the median strip;
 - 27 • The Town should ban delivery vehicle parking along Coastal Highway, and work
28 with DelDOT to develop an improvement plan for Coastal Highway that focuses
29 on pedestrian and bicycle safety.
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