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## Press release

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

### **Representative Nick Manolakos gets consensus in securing early state funding to complete a pedestrian walkway and bike lane project on Hockessin's Valley Road, bringing to a close almost 20 years of effort!**

**Hockessin, DE, September 4, 2011** - A dozen state and local officials gathered at the entrance to Tweeds Park today to celebrate the securing of state funding for a project to make the Hockessin-area more accessible to bicyclists and pedestrians.

The Valley Road Pedestrian Pathway Project will connect Swift Park & Hockessin Village to Lantana Square Shopping Center & Tweeds Park. After almost 20 years of effort by Delaware Greenways and the community, the project is in the final design stage of development. The 0.7 mile-long connector will consist of a paved walkway, six feet wide, separated from Valley Road by a small grass median, storm water curbing and a five foot wide shared shoulder/bike lane.

Earlier this year, Rep. Manolakos recognized that the previous funding commitments of the legislators could be in jeopardy after this year's elections, due to the re-alignment of districts. Taking the initiative he informed his fellow legislators of this concern.

Rep. Manolakos said the five legislators were able to reach a consensus on jointly providing 100% of the required matching funds early, prior to the election, because they all recognized the need to improve accessibility in the heavily-used area.

State Reps. Nick Manolakos, R-Limestone Hills & Deborah Hudson, R-Fairthorne, and State Sens. Liane Sorenson, R-Hockessin; Michael Katz, D-Centerville & David Sokola, D-Newark, committed a combined \$200,000 from their Community Transportation Fund (CTF) accounts to pay for the state's 20 percent share of the project's estimated \$1 million price tag.

These funds will secure a federal grant to finance the balance, with construction on the project expected to start next fall.

Dick Saunders, a local resident and Delaware Greenways Director, said that in parallel with the completion of this project, Delaware Greenways and the community are evaluating add-on walkway concepts for submission to DELDOT, to link other area neighborhoods, such as Stenning Woods, Woodside Farm, Tenby Chase, etc. further increasing accessibility. This project may also potentially provide a link to the new Auburn Valley Park in Yorklyn, DE.

The Valley Road Pedestrian Pathway project dovetails with a larger effort jointly undertaken by Gov. Jack Markell and the General Assembly to aggressively expand opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the state. The current state capital budget contains \$13.25 million – \$10.25 million for DELDOT and \$3 million for the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) – to create an interconnected network of shared-use trails and pathways.

#### **About Bike Delaware**

Bike Delaware is Delaware's non-profit, statewide citizen advocacy group whose mission is to make bicycling a safe, convenient and fun transportation option for everyone. To learn more about Bike Delaware, visit [www.bikede.org](http://www.bikede.org).

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