

# *Bike Trail Concept Links Rehoboth, Ferry and County Zoo*

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VILLAS- Imagine a bicycle trail passing through farmland, shopping areas, by museums, outdoor recreation and a zoo. Planning has begun for a bike trail concept that would pass through two states. A bicycle trail extending from Rehoboth, Del. to the Cape May County Zoo is envisioned by officials of the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA), Lower and Middle townships.

“The DRBA is very happy to be part of this initiative,” said Heath Gehrke, director of ferry operations at an Aug. 21 meeting. “We feel it’s important to link Rehoboth to Cape May County via the ferry.”

“Once we get to Cape May, we’d like to go all the way to the Cape May County Zoo,” he continued.

Bike trails in Delaware extend from Rehoboth to the ferry terminal in Lewes. The bike paths in Delaware are part of Gov. Jack Markell's trails initiative. A new Gordon’s Pond to Herring Point trail will open in the spring. A 16-mile long Lewes to Georgetown rails to trails path is in the planning stage

Earlier this year, DRBA widened shoulders on Sandman Boulevard in Lower Township to accommodate bike riders.

Future spurs from the bike trail in Cape May County could include the county airport and the former Fort Apache in Middle Township.

Connie Mahon, Middle Township business administrator, said economic development is a key component of the project. She said the bike trail would connect Lower and Middle townships and make the county airport a viable tourist attraction as well as the new Ockie Wisting recreational area.

The county airport houses Naval Air Station Wildwood Museum, the Forgotten Warriors Museum and the Cape May Brewery. Plans call for the Ockie Wisting recreational area to include an outdoor amphitheater for concerts, a picnic area, walking trails, athletic fields, a Frisbee golf course and fishing pond.

“Two municipalities of this size going in on a project of this magnitude I think is unprecedented and it’s a new level of cooperation everybody in this county wants to see,” said Mahon.

Lower Township Manager Mike Voll said the project represented a regional approach. He said the bike path would benefit tourism, local residents, and businesses along the trail.

“In my opinion, this is a win, win, win for the DRBA, the Township of Middle and the Township of Lower,” said Voll.

Lower Township’s portion of the bike path currently ends at Sally Marshall Crossing/Cresse Lane in Erma. Middle Township’s portion of the trail ends at Indian Trail Road.