

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
JULY 14, 2022**

The WILMAPCO Council meeting was held at WILMAPCO, 100 Discovery Boulevard, Suite 800, Newark, DE 19713 and virtually via Zoom.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. John Sisson, Chair, opened the meeting at 10:01 a.m.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

**Members present:**

David Edgell, Delaware Governor's Appointee  
George Haggerty, representing New Castle County Executive, Matthew Meyer  
Timothy Lucas, representing City of Wilmington Mayor, Michael S. Purzycki  
Heather Murphy, Maryland Governor's Appointee  
Stephen O'Connor, representing Cecil County Executive, Danielle Hornberger  
John Sisson, representing Delaware Transit Corporation  
Pamela Steinebach, representing DeIDOT Secretary of Transportation, Nicole Majeski

**Members absent:**

Michael Kline, representing Cecil County Municipalities  
Eric Thompson, Mayor of Elsmere, representing New Castle County Municipalities

**Guests, Observers:**

Mark Blake, GHADA  
Tyson Byrne, MDOT  
Lanie Clymer, DeIDOT  
Bradley Damtoft, DeIDOT  
Scott Flanigan, Cecil County Public Works  
Amanda Guittari, DeIDOT  
Diane Gunn, Century Engineering  
Nichole Johnson, DeIDOT  
Mike Kaszyski, PAC Chair  
Breanna Kovach, DeIDOT  
Deanna Murphy, Cecil County Board of Realtors  
Rashad Pinckney, MDOT  
Catherine Salarano, MDE  
Derrick Sexton, MDOT SHA  
John Thomas, MDOT

**Staff members:**

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner  
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner  
Sharen Elcock, Executive Assistant  
Dave Gula, Principal Planner  
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner  
Jacob Thompson, Senior Planner  
Dawn Voss, Administrative Assistant  
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by Dawn Voss.

### 3. MINUTES:

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Pamela Steinebach seconded by Mr. Tim Lucas the Council approved the May 12, 2022, Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion passed

(07-14-22-01)

### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

None.

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS' AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

#### **5. Chairperson's Report:**

Mr. John Sisson said he is pleased to announce DTC hired HDR as the consultant to do their transit redesign. They are excited to proceed in the next couple of months to look at their whole system and redesign it.

#### **Council Member's Reports:**

None.

#### **6. Executive Director's Report** – Ms. Tigist Zegeye shared the following information:

- Staff attended the Bike to Work Day in Newark on May 20<sup>th</sup>.
- The East Coast Greenway Alliance Greenway Council voted to designate the 1.5-mile Elkton Road pathway on June 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff presented the City of New Castle Transportation Plan to the Delaware APA on June 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff attended the Delmarva Freight Summit on June 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff worked with the consultant team and project partners to develop the Churchmans Crossing Monitoring Committee Plan for FY 2023. The first partner meeting was on June 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff hosted the Newport Transportation Plan Monitoring Committee on June 21<sup>st</sup>.
- The Wilmington Initiatives Public Workshop was on June 22<sup>nd</sup> with approximately thirty attendees.
- Staff attended the Maryland MPO Roundtable on June 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff tabled at the Southbridge Open Streets event on June 25<sup>th</sup>.
- On June 28<sup>th</sup>, AASHTO designated US Bicycle Route 201, which is Delaware's first national bike route. Staff assisted DeIDOT with the designation process.
- Staff participated in the Delaware Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan kickoff on June 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff participated in the Air Quality Partnership's Facebook Live event on July 7<sup>th</sup>.
- We are coordinating with staff from DeIDOT and MDOT on the RTP project list.
- The I-95 Cap Feasibility Study project team is planning for the next Advisory Committee meeting and will host a workshop for the public in September.
- Traffic Planning and Design consultant firm was selected to lead the Ardens' Transportation Plan. Staff is planning a Walkable Community Workshop for August 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Century Engineering, with support from RK&K, was selected to lead the Southbridge Traffic Circulation Study.

- Staff are supporting both DNREC and DelDOT with their efforts to identify EJ areas.
- WILMAPCO is hosting a University of Delaware student intern for the summer, and that is funded by Healthy Communities Delaware.
- The Health Behavior and Outcome Transportation Land Use Correlations Data Report is available on the WILMAPCO website.
- Regarding to the June billing financial report, we have expended about 87% of our budget.
- FHWA has approved the FY 2023 UPWP which started on July 1<sup>st</sup>. We need to follow up with the FTA to see if they approved the FY 2023 UPWP.

### **7. Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Report:**

Mr. Mike Kaszyski said the PAC met on June 13<sup>th</sup>. There were no action items. Ms. Heather Dunigan presented the City of New Castle Transportation Plan. PAC members had a few questions regarding implementation of the city's plan in coordination with the Route 9 Master Plan and plans for Hares Corner, and what may be causing some of the issues in the city. Mr. Matt Rogers from the New Castle County Department of Land Use presented on the New Castle County Comprehensive Plan Update, NCC@2050. Mr. Rogers discussed how the WILMAPCO plans and NCC@2050 correlated with each other. There were some questions about sprawl, growth, and how things are progressing south of the canal. Mr. Dave Gula presented on the I-95 Cap Feasibility Study. Mr. Gula provided a summary of where the project is headed, possible phasing, and some funding that could be of concern. It is an exciting project and PAC members find it interesting.

### **8. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Report:**

Ms. Heather Dunigan said the TAC met May 19<sup>th</sup> with no action items. Mr. Matt Rogers from New Castle County presented on the Comp Plan update. Paul Moser from DelDOT presented about the DelDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding Pool and gave an update on the two projects from the WILMAPCO priority list that are moving forward with additional planning and design. Mr. Dan Ormond from Rybinski Engineering presented on the New Castle County Traffic Operations Plan. Ms. Dunigan presented an update of the City of New Castle Transportation Plan. At the June 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, Mr. Matt Rogers from New Castle County was appointed chairperson, and Ms. Tricia Arndt was appointed vice-chair. Ms. Dunigan expressed thanks to Mr. Mike Fortner who served as chairperson during the transition to virtual meetings. Mr. Scott Flanigan presented the Cecil Highway Strategic Safety Plan. Ms. Virginia Burke presented an update on the 2022 to 2025 CMAQ On-Road Mobile Emissions Targets. Mr. Harry Romano presented an update on the Maryland Rail Plan. Ms. Randi Novakoff presented an update on the Public Opinion Survey.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

#### **9. To Amend the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Heather Dunigan introduced Ms. Lanie Clymer from DelDOT, who was scheduled to present an update on the Delaware Bond Bill and the action items on the agenda. Ms. Clymer said annually they prepare a brief financial update regarding the DelDOT's capital and operating budgets for the fiscal year that begins July 1. Starting with Transportation Trust Fund revenues, things have rebounded well. There are minimal lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. For fiscal year 2022, the total revenue collection was close to \$620 million. Both I-95 and a SR 1, for the first time, have surpassed fiscal year 2019 revenue values The motor fuel tax remains

strong, and DMV had one of its best years for revenue last year. DelDOT bases their annual operating capital budgets off of their revenues projected to the Transportation Trust Fund, so they are pleased to see all categories performing so well.

For fiscal year 2023, the current total revenue projection is \$620.9 million, which is likely to be increased during their first de facto session of the year, based on the FY 2022 actual results. The department's final bond bill authorization request for fiscal year 2023 was \$669.4 million. The budget for grants and allocations was \$64.2 million. Within that budget was \$6 million for the Municipal Street Aid Program, \$5 million for the Transportation Infrastructure Investment Fund coming from the Transportation Trust Fund. There is also the newly established Subdivision Street Pavement Management Fund Program that was allocated \$30 million. Of that, \$10 million came from the Trust Fund and \$20 million from the General Fund. A total of \$23.2 million was allocated to the Community Transportation Fund Program. The Transit budget for FY 2023 is \$36.7 million. This provides authorization for projects that include transit vehicle replacement, expansion projects, preventative maintenance programs, and transit facilities that include Churchmans Crossing Fairplay Station Parking Expansion Project, the Claymont Regional Transportation Center Project, and the Northeast Corridor. The Support Systems budget was \$60.8 million, and includes funding for programs, such as aeronautics department, planning initiatives, IT projects, heavy equipment procurement, transportation facilities, as well as the Transportation Management Center.

The largest category is the Road Systems budget, which was \$507.8 million for FY 2023. It includes authorization needed to initiate the design, right-of-way, or construction phases for various improvements to road and bridge projects throughout the state. A few highlights specific to New Castle County include design funding for SR 1 widening, Road A to US 40, SR 896 and Bethel Church Road; design funding for US 40 and SR 7 intersection improvements; South College Avenue gateway; and SR 9, New Castle Avenue, Landers Lane to A Street. Construction. Funding was provided for projects in New Castle County that include the I-95 and SR 896 interchange; US 13 paving and pedestrian improvements along Llangollen Boulevard to Bolden Boulevard; and SR 72 and McCoy Road/SR 71, Mill Creek and Stoney Batter Road drainage improvements. Also included in the budget was funding for statewide road system programs that include an annual budget for the bridge program of \$86 million, the department's Pavement Management Program of \$96.7 million, and several other programs that were added as a result of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (IIJA), which are the Carbon Reduction Program, the Electric Vehicle Charging Program, and the Resiliency and Sustainability Programs. Some programs also received increased funding based off of revised apportionment values from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. These include the Transportation Alternatives Program, Highway Safety, Metropolitan Planning Organization Program, as well as their SPR Program. They are refining their FY 2023 expenditure projection values for both state and federal spending. They anticipate exceeding over \$700 million in capital expenditures this year and will continue to focus on increased investment in highway safety improvement programs with safety being the department's number one priority. The plan, as it relates to New Castle County, will also include beginning construction activities on I-95 and SR 896, which is the project for which the department received a \$56.8 million grant; continued construction on SR 299 in Middletown; completion of the work on Elkton Road; construction on SR 72 and McCoy Road; continued work on the rehab of I-95; and construction of the Claymont Regional Transportation Center. Statewide programs will contribute to spending within New Castle County as well.

DelDOT has requested that the Claymont Regional Transportation Center project be amended to reflect an increase in cost. The construction budget for this project has increased \$14.2 million, revising the total construction to \$81.4 million. The increase in funding is needed for

unforeseen conditions while in construction, some project delay costs, site work, and catenary modifications.

The TAC recommended via email vote that the Council approve this amendment, and it was reviewed on July 7<sup>th</sup> by the Air Quality Subcommittee who determined it will not trigger an air quality conformity analysis.

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Pamela Steinebach seconded by Mr. Stephen O'Connor the Council amended the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Motion passed. (07-14-22-02)

**10. To Amend the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Lanie Clymer said this is for the Wilmington Transit Corridors Improvement project, where the project underwent a significant revision to the project scope that was included in the FY 2023-2026 TIP. The construction budget decreased slightly from \$5 million to \$4.3 million. The project title was modified to Wilmington's Transit Corridors Improvements. The change in scope includes the removal of the bus only lanes and increase the transit facility improvement scope to include all of the main corridors of the central business district of Wilmington.

Ms. Heather Dunigan said the TAC recommended approval of the amendment via email vote. The Air Quality Subcommittee reviewed it at their July 7<sup>th</sup> meeting and did not find that it would trigger an air quality conformity analysis.

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Pamela Steinebach seconded by Mr. Stephen O'Connor the Council amended the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Motion passed. (07-14-22-03)

**11. Amend the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Lanie Clymer said DelDOT is proposing to shift construction of the SR 4, Christiana Parkway from SR 2, Elkton Road, to SR 896, South College Avenue, Newark project from fiscal year 2026-2028 to fiscal year 2029-2030. This is the result of a fiscal restraint needed for their SIP and increased funding that was needed the next TIP amendment that will be presented.

Ms. Heather Dunigan this was reviewed by TAC via email vote, and they recommend approval. The Air Quality Subcommittee found that it would not trigger an air quality conformity analysis.

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. Tim Lucas seconded by Mr. Stephen O'Connor the Council amended the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Motion passed. (07-14-22-04)

**12. To Amend the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Lanie Clymer said an amendment for the I-95 and SR 896 Interchange project was proposed. The construction estimate increased \$78.4 million to a total construction value of \$222 million. The construction estimate increased due to scope revision costs as final design

plans are being drafted, and adjustments for inflationary factors. The project is currently on schedule to advertise this September with construction beginning spring of 2023.

Ms. Heather Dunigan said there were no concerns raised by the TAC and they recommend that it be approved. The Air Quality Subcommittee found no issues to trigger an air quality conformity analysis. Ms. Dunigan thanked Ms. Clymer and her team. In prior years there would have been many more than four changes.

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. Stephen O'Connor seconded by Ms. Pamela Steinebach the Council amended the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Motion passed.

(07-14--22-05)

### **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### **13. Maryland Freight Plan and Rail Plan Update**

Mr. John Thomas, Assistant Director for Maryland DOT Office of Planning and Capital Programming leads the rail and intermodal freight team. He said Maryland released the draft Maryland State Freight Plan and draft Maryland State Rail Plan for a public comment period. These are federally required plans, and once the public comment period ends, they will be submitted to Federal Highway and Federal Rail for approval. The freight plan is all about moving things by rail, air, water, or roadways. The goals align with the state transportation plan goals which are safety, security, resilience, economic opportunity, system preservation and modernization, fiscal responsibility, and choices. As part of IIJA, additional federal requirements were added including things like truck parking, supply chains, ports, coordination, e-commerce, military, and resilience, which are all addressed in this plan.

Among freight focus areas, safety and security are most important, whether that is a truck crashing, highway rail crossing issues, or other issues. Technology and operations are a major component including automated vehicles air quality. Asset management is important, because it is essential to be able to move freight across the bridges, through the canals, or up the bay to the Port of Baltimore and the Port of Wilmington. Congestion is major focus as bottlenecks for vehicles and trains are costly for freight and logistics providers. Truck parking is important related to safety. Truck volumes are projected to continue to increase, so truck parking will remain an issue. Adding capacity for truck parking is important but so is talking about land use, supply chains, and thinking about where those trucks are parked at the origins and destinations. There will be outreach efforts over the coming months to talk about that and provide resources to help various jurisdictions with that. Additional focus areas include moving things to and from the ports and through the canal, communication, coordination, and e-commerce. They are looking at complete streets as it relates to freight moving to and from businesses and residents. Providing on-street space for trucks or delivery drivers to pick up and drop off is essential. A complete street discussion should include these things as well curbside management and street planning and zoning. Coordinating across jurisdictions to talk about truck parking is important with respect to supporting the growing e-commerce issues. Moving goods and services to and from the military installations and resilience are also focus areas. Flooding on roads is a concern. When freight and emergency supplies are blocked due to a storm issue, that needs to be a priority.

The plan process is nearly finished. The public comment period will last about a month and then the plans will go to Federal Highway on the Freight Plan side and Federal Rail on the Rail Plan

side. One of the requirements of updating these plans every five years is that National Highway Freight Program funds cannot be obligated unless these plans are updated. Whether it is Delaware or Maryland, Federal Highway is paying attention to those deadlines, and MDOT is on schedule to meet the deadline.

The rail plan has a lot of overlap with the freight plan, because moving freight via rail as an alternative or supplement to truck, boat, and air is important. This plan also overlaps with the transit plan. Maryland released its statewide transit plan earlier this year, and MARC Rail has its Cornerstone Plan. This is federally required and administered by the Federal Rail Administration. It covers commuter rail, freight rail, and intersecting passenger rail. The last time this was fully updated was 2015. There are specific federal requirements including new requirements added as part of IIJA. The plan includes the role of rail as well as the existing system, opportunities, and how projects become in place through funding, investment, and coordination. There was a lot of outreach through the MPOs, the public, the Statewide Freight Advisory Committee, and elected officials. Outreach is always ongoing. There was a lot of coordination with the railroads. The goals are similar with both the Statewide Transportation Plan and Freight Plan. Safety is most important.

There are two Class 1 railroads in Maryland, Norfolk Southern and CSX. There are many Short Line railroads that operate on lines owned by the state or owned by the Short Line. The Eastern Shore of Maryland and Delaware Railroad, Eastern Shore, operates on lines owned by the State of Maryland and then intersects with Carload Express Delaware Central to move things through Delaware and then back up and down and north toward Wilmington and south toward Salisbury. Amtrak is running along the Northeast Corridor. There are a couple tourist excursion railroads. A private one runs one in western Maryland and one in Frederick County. MDOT is working with Frederick County to construct a parallel trail next to the low-speed, low-volume tourist excursion railroad. Amtrak and MARC service are also active in the state.

All of the projects along the Northeast Corridor and Amtrak that support Amtrak, MARC, future run-through, and connections for passengers that transfer from SEPTA are referenced in the Rail Plan. For example, the NEPA part of the Susquehanna River Bridge Replacement is nearly complete. From there, it becomes primarily an Amtrak project. Amtrak will work through the design and keep everybody else in the loop. For MARC Rail, the plan references future potential connection to SEPTA. The Maryland House passed bill number 1236 last year. That bill required a report from MDOT MTA about establishing a pilot commuter rail service between Perryville, Maryland and Newark, Delaware. Those discussions have started. That is consistent with previous studies, like the 2017 study that WILMAPCO completed and with the Statewide Transit Plan. All of that is referenced in the Rail Plan. Then, it talks about the Freight Plan and whether additional capacity for Amtrak, MARC, SEPTA, and others passenger rails on the Northeast Corridor also helps Norfolk Southern and CSX. There is a lot of discussion in both the State Freight and Rail Plans about access to and from the ports. Related to funding, many of the projects in these plans are documenting what is in the existing program and then documenting the overlap from other planning sources. Having these projects and plans adoptive and up-to-date positions the State to apply for discretionary funding sources when funding opportunities arise like an increase in the potential discretionary grant programs or IIJA.

#### **14. Cecil Highway Strategic Safety Plan**

Mr. Scott Flanigan, Director of Public Works for Cecil County, acknowledged Ms. Heather Dunigan for her assistance as a member of the Steering Committee for the Cecil County Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The plan is posted to the county website. States are required to

have a state-level strategic highway safety plan. Local jurisdictions have not been required to have one. In 2017, Secretary Pete Rahn of the Maryland Department of Transportation called upon counties in Maryland to develop and implement county-level strategic highway safety plans. Around that time, Cecil County was experiencing a spike in the number of fatal crashes and traffic fatalities, so that letter from Secretary Rahn combined with the spike in the number of fatalities were the impetus for the county to form a Strategic Highway Safety Plan Steering Committee. The Strategic Highway Safety Plan was adopted in September of 2018 and covered the period from October 2018 through the end of 2020. Those dates were chosen to align with the State of Maryland plan. In June of 2021, the next iteration of the plan was adopted, which covers 2021 to 2025, which again aligns with the State of Maryland's plan. The ultimate goal is to eliminate traffic fatalities on roadways in Cecil County by the year 2040. As an interim measure is to cut those in half, by the end of 2030 as measured against a 2008 baseline.

The plan calls out five metrics that will be used to gauge progress toward their goal. Those are the raw number of fatalities, the raw number of serious injuries, the fatality rate, the serious injury rate, and the number of nonmotorized fatalities and serious injuries, which refers to pedestrians and bicyclists. Cecil County drew heavily from the State of Maryland's plan. From that plan, they adopted six emphasis areas including aggressive driving, distracted driving, impaired driving, occupant protection, highway infrastructure, and pedestrians and bicyclists. Cecil County added responder and worker safety and protection, because at that time there were a number of incidents in Cecil County where members of local volunteer fire companies and in one case a tow truck operator who were struck and killed at the scene of traffic crashes.

The Steering Committee monitors and promotes the effort. The three Working Groups are Engineering, Enforcement, and Emergency Medical Services. Education is an integral element of each of these areas. The Working Groups implement the action items and track and report the metrics. The Executive Council, which is co-chaired by the County Executive and the Cecil County Sheriff, leads the effort. The Executive Council includes the County Health Officer, the Director of Emergency Services, the State Highway Administration District Engineer, the Commander of the Maryland State Police Northeast Barracks, and Mr. Flanigan, as the Director of Public Works, serves as the Recording Secretary. The Executive Council provides executive level leadership. Because of their positions, those members are key to resourcing the effort.

The Engineering Working Group has four action items. The first is to conduct three roadway safety audits annually, which are done by a cross functional team led by the Department of Public Works. That team looks at crash histories, to identify crash hotspots, and then perform a roadway safety audit to identify improvements to the intersection or section of road to address safety deficiencies. The second action calls for implementation of safety improvements identified during a safety audit on a section of US 40 between Route 213 and Landing Lane, where there is a history of injuries and fatalities involving pedestrians and bicyclists. The third action item is a Roadway Safety Improvement Program. A specific account to fund roadway safety improvements was included in the county's operating budget. That money will be used to implement the recommendations from the roadway safety audits. The fourth action item is an attempt to take a more systematic approach to managing pavement conditions with a particular emphasis on pavement friction.

The Enforcement Working Group has six action items. The first is for the Cecil County Sheriff's Office to establish a collision review team to be employed where it is warranted. The second action item is to conduct targeted enforcement efforts focused on vehicle drivers. The third is targeted enforcement efforts focused on pedestrians targeted at locations that have demonstrated crash histories involving pedestrians. The fourth action item is working with the



state attorney's office and the judiciary regarding what constitutes acceptable evidence for impaired driving or impaired driving while under the influence of controlled substances. The fifth is conducting joint operations, which bring together multiple law enforcement agencies including state police, county sheriff, and municipal police departments to conduct joint targeted enforcement operations. The sixth action item is using media to encourage safe behavior.

The Emergency Medical Services Working Group has eight action items. The first is promoting and enforcing Maryland's move-over law. The second is Traffic Incident Management System (TIMS) certification by the volunteer fire companies and first responders. The third is encouraging the use of ANSI-approved traffic safety vests by first responders, law enforcement, emergency medical, and volunteer fire companies. The fourth is pedestrian and bicycle safety education programs. The fifth promotes child car seats including checking to make sure child seats are properly installed. The sixth is to take a data collection and analysis approach to identify trends such as crash hotspots to focus limited resources. The seventh is to promote policies and procedures to protect those riding in the backs of ambulances in the event of a crash. The eighth action item is emergency vehicle operator and defensive driver training for first responders, law enforcement, emergency medical, and volunteer fire company members.

Metrics showing the raw fatality statistics from 2014 through 2021 for Cecil County show there was a significant increase in the number of fatal crashes and fatalities in 2017. The county has seen fatalities decrease but has work to do as they work toward zero. Thus far, calendar year 2022 looks like the county is on pace to see an increase in the number of fatal crashes and fatalities. Through the end of June, there were nine fatal crashes with ten fatalities on roadways in Cecil County, and an additional one in July. Initially, those working on the plan thought that Interstate 95 running through Cecil County would account for a large number of fatalities. That is not the case. The largest source of fatalities is other state roadways within Cecil County. In looking at the number of nonmotorized fatalities (pedestrians and bicyclists) from 2015 to 2021, 2019 and 2020 had zero. There was a significant increase in 2021. Thus far in 2022, there has been one fatality involving a pedestrian. They are above their target, but it is trending down.

Cecil County was among the first counties in Maryland to develop a county-level Strategic Highway Safety Plan. They share the lessons they learned with other Maryland counties as they work to develop their own Strategic Highway Safety Plans. First, if Cecil County can do it, anyone can. They did not have a traffic engineer on staff. The Steering Committee did this in addition to their regular day jobs. They developed and wrote this plan themselves including representatives from Public Works, the Sheriff's Office, some local police departments. Ms. Dunigan from WILMAPCO helped. People from the Maryland Highway Safety Office and various other metropolitan planning organizations helped. They did not use a consultant, and Mr. Flanigan believes that 80% of the benefit of this plan is derived from the process of developing the plan. This benefit is from relationships developed across a range of agencies and organizations and improved communication. About 20% of the benefit will come from implementing the plan itself. The process took a little over a year. If somebody else is going to do this, they need to give themselves adequate time. There are many organizations that are willing to help. The Maryland Highway Safety Office has been invaluable. Cecil County reached out to other jurisdictions, who had developed their plans. They drew heavily from their plans and also MPOs. Their public meeting had a small turnout. They solicited and accepted input by other means such as letters, phone calls, and emails and received input from the public. As much work as it was to develop the plan, implementing it is the hard part. That task never ends. Mr. Flanigan is available if anyone wishes to discuss this with him further.

## 15. Public Opinion Survey

Ms. Randi Novakoff said this survey is done every four years ahead of our Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update to help inform the RTP. It is a random sample of six hundred residents, two hundred in Cecil County and four hundred in New Castle County using both a landline and a cell phone, which provides a 95% confidence level. This survey has been conducted for about twenty-five years. In more recent years, demographic quotas were added to the survey for race to try to ensure that our survey is as representative as possible.

When asked how the transportation system meets their needs, most people say their needs are met or are somewhat met. When this is broken down by different modes, the needs are less well met, particularly for those in Cecil County wanting to ride more trains and buses. Looking at the demographics, most of the people who are not satisfied are low income and minority residents. Looking at solutions to reduce congestion, improving public transit rose to the top, as in previous years' surveys. Encouraging carpooling, biking, and walking were the least supported solution along with building new roads. The survey asked the importance of a variety of issues and improving access to public transit, particularly for those who do not own a car, was the top concern, as was preserving open space and farmland, and improving bus and train service for all. The least important issues to the respondents were developing infrastructure for self-driving vehicles, connecting communities to each other and nearby destinations, and supporting low-polluting vehicles. In terms of how transportation dollars should be spent, improving technology rose to the top, as well as maintaining and repairing the existing system. The least supported areas on which to spend transportation dollars were for building more roads and increased safety. Regarding support for the various methods of funding the system, people favor developers paying for infrastructure, and delaying or eliminating projects. People are not in favor of increasing fares for public transit, vehicle fuel taxes, nor replacing a fuel tax with a tax on the vehicle miles traveled. The vast majority of people drive alone in their vehicles. When asked if they have taken other modes over the past month, many people said they had walked. Few people are biking or taking paratransit or rideshare, particularly in Cecil County. When asked what they would be willing to do to improve air quality, people were more willing to replace their gas-powered mowers and tools with electric, refuel at certain times of the day, or walk more. They were less willing to carpool, plant trees, or bike. When asked if they are familiar with WILMAPCO, about 30% of respondents say that they are, which is consistent with previous years. When asked if they want more information from us, particularly newsletters, most people do not. They especially do not want texts from us. When asked about the effectiveness of a variety of outreach techniques, direct communications with staff via email or phone was the top choice. Web-based meetings increased in popularity, as well as mailed surveys. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and online surveys were less supported than in previous years. When asked their awareness of the transportation planning process and how projects are selected, there was an increase in those reporting awareness of how projects are selected and nearly a doubling of those who say they are familiar with the long-range plan. Those familiar with the TIP was in line with the current numbers. The 44% who indicated familiarity with the TIP in 2017 was an anomaly, which may indicate people misunderstood the question.

The demographic quotas of the survey were close to the census demographics for our area. Demographic quotas for age or income cannot be added, because we would run out of survey sample. As it is, 76,000 telephone calls have to be made to get six hundred completed interviews. We are under-represented with a younger age bracket and over-represented with the older and middle bracket. We are under-represented in the lower income bracket and over-represented in the over \$100K income bracket. This presentation and a full report are available on the website.

Ms. Pamela Steinebach asked if there has been any talk with surrounding MPOs about different ways to try to get some information, so you do not have to make 76,000 phone calls. There might be some new innovative ways of garnering that information like going out to the Delaware State Fair and doing those kind of grassroots kind of questions. Ms. Novakoff said we have similar conversations every iteration of the survey and it does get harder and harder to get six hundred completed interviews. We do other surveys at smaller events, but this allows us to get a representative sample of the region. We do supplement with a variety of other surveys, including partnering with other agencies.

Mr. Sisson asked if incentives like a gift cards are provided for people to fill out surveys. Ms. Novakoff said yes, we have for the smaller community surveys. Mr. Sisson said as some point, people block spam callers. Ms. Novakoff said when we do the survey next time, we will have to think about that and if we need to do other things to get the required number of responses.

### **16. 2050 Regional Transportation Plan 2023 Update**

Ms. Tigist Zegeye said staff are updating the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) with the 2023 update. We base the Regional Transportation Plan Update on the Progress Report and the Public Opinion Survey.

Mr. Bill Swiatek said this is our principal plan. It is the foundational work that sets the strategic policy for WILMAPCO and includes the major transportation projects that are already in the TIP or will be in the future. There are two lists of projects in the plan. One is constrained in the sense of being financially funded to complete the project. The other is aspirational in that there is no money for the project yet. The RTP is updated every four years. We have been doing this since 1996 and the update is due in March of 2023. Key tasks that were completed are the Progress Report and the Public Opinion Survey, which feed into the RTP. Staff are now developing the policy element, which includes draft goals, objectives, and actions. We will go through a phase of agency, municipal, and civic outreach and develop the project lists themselves. An air quality conformity analysis will begin next month. The formal outreach period begins in January and runs through March of 2023. Document refinement will be completed in the spring, and it should be brought before Council at the March meeting.

The Progress Report feeds into the RTP, by tracking the actions in the plan to see if we are on track to meet those actions. It is a performance-based document that includes qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure the progress of these actions. We accomplished or are on track to accomplish 60% of the actions in the 2050 RTP. This is an improvement over last time where we were at 50%. Work needs to be done to better concentrate growth in Center and Core TIAs. Additional work needs to be done to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips, reduce VMT, and increase road safety. One of the successes is meeting air quality conformity requirements as the air emissions have come down. Continued emission reductions from transportation are projected. Another success is local plan implementation. Much of the time at WILMAPCO is spent on subregional studies, the monitoring of those studies, and making sure that projects come out of them. Other successes include efforts to build walking and bike networks and congestion mitigation. Another element of RTP is the Public Opinion Survey, which is a foundational cornerstone of the RTP. It is statistically valid and helps ensure our policies are in line with public opinion.

The strategic policy of the RTP is broken down into goals, then under the goals are objectives, then under objectives are actions. Performance measures were added over the last few iterations. Under the goal to Improve Quality of Life, some of the objectives involve protecting

public health and safety, promoting active transportation, transportation equity work, and preserving natural and cultural resources. The actions involve funding transportation choices, protecting the environment, and so forth. Currently no major changes to the actions or performance measures are proposed, although that is up for discussion as we go through the stakeholder process. Under Supporting Disaster Planning Efforts, it is suggested that supporting national defense preparedness be added to one of the action items to keep in line with FHWA's Planning Emphasis Areas. Another goal is Supporting Sustainable Economic Development and Goods Movement. Its objectives include maximizing our investment, developing effective transportation networks, and planning for energy security and resilience. For this goal, adding a new action that ensures public accessibility of data is suggested to conform with FHWA's Planning Emphasis Areas. This would ensure that data produced as part of plans is easy for the public to access and use for other studies and efforts. This is already done, but this would make it policy. Under the Supporting a Greener Transportation System action it is proposed that a VMT reduction target for the next ten years be added as a performance measure. In the Delaware Climate Action Plan, the goal is a 10% reduction in VMT between 2020 and 2030. The goal to Efficiently Transport People has objectives that include improving system performance, engaging the public via an open process, and promoting accessibility and connectivity. One minor change would be to fund preservation projects first, set a new performance measure target for preservation spending, and ensure those projects are happening first. A similar target was identified in the progress report based on spending levels that are typical for preservation spending and the target is about half of the funding in the TIP.

One of the other key things updated with the plan is ensuring that funding is being spent in the correct way and the correct places. Transportation Investment Areas are developed by looking at land use plans at the state, county, and municipal levels across the region. These identify Centers, where there are the biggest concentration of densities and we want the most intensive transportation investments, to Cores where we want fairly intensive investments, to rural areas where the focus is on preservation projects. Staff will review everything from both states and counties, but one key thing that staff will review closely is the draft Growth Area Policy Map from the New Castle County Comprehensive Plan. This identifies focus redevelopment and infill areas and provides a fresh look at land development policy in New Castle County. We need to make sure that this is aligned with our TIAs.

Ms. Heather Dunigan said the current plan has a long list of projects that we thought we could afford when the plan was updated four years ago, however, many of the short-term projects are not yet done. So, with this update we want to make sure that we can afford projects included on the constrained list. Staff worked with the DOTs to get updated funding forecasts. We are still in process of getting Cecil County's information from MDOT. When DelDOT Finance provides the Delaware statewide information, it is assumed that half the available funds for capital projects goes to New Castle County as the most populated county in the state. That is a total of \$6.9 billion and from that, we deduct the core business, which are the things the state has to do in terms of preservation and safety projects. Then, we deduct the GARVEE payback, which leaves about \$4.3 billion dollars in New Castle County funds for new projects. In the 2018 iteration of the RTP, the total is about \$3.8 billion, so it is an increase, but considering inflation rates, it is a small increase. In fact, it is probably less money when inflation over the long term is considered, because the forecasted cost of the project uses the year of expenditure rather than the current year costs. So, the cost of some of the longer-term projects in the plan look extraordinary because of the inflation rate. The short term is the TIP and outyears with available funds of about \$1 billion. The mid-term is the next ten years with about \$1.5 billion. Then, there is about \$1.7 billion in the long-term category of funding.

Mr. Sisson asked if these are just state dollars. Ms. Dunigan said these are state and federal dollars that are expect for New Castle County. This does not include any kind of developer match, which is usually a very small portion of the funding.

Staff have been coordinating with both states' DOTs to review and update the project list from four years ago. Projects were added to the list based on recent plans adopted by WILMAPCO, state DOTs, and the TID projects coming out of those processes, so a long list of projects are being considered. Ms. Dunigan will look through some of the comp plans from the towns and counties to make sure those projects are captured. Completed projects will be removed and once the list is cleaned up, staff will begin the project prioritization process. Then projects are divided based on what is affordable and if there is time to get to it. The rest of it goes on the aspirations list. When the timeline of these projects is made, that feeds into the air quality conformity process. The current list of projects is available at [www.wilmapco.org/rtp](http://www.wilmapco.org/rtp).

All the roadway projects from Cecil County come from the updated Strategic Highway Needs Analysis except the Belvidere Road project, for which there will be an amendment to the TIP at the next Council meeting for dualizing Belvidere Road to tie into the new interchange. Of the other new projects, from the Rail Plan update is the work on the Susquehanna River Rail Bridge. This will be aspirational and will require sources of funds beyond what we typically get for Cecil County, because it is above \$2 billion to implement this.

There are some completed projects in New Castle County, but not all of the short-term projects from four years ago were completed. Some of them are not even in the TIP yet. There are some that were discussed with DeIDOT, and we collectively agreed can come off including widening Route 9 through the City of New Castle, the I-95/Chapman Road ramp, a new interchange at I-95/Route 72, and studies which do not belong on the project list. There are three pages of suggested new projects, but some will wind up on the aspirations list, so we do not lose track of them. Some will rise to the top when we do our project prioritization. Some are things like the TID processes that DeIDOT does with local areas. From the state agency perspective, those are high priorities and will likely need to be included on the constrained list, because there is a legal commitment to accomplish them. Ms. Dunigan thanked the staff at DeIDOT for their effort with the project list because it added support and helped the plan reflect what is going on, so there are no surprises that are being worked on without our knowledge.

The next part of the process will be prioritizing that list and figuring out what we can afford to do and when. That feeds into the air quality conformity analysis, which we will do for PM2.5 in New Castle County; and ozone for both New Castle County and Cecil County. This is making sure that we are meeting our air quality goals from this list of projects. The projects prioritization criteria are drawn from the goals of the plan. The conformity analysis will take place later this summer. Then, staff will be doing outreach at municipalities and civic associations. Staff will do the Our Town event. We are available for any groups that would like to have us. There will be online outreach as well.

Ms. Pamela Steinebach thanked Ms. Dunigan and everybody at WILMAPCO. She knows that DeIDOT was a lot more involved in putting some more projects out there on the aspirations list. She expressed her appreciation for being open and working collaboratively.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

### **17. DeIDOT's Administrative Modification Request Letters**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Heather Murphy the Council adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Motion passed.

(07-14-22-06)

**ATTACHMENTS: (0)**