



WILMAPCO



Quarterly newsletter of the Wilmington Area Planning Council

TRANSPORTER

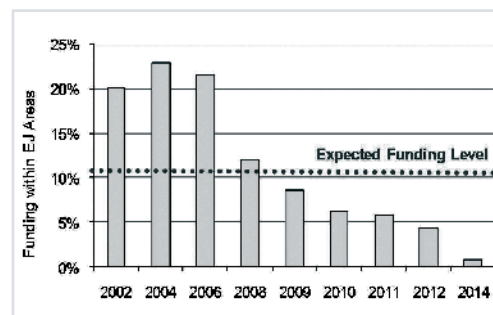
Social Equity in Transportation

WILMAPCO is wrapping up a social equity study. The 2013 Environmental Justice Report and Title VI Plan examines low-income and racial/ethnic minorities, vis-à-vis the transportation system, and how involved these groups are in our public participation process.

We found that low-income and minority (or EJ) communities carry more than their fair share of the transportation system's burdens, while often not enjoying its full benefits. Specifically, we found EJ neighborhoods:

- (including vehicle) crash rates
- Experience higher near-road emissions exposure rates
- Enjoy better bus access overall than the average neighborhood
- Have numerous bus connectivity issues related to employment and food access
- Generally, have good non-motorized connectivity
- Are more likely to be impacted by sea-level rise

Fundamentally, we should aim to reduce transportation costs for EJ communities, and ensure EJ communities receive their fair share of transportation dollars. Breaking the typical cycle of suburban sprawl and highway-dominant transportation investments is a necessary starting point.



- Do not receive their fair share of planned transportation spending
- Are home to high pedestrian crash rates
- Have lower than expected overall

Doing so would reduce today's mismatches between EJ communities and healthy, affordable food and employment access, and overall, reduce (our costly and growing) private automobile dependency, and free more dollars for EJ areas.

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While WILMAPCO has made great strides to incorporate and strengthen equity in the public participation process, problems still persist. For example, subscription rates to this newsletter are significantly lower in EJ areas than the average neighborhood. We also remain tied to traditional venues for important outreach and more work is needed to better engage our Limited English Proficient (Spanish and Chinese) populations.

The study was guided by a steering committee comprised of state and federal agencies and community advocates. Council adoption is expected in July. To learn more about our social equity work, please visit www.wilmapco.org/ej.

Port of Wilmington Truck Parking Study

WILMAPCO is putting the finishing touches on a truck parking study at Wilmington's seaport. The study examines the possibility of locating a truck parking lot outside of the port's property to better manage truck flow, allow for the expansion of port activity, and address truck idling concerns.

The study identifies two properties along Terminal Avenue, a key access road to the port, as potential parking sites. Both could accommodate around 50 trucks, anti-idling equipment, security, food, and sanitation facilities.

Beyond parking sites, the study also recommends actions to reduce truck movement along restricted community roadways, ways to curtail idling from parked trucks, and improvements in pedestrian and bicycle conditions around the port.

A steering committee of local and state agencies, environmental advocates, and community leaders guided the study. Public feedback was obtained at three community meetings. To learn more about the Port of Wilmington Truck Parking Study, please visit www.wilmapco.org/portparking. Council adoption is expected in July.



Newark Bicycle Plan Released for Public Comment

The City of Newark, WILMAPCO, and the Newark Bicycle Committee are developing a Newark Bicycle Plan to make bicycling a more safe and convenient choice for people of all ages and abilities. Development is being done in coordination with the update of Newark's Comprehensive Plan, with anticipated completion this fall.

A draft was released for public review in May as part of Newark's Bike to Work Day event. Outreach has included displays at community events, a University of Delaware employee survey, December 2012 Public Workshop, and a June 2013 Public Meeting. There is also a Bicycle Plan Online Workshop currently ongoing at www.wilmapco.org/bikenewark, where participants can review the draft plan, fill out a survey, and add ideas to a map including where they would like more bike racks, locations where it is challenging to ride, and recommended bike routes. Goals and recommendations of the plan include:

- Improve the bicycle transportation network
- Encourage adequate and secure bicycle parking at all major trip destinations
- Improve safety for bicycling through design, maintenance, and enforcement practices

For more information, please visit www.wilmapco.org/bikenewark.



WILMAPCO's Transportation Alternatives Program

MAP-21 (new federal transportation legislation) establishes the new Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) to federally fund a variety of community-sponsored projects in ten categories such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, access to transit, environmental mitigation, and Safe Routes to School. Because WILMAPCO is a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) with a population greater than 200,000, a portion of the funding has been sub-allocated to our region.

Sub-allocated funds must be awarded through a competitive processes, which our Council approved during their May meeting. The TAP prioritization process assesses proposed projects using several criteria. These criteria include:

- Demographic: population and employment density and transportation equity
- Land use: proximity to community centers, schools, libraries, parks, municipalities, hometown overlay zones, and inclusion of historic elements
- Transportation: proximity to bus stops, bike routes and greenways, high crash locations, and closing the gap in bicycle and walking networks

The prioritization of New Castle County's project submissions has been approved. We are currently working with our committees to prioritize the Cecil County submissions. For more information, please visit www.wilmapco.org/tap.



Safe Routes to School Work Continues

WILMAPCO's efforts to help create a safer walking and biking environment for elementary school students has continued. At Elbert-Palmer Elementary, where the first phase of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program has been completed, a second phase is in full swing. During the first phase, the school saw several sidewalk and crosswalk improvements, along with safety education initiatives.

The second phase has followed suit, and the school is on track to see additional sidewalk improvements next spring. Educational strategies have also continued including devoting a week to pedestrian and bicycle safety. During the week, students utilized a checklist to identify places along their walking route to school where they felt unsafe. The school's SRTS Committee then used the information to tailor the program. During safety week, pedestrian safety was also taught in class, followed by an art contest. Ten new scooters were given to contest winners. To encourage bicycling, the Urban Bike Project's Earn-a-Bike Program has continued. The program not only teaches students how to assemble and ride bikes, but they get to keep the bikes they build. To better understand parental fears around allowing children to walk to school, a poster board sticker survey was conducted. Fear of crime and violence was reported as the number one reason for not allowing children to walk to school.

Other educational strategies included pedestrian and bicycle rodeos, Walking Wednesdays, and a Peacock Bowl, where classes walking the most won a pizza party and trophy.

Claymont, Mount Pleasant, and Maple Lane Elementary schools have also continued their SRTS programs. Claymont's most recent efforts have included a Walk to School Week, where several events took place. These included: a Walk to School Week kickoff, bike rodeo, walk to the fire station, and a party for those who walked the most during the week. Mount Pleasant has continued holding park and walk events, where parents park at Bellevue State Park, and walk the remaining half mile to school with their children. Walking Wednesdays have also become popular at



Mount Pleasant students learn hand signals and practice bike safety skills during a rodeo.



Claymont students win prizes for walking to school.

the school. Maple Lane conducted a bike rodeo, gave bikes and helmets to students who did not own them, and participated in a district-wide walk to school day. The four schools are scheduled to see construction of new sidewalks and crosswalks this spring. For more information, please visit www.wilmapco.org/school-children.

The Air Quality Partnership of Delaware

The Air Quality Partnership (AQP) of Delaware, a coalition of public agencies, private corporations, and residents, has kicked-off another air quality outreach season. As part of the Delaware Nature Society's Third Annual Earth Day event, held this past April at the DuPont Environmental Education Center on Wilmington's Riverfront, the AQP manned an exhibit table. Tree saplings and other fun giveaways, and air quality information was distributed. The group also performed a skit about the air quality index during the event. The air quality index identifies when air quality is predicted to be unhealthy using a color coded system. Volunteers from the audience were provided colored T-shirts representing the index and information was shared about each color.

The skit and giant storybook are strategies of the group's new focus, children. The partnership plans to continue developing nontraditional outreach methods that target school aged children.



The AQP also read from a giant storybook and shared tips throughout the day on simple steps that can be taken to help improve air quality. Tips included: combining several trips into one, avoiding topping off the gas tank, carpooling, and walking or biking for shorter trips. Batman even made a special appearance, on behalf of the partnership, to share information about the poor air quality in Gotham City and how to help improve air quality in general.

Included among these strategies is the development of a mascot and educational program for school assemblies and statewide events. The partnership is working with Raymond Entertainment, founded by the original Philly Phanatic, to develop a unique mascot and educational program. The group plans to start a pilot program next year that will include a presentation at one school in each county. The performance, by the new mascot, will be aligned to the state's educational standards and borrow from the EPA's air quality curriculum. For more information about the Air Quality Partnership of Delaware or to join, please visit www.wilmapco.org/aqp.



The Newport Train Station Feasibility Study

In May 2011, WILMAPCO was asked by the Town of Newport and the State of Delaware to determine if reopening the Newport Train Station was feasible. The Newport Train Station was closed in the mid-1960s. The feasibility study determines what facilities would be needed to reinstate commuter train service and the impact a new station would have on the town and its surrounding development.

When the study began, a visioning process was held with stakeholders and the general public to determine priorities for the town. These priorities included:

- Make Newport a better place to live, work, and play
- Build on recent beautification and streetscape efforts
- Act as a second downtown station and an alternative to the Wilmington station
- Support growth without significantly changing the town's character
- Support quality development (shops and condos, not big box)
- Draw people in from outside and create small business growth opportunities
- Support SEPTA ridership and possibly provide the opportunity to increase train service in Delaware
- Allow people to take the train to work and encourage living in Newport
- Enhance the potential for mixed-use development of under utilized properties in Newport

To help us understand the current market conditions and potential areas for growth, a Transit-Oriented Development Market Scan was completed. The results show that the Newport area has limited demand for office and residential development. However, it does have the potential to support more retail uses, primarily grocery stores, pharmacies, general merchandise, and food service establishments.

Concurrently, the Project Team (WILMAPCO, DART, DelDOT, and WR&A) participated in railroad coordination meetings with the three

railroad operations that pass through Newport along the North East Corridor (NEC): Amtrak, Norfolk Southern, and SEPTA. The NEC is owned by Amtrak but is used regularly by Norfolk Southern and SEPTA. After extensive discussions with the railroad companies, it was determined that the preferred option would be to construct a new track along the southern right-of-way (Track A). Track A would allow a new station with high-level platforms (as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act) to be built.

The study also includes ridership forecasting. The forecasts indicate that significant ridership (480 riders) would be new, rather than patrons shifted from other stations (133 riders). The riders are generally expected to travel to the Newport station from the residential areas along the SR 141/41 Corridor from New Castle in the south to Hockessin in the north.

How Many People Might Use the Newport Station?				
SEPTA Station	Existing Ridership (without Newport)	Existing Ridership (if Newport was built)	Future Ridership (without Newport)	Future Ridership (if Newport was built)
Newark	500	500	710	710
Churchman's Crossing	463	330	560	450
Newport	--	480	--	500
Wilmington	2,020	2,020	2,220	2,220
Claymont	1,024	1,020	1,380	1,380
Total	4,007	4,350	4,870	5,250

Also included is the development of design alternatives for a new station plan. The plan includes:

- Two hundred additional parking spaces plus the potential for overflow and expansion
- Attractive and functional access for cars, pedestrians, buses, and bikes
- Track and structure improvements
- Station amenities and safety
- Land use and development recommendations

More details on the study can be found at www.wilmapco.org/newport. Council adoption is expected this July.

The Delmarva Freight Summit

On June 26th, the Third Annual Delmarva Freight Summit was held, at the New Castle County Chamber of Commerce. The summit was hosted by the Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia Departments of Transportation, along with WILMAPCO and the Dover/Kent MPO. The half-day forum brought together both public and private sector freight professionals to examine the needs and interests of freight transportation across the Delmarva Peninsula. The event featured numerous speakers, including welcome remarks from Shailen Bhatt, Delaware Secretary of Transportation and the keynote speaker Jack Wells, Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Transportation, who discussed how MAP-21 has changed the priorities for freight movement on a national level.



The summit featured speakers and industry experts who described the changing dynamics of the chemical and petroleum industry in our region. IHS Global Insight (provides economic analysis) presented highlights from an ongoing effort to study the chemical industry supply chain within Delaware. IHS plans to examine the inbound and outbound supply chain characteristics at each of the state's twelve chemical plants. This analysis would include identification and sources of inbound raw materials as well as destinations of outbound finished product, either for further processing (intermediate product) or final consumption.

Other speakers presented topics including the Delmarva Freight Study, a multi-state effort to develop a comprehensive, multi-modal evaluation of the freight transportation system, and its operations along the Delmarva Peninsula. DelDOT, in coordination with WILMAPCO, MDOT, VDOT, and numerous other agencies have



started work on a regional freight plan for the entire peninsula. The overall goal of the plan is to comprehensively evaluate the multimodal freight transportation system and related operations on the Delmarva Peninsula, determine its effect on the environment and economic development, and develop and assess future planning scenarios to identify priorities for relevant investment and regulation changes.

The event concluded with Jeff Stone, Director of the Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) speaking about the importance of a dependable freight transportation network to maintain our current employment base and foster additional economic opportunities in the state. For more information, please visit www.wilmapco.org/delmarva.



WILMINGTON AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

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WILMAPCO PUBLIC MEETINGS

Unless specified, meetings will be held at WILMAPCO, 850 Library Avenue, Suite 100, Newark, Delaware. Your participation at these meetings is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact us at (302) 737-6205, or toll free from Cecil County at (888) 808-7088. **During inclement weather, please call to verify meetings.**

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
WILMAPCO Council July 11, 6:30 p.m.	Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group August 6, 3 p.m.	Air Quality Subcommittee September 12, 10 a.m.
Joint Technical Advisory Committee and Air Quality Subcommittee July 18, 10 a.m. Lums Pond State Park	Air Quality Subcommittee August 8, 10 a.m.	WILMAPCO Council September 12, 6:30 p.m.
WILMAPCO Summer Picnic July 18, 12 p.m. Lums Pond State Park	Technical Advisory Committee August 15, 10 a.m.	Technical Advisory Committee September 19, 10 a.m.
	Public Advisory Committee August 26, 7 p.m.	

Don't miss the opportunity to influence which transportation projects get funded. Attend WILMAPCO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Public Workshop August 26, 2013, anytime from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., at WILMAPCO. To learn more, please visit www.wilmapco.org/tip.