

Quarterly newsletter of the Wilmington Area Planning Council

# TRANSPORTER

WILMAPCO

## 2040 Regional Transportation Plan

What do we want our transportation system to look like in 25 years? That is the question at the heart of the update to the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), set for Council approval this January. The RTP answers this question after considering our past successes and failures, feedback from member agencies, the general public, and existing and pending federal requirements. Generally, the RTP recommends improvements to make our transportation system more economically and environmentally sustainable, higher-performing, socially equitable, less car dependent and much more.

Goals, objectives, actions and performance measures are identified to guide our policy and planning work. Three broad, overlapping goals are listed: Support Sustainable Economic Development and Goods Movement, Efficiently Transport People, and Improve Quality of Life. Objectives, actions and performance measures are spelled out to help us achieve these goals.

This iteration of the RTP features an increased emphasis on environmental sustainability, community health and public participation. There are brand-new objectives, for example, to “plan for energy security and climate change.” Actions under this objective

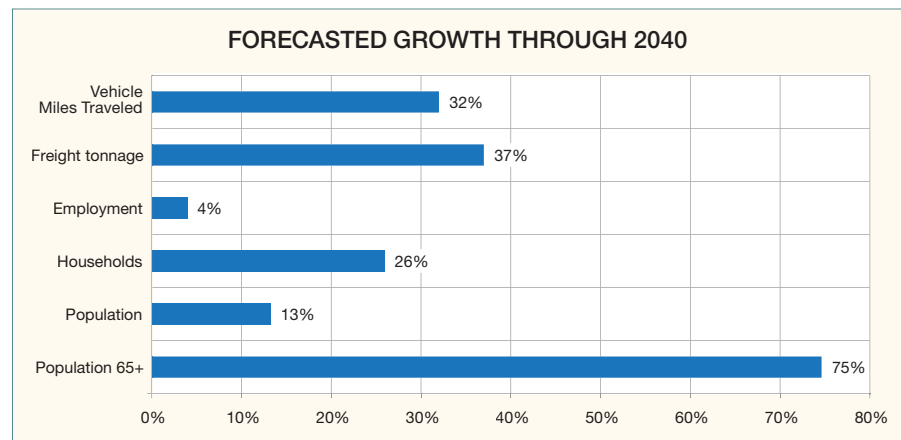
include reducing vehicle miles traveled, supporting cleaner vehicle infrastructure and understanding and adapting to rising sea levels. Another new objective is to “promote active transportation,” which includes actions to increase walking and bicycling trips. “Engaging the public via an open involvement process,” is a new RTP objective, having previously been slotted in other documents.

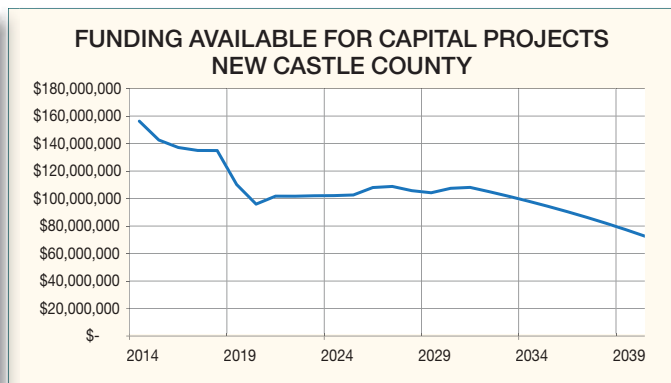
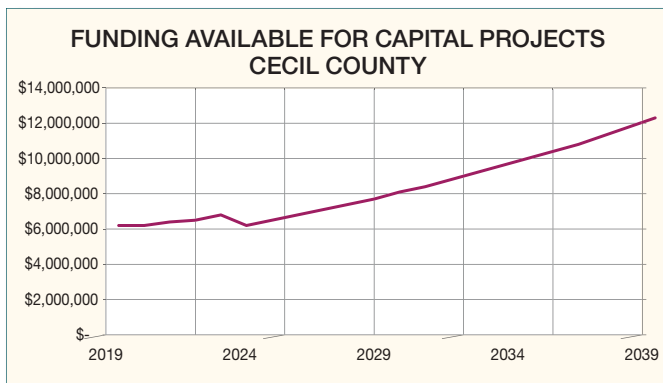
The transportation system is influenced by where people and businesses locate. Recognizing this, the RTP considers a range of different household and employment growth scenarios in New Castle County, and their impact on our transportation network. We use computer models to run various “what if” scenarios. These include: increased growth through 2040 south of the C&D

Canal, concentrated growth in the I-95 corridor, slower household growth overall and a baseline trend scenario.

The scenario that concentrated expected household and employment growth in the I-95 corridor performed best. The Northern Redevelopment scenario, led the way in reducing congestion, miles traveled, trip lengths and air emissions. It also increased average travel speeds and public transit ridership. The findings of this analysis informed recommendations in the RTP’s policy section.

Beyond policy, the identification of major transportation projects through 2040 is a key component of the RTP. This is done through consultations with the Delaware and Maryland Departments of Transportation and local governments. Financial forecasts were completed to see how much





funding is available for capital projects in our region. This analysis showed that, given current assumptions and trends, fewer dollars will be available in New Castle County for new project spending. The opposite is true in Cecil County. The problem in New Castle County is reflective of the lack of adequate infrastructure funding across the United States, and the continuing inability of governments to find solutions.

Seventy nine major projects were identified in the RTP – 68 of them in

New Castle County. Half of the funding is slated for new infrastructure, while half is assigned to reconfiguring present infrastructure. About three quarters of the projects we selected are roadway upgrades to improve vehicle flow and safety. In New Castle County, the majority of funding involves new highway construction in its central and southern suburbs, south of I-95. Projects along I-95, meanwhile, capture most of the funding in Cecil County. A required air quality analysis showed that these projects meet local

emissions standards. The RTP also includes a much longer list of unfunded “aspiration” projects, gathered from a variety of sources.

We are currently soliciting public feedback on the draft 2040 RTP. Staff has been making dozens of presentations at local government and civic meetings this fall. Public comments on the draft document will be accepted through Jan. 5, 2015.

*To view and comment on the draft RTP, please visit [www.wilmapco.org/rtp](http://www.wilmapco.org/rtp).*

## WILMAPCO's 2014 Our Town Event

The WILMAPCO Our Town forum held at Embassy Suites Hotel, Newark, on Sept. 3, 2014, focused on transportation funding and shortfalls in the region and nation. Tigist Zegeye, WILMAPCO Executive Director, welcomed more than 75 attendees who heard ideas from experts about how to better fund the transportation system. WILMAPCO has hosted Our Town events since developing the first long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) in 1996, and unveiled the 2040 RTP Update at this event.

Keynote speaker Beth Osborne, a Senior Policy Advisor and Vice President for Transportation for America, a membership organization focused on making connections within cities and towns where the federal government has underinvested

in transportation, said the United States didn't have a funding problem in the past 40 years because citizens were gradually driving more; however, since they have started driving less, the per capita gain due to the gas tax, which is used to fund transportation, has decreased.

She suggested raising gas and other taxes could help to make transportation programs become locally solvent. There are some states that already have these methods in place. Their focus is on getting a greater return on investments through auditing the list of projects using

performance measures and putting projects on a “diet” to find less expensive solutions that produce the same or more benefits.

Following the key note address, Ms. Zegeye discussed the WILMAPCO 2040 RTP Update.



Panel presentations and discussions were moderated by Ed O'Donnell, Senior Policy Advisor, University of Delaware, Institute of Public Administration (IPA), and included a presentation by Colin Peppard, Office of Senator Tom Carper, who expressed the Senator's strong concerns that funding transportation and infrastructure is a fundamental issue that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Peppard said the federal role has diminished regarding funding transportation and infrastructure. The federal gas tax was last raised in 1993, but with inflation, buys much less today. However, 32 states have increased their revenue to support transportation projects. Senator Carper's position is that if we want to keep pace with other nations, we need to invest, and in order to invest, we need to raise revenues and user fees. Mr. Peppard added if we don't get a transportation funding bill passed this year, we may not get a bill passed until 2018 because of the presidential election cycle.

Another panelist, Mark Kleinschmidt, President of New Castle County Chamber of Commerce, said demographics are destiny, and Delaware is challenged in how to move forward with funding because of its small size. He also said the Chamber of Commerce didn't support the gas tax as presented because developing a balance between tolls and debts, and coming up with other methods that aren't solely dependent on a gas tax, would be better.

Ted C. Williams, Chair, Transportation Trust Fund Task Force, and president of Landmark Science & Engineering, said we discovered that if DelDOT continued borrowing, by 2023 there would be no Delaware Capital Transportation Plan (CTP) funding left. The CTP was reduced from \$195 million to \$130 million. In addition, federal funding will drop from \$329 million to \$166 million in 2021. These

decreases impact a large number of projects.

By contrast, Mike Nixon, MDOT Regional Planning Manager, said funding progress has been much better in Maryland because MDOT received a significant increase in funding through the support of the General Assembly last year.

The final panelist, Delaware Secretary of Transportation Shailen P. Bhatt, said that DelDOT has been realigning the Capital Transportation Program (CTP) based on needs versus wants; controlling borrowing; reducing the department's overall debt; and rightsizing transit, while increasing revenue. DelDOT's debt was reduced by about one third (\$1.23 billion to \$872 million), but more support is needed from the Delaware General Assembly.



According to Bhatt, current transportation needs include funding the state of good repair such as I-95 bridge decks, corrugated metal pipes and many delayed projects. The Secretary demonstrated these needs when Rob McCleary, DelDOT Chief Engineer, came up to the stage and handed him a large chunk of concrete that was dislodged from the Brandywine Bridge on I-95 when a truck hit a pothole. He held up the piece of concrete and showed pictures of repairs, while explaining the need to take care of existing infrastructure.

*To view the speaker presentations from Our Town, please visit [www.wilmapco.org/ourtown](http://www.wilmapco.org/ourtown).*

# Unified Planning Work Program

Each May, WILMAPCO's Council adopts the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which outlines WILMAPCO's financial and budgetary information, as well as the work tasks and studies that staff will undertake during the upcoming fiscal year. In fiscal year 2014, WILMAPCO expended 62% of its overall 2 million dollar budget. Administration was the largest portion expended (18.7%). The next largest budget expenditures were Sub-Regional Studies (16.9%) and Public Outreach (12.4%). A number of projects under Sub-Regional Studies were completed in FY 2014. They

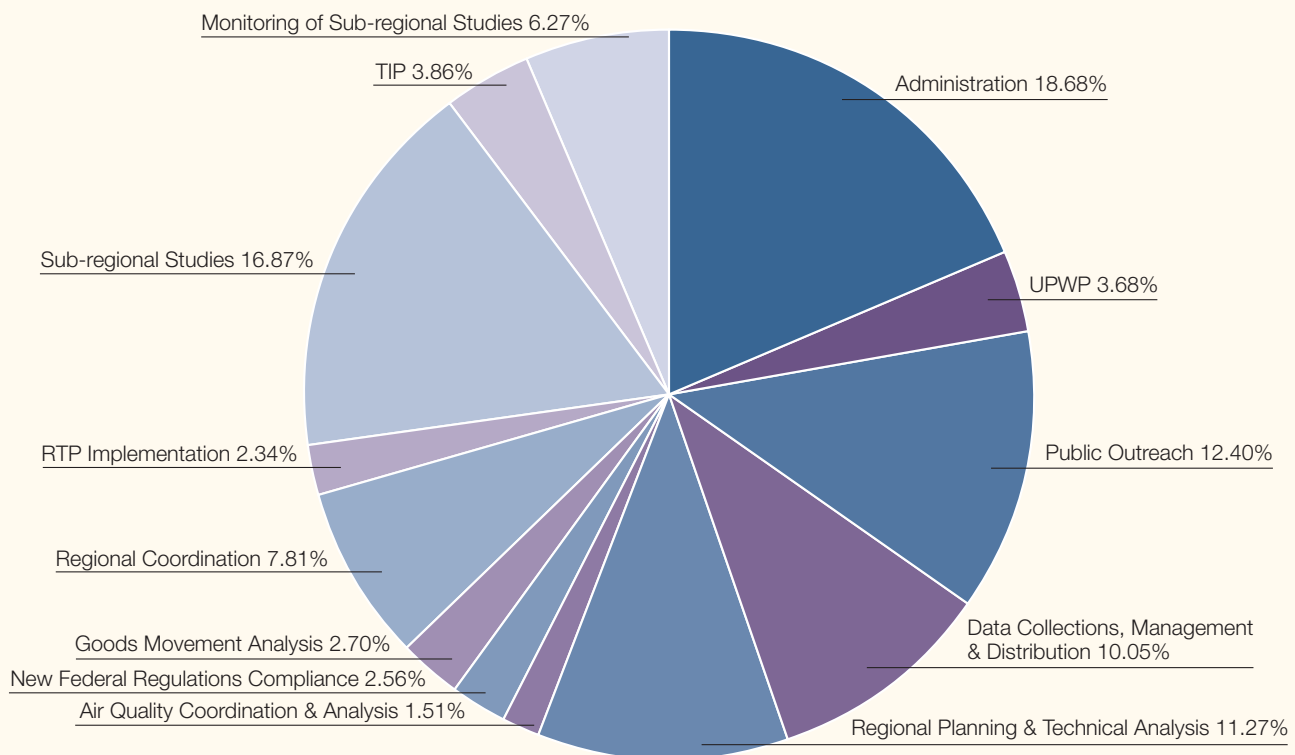
include: the Marshallton Circulation Study, Town of North East Transit Oriented Development Plan, Newark Bicycle Plan, Chesapeake Connector Economic Benefits Study, Port Deposit Transit Feasibility Study, Newport Train Station Feasibility Study, Newark Regional Transportation Center – TIGER II, Port of Wilmington Truck Parking Study and the MARC Commuter Rail Service Extension Ridership Analysis.

Current and upcoming sub-regional studies include Safe Routes to Schools Planning, Walkable Community Workshops, Charlestown Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Cecil County

Rt. 40 Planning, Wilmington Transit Planning, Town of Elkton Locust Lane Sidewalk Feasibility, Walnut Street Pedestrian and Streetscape Implementation, City of New Castle Sidewalk Inventory, Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Design Standard Overlay, SR 141 Corridor 20-Year Transportation Plan and Transit Oriented Development Analysis, the Glasgow Avenue Main Street Study, the Tri-State Mall Transit Oriented Development Analysis and Elkton Pedestrian Plan.

To view the current or previous years' UPWPs, please visit [www.wilmapco.org/upwp](http://www.wilmapco.org/upwp).

WILMAPCO FUNDING SPENDING FY2014





## Freight Planning Projects and Initiatives

Several freight planning projects and initiatives have taken place over the past year at WILMAPCO. The Delmarva Freight and Goods Movement Working Group, consisting of a group of public and private sector freight stakeholders and others who have an interest in regional freight movement, has been associated with all of them.

The largest project of the year was the Delmarva Freight Plan. The plan assesses current and future freight planning and transportation needs to enhance freight and goods movement and related economic opportunities on the Delmarva Peninsula. The plan is a multi-state, multi-Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) effort between WILMAPCO, the Delaware, Maryland and Virginia DOTs and the Dover/Kent and Salisbury/Wicomico MPOs. Coupled with extensive stakeholder outreach, the plan supports consistency with other

area planning efforts while targeting specific freight-related issues relevant to the local and regional economies. Included in the plan is a detailed scenario analysis of the Delmarva Peninsula. Scenario analyses explore the impact of disruptions to the freight system. The final report will be available this winter.

WILMAPCO also participated in and helped coordinate the Fourth Annual Delmarva Freight Summit. The summit was held at the Dover Downs Hotel and Casino and featured the following presentations:

- Marc Dixon (FHWA) – MAP-21 freight provision
- Lee Derrickson (DE Motor Truckers Association) – Transportation Challenges in the Agribusiness Industry
- Rudy Husband (Norfolk Southern) – Crude Oil Shipments by Rail
- Chad Reece (WRA) – Delmarva Freight Plan

WILMAPCO has also started a new data collection project to improve freight data in the region by coordinating with DelDOT's Transportation Management Center (TMC) to deploy Wavetronix data collection devices. The devices collect truck volume and percentage data at key roadway locations in the region. These devices provide an inexpensive method of collecting data that helps us to understand freight patterns and trends in the region so that we can better plan for safe and efficient goods movement.

To round out the year, the working group held two freight planning meetings in December to review the final draft of the Delmarva Freight Study.

*To learn more about WILMAPCO's freight planning efforts or to view any of the presentations from the Delmarva Freight Summit, please visit [www.wilmapco.org/delmarva](http://www.wilmapco.org/delmarva).*



## Bicycle Improvements Coming Soon to Cecil County

The Cecil County Bicycle Plan was adopted by the county and its municipalities in fall of 2012. The plan was developed in coordination with the county and the towns, an advisory committee and the general public. The collaborative vision is to improve bicycle safety, provide a convenient and coordinated network, and support multimodal transportation by focusing investments into existing communities to foster bicycling for a variety of uses including transportation, recreation, fitness and tourism. Consistent with the county and municipal comprehensive plans, the plan presents a summary of goals, strategies and actions. Recommended actions include installing pavement markings, restriping, signage and completing some off-road trail connections. WILMAPCO has been working with county and town officials to implement

the plan since its adoption.

Last year, WILMAPCO assisted Cecil County and its towns with the submission of a joint application for the FY 2014 Maryland Bikeways Grant Program. The Maryland Bikeways Grant Program, established in 2011 under the Cycle Maryland Initiative, supports projects that create and improve bicycle connections for transportation to key destinations, such as work, school and shopping. Funding is competitively disbursed throughout many counties and municipalities for a variety of projects in different stages of development from feasibility and design to construction. In FY 2014, the program awarded \$3.2 million in grants to four counties and 12 municipalities. Among the recipients, Cecil County received \$39,470 to install bicycle racks at key destinations and signage on bike routes

in the towns of Cecilton, Charlestown, Chesapeake City, Elkton, Perryville, North East and Rising Sun.

Bicycle signage and parking at trip destinations are significant factors that encourage regular bicycle use. Many places throughout the municipalities lack bike parking, which is an inexpensive and efficient means of improving bicycling conditions. The bikeways grant enables the municipalities to prioritize and implement needed bicycle improvements despite limited fiscal resources. The county and towns are currently working with MDOT and MDSHA to complete the work and improvements by the end of 2015.

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For more information on the Cecil County Bicycle Plan, visit [www.wilmapco.org/bikececil](http://www.wilmapco.org/bikececil).

## Newark Bicycle Plan

### Early Implementation Underway

In the few short months since WILMAPCO endorsed the 2014 Newark Bicycle Plan last May, the City of Newark, Newark Bicycle Committee and other partners have taken early steps to carry out priority recommendations. Over the summer, Newark installed a second phase of improved lane markings downtown and retouched the sharrows installed earlier on Main Street. In August, Newark City Council voted to request a partnership with DelDOT on a protected bicycle lane on Delaware Avenue, also known as a cycle track. Early planning has begun for this important east-west connection.

Other developments have taken place since the plan's endorsement as well. The University of Delaware now offers simple, online bicycle registration that

is available to students, staff and retirees to assist with returning removed, recovered or stolen bicycles to the rightful owners. The Newark Bike Project, after several years of moving annually, has settled into their new home for at least three years, and celebrated their grand reopening in October; the group continues to expand their hours, during which they provide affordable bicycles and repair services to the community.

*To learn more about the Newark Bicycle Plan or Newark Bicycle Committee, visit [www.wilmapco.org/bikenewark](http://www.wilmapco.org/bikenewark).*



PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANK WARNOCK

## Third Cecil County TOD Plan Completed in North East

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is a mixed use residential and commercial area designed to make public transit successful, walking and bicycling convenient and safe, and provide for a vibrant, livable community. In May, WILMAPCO endorsed the final Cecil County train station area TOD Plan. The 2014 North East TOD Plan followed the 2011 Elkton TOD Plan and the 2012 Perryville TOD Plan. Each town has taken steps to begin implementing their plans. In Elkton, the town worked with Maryland Transit Administration and WILMAPCO to conduct an Elkton Rail Feasibility Study that further explored the station location, track configuration and operating recommendations, conducted an



environmental review and updated ridership analysis, and developed a construction cost estimate. In Perryville, work is underway to design and construct Lower Ferry Park and initial plans have been completed

for the Town Hall area. For North East, next steps include development of a TOD Overlay District to guide redevelopment of the planning area.

*Learn more at [www.wilmapco.org/northeast](http://www.wilmapco.org/northeast).*

## WILMINGTON AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

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## Transporter Newsletter Winter 2015

## 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.**

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Air Quality Subcommittee <i>January 8, 10 a.m.</i>	Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group <i>February 3, 3 p.m.</i>	Air Quality Subcommittee <i>March 12, 10 a.m.</i>
WILMAPCO Council <i>January 8, 6:30 p.m.</i>	Air Quality Subcommittee <i>February 12, 10 a.m.</i>	WILMAPCO Council <i>March 12, 6:30 p.m.</i>
Technical Advisory Committee <i>January 15, 10 a.m.</i>	Technical Advisory Committee <i>February 19, 10 a.m.</i>	Technical Advisory Committee <i>March 19, 10 a.m.</i>
	Public Advisory Committee <i>February 23, 7 p.m.</i>	

### DON'T MISS THE CHANCE TO INFLUENCE THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION IN OUR REGION.

Attend WILMAPCO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Public Workshop:  
Monday, February 23 from 4 to 6:30 p.m., at the Newark Public Library.

### WILMAPCO IS SEEKING YOUR FEEDBACK ON PLANNED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS.

For more information, please visit [www.wilmapco.org/tip](http://www.wilmapco.org/tip) and let your voice be heard.