

TRANSPORTER

WILMAPCO

WILMAPCO Spearheads Major Planning Effort along Route 9 Corridor

Years of neglect have left communities along Route 9 near Wilmington distressed and disconnected. Unemployment and crime are rife, industrial pollution and heavy truck traffic are uncomfortably close to homes, busy roadways isolate some people without cars, and access to healthy foods are often out of reach. In step with efforts to turn things around, New Castle County asked WILMAPCO to conduct a corridor-wide master plan.

The plan, which kicked off in January, will identify the best redevelopment and reinvestment strategies for the Route 9 corridor – roughly defined as extending from US 13 in the west to the Delaware River in the east in unincorporated New Castle County. The corridor's economic strengths and opportunities will be assessed and strategies will be identified to drive business development. Focus will be directed towards creating jobs,

healthy foods, recreation, community services, affordable housing, and mitigating environmental and health concerns. Zoning adjustments will be recommended to eliminate cases of incompatible adjoining uses. Special attention will be given to making the highway and roadways safer for travel.

Background data considering current and projected land use, transportation, and demographic conditions have been collected and are currently being analyzed. This data, along with stakeholder interviews, are informing an ongoing real estate and economic development assessment. This effort will determine realistic redevelopment scenarios in the corridor.

Future work involves developing a vision and redevelopment alternatives for the corridor. These will be based on the above data analyses and the community's vision. Public outreach will begin this spring, with two

public workshops planned. A final report identifying preferred redevelopment strategies, along with transportation improvements, is expected in the fall.

This study is being guided by WILMAPCO, the State of Delaware, New Castle County, local residents, and key stakeholders.

For more information, please visit www.wilmapco.org/route9.

Follow the project on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Route9MasterPlan.



A Fast Summary of the FAST Act

laws, it increases funding by 11 percent over five years.

Notable provisions include:

Expedites project delivery: Streamlines approval processes for project design and implementation.

Expands freight funding: The FAST Act authorizes new formula and discretionary grants to fund improvements to US freight movement.

Promotes innovative finance: FAST establishes an Innovative Finance Bureau, to serve as a one-stop shop for state and local governments to receive federal funds, financing, and technical assistance.

Strengthens safety options: FAST strengthens federal safety review of public transit services and streamlines truck and bus safety grant programs. FAST also allows the use of alternative

street design manuals to promote “Complete Streets.”

Reinstates transit funding: FAST reinstates the bus discretionary grant program and strengthens the “Buy America” requirements for vehicle purchases. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is made eligible for funding under highway and rail credit programs.

Builds ladders of opportunity: Strengthens workforce training and improves regional planning.

Renames funding categories: The Surface Transportation Program (STP) retains its suballocation by population, but has been renamed the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program. The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is also retained, now known simply as STP set-aside; 50% of these funds continue to be suballocated by population.

Adds to planning focus areas: Tourism and natural disaster risk reduction are added issues for transportation planning organizations to consider. Intercity buses and related facilities are now to be part of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and regional plan.

Learn more at

www.transportation.gov/fastact.



As we plan for our region's transportation future and as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), WILMAPCO relies on predictable future funding. Thus, we are happy to report that the Fixing America's Surface Transportation or “FAST” Act was signed into law on December 4, 2015, providing the first 5-year transportation law in a decade. While the FAST Act mostly maintains the programs of past



Supporting a Healthier Delaware

An estimated one in three adults and almost 17 percent of young people in this country are obese, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Because the transportation system helps shape how communities are designed and operate, it can have a profound influence on public health. To that end, WILMAPCO has been working with Healthy Kids Delaware (HKD) and the Urban Food and Farm Coalition (UFFC) to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables and provide bicycle and pedestrian safety education for elementary school students in New Castle County.

HKD is a coalition of more than 40 organizations, including Nemours Health and Prevention Services (NHPS), University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, New Castle County Community Services, Healthy Food for Healthy Kids, local community centers, and many more working to improve public health. HKD works to coordinate community dinners, safety fairs, and many other educational events. Last year, HKD coordinated 10

community dinners throughout the county. Community dinners are free events that include cooking demonstrations, exhibitors, and presenters. During these events, the WILMAPCO exhibit table provides information on bicycle and pedestrian safety and informs parents about the availability of the Safe Routes to School and Walkable Community Workshop programs we offer. HKD also works with its partners to arrange safety fairs at local elementary schools. Safety fairs include more than a dozen exhibitors, speakers, Zumba, and often include a healthy meal and cooking demonstrations.

WILMAPCO is also working with the Urban Food and Farm Coalition (UFFC) to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables. UFFC includes more than 50 organizations working to support urban agriculture throughout Delaware. UFFC has assisted with the startup of community gardens, farmers markets, and urban farms throughout New Castle County. WILMAPCO has worked with UFFC to create a map illustrating



community and school gardens. UFFC uses this map to promote the availability of fresh foods to the region's residents.

This year WILMAPCO is continuing to work with both organizations to create new bike lanes, increase transit access to grocery stores, conduct additional safety events, and support the startup of additional farmers markets and community gardens throughout the county.

To view community gardens, school gardens and urban farms in New Castle County, please visit <http://goo.gl/7cAiCj>.

Bicycling for Better Communities

Communities across the region, and the country are celebrating National Bike Month May. Events throughout the month seek to raise awareness about the benefits of bicycling, and help create bike-friendly communities.

In Newark, our region's only bicycle friendly community, a study was recently completed for a two-way protected bicycle lane (cycletrack) on Delaware Avenue. A study to look at bicycle safety options for Cleveland Avenue will be starting this spring.

On April 30, Newark Mayor Polly Sierer will host the Mayor's Bike Ride to kick off National Bicycle Month. Details will also be available at cityofnewarkde.us.

On May 20, Newark will celebrate Bike-to-Work Day and serve snacks to commuters and local leaders from 7:30-9:30 a.m. The location has not yet been confirmed, visit www.wilmapco.org/bikenewark for updates.

Wilmington has also been busy planning for bicycling and is planning a Bike-to-Work Day on May 13 from 7 to 9 a.m., at HB Dupont Park. The City of Wilmington and DelDOT are conducting a Bike Share Feasibility Study to explore the possibility of implementing a bike share system in Wilmington. Learn more at wilmingtonbikeshare.com. Construction is expected to begin this year on the New Castle to Wilmington Industrial Track Greenway, providing off-road bicycling between the two communities.

On May 18, join White Clay Bike Club and Bike Wilmington for the Ride of Silence. Participants will ride as a group, in silence, in memory of cyclists injured or killed. For information contact: Ceci McCormick, (302) 528-1773, johnandcecimcc@gmail.com.

The Wilmington Grand Prix, one of the premier criterium-style bike

rides in the U.S., will celebrate its 10th anniversary May 13-15. For the ninth straight year, the Grand Prix will be part of USA Cycling's National Race Calendar. Learn more at www.wilmgrandprix.com.

Maryland Secretary of Transportation Pete Rahn announced that the Thomas J. Hatem Memorial Bridge, connecting Perryville and Havre de Grace, will be open to bicycles beginning July 1, 2016. Last October, WILMAPCO joined Maryland Transportation Authority staff, Bike Maryland, the East Coast Greenway, Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Group, Alta Planning + Design and Toole Design Group to tour the bridge and discuss options for bicycle access. Visit www.bikemaryland.org to learn more.

More details about these, and other events, will be posted at www.wilmapco.org/bikemonth in April.

Residents Say Quality of Life Is Improving in Southbridge

Just north of the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan study area is the Southbridge section of Wilmington. WILMAPCO was an early builder and continued leader with the South Wilmington Planning Network, a model community development coalition. The Network helps residents, business owners, and agencies collaborate on improvement projects. Most of these projects stem from a community-driven 2006 Neighborhood Plan.

Efforts of the Network have helped to implement more than half

of that plan's actions. Key ongoing projects include: a farmer's market, two community gardens, a streetscape project, and a Safe Routes to School program. This past year, the Network successfully petitioned DART to reroute the Route 8 bus through Southbridge to give residents better access to jobs across Wilmington. The new stop in Southbridge is now one of the route's most successful, attracting about 20 riders each day. The Network has also supported an ongoing dialogue between residents and officials to control chronic

flooding in the neighborhood, and provide better transportation links to the Riverfront.

According to a survey conducted this past summer, residents report positive change in their community. The vast majority either strongly agreed (63%) or agreed (22%) that life in Southbridge has improved over the past year.

To learn more about the South Wilmington Planning Network, please visit www.SWPN.org.

Municipal Populations Grow in the WILMAPCO Region

Population residing in municipalities has been rising steadily in our region (New Castle and Cecil Counties). Since 2000, nearly 30% of the region's population growth has taken place within the municipalities in both counties. In total, the region has added more than 26,000 people to its cities and towns since 2000, out of the 90,000 added to the region. A few other changes include:

- Middletown, DE, has increased by the largest amount, more than tripling its population.
- Elkton and Newark have shown sizeable gains, both adding roughly 4,000 residents.
- Townsend, DE, has grown a whopping 500%, from 346 people in 2000 to nearly 2,100 in 2013.
- Port Deposit, Chesapeake City, the Ardens, Bellefonte, Newport, and Wilmington have experienced slight losses in population.



MUNICIPAL POPULATION CHANGE; 2000-2013

Town	2000 Population	2013 Population	Change 2000-2013	% Change 2000-2013
Cecilton	474	668	194	41%
Charlestown	1,019	1,194	175	17%
Chesapeake City	787	688	-99	-13%
Elkton	11,893	15,718	3,825	32%
North East	2,733	3,695	962	35%
Perryville	3,672	4,412	740	20%
Port Deposit	676	658	-18	-3%
Rising Sun	1,702	2,878	1,176	69%
Total Incorporated	22,956	29,911	6,955	30%

Town	2000 Population	2013 Population	Change 2000-2013	% Change 2000-2013
Arden	477	447	-27	-6%
Ardencroft	267	235	-32	-12%
Ardentown	300	268	-32	-11%
Bellefonte	1,249	1,198	-51	-4%
Delaware City	1,453	1,725	272	19%
Elsemere	5,801	6,164	363	6%
Middletown	6,161	19,600	13,439	218%
City of New Castle	4,862	5,385	523	11%
Newark	28,547	32,549	4,002	14%
Newport	1,122	1,057	-65	-6%
Odessa	286	369	83	29%
Townsend	346	2,076	1,730	500%
City of Wilmington	72,664	71,525	-1,139	-2%
Total Incorporated	123,532	142,598	19,066	15%

To review all the municipal population estimates, please visit the U.S. Census website at www.Census.Gov.



Wilmington Initiatives Hold a Public Workshop

The Wilmington Initiatives (WI) program is designed to promote a balanced transportation system by incorporating improvements to all modes of transportation. The program strives to enhance livability in Wilmington by improving connections between development, transportation, and public space. The WI program partners include the City of Wilmington, DelDOT, Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC), and WILMAPCO.

The WI partners held a public workshop this past February to highlight ongoing transportation projects in Wilmington and present residents and stakeholders with an opportunity to view these projects and provide their comments. The new Christina River Bridge, the Wilmington Bike Share Feasibility Study, and a series of Transportation Alternatives Projects were presented.

The Christina River Bridge project proposes the construction of a new crossing over the Christina River to add another access point to the Wilmington Riverfront attractions and to improve access to US 13, I-495, and I-95. More information on this project can be found at www.deldot.gov/information/projects/crb.

The Wilmington Bike Share Feasibility Study is a partnership between the City of Wilmington and DelDOT to explore the feasibility of implementing a bike share system throughout Wilmington. You can learn more about the study at www.wilmingtonbikeshare.com.

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) emphasizes the development and implementation of a variety of projects that highlight cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the transportation system. TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Many of the TAP projects in Wilmington are the result of a community request for an infrastructure improvement, such as better sidewalk lighting or a need for traffic calming on a busy neighborhood street. All project submissions in New Castle County are evaluated using WILMAPCO's

project prioritization process. Information was available at the workshop for the following TAP projects:

- 9th Street Enhancements, Phase II
- 11th Street Enhancements
- Brandywine South Pedestrian & Trail Improvements
- City of Wilmington Bicycle Improvements
- City of Wilmington Pedestrian Safety Improvements
- Concord Avenue Streetscape Improvements, Phase II
- Old Brandywine Village Streetscape Improvements
- Southbridge Streetscape Improvements, Phase II
- Walnut Street Pedestrian and Streetscape Improvements

For more information on these projects and the TAP, please visit www.wilmapco.org/tap.

For more information about Wilmington Initiatives, please visit www.wilmapco.org/wilmington-initiatives.



Transportation System Gets Mixed Reviews from Cecil County Residents

Each year, WILMAPCO conducts a telephone survey of a random sample of 600 residents of Cecil County. The purpose of the survey is to gather information on the transportation choices made by residents and to gauge their perceptions and thoughts regarding transportation.

Those interviewed were asked how well they felt the current transportation system meets their travel needs. Four in five respondents reported that their transportation needs were “somewhat” or “very” well met in 2015, the highest proportion since surveying began.

When asked to rate the condition of roads and highways, about half of respondents (49%) thought they were “excellent” or “good,” which was lower compared to recent years. However, about 4 in 10 respondents said in the last year they had noticed improvements made by the state to the transportation system in the area, a greater proportion than observed in past years.

Employed respondents were asked how often they experienced traffic congestion during their work commute. In 2015, a similar proportion of respondents (22%) reported finding themselves in traffic congestion as in 2014 and 2013 (24% and 21%).

In general, Cecil residents feel they did not have a lot of transportation options. In 2015, 72% of respondents reported they had “few” options. Respondents’ assessment of the job the government has done improving accessibility to alternative modes of transportation was similar in 2015 compared to the ratings in 2013, with

about three-quarters of respondents in 2015 feeling that government agencies were doing only a “fair” or “poor” job. This rating was better than ratings in 2011, but still rather low overall.

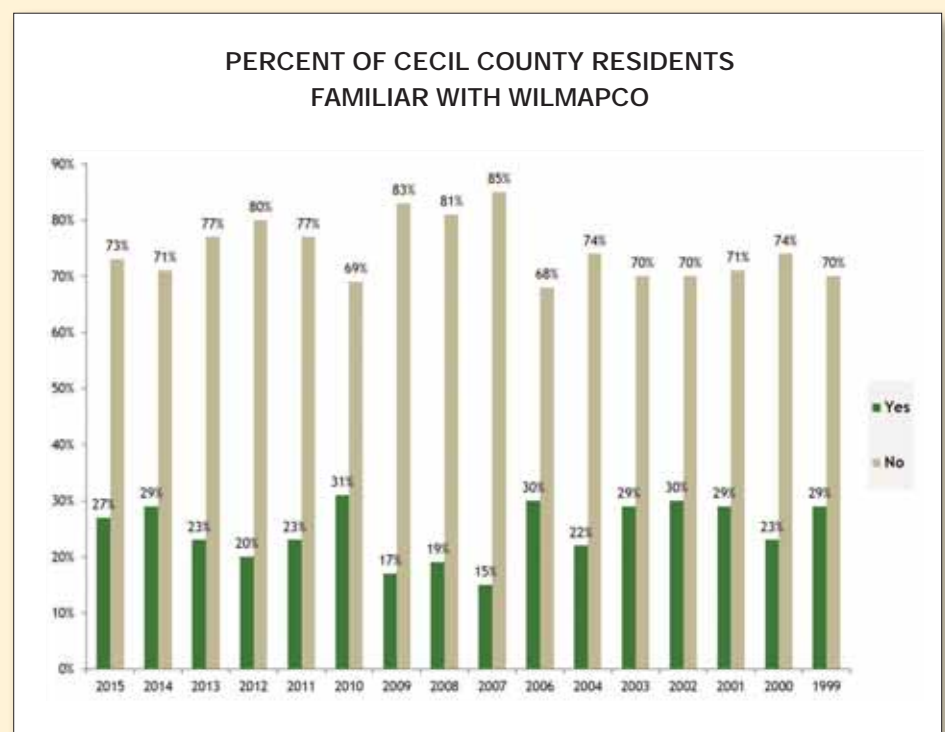
As in previous years, the majority of respondents reported they “always” or “usually” drove alone. Overall, the trend since 2007 has seen a slight decline in dependence on drive alone trips.

Respondents were asked whether they had used any public transportation in the last month. As in previous years, about 9 in 10 respondents said they had not used any.

About one in four survey participants said they were familiar with WILMAPCO (see chart below). When asked how they would rate opportunities to participate in transportation planning, about

8 in 10 respondents considered their opportunities to be just “fair” or “poor.” There was no clear consensus on the preferred way to communicate with planners. About a third preferred using a website, and nearly one in three preferred public meetings. Surveys as a form of feedback were also preferred by nearly one in three. Although the ratings of opportunities to participate in transportation planning were low, about 4 in 10 of those completing the survey said they were interested in receiving free newsletters or public meeting announcements from WILMAPCO regarding future transportation plans in their area.

To learn more, please visit www.wilmapco.org/survey-results.



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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.**

APRIL	MAY	JUNE
Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group <i>April 5, 3 p.m.</i>	Air Quality Subcommittee <i>May 12, 10 a.m.</i>	Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group <i>June 7, 3 p.m.</i>
Air Quality Subcommittee <i>April 14, 10 a.m.</i>	WILMAPCO Council <i>May 12, 6:30 p.m.</i>	Air Quality Subcommittee <i>June 9, 10 a.m.</i>
Public Advisory Committee <i>April 18, 7 p.m.</i>	Technical Advisory Committee <i>May 19, 10 a.m.</i>	Public Advisory Committee <i>June 13, 7 p.m.</i>
Technical Advisory Committee <i>April 21, 10 a.m.</i>		Technical Advisory Committee <i>June 16, 10 a.m.</i>



MAY IS NATIONAL BIKE MONTH!

Get Out and Ride – National Bike to Work Week 2016 is May 16-20

BIKE TO WORK DAY IS MAY 20

TO LEARN ABOUT BIKE MONTH EVENTS, VISIT WWW.WILMAPCO.ORG/BIKEMONTH.