

Quarterly newsletter of the Wilmington Area Planning Council

TRANSPORTER

WILMAPCO

WILMAPCO Supports Resilience and Sustainability Planning in Wilmington and Newark

The cities of Wilmington and Newark sought WILMAPCO's support in crafting new plans to address climate change. Both plans, funded by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), are still under development.

The focus of Wilmington's Resilience Plan (WRP) is adapting to rising sea levels. As a port city, Wilmington's land and infrastructure will be challenged this century by rising seas, changing precipitation patterns, and more extreme weather events. The resilience plan considers strategies to offset impacts to the city's transportation system, sewer and stormwater infrastructure, public

health, and waterfront development. It also will recommend ways to reduce Wilmington's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions that help drive global warming.

The Sustainable Newark Plan, meanwhile, seeks to minimize the city's environmental footprint. The plan considers several strategies to get there, including cleaner and more efficient energy, more sustainable land and infrastructure development, reduced waste generation and water usage, and more efficient building design. The draft plan also recommends setting targets to track progress over time.

WILMAPCO brought the planning teams working on each study together

in April to coordinate and learn from each other. Leaders from the Wilmington Resilience team were impressed by the robust public engagement that informed Newark's recommendations. Meanwhile, the Newark team thought that Wilmington did a great job in explaining the risks that it faces from climate change.

If you would like more information on Wilmington's Resilience Plan, please contact the Wilmington Department of Public Works at www.wilmingtonde.gov/government/city-departments/departments-of-public-works. For more information on the Sustainable Newark Plan, visit: www.newarkde.gov/1067/Newark-Community-Sustainability-Plan.





WILMAPCO Analyses Uncover Social Inequities

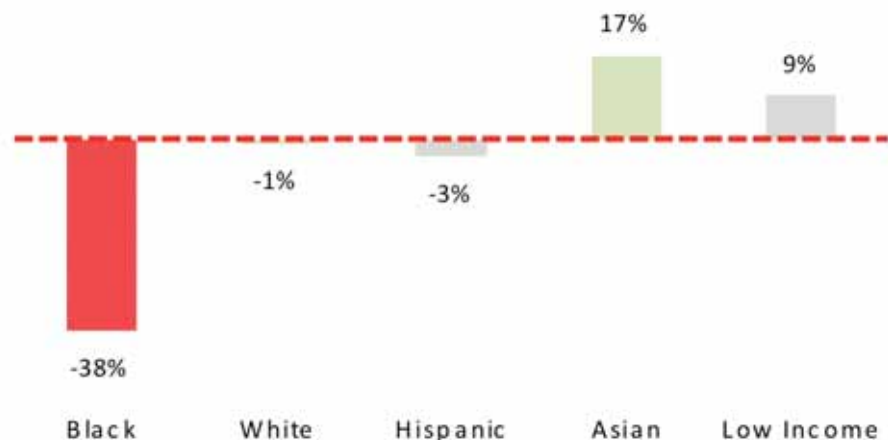
A sweeping update to WILMAPCO's social equity initiative is underway. The Transportation Justice (TJ) Plan, scheduled for completion this fall, examines the inequities historically disadvantaged populations may experience within our transportation system and our public planning processes. Groups covered in the analysis include: people with low incomes or who are living in poverty, racial/ethnic minorities, seniors, people with disabilities, people living in households without cars, and people who do not speak, read, or write English very well.

The report uncovered transportation inequities for people with low incomes, those living in impoverished communities, and for Hispanics and African Americans. But those with low incomes or living in predominantly

African American neighborhoods experienced more inequities, including more difficulties reaching activities, higher-than-expected bike and pedestrian crashes, long commutes by bus, fewer-than-

expected public electric-vehicle charging stations (also true of people living in impoverished or Hispanic neighborhoods), lower awareness of WILMAPCO (also true of low-income residents and Hispanics),

TIP Project Funding Equity
Within Areas of Concentration
2002 - 2018



and less-than-expected transportation funding since 2002.

The charts on this page and the previous page show our analysis of planned transportation funding (in the four-year Transportation Improvement Program, or TIP) within racial/ethnic minorities and impoverished neighborhoods.

Both charts show a more limited transportation investment in African American neighborhoods. Considering TIP spending for the fiscal years of 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014, and 2018, African American neighborhoods received 38% less planned funding than expected. By comparison, white and Hispanic neighborhoods had only 1% and 3% less funding than expected. Impoverished neighborhoods and Asian neighborhoods had more funding than expected — 9% and 17% more. The chart on this page breaks out the transportation project spend within African American neighborhoods by year. The funding met the equity benchmark in only one year, 2006. In the other years, a greater proportion of planned spending occurred outside African American neighborhoods.

The Transportation Justice Plan will consider ways to balance the social inequities it uncovers. For example, a recommendation could be that African American neighborhoods receive more points in our project prioritization processes to help correct for underfunding.

Other key work in the plan includes analyses of other populations challenged with mobility, updated public outreach considerations when working within low-income and minority communities, and a language assistance plan for supporting people with low literacy

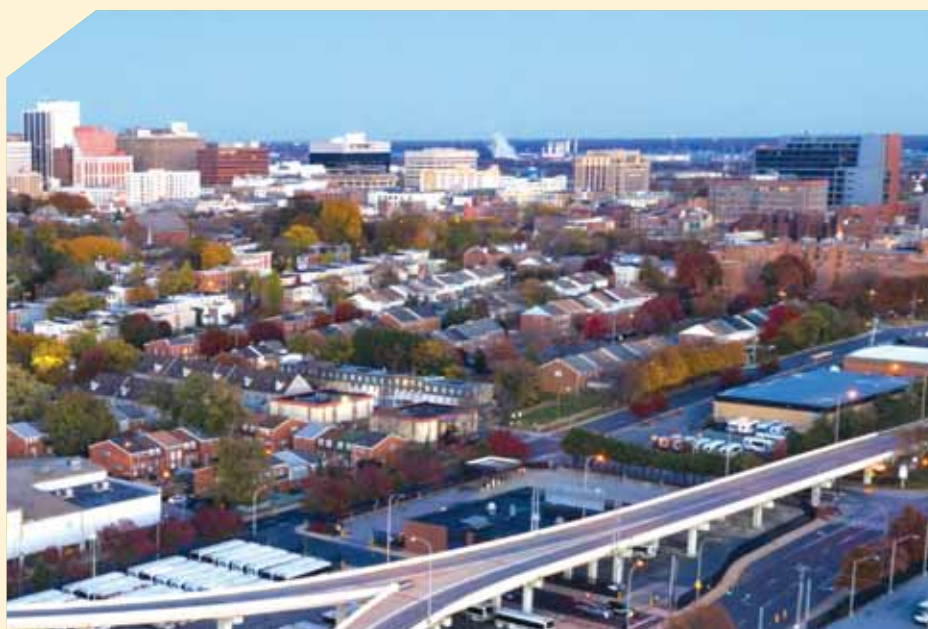
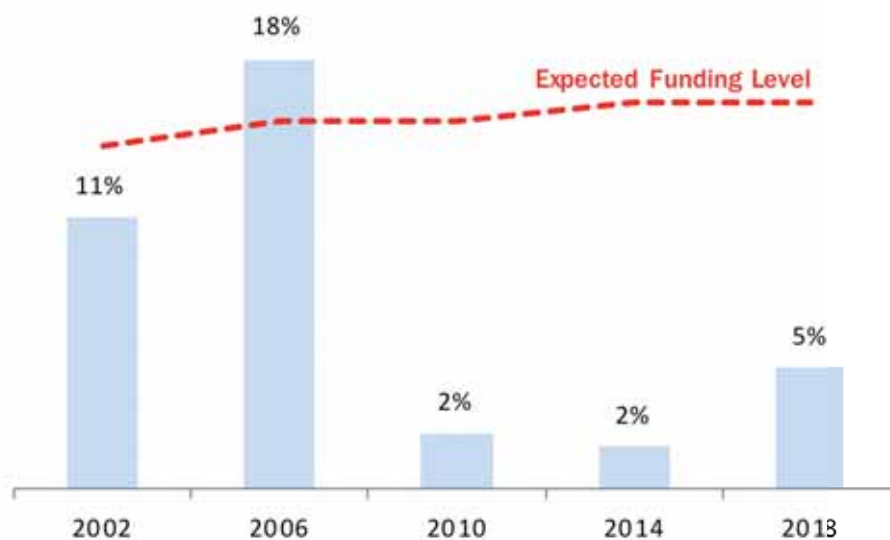
and/or limited English language skills in getting involved with WILMAPCO.

An additional analysis included in the report, a partnership with the University of Delaware's Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research, will examine walking, biking, bus, and driving connectivity from our region's neighborhoods to key

destinations such as supermarkets, low-wage employment, and medical care centers.

The study is under the guidance of a working group composed of WILMAPCO member agencies and members of our Public Advisory Committee. If you would like to learn more or get involved, please visit: www.wilmapco.org/tj.

TIP Project Funding Equity Within African American Neighborhoods 2002 - 2018



WILMAPCO's Latest Data Report Measures Public Health Concern

Public health outcomes may be strongly influenced by where people live, as suggested in WILMAPCO's latest data report on Social Determinants of Health (SDOH). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines SDOH as "the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age," and the fundamental drivers of these conditions. This concept is used by many organizations and government agencies around the world to measure public health concerns by geographic location, and many organizations have developed their own definitions and methodologies.

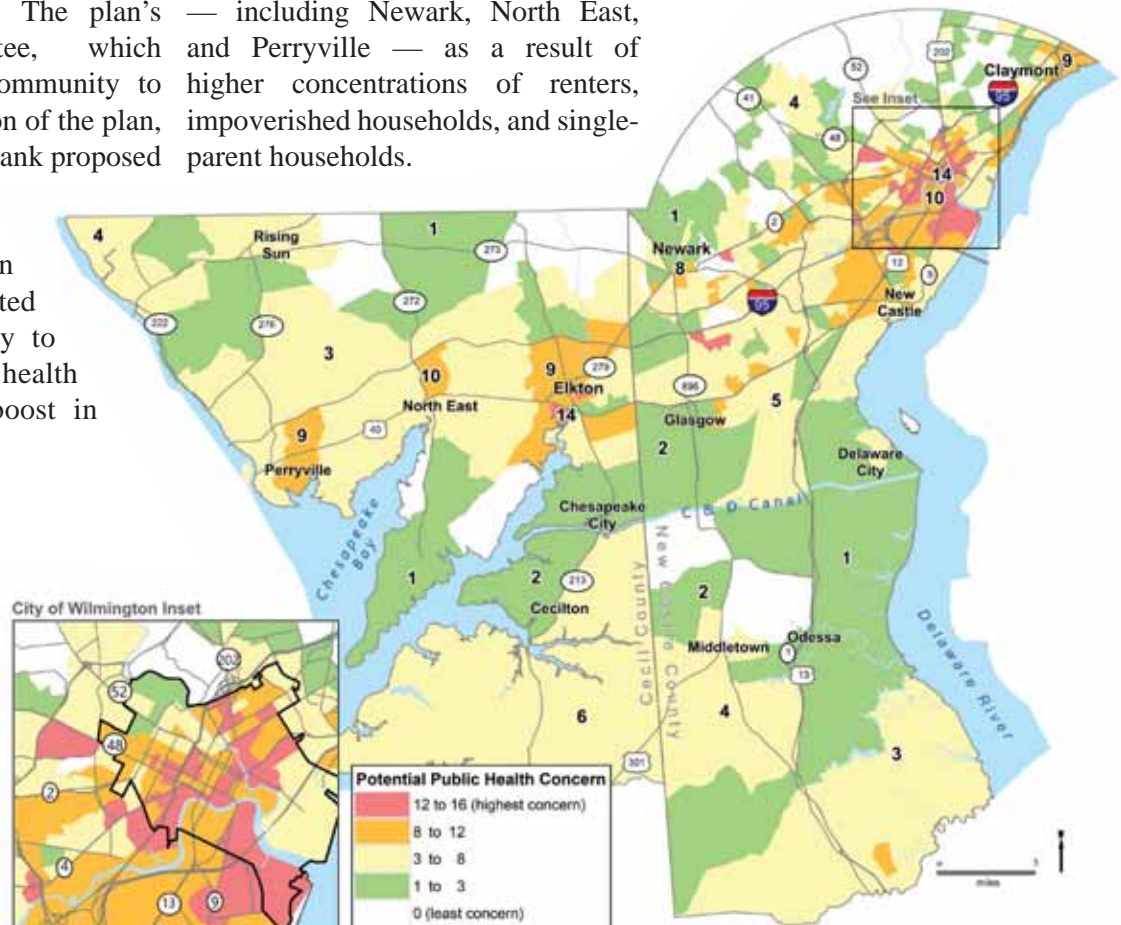
WILMAPCO's take on the Social Determinants of Health was developed as part of the implementation of the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan. The plan's Monitoring Committee, which empowers the local community to guide the implementation of the plan, developed a process to rank proposed transportation projects in the plan. As part of this prioritization process, projects located in areas that are likely to have greater public health concerns received a boost in their priority scores.

The Draft Social Determinants of Health Data Report expands on this scoring process, utilizing eight quantitative factors that were determined to be indicators of public health, such as household poverty rates, employment rates, and food deserts (low-income areas with limited access to fresh foods). This methodology uses nationally available data from the American Community Survey and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, making it applicable to any location in the United States.

The data report finds that in the WILMAPCO region, the greatest public health concern is in central Wilmington and parts of downtown Elkton. Scores are moderate to high in the towns along the I-95 corridor — including Newark, North East, and Perryville — as a result of higher concentrations of renters, impoverished households, and single-parent households.

The report provides additional insight on food deserts in the region and includes an online interactive map, where anyone can view the detailed data and scoring breakdown for any neighborhood in the region. This can be a valuable tool to help identify the areas of greatest need within a study area, pinpoint communities' specific needs, and find ways to address those needs through transportation and land-use recommendations.

The latest draft of the Social Determinants of Health Data Report and the accompanying interactive map are available at www.wilmapco.org/data-reports.





Newark Bike Project: Promoting Bicycling to the Community, Two Wheels at a Time

Since 2011, the Newark Bike Project (NBP) has become a staple in the greater Newark area, providing refurbished bikes, free bikes to those in need, assisted DIY repairs, youth programming, and community events. NBP works toward sustainability through community outreach, education, and empowerment.

As Newark's community bike shop, NBP is operated with the help of volunteers and is funded through donations, the sale of donated bicycles, grants, and sponsors. In 2018, NBP had 2,914 visitors for 509 repairs, 910 volunteer visits, 589 donated bikes recycled into the community, and 50 bikes distributed through the free bike and youth programs.

Two programs that continue to thrive are the Youth Program and the Free Bike Program. WILMAPCO provides financial support to the Youth Program, now entering its sixth year. NBP activities include:

- Youth Empowerment Program, aimed at youth ages 9 to 14, includes community service and bike

activities that foster safe bicycling as transportation. Started as a program offered several Sundays each summer, the program now includes three 4-day bike camps. Campers learn bicycle maintenance and safety skills, perform community service projects, explore the community, and more, all by bicycle.

- Support for local Safe Routes to School programs in partnership with WILMAPCO, the City of Newark, Christina School District, the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), and BikeNewark. To support Safe Routes to School programs, Newark Bike Project has provided Downes Elementary School with bicycles to promote bicycling to school. The organization is currently working with Newark Parks and Recreation to organize bicycle education events at Downes and West Park elementary schools this fall.
- Partnerships with local schools to teach bicycle safety and

maintenance. NBP currently works with students from two schools — the Christina School District Networks Program and the Newark Center for Creative Learning. The Networks Program provides high school students with employability skill training and bicycle safety education. The Newark Center for Creative Learning Program promotes community service and teaches bicycle safety and mechanics.

Since NBP's founding, the Free Bike Program has provided bikes to support access to jobs, healthy lifestyles, and independent, affordable transportation. Recipients are referred by social service agencies, schools, churches, and other nonprofits. In 2019, NBP began a partnership with Connections CSP to provide fleets of bicycles for its residential addiction treatment programs. Fleets of bikes provide both needed transportation and therapeutic activity.

Learn more about the Newark Bike Project at www.newarkbikeproject.org.

East 7th Street Peninsula Study

to Proceed in Six Phases



The East 7th Street Peninsula in Wilmington, which includes many important cultural amenities — such as the original landing point for Swedish travelers, Fort Christina Park, the Kalmar Nyckel Shipyard, and a replica ship — is difficult for visitors and residents to enjoy due to its isolated location and limited street network.

The Wilmington Initiatives (WI) Partners (City of Wilmington, DelDOT, Delaware Transit Corporation, and WILMAPCO) have developed the East 7th Street Peninsula Study, which consists of recommendations for improvements to public infrastructure on the peninsula.

To build the study, the project team held a Community Visioning Workshop in June 2018 where more than 50 people attended and shared their ideas. The team then began to develop a draft concept plan to address the needs and the wants of the businesses and the community. This concept was

presented to the WI Partners and to the stakeholders of the East 7th Street Coalition for review and comment. After incorporating their comments, the refined concept plan was brought back to the public at an open workshop held in February 2019.

The project team went back to work to refine the concept further in response to additional comments, and the plan was again vetted by the WI Partners, the East 7th Street Coalition stakeholders, and the public at a final workshop held in May.

The plan includes the following recommendations and estimated costs:

PHASE 1: Upgrade the stormwater management system for the peninsula, including maintenance of pipes and tide gates, and creation of a stormwater retention pond: \$2,100,000.

PHASE 2: Repave East 7th Street from Church Street to the eastern end at Babiarz Park. Low-lying

portions of these streets would be raised 3–5 feet to improve drainage. A roundabout would be added at Wilmington Industrial Park. Sidewalk, streetscape, and lighting improvements would be added west of the Amtrak viaduct and sidepaths, streetscape, and lighting improvements east of the Amtrak Viaduct: \$6,400,000.

PHASE 3: Repave Swedes Landing Road and create a signalized intersection at 4th Street. Sidepaths, streetscape, and lighting improvements would be included: \$3,000,000.

PHASE 4: Repave East 8th Street from east of Claymont Street to its eastern end; this also includes Claymont Street. Low-lying portions of these streets would be raised 3–5 feet to improve drainage systems. Sidepaths, streetscape, and lighting improvements would be included: \$4,000,000. (It may be necessary to combine parts of this phase with Phase 2.)

PHASE 5: Repave North Church Street between East 4th and East 8th streets; repave East 8th Street between Church Street and the Amtrak viaduct. Reopen the 8th Street Tunnel under the Amtrak viaduct. Sidewalk, streetscape, and lighting improvements would be added: \$1,000,000 per block.

PHASE 6: A riverwalk trail around the perimeter of the peninsula (approximately 2 miles). Lighting, benches, and information kiosks would be included: \$2,000,000.

For more information, please visit www.wilmapco.org/7thstreetpeninsula.

Public Feedback Needed to Improve Access to Wilmington's Central Business District

Anyone who has tried to enter Wilmington from I-95 during the morning commute knows that the intersection of Maryland Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard can be a difficult area to navigate. Frequent congestion of the intersection during the morning commute can often cause unsafe backups on the I-95 exit ramp to Maryland Avenue, even extending onto I-95 itself. DART First State's operations center is also located in the vicinity on Monroe Street. This is where DART buses are washed, maintained, and parked when not in use. Most of the DART bus routes that serve the city and county start here, so buses traverse these streets at all hours of the day, adding more vehicles to the congestion.

More than 10 years ago, the Wilmington Initiatives (WI) Partners (City of Wilmington, DelDOT, Delaware Transit Corporation, and

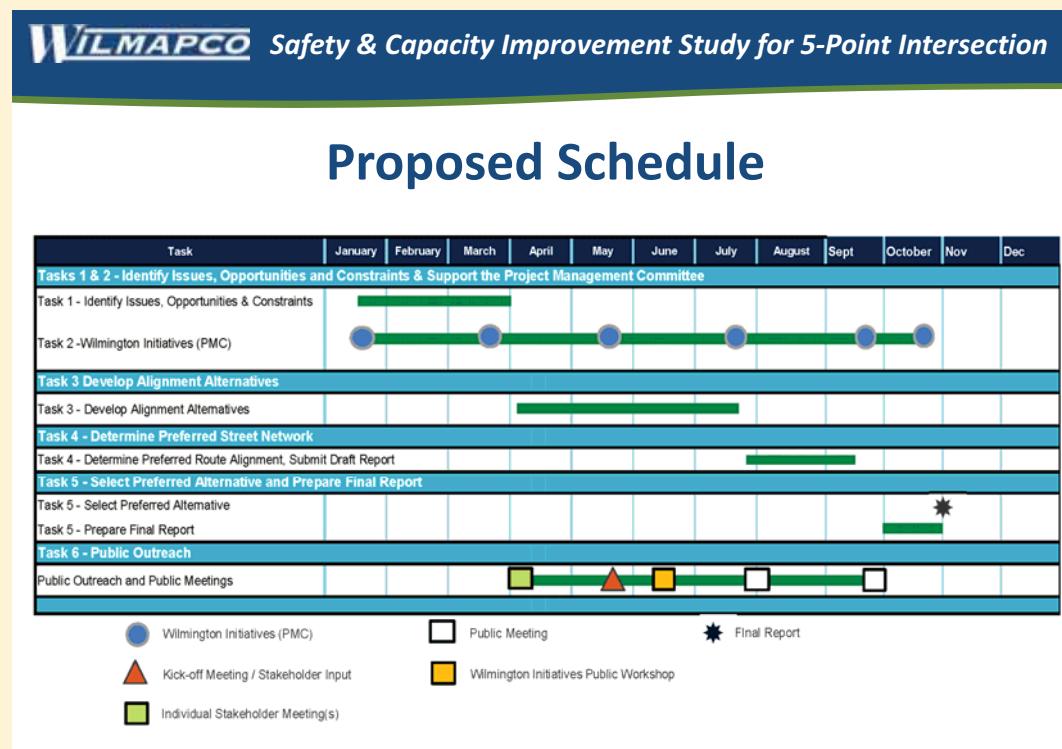
WILMAPCO) began developing concepts to improve access to Wilmington's Central Business District from the I-95 exit ramp at Maryland Avenue to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. In 2018, the WI Partnership submitted a request for WILMAPCO to lead a new study that would pick up where previous studies left off, developing new solutions for implementation. The first tasks included collecting current data on traffic and street conditions and the review of previous alternatives. Now that these tasks have been completed, the project team is seeking public feedback.

Stakeholders were invited to attend a focus group workshop in May to help develop guiding principles and review previous ideas to improve traffic flow. A public workshop was then held in June to allow an additional opportunity for community input.



The study team is currently working to develop alternative concept designs for the necessary roadway improvements to reduce congestion and make the area more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. Key stakeholders have been involved from the start to help ensure a successful outcome.

To learn more or to sign up for email alerts of participation opportunities and project updates, please visit www.wilmapco.org/maryland-monroe-mlk.



WILMINGTON AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

100 Discovery Boulevard, Suite 800
Newark, DE 19713
(302) 737-6205

- John Sisson, Chair
Delaware Transit Corporation
Chief Executive Officer
- David Warnick
City of Rising Sun, Planning
Commissioner
- Jennifer Cohan
Delaware Dept. of Transportation
Secretary
- Connie C. Holland
Delaware Office of State Planning
Coordination, Director
- Alan McCarthy
Cecil County Executive
- Matthew Meyer
New Castle County Executive
- Heather Murphy
Maryland Dept. of Transportation
Director, Office of Planning and Capital
Programming
- Michael S. Purzycki
Mayor of Wilmington
- Michael Spencer
Mayor of Newport
- Tigist Zegeye
WILMAPCO, Executive Director
- Randi Novakoff
Transporter Newsletter, Editor



PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
NEWARK, DE
PERMIT NO. 190

Transporter Newsletter Summer 2019

WILMAPCO PUBLIC MEETINGS

Unless specified, meetings will be held at WILMAPCO, 100 Discovery Boulevard, Suite 800, 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.**

AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
August 6, 3 p.m. Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group	September 12, 10 a.m. Air Quality Subcommittee	October 1, 3 p.m. Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group
August 8, 10 a.m. Air Quality Subcommittee	September 12, 4 p.m. WILMAPCO Council	October 10, 10 a.m. Air Quality Subcommittee
August 15, 10 a.m. Technical Advisory Committee	September 19, 10 a.m. Technical Advisory Committee	October 17, 10 a.m. Technical Advisory Committee
August 26, 6 p.m. Public Advisory Committee		October 28, 6 p.m. Public Advisory Committee

**HAVE YOU RECENTLY MOVED? DO YOU NO LONGER WISH TO RECEIVE TRANSPORTER?
WOULD A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER LIKE TO BE ADDED TO THE MAILING LIST?**

IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT **JANET BUTLER** AT **302-737-6205 EXT. 110**
OR **JBUTLER@WILMAPCO.ORG** WITH YOUR MAILING LIST UPDATES.