

**TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**January 18, 2024**

A joint meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Air Quality Subcommittee was held on Thursday, January 18, 2024, at WILMAPCO, 100 Discovery Boulevard, Suite 800, Newark, DE 19713 and via video conference/conference call.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Matt Rogers, New Castle County Department of Land Use, and TAC Chair, brought the TAC meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

**2. TAC Members present:**

Tricia Arndt, Delaware Office of State Planning  
Cooper Bowers, Delaware Department of Transportation  
Hannah Campbell, Maryland Department of the Environment  
Sophia Cortazzo, Maryland Department of Transportation  
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning  
Taylor Englert, DNREC  
Gwinneth Kaminsky Rivera, City of Wilmington Planning  
Matt Rogers, New Castle County Department of Land Use  
Derrick Sexton, Maryland SHA Regional and Intermodal Planning Division  
Catherine Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation

**TAC Ex-Officio Members present:**

**TAC Members absent:**

Cecil County Division of Planning and Zoning  
City of Newark  
City of Wilmington Department of Public Works  
Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism  
Delaware River and Bay Authority  
Town of Elkton Planning

**TAC Ex-Officio Members absent:**

Amtrak  
Diamond State Port Corporation  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. Federal Highway Administration  
U.S. Federal Transit Administration

**Guests and Invitees:**

Anna Batista, Maryland State Highway Administration  
Virginia Burke, MDOT  
James Coverdale, DNREC  
Anson Gock, DeIDOT  
Austin Gray, DeIDOT  
Stephanie Johnson, DeIDOT  
Rachel McGuire, Jacobs Consultant  
Colton Phillips, DeIDOT  
Brad Sanhaus, Jacobs Consultant  
Will Tardy, Jacobs Consultant

**Staff:**

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner  
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner  
Sharen Elcock, Executive Assistant  
Elizabeth Espinal, Administrative Assistant  
Dave Gula, Principal Planner  
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner  
Jake Thompson, Principal Planner  
Dawn Voss, Outreach Coordinator  
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth Espinal.

**3. MINUTES**

Approval of the November 16, 2023, and December 21, 2023 TAC Minutes and Approval of the Air Quality Subcommittee Notes for November 2, 2023.

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt seconded by Ms. Cathy Smith, the November 16, 2023, and December 21, 2023 TAC Minutes approved.

Motion passed. **(01-18-24-01)**

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Cathy Smith seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky, the November 2, AQS Notes were approved.

Motion passed. **(01-18-24-02)**

**4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

None.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**6. To Recommend Amendment of the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Heather Dunigan shared that DeIDOT is requesting that the TIP be amended to include the Transit Vehicle Air Filtration System project. Ms. Dunigan added that during the wildfires last summer, DART conducted a pilot test of an air filtration system on their buses to enhance indoor air quality. This initiative, prompted by concerns over COVID-19, aimed to improve the overall air quality within the buses. The test results indicated that the system was effective in enhancing air quality, surpassing that of the outdoor environment. Therefore, DART intends to expand this program, requiring a \$1.2 million investment to convert all buses.

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky, TAC approved amending the FY 2023-2026 TIP.

Motion passed. **(01-18-24-03)**

## **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **7. Maryland Greenhouse Gas Emissions Targets**

Ms. Anna Batista, from the Maryland Department of Transportation, provided an overview of the new greenhouse gas measure introduced as part of the transportation performance management program (TPM). The measure, which applies to the National Highway System (NHS), requires reporting on greenhouse gas emissions, with the first reporting period due on February 1st. This measure is part of the broader Transportation Performance Management (TPM) program, which includes safety, infrastructure condition, and various system performance measures. While the greenhouse gas emissions measure was initially part of TPM rulemaking, it was reinstated after being struck down previously.

Maryland is still finalizing its approach, aiming to align targets with the state's climate goals of a 60% reduction in emissions by 2031 and carbon neutrality by 2045. Ms. Batista discussed challenges in data interpretation, particularly regarding discrepancies in 2022 data provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). For now, the state plans to set declining targets in line with its long-term goals, although specific numbers are pending further review. However, in coordination with other MPOs within the Urbanized Area (UZA), setting specific targets becomes essential. This process involves aligning on joint targets, particularly concerning measures like CMAQ emissions or congestion. Unlike states, which rely on reported statewide road fuel sales, MPOs face challenges in calculating their portion of fuel sales due to the lack of reported data at their level. Efforts are underway to delineate the MPO portion of statewide fuel sales and determine the UZA portion to facilitate target setting. Additionally, exploring the feasibility of providing region-specific Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) data could aid MPOs in determining their share of greenhouse gas emissions.

Maryland plans to set targets in line with its climate goals and is coordinating with other DOTs in the region. For MPOs, targets will be due 180 days after the state sets theirs, with additional challenges in calculating MPO-specific emissions as previously stated. Ms. Batista highlighted support available from MDOT and emphasized the importance of coordination between states and MPOs in meeting reporting requirements.

Mr. Bill Swiatek expressed appreciation for the presentation and inquired about progress in setting targets, particularly concerning the data from 2022. He suggested options for sharing targets, including the upcoming Air Quality Subcommittee meeting and the TAC meeting scheduled for next month. Mr. Swiatek also asked about the possibility of county-wide numbers, noting that it has been done with the CMAQ performance measure.

Ms. Anna Batista responded that, currently, they haven't considered county-wide numbers but mentioned discussing it with Tori the Program Director and exploring the feasibility of obtaining them. She anticipated similar discussions in Delaware.

### **8. Delaware Greenhouse Gas Emissions Targets**

Mr. Colton Phillips from DelDOT started this three-person presentation, he stated Jacobs Consultants would be presenting data analysis throughout this presentation. Mr. Phillips explained the setting greenhouse gas emissions targets within the context of transportation performance measures (TPM). He began by emphasizing DelDOT's mission to provide excellent transportation for all. Mr. Phillips discussed the new FHWA ruling requiring the creation of a GHG performance measure, with a deadline of February 1st, 2024, for target submission.

Mr. Colton Phillips explained DeIDOT's process for producing the target, which involved analyzing historic vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and fuel usage data from 2002 to 2022. They applied this data to FHWA's formula and used linear regression modeling to project future trends. Based on this analysis, which showed an increase in emissions, DeIDOT recommended setting the minimum declining target of 0.1%. Mr. Phillips stressed DeIDOT's support for the Delaware Climate Action Plan but acknowledged uncertainties in future emissions trends.

Mr. Phillips invited feedback on the proposed target before the February 1st deadline and outlined next steps for DeIDOT, including implementing workflow changes and tracking progress toward emissions reduction goals.

Mr. Will Tardy from Jacobs Consulting continued the presentation. He mentioned the presentation will cover the analysis method, three identified trends in the source data, and insights into the challenges and opportunities derived from the data, which will be discussed further on this presentation.

The analysis method employed was straightforward, utilizing well-vetted information due to time constraints. A simple linear regression was conducted to forecast consumption and travel behavior from 2022 to 2025. Mr. Will Tardy displayed charts illustrating annual VMT for the state and the National Highway System (NHS), indicating a relatively flat trend with a slight downward slope for statewide VMT and a positive slope for NHS travel within Delaware. Despite potential considerations regarding the COVID-19 dip, it was included in the data set for the time being.

Furthermore, Mr. Tardy showcased fuel sales data, indicating a positive trend for gasoline and diesel consumption. This growth poses a challenge for the state, requiring a reduction in consumption rates to meet future targets. Transitioning to the metric and measure, CO2 emissions on the NHS were analyzed, demonstrating a projected reduction of 0.1% by 2025. This reduction equates to a significant decrease in gasoline sales. He emphasized that's a 6% decrease in the entire state by 2025, highlighting the state's commitment to greenhouse gas reduction.

Lastly, Mr. Tardy addressed the volatility of the greenhouse gas metric, with periods of both positive and negative trends observed. Despite challenges, the state remains committed to addressing greenhouse gas emissions, with further discussions on challenges and considerations to follow.

Ms. Rachel McGuire continued this presentation by referencing Ms. Anna Batista comment that DOTs are facing numerous challenges in meeting the new greenhouse gas emissions targets. One major challenge is the influence of factors that she believes are beyond DOT control, such as fuel prices, fleet characteristics, EV penetration rates, population growth, land use policies, and consumer behavior. Additionally, the short timeframe for meeting the targets coupled with market and network conditions presents a formidable task. Changes in fuel prices, for instance, take time to affect consumer behavior, and fuel sale projections are not factored into transportation investments.

Furthermore, the data set used lacks a geospatial component, making it challenging to pinpoint specific geographic areas contributing to emissions. The 2022 baseline exacerbates the challenge, requiring DOTs to manage four years of growth within a two-year period. While there are no penalties for failing to meet targets, there will be new plan recommendations to showcase state investments in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Ms. McGuire emphasized that in Delaware's case, the new equation imposed by FHWA is particularly limiting small eastern states like Delaware. It fails to account for regional travel conditions, such as interstate travel patterns and out-of-state fuel purchases, which significantly impact emissions. For instance, the impact of interstate travel routes like I-95, I-495, and US301 is significant. Many travelers from Philadelphia pass through Delaware to reach Maryland. Despite these limitations, Delaware has several strengths, including a high level of road ownership, a centrally coordinated infrastructure system, and legislative support for reducing carbon emissions.

The Delaware Climate Change Solutions Act and other carbon reduction plans demonstrate the state's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, ongoing research projects funded by the University of Delaware (UD) and access to detailed travel data provide opportunities for targeted emission reduction strategies.

In conclusion, while meeting the FHWA-imposed reduction targets will be challenging, Delaware remains confident in its ability to demonstrate commitment and investment in reducing carbon emissions and greenhouse gases. Ms. McGuire concluded the presentation by requesting any questions or concerns.

Mr. Bill Swiatek imposed a general inquiry and asked about the potential for detecting carbon reductions if different metrics were used, such as considering non-NHS roads. Ms. Rachel McGuire hesitates to provide a definitive answer but suggests that before the final rulemaking, they hoped for more flexibility to tailor the metrics to Delaware's unique characteristics.

Mr. Colton Phillips from DelDOT added that FHWA's strict tracking requirements limit their ability to incorporate additional data sets for carbon reduction calculations. They aim to adhere to FHWA's formula to establish targets accurately, despite potential biases from major highways like I-95 and US301 which can sway the metric.

## **9. Philadelphia MSA Regional Climate Action Plan**

Mr. Bill Swiatek provided an overview of the priority climate action plan for the Philadelphia MSA, spearheaded by DVRPC with support from WILMAPCO and consulting firm (ICF). This plan, mandated by the EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction grant program, covers a vast region spanning four states and 12 counties, including New Castle and Cecil Counties.

The priority climate action plan, due in March 2024, and the subsequent comprehensive plan due in September 2025, aim to address climate change impacts and reduce carbon emissions while benefiting low-income and disadvantaged communities. To meet these goals, the region has established steering committees, subcommittees, and working groups to coordinate efforts and prioritize actions.

Key elements of the plan include implementing clean energy initiatives, electrifying transportation, enhancing public transportation, improving building efficiency, and promoting active transportation options. Stakeholder engagement, including focus groups with diverse interests, has played a crucial role in shaping the plan's priorities and ensuring alignment with community needs. The plan also emphasizes near-term implementation-ready projects to achieve measurable carbon reductions by 2030. Funding opportunities are available for projects aligning with the plan's objectives, with grants ranging from \$2 million to half a billion dollars.

Mr. Swiatek highlighted the upcoming draft of the priority climate action plan, inviting feedback from stakeholders and showcasing potential project opportunities. He encouraged participation

in the grant application process to maximize the region's impact in addressing climate change. Interested parties can learn more about the initiative and project opportunities on the DVRPC website: [www.dvprc.org/cprg](http://www.dvprc.org/cprg)

Mr. Colton Phillips raised a point following the presentation, about the importance of modern building design in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in HVAC systems and energy-efficient features like sunroofs. He suggested that evaluating the building stock in the study area could provide valuable insights for future planning efforts.

Mr. Bill Swiatek agreed, noting that such data considerations could be addressed in the comprehensive plan and emphasized that this funding can support residential and commercial efficiency upgrade programming in the near-term. Mr. Phillips further highlighted the need for buildings to accommodate electric vehicles, suggesting that building codes and regulations could play a role in implementing these changes.

### **10. 2024 Draft Inter-Regional Report**

Mr. Jake Thompson presented an overview of the 2024 Inter-Regional Report. Emphasizing that transportation systems extend beyond county lines, Mr. Thompson noted that the study area includes MPOs and counties within 80 miles of the WILMAPCO region, comprising a total of 28 counties across four states, including Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Data for the report was sourced from various entities including the US Census Bureau, FHWA, state DOTs, MPOs, county planning departments, and transit providers.

Projected demographic changes indicate a population growth from 11.5 to 12.6 million by 2050, with Cecil County expected to experience the largest increase and Salem County facing a notable decline. Employment is forecasted to grow by 11%, with Philadelphia being the primary contributor. Mr. Thompson highlighted shifts in urban area delineations based on census definitions, affecting 26% of the study area.

Regarding traffic trends, Mr. Thompson pointed out an increase in average daily vehicles on I-95 despite a slight decline in recent years, potentially influenced by remote work and traffic patterns between Baltimore and Philadelphia. Looking ahead to 2045, a 52% traffic increase is anticipated, with I-95 expected to see a 73% rise. The COVID-19 pandemic spurred an increase in remote work, yet average commute times remained stable. Notable variations in commute times were observed across different counties. Truck traffic, particularly on I-95, is highlighted as a significant component of regional transportation, with projections indicating a 25% increase by 2045. Mr. Jake Thompson also touched upon domestic trade volumes and transit routes extending beyond county lines.

The presentation concluded with discussions on land use patterns, investment areas, demographic shifts, and transportation projects. Mr. Thompson summarized the report, indicating projections such as significant population and employment growth by 2050, with the population increasing by nearly 10% and employment by 11%. Moreover, a 25% increase in truck traffic and a 52% increase in overall traffic are anticipated if no alterations are made to the transportation system. In addition, he highlighted recommendations including the expansion of intercounty transit services, continued interagency coordination, and support for dense, walkable land uses.

For further details and access to the Inter-Regional Report and past reports, interested parties can visit [www.wilmapco.org/interregional](http://www.wilmapco.org/interregional)

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **11. Staff Report**

Ms. Heather Dunigan reported the following updates:

- On January 11th the Council met with no action items to review. Three presentations were presented.
- On January 17th Wilmington Initiatives held a meeting, information revealed that, Wilmington received state grant money for Safe Streets for All. Wilmapco is hoping to coordinate with them to present the NCCAP in efforts to use the grant for supplemental planning.
- On January 18th the Route 9 Monitoring Committee will have a meeting.
- On January 22nd the Rising Sun Mobility Friendly Design will meet in town to discuss kick-off of the project scope.
- On January 22nd WILMAPCO will send out UPWP Project Submissions letters to Town Official, Managers, and Municipalities accepting applications through February 26th.
- On February 2nd the Ardens Monitoring Committee will have a meeting.
- On February 13th the East Elkton Steering Committee will have a meeting
- On February 13th staff will participate in an FRA Long-Distance Study for the Northeast Working Group.
- On the Newport Train Station updates are that DTC, DeIDOT and Wilmapco will be working to assist the State Department in developing an RFP to secure consultant to complete the NEEPA and preliminary engineering.
- The State of Delaware has been awarded a federal grant for FRA's FY2022 Corridor ID grant and DTC will lead the process for the Diamond State line initiative and the scope of studies for rail passengers.
- Staff continues to coordinate with DVRPC on the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program.
- On the Claymont Study, Task 1 has been completed and the project partners had a kickoff meeting to review the draft report. A Visioning Workshop is projected for late February.

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

**ACTION:** Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

**Attachments (0)**