

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

November 17, 2022

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, November 17, 2022, via video conference/conference call.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Matthew Rogers, New Castle County Department of Land Use, and TAC Chair, brought the TAC meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

2. TAC Members present:

Ben Allen, Maryland State Highway Administration
Tricia Arndt, Delaware Office of State Planning
Cooper Bowers, Delaware Department of Transportation
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning
Michael Fortner, City of Newark
Gwineth Kaminsky, City of Wilmington Planning
Quinn Krenzel, Town of Elkton Planning
Matthew Littlejohn, Cecil County Division of Planning and Zoning
Matthew Rogers, New Castle County Department of Land Use
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment
Catherine Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation

TAC Ex-Officio Members present:

TAC Members absent:

City of Wilmington Department of Public Works
Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism
Delaware River and Bay Authority
DNREC
Maryland Department of Transportation
Maryland Transit Administration

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:

Maria Andaya, DelDOT
Angie Hernandez, JMT
Kevin Racine, Citizen

Staff:

Sharen Elcock, Executive Assistant
Dave Gula, Principal Planner

Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner
Jacob Thompson, Senior Planner
Dawn Voss, Administrative Assistant
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by: Dawn Voss.

3. MINUTES

Approval of the October 20, 2022, TAC Minutes.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Mike Fortner and seconded by Ms. Tricia Arndt TAC approved the October 20, 2022, TAC minutes.

Motion passed.

(11-17-22-01)

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Air Quality Subcommittee

Mr. Bill Swiatek said the Air Quality Subcommittee met on November 3rd. The group began a review of both conformity documents and approved the conformity analyses within them. The next AQS meeting is scheduled for December 1st. If there are no agenda items, we will ask the AQS to recommend releasing both conformity documents for public review beginning on January 16th.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

ACTION ITEMS

6. To recommend amendment of the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Bill Swiatek said this amendment to the FY 2023-2026 TIP in New Castle County is for the Transit Vehicle Replacement project for four hydrogen buses along with associated charging infrastructure. The justification is that these new transit buses use hydrogen and fuel cell technology to create electricity and to charge batteries for zero emission and extended range. The buses are refueled in six to twenty minutes, depending on the model and their operating conditions. It is about \$11 million in total funding. The Air Quality Subcommittee reviewed this via email and found it did not trigger a revised conformity determination.

Mr. Matthew Rogers asked what the range is for these buses. Ms. Cathy Smith said she can find out how far they can go on a charge. The electric buses get about two hundred miles per charge, but she will follow up on the range of the hydrogen buses.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Cooper Bowers and seconded by Ms. Tricia Arndt the TAC recommends amendment of the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

7. DeIDOT Pedestrian Action Plan

Ms. Maria Andaya, with DeIDOT Division of Planning, said the Pedestrian Action Plan: Phase 1 was developed in their continuing effort to make Delaware's transportation network safer and more accessible to pedestrians. This plan was launched at the beginning of October to coincide with Pedestrian Safety Awareness Month. TAC members are encouraged to check out the project website and complete the public survey.

Ms. Angie Hernandez, with JMT, said there are three phases to this project, and they are at the end of phase one. The draft phase one plan is out for public comment. They did not receive many comments, but they have some changes that will be made before finalizing the phase one draft. In phase one, they gathered the information around DeIDOT to understand what they were already doing internally for pedestrians. They also looked at pedestrian crash clusters and connectivity from a mapping perspective to understand the pedestrian safety trends in the state. An interactive project website was created, which coincided with the release of the Department of Homeland Security's release of crash data for the state. There is an interactive map that links directly to the data showing all of the pedestrian crashes in the state. It is a useful tool for local municipalities to understand what is going on in their jurisdiction. Public involvement has begun with the public survey, which is going to remain open into phase two to allow communication with people about the project and gather input. In phase two, they will do additional coordination internal to DeIDOT to help the departments work together effectively. They will look at programs and policy changes that could help increase pedestrian safety and connectivity. In addition to looking at the mapping and connectivity, they will overlay some equity information to help better prioritize projects in areas that should be considered from an equity standpoint. In phase three, they will begin with public and stakeholder outreach. In phase three, they will develop an implementation plan that will identify new action items and countermeasures, policies, and programs that are not already in place at DeIDOT. They will also establish performance measures during that phase.

They are following a Federal Highway guided process for safety action plans. A vision statement was put together that coincides closely with DeIDOT's mission and vision. The vision statement is guiding the team in this plan and will help them keep going in the same direction while developing new actions, goals, and different plans and policies through all the phases. The document for the Pedestrian Action Plan: Phase 1 is an update to the 2007 plan. They looked at the goals that were in the 2007 plan and other pedestrian-related planning documents at DeIDOT. They summarized that information into four goals. Within each goal, there is a line item of what was completed since the 2007 plan. Many links in the plan connect the information directly to other online resources that showcase how different things have been implemented at DeIDOT. There are objectives within each goal as well, and under the objective there are DeIDOT's ongoing actions to accomplish that objective. They also identified actions DeIDOT plans to undertake. For the actions that are not already underway, timeframes were added to indicate short-, medium-, and long-term timeframes to accomplish these goals. They envision as they move through phases two and three, that new actions, goals, and ideas will be added to this. They will also identify responsibility, whether it be internal or external, to ensure that these things move forward.

Public involvement for phase one was all online. The public survey was launched. There were a few social media blasts in October to encourage people to visit the website and take the survey.

DeIDOT went to a number of community events throughout October to hand out survey cards and talk to people about being a pedestrian in the state, and what their concerns and ideas are. In phase two that survey will remain open, there will be more in-person outreach. They are planning to do community events, both pre-programmed events in the community and some pop-up events. They are thinking those could be in high crash areas. They want to look at some EJ areas as well to make sure that they talk to people as they walk through their daily lives. They will do some listening sessions in a smaller group setting where they can hear people's concerns firsthand. In phase three they anticipate more online engagement with surveys and other web-based activities. They want to continue in-person engagement and are thinking about adding some temporary safety infrastructure projects for pedestrians such as bump-outs or crosswalks to show people how roads could be designed differently. On the website, there is a tab for Goals and Objectives with the pdf link and graphics that show what the goals and objectives are. The County Summaries tab has information about each of the counties and introduces the interactive web maps. This is all live data that is being pulled from the Department of State Homeland Security. When the map is zoomed out, pedestrian crash density is seen as a heat map. When zoomed in, the types of pedestrian crashes and where they happened is visible. Clicking on an individual crash shows more data about the crash. There is a Get Involved tab where different public outreach information will be published. There is a comment box for the public to add a comment, and a public survey.

Ms. Tigist Zegeye asked where they conducted in-person engagement in New Castle County. Ms. Andaya said they did a pop-up event at the corner of Philadelphia Pike and Harvey Road, where the WAWA is. Because there is a bus stop there, they checked with DTC to see what time has the highest ridership and went then. It was from eleven to one. They also did one on US 13 at the corner of Boulden Avenue, which has a high pedestrian fatality rate.

Ms. Tricia Arndt said in the last report she noted that in fifty-one percent of fatalities the pedestrian involved was impaired. Ms. Andaya said that is correct. Ms. Arndt asked what other factors they are collecting data on, such as low visibility or inattentive driving. Ms. Andaya said if you look at the plan, data was presented about lighting conditions, the weather condition, whether it was rainy or foggy, and what time the crash occurred, which is usually dusk to dawn. Those data are in the plan. The data is being pulled in real time from the Office of Highway Safety. Ms. Arndt said she noted that in the dropdown box it said yes or no as to whether or not there was a bicycle involved. She asked if they were going to overlay the pedestrian data with bicycle crash data to highlight areas where both of those types of interactions are a problem, and that might lead to a higher prioritization and a different solution for those areas to accommodate bike injuries and pedestrian injuries. Ms. Andaya said they included the bicycle dropdown because it was included in the Office of Highway Safety's data. Ms. Hernandez said as far as prioritizing locations, that is what they want to continue looking at in phase two, as far as how to do that. The traffic department at DeIDOT is already looking at all of this in the safety studies that they are doing. They do a couple of different pedestrian safety audits each year that dive into that data. They want to take a holistic approach to all of the programs that are out there for pedestrians that can help to close the gaps in the network. The bicycle information is definitely a piece of the discussion, but what they want to uncover is, how to better prioritize areas, the factors and methods that should be used to better prioritize, and the funding mechanisms available to move forward. DeIDOT is trying to address problems as they arise, instead of being reactive years later.

Ms. Andaya said in addition to what was said about the pop-up events. DTC displayed the QR Code on their LED monitors at the park and rides and bus transit centers across the state. So, thank you DTC.

Ms. Zegeye said she assumes that they are focusing on the state owned and maintained roadways first and asked if there is any coordination with municipalities where there are obviously high crash areas. Ms. Hernandez said the coordination with the municipalities is anticipated to be phase three, but the primary focus of this plan is state owned or maintained roadways. When they look at the crash data, if they see crash densities on local streets, they are not going to just ignore that. DelDOT does not have control over those local streets, so that is where that coordination is going to need to happen.

From the chat:

Ms. Andaya: Ped Plan website

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/154c9553aa964904bb6a79f7f3f5a512>

Ms. Hernandez: link to project website:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/154c9553aa964904bb6a79f7f3f5a512/page/Home/>

8. Ardens Walkable Community Workshop

Mr. Jake Thompson said Walkable Community Workshops are an opportunity for citizens to become planners as they are experts in their own community. These workshops consist of three parts. They begin with the presentation, going over topics such as sidewalk design, crosswalks, traffic calming, and other tools to improve walkability. That gets ideas going for the walking audit, where participants survey the area and try to identify issues and opportunities to improve walking. Then the group returns to the meeting location for a mapping exercise where they share their ideas for improving walkability, and those ideas are documented in the report. The Ardens Walkable Community Workshop took place on Monday, September 8th, at the Candlelight Theatre in Ardentown. There were about thirty-seven people in attendance in addition to staff and the walking audit focused on the intersection of Harvey and Veale Roads, which was identified as a problem intersection for pedestrians by the community. It was very well attended, and many great ideas were shared. The recommendations the group came up with were summarized on a map. They had many ideas including traffic calming measures, improvements to the path network, sidewalks and crosswalks, intersection improvements, and a recommended bike route.

Calming traffic on Harvey Road was the top concern expressed during the workshop, and that has been a goal of the community for over twenty years. One idea expressed by many participants was to reduce the speed limit, which currently ranges from twenty-five to forty-five miles per hour, to twenty-five through the whole stretch of Harvey Road through the Ardens. However, that will not necessarily force lower traffic speeds. What could force lower speeds is more frequent and improved crossings, especially where paths meet Harvey Road. None of the paths that meet Harvey Road have dedicated crossings. There were also suggestions to narrow the perceived width of the road such as by placing planters in sections with wider shoulders and installing pedestrian-scale lighting. Many intersection improvements were also discussed, and mini roundabouts were suggested for the intersections of Sconset Road and The Mall, which is actually two intersections between the same two streets, and those currently have no traffic control devices. Harvey Road has many signalized intersections. Mini roundabouts were suggested for those as well, and there are many other ideas, such as adding “no turn on red” signs, “yield to pedestrian” signs, all-ways stops that would be triggered by pedestrian push buttons, crosswalks at all legs as there are many crosswalks that are missing, red light enforcement cameras, and HAWK signals.

A bicycle route was also recommended through the Ardens. For people arriving in the Ardens by bike, Harvey Road would seem to be the most natural and direct route. However, it is considered high stress for biking according to DeIDOT's Bike Level of Traffic Stress analysis. An alternative route would take cyclists entirely on low stress neighborhood streets. Those include Sconset Road, The Mall, Millers Road, Orleans Road, The Highway, and Sherwood Road. This route only adds 0.2 miles compared to biking directly on Harvey Road, and it would require signage and sharrows to direct people along this route. This would be an interim solution. Ideally, improving Harvey Road would make it safe and comfortable for everyone to bike on, however, this route would guide cyclists by many historic buildings, destinations, and natural areas that they would not see on Harvey Road.

The Ardens mostly lack sidewalks as part of maintaining their rustic and historic nature, and most streets are comfortable to walk on alongside traffic. However, there are a couple of locations where sidewalks were desired, particularly approaching the intersection of Harvey and Veale Roads to create a safe place to reach the intersection and wait to cross the street, as well as along Veale Road to Marini Produce. Advisory shoulders are a potential alternative solution to sidewalks, especially on roads that may have insufficient right-of-way to install sidewalks while maintaining traffic in both directions. With advisory shoulders, there is just one center lane that is shared for vehicles traveling in both directions, and shoulders are intended for walking and biking. When drivers approach oncoming traffic, they would have to yield and then enter the shoulder to allow oncoming traffic to pass. This design is common in Europe, but still experimental in the United States, so DeIDOT would have to submit a request to experiment to the FHWA. These could be accompanied by HAWK signals or RRFBs, especially where paths cross these roads. Many path improvements were also discussed. Each path in the Ardens has a unique name, however most of these paths lack signage, and some paths are not clearly distinguishable from their surroundings. There is a suggestion to install signage for all paths which would improve wayfinding and give each path its own identity. There are also suggestions that at all path crossings should lead to crosswalks and pedestrian push buttons. There are concerns about drainage issues on paths and improving the connection from the existing path leading to the Harvey and Veale intersection, which was part of our walking audit.

This report will tie into the Ardens Transportation Plan, now called Connecting with the Ardens: A Transportation Plan. This report serves as public feedback for the plan, and this report will help inform that planning process. The report is on our website: www.wilmapco.org/walkable.

From the chat:

Ms. Tricia Arndt: Thanks Jake, good info and presentation.

9. Ardens Transportation Plan

Mr. Bill Swiatek said many planning processes at WILMAPCO that have been successful started with a walkable community workshop to get to know the community and then build it into a much larger plan, and that is the case here. The Ardens are in the northeastern section of New Castle County, and they have interesting boundaries. Ardentown is split into two sections separated by Arden. There is an area in the middle called the Donut Hole, where twenty-four residents of unincorporated New Castle County live. The goal of the project is to address the transportation issues that are common to the Ardens with a focus on traffic calming and the safety of active transportation. The steering committee is comprised of all three villages, New Castle County, DeIDOT, and DART. The project objectives begin with gathering public input such as material from the walkable community workshop and survey results looking at existing conditions. Then, the team will move on to different alternatives such as mini roundabouts,

chicanes, and coming up with ideas to slow traffic. The team will then work with residents in the Ardens to find a preferred alternative for the different issues. The projects will go through a process of prioritization to determine which projects are most important and should be pursued first. Then, work will begin on an implementation plan which will include some sort of monitoring committee that will work on getting these solutions built. There is an Inter-Ardens Transportation Working Group that will likely carry this study forward, and WILMAPCO will be working with them.

There is a long history of trying to traffic calm on Harvey Road. A study that was done in 1999 resulted in points of consensus about what this traffic calming could be. It was an effort between the Claymont Fire Department, who had concerns about some of the proposals, and the Ardens community. These points of consensus were things that everybody agreed could be pursued in the future. One of the key points was no vertical traffic calming measures, but just the use of horizontal calming features. They also agreed on compliance with DeIDOT standards and the use of low-level landscaping. One of the key things is that features are traversable for emergency vehicles and buses. There were some attempts to implement this plan, but they fell short, as speeding remains an issue. So, it is important to set up the implementation committee to move the recommendations forward this time.

The Ardens Walkable Community Workshop generated several great ideas to build on. An existing conditions report was also created that laid out the demographics in the area and the existing conditions. New data were collected for this plan. There was a public survey that had twenty questions. It was an online-only survey that was publicized at community events including the Arden fair and a postcard mailing. There were over two hundred responses to the survey, which is good for a community of about one thousand people. Data are still being scrubbed, so the final number may be lower. The majority of participants were from the Ardens. When asked how well the transportation system meets their needs, most people replied that it did meet their needs. When those results are compared with the WILMAPCO Public Opinion Survey in New Castle County, they are aligned. The rest of New Castle County is slightly higher in responding that the transportation system does not meet their needs, perhaps because the car ownership rate is so high in the Ardens. More than half of the people were very concerned with speeding traffic on Harvey Road, about half on Veale Road, and about a third were concerned with speeding along Marsh Road. Speed data was collected to see where the trouble spots were. Looking at eighty-fifth percentile speeds shows a disparity between the posted speed limits and actual speeds on Harvey Road. It underlines the need for traffic calming here. The speeds are more aligned with the speed limit on Veale Road and Marsh Road. The team looked at reportable crashes. This crash data looks at the car, bike, and pedestrian crashes. The team will focus on each of the crash clusters moving forward. DeIDOT did a recent project on Marsh and Harvey Road, so it is expected that those crashes will decrease with that project. The other intersections will get attention, and one that stands out was the interchange with I-95. Community feedback reported safety issues at that off-ramp, and the crash data confirms that. The survey asked which new amenities are needed along Harvey Road in line with the walkable community workshop and respondents gave many ideas. One of the key ones is better pedestrian crossings so the path networks on either side can be reached.

A WikiMap exercise was well received by the public. About one hundred people visited the WikiMap to indicate destinations they enjoy. Barriers to walking and routes that people enjoy taking were identified. The Ardens are well connected by pathways, but there are some trouble spots in terms of barriers connecting to the paths and many of them are along Harvey Road. The public workshop was well attended, and survey results were presented and additional feedback on the trouble spots came out. The community provided many additional ideas about

specific interventions that could be made. All the public feedback has been collected. Now, the consultants and the staff will develop alternatives. A second public workshop and second public survey will be planned in the spring timeframe to understand what the preferred alternatives are.

10. Southbridge Transportation Action Plan

Mr. Bill Swiatek said the Southbridge Transportation Action Plan used to be called the Southbridge Circulation Study. It was an update to the 2008 Southbridge Circulation Study, but the community felt that it should be renamed to take a more action-oriented. The study area is Southbridge in South Wilmington. The core study area is the Southbridge neighborhood, which is the residential area, but also looks at areas on either side of Southbridge because of the activities with the port and the riverfront development that is happening to the west. The project management committee includes the City of Wilmington, DART, DelDOT, the South Wilmington Planning Network (SWPN), the Southbridge Community Development Corporation (CDC), and the Southbridge Civic Association. The study is being run through the South Wilmington Planning Network, which is serving as the advisory committee. The SWPN is an existing group, and half of some of their meetings are now being used to talk about the plan. Community ambassadors are working with the team on the study. This was a good practice that came out of the Southbridge Neighborhood Action Plan, which was produced last year. Two dedicated representatives from the civic association are receiving stipends to attend, provide feedback, and get others involved. Local survey takers will be used to administer a second survey, which will be door-to-door.

The schedule for the plan involves identifying issues, opportunities, and constraints. The visioning is abbreviated because a lot of that work was completed with last year's neighborhood plan. The team will move on to the assumptions, alternatives, and preferred alternatives. The foundation of this plan is the Southbridge Neighborhood Action Plan, the 2008 Southbridge Circulation Study, some of the work at the port like the Statewide Truck Parking Study, and the Route 9 Master Plan. This is an active area for development and redevelopment. The Future Riverfront East Street Grid won a RAISE Grant a couple of years ago just to the west. The Wetlands Park was recently dedicated, and there are some pathway projects associated with that. A bridge replacement is coming over the rail line on US 13, and there are streetscape projects in Southbridge that that came out of the 2008 plan. There will be a road diet associated with the bridge project on South Heald Street and the road diet and additional work planned for the Route 9 area to the south of Southbridge.

The four focus areas of the of the Southbridge Transportation Action Plan are Traffic and Road Diets, to determine if those road diets can extend into Southbridge and address speeding issues. Trucks and Freight will look at ways to slow down the trucks that are coming in and reroute as many as possible to reduce the number in the community. Bicycle and Pedestrian Needs will look at pedestrian and bike safety, but also look at bike connectivity across the Christina River into the East Side and connectivity to Eden Park. Transit is an important issue in Southbridge. Many residents do not own cars, so they rely on the bus. This will look at connectivity to jobs, health, and food. DART has won an Areas of Persistent Poverty Grant to do some of this work, and to also look to connect to jobs around the port area.

An existing conditions report was done and can be found on the website. In it is a map of the crash clusters in Southbridge. The biggest one is where Lobdell and Heald come together, with twenty-nine crashes in the past few years. We did a survey to confirm and refine the focus areas that came out of the Neighborhood Action Plan. We also promoted a separate Shoreline Protection Survey that came out of the City of Wilmington Climate Resilience Plan that is

looking at ways to better protect the shoreline in South Wilmington. Once people filled out the transportation survey they were directed to that survey. Forty-three responses were received. About half of the people who did it were residents, and of the residents most of them completed it in person. Southbridge is a tech desert. The survey results show that transportation is more of a challenge for Southbridge residents than the average New Castle County resident. Generally speaking, people in Southbridge have more difficulty reaching healthy and affordable grocery shopping, social activities, jobs, and medical care. Only twenty percent said that they were never limited by transportation. Survey results indicate better bus service is needed to these destinations including grocery stores with fifty-seven percent of people agreeing with that. About fifty percent said better bus service was needed to shopping, and forty-three percent said to jobs or school. A survey from the Neighborhood Action Plan with a stronger survey sample asked how important improving walking and biking access is, and most people agreed that it is important. Only four percent said it was not important. The top needs from the transportation survey are reducing traffic speeds, reducing truck traffic, and improving sidewalks and crosswalks. However, things at the bottom of the list like adding bike lanes, public EV charging stations, and adding street trees still have about half of the people saying they are at least somewhat important. When asked about the lane reduction on New Castle Avenue and Heald Street, fifty-two percent of people support it; fourteen percent are not sure, and about a third say no. So, there is still some work to do about this as a potential alternative.

A public workshop was held with the civic association meeting. It was advertised via postcard and had good attendance. Attendees were able to interact with the boards and provide more detailed feedback. Text messaging feedback is being pushed for the first time with this study. This is the result of looking at the Public Opinion Survey where we asked if text messaging is an effective method of public outreach. The responses vary greatly by race or ethnicity, with forty-four percent of Whites saying text messaging is a good way to reach them, but for Blacks and Hispanics, that figure is closer to seventy percent. So, in the advertising for this plan, which is happening in a place where ninety percent of people are Black, text messaging is being encouraged. People can use their phone to send a note to us, and then we include them on future survey opportunities, public meetings, and other information. The next steps include working with the local community center to do youth engagement. We want to develop alternatives. The team identified some immediate concerns that were shared with Public Works that had to do with a single retiming effort along the two main roads in Southbridge as well as some issues on Bradford and Claymont Street. A second public workshop and a second survey that will be door-to-door will take place to help select preferred alternatives.

Mr. Dave Gula said when he presented this yesterday to Wilmington Initiatives, one of the things that people were most interested in was how using text messages to keep people involved in a project works out. They ask us to let them know how that goes because Wilmington Initiatives works in Wilmington and there are many EJ communities including Southbridge. It is often seen as an intrusion, but if it is something that was requested, and it is successful with communities that are in a tech desert, this is something that we could expand and use in other similar neighborhoods. Mr. Gula asked that Mr. Swiatek let us know how that continues, because if it works in those communities, it could be adopted more universally for projects in those communities. Mr. Swiatek said he is also curious to see how it goes. The software that was bought can be used for any study, so if Mr. Gula wants to try it in another study he can. It has been used elsewhere by different planning agencies with some success, and it relates to the spread approach with outreach, where some people prefer text messages, some like email, some like to come to meetings, and some like virtual meetings. If we do it all, hopefully, we can get the majority of people participating.

11. 2050 Regional Transportation Plan Update

Ms. Tigist Zegeye said the staff are updating the long-range plan. The RTP is our principal plan. In the RTP, there are goals, objectives, and actions, as well as performance measures as required by the federal agencies. It also has several projects on the constrained and aspirations lists. It has been updated every four years since 1996, and the next one is due in March of 2023. The update was started in January with the Regional Progress Report, which was adopted in March. The Public Opinion Survey was conducted during the summer and was presented to the TAC and Council in June and July. Staff worked on the project lists with MDOT and DelDOT in July. Then, several technical analyses were conducted including mobility, livability, air quality, land use, and environmental and financial reasonableness. The Air Quality Conformity Determination was completed. Now, staff are doing outreach for civic organizations, member agencies, counties, and municipalities. So far, about twenty meetings with agencies and municipalities have been scheduled. WILMAPCO staff plan to meet with member agency staff in the next couple of months and present a draft RTP. Staff are working on the draft RTP document itself, so that will be presented at the December TAC meeting. Hopefully, the TAC will recommend to Council to release it for a thirty-day public comment period, and officially both the draft RTP and the Air Quality Conformity document would be out for public comment beginning in January. Then, staff will review the public comments and revise the draft as needed. The Our Town or RTP Public Workshop is scheduled for February 8th at Embassy Suites. The hope is that by February the PAC and TAC would recommend the Council adopt the RTP at the March meeting. Then, it will be submitted to FHWA and FTA, who have a couple of months to review it.

Mr. Bill Swiatek said the conformity results are determined by looking at the list of projects and the regionally significant expansion projects that we have and see if they meet our PM2.5 and ozone standards. So, the PM2.5 in New Castle County and ozone in both counties was reviewed, and we were able to easily show conformity to those. The results for the New Castle County ozone emissions look at volatile organic compounds (VOC's) and nitrogen oxide (NOx). In each of the years tested through 2050, New Castle County was well under the budgets of record for both in terms of the emissions, and importantly, the emissions are coming down through those years. Similarly, fine particulate matter in New Castle County emissions is coming down and is well under the budgets. Cecil County, as well, is easily meeting the budgets of record. There is talk of updating these budgets. That was discussed at the last Air Quality Subcommittee meeting. Hopefully, they will come down, and we can update the budgets, which are ten years old.

Ms. Zegeye said the financial outlook must be done for both Cecil County and New Castle County. Working with MDOT in Cecil County, of the Maryland funding, thirty percent is going to preservation, fifty-two percent is operations, and eighteen percent for capital projects. So, Cecil County will be getting 0.5 percent of available funds for capital projects. Compared to the last RTP update Cecil County funding has gone down. We have less money than in 2019. The available funds do not include operating and system preservation expenditures, MDTA Toll Funds, and grants.

For the financial outlook for Delaware, we are focusing on the funding that is available for capital projects in New Castle County, which is about sixteen percent. Seventeen percent is available for projects in Kent and Sussex County. It is assumed that out of those funds, forty-eight percent of the capital projects will be coming to New Castle County. Based on that, there is slightly more money on the Delaware side. Looking at what these funds will be used for, projects are identified by short, mid, and long term. Staff also have identified some grant funds that may be available that have not been identified for New Castle County. One thing to keep in mind is that

we have the 2023 project costs, which is current year, but the Feds require that we use the year of expenditure for the actual project cost. So, we are assuming five percent inflation in the short term because the inflation rate is much higher than normal. Then, hopefully, things would get better. So, for the mid and long term, we are assuming a three percent inflation rate. The constrained project list would be using all the available funds. The grants projects list will be supplemental grant funding, and this is mainly because the IJA has a number of competitive grants for which DeIDOT and MDOT will be applying. For the aspirations project list, the funding has not been identified, so we are just concentrating on the amount of money we have for the constrained list. There may be new projects that will be identified through our plans, and in consultation with DeIDOT and MDOT.

INFORMATION ITEMS

12. Staff Report

Ms. Zegeye reported the following updates:

- The Council met on November 10th. They had a few action items including amending the FY 2023 TIP to include the SR 9, New Castle Avenue, Landers Lane to A Street project; amending the TIP to include SR 1 and US 13 Southbound Merge project; approving the technical scoring for Project Prioritization for FY 2023 New Castle County TAP program and the Delaware Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Candidate project; and approving the proposed PAC member reappointments. They had presentations on the RTP, Ardens Walkable Community Workshop, the Ardens Transportation Plan, and the Southbridge Transportation Action Plan.
- Staff attended the RAISE grant announcement for the Route 9 Corridor in October.
- Staff conducted the Walkable Community Workshop for the town of Charlestown in October with fifty attendees.
- Staff participated in the Performance Measurement Peer Exchange in Baltimore in October.
- The Southbridge Transportation Action Plan held their first public workshop. The next steering committee meeting is scheduled for November 29th.
- Staff attended the Southbridge Wetlands Park dedication on October 18th.
- Staff attended the Delaware Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan Public Meeting on Monday, November 14th.
- The Ardens Transportation Plan held their first public workshop on October 25th. The steering committee met on November 15th.
- Staff had our TMA Certification review, and public meeting on November 9th, which went well.
- The Governor Printz and North Claymont Monitoring Committee meeting was held on November 10th.
- The Churchman's Crossing Monitoring Committee meeting was held November 16th.
- The advisory committee meeting for the I-95 Cap Feasibility Study was held virtually on November 15th. The final public workshop for this study will be November 17th at 6:00 p.m. at Ursuline Academy.
- The Route 9 Monitoring Committee will meet November 17th at 4:30 p.m.
- Staff will be presenting our transportation justice work at a University of Washington Health and Sustainable Transportation class November 29th.
- The US 202 Corridor Monitoring Committee will meet on November 30th.
- Safe Kids Delaware is working with Downes elementary school to plan a safety rodeo in January and then a bike to school day and rodeo in May,
- Staff is working with the Air Quality Partnership to convert the in-person Tropo assembly to a digital version.

From the chat:

Mr. Bill Swiatek: FYI - the Route 9 Monitoring Committee was canceled tonight. Next meeting is December 8.

OTHER BUSINESS:

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt and seconded by Mr. Mike Fortner the TAC adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Motion passed.

(11-17-22-03)

The TAC adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Attachments (0)