

**TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**December 15, 2022**

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, December 15, 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 10:05 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  
Virginia Burke, Maryland Department of Transportation  
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning  
Michael Fortner, City of Newark  
Gwinneeth Kaminsky, City of Wilmington Planning  
Marvina Cephas, DNREC  
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  
Maryland Transit Administration  
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:**

Sophia Cortazzo, MDOT

**Staff:**

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner  
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner  
Sharen Elcock, Executive Assistant  
Dave Gula, Principal Planner  
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager

Jacob Thompson, Senior Planner  
Dawn Voss, Administrative Assistant  
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by: Dawn Voss.

### **3. MINUTES**

Approval of the November 17, 2022, TAC Minutes.

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt and seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky TAC approved the November 17, 2022, TAC minutes.

Motion passed.

**(12-15-22-01)**

### **4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group

Ms. Heather Dunigan said the Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group met on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Maria Andaya from DeIDOT presented the Delaware Statewide Pedestrian Action Plan including the data and mapping analysis. Mr. Jake Thompson presented the report from the October Charlestown Walkable Community Workshop. Mr. Bill Swiatek presented the Ardens Transportation Plan and the Southbridge Transportation Action Plan.

### **5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **6. To recommend release of the Draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and FY 2023-2026 TIP Air Quality Conformity Determination for Public Comment.**

Ms. Tigist Zegeye said the list of projects of regional significance in both counties meet both PM 2.5 and ozone standards. New Castle County is in maintenance for PM 2.5. Both Cecil and New Castle Counties are in nonattainment for ozone. Conformity was demonstrated for both counties. WILMAPCO and DNREC partnered to create the New Castle County portion of the document in coordination with DeIDOT, who used Jacobs as their consultant. For Cecil County, the work was done by Michael Baker and submitted to WILMAPCO, MDOT, and MDE. The Air Quality Subcommittee recommend releasing the analyses and documents to the public. The TAC is being asked to release these documents for public comment from January 16<sup>th</sup> to March 6<sup>th</sup>.

**ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky the TAC recommends release of the Draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and FY 2023-2026 TIP Air Quality Conformity Determination for Public Comment.

Motion passed.

**(12-15-22-02)**

### **7. To recommend release of the Draft 2050 RTP for Public Comment**

Ms. Tigist Zegeye said over the last few months information about the 2050 RTP has been presented to the TAC. In February, the TAC was asked to adopt the Regional Progress Report, which is the basis for the long-range plan. In June, staff presented the Public Opinion Survey, which was endorsed and brought to the Council. During the summer months, the goals and objectives, the revised actions and performance measures, and the project list that staff compiled with MDOT and DeIDOT were presented to TAC. In the early fall, staff did several analyses including air quality and financial reasonableness. A draft plan was put together based on all this information. The staff request that the TAC recommend the release of the long-range plan for a public comment period from January 16<sup>th</sup> through March 6<sup>th</sup>, so Council may act on it at their January meeting. Staff have been doing a lot of outreach. An Our Town, which is part of the RTP public workshop, is planned for February 8<sup>th</sup> at Embassy Suites. Then, the RTP will be brought to TAC for action in February, and the Council may adopt it in March. The PAC recommended releasing the RTP for public comment at their December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**ACTION:** On a motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt and seconded by Mr. Michael Fortner the TAC recommends release of the Draft 2050 RTP for public comment.

Motion passed.

**(12-15-22-03)**

### **8. To recommend adoption of the WILMAPCO Safety Performance Measures for Cecil County and New Castle County**

Mr. Dan Blevins said we are looking for TAC endorsement of the Transit Safety Performance Targets. These are part of the federally mandated TPM efforts, similar to the ones for roadway safety, which look at fatalities and injuries, both in number and rate, and also what they call safety events. These targets were set by Cecil Transit and DTC. MPOs have one hundred and eighty days to adopt these or set their own. WILMAPCO staff ask the TAC to recommend adoption of these as is.

**ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Gwineth Kaminsky the TAC recommends adoption of the WILMAPCO Safety Performance Measures for Cecil County and New Castle County.

Motion passed.

**(12-15-22-04)**

### **9. To recommend endorsement of the I-95 Cap Feasibility Study**

Mr. Dave Gula said the study area is in Wilmington at I 95, where it runs between 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Delaware Avenue. The border streets to the east and west are Adams Street and Jackson Street. The advisory committee included neighborhood groups, church groups, local civic organizations, and elected officials from City Council members to United States Congress members. The advisory committee had three in-person and two virtual meetings and requested that a note be added to the final report stating their support for this project and interest in continuing as the advisory committee as the project moves forward. For community outreach there was a virtual workshop and four in-person workshops held in the project area to allow residents to attend easily. Separate presentations were made to United Neighbors, the West Center City Civic Group, the Wilmington Rotary Club, and to a group at Westminster Presbyterian Church, who will have another presentation in January. The team also attended community events in the local neighborhoods, William "Hicks" Anderson Community Center, and United Neighbors' bridge mural painting events, where they paint murals on the bridges that

span I-95. There is interest in preserving that artwork, if possible, when this project moves forward.

A final concept was presented to both the advisory committee and the community. It shows open space achieved by closing the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Street bridges to traffic. The area between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets has a public green, small amphitheater, restrooms, and a nature play area. Between 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets, there is a large festival green, and a market promenade along Jackson Street with a water feature. Between 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Delaware Avenue, there are urban gardens and a knoll, which can also serve as a sledding hill. There is an on-ramp from Jackson Street, an on-ramp from Adam Street, and an off-ramp from I-95 in this section. Along Adams, there is shaded seating in an area where food trucks could potentially park. There is a space that could be a cafe on Delaware Avenue. Hargreaves and Jones provided very good graphics, which are in the report and on the website. The traffic analysis is also posted to the website. The team was able to confirm removal of bridges to vehicular traffic and traffic calming on Jackson and Adams Streets can be done without significantly affecting the flow of traffic within this area. Signal timing measures will be taken. The team met with emergency services, and the final report was forwarded to them to ensure this does not affect emergency service response time in the area. There will be a significant amount of traffic engineering as this project moves forward. The team talked to City Public Works about doing pop-up closures where those two bridges are closed to vehicular traffic to test the impacts on traffic. Removing a traveling lane also potentially provides over one hundred additional parking spaces, which was a concern in the neighborhood. With a park this large, parking will be needed for people to visit.

The two options for the cap structure are the closed plan and the open plan. The closed plan would put retaining walls just outside of the right of way on I-95, creating a large fill area and much smaller girder span over I-95. The open plan looks similar to the current bridges over I-95. There would be limited fill around some of the ramps and some retaining walls installed, but the retaining walls would be further away from the travel lanes, causing the girders spanning I-95 to be much longer. The whole span would have a center support and there would be pylons similar to the existing bridges. The closed version looks like a tunnel. There are no tunnels in Delaware, nor any tunnel teams for inspection and safety. A tunnel section for DelDOT would need to be created. The open section is more like a very large bridge. The federal regulations have some flexibility on whether this is termed a tunnel or a bridge, which will affect other costs, like ventilation if it is a tunnel. The girders could be prestressed concrete or steel. There must be adequate spacing for inspections, but some space between the girders can be used to make troughs for tree plantings. The depth of the fill on top of the deck will vary. Because Adams Street is lower than Jackson Street there may be areas where there is a significant amount of dirt above the cap. In other places this deck structure would support planting trees.

To determine the cost, the team looked at three projects in Dallas, Texas, and one in Pennsylvania to get an estimated cost per acre. This study determined that this project is feasible. The deck itself will probably be the most expensive piece of this project. Only some very small shade structures, a stage, and some cafe work were shown, so the structural costs above the deck are not expected to be high. The final report indicates that this could be a phased project. The recommended phasing would begin between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets to address the lack of green space in the neighborhood. Phase 2, from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Streets, costs more as it is much larger. Phase 3 costs the most, because the ramps make it the most complicated.

**ACTION:** On a motion by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky and seconded by Mr. Cooper Bowers the TAC recommends endorsement of the I-95 Cap Feasibility Study.

Motion passed.

(12-15-22-05)

**PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

None

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**12. Staff Report**

Ms. Heather Dunigan reported the following updates:

- The Southbridge Transportation Action Plan had a youth engagement event for fourth, fifth, and sixth graders on December 6<sup>th</sup>.
- The Route 9 Monitoring Committee met on December 8<sup>th</sup>.
- The Bayard Safe Routes to School team met December 12<sup>th</sup>.
- The first Churchman's Crossing Plan Update Monitoring Committee meeting of FY 2023 was held on November 16<sup>th</sup>.
- The I-95 Cap Feasibility Study Advisory Committee met November 15<sup>th</sup>, where they endorsed the study. A final public workshop was held on November 17<sup>th</sup>. The report is on the WILMAPCO website.
- The Newport Transportation Monitoring Committee meeting was held on December 14<sup>th</sup>.
- The first Concord Pike Corridor Master Plan Monitoring Committee meeting of the fiscal year was on November 30<sup>th</sup>. A meeting with agency partners, elected officials and the owners of Independence Mall to look at better options around the area was held December 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff attended a USDOT best practices event on outreach training on December 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff attended the Riverfront Development Corporation South Bank public meeting on December 14<sup>th</sup>.
- A public workshop about the Townsend Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan will be held in their town hall on January 4<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.
- Downes Elementary School is having a safety rodeo event on January 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.
- The kickoff meeting for the Safe Streets for All Plan for New Castle County may be held on January 10<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon. The details will be sent out this week.
- Staff have had many meetings with groups about the Regional Transportation Plan. Staff met with the Delaware Office of State Planning on December 8<sup>th</sup>, Cecil County and MDOT on December 12<sup>th</sup>, and Delaware Transit Corporation on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Staff will meet with New Castle County Land Use on January 4<sup>th</sup> and DelDOT on January 5<sup>th</sup>. Staff will present to Cecil County Council and the Town of Charlestown on January 10<sup>th</sup>. Staff will present to New Castle County Council and Perryville on January 17<sup>th</sup>.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt and seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky the TAC adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Motion passed.

(12-15-22-06)

The TAC adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

**Attachments (0)**