

# TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 17, 2022

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

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Michael Fortner, City of Newark, and TAC Chair, brought the TAC meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**2. TAC Members present:**

Trisha Arndt, Delaware Office of State Planning  
Cooper Bowers, Delaware Department of Transportation  
Nicholas Cannistraci, Town of Elkton  
Marvina Cephas, DNREC  
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning  
Michael Fortner, City of Newark  
Gwinneth Kaminsky Rivera, City of Wilmington  
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  
Derrick Sexton, Maryland State Highway Administration  
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 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:**

Ben Allen, Maryland State Highway Administration  
Tyson Byrne, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Jane Dille, League of Women Voters  
Savannah Edwards, Rossi Group  
Breanna Kovach, Delaware Department of Transportation

**Staff:**

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner  
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner  
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 February 17, 2022, TAC Minutes.

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky and seconded by Ms. Catherine Smith TAC approved the February 17, 2021, TAC minutes.

Motion passed.

**(03-17-22-01)**

**4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

None

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None

**ACTION ITEMS**

**6. To recommend amendment of the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Heather Dunigan said this amendment is from Cecil County for Safe Routes to School improvements around the Elk Neck Elementary School, including crosswalks, timed beacons, and better signage to help address speeding issues and make better conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists around the school. They received a grant for \$85,000 HSIP money. This project would have also been eligible for TAP funding as there is unspent money that is dedicated for use in Cecil County. Members from Maryland are encouraged to consider using TAP funds for future projects like this.

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Mr. Matthew Littlejohn the TAC recommends amendment of the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Motion passed.

**(03-17-22-02)**

**7. To recommend amendment of the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Heather Dunigan said this request is from DeIDOT and DART First State to amend the TIP to include automated and dynamic paratransit scheduling which will help make more efficient use of paratransit resources to make a better experience for the riders. The cost is \$6.2 million.

Ms. Cathy Smith added that DART's existing technology is outdated. The features of this newer system will help with real-time traffic and online reservations. It will help DART to adapt when they do different service delivery options such as micro transit. It will provide real-time run optimization and better customer communication.

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt and seconded by Mr. David Dahlstrom the TAC recommends amendment of the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Motion passed.

**(03-17-22-03)**

**8. To recommend amendment of the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Heather Dunigan said this request is from DeIDOT in cooperation with DART to make pedestrian travel safer along US 13, one of the most dangerous areas in terms of pedestrian fatalities in the state. This will also improve the efficiency of transit service along US-13 because it is also a busy transit corridor. This would implement a combined bus-bike-right-turn lane similar to what is in place at the beach area. It is a \$250,000 project. It is recognized that it would still be comfortable only for very experienced cyclists. DeIDOT had a public workshop on this project last night. Their comment was they expect most novice cyclists would use the sidewalk for this area.

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Catherine Salarano and seconded by Ms. Tricia Arndt the TAC recommends amendment of the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Motion passed.

**(03-17-22-04)**

**9. To recommend release of the Draft FY 2023-2026 TIP for Public Comment**

Ms. Heather Dunigan said we have moved with DeIDOT to a biennial cycle for our TIP program and so it has been three years without a full update. The TIP is where the region's transportation projects are implemented, so this represents the first four years of our long-range transportation plan. Prioritization typically takes place the spring before for TIP comes out to provide the state DOTs with priorities. In Cecil County, we rely largely on this prioritization for the Maryland Tour Meeting and letters submitted by jurisdictions. This TIP includes \$2.8 billion in funding for all modes of travel and is divided into a Delaware statewide section, New Castle County section, and Cecil County section. It is three percent less than the last version of the TIP, which was amended in September 2019. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was signed in November 2015, so WILMAPCO delayed the TIP process a Council cycle to give the State DOTs an opportunity to absorb what was in the act and incorporate it into the funding program recommendations. Staff are suggesting releasing the draft for public comment from March 18 through April 29. There will be a joint virtual workshop on April 6<sup>th</sup> that will include WILMAPCO, DeIDOT, MDOT, and Cecil County. Council reviewed this at their March 10<sup>th</sup>

meeting and recommended its release for public comment pending no issues from the TAC. This will go to the TAC for adoption at the next meeting and Council adoption in May.

There are several new projects included in this program. In the Delaware statewide section, a few new projects align with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. These include a Carbon Reduction Program, which provides funding for projects geared toward reducing emissions and requires the states to work in consultation with the MPOs to develop reduction strategies. There are Electric Vehicle Program funds for deployment of EV infrastructure and to create an interconnected network to collect data on it. The Resiliency and Sustainability Program Initiatives Project funds more deployment of EV vehicles, as well as planning for areas at risk of sea level rise and flooding. The STIC Program provides funding for innovative transportation practices. In New Castle County, there are a few new projects. The bridge over South Walnut Street was previously in the program, but with much less money as a bridge rehab project. Now, it is a bridge replacement project which is more expensive, so the current document only shows PEL and right-of-way funding. New to the program is the Edgemoor Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Connection from Governor Printz Boulevard to Hay Road, which will provide a connection between Governor Printz, and the new Gulftainer port facility in Edgemoor, as well as helping people walk and bike to Fox Point State Park. This includes \$1.5 million for construction. New, but not funded is the Port Area Truck Parking Facility, which we are showing with no funding to be consistent with DelDOT's program. There is funding for a shared use path from South Church Street to Walnut Street, which is south of the new Wetland Park in Wilmington, with \$2.6 million for right-of-way and construction. The SR-1 project has been adjusted to show improvements at the Tybouts Corner interchange. This shows \$6.6 million for preliminary engineering and \$1 million for right-of-way. New to the TIP is the US-13 southbound bus-right-turn lane, which would include \$2.3 million for construction. In Cecil County there is one new project for the improvements near Elk Neck Elementary School.

Comparing this program with the last TIP, the share of money for multimodal and bike/ped has increased substantially. A few projects that were previously shown as road projects were shifted to multimodal to reflect more emphasis on Complete Streets projects. The I-95/896 Interchange Project had previously been a road project and now includes a bicycle/pedestrian pathway. Some other projects like intersection projects and safety improvement programs are more multimodal than they used to be and were switched from road to multimodal. In looking at funding by category, WILMAPCO emphasizes preservation first, and about half the funding is going to preservation projects, which is a slight dip but still the largest share of the program.

Overall funding has decreased by 3% compared with the FY 2020-2023 TIP. The statewide portion of the program is the largest portion of money and that has gradually been increasing. New Castle County-specific funds have decreased over the last five TIPs. Sussex County funding has been increasing, so the bulk of Delaware's funding increases in 2023-2026 are going towards Sussex County. Looking at funding by location and source, 52% of the money is coming from Delaware and Maryland State funds; 46% are federal funds; 2% are other, which includes Cecil County funds, local municipality money, and developer-funded projects. 6% of the program is in Cecil County; 30% is in New Castle County and 64% is in the Delaware portion, and 64% is spent throughout the state.

A TIP Quick Guide is available for anyone who wishes to share it, and it will be posted on the WILMAPCO website, along with the document and spreadsheet. The TIP Quick Guide gives a summary of the changes, some graphs, and a map of the projects. We anticipate, pending TAC action, releasing this for comments starting tomorrow through April 29<sup>th</sup>. The public workshop

will be on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Any changes to the document or comments received will be brought back to the TAC at the next meeting and it will go to Council on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. David Dahlstrom asked why there was a 24% drop in transit funding. Ms. Dunigan said it seemed like some of the bridge replacement money was no longer included and also some of the train station funding has been largely spent. A lot of the phases of the Newark and Claymont Train Station projects will be completed by 2023 and so that money cycled out. Mr. Dahlstrom said he was thinking that was more for buses and other equipment.

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. Matthew Rogers and seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky the TAC recommends release of the FY 2023-2026 TIP for public comment.

Motion passed.

**(03-17-22-05)**

### **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### **10. FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Ms. Tigist Zegeye presented the draft FY 2023 UPWP financial information. From the Delaware side, funds are received from Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, DeIDOT, New Castle County and the City of Wilmington, and the total for Delaware is \$2.8 million. From the Maryland side, funds are received from Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, MDOT, and Cecil County, and the total for Maryland is \$130,588, which makes a total of \$2.9 million for the FY 2023 UPWP. There is no in-kind this year, so the 20% local match will be coming from these entities all in cash.

In talking to DeIDOT, WILMAPCO had carry-over funds that had not been spent. So, letters were sent to both counties and all municipalities in both counties asking them to submit projects for FY 2023. Four submissions were received. The Town of Elkton requested an access improvement study for Belle Hill Road, west of Maryland 279. They are asking us to look at an alignment for this roadway. After discussion with Federal Highway Administration, it was determined that preliminary engineering and design are not an eligible task for PL funds. So, unfortunately, we are not able to accommodate this submission. The three Ardens requested a transportation plan. They want to focus on the nonmotorized aspect of the three Ardens, look at traffic calming, and have staff do the work needed to create a transportation plan. They defer to WILMAPCO on how much this will cost or if a consultant is needed. Staff recommends including the transportation plan for \$70,000, based on previous experience putting together a transportation plan. The City of Wilmington requested an update to the 2008 Southbridge Circulation Study. They are requesting \$95,000 to for this project. The staff recommendation is to include it in the FY 2023 UPWP. The Town of Charlestown are asking for a Walkable Community Workshop and planning study. They request the assistance of WILAMPCO and the Maryland SHA to identify sidewalks and crosswalks along MD-267 that lead to an elementary school. They are asking for \$12,000. The staff recommends that we conduct the Walkable Community Workshop in-house, so there will not be any funds used for that. Staff also recommends working with SHA and the town and put together a Safe Routes to School Program application or a TAP grant. We are not sure what the \$12,000 would cover, however, we think this project would be eligible for Safe Routes to School as well as the TAP and we will be happy to help with the application in coordination with SHA and the town.

Staff have put together the normal task descriptions included in the UPWP. The Sub-Regional Studies (23.11) and the Monitoring (23.13) have more funding because there are several projects continuing from previous years that require consultant work. The only new projects

being proposed are the Ardens Transportation Plan for \$70,000 and the update to the 2008 Southbridge Circulation Study for \$95,000. The UPWP was presented to the Council last week. The TAC is seeing it today, and the PAC will review it as well. It will be released for a thirty-day public comment period starting on April 1<sup>st</sup> and ending on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Also in April, it will come to the TAC and PAC for approval. Then, our hope is that the Council will approve it at their May meeting. It will be submitted to DelDOT, MDOT, FHWA, and FTA after the May Council meeting, and implemented on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **11. Claymont Regional Transportation Center**

Ms. Breanna Kovach is a Group Engineer at DelDOT in the Project Development Section. The Claymont Train Station is part of the North Claymont Master Plan. The existing has a tunnel system to get from one side of the tracks to the other, and water comes in, which requires pumping. Pre-COVID, the parking lot was at capacity with four-hundred and thirty-one spots plus and additional seventy-three spots in a lot on Governor Printz Boulevard accessed by a pedestrian bridge over I-495. That totals around five hundred spots. To access the northbound trains, riders use the stairs or the ramp to access the southbound platform, then use the chairlift or stairs to access the tunnel to the other side. The platform has a significant curve, which also causes ADA compliance issues.

DTC provided Ms. Kovach ridership information. This project is a design-build project that was awarded pre-COVID. The pre-COVID numbers for ridership were a daily weekday ridership of over one thousand riders in both directions, which fills the parking spots. The average ridership over the last six months was between three and four hundred weekday riders in both directions, but this was around the holidays, and with the Omicron variant many people were working from home. The hope is ridership will return to the pre-COVID numbers.

Claymont Properties, LLC, or Commercial Development Company (CDC) purchased the site, which was a former steel mill, with the hopes of cleaning it up and redeveloping. When looking for a new station along the Northeast Corridor, this is a convenient location, and was mentioned in the WILMAPCO Claymont Master Plan. DelDOT and DTC worked with the developer and acquired fifteen and a half acres for operational right-of-way for the new train station. The new station will have three-hundred and forty-four surface lot and four-hundred and sixty-four garage spaces for a total of eight-hundred and eight spaces, including electric vehicle charging spots. There are two, six-hundred-and-thirty-foot platforms that will be on a tangent, and a shared-use path connecting US-13 to the station and out the other side. This path is part of the North Claymont Master Plan to connect the East Coast Greenway. A new pedestrian bridge will be constructed over the tracks with stair towers on either side. There will be a new signal on Philadelphia Pike at Transit Center Drive. A stub-out is being constructed there for future development on the northern side. The existing signal at Alcott Avenue is being modified. The new Transit Center Drive is being constructed. Ms. Kovach shared an animated rendering of the train station highlighting the parking area, the pedestrian bridge over the tracks, the platforms, covered walkways, EV and bicycle amenities, and bus stops.

This is a design-build project, so the project is awarded to a team, which consists of a contractor and a designer. The team is led by Wagman Heavy Civil, which is the contractor with JMT as their engineer. RK&K helped create the RFP for the for the project. The inspection team is Century Engineering. The project has not only the typical project constraints, but this is the former City Steel site, so there are hazmat constraints. This was a brownfield site, so there is a contaminated materials management plan in place. There is also additional coordination with

Amtrak and additional requirements that need to be made based on their design specifications. The development on all sides requires extra coordination as well.

The RFP process was underway in late 2018. The project was awarded in early 2019. Within a couple of months, the contractor was on site doing clearing and demo work. In spring 2020, the team started the construction of a forty-two-inch sanitary sewer line. With other aspects of the design, the team had to go through the typical plan submittals required by DelDOT on a design-bid-build project and Amtrak reviews. There are bi-weekly meetings with Amtrak. In March 2021, the parking garage plans were released for construction, which started in May. Around the same time, construction for Philadelphia Pike and Transit Center Drive was released to start. In the summer, we have Amtrak's no exception for the catenary relocation project. There are a couple of catenary poles that need to be relocated. In the fall, Amtrak issued a no exceptions for the platform stair tower and pedestrian bridge design packages. All of those design submittals within the Amtrak right-of-way were approved and are in construction now.

The team has to coordinate facilities along Philadelphia Pike that needed to be relocated, new services to the train station, and utilities on the other side of the tracks. There are relocations that were not originally identified including a gas transmission line that was directly adjacent to a railroad bridge foundation on Philadelphia Pike. This took a few different layers of coordination, because under the MOA with CDC, they would remove this railroad bridge, but then they came across this gas transmission line. The project team coordinated with Delmarva to remove or relocate that line, then coordinated with CDC to demo the railroad bridge in order to widen the road for Transit Center Drive. On the east side of the tracks there is a wooden duct bank within Amtrak's right-of-way, and it could not be moved, so the team changed the foundation design. There were several design submittals that needed to go through Amtrak coordination. There continues to be a lot of coordination, because Amtrak's protection is needed when working within the Amtrak right of way. The construction of the pedestrian bridge will require outages, and Amtrak will need to do track adjustments and cross bonding. Four existing catenary polls need to be relocated. The team is coordinating that effort. The pedestrian bridge needs to be constructed through Amtrak catenary poll lines and Delmarva electric lines, so outages are needed from both parties. It takes months to coordinate that, and it is scheduled in October, over a few hours, in the middle of the night, on a weekend.

Currently, northbound Philadelphia Pike has been widened, and work is being done on the southbound side. That will be finished this spring or summer. The parking garage was started in summer of 2021. The pre-cast elements were set late summer and the work continues inside. The site work continues. One piece of the sanitary sewer line needs to connect from the edge of this property into the existing station. Then the critical driving force is the work within the Amtrak right-of-way, which will continue until fall of 2023. The team took a train station project, which is over \$70 million in a CTP cost from back in 2019, through the entire design process, with all of the coordination efforts, got it into construction, and is going to complete it in 2023. Ms. Kovach give kudos to the project team, and all of those who have helped along the way.

## **12. Port Circulation Study**

Mr. Dan Blevins said the Port Access Alternatives Study has been going on for the past year. The goal is to evaluate ideas from many of the recent studies WILMAPCO has done in the area such as Southbridge Circulation, Route 9, and the Wilmington Comp Plan. There are many ideas, and this study put those ideas to the test by running them through different modeling software to see what impact they would have in and around the port and, more broadly, the

Route 9 corridor. This study is technical in nature and takes those ideas to the next step to see what results can be expected from them.

In March 2021, some of the ideas from those plans were presented to the community in various ways such as South Wilmington Planning Network discussions, the Route 9 Monitoring Committee, and a public workshop. Then staff started going through ideas to identify the alternatives that would be considered further and taken through the analysis to determine their feasibility. These will be brought back to the public and then a final report will be produced. The second public workshop to present the recommendations will be next Wednesday. There are five alternatives. The first two are a Pigeon Point Extension either at Lambson Lane or at the FedEx facility. These look at extending Pigeon Point under I-295 and creating an exit point at Cherry Lane. The second one is an extension of Pyles Lane. Alternative four is an extension and improvements to Garasches Lane. Alternative five is a matter of signage to reroute all port traffic off of Route 9 to stay on the interstate system, I-295 around to I-495, thus avoiding New Castle Avenue.

The analysis determined measures of effectiveness for each option, looking at travel times and travel speeds through the Route 9 corridor from C Street down to Cherry Lane, levels of service for seventeen intersections in this corridor, overall truck volume reduction, and fuel consumption. All of those factors were used to calculate a series of scores to compare the alternatives to each other. Alternative five, the rerouting, scored well for reducing a significant amount of volume on Route 9. Both options for Pigeon Point also performed well. Looking at the intersections in the study to see if trucks traffic was reduced overall, alternatives one, two and five scored well. Alternative three, Pyles Lane, generally did not reduce the amount of truck traffic on this section of Route 9, mainly because it is not connected directly to the port or Terminal Avenue. Looking at the percent reduction in trucks during the AM and PM peak periods from the northern part of the corridor to the southern part, at Cherry Lane the intersection will get slightly busier in alternatives one and two, but it will siphon much of the truck and potentially some regular vehicle traffic from Route 9. The benefit scores indicate alternative five performs the best overall. Numbers one and two perform quite well with the Pigeon Point extensions. Garasches Lane also does reasonably well.

Cost estimates for each one of these alternatives are available. The extensions to Cherry Lane, alternatives one and two, are each about \$24 million. Pyles Lane, at \$3 million, is not very expensive, however it did not score very well. Garasches Lane is around \$7 million and scored reasonably well. The rerouting is roughly a five-mile extra movement going from I-295 to I-495. It is hard to assign a cost to this. There are different enforcement, signage, and other factors to consider. Many people would be involved in setting up this level of enforcement and signage, including the Port of Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, DRBA. It is probably worth trying, even if it diverts a limited amount of traffic, but the enforcement would be a challenge.

The team has gone through community visioning. In a week they will present the results at a public workshop. Sixty-five or seventy people are signed up for the workshop. We will be going the Route 9 Monitoring Committee this evening. This will be brought back to the TAC in April as we are looking for adoption of this in May of 2022.

### **13. Health Risks & Conditions Data Report**

Mr. Bill Swiatek reviewed the results of a new data report being built at WILMAPCO on health risks and conditions and how they relate to transportation and land use data. This work builds off of WILMAPCO's Social Determinants of Health Analysis (SDOH). This work is a factor in the



project prioritization process. SDOH is the social economic conditions that impact the health of people. For a long time, there was no granular level health data that was available below the zip code level. A few years ago, staff decided to venture into SDOH and look at demographic data to build that as part of the Route 9 work. A data report was assembled in 2019 that brought it out to the regional level. Granular level health risk and condition data is now available on PolicyMap for things like obesity rates, physical activity rates, asthma, poor reported health, and many other things. They charge for the data, but with WILMAPCO's connections with public health community, we were able to obtain it through Healthy Communities Delaware. The report itself will compare correlations between SDOH and the newly available health data to see how well it correlates with observed health conditions and risks. It will also look at SDOH versus the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), which is produced by the CDC to identify communities that are vulnerable to health risks and natural or man-made disasters. Delaware Public Health Department has been using it with the COVID response. Then, some of those hard health data will be examined related to transportation and land use conditions to see if there are correlations between one and the other. The SDOH Index and SVI share many of the same criteria including poverty, education, minority segregation, employment, and single parent households. In SDOH, homeownership, time-in-residence, and food deserts are factors. A host of other measures are included in SVI including income such as the presence of children, disabled people, people who do not speak English well, crowding in homes, and mobile homes. All of these factors are equally weighted in each index.

When looking at the census tracts that are of most concern and least concern for SDOH versus the census tracts that are of most and least concern for SVI, many of the same tracts appear in both. The Pike Creek and Route 41 corridor are of less concern in both cases, and parts of the City of Wilmington and Elkton are of more concern. SVI shows a couple of census tracts in Elsmere and also some of the suburban poverty clusters along Route 40, whereas the SDOH is concentrated more in the City of Wilmington and the Route 9 corridor.

Staff looked at the  $R^2$  variations and values between the two indexes versus asthma rates, and poor mental health rates, and so forth. The higher the  $R^2$  value, the greater the correlation, which indicates it could be said to influence those factors. Generally, the SDOH performed better than the SVI index on these correlations, usually having about double the  $R^2$  value. The highest correlations were found with asthma, which was about an  $R^2$  value of .5 where 1 is a complete correlation and 0 is a noncorrelation. Poor mental health, obesity, and physical inactivity all showed correlations when we look at SDOH, but less so for SVI. Neither index showed strong correlations with a census tract's high blood pressure rate or poor reported health rate. Median age may be more a factor here, which is something to examine in the future. Another way of looking at this, is to take those census tracts that are places of most concern and least concern and look at the median percent of people who suffer from these conditions. Comparing the top fifteen census tracts in SDOH to the bottom fifteen, for example, 41% of people in the top fifteen census tracts have obesity versus only 33% on in the bottom fifteen. There is a little more of a spread between the top and bottom census tracts with SDOH versus SVI.

Data on many conditions were available, but this report is focused on two that relate to transportation. The first is asthma, which has little spread between people who suffer from asthma in one tract versus the other. The census tract with the least amount of asthma in our region had a rate of 8.6% for adults, and the census tract with the most was 12.7%. When looking at the SDOH factors, the demographic factors, and the socio-economic factors versus some of the transportation and land use conditions, for example, this report shows higher rates of asthma in in places that have more poverty. In the example presented, the top tracts for

asthma had a poverty rate of about 22% versus only 3% for the bottom twenty tracts. That is one of several influencers for asthma as most impoverished places have more pest infestations, mold, and other factors that can cause indoor conditions that can cause asthma.

For land use and transportation factors, we looked at housing near busy roads. This was the percentage of households within a quarter of a mile of a road that had over 20,000 average annual daily traffic. In this analysis 56% of households within those tracts with higher rates of asthma were near busy roads versus 40% were not. Looking at the freight network with the same type of analysis, 93% versus 56%. Housing near industrial lands showed 100% versus 73%. Looking at air violations, or places that actually had emissions that triggered an air violation, there were 115 air violations within a mile of a census tract that had high asthma versus only 28 for census tracts that were in the bottom tier for asthma. On a scatter plot, the data shows no correlation between asthma and the percentage of households near a busy road. In places that had 12% asthma, 80% of households were within proximity to a busy road, but then there were also some with zero percent proximity to a busy road, so it is not showing any correlation when we look at the whole dataset. Regarding the freight network, for most of the census tracts that had 12% or higher asthma, they were also nearby a freight network, but there was one that was not. Looking at asthma versus a near-industrial zone, all of the census tracts that had 12% or more were 100% near an industrial zone and there was an even better correlation with asthma and nearby air violations.

Physical inactivity was also in the report. In tracts with the least physical inactivity about 24% of people were inactive, versus the tracts with the most physical inactivity, in which 41% of people were inactive. Cecil County, north of I-95 does very well with physical activity. Route 9 corridor and parts of the City of Wilmington have the most inactivity. SDOH indicators show a significant range between the least and the most active census tracts. Land use and transportation factors show a significant spread. Looking at walk connectivity, which is the percentage of people who are able to connect from their homes to destinations, shows places that had the least amount of physical activity had better walk connectivity than places that had the most. In looking at the percentage of households nearby park space, 98% of households in the least active census tracts were within a quarter mile of a park, versus only 17% of households in the most active census tracts. This is an inverse relationship, but in the more active and wealthier places, people are able to drive a car to the park or the gym to exercise. Related to industrial and air violations, the least active places have more industrial activity and more polluting activity nearby. Showing the data on scatter plots, some correlations can be seen. There is a strong correlation with physical inactivity and obesity. There is no correlation seen physical inactivity versus the proximity to busy roads. In terms of physical activity versus walking connectivity, households with good connections gradually increases as the tract becomes more physically inactive, so the places that have the least amount of activity had more households with good walking connections. That accounts for infrastructure and level of service, but not for personal safety. Looking at physical activity versus proximity to parks shows households that are more physically inactive are more likely to have a park nearby. Again, this does not consider the personal safety issues, which may impact use.

A takeaway from this data analysis is confidence using our SDOH Index. It has been a very solid resource for public health and planning. Wilmington's COVID-19 Community Response Group, which is doing prevention work around COVID and encouraging people to get the vaccine and then boosters has been using SDOH scoring to concentrate on different areas. The areas with the lowest rates of receiving the boosters fit with our SDOH areas so we almost predicted where we would have a public health concern before it happened. In addition, Delaware Guidance Services, which offers mental health services are using the SDOH Index to

find a location so they can concentrate their facility in a place where they can be more supportive of clientele who do not have cars and need to use the bus to get to their facility. Overall, the health data that is coming out can be used to strengthen work on the SDOH Index and make the correlations even stronger.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **14. Staff Report**

Ms. Dunigan reported the following updates:

- The Council met on March 10<sup>th</sup> and had three action items. They approved the Route 72/McCoy Road/SR-71 TIP amendment. They voted to release the TIP for public comment, and they endorsed the 2022 Regional Progress Report, which can be found on the WILMAPCO website.
- WILMAPCO is partnering with the City of Wilmington, DeIDOT, and DTC to submit a Raise Grant for the 12th Street Connector Project. The deadline for the Raise Program is April 14<sup>th</sup>. A consultant will help with the grant application.
- The Union Street Reconfiguration Study had their third Advisory Committee meeting on February 28<sup>th</sup> and presented the preferred concepts for the corridor. There will be a public workshop on March 16<sup>th</sup>.
- The I-95 Cap Feasibility Study had a second Advisory Committee meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup> to present initial ideas. The next workshop will be held in mid-April.
- The Newport Transportation Study Monitoring Committee met on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Staff presented our Transportation Justice Plan to the Delaware Chapter of Women Leading Government Conference on March 16<sup>th</sup>.
- The Route 9 Monitoring Committee will meet this afternoon.
- The Port Circulation workshop is scheduled for March 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Staff attended the DeIDOT Council on Transportation meeting on February 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff participated in the Augustine Cut Off Bicycle Network Improvements Public Workshop held by DeIDOT on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Staff will be attending the City of Newark Planning Charrette next week, March 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.
- The TIP Public Workshop is scheduled for April 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **OTHER BUSINESS:**

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky and seconded by Mr. David Dahlstrom the TAC adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Motion passed.

**(03-17-22-06)**

The TAC adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

**Attachments (0)**