

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

April 15, 2021

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, April 15, 2021, 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 10:02 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
Alexandra Brun, Maryland Department of the Environment
Tyson Byrne, Maryland Department of Transportation
Jennifer Callaghan, Cecil County Department of Public Works
Nicholas Cannistraci, Town of Elkton
Marvina Cephas, DNREC
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning
Michael Fortner, City of Newark
Gwinneth Kaminsky, City of Wilmington Planning
Brian Mitchell, City of Wilmington Department of Public Works
Catherine Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation

TAC Ex-Officio Members present:

Lindsey Donnellon, U.S. Federal Highway Administration

TAC Members absent:

Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism
Delaware River and Bay Authority
Maryland Transit Administration
New Castle County Department of Land Use

TAC Ex-Officio Members absent:

Amtrak
Diamond State Port Corporation
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Guests and Invitees:

Ian Beam, MDOT
Jade Clayton, Maryland Transit Administration
Jane Dille, League of Women Voters
Bill Dunn, Civic League for New Castle County
Givvel Marrero, Delaware Hispanic Commission
Jolyon Shelton, DNREC
Josh Thomas, DelDOT

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

The March 18, 2021 TAC minutes were approved.

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt and seconded by Ms. Catherine Smith the TAC approved the March 18, 2021 TAC minutes.

Motion passed.

(04-15-21 - 01)

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

a. Air Quality Subcommittee

Mr. Bill Swiatek said the Air Quality Subcommittee met on April 1. The group reviewed the air quality portion of the overall project prioritization process for the FY 2023 TIP and had no changes. They also reviewed the CMAQ project prioritization process for the FY 2023 TIP, which was updated with new cost-benefit data from FHWA and had no changes. The AQS also discussed the need for a revised New Castle County air quality conformity analysis to go along with the FY 2023 TIP. The immediate trigger is that the regionally significant I-295 Northbound project is currently modeled for 2040 in service but is moving more quickly than expected. It should now be in service before 2030. This conformity analysis should be completed prior to the adoption of the FY 2023 TIP, which is expected in March 2022. The group will develop a timeline and assumptions at future meetings.

b. Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group

Ms. Heather Dunigan said the Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group met on April 6th. The group discussed some of New Castle County's recent trail planning with Mr. Marco Boyce, who gave updates about the Newport River Trail and the Commons Boulevard Trail plans. Mr. Matt Saponaro presented about trail data and artificial intelligence analysis of video data collected along the Hall Trail in Newark looking at overall trail use and how well people were following COVID safety protocols. Ms. Randi Novakoff shared a bicycle/pedestrian outreach video.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

ACTION ITEMS

6. To Recommend Approval of the FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program

Ms. Tigist Zegeye said financial numbers in the draft UPWP have not changed since it was last presented to the TAC. The cash activity for the FY 2022 UPWP is \$2,420,190. In-kind activity for the UPWP, mainly coming from the Town of Elkton and Cecil County, is \$8,403. An In-kind agreement between Cecil County, the Town of Elkton, and WILMAPCO has been signed, and 146 hours to cover the \$8,403 needed in-kind match were identified. The total funding available for the FY 2022 UPWP is \$2,428,593. The new projects for the FY 2022 UPWP that require consultants are the Transportation Justice Analysis for \$30,000; the Delaware Freight Plan Update for \$50,000; Wilmington Initiatives Support for \$45,000; the City of Wilmington I-95 Cap Feasibility Study for \$100,000; and monitoring support for a number of projects including the 202 Corridor for \$49,000; the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan for \$35,000; Southern New Castle County Master Plan for \$10,000; North Claymont Area Master Plan for \$35,000; Newport Transportation Plan for \$35,000; Governor Printz Corridor for \$35,000, and Churchmans Crossing Plan for \$35,000.

The UPWP is out for public comment April 1st through May 3rd. The public outreach portion of the UPWP will be presented to the PAC on Monday, April 19th for their recommendation for approval to the Council. With TAC and PAC approval the UPWP will go to the Council on May 13th for their approval. Once it is approved by Council, it is submitted to DeIDOT, MDOT, FHWA and FTA for approval, and the FY 2022 UPWP will be implemented in July 2021.

Mr. Tyson Byrne said after last year's in-kind agreement with Cecil County, MDOT had asked to be included as signatories and they were not. Federal Highway is coordinating with them on their approval of the in-kind match so they would like to be on the in-kind agreement, because they are responsible for the matching of federal funds. They are a very important part of this process, so they are requiring that WILMAPCO include them as a signatory. Ms. Zegeye replied WILMAPCO is trying to avoid doing things differently on the Delaware side and the Maryland side. WILMAPCO will have a PL agreement with the DOT, which has the federal portion and the state match. Mr. Byrne said the original guidance that the FHWA sent included MDOT, which is why they were on the original agreement between all four parties and why they are insisting that they are on it. WILMAPCO is not doing any in-kind agreement with Delaware. There are no in-kind funds from Delaware so there is no inconsistency in doing one with Delaware and one with MDOT. Ms. Zegeye said in the State of Delaware there is a PL agreement with the State DOT and if there is an in-kind it is with the people or entities who actually will be providing the services. In this case, Ms. Zegeye has a list of employees in the Town of Elkton and Cecil County whose salaries are being used as a match. At the same time, the federal government does not allow state agencies to qualify as local match so technically we cannot put MDOT as contributing to in-kind, because that is against the law. The salaries or the hours of state employees, especially DOT, cannot be used as in-kind. For that reason, our auditors require us to include the number of people who will be contributing their time in the actual UPWP. Ms. Zegeye suggested this discussion be continued offline. WILMAPCO needs to have a PL agreement with MDOT, which we have not done for many years, but for the purpose of this UPWP the county executive and the mayor have signed an in-kind agreement. FHWA Delaware Office is looking at the agreement and would approve the UPWP for the entire region. Mr. Byrne said MDOT had a PL agreement last year for which they did virtual signatures. Mr. Byrne said the discussion can continue offline, but he has stated his preference.

Mr. Brian Mitchell asked if the 20% match for the capping of I-95 is coming from the City of Wilmington or is there some in-kind option? Ms. Zegeye replied that in the FY 2022 UPWP on

the Delaware side none of the projects listed require a match from the member agencies. DelDOT gave the entire UPWP match in cash.

Mr. Mike Fortner asked if the issue discussed with Mr. Byrne would delay the approval on contingency of further discussion. Ms. Zegeye suggested not delaying the approval as it would delay the entire UPWP for Delaware and Maryland. We are talking about an amount of \$8,403 worth of in-kind versus the \$2.4 million that would be jeopardized if we do not have a UPWP. If Mr. Byrne does not feel comfortable approving the UPWP, the Delaware portion can be approved at this time, but Ms. Zegeye does not recommend that because as a region one unified work program is preferred. Also, this is something that can be worked out offline, but it would not affect the UPWP approval. Mr. Fortner asked if the UPWP can be approved, and the issue can be worked out later. Ms. Zegeye said the TAC recommends approval to the Council, but ultimately the Council has to decide what they will do.

Mr. Byrne stated that MDOT objects.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Givvel Marrero and seconded by Ms. Tricia Arndt the TAC recommended approval of the FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program, with MDOT objecting.

Motion passed.

(04-15-21 - 02)

7. To Recommend Approval of the Technical Scoring for Project Prioritization for FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Ms. Heather Dunigan said work has begun on the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program. One of the early steps is to review the project list with our partners and do a project prioritization. The technical scores have been updated. Some criteria scores have not changed. Some criteria were updated based on the amended prioritization process that the Council and TAC voted to approve last year, which align the scoring factors with the Transportation Justice Report adding in social determinants of health and revising the economic development criteria to align it with our TIA's. The columns with headings "Safety", "Mobility Challenged", and "Pedestrian Priority" were updated to include the most recent data available. The project list is sorted into projects within the TIP, most recently amended, and projects not in the TIP. Then they are sorted by project mode and technical score. This will be reviewed by Council, who can vote to rank the projects based on their technical score or any other factors. The column titled "Status 12/20" lists updated implementation status based on information from December which is posted on DelDOT's website indicating if projects are moving more quickly than expected, delayed, or on schedule. Potentially a couple of these projects may trigger an air quality conformity analysis. For example, the I-295 project was in the RTP for 2040 but is moving forward more quickly than anticipated. Some of the most recently adopted plans were not scored but added to the list to prevent them from being lost in the priority. Then, some projects are listed that are not in the TIP that hopefully will be moved into the TIP as funding becomes available. Also, as part of this, we look at projects for CMAQ funding and updated our scoring based on the most recent information from the FHWA. Mr. Bill Swiatek added that projects are sorted first by highest ranking project type. This is what has changed based on data from FHWA. They calculate the emissions cost benefit of different project types from all the CMAQ funded projects across the country. As time goes on there are more projects being funded and more emissions costs analyzed. These project types are sorted first in our system. Then they are sorted by air quality technical score. Finally, they are sorted by the overall technical score. Ms. Dunigan said at the bottom of the sheet some projects were included that will be removed

from the list because they are being implemented, they are delayed, or merged with other projects that were implemented.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Cooper Bowers seconded by Mr. Brian Mitchell the TAC recommended approval of the technical scoring for project prioritization for FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Motion passed.

(04-15-21 - 03)

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

8. MDOT/MTA MARC Train Service Development Outreach

Ms. Jade Clayton said she is a Senior Planner from the Maryland Transit Administrations Office of Planning and Capital Programming. The MARC Expansion Act was passed during the 2021 legislative session. MTA is rapidly starting to follow through on some of the requirements from the bill. The bill includes continued planning and coordination to close the gap between MARC and SEPTA commuter rail services. The MARC Expansion Act includes service to Delaware, and the Penn-Camden Connector, which would form a connection between the Penn and Camden lines between Penn Station and BWI airport. That would improve some passenger efficiencies as well as some operations and maintenance efficiencies now that MTA is investing in the Riverside Heavy Maintenance Yard. Also, on the south end, service is extending into Virginia. Overview of projects include extending MARC service from the current north terminus in Perryville to meet SEPTA service in Newark, Delaware. Service today into Perryville is bi-directional, one midday trip, and no weekend service. Service into Newark is now bi-directional, no midday or weekend service. The Act proposes adding at least two AM and PM trains from Perryville to Newark. The Penn-Camden Connector is direct access between the Camden and Penn Lines, access from both lines to the Riverside Heavy Maintenance Yard and addresses the Penn Line train storage challenges as MTA tries to maintain current service and expand into future service areas. Service to Virginia extends MARC service from Union Station to Alexandria, Virginia. There are three lines that service Union Station in Washington D.C. It is not determined which lines would run through to VRE so that is part of the planning process and discussions with stakeholders. The proposed pilot service is two AM and PM trains to Alexandria, Virginia.

Infrastructure challenges include the number and condition of tracks, signals, and switches. MTA does not own that infrastructure so they must work with the host railroads. Infrastructure challenges also include the size and condition of facilities needed for current and future service; and having seats and train sets available to provide a quality of service that makes the extension worthwhile. Another challenge is alignment with negotiating partners' needs and service, which are the host railroads who own the tracks, as well as other operators, their unions, and their out-of-state-counterparts including DeIDOT, SEPTA, PennDOT and various entities in Virginia. There are also challenges with the maintenance of traffic during the planned construction, including some that is planned at Union Station.

MTA continues to work with WILMAPCO, DeIDOT, DTC, and SEPTA on service to Delaware. It is in the planning stages so far. MTA has put together a MARC Cornerstone Plan, which is a 25-year plan that outlines critical pathways for state of good repair, as well as any investments that would enable future expansion or major projects. The Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan was published in 2020 and includes these services as part of a twenty-five-year plan. The plan was largely based on outreach and stakeholder feedback. The Elkton Train Station Feasibility Study is from 2014 so it needs to be reviewed in any future feasibility studies, which will be the next step. There was the Perryville Transit-Oriented Development Plan; the WILMAPCO MARC-

SEPTA ridership study; the Newark Train Station Study and the ongoing construction for the improvements which included anticipation of MARC service in the design and construction. Then, there will be continued ongoing coordination with stakeholders in February. MTA is working on a statewide transit plan and state rail plan updates this year. The rail plan covers freight and passenger rail. A University of Maryland Ridership Modeling Effort is underway, so ridership estimates are being done with FTA's approved model, in an effort to prepare for any future federal grant funding for this service by basing the ridership and feasibility study on their preferred model. There are various Martin State Airport projects. At one point a northeast maintenance facility was considered, but the acquisition was too expensive, so Martin State Airport became that northeast storage and maintenance facility.

From the Act itself the next steps that are required by December include a lot of stakeholder engagement such as this presentation to the Technical Advisory Committee, then on Monday with the Public Advisory Committee, meeting with leading employers in the Maryland and D.C. area, and working with the Greater Washington Partnership who convene many of these stakeholders together. WILMAPCO, DeIDOT and others have provided information about employers in the northern end to invite them to roundtable events. MTA is reaching out to operating partners who work with their labor unions. There was a meeting with the Rider Advisory Committee and there will be a meeting with the Rail Subcommittee this month. MTA will be working on negotiations with the counterparts and agencies for this service and will report to the legislative body summaries of these discussions, efforts to negotiate the proposed two AM and PM trains, and any other findings by December 1st. There was a cursory look at censorship data on commuting patterns to provide some information to the MARC Riders Advisory Council. Some current riders from New Jersey and Delaware who drive to Perryville expressed how much it would shorten their trip if they could board at SEPTA in Newark, or further north, as many of them commute to D.C., not just Baltimore or Aberdeen.

The second project is the Penn-Camden Connector, which is also in the MARC Cornerstone Plan. The feasibility study kicked off this week for a more advanced engineering study of what the needs are and what the design will be for this connection. It is also in their RTP, will be in the statewide transit plan, and most likely will be in the statewide rail plan when it is updated. The next steps include the feasibility study including looking at infrastructure challenges, operational needs with CSX in particular as they may or may not be sharing use of this line at the same time, environmental strategies, and reporting on that draft this summer or fall. Then the goal is to produce findings from that study by the December 1st deadline.

Service to Virginia has a similar list of previous works, projects, and long-range plans. MWCOG has done a run-through market assessment of potential markets for connecting the Brunswick, Penn, or Camden line into Virginia. The Greater Washington Partnership provided technical reports. Work continues with the Northeast Corridor Commission and their strategic development plan ensuring that MTA projects and projects from other partners are known and in one place. There are also Washington Union Station expansion and track improvements. So, while planning future expansion, MTA is maintaining repairs and reducing impacts on riders along the way. The next steps for service to Virginia are meeting with various stakeholders, state representatives, rider advisory committees, labor representatives, technical advisory and other subcommittees, negotiating with DOTs and others on the south end of service, and then reporting to them by December.

Ms. Zegeye said thank you. This has been in the making for more than twenty years, so it is great that MTA is taking the initiative to move it forward. WILMAPCO is happy to help in any way including communication to our committees as well as the community at large. Ms. Clayton

said thank you and recognized Mr. Dave Gula's efforts in keeping MTA on track with this. He was working on this before Ms. Clayton came to MTA. One of her first assignments at MTA was to restart these conversations about five years ago.

9. Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning Video Rough Cut

Ms. Randi Novakoff said she is presenting the next in a series of five public outreach videos that WILMACPO is creating. The first one was the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan. These videos are funded through a grant from FWHA. Topics include transportation justice, who is WILMAPCO, and how an idea becomes a project, and the bicycle and pedestrian for today. The idea of the videos is to create a simple way for people to understand the transportation planning process and encourage participation in that process. The video was shown. Ms. Novakoff said the intention is to add Spanish subtitles to the final version. As far as outreach strategies, the video would be shared on social media, with civic organizations, and with New Castle County libraries.

Mr. Tyson Byrne suggested trying to air the video on public access for either of the two counties. Ms. Novakoff said that is a good idea and she will follow up on that.

INFORMATION ITEMS

10. Staff Report

Ms. Dunigan reported the following updates:

- A second Advisory Committee meeting for the Churchmans Crossing Plan is scheduled for May 3rd. The Union Street Reconfiguration Project is planning to hold its first Advisory Committee meeting on April 22nd and staff is hoping to have a Public Workshop on May 10th. Via the chat feature, Mr. Gula commented that the workshop was moved from May 10th and we will keep everyone updated.
- Staff has been working with the Town of Townsend to schedule a Walkable Community Workshop and is tentatively looking at a date this summer.
- The Port of Wilmington Study had a meeting on March 15th. Staff is working on an outreach strategy to get engagement from more minority participants and the March meeting had 30% minority registration when it is normally less than 5%.
- Social justice outreach training for planners will begin on April 16th. This will be a series of five training sessions held in partnership with Delaware APA and the University of Delaware.
- Staff has been working with the team for Wilmington Earth Week and Arbor Week from April 19th to 23rd. Each day will have different activities and themes. Tuesday will be Transportation Tuesday, where there will be a story book on bicycle safety and air quality at 10:00 a.m. and a panel discussion with Delaware Commute Solutions, formerly known as Rideshare Delaware, in the evening.
- WILMAPCO has been working on getting a Master of Public Health student intern for the summer to support our work in Southbridge and along Route 9. This is covered by a grant from Healthy Communities Delaware.
- In Southbridge door to door surveys are being taken as part of the Southbridge Neighborhood Plan. The TAC will be updated on the results of that survey later this summer.
- Staff has been working with a coalition to plan a series of open street events in Wilmington. The first event will be May 15th on Market Street.
- Staff is working with Bike Newark and the City of Newark on a virtual bike month activity. This will include a social media campaign and hopefully a pop-up event.
- The City of New Castle Transportation Plan continues to have a Wikimap on the WILMAPCO website to get feedback. A Planning Partners meeting was held on April 14th and an Advisory Committee meeting is being planned.

- The Maryland Transportation Alternatives Program call for applications is now open and will continue until May 17, 2021. Ms. Dunigan reminds Maryland partners that we do have funds dedicated for use within Cecil County and she encourages them to apply.

OTHER BUSINESS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Gwinneeth Kaminsky and seconded by Mr. Cooper Bowers the TAC adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Motion passed.

(04-15-21 - 04)

The TAC adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Attachments (0)