

# TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

**May 20, 2021**

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, May 20, 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 10:01 a.m.

**2. TAC Members present:**

Tricia Arndt, Delaware Office of State Planning  
Ian Beam, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Cooper Bowers, Delaware Department of Transportation  
Alexandra Brun, Maryland Department of the Environment  
Jennifer Callaghan, Cecil County Department of Public Works  
Marvina Cephas, DNREC  
Michael Fortner, City of Newark  
Jeanne Minner, Town of Elkton  
Matt Rogers, New Castle County Department of Land Use  
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  
City of Wilmington Planning  
Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism  
Delaware River and Bay Authority  
Maryland Department of Planning  
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, MDOT SHA  
Nathan Attard, DTC  
Tyson Byrne, MDOT  
Nicholas Cannistraci, Town of Elkton  
Jane Dilley, League of Women Voters  
Gladys Hurwitz, MDOT  
Paul Moser, DelDOT  
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 April 15, 2021 TAC minutes were approved.

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt and seconded by Mr. Cooper Bowers the TAC approved the April 15, 2021 TAC minutes.

Motion passed.

**(05-20-21 - 01)**

**4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

**a. Air Quality Subcommittee**

Mr. Bill Swiatek said the Air Quality Subcommittee met on May 6. The group reviewed and agreed upon a timeline for the upcoming FY 2023 New Castle County conformity analysis. The work will begin this August and conclude with Council adoption in March 2022. Though not required, we are going to try and use the latest MOVES model, MOVES 3, for the analysis. This work will be for New Castle County only and will include the analysis years of 2025, 2035, 2045 and 2050. These details were confirmed with EPA after the meeting.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None.

**6. Appointment of Nominating Committee for TAC Chair**

Mike Fortner requested three volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee for TAC chair and vice chair. The committee is asked to have one telephone call by the next meeting to appoint a chairperson and a vice chair. Normally, the chair serves for two years at which time the vice chair becomes chair. Because the TAC does not currently have a vice chair, the Nominating Committee will nominate both a chair and vice chair. Mr. Ian Beam volunteered. Mr. Fortner selected Ms. Tricia Arndt and Mr. Matt Rogers. Mr. Beam will coordinate the call on the Teams platform. Mr. Cooper Bowers volunteered to replace Ms. Arndt because she served on the last Nominating Committee. Ms. Dunigan will provide contact information to Mr. Beam to coordinate the meeting.

**ACTION ITEMS**

None

## **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **7. Maryland Freight Plan**

Ms. Gladys Hurwitz from the Maryland Department of Transportation Office of Planning at the Secretary's Office said while aligning with federal planning requirements and broader state-specific initiatives per the Maryland Transportation Plan, the purpose of the State Freight Plan is to examine existing and projected conditions including building consensus and identifying policy positions, strategies, and freight projects to improve freight movement, efficiency, and safety. The Maryland State Freight Plan supplements and supports overall views and goals of the State's long-range transportation planning initiatives for the Maryland Transportation Plan. It also incorporates national freight goals from federal freight transportation authorizations including MAP-21 and the FAST Act. Last updated in 2017 as the Maryland Strategic Goods Movement Plan, MDOT has begun the process of updating the freight plan for an expected revision date and federal approval by fall 2022, complying with the requirements to update the plan every five years. The freight plan will focus on meeting the planning requirements of MAP-21 and the Fast Act, including updating the comprehensive overview of freight movement in Maryland, expanding insights into the latest freight supply chain or technology influences, defining policy needs and strategies to insure the efficient movement of freight in Maryland, identifying freight project priorities related to investment plans for a five-year forecast period. It also needs to be a collaborative effort among stakeholders as well as state, local, and regional planners, including coordination with existing ongoing plans and resources. One of the key focus areas of the Maryland Freight Plan is meeting the requirements of the FAST Act. This could include anything from freight system trends, needs, and issues, freight network, technology innovation, freight congestion and mitigation strategies, and freight advisory committee consultation.

Milestone 1 includes visioning with goals, objectives, and performance measures, and will go through the spring of 2021. MDOT will begin compiling background updates to include peer assessments, revise outlines that comply with current requirements, and an inventory of Maryland's existing multimodal freight networks. These insights feed the coordination and refinement of overall freight-related vision, goals, objectives, and performance measures culminating in a stakeholder discussion that was held in April of 2021. Milestone 2, otherwise known as projects and programs, will go through the summer of 2021, and is where MDOT will assess overall freight conditions, performance, and trends for the state of freight in Maryland both now and in the future. These efforts may incorporate network or location details such as asset conditions, freight bottlenecks, or truck parking as well as a broader perspective related to supply chain economic factors, technology implementation, and environment. These collective insights will inform a compilation of specific freight needs, issues, and program project priorities for stakeholder review by July or August of 2021. Milestone 3 includes the draft plan developments. Through the end of 2021, MDOT will build upon findings from Milestones 1 and 2 to compile the draft. This phase will formalize the necessary financial plans for the priority funds needed, including plan expenditures in the national highway freight program and lists of unfunded needs, policy positions, and freight-related programs and planning strategies. For Milestones 4 and 5, throughout most of 2022, MDOT will refine and finalize the state freight plan based on feedback from stakeholders in coordination with key project, freight, and senior leadership groups. The final state freight plan will be submitted to FHWA Division Office of Formal Review to determine if the plan has all the elements required. The plan will be submitted for FHWA to be approved no later than November 20, 2022.

A peer assessment was conducted to get freight perspectives from various states such as Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota. Regional perspectives from regional field plans included the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, New York Metropolitan Transportation Council, Ohio Kentucky Indiana Regional Council of Governments, and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, among others. The main takeaway from this is there is no one-size-fits-all approach, but there is potential for best practices opportunities in various areas such as plan linkages and libraries, streamlined freight documentation, freight network coverage, interactive freight data resources, and planning for technology.

Stakeholder outreach is important to the success of this project. Information is shared at quarterly MDOT Freight Roundtables. The State Freight Advisory Committee met this past March, will meet again in September, and will continue to meet as needed. MPOs continue to be engaged at quarterly meetings and as key milestones are met. FHWA is also briefed at key milestones. Regional stakeholders are updated about key milestones or as appropriate. The State Freight Advisory Committee has diverse representation from industry, state, and regional freight, MPOs, and local DOT and federal representatives. The State Freight Advisory Committee advises the State on freight-related priorities, policy issues, projects, and funding needs; serves as a forum for discussion of state transportation issues affecting freight mobility; communicates and coordinates regional priorities with other organizations; promotes the sharing of information between the private and public sectors on freight issues; participates in the development of the state freight plan and other relevant freight plans; provides recommendations for critical urban and rural freight corridors which should be done as part of the state freight plan process; and reviews and provides guidance on freight related performance measures and performance data. The goal of the State Freight Advisory Committee is to represent the freight community at large and advise the State on freight-related priorities, policies, issues, projects, and funding needs in order to advance freight goals and objectives in Maryland.

The first State Freight Advisory Committee meeting was in March. There were sixty-three attendees and there was representation from industries, state, regional freight including representatives from DCDOT, VDOT, DeIDOT, FHWA, and FMCSA. There were presentations on COVID perspectives, FHWA status on freight grant tools, the freight plan, the rail plan, the Howard Street Tunnel, truck parking and data, and from members on consumer products delivery, and the Maryland Motor Truck Association. The next meeting will be September 2, 2021. At the State Freight Advisory Committee meeting, poll questions were asked such as, "What is the most important thing about freight to you?" Some of the top answers were the economy, keeping the economy running, economic vitality, growth, economic activity. There was also efficiency of movement and safety, the safe and efficient movement of goods and people. We also asked what they would like to see for the next Freight Advisory Committee and innovative technology is something that people found interesting, followed by industry spotlights and information on economic and workforce development.

Ms. Hurwitz asked poll questions of the TAC attendees using word clouds to show responses.

- What is most important thing about freight to you? The TAC responded: rail, healthy, economy, time, e-commerce. At the State Freight Advisory Committee, attendees responded: economy, efficiency of movement, and safety.
- What is missing from the 2017 Freight Plan Vision? The 2017 vision is, "Freight travels freely and safely through an interconnected network contributing to economic viability and growth for Maryland businesses." The TAC responded: new technologies, community support, balance with livability. Ms. Hurwitz asked for clarification about community support. Mr. Josh Thomas said there is a lot of opposition to anything related to freight so making

sure we have community outreach and support to make freight a good neighbor. Ms. Hurwitz said freight tends to meet opposition in different neighborhoods as people do not want trucks driving through their neighborhood, but Amazon is also a truck and needs to travel through neighborhoods to make package deliveries. Ms. Hurwitz asked for expansion on “Balance with livability”. Ms. Dunigan said when staff do community plans, there are many concerns particularly from people living close to distribution centers about the impacts of trucks driving through their neighborhoods, the time of the trucks traveling through, the impacts on walkability in the neighborhoods, and balancing quality of life issues. State Freight Advisory Committee replies included: infrastructure investment, incorporation of technology, Maryland citizens/people, understanding cost, freight not just about goods.

- The update to the Freight Plan follows closely with the long-range Transportation Plan. What would you change or add to the goals? The TAC responded: First mile/last mile. At the State Freight Advisory Committee there was a long list, some of which were: last mile delivery, innovation, emission reduction strategies, and also truck parking.
- What are your freight priorities? The TAC responded: reduce emissions. At the State Freight Advisory Committee: the need for interconnectivity, permit automation, safety, travel time reliability, economics, efficiency.

## **8. New Castle County Bicycle Plan Priority Project Update**

Mr. Paul Moser said he is an engineer in DelDOT’s Local Systems Improvement Section, which does the trails and pathways program, the pedestrian access routes program, scenic byways, and transportation alternatives. Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) ranks linear segments of roadways or intersections based on who would be comfortable cycling there. Level 1 is suitable for children and people uncomfortable with biking, and includes pathways, low-volume subdivision streets, or roads with almost no traffic volume. Level 2 is for people who are more comfortable biking on roads that have a little more traffic such as cycling around campus in Newark. Level 3 is for people who are comfortable with a little more aggressiveness and have more competency. Most roads in America fall in the LTS 3 category where there are no real provisions for cycling, but it is tolerable. Level 4 is for people who will bike anywhere.

There has been an extensive effort using many interesting data inputs to develop this Level of Traffic Stress model for the State. Using a map of Harrington as an example, Mr. Moser showed different LTS by color which allows you to look at an area and understand how suitable it is for bicycling. Some insights from looking at this map include that east-west bicycling will be on the collector roads, so there is more traffic and a higher level of traffic stress. In Harrington, to go east-west across the railroad tracks, the options are limited to LTS 3 and LTS 4, and then there are a few intersections that are LTS 2. When all LTS 1 routes are removed, there are no routes to get from one subdivision to another. Each of those “islands” is given its own name and color on the map, which illustrates that unless a cyclist is willing to go beyond LTS 1, they are restricted to their area. Adding the LTS 2 roads back in expands the islands dramatically. The higher your tolerance for traffic stress, the larger your mobility options are as a cyclist and the more opportunity there is for projects to improve the LTS on certain roads to further expand mobility options. The problem in bicycle transportation is that households within bikeable distances to common destinations are unable to reach them directly on low stress streets, pathways, or intersections, and therefore, your bicycle mobility is suppressed. The solution is to create new connections to facilitate potential bike trips on the low stress bicycle network and ideally leverage places with existing low-stress connectivity.

From the 2018 Blueprint for Bicycle Friendly Delaware Plan, the working group looked at five destinations including transit centers, employment centers, schools, community centers, and

parks and trails. Knowing where those destinations are and where people live, provides a sense of mobility based on the comfort level of the cyclist. A model was built to show how potential projects fair. For example, to get from a house in Brookside to Gore Hall at the University of Delaware, the fastest route is two miles, which is a twelve-minute bike ride. The route begins with an LTS 1, but Marrows Road is LTS 4 as there is higher traffic speeds, and no shoulder as you approach the intersection. There is no LTS 1 route for this trip. When LTS 2 paths are added, the route goes down Route 4 and back into Newark to make a 4.2-mile trip, which is about twenty-one minutes. A propensity score is how likely people are to take a trip based on distance. This considers how long the trip is in total distance and what is the length of the detour. For this example, the LTS 1 score is 0 as it does not exist. For the LTS 2 the score is .359 which means people are less than half as likely to take the trip. For LTS 4 the score is 1 because it is less than 3 miles and very direct. The LTS 3 route has a propensity score of .5. There is no good route for this trip without LTS 4 conditions. The model weights the scores to get one number. When weighted, this is a .5 out of a possible 2.25, so this trip is about a fifth as connected as it could be. There are good conditions and land use for urban cycling, but due to these barriers it is deficient. This modeling allows us to not only see the conditions but also see how they can be improved. Another example is connectivity between households and a school in Bethany. The model can be run with a project plugged into it so the projects that improve mobility for the most people become apparent.

Ms. Heather Dunigan added the list of projects is a subsection of the list from the New Castle County Plan. For the whole list of about twenty projects, municipalities were asked to submit their priorities. Twenty projects were too much for DeIDOT to do in one year of analysis, but the rest of the projects have not been forgotten. Mr. Moser added that this tool is used in the bike/ped program, which is a small subset of DeIDOT's overall operations, and their budget is small. They have the capacity to do one or two projects per county per year. Many of the proposed projects do not fit within this group's capabilities and are better suited for a larger capital project under a different funding mechanism within DeIDOT, so they curate this list based on projects that are achievable within their program's budget and capabilities.

The Jack A. Markell Trail, Battery Park extension refers to a missing link between the Markell Trail and the Battery Park area. From a modelling perspective, it looks terrible, because it only connects one park to a pathway which has local connections, then not much for miles until it reaches Wilmington. It is interesting that this project that we know is useful and beneficial based on bicycle demand, ranked very low. This model does not tell you everything, just the mobility improvements to a subset of specified destinations. This project was funded with the Delaware Bicycle Council 2020 Innovation Grant, which they tacked onto the New Castle Transportation Plan so this project will probably be done in the near future.

The New Castle to Llangollen Connector is an interpretation of a concept to build a pathway to the bay shore of Delaware. The project managers at DeIDOT took a simpler approach with a pathway from Deemers Beach to Route 9 and then down to Llangollen. This ranked three out of seven, because even though it is a longer trip, there are many people there that would be connected to New Castle, the Jack Markell Trail, and jobs in New Castle. That section of pathway on Deemer's Beach was constructed by the New Castle Conservation District and they had the legal authority to build on private property without easements, so that was constructed partially on private property and there is no legal easement to build to Route 9. To construct that will take different authorities and extensive environmental permitting so New Castle Conservation District or DNREC are more suited to develop this project, so for now it has been put on hold.

The School Lane Trail project will connect the pathway on Route 273 to School Lane. This project ranked fourth out of seven. There are connectivity benefits to schools, transit, and community centers. The neighborhoods affected could use that mobility improvement. This is moving forward.

The North Delaware Greenway, Baynard Connector project connects Talley Road to Baynard Boulevard. It ranked second out of seven. This project goes through a DeIDOT yard. DeIDOT just improved one of the yards and they do not want to move forward with this. There is no viable alternative, so this is on hold for now. If Wilmington builds their bike plan with a protected bike lane on Washington Street and on Baynard Boulevard, this could make sense in the future.

The Commons Boulevard Pathway, Phase 2 ranked fifth out of seven. This project has benefits for longer trip lengths. There are a lot of connectivity improvements in Phase 3. It is a major connector to employment as one of the largest employment centers in the state is nearby. New Castle County is developing concepts for this. They will not move forward with it now but probably will in the future. It is a New Castle County priority with good mobility benefits.

The Augustine Cutoff Pathway ranks first out of seven and will move forward. This will connect the Blue Ball Barn property to the City of Wilmington. It builds off of developer improvements and provides an alternative to the North Delaware Greenway. A feasibility study is being done with Whitman Renquardt Associates. There will be a public workshop. Then, once the concept is developed it will move into project development.

The Wyoming Road Protected Bike Lanes project ranked sixth out of seven. Compared to the other projects, it is smaller, but was modeled in the context of the Newark TID. There is major redevelopment at the College Square Shopping Center and this project would leverage many of other projects in the area. It was awarded the Delaware Bicycle Council Innovation Grant. The City of Newark is studying it, and it will likely move forward in the next couple of years.

The whole process for the New Castle County Bike Plan project prioritization will begin again in November. In the meantime, some improvements to the model will be made such as using travel time instead of distance as the impedance factor, which would be useful for intersections as intersection delay is not factored into this model. Elevation will likely be added, which will be turned into power and factored into a travel time impedance. The model penalizes detours of 20%. Mr. Moser thinks it is closer to 10-15% especially where there is high resolution and different projects to model. Decreasing the trip length from 3 miles to 1.5 miles and the maximum trip length from 6 miles to 4 miles, is recommended to reflect how people actually bike. There may be a change in the employment center data set. Mr. Moser wants to integrate with Streetlight Data which uses GPS data to create mobility analytics. Since Mr. Moser created this presentation, there have been many different studies. There were studies in Milford and the Newark TID, for which the TID data is available at [bit.ly/NewarkTIDModel](http://bit.ly/NewarkTIDModel). The modeling results for the Churchmans Crossing Study will be ready soon.

All of this provides a narrative, meaningful, and quantitative way to approach bicycle mobility to make it relatively simple for the public. It allows the comparison of the value of projects and creates a process for managing public and legislative requests.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **9. Staff Report**

Ms. Dunigan reported the following updates:

- The Churchmans Crossing Plan Update Advisory Committee met on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Modeling results were presented, and scenarios discussed. A public workshop will be held June 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The Union Street Reconfiguration Project Advisory Committee met on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. A public workshop was held on May 19<sup>th</sup> with forty people in attendance.
- Staff is working through developing initial recommendations for the City of New Castle Transportation Plan. The Advisory Committee will meet in June.
- The Route 9 Monitoring Committee is meeting this evening.
- A public workshop for the Southbridge Neighborhood Plan will be held in Hicks Park on June 8<sup>th</sup>.\*\*
- The social justice training WILMAPCO is hosting with the American Planning Association and the University of Delaware continues to meet every other Friday through June.
- The outreach videos, “Route 9 Corridor Master Plan” and “Planning for Safer Walking and Biking” are now available. Staff is working to promote views of them. The Route 9 video is currently up to about 360 views.
- The Delaware Truck Parking Focus Group is meeting on May 20<sup>th</sup>. The Freight Summit will be held on June 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff continues to work with the partnership developing Open Street events in Wilmington. The first was held May 15<sup>th</sup> on Market Street. The next will be June 19<sup>th</sup> in partnership with Reach Riverside and the Teen Warehouse.
- Staff is working with the City of Newark and Bike Newark to hold a series of virtual Bike Month activities including a social media photo contest, and a pop-up bike station that was held last Sunday.
- We are partnering with the Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Alliance to update the corridor management plan. A public meeting is planned for the evening of June 8<sup>th</sup>.
- I-95 Cap Feasibility Study RFP is available. Proposals will be accepted through June 15<sup>th</sup>.
- At the May 13<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, Council voted to adopt the State and Local Cash, and In-kind Commitment Agreement; as well at the UPWP, which is available on the website. They also voted to approve the proposed Project Prioritization for the FY 2023 TIP.

\*\*Via the chat feature, Mr. Swiatek commented that the Southbridge Neighborhood Plan public workshop has been moved to June 10<sup>th</sup> at 6: p.m. in Hicks Park.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt and seconded by Mr. Cooper Bowers the TAC adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Motion passed.

**(05-20-21 - 02)**

The TAC adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

**Attachments (0)**