

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

July 16, 2020

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, July 16, 2020, via video conference/conference call.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Mike Fortner, City of Newark, brought the TAC meeting to order at 10:02 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
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning
Stacey Dahlstrom, New Castle County Department of Land Use
Michael Fortner, City of Newark
Gwineth Kaminsky, City of Wilmington Planning
Jeanne Minner, Town of Elkton
Pete Regan, MDOT SHA
Jolyon Shelton, DNREC
Steve O'Connor, Cecil County Land Use
Catherine Smith, DTC

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 the Environment
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:

Tyson Byrne, Maryland Department of Transportation
Arthur Jenkins, DeIDOT Finance
Josh Thomas, DeIDOT

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, Transportation Planner
Dawn Voss, Administrative Assistant
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by: Dawn Voss

3. MINUTES

The June 18, 2020 TAC Minutes were approved.

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Tricia Arndt and seconded by Ms. Jeanne Minner the TAC approved the June 18, 2020 TAC minutes.

Motion passed.

(07-16-20 - 01)

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

a. Air Quality Subcommittee

The Air Quality Subcommittee met on July 2. The group received a presentation from DelDOT on efforts to update its CMAQ emissions analysis. The new methodology promises to be a big improvement over what has been done previously. It should result in new emissions performance measurement targets, which will be included in the WILMAPCO mid-period CMAQ performance plan due this October.

In addition, WILMAPCO staff presented on air quality improvements our region has experienced with the help of the Spring lockdown. In April, the ozone Air Quality Index saw an average daily improvement of 15%, compared to the previous five April averages, in New Castle County. In Cecil County there was a 10% improvement.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

ACTION ITEMS

6. To Recommend Amendment to the Functional Classification of Belvidere Road

Mr. Dan Blevins said Cecil County has requested that the roadway functional classification of Belvidere Road between Theodore Road and US 40 be changed from Local to Major Collector. Belvidere Road is a 2.6-mile segment running from Theodore Road to US 40 and crossing over I-95 at about the midpoint. This change stays within the mileage set by the federal highway recommendations with the adjustments to the local systems. It also helps Cecil County get closer to their recommended mileage for their major collector.

Ms. Tricia Arndt asked if changing classification opens them up to additional funding opportunities. Mr. Blevins replied going from local to a major collector allow access to federal funds. Ms. Dunigan added that they are shortly going to apply for a federal grant to fund improvements along the road. This will enable them to be eligible for the grant.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Cathy Smith the TAC recommended amending the functional classification of Belvidere Road.

Motion passed.

(07-16-20 - 02)

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

7. FY 2021 Capital Transportation Program (CTP) Update

Mr. Art Jenkins, Assistant Director of Finance at DeIDOT, presented about the FY 2021 CTP. Mr. Jenkins said as DeIDOT has been navigating COVID-19, they have seen an impact on both their revenue and how they manage their capital and operating funding. The anticipated impact on revenue is a \$63.1 million loss for FY2020 and that loss carrying forward into FY2021 is anticipated to be \$24.7 million. DeIDOT did receive Federal C.A.R.E.S. Act funding that provided the transit agency with \$61.2 million to help offset some of the operational expenses that DTC incurred related to COVID. That one-time funding also allowed DeIDOT to reduce its subsidy to DTC for FY 2021 by \$50.4 million. They are still on track to go to the bond market in August as planned. There is still some ambiguity as to what to expect for FY 2022-2026 depending on how quickly DeIDOT can recover from COVID.

Related to sources of funding for the transportation trust fund for FY 2021, the current revenue projections for tolls, DMV, and motor fuel tax all include COVID impacts which reduced revenues for FY2021 by just under \$25 million. The federal component of \$285.3 million is to be used for the capital program next year. On the operating side, the department plans to use the \$331 million in operating appropriations received for FY2021. The largest piece of the operating budget is personnel costs, which along with debt service makes up about 60% of their total operating expenditures. For FY2021, \$375 million is anticipated for State capital expenditures. DeIDOT's approved appropriation included a decrease to grants of about \$3 million. The municipal street aid is still in that capital program at roughly \$6 million. There is \$5 million that remain for CTF subdivision, the paving pilot program. There is another \$3 million for CTF funding which is a continuation of last year's authorization.

Capital program initiatives in New Castle County that are part of the State capital program include \$112.7 million for construction-related initiatives and improvements for projects such as SR 141, I-95 interchange at Jay Drive, the rehabilitation of I-95 project, the Newark regional transit center, the Claymont regional transit center, and some early work packages for the I-95 rehab project. There is approximately \$8 million for south Wilmington infrastructure improvements. The capital program also includes some funding for urbanized surface transportation block grants, the FTA Urbanized Area Fund, and replacement of transit vehicles for elderly and disabled persons.

8. 2020 Delaware Strategies for State Policies and Spending Update

Ms. Tricia Arndt presented the purpose for coordinating the state agencies and local governments and how this document is implemented through the state agencies and comprehensive plans. The Strategies are a guide for municipal development and State spending. It is a Delaware code requirement that these Strategies be updated every five years. The Strategies came into play in 1999. In 2011, it became a requirement that they be updated every five years. The purpose of these strategies is to coordinate land use decisions with the provision of infrastructure and services. Delaware is unique among states in that land use

decisions are made at the local level, while the responsibility to provide the bulk of the infrastructure and services comes from the State. It is necessary to bring those two together to avoid waste and inefficiency. These Strategies bring that policy guidance to state agencies and serves as a framework to coordinate the plans and actions of local government.

The State pays for infrastructure including 85% of the roads, significant school maintenance and operations, and emergency services. Agencies use the Strategies in the Preliminary Land Use Services (PLUS) project reviews, where state agencies come together to review large-scale projects. These Strategies are used by agencies when they put in their capital budget requests. Strategies are also used for school site approvals, which go through a site review to ensure they are in an area that anticipates growth and where the State wants growth to occur.

Local government and how comprehensive plans are developed are key components of the strategy update. The first thing considered are comprehensive plans, where the municipalities and the counties are experiencing growth, and where they want growth to occur. They work with them in the development of those plans, and the governor certifies those plans based on the consistencies with the State Strategies. This ensures the State and local governments are planning together and collaborating on growth, infrastructure, and public services. Strategies are updated every five years as Delaware is constantly changing. Local governments are on different cycles. The plans are reviewed every five years and updated every ten. State agencies have new data, tools, and policies that are included in the Strategies. The process to update strategies includes an extensive data collection effort including data from State agencies and local governments. This data is fed into the GIS analysis. A series of public workshops are hosted to put the information out to the public. The agencies review the draft document and provide comments, updates, and text. Ultimately the document goes to the State Cabinet Committee on State Planning for approval, then to the governor for his approval. The state agency staff is a very important in shaping the policy document with writing, editing, and making sure their policies and priorities are in line.

To create maps for the document, more than thirty-five data sets go into the update including school sites, transit routes, social service centers, agricultural preservation districts that are going to change over time, corridor capacity preservation areas, and numerous other data sets. The two main classifications that go into the data sets are areas favoring growth and areas favoring preservation. First, the municipal comprehensive plans are considered. Then the county designated growth areas and comprehensive plans are layered in to create the combined datasets from the state agencies that show areas favoring development. These areas have water, sewer, and transit services, as well as close proximity to emergency services. Then datasets favoring preservation including wetlands, flood plains, and agricultural preservation are considered. Finally, "out of play" areas including purchased, conservation easement or some other legal impediment to development on those sites are mapped. GIS is used to combine the layers into the Strategies map. This process indicates Investment Levels 1-4 and out of play. This method was developed in 2004 and has been used to update the Strategies ever since.

Investment Level 1 areas are mature and established such as Wilmington and Dover. They have established infrastructure and services and are urban areas. Investment Level 2 is similar to level 1, but with newer infrastructure and planned infrastructure investments, and include some of the more recent subdivisions in close proximity to the Level 1 areas. Investment Level 3 areas are less established and have a suburban sprawl look. Level 3 areas require advanced planning and master planning. These are longer-range growth areas where development may still occur, but the State may have other priorities for them in the short term. Investment Level 4 areas are rural areas, natural resource preservation areas, and areas of farming and agricultural

economic activity. Out of play lands are not available for public development because they are publicly owned or they are purchased for conservation, or there is some other legal means that would prohibit development. The State will only spend money in these areas for the purpose for which the areas were preserved.

This year's update of the Strategies was special because it has been twenty years since the Strategies have been enacted. State Planning worked with UD's Institute for Public Administration who assembled, basically, a performance review of the Strategies over the last twenty years and put forward some recommendations to implement and improve upon some Strategies that were in action. The priorities looking ahead at the next twenty years include water and wastewater infrastructure improvements, consistent funding for agriculture, open space and rural growth management. It was noted that there is not sufficient affordable housing options and multi-unit housing options. Climate resiliency is something to focus on in the future as well as collaborative planning. These maps are not parcel based. There may be some restrictions in a Level 1 area such as a flood plain or some other restriction. Ultimately the decisions are made on a local level because the local government is doing the specifics on the ground planning, and implementation of zoning. Similarly, a Level 4 area has qualification for unforeseen circumstances that affect such things as public health, safety, or welfare.

The Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues approved the document in early June. The document now rests in the governor's office waiting for them to complete their review, then sign the executive order to move forward. Outreach was done through an online public meeting instead of series of in person meetings in each county. On the State Planning website there is a hub site where you can access the whole document, chart, maps, and the twenty-year retrospective from UD. The interactive map is new this year. You can click on map to see what Investment Level an area is and why.

Mr. Dahlstrom referred to the slide that showed the different types of funding provided and asked if there is a breakdown of how much is spent on each category by Investment Level. Ms. Arndt replied that there is a break down by year of what is spent annually in the appendix of their annual report where there is a five-year table that breaks down spending in each category. As far as spending by level, Ms. Arndt said they track development trends so they know how much is going to each of those levels for residential and non-residential and the square footage, but she is not sure how specific the information is for each level. She will look into that.

9. Southern New Castle County Master Plan Update

Mr. Dave Gula said that this project is intended to create long term vision for the southern part of the county with an emphasis on public outreach. This document, when completed, will provide direct input to the RTP, the TIP, and New Castle County's Comprehensive Plan, which is in the process of being updated. This would potentially be a small area plan that would be adopted by the comprehensive plan. There has been substantial work done previously, but some time has passed and it needed to be refreshed.

Starting in October 2018 there was a well-attended information session. A community visioning session was held in Odessa in October, which was also well attended. At that meeting, there was a great deal of community outreach done, and because that session was successful a second one was held in Middletown in March of 2019. A public workshop was held in June of 2019 to go over land use scenarios that were developed by work with NCC Land Use. Phase I of the scenario modeling was completed, and the public was asked for feedback in October of 2019 at another workshop. That event, and continued outreach to local municipalities helped us

to define the preferred scenario. Staff is working with the preferred alternative and the report. The public outreach for this final segment has not yet been scheduled.

Three transportation scenarios had been envisioned. These scenarios were informed by work that was done previously, and the data that has been compiled since the last plan work in this area. This also takes into consideration community feedback, as there have been many ideas expressed by the community. All of this was developed by our Staff Committee and Advisory Committee. Ideas were taken to the Advisory Committee to make sure the stakeholders were on board. The public and committees questioned if the towns could take more growth. There were questions about employment growth in the southern part of southern New Castle County, south of Middletown and to the west into Townsend. There were many questions about infrastructure. There is traffic congestion because there are not many of jobs in the southern part of NCC. Many people leave this part of the county every day to work elsewhere and then return in the evening. There have already been some transportation projects to accommodate growth, such as the mainline US 301 project, but there is a need for us to evaluate if more should be done.

Three scenarios were run through the DelDOT Travel Demand Model. The first scenario was business as usual where development continues with what is already approved with no changes to zoning or the land use plan. The second scenario was planned growth and preservation; looking at areas that were planned for the extension of the sewer and infrastructure, but also areas that were expected to grow in New Castle County. The third scenario looked more specifically at and around the towns to see what it might look like if the focus was on the towns like Middletown, Odessa, Townsend, and Smyrna, and shifting some of the units that are planned for the county itself to those areas.

When the first analysis was run, there were small differences between the three scenarios. Mostly we saw the same issues in the same areas, especially in Middletown, the Route 1 and 13 corridors. There was not much difference between the three scenarios. Then a preferred scenario was developed after the October meeting. This was based on comments from the public. It is a hybrid of scenarios two and three with added employment around the Townsend area. This scenario was really built on community vision. This scenario went through a more detailed traffic analysis in Phase II to identify any road or intersection improvements that are not already identified in DelDOT's Capital Transportation Program, WILMAPCO's long range plan, or the TIDs. Looking at existing AM and PM peak hour LOS for the intersections being considered, twenty-seven were already part of another analysis such as the Southern New Castle County TID, the Westown TID, or the Eastown TID. Those intersections already have programs and have already been modeled, therefore cannot be considered for improvements in this analysis. There are eight intersections that were not covered by any other projects, so that is where the detailed Synchro analysis was run. Using the year 2015 as a baseline and going to 2050, and using the demographic forecasts provided by WILMAPCO, the existing conditions were analyzed to show the different results by 2050 with or without improvements. The results showed there is not a much change for many of the intersections. A few give cause for concern with AM and PM peaks in 2050 if there are no improvements but with the planned improvements most of those fall within LOS B. The recommendations suggest improvements at US 13 at Odessa, SR 71 at Main Street in the Townsend area, and where US 13 and SR 71 come together. Those are the only four intersections that were found to require additional work. There will be more details in the final report.

In the larger report, other bicycle and pedestrian concerns are considered. Looking at what has been done in the past, much of the bicycle/pedestrian considerations comes from WILMAPCO's outreach and process. Ms. Dunigan was able to bring the New Castle County Bicycle and

Pedestrian Plan to some of the workshops, which allowed more detailed information to be received from the public. That information was carried forward to try to improve the network for bicycles and pedestrians countywide. Proceeding with construction and design of some improvements already planned in the CTP, more pathways, sidewalks, and trails can be added. This part of county is not as well equipped for bicyclists and pedestrians as the northern part of the county so there are many improvements that can be made.

Transit was also reviewed. DART was looking at this area with us and there were some proposed changes developed. As New Castle County is working on the draft of the land use section of this report, we had already talked about DART's proposal to expand transit service. There are many requests to expand transit in the area, however, the area does not have the density to support all of the desired expansion. DTC is looking to expand service and worked some expansion proposals into their last service change. DTC is planning to expand the service area, expand hours of service, and offer more connectivity. They did have a future proposal to expand Route 47 and split Route 43 into multiple routes to create better service between Routes 45 and 301, as well as some other initiatives. The community was very supportive of more transit and expressed the desire to have transportation to help seniors get around in the future, including transit services that have more local connections. This goes hand in hand with the bicycle and pedestrian improvements that were also included in this report, because people have expressed the need for it. Anyone who cannot drive in southern New Castle County right now, has limited options.

Part of the report also deals with recommendations around the Summit Airfield. That is a public/private airfield, but it also has a significant amount of private work being done within it. There are some business interests that are located at the airfield. Strategy one recommends review and refine as necessary the UDC as it relates to airport uses and to promote development that is compatible to aviation design and mitigate risk to that airport operations and the public around it. The challenge is that there has been a lot of residential development around the airport and land should be left near the airport to allow for Summit Aviation to expand its operation. Strategy two recommends continued coordination with the DeIDOT Office of Aeronautics including promotion of information on the airport's economic impact. There are many jobs at that airport. It is an employment center for that part of the county and this knowledge needs to be more widespread so there needs to be technical coordination on Part 77 of Airspace reviews; enforcement of Sec. 40.03.432 of the UDC and maintain the section's reference to 2 Delaware Code 601-603 (Obstruction in Airport Approach Areas), which relates to limiting the amount of residential areas around the airport itself. This strategy also recommends sharing the Office of Aeronautics report, "Economic impact of Delaware Airports" that basically says this site is an economic generator. We want to make sure this is shared with the County Executive and County Council members, so people are more aware of job growth at Summit Aviation. Strategy number three is to work with the Summit Airport to understand what its future business plans are and considering a public/private partnership with the airfield.

WILMAPCO Staff is working on incorporating all this into the Southern New Castle County transportation portion of this report. Staff has been working with New Castle County as they have been working on the land use section, however the timelines for approval are different. The County goes through a longer process to get to their eventual approval, while the transportation element can move separately through WILMAPCO's process in a much shorter timeframe. New Castle County, DeIDOT and WILMAPCO are going to work together on a virtual public workshop. There are some tentative dates at the end of August. The Transportation Element Report is in draft and will be released to the public for review around that same time, if not earlier. This plan will come back to the TAC in August for approval of the transportation

element so it can go to Council in September. The County is looking to have the land use element approved by November.

INFORMATION ITEMS

10. Staff Report

Ms. Dunigan reported the following updates:

- On July 9th, Council approved the following action items: amendments to the TIP for the addition of the Belvidere Road Bridge Project, change in funding for the Cecil County Urban Transit System, and change in funding for SR 273, I-95 interchange improvement. Council voted to approve changes to the Project Prioritization Process and to release the Public Participation Plan for public comment. The Public Participation Plan can be found on the WILMAPCO website.
- Many RFPs have been released. A number of proposals have been received for Union Street Improvement Study, the New Castle County Transportation Plan Update, Truck Parking Study, and the First/Last Mile Freight Network Study. Proposals for the Port of Wilmington Analysis are expected back in by next week. Interviews will go into August then consultants will be selected.
- Staff is working on two Healthy Community Delaware projects. One is in Southbridge, from the City's Comprehensive Plan and the other is on the Route 9 Corridor from the Route 9 Master Plan.
- On June 26th, WILMAPCO participated in the Maryland MPO Roundtable.
- Throughout the month of June staff participated in Freight Friday Webinars that IPA hosted. These are available for viewing on the Institute for Public Administration's Facebook page.
- Staff is continuing to work on developing WILMAPCO videos to highlight public outreach and planning work. Staff is scheduling interviews and locations for filming.
- Air Quality Partnership is working on rescheduling Air Quality Awareness Week and is looking at September 12th to do something along with Bike to Work Week.
- Safe Routes to School is continuing to work with Bayard Elementary School to look at ideas that need to be reviewed and moved into special projects.
- The Maryland, Monroe and MLK Safety Project options were presented to Wilmington Initiatives on July 15th. A final call with all stakeholders will be held later this month and a draft report will be completed later this month by the project management committee.
- Staff is planning to schedule a virtual workshop in September for the Concord Pike Project.
- Staff is planning to schedule a Governor Printz Advisory Committee meeting and workshop in September.
- Staff is hoping to have a virtual workshop on the transportation analysis and recommendations for the Southern New Castle County Master Plan in August.
- A package of multi-modal improvements was shared with the Newport Transportation Study Management Committee on June 25th. The comments were due by July 15th, and a follow up call will be held with DeIDOT staff to get feedback. An Advisory Committee meeting is supposed to take place later this month or in early August.

OTHER BUSINESS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Jeanne Minner the TAC adjourned at 10:55 AM.

Motion passed.

(07-16-20 - 03)

The TAC adjourned at 10:55 AM

Attachments (0)