

**TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**August 17, 2023**

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, August 17, 2023, at WILMAPCO, 100 Discovery Boulevard, Suite 800, Newark, DE 19713 and via video conference/conference call.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Matt Rogers, New Castle County Department of Land Use, and TAC Chair, brought the TAC meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

**2. TAC Members present:**

Cooper Bowers, Delaware Department of Transportation  
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning  
Michael Fortner, City of Newark  
Quinn Krenzel, Town of Elkton  
Matthew Littlejohn, Cecil County Division of Planning and Zoning  
Rashad Pinckney, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Matt Rogers, New Castle County Department of Land Use  
Catherine Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation

**TAC Ex-Officio Members present:**

None

**TAC Members absent:**

City of Wilmington Planning  
City of Wilmington Department of Public Works  
Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism  
Delaware Office of State Planning  
Delaware River and Bay Authority  
DNREC  
Maryland Department of the Environment  
Maryland SHA Regional and Intermodal Planning Division

**TAC Ex-Officio Members absent:**

Amtrak  
Diamond State Port Corporation  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
US Federal Highway Administration  
U.S. Federal Transit Administration

**Guests and Invitees:**

Stephanie Johnson, Delaware Department of Transportation  
Jim Pappas, Delaware Department of Transportation

**Staff:**

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner  
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner  
Sharen Elcock, Executive Assistant  
Elizabeth Espinal, Administrative Assistant  
Dave Gula, Principal Planner

Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner  
Jacob Thompson, Senior Planner  
Dawn Voss, Outreach Coordinator  
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth Espinal.

### **3. MINUTES**

Approval of the July 20, 2023, TAC Minutes was postponed until next meeting due to lack of a quorum.

### **4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

#### **a. Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group**

Ms. Heather Dunigan said the Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group met briefly on August 1. The Group reviewed the Federal funding letter for FY 2024 and no concerns or objections were raised. Mr. Bill Swiatek also presented the Southbridge Transportation Action Plan.

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

None.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **6. To recommend amendment of the FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Ms. Tigist Zegeye shared that WILMAPCO has an agreement with DeIDOT where we review the fundings of each fiscal year and do not accumulate multiple years of open fundings. Therefore, Staff is requesting an amendment of the FY 2024 UPWP to include fundings for 12 tasks that were not completed by the end of the FY 2023 UPWP. The total sum of fundings to be incorporated onto the FY 2024 UPWP amounts to \$115,239.40 dollars. Total funds from Delaware are \$142,856 dollars, and an additional \$7,144 dollars from the Maryland side. This aggregates to approximately \$115,000 in available funds to be utilized by member agency consultant support.

Vote was held via email due to lack of quorum.

**ACTION: TAC recommended amendment of the FY 2024 UPWP via email vote.**

#### **7. To recommend use of Federal STBG, CMAQ, FTA Urbanized Area, FTA 5310, and TAP Funds in FY 2024**

Ms. Heather Dunigan DeIDOT's recommended use of federal funds for FY 2024, noting that WILMAPCO approval of certain categories of funds is needed based on the WILMAPCO and DeIDOT MOU. The projects identified include local and statewide initiatives, Supplemental details were shared regarding use of funds for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, Transportation Alternatives Program, and ITMS program. The NMTWG concurred with the use of funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Staff expressed concern about the eligibility of the ITMS telecommunications generator project for CMAQ funds and intended to discuss this with the Air Quality Subcommittee and FHWA for clarification.

Vote was held via email due to lack of quorum.

**ACTION: TAC recommended use of federal funds via email vote.**

## **8. To recommend endorsement of the Southbridge Transportation Action Plan**

Mr. Bill Swiatek shared that The Southbridge Transportation Action Plan (STAP) examines the recommended mobility improvements of the 2021 Southbridge Neighborhood Action Plan. It also builds off other area studies, including: the City's 2028 Comp Plan; the Rt. 9 Master Plan, the Analysis of Proposed Truck Access Improvements in the Port of Wilmington Area; and the 2008 Southbridge Circulation Study.

The community-driven STAP was run through the South Wilmington Planning Network, which doubled as an Advisory Committee. Three local residents were hired as part of the project team: one to drive street-level engagement and two appointed by the Civic Association to serve as community liaisons. Four community workshops were held, and two community surveys were completed, including an extensive door-to-door effort which found support for proposed alternatives. As part of the process, they had to engage young Southbridge residents through focus groups.

The STAP proposes short, medium, and long-term recommendations and projects to reduce traffic speeds in Southbridge; recommendations to slow, reduce, and reroute through heavy truck trips; recommendations to improve walkability and lighting; and recommendations to increase bus connectivity, especially to grocery stores and job clusters.

Mr. Bill Swiatek added that some of the featured projects include: street reconfigurations (including a road diet and raised intersections to calm traffic and provide more space for sidewalks), beautification and lighting enhancements, signage and an intersection reconfiguration (to direct through trucks around the community), along with the concept routes for a future truck bypass route, sidewalk and pathway enhancements (to better link into surrounding parks), and future trails are also recommended, as well as 17 recommendations to improve street lighting (based on community surveying and a night time audit). Proposed enhancements to existing bus service such as adding Sunday service to a nearby supermarket and longer-term improvements such as rerouting of nearby bus lines into Southbridge are also included.

The draft STAP was presented at the July Southbridge Civic Association meeting where it received support, and it was also out for public comment through August the 6th where no negative comments were received.

Vote was held via email due to lack of quorum.

**ACTION: TAC recommended endorsement via email vote.**

## **9. To recommend endorsement of the New Castle County Safe Streets for All Action Plan**

Ms. Heather Dunigan reported that the Safe Streets for All Action Plan has been available for public review since August 1st, and will remain available until August 31st. Currently, there have been no public comments received. However, during the drafting process, the committee received several minor comments from advisory committee members from July 5th to July 26, which were addressed with clarifications. Some suggestions were made to prioritize safety through enforcement more significantly, but this wasn't changed as historical evidence shows that over-reliance on enforcement isn't effective. Despite concerns, the committee maintained the crash reduction goal although they had previously stated it was too ambitious. Endorsement from TAC will be requested via email, and any incoming comments will be addressed before the Council meeting on September 14th. Next steps include ongoing committee involvement for monitoring and evaluations, with yearly reports and biannual coordination meetings.

Vote was held via email due to lack of quorum.

**ACTION: TAC recommended endorsement via email vote.**

**PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**10. DeIDOT Equity and Data Report**

Ms. Stephanie Johnson from DeIDOT presented the Equity Focus Area Analysis, she mentioned briefly that the Carbon Reduction Plan is a requirement by the FHWA, with coordination involving various entities like MPOs. A draft report of the plan has been submitted for review. However, the focus of this presentation primarily is on the new Equity Analysis Tool developed by DeIDOT. Ms. Johnson emphasized the importance of equity in transportation decisions and introduced the mission of DeIDOT, which centers on "Excellence in Transportation" for everyone. She added that the team has worked on the development and analysis of this tool for over a year, taking inspiration from existing methodologies EJ studies from WILMAPCO.

Ms. Johnson mentioned that this presentation focused on the development of an equity analysis tool that aims to incorporate considerations of equity into transportation decision-making, utilizing a comprehensive methodology and data visualization techniques. The department team put a lot of emphases to identify and name it the 'equity focus areas' instead of using terms to identify them such as: "disadvantaged" or underrepresented." These areas were defined through a data-driven approach involving factors such as poverty rates, minority population ratios, language isolation, and residential data. DeIDOT applied this methodology across Delaware and created interactive maps to visualize these areas. Ms. Stephanie shared the process of refining their analysis through collaboration with stakeholders and receiving feedback on identified areas. This involved verifying and updating data points, such as removing non-residential polygons and correcting irregular areas like cemeteries or student housing being counted as equity focus areas. Several supplementary datasets, such as aging population distribution and mobile home park locations, were included to enhance the tool's functionality and assist project managers and program managers in decision-making and outreach strategies.

Ms. Stephanie Johnson discussed the next steps, including making the tool publicly available for use, updating it with new data as it becomes available, and using it for various applications like resiliency planning and traffic analysis. Throughout the presentation, Stephanie acknowledged the contributions of various partners, including WILMAPCO, and provided access to the interactive tool for further exploration.

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ac95bc35b5ee4bba85a7b0e5dd78e715>

Mr. Bill Swiatek congratulated the team on the advancements made with DeIDOT's new Equity Focus Area analysis tool, over previous ways used to identify Environmental Justice (EJ) areas. Mr. Swiatek clarified that WILMAPCO's EJ area identification methodology, cited in the Story Map, also utilizes affordable housing development and low-income school data. The WILMAPCO method also captures all racial and ethnic groups.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**11. Staff Report**

Ms. Heather Dunigan reported the following updates:

- Reminder that the next TAC meeting will be held in-person only at Lums Pond State Park as our annual picnic; please schedule additional time to enjoy lunch after the scheduled meeting on September 21.
- WILMAPCO Staff continues to coordinate with DVRPC on the climate reduction grant for the Philadelphia Metropolitan Statistical Area and there is consultant selection that will be occurring later this month as part of that.
- Staff will be applying for Neighborhood Access and Equity program funding to study the feasibility of alternative truck routes to reduce through truck volume in the Southbridge neighborhood as recommended by the Transportation Action Plan.
- Staff has started on all the list of new UPWP projects for FY2024.
- Staff elected Wallace Montgomery to lead the East Elkton Traffic Circulation and Safety Plan project and there's a kickoff meeting scheduled August 22nd.
- Staff elected RK&K for the Parkland Highway Corridor Plan. We are still reviewing proposals for the South Claymont and Philadelphia Pike Corridor Master plan however, we received 9 proposals in total, interviews will be held on August 23.
- Staff is working on the development of a draft scope for the Rising Sun Mobility Friendly Design standards with outside consultant to be presented during the kickoff meeting with town and Cecil County.
- Staff will collaborate with Mike Fortner of City of Newark for the Newark Bicycle Plan Update with a presentation at the Newark Planning Commission on September 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff will be kicking off the main outreach event at Newark Community Day on September 17th.
- WILMAPCO and DeIDOT will present the TIP/CPT development of initial projects for inclusion at a public meeting on August 30th from 4:00 to 6:00 PM at the Newark Free Library.
- Wilmington Initiatives had their most recent meeting on August 16th and discussed the two-way King Street TAP project and the Old Brandywine Village project.
- The Delaware East Coast Greenway will have a meeting to review some of the project updates and that is scheduled for August 28<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 7:30PM at the Twisted Iron Brewery.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**ACTION:** Meeting adjourned at 11:01a.m

**Attachments (0)**