

GUIDE TO TRANSPORTATION PLANNING



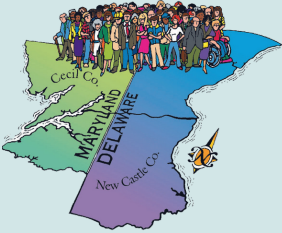
You can make a difference!

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The preparation of this document was financed in part with funds provided by the Federal Government, including the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration of the United States Department of Transportation.

Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)



We are the transportation planning agency for the Cecil County, MD and New Castle County, DE region. As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), WILMAPCO is responsible for planning, financing, and coordinating the development of the best transportation system for the region.

Each day we work alongside communities, business owners, and government agencies to develop plans, projects, priorities, and policies. We track project financing, measure the system's performance, and analyze transportation's impact on people, land, air, climate, the economy and more.

Did you know?

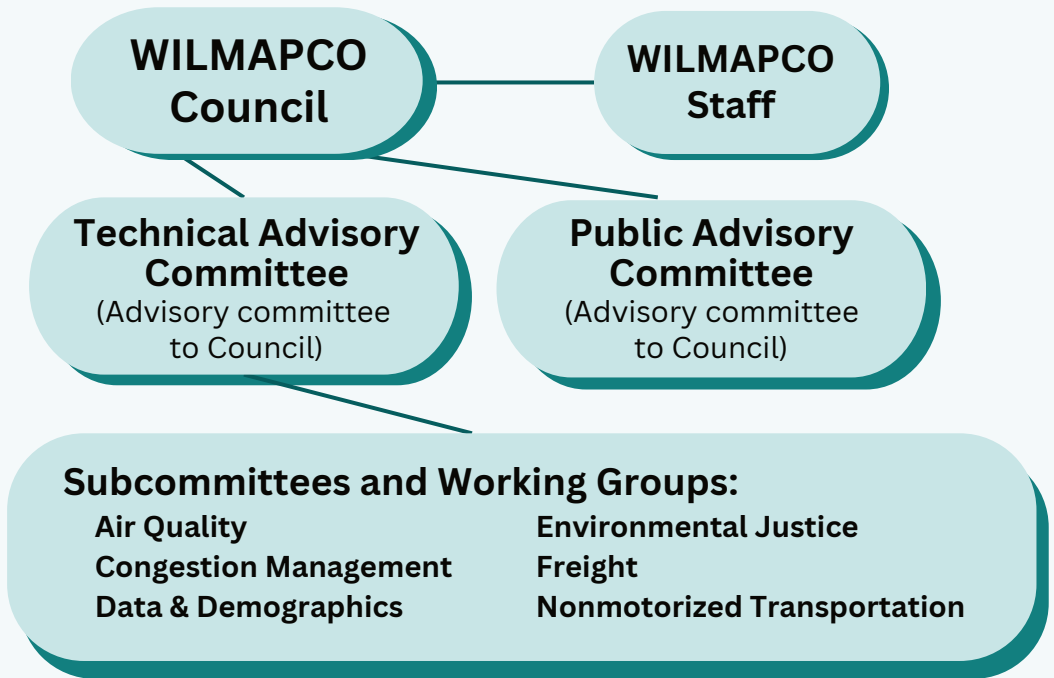
When we say transportation, we mean:

- Roads and highways
- Walking and bicycle paths
- Railways
- Public Transportation
- Freight movement

According to the
2020 Census,
674,444 people
live in the region
we serve.

WILMAPCO is dedicated to serving the residents of the region by carrying out a comprehensive and cooperative regional transportation planning process. To that end, WILMAPCO strives to inform and involve the public in all transportation planning decisions. More information about WILMAPCO and what we do can be found on our website: www.wilmapco.org.

Who is WILMAPCO?



WILMAPCO Council

WILMAPCO's Council is composed of representatives of state and local governments, and public agencies responsible for transportation and land use policies. The Council adopts transportation plans and studies, sets policy, and approves funding for transportation projects in our region. These meetings are open to the public.

WILMAPCO's Council meets the second Thursday of every other month at 2:00 p.m. Meetings are held at WILMAPCO's office and virtually.

WILMAPCO Council includes:

- Secretary, DE Department of Transportation
- Director, Delaware Transit Corporation
- MD and DE Governors' Appointees
- New Castle and Cecil County Executives
- New Castle and Cecil County Municipal Representatives
- Mayor, City of Wilmington

WILMAPCO Staff

The WILMAPCO staff provide technical support and expertise to the Council. Staff are responsible for producing plans and programs that set the direction for transportation planning in the region. Staff monitor trends, engage the public on transportation issues, and strive to keep you involved and informed about projects and plans.

WILMAPCO's office hours:
Monday through Friday
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Public Advisory Committee (PAC)

The Public Advisory Committee's mission is to advise the Council on public participation strategies and provide a forum for community concerns. PAC members represent civic organizations; business, environmental, and transportation interest groups; and agencies representing diverse populations.

The PAC meets the third Monday of every other month at 6:00 p.m. in the WILMAPCO's offices and virtually.

The PAC includes:

- AARP Delaware
- New Castle County Residents
- Cecil County Residents
- Municipal Representatives
- Umbrella and Civic Organizations
- Delaware Hispanic Commission
- League of Women Voters
- Chambers of Commerce
- Seniors and Disabled
- Rail Advocates
- Committee of 100
- Nature Conservancy

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The Technical Advisory Committee represents federal, state, and local planning agencies in Delaware and Maryland. The TAC oversees the technical work of WILMAPCO staff and makes recommendations to Council on projects, programs, and plans.

The TAC meets virtually on the third Thursday of every month at 10:00 a.m.

The TAC includes:

- State, County, and Municipal representatives (State Planning Coordination Office, DRBA, MD Dept. of Planning, New Castle, Cecil, Newark, Wilmington, and Elkton)
- Transportation agencies (DelDOT, MDOT, DTC, MSHA, Amtrak, MTA)
- Environmental Agencies (DNREC, MD Dept. of the Environment)
- Federal Agencies (EPA, FHWA, FTA)

How You Fit into Transportation Planning

Your role in the process is very important. Without your input and ideas we cannot have a true understanding of the community's needs.

Transportation planning involves many levels of government and results in many different planning products.

You have the opportunity to influence plans, studies and other documents that guide planning and decision making. Get involved and be part of the decisions that affect your community.



“Our transportation decisions determine much more than where roads or bridges or tunnels or rail lines will be built. They determine the connections and barriers that people will encounter in their daily lives.”
-Elijah Cummings



Most Importantly, Get Involved!

How to get Involved

The transportation planning process is ongoing, there are several ways to make transportation planners aware of your needs and concerns, and help develop solutions.

- Sign-up for WILMAPCO's mailing list to receive newsletters, the monthly E-news, project updates, and other information.
- Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.
- Attend our local transportation committee meetings and share your thoughts during the public comment portion of meetings.
- Complete our surveys to let us know what you would like to see happen in transportation in your community.
- Serve on a public focus group or public advisory committees.
- Share information about WILMAPCO with your friends and neighbors. Invite us to attend your rotary clubs, community meetings, civic or other organization meeting to talk about regional planning and local issues.



We Have Tools to Help You

Website

Our website is updated regularly and provides extensive information on all of our projects, plans, and reports. You will find opportunities for participation and interactive maps that show information about planned projects.

Newsletter and E-news

Our newsletter, *The Transporter* will make you more aware of what is happening at WILMAPCO and opportunities to get involved. Subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter to for the most up to date information on events. Sign up for both newsletters on our website.

Data Resources

WILMAPCO analyzes demographic information and creates maps that provide local transportation and land use information. We can create reports, maps, spreadsheets, and forecasts, that can be helpful for your public meetings, working group discussions, workshops or community meetings.

Presentations

Invite WILMAPCO to speak to your civic organization, local business, or other community group. We can present about our general purpose or topics like air quality, walkability, or suggestions for better land use practices. Every four years we host an “Our Town” event to discuss key local and national transportation issues.

Reports and Plans

WILMAPCO’s planning documents are are updated frequently. We strive to include public input where appropriate. Copies of our RTP, TIP, UPWP or any of our other studies are available at our office and on our website.



Congestion Management

This annual report defines the most congested areas in our region and provides a variety of strategies to improve roadway conditions in these areas. The report encourages land use, transit, and multi-modal alternatives to be considered, before a roadway is expanded.

Transportation Justice

Our Transportation Justice (TJ) initiative identifies social inequities in our region's transportation system. We examine the fairness and inclusivity of the existing and planned system, as well as our public engagement processes. Recommendations are made to overcome observed barriers and inequities.

Safe Routes to School Program

Safe Routes to School is a national program that seeks to emphasize safety, health, community, and choice by encouraging elementary and middle school children to walk and bike to school. The program includes funding for infrastructure improvements and education.

Social Media

Follow WILMAPCO on social media to stay up to date on projects and events.



www.facebook.com/WILMAPCO



www.instagram.com/wilmapco_mpo



www.linkedin.com/company/wilmapco



www.youtube.com/@WILMAPCO



twitter.com/WILMAPCO

Community Planning

WILMAPCO works alongside local governments, civic leaders, residents, and businesspeople on community (or sub-regional) plans. While not required by federal mandate, these local plans help us to realize Regional Transportation Plan objectives within communities, and provide us with a deeper understanding of our region's transportation needs.

The Basics of Regional Transportation Planning

WILMAPCO is responsible for setting the direction in transportation planning. To help guide us, we produce three important documents: the long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). We also maintain a Congestion Management Process (CMP). These are required by federal law and they provide numerous opportunities for public participation.



Review these documents online at:

Regional Transportation Plan:

www.wilmapco.org/rtp

Unified Planning Work Program:

www.wilmapco.org/upwp

Transportation Improvement Program:

www.wilmapco.org/tip

Congestion Management Process:

www.wilmapco.org/cms

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

The Regional Transportation Plan sets a plan for our region spanning at least 20 years. It is updated every four years to incorporate new trends and demographic data. It lists the goals we will strive to achieve and the strategies we will use to accomplish them. Projects that are identified in this plan are then included in the TIP to be implemented.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The Unified Planning Work Program is a one-year document (from July 1 to June 30) that specifies the planning activities WILMAPCO staff and member agencies will undertake in the coming year. It serves as a programmable budget and spells out the operating needs for WILMAPCO and its staff.

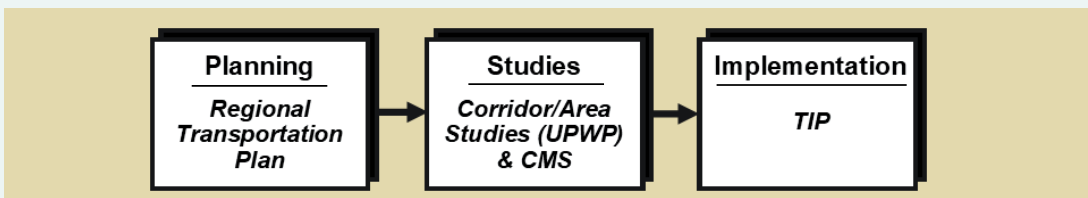
The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Transportation Improvement Program is the document that details the funding for projects to be undertaken in the region for the next four years. It is updated biennially to add projects, or to make adjustments to previously scheduled work. Comments are solicited at several key times during the process and then the final document is adopted by the WILMAPCO Council.

Congestion Management Process (CMP)

The Congestion Management Process (CMP) is a systematic approach for addressing regional congestion to provide decision-makers with performance-based strategies to improve the mobility of people and goods traversing the regional transportation system. It also addresses other regional goals such as improving safety, accessibility, security, and supporting the principles in the WILMAPCO 2050 Regional Transportation Plan.

How Are These Connected?



The RTP establishes regional transportation goals. Studies and initiatives at the regional and sub-regional level are pursued through the UPWP. Recommendations from these studies can then be included as part of the TIP for funding.

The Regional Transportation Plan

Goals and Objectives

Goals and Objectives have been developed to ensure that transportation plans achieve a vision for the future. These goals are considered whenever a project is brought before WILMAPCO's Council for approval. There are actions under each objective, along with performance measures.

Support Sustainable Economic Development and Goods Movement

- Maximize our investments
- Develop effective transportation networks
- Reduce carbon emissions and promote climate resilience

Efficiently Transport People

- Improve system performance
- Promote accessibility and connectivity
- Engage the public via an open involvement process

Improve Quality of Life

- Protect public health and safety
- Promote active transportation
- Ensure Transportation Choice and Equity



The centerpiece of the Regional Transportation Plan is the Transportation Investment Areas (TIAs). TIA's help direct the most intensive transportation investment to areas with the most densely populated communities.

How an Idea Becomes a Transportation Project

Projects may come out of a local or regional plan, but anyone can propose a transportation project!

Public Involvement

Transportation planners and engineers determine how these projects benefit the regional transportation network.

Projects need to be sponsored by agencies authorized by federal law such as WILMAPCO, DOTs, and county and municipal governments.

WILMAPCO prioritizes these projects according to the goals set forth in the Regional Transportation Plan.

Public involvement dictates regional goals to determine how the regional transportation network will look in the future.

Public Involvement

Funding for these projects is identified within the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Public Involvement

The draft TIP is released for public comment.

Public Involvement

The TIP goes before WILMAPCO committees and Council for consideration and eventual adoption.

The TIP goes to state and federal authorities for approval.

Funds flow to project sponsors to begin preliminary engineering and right-of-way acquisition.

Construction begins!

Regional Successes and Challenges

Regional Successes

After the Coronavirus pandemic, single occupancy vehicle trips were down for the first time in decades. About 8 in 10 workers drove alone to work prior to the pandemic. Post-pandemic, it was about 7 in 10. This was due largely to the sharp increase in the percentage of workers working from home. Before the pandemic, only 4% of regional workers worked from home. That figure rose to 16% in Cecil County and 24% in New Castle County by 2021. Fewer cars on the road have also helped ease regional congestion

Regional Challenges

Continuing suburban sprawl, stubbornly high vehicle crash rates, and enduring social inequities are a few of the key challenges facing the region today. Transportation and land use policies have long supported growth in places with little existing infrastructure. Subsequently, few places in the region boast good bus, bicycle, and walking connections between homes and everyday destinations. More sprawl means more driving. And after posting sharp declines during the first half of the 21st Century, vehicle injury and fatality rates have risen during the last few years. Societal inequities by race and class are replicated in our transportation system. Our public opinion survey, for example, shows that difficulty utilizing the transportation system increases as income decreases.

Financing the Transportation System:

Financing the transportation system remains a challenge. The problem stems from the primary source of transportation revenues, gasoline taxes. Following years of inflation, the increasing costs of labor and materials, and declines in per capita gas consumption, revenues are not keeping pace with needed improvements.

Addressing Congestion:

Dispersed land use patterns, high rates of single occupancy trips, and high rate of automobile ownership all contribute to congestion. In our region, the continuing trend toward smaller household size means that more households are generating more trips from more locations.

Creating alternatives to the automobile:

In the past, transportation agencies concentrated on meeting the needs of automobile traffic, often neglecting the needs of those who walk, bike, and use public transportation. The focus of WILAMour transportation planning was broadened to accommodate these modes. Fostering transportation choice is a priority for WILMAPCO.

Accommodating the needs of older and disabled residents:

Our senior and disabled communities must negotiate a transportation system designed to facilitate the movement of younger, non-disabled adults. The unfortunate result is high rates of isolation for older adults and disabled persons who do not drive. Projected increases in both populations compound the need to further address these issues.

Adapting to Climate Change

Situated on the low-lying Atlantic coastal plain, the WILMAPCO region is susceptible to rising seas as a result of climate change and geological shifts. Sea Level Rise (SLR) presents challenges to key facets of our transportation system, such as highways and rail lines. Adaptation planning is necessary to begin addressing impacts of SLR. Coordination at all levels of government, the public, and other private entities is essential to develop long-range response plans.

WILMAPCO Region in a Nutshell

Population (2020 Census)

Total Population: 674,444

Cecil: 103,725

New Castle: 570,719

Population Growth Trend

Cecil: 262 people/year

New Castle : 3,224 people/year

Our Region's Land Use (2020 Census)

Land Area

Cecil: 346 square miles

New Castle: 426 square miles

Density (people/square mile)

Cecil: 300

New Castle: 1,340

Urbanized Population

Cecil: 22,790 urban, 21,151 rural

New Castle: 222,024 urban, 11,723 rural

Transportation (2017-2021 American Community Survey)

Work Commute Mode

75% Drive Alone

8% Carpool

3% Public Transit

2% Walk/Bike

11% Work at Home

Commute Time

10% Under 10 minutes

47% Ten to 29 minutes

28% Thirty to 59 minutes

6% Sixty minutes or more

Household's Vehicles

7% No vehicles

31% One vehicle

39% Two vehicles

23% Three vehicles

Want to find out more about planning?

Check out these resources for more information about planning concepts, principles, and practices.

The American Planning Association

www.planning.org

“APA is a nonprofit public interest organization committed to planning. APA and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, advance the art and science of planning to meet the needs of people and society.”

Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations

www.ampo.org

“AMPO is a nonprofit organization that serves the needs and interests of MPOs nationwide. AMPO offers its member MPOs technical assistance and training, conferences and workshops, print and electronic communications, research, a forum for transportation policy development and coalition building, and a variety of other services.”

Federal Highway Administration

www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning

“The Federal Highway Administration serves as advocate and national leader for environmental protection and enhancement, comprehensive intermodal and multi-modal transportation planning, and for fair and prudent acquisition and management of real property.”

Federal Transit Administration

www.transit.dot.gov

“The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides financial and technical assistance to local public transit systems, including buses, subways, light rail, commuter rail, trolleys and ferries. FTA also oversees safety measures and helps develop next-generation technology research.”

Glossary

Complete Streets. Streets that provide for safe, convenient, efficient, and accessible use by pedestrians of all ages and abilities, bicyclists, transit vehicles and motor vehicles.

Capital Transportation Program (CTP - Delaware). A 6-year document that lists all the projects Delaware DOT plans to undertake. It also identifies funding sources and schedules.

Congestion Management System (CMS). Systematic process for managing congestion. Provides information on transportation system performance and finds alternative ways to alleviate congestion and enhance the mobility of people and goods, to levels that meet state and local needs.

Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP - Maryland). A 6-year document that lists all the projects Maryland DOT plans to undertake. Also identifies funding sources.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers the Federal-Aid Highway Program, principally providing financial assistance and technical and programmatic support to states to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads, and bridges.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that provides financial and other resources to transit agencies (i.e., known as transit providers) in developing and improving public transportation equipment, facilities, services, techniques, and methods.

Fiscal Constraint. Making sure that a given investment program or a specific project can reasonably expect to receive funding within the time allotted for its implementation.

Glossary

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). A transportation program that identifies the highest ranking accident locations or corridors in each state and provides solutions to improve conditions.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). The application of advanced technologies to improve the efficiency and safety of roads and transit services.

Level of Service (LOS). A measurement of congestion on a road or intersection based on traffic volumes, capacity, average speed and delay. LOS ratings are usually assigned letter grades from A – F.

Long-Range Transportation Plan. A multi-year transportation plan developed by state DOTs and MPOs in collaboration with a range of stakeholders that defines a vision for the region's or state's transportation systems and services. For metropolitan areas, it includes all transportation improvements proposed for funding during the next 20 years.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). A regional agency serving urbanized areas with populations over 50,000. Responsible in cooperation with the state and other transportation providers for carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning requirements of federal highway and transit legislation.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The official intermodal transportation plan that is developed and adopted through the metropolitan transportation planning process for the metropolitan planning area.

Public Participation. The active and meaningful involvement of the public in the development of transportation plans and programs.

Right of Way (ROW). An area reserved for future transportation facilities, or the legal right to gain access to ensure the operation of the transportation system.

Glossary

Safe Routes to School (SRTS). Empowers communities and makes funding available for a wide variety of programs and projects that encourage children and their parents to walk and bicycle safely to school.

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). A multi-year, statewide, intermodal program of transportation projects, consistent with the statewide transportation plan and planning processes as well as metropolitan plans, TIPs, and processes.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trail program projects, and safe routes to school projects.

Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ). An area designation used by state and local transportation officials for tabulating traffic-related data, especially journey-to-work and place-of-work statistics. A TAZ usually consists of one or more census blocks, block groups, or census tracts.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD). A TOD is a mixed-use residential or commercial area designed to maximize access to public transport, and often incorporates features to encourage transit ridership.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). A document prepared by a metropolitan planning organization that lists projects to be funded with FHWA/FTA funds over a four- or five-year period.

Transportation Justice (TJ). An initiative which identifies and proposes recommendations to reduce social inequities in the Wilmington region's transportation system.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The management plan for the metropolitan planning program. Its purpose is to coordinate the planning activities of all participants in the planning process.

Contact Information

Local and Regional Agencies

**American Public Transportation
Association (APTA)**

www.apta.com
(202) 496-4800

Amtrak

www.amtrak.com
(800) 872-7245

DART First State

www.dartfirststate.com
(800) 652-DART (3278)

**Delaware Department of
Natural Resources (DNREC)**

dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov
302-739-9000

**Delaware Department of
Transportation (DelDOT)**

www.deldot.gov
(800) 652-5600

**Wilmington Area Planning Council
(WILMAPCO)**

www.wilmapco.org
302-737-6205

**Delaware Valley Regional Planning
Commission (DVRPC)**

www.dvrpc.org
215-592-1800

Dover/Kent MPO

www.doverkentmpo.org
302-387-6030

**Maryland Department of
Transportation (MDOT)**

www.mdot.maryland.gov
410-865-1000

**Maryland Mass Transit
Administration (MTA)**

www.mta.maryland.gov
866-743-3682

SEPTA

www.septa.org
215-580-7800

National Agencies Agencies

**American Association of State
Highway and Transportation
Officials (AASHTO)**
www.transportation.org
202-624-5800

**American Public Transportation
Administration (APTA)**
www.apta.com
202-496-4800

**Association of Metropolitan
Planning Organizations (AMPO)**
www.ampo.org
202-296-7051

**Bureau of Transportation
Statistics (BTS)**
www.bts.gov
800-853-1351

**Environmental Protection Agency
(EPA)**
www.epa.gov
215-814-5000

**Federal Highway
Administration (FHWA)**
www.fhwa.dot.gov
202-366-0660

**Federal Motor Carrier Safety
Administration**
www.fmcsa.dot.gov
800-832-5660

**Federal Transit Administration
(FTA)**
www.fta.dot.gov
202-366-4000

National Transportation Library
ntl.bts.gov/ntl
800-853-1351

Planners Web
www.plannersweb.com
802-864-9083

**Transportation Research Board
(TRB)**
[https://www.nationalacademies.org
/trb/transportation-research-board](https://www.nationalacademies.org/trb/transportation-research-board)
202-334-2934

How to Contact WILMAPCO

Call: (302) 737-6205

Fax: (302) 286-7131

Email: wilmapco@wilmapco.org

Write: WILMAPCO
100 Discovery Boulevard, Suite 800
Newark, DE 19713

Web: www.wilmapco.org

WILMAPCO's offices are located on the 8th floor of the Tower at STAR Campus on South College Ave. (Route 896) in Newark, across from the University of Delaware's Fred Rust Ice Arena. We are also easily accessible by DART First State bus service.



How do I raise awareness about transportation issues in my community?

- Contact WILMAPCO
- Teach children about the importance of these issues
- Tell friends and family about upcoming meetings and urge them to attend
- Bring issues up at homeowners' or neighborhood association meetings



www.wilmapco.org
WILMAPCO
Wilmington Area Planning Council

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October 2023**