

Quarterly newsletter of the Wilmington Area Planning Council

# TRANSPORTER

**WILMAPCO**

## Let WILMAPCO Help Make YOUR Community More Walkable

In 2004, WILMAPCO was selected for the “Walkable Communities Workshops” program, sponsored by the National Center for Bicycling & Walking (NCBW). Staff received training on how to host workshops that empower communities to take actions needed to provide better walking and bicycling facilities, while encouraging more active lifestyles. Since then, WILMAPCO has worked with communities to host 17 Walkable Community Workshops (WCWs).

WCWs are interactive events that bring together residents, elected officials, advocates, public agency staff, public health practitioners, educators, planners, and engineers to focus attention on making communities safer and easier to walk in. Workshops often result in more comprehensive, area-wide circulation studies and project implementation. During a WCW, facilitators deliver a presentation on the elements of a walkable community and solutions to common planning and design challenges. They then

lead participants on an interpretive walking tour (called a “walkabout” or “walking audit”) of the study area. The facilitators emphasize seeing the community from the perspective of a pedestrian and highlight ways in which land-use and transportation decisions affect walking, health, physical activity, and livability.

Local participants brainstorm opportunities to reduce barriers and enhance opportunities for walking in their community. WCWs have given communities the tools to advocate for improvements, resulting in new sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, parking changes, and public art.

The WCW program is free and any city, town, unincorporated community, or civic association with a corridor where people want a safer, more attractive route for walking may apply. Applicants will be asked to assist with identifying the workshop location and walking audit route, and publicizing the event.

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Information about past workshops and details on how to apply for a workshop in your community are available at [www.wilmapco.org/walkable](http://www.wilmapco.org/walkable).



# A Year on, Implementation of the Route 9 Master Plan in Full Swing

The Route 9 Corridor Master Plan, endorsed by WILMAPCO's Council in May 2017, established a 20-year vision for the revitalization of the Route 9 corridor near Wilmington. Requested by New Castle County, this plan makes sweeping land use and transportation recommendations aimed at improving quality of life for residents and supporting economic growth. It featured an extensive public outreach process and robust real-estate and traffic analyses.

Below are some key areas making progress towards implementation:

- **The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) sets aside \$1.2 million to begin major transportation projects.** Beginning in 2023, DelDOT plans to begin preliminary engineering work on major transportation improvement projects identified. These include intersection rebuilds, road diets with streetscape and beautification improvements, initiatives to curb illegal truck movements through neighborhoods, and projects to make it easier for people to walk, bike, and take the bus. The total cost of all these projects will exceed \$17 million. Guiding the study, the Monitoring Committee — a group of local leaders, residents, government, nonprofits, and activists — is actively working on a local project-prioritization process to help decide which of the nearly two dozen transportation projects are most important, so DelDOT can begin with those first.
- **Safe Routes to School Programs kick off at McCullough Middle School and Eisenberg Elementary School.** In the shorter



term, \$260,000 has been set aside by DelDOT, local elected officials, and Nemours to improve walking and bicycling conditions around two area schools. Potential projects have been identified and are currently awaiting engineering cost estimates. Full implementation is expected within a couple of years.

- **Transportation Alternative Program project to improve walking and bicycling access.** Sticking with the transportation theme, New Castle County is leading work with another funding pool to make walking and bicycling improvements in critical places along the corridor. Key problem areas were uncovered in the Master Plan and a Walkable Community Workshop from 2015. The first phase of the project will total \$1 million. The County is working closely with DelDOT, WILMAPCO, and other members of the Monitoring Committee to decide where this funding should be spent first. Implementation of this project can be expected within a few years.
- **On-the-Job Training Subcommittee formed.** A subcommittee of the Monitoring Committee has been formed to

examine the potential to add local labor hire/training preferences to awarded transportation construction contracts.

- **New Castle County considers adjustments to the Comprehensive Plan.** New Castle County is actively examining how to fold land-use and zoning recommendations from the Route 9 Master Plan into its comprehensive plan. This would give the recommendations a legal status and begin the process to their realization.
- **Eden Park and Hamilton Park Community Survey development underway.** New Castle County has asked the University of Delaware to conduct a community survey in the Eden Park and Hamilton Park neighborhoods to better understand local residents' feelings about possible relocation away from industry, I-495, and the port. The survey, fully supported by the local civic association, was a key recommendation in the plan. Results will be available by the summer.

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For more information about the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan, please visit [www.wilmapco.org/route9](http://www.wilmapco.org/route9).



# Group Identifies 3 Priority Projects: 12th Street, 7th Street Peninsula, MLK/Maryland Intersection

The Wilmington Initiatives Partners have been working to coordinate transportation projects and studies in the City of Wilmington. Partners include DelDOT, the Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC), the City of Wilmington, and WILMAPCO.

The group has identified three projects as priorities, including the 12th Street Connector, the East 7th Street Peninsula, and the 5-Point Intersection at Maryland Avenue and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.

The 12th Street Connector Study seeks to recommend the optimal location and design for the proposed roadway. Over the last 30 years, many concepts have been explored to improve access to Wilmington's Central Business District from I-495 via the 12th Street corridor. In 2004, the most recent concept envisioned this connection to also provide access to the Brandywine Creek and vacant land alongside the waterfront. This proposed roadway would provide a more

direct route from I-495 to downtown, redirect current traffic from the Price's Run, Riverside, and East Side neighborhoods, and create bicycle and pedestrian connections for residents to access the Brandywine Riverfront.

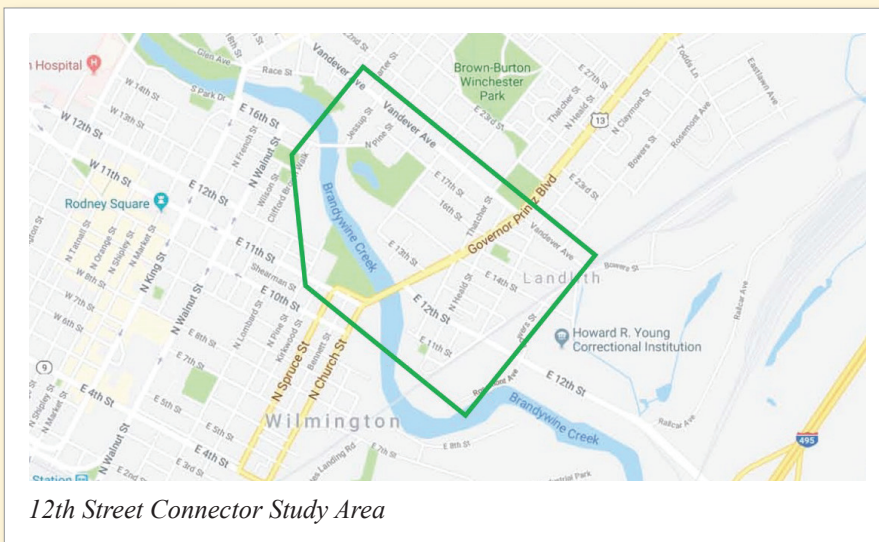
Nearly 10 years ago, the Wilmington Initiatives Partners began working to improve access to Wilmington's Central Business District from the I-95 exit ramp at Maryland Avenue to Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Boulevard. The intersection is a convergence of five roads and a key gateway to Wilmington's Riverfront. Frequent congestion during the morning commute often causes backups on the exit ramp from I-95 to Maryland Avenue. Design alternatives for improvements will be developed to improve safety and capacity. This may include the restoration of the street grid to remove the 5-Point Intersection and simplify traffic operations in the area. This project will also provide opportunities for reconfiguring, relocating, and expanding DTC's Fixed Route Bus Operations Center.

The East 7th Street Peninsula was the original landing point for the Swedish

travelers who founded the first permanent settlement in Delaware. Fort Christina Park is located on the peninsula and commemorates the landing of the Swedes and the establishment of Fort Christina. Babiarz Park, located at the eastern end of 7th Street, contains a replica of the original fort, as well as a closed marina and boat launch. The Kalmar Nyckel Shipyard also celebrates the first Swedish colony in North America and is the main access point for residents and tourists to view a replica of the Swedes' ship, the *Kalmar Nyckel*. These cultural amenities are difficult to access and enjoy due to the isolated nature of the East 7th Street Peninsula. The peninsula is located at the confluence of the Brandywine Creek and the Christina River. The two waterways lie to the north and south and create a natural boundary on three sides of the peninsula. The Amtrak Northeast Corridor rail viaduct forms another boundary to the west, which results in limited access to the peninsula from the East Side neighborhood and the rest of the city. This difficult and limited access has impacted economic growth for the peninsula and limited private investment and development. Another challenge is that the roadways are subject to flooding during storm events, which compromises the limited access even further. This study will examine the infrastructure improvements needed to provide better access, mitigate flooding conditions, and encourage development of this hidden gem.

To learn more about these and other Wilmington Initiative projects, please visit

[www.wilmapco.org/wilmington-initiatives](http://www.wilmapco.org/wilmington-initiatives).



# Maryland Transportation Plan Provides a 20-year Vision for State

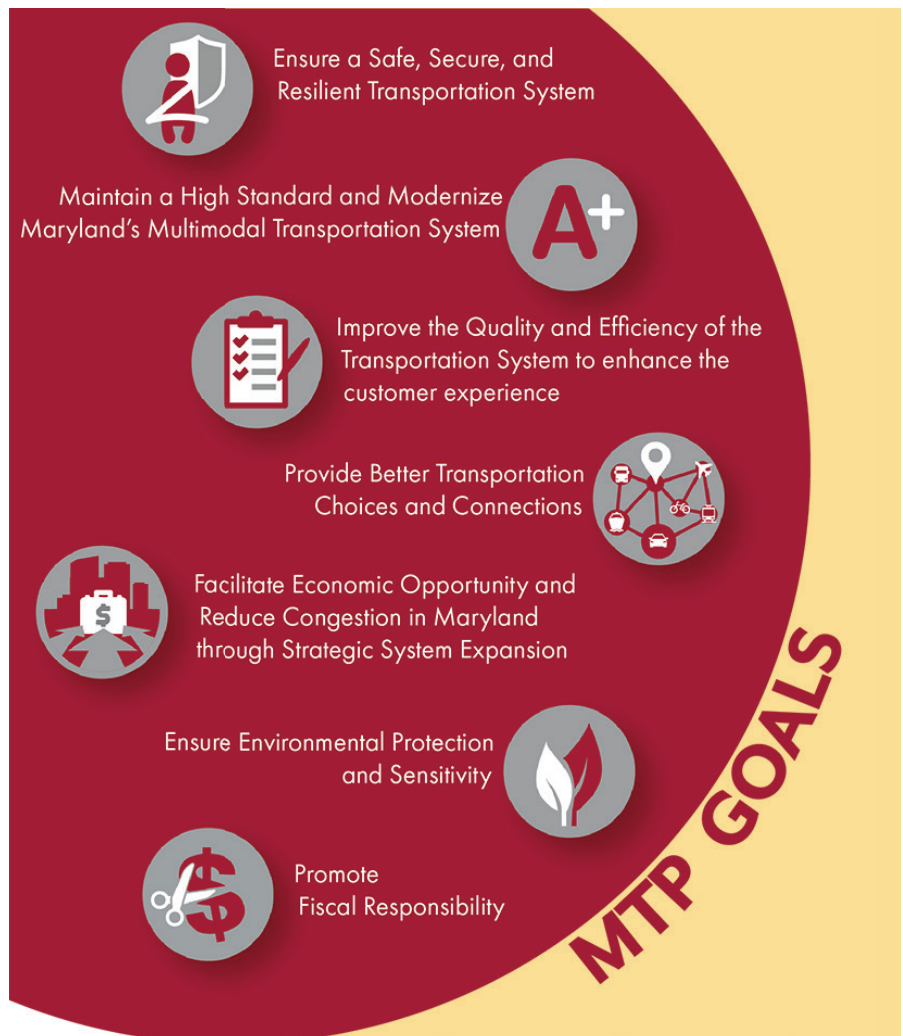
Every five years, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) develops a 20-year vision for transportation in the state known as the Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP). The MTP outlines the state's overarching transportation priorities and provides policy direction through statewide multimodal goals and objectives. It also helps define transportation decision-making within the larger context. The plan embodies MDOT's Mission Statement: "The Maryland Department of Transportation is a customer-driven leader that delivers safe, sustainable, intelligent, and exceptional transportation solutions in order to connect our customers to life's opportunities."

A few months ago, MDOT launched a survey to collect insight on what transportation initiatives are important to Marylanders when looking ahead 20 years. With nearly 6,000 responses, the survey highlighted travel reliability, systems maintenance, and safety and security as top priorities for Maryland residents. After feedback has been reviewed, the draft plan will be available this summer for further comment. MDOT hopes to finalize the plan this fall before submitting it to the Governor and Maryland legislature with the Maryland State Transportation Report in January 2019.

To learn more, please visit  
[www.mdot.maryland.gov/MTP](http://www.mdot.maryland.gov/MTP).



## 2040 Maryland TRANSPORTATION PLAN



# Partnership Kicks off Newark-Area Transit Planning and Outreach

In 2017, the four transit systems operating in the City of Newark — DART First State, City of Newark, Cecil Transit, and the University of Delaware — formed the Newark Transit Improvement Partnership (Newark TrIP) with the intent to consolidate and coordinate the systems to be more customer-friendly and efficient for transit users.

The Newark TrIP has begun work on the Newark-Area Transit Needs Data

Collection and Analysis project. Key components of the project will include technical analysis and stakeholder outreach.

For the outreach, planners will be seeking feedback from transit riders, businesses, community groups, and transit drivers to better understand existing services, unmet transit needs, and opportunities for integration of services. This feedback will help planners evaluate ways to leverage

improved transit performance that can support or increase the economic viability of the region.

The planning team will supplement stakeholder outreach with technical analysis of existing and potential transit use, to identify ways that transit can better serve the needs of the greater Newark community.

Learn more at [www.wilmapco.org/newarktransit](http://www.wilmapco.org/newarktransit).

## Planning Conference in Rehoboth Beach Set for October 23-24

Planners, and those interested in planning, from across the region will be gathering in a few months for Planning 360°, a major conference. The two-day event, organized by the Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA Delaware) with support from the Delaware Public Health Association, will examine how strong plans can create great places. Held every four years, this is Delaware's premier planning conference and a wonderful opportunity for networking and educational enrichment.

Headlining the event are a pair of keynote speakers — Georgia

Sheridan, AICP, and Dr. Tim Chapin. Ms. Sheridan, a veteran planner from Los Angeles, specializes in techniques to improve communication and messaging in planning, borrowing strategies from the advertising industry. She teaches an innovative course on the topic at UCLA and had perhaps the most popular and well-received session at last year's National APA conference in New York City. Dr. Chapin, Dean of Florida State University's College of Social Sciences and Public Policy, has extensively studied the impacts autonomous vehicles (AVs) may have on cities, towns, and other places. He will help

planners best position communities for an AV future.

The conference will have concurrent session tracks in economic development, environmental quality, public health, and communications, featuring examples of good plans — and lessons learned — in Delaware and across the wider region. A few local, mobile-based workshops are planned, including a tour of the Dogfish Head Brewery.

Interested conference participants should visit <https://delawareapa.wordpress.com> to learn more and to register!



## APA Delaware 2018 Regional Conference



# Elkton Pedestrian Plan Forges Ahead

**W**ILMAPCO has been collaborating with the Town of Elkton and the Maryland State Highway Administration to develop the Elkton Pedestrian Plan, which identifies necessary improvements to the town's pedestrian network that will make Elkton a more walkable community. After more than a year of collecting data and building on the work of a previous Walkable Community Workshop, the draft of the Elkton Pedestrian Plan is available for public review.

The draft Elkton Pedestrian Plan begins with a brief history of Elkton, focusing on how its transportation infrastructure has changed over time, followed by the purpose of the study. The next section discusses studies that have previously been completed in Elkton and their pedestrian-related recommendations. The Elkton Pedestrian Plan builds on and continues to support those

recommendations. The Pedestrian Prioritization section is a technical analysis identifying areas that are likely to have pedestrian activity or should be prioritized for pedestrian improvements. This is followed by an inventory of the existing network, focusing on the condition of all public sidewalks and curb ramps in the town. To ensure that all neighborhoods and demographics were reached, the steering committee held two public workshops, visited Elkton Middle School, attended the Elkton Fall Festival, and promoted the plan via social media, radio, mail, and surveys.

As a result, the steering committee received a wide variety of comments and suggestions for improving Elkton's pedestrian network. The public's ideas were compiled into a list of draft recommendations, which were then prioritized. The

draft report includes general, town-wide recommendations, such as completing sidewalks, curb ramps, and crosswalks, improving lighting, resuming passenger rail service, and encouraging more compact and walkable development. Proposed improvements to specific streets and intersections are also included. Recommendations include improving and expanding sidewalks, building mixed-use paths, expanding the trail network in Meadow Park, and redesigning intersections to be safer to cross. These proposed changes are intended to make walking around Elkton safer and more convenient, improve access for people with disabilities, encourage more people to walk, and enhance personal safety.

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To view the draft Elkton Pedestrian Plan and share your thoughts, please visit [www.wilmapco.org/elktonpedplan](http://www.wilmapco.org/elktonpedplan).



# Mobility in Motion Initiative Seeks Public Input on Transportation

For many Delaware residents, transportation to work, school, medical appointments, shopping, and social or community services may be a hardship because of disability, age, illness, veteran status, or financial constraints. Some transportation-disadvantaged individuals may face challenges walking, bicycling, or rolling to public transit locations.

Other Delawareans live in rural areas that are not served by public transit or where transportation options are limited. They often rely on volunteers, family members, caregivers, or non-profit service organizations to meet their basic needs and take advantage of support services.

Recognizing the importance of personal mobility for all citizens, the Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC), operating as DART First State Transit, has launched *Mobility in Motion*. This initiative invites all Delawareans to envision and provide critical input on the future of mobility in the state.

SHAPE THE FUTURE  
OF MOBILITY IN  
DELAWARE



TAKE THE ONLINE SURVEY  
AND LEARN MORE AT  
**MOBILITYDE.ORG**



How can you help? Here are three ways:

1. Learn more by visiting: [www.MobilityDE.org](http://www.MobilityDE.org)
2. Take the online survey to provide input! [goo.gl/d6kz2B](http://goo.gl/d6kz2B)  
Enter for a chance to win a \$25 gift card for completing the survey!
3. Share the online survey with your network!

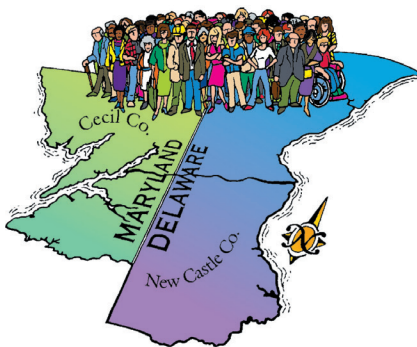
The survey data will help identify public transit and human services transportation barriers, challenges, and gaps in service, and develop a Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan, or “Coordinated Plan,” for the state. Developed through a participatory planning process, the Coordinated Plan will serve as a strategic framework for addressing the state’s existing and future mobility needs.

The Institute for Public Administration (IPA) at the University of Delaware is facilitating outreach on behalf of DTC. For more information, please contact IPA policy scientists Marcia Scott ([msscott@udel.edu](mailto:msscott@udel.edu)) or Julia O’Hanlon ([jusmith@udel.edu](mailto:jusmith@udel.edu)).

## WILMINGTON AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

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## Transporter Newsletter Summer 2018

## WILMAPCO PUBLIC MEETINGS

Unless specified, meetings will be held at WILMAPCO, 850 Library Avenue, Suite 100, Newark, Delaware.

Your participation at these meetings is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact us at (302) 737-6205 or toll free from Cecil County at (888) 808-7088. **During inclement weather, please call to verify meetings.**

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
Air Quality Subcommittee <i>July 12, 10 a.m.</i>	Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group <i>August 7, 3 p.m.</i>	Air Quality Subcommittee <i>September 13, 10 a.m.</i>
WILMAPCO Council <i>July 12, 6:30 p.m.</i>	Air Quality Subcommittee <i>August 9, 10 a.m.</i>	WILMAPCO Council <i>September 13, 6:30 p.m.</i>
Technical Advisory Committee <i>July 19, 10 a.m.</i> Lums Pond State Park	Public Advisory Committee <i>August 13, 6:30 p.m.</i>	Technical Advisory Committee <i>September 20, 10 a.m.</i>
	Technical Advisory Committee <i>August 16, 10 a.m.</i>	



**DURING THE HOT SUMMER MONTHS IT'S IMPORTANT WE ALL DO OUR SHARE TO HELP IMPROVE THE AIR WE BREATHE.**  
**TRY TRANSIT, CARPOOLING, WALKING, OR BIKING TO YOUR DESTINATIONS. TO LEARN MORE OR SIGN UP FOR**  
**EMAIL ALERTS WHEN AIR QUALITY IS FORECAST TO BE POOR, VISIT [WWW.WILMAPCO.ORG/AQP](http://www.wilmapco.org/AQP).**