

Quarterly newsletter of the Wilmington Area Planning Council

TRANSPORTER

WILMAPCO

2050 Regional Transportation Plan Is Taking Shape

WILMAPCO planners are putting the finishing touches on a draft of the region's transportation plan. Updated every four years, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) establishes strategic policy and identifies key future projects.

On the policy side, the RTP is comprised of three broad and overlapping "goals." These are:

- Improve Quality of Life
- Efficiently Transport People
- Support Sustainable Economic Development and Goods Movement

Under these goals are "objectives" and under the objectives are "actions." Actions are specific steps to carry out the objectives.

Measuring the performance of the transportation system has been a major policy directive from Washington. We have nested both federally required measures and our own measures under each of the RTP's actions. For example, our action to reduce overall Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) has both a nationally-required performance measure and our own measure that tracks VMT growth.

Sticking with policy, much effort has also gone into revising our

Transportation Investment Areas (TIAs). TIAs identify where, across the region, different intensities of transportation investments ought to occur. The idea is that heavy

be affordable, based on projected revenues, and pass regional air quality tests. WILMAPCO has worked with Maryland and Delaware to identify projected revenues through the next few decades. The batch of projects proposed will not exceed that future funding.



Public comment on the RTP will run from January 14 through March 6. To review the 2050 RTP or submit a comment, please visit www.wilmapco.org/rtp.

transportation investments could support redevelopment in certain areas, while managing or limiting it elsewhere. While TIAs don't have any legal standing, they help WILMAPCO guide projects into the right places. New to the 2050 RTP is the identification of new "Centers," or places of the most intensive transportation investment. For example, in addition to Wilmington and Newark, the Churchman's Crossing area, Newport, and North Claymont have been tagged as Centers in New Castle County.

The projects identified in the RTP must

To learn more about the regional transportation plan, attend WILMAPCO's Our Town event on February 7 at 4 p.m. at the University of Delaware Tower at STAR Campus, 100 Discovery Blvd., Newark. During the event, you will have the opportunity to learn about and review several of the region's long-range and comprehensive plans in one location. Register for Our Town today!

www.wilmapco.org/ourtown

WILMAPCO Plans **Multi-Pronged Outreach** on Regional Transportation Plan



It has been a busy year for WILMAPCO, with many studies and plans in progress. Most notable is the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Federal law dictates that a project cannot be funded (with federal dollars) unless it is found in a financially reasonable RTP, so it is an important document, and equally important that the region's residents are informed and have adequate opportunity to provide input.

To make sure the public is informed, WILMAPCO tailors its outreach strategy for each group it is trying to connect with. For example, in some communities, social media may be a great tool, while in others, pop-up workshops are more effective. After years of polling the region's residents in our telephone public opinion survey, one thing is clear: there is no silver bullet, and multiple outreach strategies must be used.

To this end, WILMAPCO has secured grant funding to conduct "innovative" outreach for the 2050 RTP. To reach

as wide an audience as possible, in a region as diverse as WILMAPCO's, both high- and low-technology tools must be used. Typically, WILMAPCO does this through a variety of means, including a telephone public opinion survey; presentations to civic and municipal organizations (typically around 30); discussions with all our member agencies; exhibits at events such as Newark Community Day, Middletown's Peach Festival, and Elkton Fall Fest; newsletter articles, press releases, radio interviews; and WILMAPCO's Our Town Event, which typically draws about 100 people.

For the 2050 RTP, in addition to the strategies listed above, WILMAPCO has launched a highly interactive online survey. Unlike usual surveys, this one is specifically designed for planners to educate and collect input for actionable results. Other strategies have included a virtual workshop. Held in November, and attended by 75 people, the virtual workshop included a presentation, polling, and a collaborative whiteboard

exercise allowing participants to provide input. WILMAPCO is also conducting popup workshops in communities not easily reached through other means. The pop-ups replicate the online survey, by making a quick and interactive experience for residents who are just "passing by." The pop-ups are held at busy locations, including shopping malls, train stations, grocery stores, and libraries.

Outreach for the 2050 RTP will culminate in the 2019 Our Town Event. The event will not only feature the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan, but several other long-range plans currently being updated in the region. Featured plans include DelDOT and MDOT Long-Range Plans, Maryland Statewide Bicycle Plan, New Castle County Bicycle Plan, and City of Wilmington Comprehensive Plan. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn about and provide input on several fundamental planning documents for the region during this event. Our Town will be held on February 7, 2019 from 4-7 p.m. at the University of Delaware STAR Campus Tower Atrium (100 Discovery Blvd., Newark).

To register for Our Town, please visit www.wilmapco.org/ourtown.



Partners Plan for Better Transit in Newark

The four bus transit systems serving the City of Newark — DART First State, City of Newark, Cecil Transit, and the University of Delaware — along with WILMAPCO, have formed the Newark Transit Improvement Partnership (TriP).

In 2018, this partnership began technical analysis and public outreach to look at ways the systems could be consolidated and made more customer-friendly and efficient. During the year, the partnership also surveyed stakeholders, including 142 bus riders, bus drivers, and more than 180 local residents, and hosted a public workshop.

Of the 142 bus riders surveyed, 67% ride to work, 36% use the bus for shopping and errands, and 27% use it for medical appointments. Most were frequent riders, with 25% using transit two to four days per week and 67% using it five to seven days per week.

Most requested changes included more frequent bus service, longer service hours on weekdays, more weekend service, and improved on-time performance. Overall, 88% of riders said they were completely or fairly satisfied with the bus service.

Residents surveyed were most aware of DART (72% familiar) and University of Delaware Shuttle (63% familiar). Fifty-one percent said they were aware

of local bus services but have never used them. Some visions for the future shared by workshop participants include integrated local, state, and regional transit services, transit integration with pedestrian and cycling transportation, and shuttle service to Main Street from remote parking.

The planning team will review the findings of the outreach and look at examples from other communities to develop recommendations that will be released for comment later this winter.

Visit www.wilmapco.org/newarktransit to learn more about the Newark Area Transit Study.

Planning for Better Bicycling and Trails in New Castle County

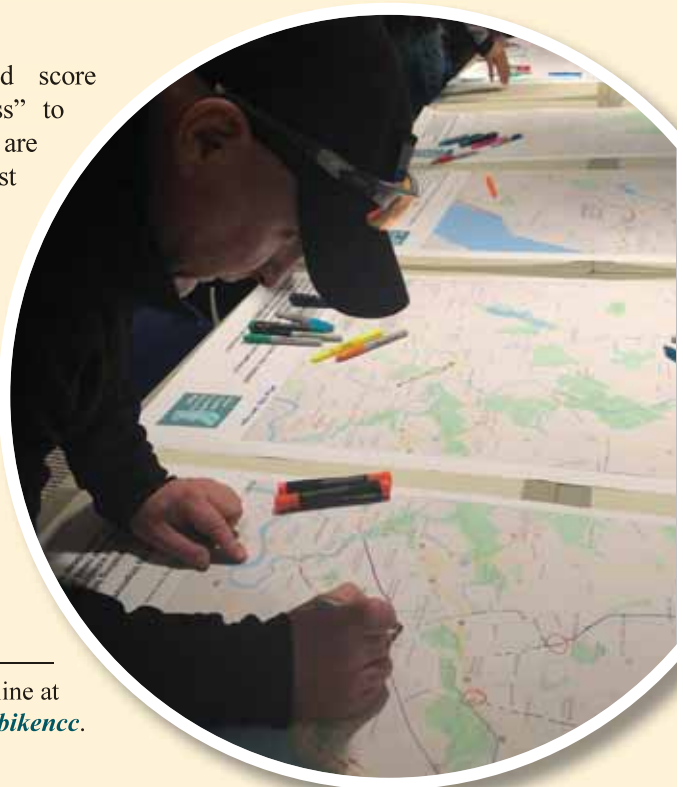
In 2018, WILMAPCO launched development of the New Castle County Bicycle Plan. Throughout the next year, WILMAPCO will work with local and state agencies and the community to develop a Bicycle Plan that builds upon past planning and new feedback to establish recommendations for:

- Improved safety, access, and comfort of bicycling,
- Prioritization of infrastructure improvements, including pathways, on-street routes, and end-of-trip needs such as bike parking, and
- Identification of programs and policies for education, enforcement, and encouragement.

WILMAPCO has worked with the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) to map

existing bicycle routes and score their “level of bicycle stress” to show places that are and are not comfortable for most cyclists. We have worked with municipalities, New Castle County, Delaware Greenways, and Bike Delaware to hold workshops in Townsend, Elsmere, Odessa, and Brandywine Hundred. In addition to workshops in other communities, we will launch an online survey in early 2019 to get additional feedback.

Information is available online at www.wilmapco.org/bikencc.



• PROJECT UPDATES •



East 7th Street Peninsula Roadway Improvement and Infrastructure Study

The East 7th Street Peninsula Roadway Improvement and Infrastructure Study is a project focused on the future growth of this part of Wilmington. The East 7th Street 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. The sole vehicular and bicycle/pedestrian access points are via Swedes Landing Road from the 4th Street Corridor and East 7th Street from the East Side neighborhood. 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.

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 study began with a Community Visioning Workshop on June 26 at the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation. Over 40 attendees were given a presentation and participated in roundtable discussions regarding the current and future needs for infrastructure on the

peninsula. A follow-up community meeting was held for the HOPE Coalition on July 17, to accommodate residents who were not able to attend the first meeting. The findings from the public workshop were presented to the Wilmington Initiatives (WI) partners (DelDOT, Delaware Transit Corporation, WILMAPCO, and City of Wilmington) in August, and to the Advisory Committee (AC), the 7th Street Peninsula Coalition (7SPC) at its September meeting. A concept plan for the peninsula was presented to the WI partners and the AC in September, and also presented to the mayor in October. The next step will be to bring the draft concept plan to the public at an open-house workshop on February 6 from 4-7 p.m. at the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation, 1124 E. 7th Street, Wilmington.

To learn more or sign up for project updates, please visit www.wilmapco.org/7thstreetpeninsula.

• PROJECT UPDATES •

Concord Pike (US 202) Corridor Master Plan

The Concord Pike (US 202) Corridor Master Plan got underway in 2018. This project will look at land use and multi-modal improvements for the corridor to reduce congestion and improve bicycle and pedestrian amenities, as well as consider land-use concepts to encourage economic growth for existing businesses along the corridor. The first public outreach, an information session, was held on July 25 at the Talleyville Fire Hall. Over 200 people attended to view a kick-off

presentation, discuss traffic and land use data, and give their thoughts on future needs. A community visioning workshop was held on November 14 and was attended by nearly 100 people. A presentation from the project team was followed by group discussions of eight to 10 people who shared ideas for improving the corridor and its strengths and weaknesses. On November 15 and 16, the project team interviewed stakeholders for more in-depth input

on the Concord Pike corridor. The next steps for this study are to analyze the data and the public input and begin to develop scenarios for the future of the Concord Pike corridor. These will be brought back to the public in an open-house workshop early in 2019.

To learn more,
visit www.wilmapco.org/202.

Below:
Newark Regional Transit Center rendering

Newark Regional Transportation Center

The Newark Regional Transportation Center has been under construction since the summer of 2017. The project team is working toward a December deadline to complete construction on Phase I, which involved building the access road and parking areas, and reconfiguring the intersection with S. College Ave. (SR 896). Station construction began this summer, and work on the building's foundations began in November. Design is completed and is

under review by partners, including Amtrak, DelDOT, Delaware Transit Corporation, and the consultant team. This final phase will include the platform, foundations for catenary and signal towers, and all track work. Completion of the entire project is currently scheduled for mid-2021.

To learn more, visit
www.wilmapco.org/newarktrain.

Southern NCC Master Plan

WILMAPCO staff has been working with New Castle County (NCC) Land Use and DelDOT staff on the Southern NCC Master Plan. This master plan will be designed to develop a policy and infrastructure program with public consensus for the area of NCC below the C&D Canal. An

information session for the public was held on October 17 and was attended by 47 people. A community visioning workshop is planned for January 31, 2019.

To learn more,
visit www.wilmapco.org/sncc.



• PROJECT UPDATES •

12th Street Connector Alignment Study

The 12th Street Connector Alignment Study is underway. The purpose of this project is to evaluate and recommend the optimal location and design for the proposed 12th Street Connector. This roadway will provide a more direct route for access from I-495 to downtown; redirect current traffic from Price's Run, Riverside, and East Side neighborhoods; and create multi-modal connections for residents to access the Brandywine Riverfront. The concept will hopefully generate economic development opportunities by opening new land in the vicinity of and along the Brandywine Creek while providing the necessary roadway improvements to reduce neighborhood congestion and make the area more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. At the same time, the Wilmington Department of Planning and Development is working in the

same area to develop sustainable reuse plans for brownfield sites and the surrounding neighborhood under the Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields Area-wide Planning Program. The Brownfields study will look to develop an economic development strategy for the neighborhood, while the 12th Street Connector study will try to create the transportation infrastructure necessary for the community to realize this vision.

A Community Visioning Workshop was held on Monday, June 25 at the Fletcher Brown Boys & Girls Club. More than 30 people attended the meeting for a presentation and break-out discussions to determine the needs of the community for better connectivity and access to the Brandywine Riverfront. A follow-up community meeting was held with the HOPE Coalition on July 17, to

accommodate residents who were not able to attend the June 25 meeting. The project team also met with stakeholders in July for a charrette to develop alternatives based on the draft "Purpose & Need" document and the comments from the Visioning Workshop. These alternatives were refined and presented to the Wilmington Initiatives partners (DelDOT, DTC, WILMAPCO, and City of Wilmington) at a meeting in September, and to the mayor and his staff in October. The three alternatives were presented to the public at an open house workshop on January 7, 2019 at the Fletcher Brown Boys & Girls Club from 4-7 p.m.

To learn more or sign up for project updates, please visit www.wilmapco.org/12thstreetconnector.



Elkton Pedestrian Plan Is Now Complete

WILMAPCO's most recently adopted pedestrian plan, the Elkton Pedestrian Plan, was completed in July 2018. The plan was requested by the Town of Elkton, MD to make it a more walkable community, and the plan presents a series of recommendations for improving pedestrian safety and

access on major town and state roads, neighborhoods, and parks. WILMAPCO worked with town officials and State of Maryland planners to collect extensive background data, including an analysis of the road network for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a review of

previous studies completed in Elkton, and a technical scoring process that identifies areas with the potential for higher pedestrian activity. A thorough public outreach process helped ensure that all Elkton neighborhoods and demographics had the opportunity to weigh in on the plan. Public feedback, combined with background research, was used to develop the best recommendations for making a more walkable Elkton, including improvements such as completing sidewalks, adding mixed-use paths and trails, and improving lighting. The plan will help guide the town as opportunities arise to redevelop roads and invest in a more walkable future.



To learn more, visit
www.wilmapco.org/elktonpedplan.

Planned Projects Meet Air Quality Standards

Because our region does not meet air quality standards, WILMAPCO must periodically analyze whether the planned transportation system will too heavily pollute our air.

The Delaware and Maryland Departments of Transportation (DelDOT and MDOT) used computer modeling to predict transportation emissions stemming from the system, including the major expansion projects identified in our RTP. These emissions were compared against standing emissions budgets for ozone (NO_x and VOC) in New Castle County and Cecil County and fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) in New Castle County. The results through 2050 fell under all emissions budgets.

The chart below provides an example of one of the analyses. Transportation emissions of fine particulates (dangerous, microscopic grains of dust) should lessen over the next few decades. We are projecting about 98 tons of PM_{2.5} in 2020 from modeled

transportation emissions — half of the allowable budget of 199 tons/year. PM_{2.5} is projected to fall a further 45% between 2020 and 2040, before evening out in that decade.

To learn more, visit
www.wilmapco.org/rtp.



WILMINGTON AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

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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.**

FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group <i>Feb. 5, 3 p.m.</i>	Air Quality Subcommittee <i>March 7, 10 a.m.</i>	Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group <i>April 2, 3 p.m.</i>
Public Advisory Committee <i>Feb. 11, 6:30 p.m.</i>	WILMAPCO Council <i>March 7, 4 p.m.</i>	Air Quality Subcommittee <i>April 11, 10 a.m.</i>
Air Quality Subcommittee <i>Feb. 14, 10 a.m.</i>	Technical Advisory Committee <i>March 21, 10 a.m.</i>	Public Advisory Committee <i>April 15, 6:30 p.m.</i>
Technical Advisory Committee <i>Feb. 21, 10 a.m.</i>		Technical Advisory Committee <i>April 18, 10 a.m.</i>



SAVE THE DATE FOR THE WILMINGTON AREA PLANNING COUNCIL'S
2019 OUR TOWN EVENT: PLANNING FOR TOMORROW
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 7, 2019 FROM 4-7 P.M. • 100 DISCOVERY BLVD., NEWARK
TO REGISTER, VISIT WWW.WILMAPCO.ORG/OURTOWN OR CALL WILMAPCO AT **302.737.6205**.