

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

December 18, 2025

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, December 18, 2025, at WILMAPCO, 100 Discovery Boulevard, Suite 800, Newark, DE 19713 and via video conference/conference call.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Cooper Bowers, from New Castle County Department of Land Use, and TAC Chair, brought the TAC meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

2. TAC Members present:

Cooper Bowers, New Castle County Department of Land Use
Samantha Bulkilvish, Delaware Office of State Planning
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning
William Goldman, Cecil County Division of Planning and Zoning
Gwinneth Kaminsky Rivera, City of Wilmington Planning
Shawn Kiernan, Maryland Department of Transportation
Clare Quinlan, Delaware Department of Transportation
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment
Catherine Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation
Steven Weber, City of Wilmington Department of Public Works

TAC Ex-Officio Members present:

Jasmine Champion, U.S. Federal Highway Administration

TAC Members absent:

City of Newark
Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism
Department of Natural Resources and Environment
Delaware River and Bay Authority
Maryland State Highway Administration
Town of Elkton Planning

TAC Ex-Officio Members absent:

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

Guests and Invitees:

Steven Bayer, DelDOT
Harry Romano, MDOT Consultant
Hunter A. Withers, Wallace Montgomery

Staff:

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner
Leonard Bonarek, Senior Planner

Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner
Sharen Elcock, Executive Assistant
Elizabeth Espinal, Administrative Assistant
Dave Gula, Principal Planner
Dawn Stant, Outreach Coordinator
Colleen Stroud, Regional Planner
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner
Jake Thompson, Senior Planner
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth Espinal.

3. MINUTES

Approval of the November 20, 2025, TAC Meeting Minutes.

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Samantha Bulkilvish and seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky, the TAC minutes are approved.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Ms. Heather Dunigan provided an update regarding the Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group meeting held on December 2. During this meeting, the group engaged in a discussion regarding MDOT's trails plan, with a particular focus on developments within Cecil County.

A key priority arising from this plan is the implementation of a feasibility study to explore options for Susquehanna River crossings. This study aims to establish a connection to Harford County, MD and is projected for completion in the summer of 2026.

Furthermore, the update included a progress report on the Regional Sidewalk Gap Analysis. The presentations concluded with a summary of the Walkable Community Workshops provided by Mr. Dave Gula.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

ACTION ITEMS

6. To recommend amendment of the FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Mr. Jake Thompson reported that DelDOT has requested six amendments to the FY 2025–2028 TIP regarding transit vehicle replacement.

The proposed changes consist of three new projects to provide funding for hybrid buses, offset by three amendments to remove funding previously allocated for hydrogen buses and their associated charging infrastructure. This shift in procurement is consistent across all six amendments, as DelDOT has updated its fleet strategy to prioritize hybrid vehicles over hydrogen-powered or zero-emission models.

These revisions are necessitated by changes to a pending discretionary grant, which now specifies hybrid buses rather than hydrogen. In the documentation provided, new projects are highlighted in green, while the projects they are intended to replace are highlighted in red.

Specifically, this item proposes an increase of \$12.941 million in FY 2028 for the acquisition of nine (9) hybrid buses.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Samantha Bulkilvish, the TAC recommends amending the FY 2025-2028 TIP.

7. To recommend amendment of the FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Mr. Jake Thompson clarified that, while the underlying justifications remain consistent across all six proposed amendments, procedural requirements necessitate an individual vote for each action item.

Regarding this item, the proposal seeks a budgetary increase of \$10.283 million in FY 2028. This funding is designated for the procurement of eight (8) hybrid buses.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Samantha Bulkilvish, the TAC recommends amending the FY 2025-2028 TIP.

8. To recommend amendment of the FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Mr. Jake Thompson presented this amendment, which proposes a budgetary increase of \$671,000 in FY 2028. The additional funding is intended for the procurement of five (5) hybrid buses.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Cathy Smith, the TAC recommends amending the FY 2025-2028 TIP.

9. To recommend amendment of the FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Mr. Jake Thompson presented a proposed budgetary reduction of \$2.709 million in FY 2026 for four (4) hydrogen buses and associated charging infrastructure.

In response to an inquiry from Mr. David Dahlstrom regarding the scale of the reduction, Mr. Thompson noted that the amendment was submitted as requested by DeIDOT.

Ms. Cathy Smith further clarified that the high costs and logistical challenges of developing hydrogen infrastructure, combined with timing constraints, rendered the project unfeasible at this time, despite previous grant funding.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky, the TAC recommends amending the FY 2025-2028 TIP.

10. To recommend amendment of the FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Mr. Jake Thompson presented an amendment proposing a budgetary reduction of \$4.335 million in FY 2025. This decrease applies to the funding previously allocated for four (4) hydrogen buses and their associated charging infrastructure.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky, the TAC recommends amending the FY 2025-2028 TIP.

11. To recommend amendment of the FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Mr. Jake Thompson presented a proposed amendment to decrease funding by \$3.59 million across FY 2025–2026. This reduction applies to the allocation for four (4) hydrogen buses and their associated charging infrastructure.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky, the TAC recommends amending the FY 2025-2028 TIP.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

12. Southern NCC Growth Area Land Use & Transportation Study

Mr. Dave Gula and Mr. Dan Blevins presented an overview of the Southern New Castle County Growth Area Land Use and Transportation Plan, an 18-month planning study initiated in September at the request of New Castle County and DelDOT. The study evaluates existing and future land use conditions, identifies transportation gaps and constraints, and recommends infrastructure improvements needed to support continued growth in the area. While the County is advancing related studies on topics such as stormwater management and sea level rise, the plan remains focused on land use and transportation.

Mr. Gula outlined the study tasks and schedule, noting that trend analysis and existing conditions assessments have been completed and that the project is currently concluding the market assessment phase, led by JMT with support from BAE. Upcoming work includes land use and transportation modeling, scenario evaluation, and a final report addressing level-of-service issues and recommended improvements. He also summarized public outreach efforts, including a November open-house workshop attended by more than 50 participants, which generated feedback on speeding, lighting, truck traffic, intersection improvements, incomplete infrastructure in new developments, and flooding concerns on Shallcross Lake Road. A project website, digital feedback map, advisory committee, and additional workshops will support ongoing public engagement.

Mr. Blevins presented preliminary data findings, including demographic trends, travel behavior, development patterns, and transportation conditions. He noted significant population growth since 2000, an aging demographic, high rates of single occupant vehicle commuting, and substantial residential and retail development activity within the study area. He also reviewed emerging travel pattern data, crash and safety trends, and observed operating speeds on key roadways, which will inform upcoming modeling and scenario analysis. All study materials and data are available on the project website for public review.

To view this presentation in its entirety please [click here](#). [14m.42s.].

Mr. Cooper Bowers expressed appreciation for the work being completed this year and for the continued progress on the study report. Mr. Dave Gula asked whether New Castle County was nearing selection of consulting teams for the related infrastructure studies and whether updates might be shared at an upcoming workshop. Mr. Bowers responded that the County is currently in the consultant selection process and that updates are unlikely for the next workshop. Mr.

Bowers noted that additional information on adjacent infrastructure topics, such as sewer systems and critical emergency services, may be available by the second or third workshop.

INFORMATION ITEMS

13. Staff Report

Mr. Dave Gula reported the following updates:

- On November 24th, Staff finalized the City of New Castle Walkable Community Workshop report.
- On November 25th, Staff presented the Mobility Opportunities Plan at a University of Washington class.
- On December 1st, The Ardens Transportation Plan Monitoring Committee met.
- On December 3rd, Staff presented on incorporating public health considerations in planning at the APA Delaware State Conference.
- On December 8th, Staff attended the 5th Neighborhood Planning Council meeting in Wilmington.
- On December 9th, the Southbridge Truck Bypass Study's Management Committee met.
- On December 11th, the MD-272 Monitoring Committee met. Staff also attended the North East Rising Community meeting.
- On December 16th, the KMIC (Kirkwood Monitoring Implementation Committee) Planning Partners met.
- On December 17th, Staff participated in the Delaware Winter Freight Meeting.
- On December 18th, the Route 9 Monitoring Committee will meet.
- On January 5th, the Ardens Transportation Plan Monitoring Committee will meet.
- On January 7th, Staff will present the Route 9 Master Plan to the Rt. 9/13 Civic Alliance.
- On January 8th, the East Elkton Monitoring Committee will meet.
- On January 12th, the SNCC Growth Area LUTP Advisory Committee will meet.
- On January 23rd, Staff will make a presentation for WHA at the Compton Towers.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Ms. Cathy Smith shared two significant personnel updates with the committee:

- Ms. Smith announced that Mr. John Sisson, Chief Executive Officer for DTC, will retire in July. His departure was officially communicated to all staff on December 15th, and after 12 years of service he will be missed.
- Ms. Smith reported the passing of Dr. Jerome Lewis on December 13th. Dr. Lewis was the founder and director of the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration (IPA). Ms. Smith highlighted his long-standing leadership in public service and his dedicated collaboration with DTC, specifically noting his commitment to improving paratransit services.

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: Meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

Attachments (0)