

**JOINT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND AIR QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING**

September 24, 2026

An in-person only meeting of the Joint Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Air Quality Subcommittee (AQS) was held on Thursday, September 24, 2026, at Lums Pond, 1068 Howell School Rd, Bear, DE 19701, Area 4.

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 10:13 a.m.

2. TAC Members present:

Cooper Bowers, New Castle County Department of Land Use, AQS Member
Samantha Bulkilvish, Delaware Office of State Planning
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning
William Goldman, Cecil County Division of Planning and Zoning, AQS member
Wesley Hicks, Delaware Department of Transportation
Julianne Hilton, Maryland Department of the Environment
Jared Kauffman, Delaware Transit Corporation
Shawn Kiernan, Maryland Department of Transportation, AQS member
Tina Merrill, Department of Natural Resources and Environment

TAC Ex-Officio Members present:

Brian Devine, Diamond State Port Corporation

TAC Members absent:

City of Newark
City of Wilmington Department of Public Works
City of Wilmington Planning
Maryland State Highway Administration
Town of Elkton Planning

TAC Ex-Officio Members absent:

Amtrak
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Guests and Invitees:

Taylor Englert, DNREC, AQS Member
Eric Gasenski, NCC

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, Associate Planner

Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner
Jake Thompson, Senior Planner
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth Espinal.

3. MINUTES

Approval of August 20, 2026, Joint TAC & AQS Meeting Minutes.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Tina Merrill, the minutes are approved.

Acceptance of the September 3, 2026, AQS Notes.

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Taylor Englert and seconded by Mr. Brian Devine, the notes are accepted.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

a. Air Quality Subcommittee:

Mr. Bill Swiatek reported that the Air Quality Subcommittee (AQS) met twice during the month, on September 3 and September 17.

During the September 3 meeting, the subcommittee reviewed preparations for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update's air quality conformity analysis, including modeled horizon years, the project list, and data inputs. Additionally, the group received a presentation from Jacobs regarding DeIDOT's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program emissions analysis. At the September 17 meeting, the subcommittee nearly finalized its preparations for the conformity analysis, with a few minor follow-up adjustments made shortly thereafter. Results of the conformity analysis are anticipated for review in November.

b. Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group:

Ms. Heather Dunigan gave an update on the September 1, 2026, Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group (NMTWG) meeting. The meeting featured the annual federal funding letter that was presented at the previous TAC meeting, reviewed Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding applications, and received updates on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Surface Transportation Block (STB) Grant funding pool program and associated projects.

Regarding project submissions for the bicycle and pedestrian funding pool, Mr. Leonard Bonarek provided a status update on Fiscal Year 2026 submissions. Because several projects from that cycle remain ongoing, WILMAPCO staff are currently consulting with DeIDOT to determine whether additional applications will be submitted for Fiscal Year 2027. Internal staff work is underway to compile and prioritize potential submissions for future committee review.

The NMTWG also addressed proposed updates to the TAP prioritization process to better align with federal guidance on social equity, which includes removing race-specific measures.

Finally, updates were provided on two major planning initiatives: the East Elkton Paths Plan, which is now available for public review on the website, and the ongoing Susquehanna River Crossing Feasibility Study.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

ACTION ITEMS

None.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

6. WILMAPCO's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update.

Ms. Tigist Zegeye provided an update on the schedule for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) development:

The RTP development process officially began in January with the Regional Progress Report, which established data and analysis needs and evaluated existing goals and objectives. As part of this initial phase, a public opinion survey was conducted, with results presented to the committee in August and to the Council in September.

Work is currently underway on the draft project list, which has been shared with select AQS members and will be presented to the committees at their next meetings. This project list is essential for informing both the air quality conformity analysis and the financial plan. Ongoing efforts also include technical assessments and interagency coordination for the draft RTP.

Following the presentation of the RTP goals and objectives in July, staff will present further details on the financial plan at the next meeting. Although the air quality conformity analysis was targeted to begin in September, it may start slightly later. Upon completion, the air quality conformity determination will be submitted to AQS, followed by committee action in November, December, and January.

Public outreach to member agencies, municipalities, and civic organizations will begin once the financial and air quality information is finalized. The draft document will be released for a public comment period exceeding 30 days in January. Following public review and comment, staff will present recommendations to both the PAC and the TAC at their February meetings, aiming for adoption by Council in March and submission to FTA and FHWA shortly thereafter.

7. Wilmington's Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan.

Mr. Leonard Bonarek presented an update on the City of Wilmington's 2026 Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Citywide Safety Action Plan. Following the city's receipt of the SS4A grant in 2022, WILMAPCO assumed administrative oversight and led a competitive procurement process that resulted in the selection of Toole Design Group as the project consultant. The primary objective of the initiative is to establish a Vision Zero framework aimed at eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Achieving zero deaths is an attainable goal, given that Wilmington recorded 16 traffic fatalities over the five-year study period. Addressing serious injuries remains challenging because existing city records do not distinguish between minor and severe injury levels.

To guide safety interventions, Toole Design Group implemented a dual-network analytical framework. While the High-Injury Network identifies historical crash hotspots, the High-Risk Network evaluates roadway geometry, operating speeds, and demographic factors to proactively identify hazardous corridors. This approach accounts for areas such as Southbridge, where high-stress traffic conditions suppress pedestrian activity and result in low crash counts despite inherent safety risks. Proposed improvements are categorized into targeted Focus Areas for quick-build projects, such as intersection daylighting and mini-roundabouts, and Focus

Corridors designated for major capital investments, including road diets, protected bike lanes, and curb extensions.

The project timeline includes an Advisory Committee meeting at 3:30 PM followed by a Public Open House at 4:30 PM on November 9, 2026, at the Wilmington Library to gather community feedback on the draft plan. Following this public review process, the final action-oriented safety plan is scheduled for completion in January 2027.

8. WILMAPCO's Monitoring Committee Update.

Mr. Dave Gula provided an update on WILMAPCO's Monitoring and Implementation Committee activities and explained the importance of maintaining community engagement following the completion of transportation plans. Because transportation projects can take several years to secure funding and advance to implementation, the committees provide an ongoing forum for monitoring progress, identifying short-term opportunities, addressing emerging concerns, and maintaining communication with communities and partner agencies.

Mr. Gula noted that monitoring activities also help identify "low-hanging fruit" that can be implemented while larger projects are being developed. The committees provide opportunities for DelDOT, DART, New Castle County, Cecil County, municipalities, and other partners to present project updates and respond to community questions. Examples have included DelDOT presentations on major construction activities and WILMAPCO coordination on pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and roadway improvements.

Several completed plans were highlighted. Monitoring activities for Concord Pike have included traffic signal timing and operations, while the Rocky Run area generated additional analysis of potential pedestrian connections. Churchman's Crossing monitoring has included lighting evaluations, DART service coordination, pedestrian improvements, and connectivity analysis. Kirkwood Highway activities have included intersection control evaluations at locations experiencing safety, crash, and congestion concerns. Bus stop accessibility reviews have also been conducted in coordination with DART for the Concord Pike MC.

Mr. Dan Blevins discussed continued monitoring of the U.S. 40 corridor, including comparisons of projected and actual traffic conditions and evaluations of safety concerns at crossovers. He also provided an update on implementation of recommendations from the Senate Resolution 10 study, which examined truck routing and related roadway and safety improvements. Most of the study's approximately 24 implementation efforts have been completed, while several larger projects remain under consideration. The study's findings will also inform the upcoming SR 7 corridor study.

Mr. Gula provided an update on Wilmington Initiatives, which continues to coordinate transportation planning and implementation among WILMAPCO, the City of Wilmington, DART, DelDOT, and other agencies. The initiative helps coordinate multiple projects and minimize conflicts between transportation and infrastructure improvements. Related efforts have included downtown circulation planning, East 7th Street Peninsula improvements, South Wilmington connectivity, flood resilience, and multimodal access.

Mr. Bill Swiatek provided updates on monitoring activities for East Elkton, the MD 272 Corridor, the Ardens, Route 9, and Southbridge. In East Elkton, implementation efforts have included fresh pavement markings, pedestrian signal and signage improvements, and functional classification updates. The committee has also developed a local project prioritization process, evaluated the feasibility of developer contributions toward transportation improvements, and

advanced work on a paths plan. Although no projects have yet been implemented associated with the MD 272 Corridor Plan, the committee has developed a local project prioritization process and completed a two-way conversion study of Mauldin Ave.

In the Ardens, implementation efforts have included reducing the speed limit on Veale Road and improving signage and pedestrian countdown signals. The committee has also evaluated pedestrian crossings and sight distance, prepared conceptual sketches, and established a local project prioritization process.

Route 9 implementation efforts have included new pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the Memorial Drive road diet, and upgrades to traffic signals and crossings. The committee has also developed a local project prioritization process, coordinated with other local planning initiatives, and advanced a paths plan.

Southbridge implementation efforts have included lighting and streetscape upgrades, numerous bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and improved signage. The committee has recently focused on identifying sidewalk gaps and incorporating recommendations from a localized DART bus study and the Southbridge Truck Bypass Plan.

Overall, the presenters emphasized that the Monitoring and Implementation Committees provide an important link between completed planning studies and long-term project implementation. Continued monitoring allows WILMAPCO and its partners to track recommendations, respond to changing conditions, advance feasible short-term improvements, and maintain community involvement throughout the project-development process.

Mr. Shawn Kiernan requested clarification regarding the depth of the street lighting evaluations conducted during corridor assessments, noting that "daylighting" had also been mentioned earlier in the presentation.

Mr. Dan Blevins explained that lighting evaluations typically involve nighttime field reviews to assess existing fixtures, placement, and coverage. He noted anecdotally that during recent lighting upgrades, some installed LED fixtures turned purple due to a manufacturing defect. He explained that current LED technology allows light to be directed more precisely, providing sufficient illumination while minimizing spillover into adjacent residential backyards. He added that public concerns usually fall into two categories: safety issues regarding poorly lit areas or complaints about excess light trespassing into private property.

Regarding the purple light issue, Mr. Blevins noted that a widely distributed manufacturing flaw in a specific batch of LED coatings caused fixtures across various jurisdictions to turn purple over time. While the unexpected color shift prompted lighthearted community reactions, transportation operations teams worked to replace the defective units.

INFORMATION ITEMS

9. Staff Report

Mr. Dave Gula reported the following updates:

- On September 16th, Staff attended the WI Partners meeting.
- On September 17th, APA Delaware hosted a walking tour of the Grove redevelopment in Newark.
- On September 19th, Staff participated in the Wilmington Open Streets Event on W. 2nd Street which was a total success and well attended.

- On September 23rd, Staff participated in the MD 222 / I-95 Corridor Vision Study - Working Group Meeting and participated in the MDOT- CTP Pre Tour at 2PM.
- On September 28th, Staff will be presenting the WILMAPCO First/Final Mile Freight Study at the Mid-Atlantic ITE conference in Atlantic City, NJ. Staff will participate in MARAMA's Mid Atlantic Clean Air Collaborative meeting, and a public open house will be held for the East Elkton Paths Plan at 4:30pm.
- On September 29th, Staff will attend DelDOT's Canal Lift Bridge Stakeholder meeting.
- On September 30th, the SNCC LUTP Partners will meet. The NNCC Bike & Ped Network MP study will hold its kickoff meeting.
- On October 1st, the Port Terminal Truck Routing Feasibility Study partners will meet, and the KMIC agency partners will meet.
- On October 5th, the Ardens Monitoring and Implementation Committee will meet.
- On October 6th, Staff will participate in Delaware's Quarterly Mobile Sources Planning Group meeting. Staff will attend DelDOT's NRTC update.
- On Oct 7th, Staff will participate in Cecil County's CTP Tour in the Administrative Building at 10AM.
- On October 8th, the CPMIC Agency Partners will meet.
- On October 14th, Staff will attend the SNCC LUTP Advisory Committee meeting.
- On October 15th, Staff will attend DelDOT's DSRL CID Grant update meeting with FRA if not canceled, all meetings scheduled during the summer months were canceled.
- On October 16th, Staff will attend CCT's Coordination meeting.
- On October 20th, Staff will present the MD-272 Plan at the APA Maryland State Conference. Staff will also attend the Newark Traffic Committee meeting.
- On October 21st, Staff will attend the WI Partners meeting.
- On October 26th, the SNCC LUTP workshop will be held.
- On November 9th, Safe Streets for All Wilmington will hold the AC meeting and Public Workshop.

Ms. Tina Merrill requested clarification on the date and details of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Air Management Association (MARAMA) event. Mr. Gula clarified that the event is scheduled for September 28, noting that Ms. Merrill had assumed it had already passed. Mr. Swiatek added that he would forward the invitation to her via email.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Ms. Samantha Bulkilvish provided an update regarding recent legislative developments and agency news from the Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC). She highlighted House Bill 450 and Senate Bill 23, noting that HB 450 specifically pertains to transportation funding. The OSPC is hosting a hybrid briefing on this legislation. Additional details and access to the briefing can be found on the agency's website.

Additionally, the Office of State Planning is currently hiring a Principal Planner. The job posting is available on the OSPC website under the "What's Going On" section, as well as on the state employment site.

Lastly, Ms. Bulkilvish encouraged attendees to subscribe to the OSPC newsletter via their website to stay updated on agency activities. She noted that the latest edition was distributed earlier in the week and contains full details on recent legislation and state planning initiatives.

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: Meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Attachments (0)