

# TRANSPORTER

## Regional Sidewalk Gap Analysis: How you can get involved

WILMAPCO has kicked off the Regional Sidewalk Gap Analysis and is in the process of identifying gaps in the sidewalk network in New Castle County, Delaware and Cecil County, Maryland. The data from this project will help determine how filling those gaps can improve walking in your community. The first round of regional analysis was completed using computers to review satellite images for missing, damaged or otherwise difficult to use sidewalks.

This computer image review is checked for quality by agency partners' employees who have an in-depth knowledge of the communities where they work. While it is important to have

professional input into where the walking network is lacking in our region, there is no replacement for the perspective of the people who live and work in these communities.

The project team has created an interactive map of the region that anyone with local knowledge can use to help identify issues that may have been missed. The map is set up to be easy to use, and gives participants the option of identifying sidewalk obstructions, issues with pedestrian crossings, missing crosswalks, or safety/comfort concerns.

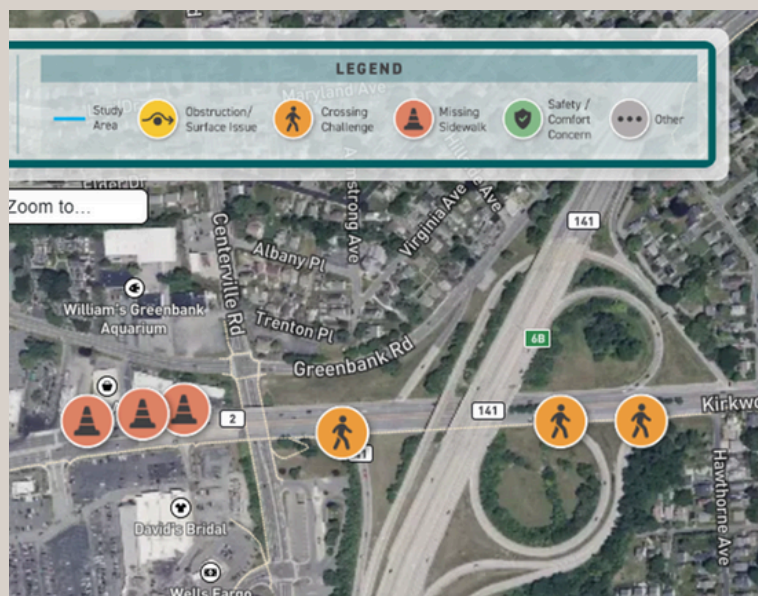
Once the analysis is complete, the project team will produce a ranked list of potential projects that will help improve walkability in the region.



WILMAPCO has received good feedback so far, but we would like to see more comments on the interactive map from the towns of Elkton and North East in Cecil County, and the Southbridge, Brandywine Village and Penn Rose neighborhoods of Wilmington, Delaware.

Community members are encouraged to visit the [wilmapco.org/sidewalk](http://wilmapco.org/sidewalk) project page, or can access the interactive map directly by clicking [here](#).

When commenting on the map, participants are encouraged but not required to provide their email address so the project team can follow up with any questions and keep participants informed of project progress.



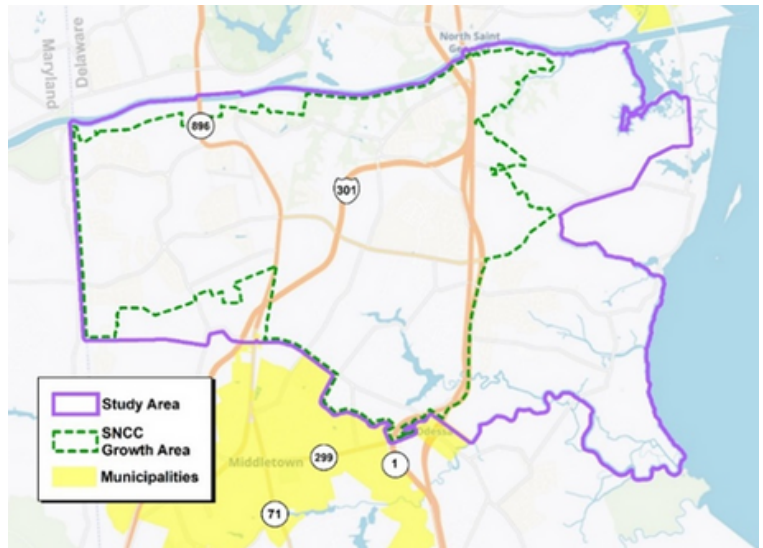
A screenshot from the wikimap, with participant feedback added.



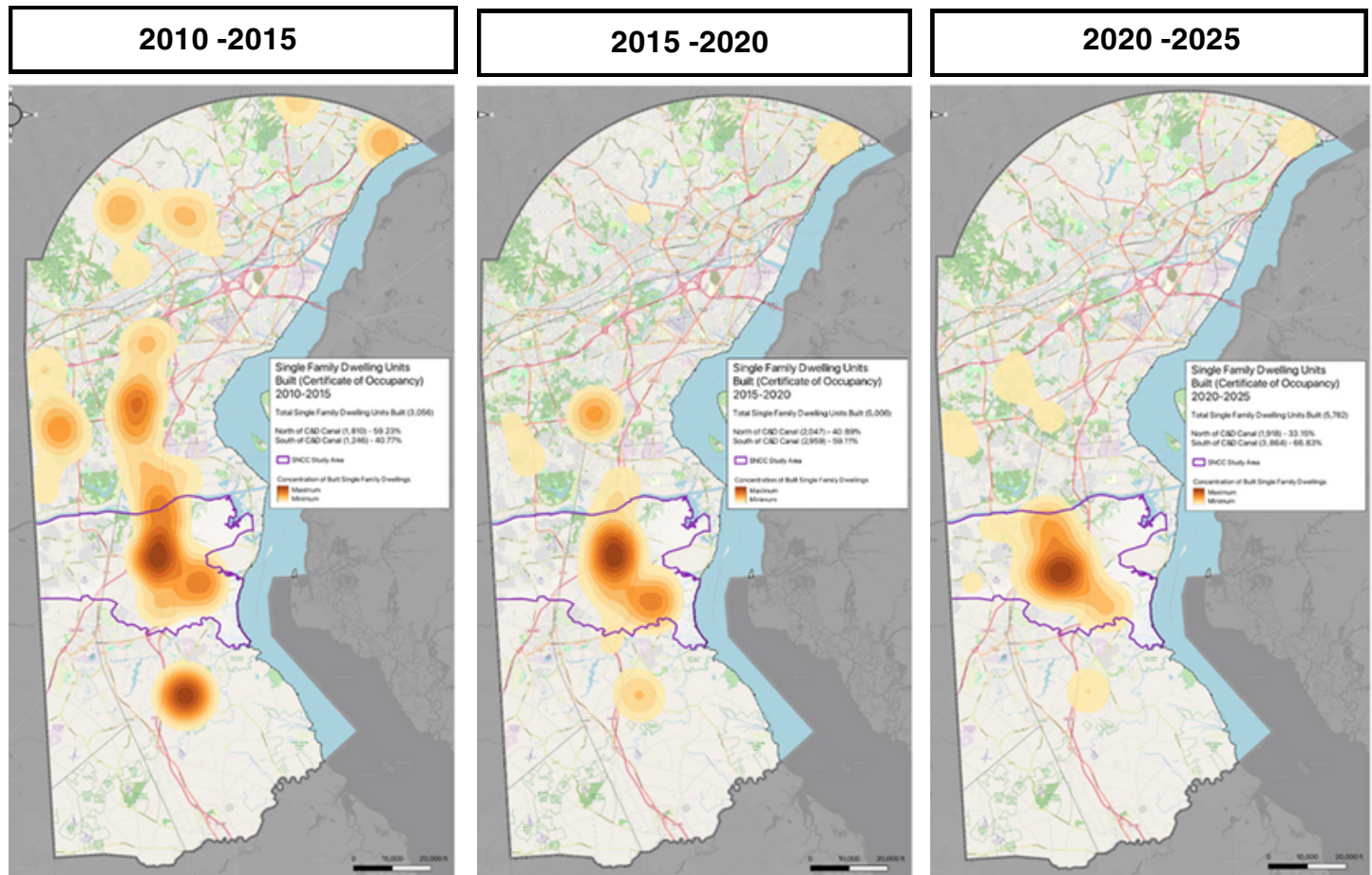
# The Southern NCC Growth Area Land Use and Transportation Plan is underway

The Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) is working with its partner agencies, Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC), and New Castle County Land Use to create a program of improvements for the Unincorporated Southern New Castle County Growth Area. The primary objective of this effort is to develop a coordinated infrastructure master plan that includes a comprehensive evaluation of land use and infrastructure issues faced in this area of New Castle County. Additionally, the plan will develop and recommend effective implementation measures to better coordinate transportation infrastructure improvements that will support the expected growth in the area.

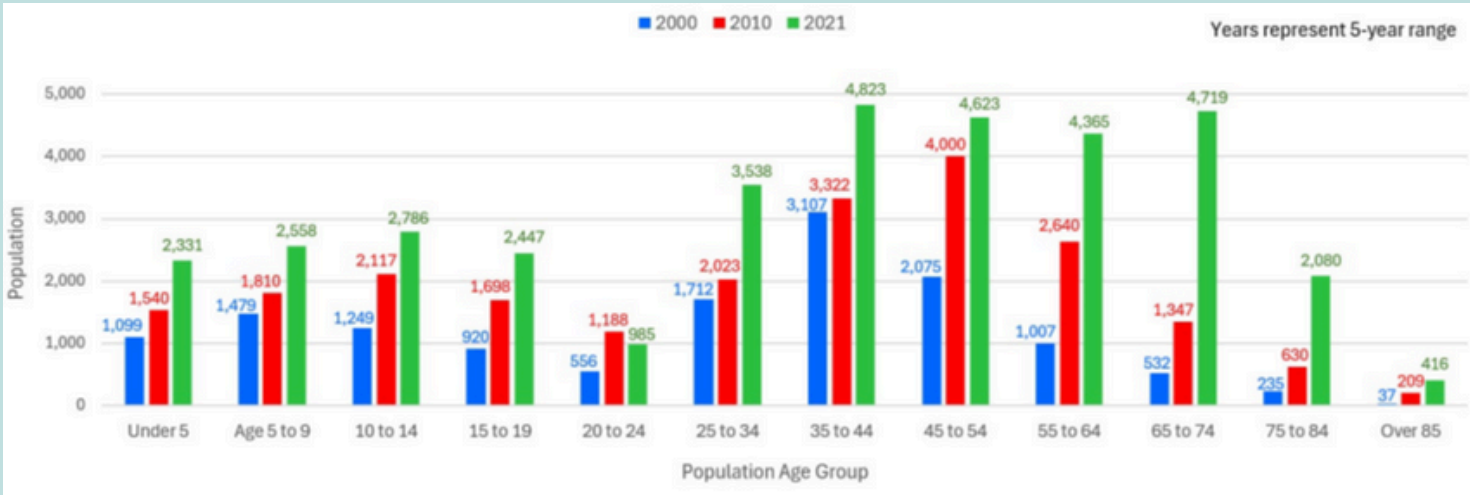
The Unincorporated Southern New Castle County Growth Area is comprised of the area to the north of the Towns of Odessa and Middletown and spanning to the C & D canal.



The SNCC Growth area has seen the greatest population growth in NCC for the last decade.



One unexpected aspect of this growth is that the incoming population has included a large cohort between the ages of 35 and 74. This population influx has brought a large number of households above 54 years old, and this increase in the diversity in ages for the study area can create challenges for the transportation network.



When WILMAPCO held the first workshop for this study, on November 17, 2025, we collected comments via paper forms and an online survey. We found that many residents would like to see a more extensive network of walking and biking paths to connect them to restaurants, shops, and recreation areas in their communities. This was heard from parents with younger children as well as from older residents without children at home. However, the older group does have different interests and needs than younger households with school-age children. The older residents requested transit services that would transport them to activity centers, but also to health care centers and other professional services. The current transit service consists of DART bus routes 46 and 301, both of which pass through the study area with only one bus stop for each route, at the N. Middletown Park & Ride at US 301 and the Boyd’s Corner Park & Ride at SR 1, respectively. These routes are designed to carry commuters to job centers and connections to other DART routes, so they do not circulate within the study area and their routes do not include the areas that many residents would like to access.

There was considerable discussion about these topics at the first meeting of the study Advisory Committee on January 12, as well concerns with high traffic speeds and roadway safety. That group consists of partner agency staff, elected officials, municipalities, school district

officials, local fire companies, businesses and business organizations, developers, neighborhood home owners’ associations and civic groups, and local institutions. The Advisory Committee will assist the partner agencies as we move through the study tasks by bringing opinions and comments from the community to help develop plans and strategies that will improve the transportation network to accommodate the continued growth in this area of New Castle County.

Following the integration of community comments, the study team will develop land use and transportation scenarios based on current data and 20-year future projections. These scenarios will be modeled to determine a network that optimizes active transportation, improves transit accessibility for seniors, and addresses safety and congestion.

The results of the modeling and analysis will be presented for review and comment at the next Advisory Committee meeting and the next public workshop, both of which are expected to be held in March of 2026.

To follow the progress of this study, please visit [Southern New Castle County • WILMAPCO](#).

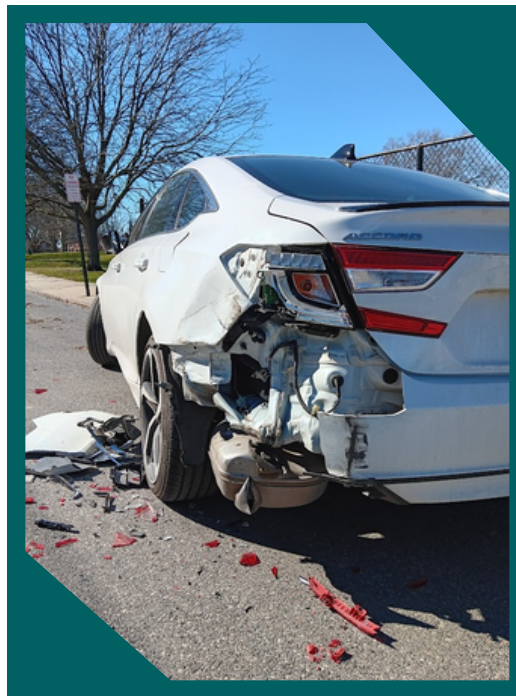


# Southbridge Truck Bypass Study develops short-term recommendations

More than 400 tractor-trailers travel through Wilmington's dense Southbridge neighborhood on a typical day. The Southbridge Transportation Action Plan (STAP), developed by WILMAPCO in 2023, identified these trucks as the community's top transportation concern. Nearly all surveyed residents (95%) said reducing truck traffic was important, citing safety issues, health impacts, and damage to vehicles and homes.

To address these concerns, the STAP recommended studying the feasibility of a truck bypass around Southbridge. A new roadway connection could offer trucks a more efficient route that avoids the neighborhood. WILMAPCO received a federal grant to explore this concept, with additional support from DelDOT and the City of Wilmington.

The community-driven Southbridge Truck Bypass Study (STBS) is now about halfway complete. To date, the study has documented truck travel patterns in and around Southbridge, supported the installation of no-truck parking signage on community streets, and developed several short-term recommendations aimed at reducing truck traffic in the neighborhood.



Short-term recommendations include:

- Removing outdated signage on northbound US 13 that directs Edgemoor-bound traffic through Southbridge
- Installing new truck-routing signs encouraging heavy trucks to use Christina Avenue and Terminal Avenue instead of New Castle Avenue and Heald Street in Southbridge
- Implementing an active railroad-crossing monitoring system to alert truck drivers when Christina Avenue or Terminal Avenue is blocked by a train

More extensive land-use and transportation strategies are currently being developed which could further reduce truck traffic in Southbridge and improve freight movement throughout Wilmington. These concepts will be shared at a public workshop planned for mid-February.

For more information about the STBS, visit [www.wilmapco.org/southbridgetrucks](http://www.wilmapco.org/southbridgetrucks)





# Tracking progress on regional planning goals

We are nearing completion of our latest performance measurement effort, the Regional Progress Report. This report tracks how well the policy objectives in the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) are advancing. In short, are we meeting the mark, falling short, or somewhere in between?

Each RTP action receives a green, yellow, or red light rating based on a review of both quantitative and qualitative indicators. The findings in this report will help shape the next RTP update, scheduled for 2027.

One action showing good progress is the development and implementation of subregional plans. Since 1995 WILMAPCO has produced roughly 60 corridor and community plans. Most of these (about 80%) have led to at least some transportation projects.

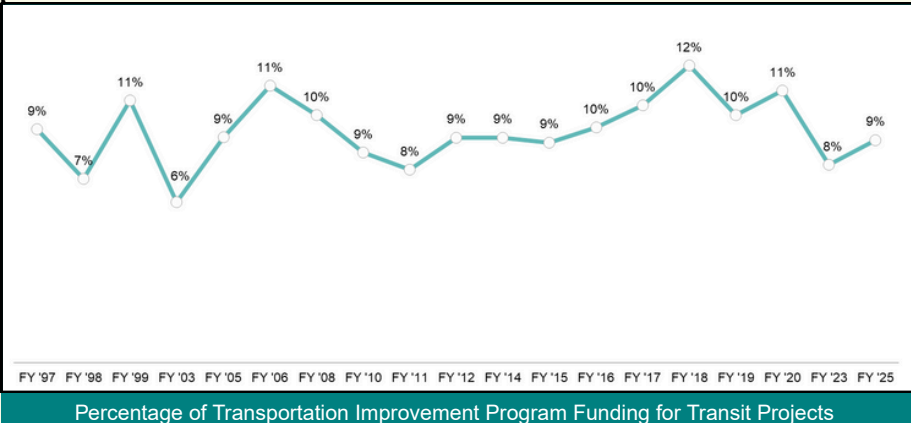
Notable examples include:

- New Castle County Greenway Plan (2003)
- Claymont and Newark Regional Transportation Center Plans (2008 and 2013)
- Ardentown Paths Plan (2017)

A few plans, however, have seen limited advancement beyond the planning stage, such as Perryville’s Greenway Plan (2012) and North East’s Transit-Oriented Development Plan (2014).

One action that has showed poor progress is planning for and funding improvements to public transportation. In our 2022 Public Opinion Survey, residents identified limited public transportation as the region’s most significant transportation problem. Nearly four out of five respondents (79%) said improving bus and train service was important or essential.

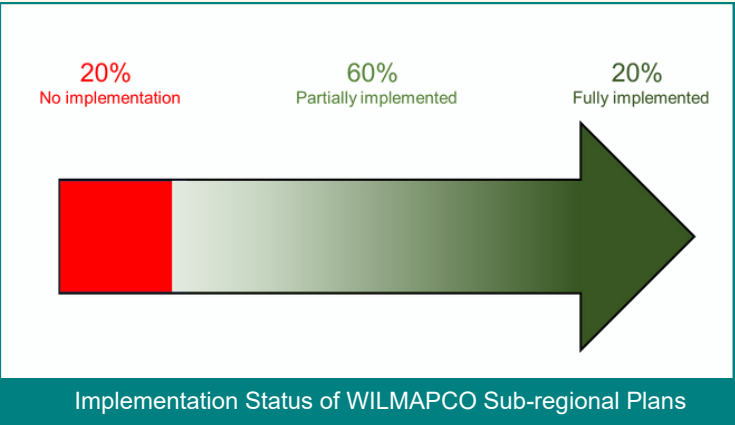
Despite this, the data show that only about one in ten capital transportation dollars since the late 1990s have gone toward bus and rail management or expansion projects.



- Overall, in the draft Regional Progress Report:
- 63% of actions were judged to have progressed well
  - 22% showed mixed progress
  - 16% had poor progress

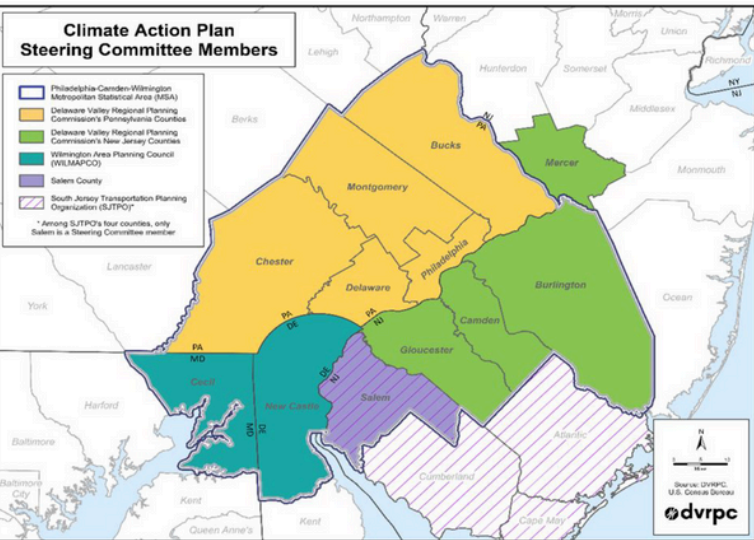
WILMAPCO will closely review these findings as we begin drafting the next Regional Transportation Plan. Council adoption is anticipated in March 2026.

To learn more about the Regional Progress Report, please contact us or visit <http://www.wilmapco.org/regional-progress-report/>.



# Regional Comprehensive Climate Action Plan finalized

Alongside the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization, WILMAPCO has developed a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan. The plan serves to map out how, together, we can reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and grow sustainably throughout the Philadelphia Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). As shown in the map below, this region includes 12 counties across Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. This plan was developed thanks to the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant and builds upon a 2024 Priority Climate Action Plan.



Philadelphia Metropolitan Statistical Area, the region considered in this plan

The Comprehensive Climate Action Plan includes 26 measures, across eight economic sectors, aimed at reducing regional GHG emissions. These eight sectors include agriculture, forestry, and land use, buildings, electric generation, industrial, oil and gas, solid waste, transportation and off-road vehicles, and water and wastewater. Within these sectors are actionable measures such as electrifying light-duty vehicles and establishing and reinforcing land use patterns that support transit and active transportation. This cohesive plan also addresses workforce opportunities and needs in order for these measures to be carried out, as well as a community benefits analysis, which illustrates the assets these measures will bring to the region's residents.

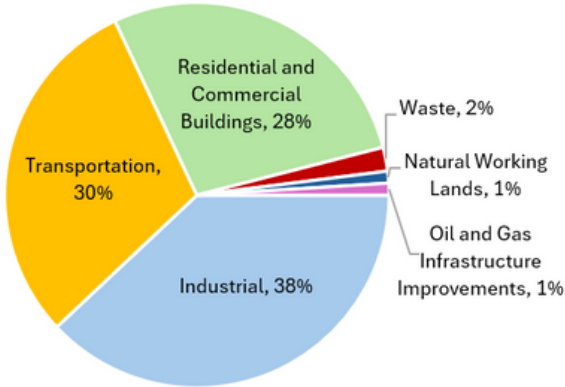
Contributions to this plan came from dozens of technical and academic experts from across the sectors. Nineteen community benefit organizations throughout the region also sat on the steering committee, including Healthy

Communities Delaware, the Delaware Community Foundation, West Side Grows Together, the Sierra Club Delaware Chapter, and Fair Hill Nature Center. As part of the plan development process, the team solicited feedback via an online survey and hosted three focus groups, with nearly 30 total participants sharing what climate issues matter most to them. The Wilmington focus group revealed shared priorities of housing and development, sense of community, transportation, quality of life, and education.

## Greenhouse Gas Reduction

The plan models what it might take to reach the GHG reduction goal of net-zero by 2050. By undertaking reasonable yet ambitious steps, the model suggests an 82% reduction from 2005 levels is attainable by mid-century. Within the transportation sector, the model shows that on-road zero-emissions vehicle adoption, vehicle miles traveled reduction, and more infill redevelopment would create most of the benefit. Enhancements to active transportation and transit would also contribute to emissions reductions. These reductions depend on the deep decarbonization of the electric grid, as this will determine the extent of the benefit of electric vehicles.

2019-2050 Cumulative Reductions by Sector  
(% of total MTCO<sub>2</sub>e reduced)



Potential Carbon Dioxide reductions by sector

## What's next?

While federal support for climate action has waned recently, state support in Delaware and Maryland has remained strong. Indeed, both states recently published climate action plans that were coordinated with this regional effort. Many of the recommendations in these long-range plans will be undertaken with or without federal support by states, counties, cities, towns, and private interests. If you would like to learn more, please visit: [www.dvrpc.org/cprg](http://www.dvrpc.org/cprg).



# 2026 Delaware State Rail Plan Update

The 2026 Delaware State Rail Plan (SRP) is an update to the 2011 Delaware State Rail Plan that addresses freight, intercity, and commuter rail services within the state. This update will outline the policies, strategies, and investments that will guide rail transportation in Delaware for the next 20 years. It draws on several statewide planning efforts, including DelDOT's [Framework for Excellence](#) and the [2022 Delaware State Freight Plan Full.pdf](#)



opportunities for Delaware's passenger and freight rail network. The updated SRP's vision will emphasize safety, improvements to existing infrastructure and services, resiliency, and operational efficiency.

To ensure public input informs proposed investments, DelDOT launched an online public survey in December 2025 with a deadline of January 31, 2026. Flyers were distributed at rail stations statewide to engage current riders and encourage participation.

The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) is developing the 2026 SRP Update to comply with Chapter 227 of Title 49 of the U.S. Code, Section 22705, as enacted under the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) of 2008. PRIIA requires states to prepare rail plans that meet specific criteria to remain eligible for related federal grant programs. DelDOT began the project in 2025 with a comprehensive assessment of the state's existing rail system. Since then, the agency has conducted extensive coordination with stakeholders, including local jurisdictions, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), railroads, economic development groups, and advocacy organizations. These efforts helped define the vision, goals, needs, and

Next, DelDOT will begin developing specific improvements and investments to address the state's rail needs. Throughout the process, the agency will continue engaging stakeholders and the public to refine opportunities and strategies that will shape the future of rail transportation in Delaware. The updated SRP is expected to be finalized in Winter 2026/2027.

To learn more, visit

<https://deldot.gov/Business/railPlanning/>,

<https://publicinput.com/delawarerailplan>,

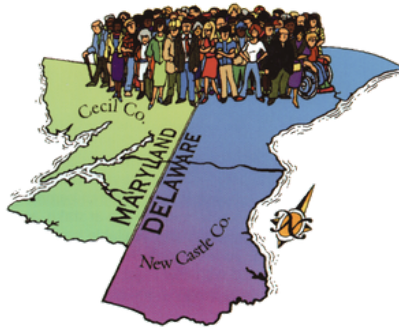
check us out on Facebook at facebook.com/delawaredot/ and follow us on Instagram @ delawaredot and on X @DelawareDOT



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## Transporter Newsletter Winter 2026

## WILMAPCO Public Meetings

For the latest information on meeting location or virtual login, please visit [www.wilmapco.org](http://www.wilmapco.org)  
or email Elizabeth Espinal at [espinal@wilmapco.org](mailto:espinal@wilmapco.org)

FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
<i>February 9, 6 p.m.</i> Public Advisory Committee	<i>March 3, 3 p.m.</i> Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group	<i>April 13, 6 p.m.</i> Public Advisory Committee
<i>February 19, 10 a.m.</i> Technical Advisory Committee	<i>March 12, 2 p.m.</i> WILMAPCO Council	<i>April 16, 10 a.m.</i> Technical Advisory Committee
	<i>March 19, 10 a.m.</i> Technical Advisory Committee	

The Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) is 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. Learn more at [www.wilmapco.org](http://www.wilmapco.org).