

**PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
WILMAPCO Hybrid-format Meeting, August 17, 2026

Minutes prepared by Elizabeth Espinal.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce representative and PAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL**

**Members Present: 9**

Mark Blake, Greater Hockessin Area Development  
Tracy Chamblee, Southern New Castle County Alliance  
Patricia Folk, Cecil County  
Mike Kaszyski, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce and PAC Chair  
Sarah Lester, Cornerstone West  
William Lower, Committee of 100  
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council  
Joshua Solge, City of Newark  
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance

**Members Absent: 5**

Robin Bullock, Holloway Terrace  
Carlos de los Ramos, AARP  
Bill Dunn, Civic League for New Castle County  
Victor Singer, New Castle County Civic League  
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance

**Staff Members: 7**

Daniel Blevins, Principal Planner  
Leonard Bonarek, Senior Planner  
Elizabeth Espinal, Administrative Assistant  
Dave Gula, Principal Planner  
Dawn Stant, Outreach Coordinator  
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner  
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

**Guests: 4**

Emily Bull, Maryland Department of the Environment  
Wesley Hicks, Delaware Department of Transportation  
Julianne Hilton, Maryland Department of the Environment  
Lilia Montoya, Delaware Transit Corporation

**2. Approval of the June 15, 2026, Meeting Minutes**

**ACTION:** On Action by Mr. Glenn Pusey and seconded by Mr. Dave Tancredi, the meeting minutes were approved by the PAC.

**3. Public Comment Period:**

None.

#### **4. Executive Director's Report:**

Ms. Tigist Zegeye introduced Ms. Lilia Montoya, the new Chief Executive Officer of the Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC), who addressed the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) to share her background and vision for the agency:

Ms. Montoya, who joined DTC approximately three months ago, has over 20 years of transportation experience spanning heavy rail, school bus transportation, and transit operations. She previously served in transit leadership roles in California, including Los Angeles County and northern San Diego County.

Ms. Montoya expressed her enthusiasm for joining the Council and leading DTC's statewide operations under the DART brand. She highlighted that the agency operates border-to-border with a dedicated workforce of 1,150 employees supporting local communities and environmental initiatives.

Ms. Montoya commended the ongoing planning, infrastructure investments, and environmental efforts across Delaware, noting the state's well-maintained roads and green spaces. She expressed gratitude for the warm welcome and stated that she looks forward to collaborating with member agencies and attending future Council meetings.

Ms. Tigist Zegeye shared the following public outreach information:

- Starting with the July 9th Council meeting, members considered several action items presented by WILMAPCO staff. These included amending the FY2025–2028 TIP for the Cecil County Mid-County Transit Hub, adopting the Decennial Functional Classification Update for New Castle and Cecil Counties, approving the project prioritization for the 2026 New Castle and Cecil Counties TAP program, approving the draft WILMAPCO 2026 Public Participation Plan, and adopting the Regional Sidewalk Gap Analysis and Prioritization. Additionally, Council received two presentations: Draft 2050 RTP: 2027 Update – Review of Goals, Objectives, Actions, and Performance Measures, and Southern New Castle County Land Use and Transportation Plan Update.
- Staff participated in the Delmarva Freight Summit and conducted a Southbridge Truck Bypass Public Workshop.
- Staff attended Enstructure's Edgemoor Port Site tours.
- Staff attended the Wilmington Initiatives Public Workshop.
- Staff attended DTC's Newport Station Public workshop.
- Staff participated in the New Castle County Chamber of Commerce State of the County event.
- Staff attended DelDOT's Centerville Rd Railroad Crossing Study workshop.
- Staff attended the DelDOT Statewide Rail Plan MPO briefing.
- Staff hosted the Wilmington SS4A Safety Action Plan AC meeting.
- Staff hosted the consultant interviews for the Limestone Rd/SR 7 LUTP RFP. The team from Wallace Montgomery/RKK was selected.
- Staff attended DelDOT's Kickoff meeting for the C&D Canal Rail Bridge Study.
- Staff hosted consultant interviews for the NNCC Bike & Ped Network MP RFP. The team from RKK was selected.
- Staff attended Delaware's Smart Growth Visioning Workshop.
- On August 18th, Staff will attend the Newark Traffic Committee meeting.
- On August 20th, Staff will continue to attend DTC's DSRL meeting with FRA.
- On August 21st, Staff will attend the WHA Empowerment Fair.

- On August 25th, Staff will continue to attend the DelDOT Statewide Rail Plan MPO briefing.
- On September 11th, the Route 9 Monitoring Committee will hold a streetlight / storm drain walking audit in the Rose Hill Gardens and Rosegate neighborhoods.
- On September 15th, Staff will attend the Newark Traffic Committee meeting.
- On September 17th, APA Delaware will be hosting a walking tour of the Grove redevelopment in Newark.
- On September 19th, Staff will participate in the Wilmington Open Streets Event on W. 2nd Street.
- On September 20th, Staff will participate in Newark's Community Day.
- On September 28th, Staff will participate in MARAMA's Mid Atlantic Clean Air Collaborative meeting.

Mr. Dave Tancredi inquired whether WILMAPCO participates in the SNCC Peach Festival, in Middletown. Ms. Stant responded that WILMAPCO did not.

## **ACTION ITEMS:**

### **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### **5. FY 2027 UPWP Studies Update.**

Mr. Dave Gula and Mr. Dan Blevins provided an overview of projects included in the FY2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The FY2027 UPWP was adopted by the Council on May 21, 2026, and includes four new project submissions along with continued monitoring and implementation efforts.

Mr. Gula reviewed the four new projects, including the Bellefonte Pedestrian Pathway Study, which will evaluate sidewalk gaps along Marion Avenue, Bellefonte Avenue, and Beeson Road. The project will utilize a Walkable Community Workshop approach to assess pedestrian safety, conduct walking audits, and develop recommendations in coordination with the Town of Bellefonte.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski inquired about the geographic location of nearby schools relative to the project area shown on the map, specifically pointing to Mount Pleasant Elementary and the local high school.

Mr. Dave Gula clarified that Mount Pleasant Elementary is located nearby—approximately one block off Washington Street Extension near Philadelphia Pike—while the high school is situated off Marsh Road. Mr. Gula noted that while these facilities are within reasonable walking distance, surrounding infrastructure presents challenges. Scouting efforts revealed that nearby residential streets lack continuous sidewalks, and in some cases, have none at all. Although these local streets experience low traffic volumes, WILMAPCO will analyze traffic speeds and volumes to evaluate necessary safety improvements.

Mr. Dave Tancredi questioned how this site-specific study aligns with the Regional Sidewalk Gap Analysis presented at the June meeting, asking how local requests are prioritized given that 134 high-priority sidewalk gaps exist across the region. He noted that in his own community, infrastructure requests like curb repairs are governed by DelDOT's regional prioritization process.

Mr. Gula explained that while the regional sidewalk gap analysis offers a broad overview, individual municipalities (such as Bellefonte) often request targeted assistance for locally

prioritized corridors. WILMAPCO staff use Walkable Community Workshops to help local communities evaluate feasibility and identify potential funding sources, accelerating progress rather than waiting on traditional regional funding pipelines.

The Limestone Road (SR 7) Land Use and Transportation Plan will evaluate multimodal transportation and land use improvements along the corridor in partnership with New Castle County, DelDOT, and DTC. The study will examine safety, connectivity, circulation, future growth, and transportation needs through stakeholder engagement, technical analysis, and development of improvement recommendations.

Members inquired about the project timeline; Mr. Gula clarified that it is a 17-month modeling study with an estimated completion date of January 2028. Members also questioned if this project was bigger than Kirkwood in mileage distance,

The Northern New Castle County Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Master Plan will focus on developing a connected bicycle and pedestrian network that links historic, cultural, and recreational destinations. The study will identify key destination clusters, evaluate existing conditions, and recommend infrastructure improvements to support active transportation and bicycle and pedestrian tourism.

The Susquehanna River Road Corridor Study in Port Deposit, Maryland, will examine safety and access concerns along the rural corridor, including speeding, pedestrian access to the river and surrounding natural areas, and opportunities for roadway improvements in coordination with local and state partners.

Mr. Blevins provided updates on ongoing monitoring and implementation efforts, including the Kirkwood Highway Corridor Plan Monitoring and Implementation Committee (KMIC). The committee will evaluate potential impacts associated with the proposed Churchman's Road Extension, review bus stop configurations along the corridor, and identify opportunities for improvements in coordination with DTC.

Additional monitoring efforts include evaluating potential transportation impacts of projects within the Churchman's Crossing area, such as opening Continental Drive to through traffic and improving connections to I-95. These studies will assess traffic circulation, potential congestion relief, and cost-benefit considerations.

The FY2027 UPWP projects will continue to support regional transportation planning, safety improvements, multimodal connectivity, and implementation of recommendations identified through WILMAPCO's planning studies.

**To view the presentation in its entirety, [\[click here\]](#) (28m. 06s.).**

## **6. Southbridge Truck Bypass Study**

Mr. Bill Swiatek provided a final update on the Southbridge Truck Bypass Study, which evaluated strategies to reduce truck traffic impacts in the Southbridge community while improving freight movement efficiency in Wilmington. The study was supported through a Reconnecting Communities grant, along with funding from the City of Wilmington and DelDOT.

Building upon the Southbridge Neighborhood Action Plan and previous transportation studies, staff performed technical cost assessments and analyzed a full year of StreetLight location data

to map truck origin and destination patterns. A comprehensive public engagement process guided the selection of a preferred, phased implementation plan.

Staff held public workshops, advisory committee meetings, and a youth engagement session at the Neighborhood House Community Center. Key concerns raised by students and residents included severe truck noise, sleep disruption, illegal street parking, and heavy trucks navigating narrow residential streets.

Mr. Swiatek said the project team collected survey responses through online forms and door-to-door outreach, gathering 70 completed responses. Every proposed strategy received over 50 percent community support. Residents also emphasized the need for immediate, visible improvements and ongoing community involvement during implementation.

Mr. Swiatek reviewed recommended strategies, including improved truck routing signage, roadway improvements, land use planning considerations, railroad crossing mitigation, and potential bypass alternatives. The preferred long-term option identified was the New Castle Avenue Connector, which would provide a direct connection between New Castle Avenue and Christina Avenue while improving freight efficiency and reducing truck traffic through Southbridge.

Following the public comment period that concluded on July 19, staff finalized the draft report for publication on the WILMAPCO website. The study is scheduled for Council endorsement on September 10, 2026, after which it will transition to the monitoring and implementation phase.

**To view the presentation in its entirety, [\[click here\]](#) (11m. 07s.).**

Mr. Dave Tancredi requested clarification regarding the operational and environmental tradeoffs between the proposed New Castle Avenue Connector bypass and the Christina Avenue overpass, noting that while the bypass is approximately \$10 million less expensive, constructing a new roadway would likely result in greater environmental impacts. He asked how traffic routing would function in practice, specifically whether trucks traveling along Route 9 heading toward the port or northern industrial areas would utilize Terminal Avenue and Christina Avenue rather than entering residential streets.

Mr. Bill Swiatek explained that the New Castle Avenue Connector offers a direct, efficient route serving the northern peninsula, where a major freight carrier generates over half of Southbridge's truck traffic, is located. He confirmed that while the bypass incurs greater environmental and property impacts. However, it is the most effective solution for both reducing neighborhood truck volumes and improving freight efficiency.

Mr. Tancredi inquired whether constructing the overpass along Christina Avenue would allow trucks to detour earlier via Terminal Avenue, thereby bypassing the active rail crossings entirely. Mr. Swiatek clarified that the connector route also specifically isolates and resolves the primary rail crossing bottleneck. It provides a direct outlet for heavy trucks without forcing them onto New Castle Avenue in Southbridge.

## **7. 2026 Public Opinion Survey**

Ms. Dawn Stant presented the results of the 2026 Public Opinion Survey, which is conducted every four years to inform the update of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Ms. Stant explained that the survey targeted a statistically valid sample of 600 residents across New Castle County (two-thirds) and Cecil County (one-third). Due to the former vendor going out of business, WILMAPCO worked with a new vendor. A hybrid method was implemented using direct mail postcards directing residents to an online platform, followed by phone calls and online panels. The survey length was also reduced to a 15-minute format. The revised strategy shifted the demographic balance toward younger residents: participants over age 65 represented 16% of respondents in 2026, down from 52% in 2022.

Overall, 78% of respondents reported that the transportation system meets their needs, with drivers reporting the highest satisfaction at 95%, while households earning under \$50,000 annually were more than twice as likely to report that the transportation system did not meet their needs. Additionally, 40% of respondents faced difficulty reaching key destinations due to a lack of transportation, with Cecil County reporting higher access challenges, particularly for social activities (43%).

Regarding funding options, developer fees received the highest approval at 77%, followed by higher registration fees for inefficient vehicles and a Vehicle Miles Traveled tax; Cecil County residents showed higher support for delaying or eliminating projects (60%) and increasing transit fares (43%).

Key community priorities included equitable service across all communities (86%), open space preservation (84%), traffic congestion reduction, improved bus service, and bicycle infrastructure (over 50%), while public EV charging received 49% support.

Public familiarity with WILMAPCO rose to 34%. Finally, 64% viewed social media outreach as effective, 85% utilized online surveys, and younger demographics (ages 18–34) showed the lowest inclination to attend public meetings.

**To view the presentation in its entirety, [click here](#) (11m. 15s.).**

PAC members commended Ms. Stant's outreach efforts and discussed potential future strategies, including launching a TikTok account featuring short-form videos to engage younger demographics.

## **8. Other Business**

Mr. Tancredi asked if further discussion on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) would be added to the October agenda, which Ms. Stant confirmed. Ms. Stant also reminded the committee that several members are up for reappointment and noted she would contact them via email. Finally, Mr. Kaszyski requested the formation of a Nominating Committee—comprising Mike Kaszyski, Dave Tancredi, and Tracy Chamblee—to oversee the election of the PAC chair and vice chair for next meeting.

## **9. Adjournment**

The PAC adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

**Attachments: (0)**