TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
October 15, 2026

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, October 15, 2026, 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 meeting to order at 10:05 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
Michael Fortner, City of Newark
William Goldman, Cecil County Division of Planning and Zoning
Wesley Hicks, Delaware Department of Transportation
Julianne Hilton, Maryland Department of the Environment
Gwinneth Kaminsky Rivera, City of Wilmington Planning
Shawn Kiernan, Maryland Department of Transportation
Tina Merrill, Department of Natural Resources and Environment
Catherine Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation
Steven Weber, City of Wilmington Department of Public Works

TAC Ex-Officio Members present:
Gregory Beacoat, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Brian Devine, Diamond State Port Corporation

TAC Members absent:
Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism
Delaware River and Bay Authority
Maryland State Highway Administration
Town of Elkton Planning

TAC Ex-Officio Members absent:
Amtrak
U.S. Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Federal Transit Administration

Guests and Invitees:
Emily Bull, MDE
Grace Bell, NCC Dept. of Land Use
Robert Evans, Public
Eric Gasiewski, NCC Dept. of Land Use
Landon Jones, Wilmington Planning Division
Bill Kastning, Cecil County
Rohit Marath, Public
L'Kiesha Markley, MSHA

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 September 24, 2026, Joint TAC & AQS Meeting Minutes.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Mr. Shawn Kiernan, the TAC and AQS minutes are approved.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES
None.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
None.

ACTION ITEMS
6. To recommend adoption of the Delaware Transportation Performance Measure Targets.
Mr. Dan Blevins requested the TAC's support for adopting Delaware's statewide Transportation Performance Measure (TPM) targets for PM2 and PM3 for the 2026–2029 performance period. PM2 measures National Highway System (NHS) bridge and pavement conditions, while PM3 measures travel time reliability for interstate and non-interstate highways, including truck travel time reliability. Staff noted that WILMAPCO has historically adopted the statewide targets established collaboratively by DelDOT and MDOT, which are incorporated into Appendix H of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Blevins asked TAC to adopt the statewide PM2 and PM3 targets for use in regional transportation planning.

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky and seconded by Ms. Samantha Bulkilvish, the TAC recommends adoption of the Delaware Transportation Performance Measure Targets.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:
7. MDOT's Statewide Freight Plan Update.
Ms. L'Kiesha Markley of the Maryland State Highway Administration's Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering, Innovative Performance Planning Division, presented an update on Maryland's State Freight Plan. She explained that the plan is updated every four years to meet

federal requirements under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and reflect changes in freight operations, infrastructure needs, and post-pandemic recovery. The latest update incorporated developments since 2022 and was completed under an accelerated schedule. The draft plan was submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on September 14, with approval anticipated in early December 2026.

Ms. Markley emphasized the role of the State Freight Advisory Committee, which includes industry representatives, state and federal agencies, railroads, military representatives, local governments, associations, and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). The committee and public stakeholders provided feedback on the plan's vision, goals, objectives, and investment priorities. The updated vision emphasizes safe, efficient, resilient, and interconnected multimodal freight movement that supports Maryland's economy and communities.

The plan aligns with the 2050 Maryland Transportation Plan and focuses on four goals: enhancing safety and security by reducing freight-related incidents and maintaining safe operations during severe weather, security threats, and other disruptions; delivering system quality by maintaining infrastructure in a state of good repair, improving mobility and reliability, and reducing freight bottlenecks; serving communities and supporting the economy by strengthening freight competitiveness, improving multimodal and intermodal connections, and supporting ports, BWI Airport, railroads, and related industries; and promoting environmental stewardship by advancing sustainable infrastructure, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, supporting alternative fuels and electric vehicles, and minimizing freight-related environmental impacts.

Two stakeholder surveys informed the update. The first received approximately 110 responses, with about 80% of respondents expressing agreement with the plan's vision and goals. The second survey assessed freight needs, priorities, and strategies, identifying additional railroad crossings, freight bottlenecks, truck parking shortages, and crash locations. Stakeholders also emphasized the need for improved freight data, stronger integration of freight planning with land-use decisions, increased rail and multimodal funding, and continued attention to environmental sustainability.

Ms. Markley outlined the plan's seven chapters, which address the freight network, demand and economic trends, infrastructure needs, safety, investment priorities, and implementation strategies. Detailed supporting information is provided in the appendices. The plan also identifies major freight commodities by tonnage and value, key highway and rail corridors, and emerging congestion concerns.

She reported that truck delays and reliability have worsened since 2019, with a sharp increase in delays between 2023 and 2024. Disruptions associated with the loss of the (Francis Scott) Key Bridge connection in the Baltimore region contributed to these trends. Several major bottlenecks remain in central Maryland, with congestion concerns also emerging along I-95 near Aberdeen and Cecil County.

The freight investment plan includes technology improvements, truck safety and enforcement upgrades, expanded truck parking, and capital projects. Planned initiatives include work-zone alerts, high-wind warnings on bridges, mobile technology to address recurring bridge strikes, truck parking improvements along I-70 and I-95, and improvements to key highway corridors. Although Maryland's application for a federal BUILD grant to support truck parking improvements was unsuccessful, the state intends to continue advancing project design.

Ms. Markley concluded by noting that the plan incorporates stakeholder feedback and establishes implementation strategies assigned to responsible agencies. She acknowledged WILMAPCO's contributions and ongoing coordination with FHWA throughout the update process.

To view this presentation in its entirety please click here. [28m.49s.].

8. DTC's Fall Service Change Update.
Ms. Cathy Smith presented an overview of DART's upcoming service changes, scheduled for implementation on November 15. She reviewed DART's mission and environmental commitment and explained that three public hearings were held, one in each county. Because the proposed changes were relatively minor, attendance was limited. Following the 2026 customer satisfaction survey, DART prioritized improving service reliability and frequency.

In New Castle County, Routes 11 and 25 will be realigned through downtown Wilmington, replacing Market Street with Orange Street northbound and King Street southbound. The change is intended to reduce delays caused by delivery vehicles, illegal parking, and roadway obstructions while maintaining access to downtown destinations. DART also approved streamlining Route 15 by eliminating its deviation into Twin Spans Business Park due to low ridership; all stops along SR 9 will remain served. Route 53 in Newark will retain a revised alignment that extends along Wyoming Road to Marrows Road, improving service to residential neighborhoods, senior housing, and other destinations. Positive public feedback supported retaining the revised route.

Ms. Smith also discussed DART's planned microtransit service in Seaford, which will be its second microtransit zone in Sussex County, following Georgetown and Millsboro. The service is intended to improve mobility in areas where traditional fixed-route buses may be less effective, including mobile home parks and residential communities. DART is conducting public outreach and informational sessions to educate residents on booking trips through its mobile app, website, or reservation center.

Two proposed route changes involving Routes 10 and 33 were rejected following public and legislative feedback. Concerns included access for seniors, individuals with limited mobility, and transit-dependent residents in areas such as Trolley Square, the Highlands, Tower Hill, and Forty Acres. Ms. Smith emphasized that the decision demonstrated the value of public engagement and DART's commitment to responding to riders' concerns.

Ms. Smith concluded with an overview of ridership trends. Fixed-route ridership in FY2027 was approximately 5–5.5% below the previous fiscal year, with reliability and service frequency identified as key customer concerns. Paratransit ridership remained relatively steady, while SEPTA ridership showed signs of recovery. DART Connect ridership in Newark declined following technical issues associated with the transition between scheduling platforms but has since rebounded. The Newark service recently recorded its highest ridership to date, averaging approximately 45–50 riders daily and 3–3.2 riders per trip. Ms. Smith noted that DART continues to improve scheduling and service efficiency.

To view this presentation in its entirety please click here. [14m.46s.].

9. WILMAPCO's 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
Ms. Tigist Zegeye provided an overview of the financial plan for the 2027 update of the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). She explained that federal requirements mandate a

financially constrained plan that identifies anticipated public and private revenues, project costs, and inflation-adjusted expenditures. The financial projections apply a 5% inflation rate for the short term and 3% for the mid- and long-term periods. WILMAPCO also coordinates with state departments of transportation to develop revenue estimates. The plan may include an aspirational project list for projects that currently lack funding.

For Delaware, WILMAPCO used the June 2026 revenue forecast from the Delaware Economic and Financial Advisory Council (DEFAC). Anticipated revenues include tolls, fuel taxes, motor vehicle fees, federal funds, DART farebox revenue, investments, bonds, and carryover funds. These revenues are reduced by core operating and system expenses, including DelDOT and DART operations, debt service, GARVEE debt service, and state-of-good-repair needs.

Ms. Zegeye explained that available funding would not be sufficient to support all projects identified in the RTP. For the short-term period, statewide anticipated revenues total approximately $4.7 billion, with about $3 billion allocated to core expenses, leaving approximately $1.2 billion for projects. Based on the estimated distribution of funds, 48% for New Castle County, 21% for Kent County, and 31% for Sussex County, approximately $3.7 billion is projected to be available for New Castle County's long-range plan through 2050. This represents a decrease of approximately $1 billion from the $4.7 billion estimated during the previous RTP update. She emphasized that the figures remain preliminary while staff continue coordinating with DelDOT to verify assumptions and calculations.

For Maryland, MDOT provides statewide estimates for operations, system preservation, and expansion, along with specific funding estimates for Cecil County. Historically, Cecil County has received approximately 0.6% of statewide expansion funding. Ms. Zegeye noted that the projected funding outlook for Cecil County was more favorable.

Ms. Zegeye concluded by reviewing progress on the RTP update. WILMAPCO has completed the Regional Progress Report and public opinion survey and has begun the air quality conformity analysis. Staff is assessing the plan's financial feasibility and policy consistency, with a presentation to the Council anticipated in November. A draft project list is also being developed but cannot be finalized until the financial projections are confirmed. Staff expect to present the project list, draft air quality conformity determination, and draft report for Council review at upcoming meetings.

To view this presentation in its entirety please click here. [06m.46s.].

INFORMATION ITEMS

10. Staff Report

Mr. Dave Gula reported the following updates:

- On September 28th, Staff presented the WILMAPCO First/Final Mile Freight Study at the Mid-Atlantic ITE conference in Atlantic City, NJ. Staff participated in MARAMA's Mid Atlantic Clean Air Collaborative meeting; and a public open house was held for the East Elkton Paths Plan.
- On September 29th, Staff attended DelDOT's Canal Lift Bridge Stakeholder meeting for MPO's.
- On September 30th, the NNCC Bike & Ped Network MP study held its kickoff meeting.
- On October 1st, the Port Terminal Truck Routing Feasibility Study partners met. The KMIC agency partners met.

- On October 5th, the Ardens Monitoring and Implementation Committee met.
- On October 6th, Staff participated in Delaware's Quarterly Mobile Sources Planning Group meeting. Staff also attended DelDOT's Newark Regional Transportation Center update.
- On October 7th, Staff attended MDOT's Cecil County tour meeting. Staff also participated in Downes Elementary School's Walk to School Day.
- On October 8th, Staff met with Northeast Wilmington CDC to review the 12th Street Connector and other projects.
- On October 13th, Staff attended the Limestone Rd/SR 7 Check-in. Staff attended the Foulkstone Pathway workshop, which was very well attended.
- On October 14th, Staff attended the Fall KMIC meeting.
- On October 15th, Staff will attend the SNCC AC meeting.
- On October 16th, Staff will attend the CCT's Coordination meeting.
- On October 20th, Staff will present the MD-272 Plan at the APA Maryland State Conference. Staff will 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 October 27th, the Southbridge Improved Mobility Committee will meet.
- On October 28th, Staff will attend DelDOT's DE Safety Summit in Dover.
- On November 3rd, Staff will attend DelDOT/DTC's NRTC Update meeting.
- On November 4th, Staff will attend DelDOT's Statewide Rail Plan AC meeting.
- On November 5th, the Edgemoor Port Terminal Truck Routing Feasibility Study Partners will meet. Staff will attend the Newport Station Study AC meeting; and the Air Quality Subcommittee will meet.
- On November 9th, Wilmington's Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan will host the AC meeting immediately followed by a public workshop in the public library.
- On November 10th, Staff will attend the Limestone Road/SR 7 Partners meeting.
- On November 16th, the East Elkton Paths Plan will host a virtual public workshop.
- On November 17th, Staff will attend the Newark Traffic Committee meeting.
- On November 18th, Staff will attend the WI Partners Meeting. Staff will also attend the Fall CXMIC meeting.
- On November 19th, the Route 9 Monitoring and Implementation Committee will meet.

OTHER BUSINESS:

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: Meeting adjourned at 11:13 a.m.

Attachments (0)