

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
February 19, 2026

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, February 19, 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 TAC meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. TAC Members present:

Cooper Bowers, New Castle County Department of Land Use
Alexandra Brun, Maryland State Highway Administration
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
Gwinneth Kaminsky Rivera, City of Wilmington Planning
Shawn Kiernan, Maryland Department of Transportation
Quinn Krenznel, Town of Elkton Planning
Tina Merrill, Department of Natural Resources and Environment
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:

Brian Devine, Diamond State Port Corporation

TAC Members absent:

Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism
Delaware River and Bay Authority

TAC Ex-Officio Members absent:

Amtrak
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Federal Transit Administration

Guests and Invitees:

Ryan Long, Walker Consultant
Harry Romano, MDOT-SHA Consultant
Hunter A. Withers, MDOT-SHA Consultant
Bill Williamson, Delaware Transit Corporation

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 January 15, 2026, TAC Meeting Minutes.

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

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

None.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

ACTION ITEMS

6. To recommend endorsement of the draft 2026 Regional Progress Report.

The 2026 Regional Progress Report evaluates policy actions from the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) using a "traffic light" rating system across more than 100 data indicators. Performance has improved since 2022, with 63% of actions rated green (on track), 22% yellow (moderate progress), and 15% red (little or no progress). Key successes include air quality compliance and active transportation, while road safety and public transit funding remain areas of concern. Following a summary of these trends and an acknowledgment of the collaborative data-sharing efforts with state and transit partners, the Committee sought the Transportation Advisory Committee's (TAC) recommended endorsement of the report.

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Catherine Smith and seconded by Mr. Michael Fortner, the TAC recommends endorsement of the draft 2026 Regional Progress Report.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

7. Route 9 Service Plan

Mr. Bill Williamson presented a comprehensive overview of the Route 9 Corridor Transit Improvement Plan, which focuses on enhancing transit service and infrastructure along New Castle Avenue. This plan follows a final report that identified key investment needs and was developed in coordination with the Route 9 RAISE grant project. The presentation detailed the results of a public outreach campaign conducted in the spring of 2025, which gathered feedback from 70 participants, including fixed-route riders, paratransit users, and non-riders. Survey results highlighted that current barriers to transit use include infrequent service, inconvenient schedules, and bus stops located too far from key destinations.

To address these concerns, the report proposes several service realignments that will go through future DART public hearings and service changes. Key recommendations include realigning Route 8 to better serve Terminal Avenue and the Port of Wilmington with new Sunday service and adjusting the schedules of Routes 15 and 51 to provide more consistent timing between buses. Additionally, the plan suggests introducing DART Connect, a curb-to-curb microtransit service. This on-demand shuttle would replace traditional fixed-route service in lower-ridership areas like the Dunleith community, providing more flexible access to industrial zones such as the FedEx and recycling plants.

Infrastructure improvements are a major component of the plan, centered on a new five-tier classification system for bus stops. The goal is to ensure all stops are ADA-accessible, moving away from "Tier 5" stops (simple signposts) toward higher-amenity locations. High-ridership areas such as the Route 9 Library and the Henrietta Johnson Medical Center are slated for "Super Stops," which feature large shelters, real-time passenger information, and bike racks. Supporting these transit hubs, the plan recommends pedestrian safety enhancements like curb extensions to shorten crossing distances and new sidewalk installations along Rogers Road and Lambson Lane.

The presentation concluded with a phased implementation strategy that prioritizes improvements based on urgency and ridership. Priority 1 projects, focusing on immediate ADA compliance and high impact stop upgrades, are recommended for early construction. Lower priority items are scheduled to be integrated into broader capital projects over the next five to six years. Following the summary of these findings, the floor was opened for committee questions regarding the timeline and coordination of these transit enhancements.

To view this presentation in its entirety please [click here](#). [28m.21s.]

Mr. Dave Gula inquired whether the consultant team had identified a comprehensive list of anticipated projects that could facilitate transit improvements. He noted that unexpected projects often arise and expressed interest in leveraging larger capital initiatives to address lower-priority transit needs.

Mr. Bill Williamson explained that while the report focuses on prioritizing transit stops, the team is actively coordinating with other efforts, including private development and the ongoing Route 9 RAISE grant project, which overlaps with the study area. He acknowledged that while a finalized, consolidated list of all pending projects was not currently prepared, the team is actively monitoring external projects to ensure transit improvements are integrated wherever possible.

Mr. Gula suggested that the team utilize existing forums to stay informed of upcoming projects, such as quarterly meetings between DeIDOT and the City of Wilmington, and the Wilmington Initiatives group, which discusses long-term planning. He emphasized the importance of aligning these efforts to capitalize on implementation opportunities.

Additionally, Mr. Bill Swiatek provided a link via the Zoom chat to a comprehensive map detailing sidewalk issues in Southbridge.

8. Regional Sidewalk Gap Analysis Outcomes

Ms. Heather Dunigan provided an update on the Regional Sidewalk Gap Analysis, noting that the project has progressed since her previous briefing in October. Ms. Dunigan explained that

the study combines regional data analysis with community input to identify and prioritize critical sidewalk gaps across the region, with the goal of highlighting the most significant barriers to pedestrian mobility and supporting related planning efforts.

During Phase 1, the project team conducted a regionwide analysis to identify the presence and absence of sidewalks using high-resolution aerial imagery processed through artificial intelligence. This work, completed in partnership with Ecopia AI, was supplemented with data from Cecil County, New Castle County, and WILMAPCO. At the same time, an online interactive mapping tool was launched to collect public feedback on missing sidewalks, safety concerns, and barriers to pedestrian access. The tool remains available and continues to gather community input.

Ms. Dunigan reported that the project is now transitioning into Phase 2, which will include more detailed field investigation and evaluation of selected priority locations. Three demonstration areas are near Lancaster Pike and DuPont Road, along North DuPont Highway, and along Bridge Street in Elkton; these have been selected for in-depth analysis and public design workshops. These case studies will help refine prioritization criteria, evaluate funding strategies, and test the analytical framework for future use.

She also introduced the project's "*Sidewalk Gap Explorer*," an interactive application that allows users to review identified gaps, adjust prioritization criteria, and explore data across the region. Ms. Dunigan concluded by encouraging continued public participation through the online mapping tool and noted that the final report is expected to be completed by June.

To view this presentation in its entirety please [click here](#). [15m.25s.]

Ms. Samantha Bulkilvish asked whether similar Sidewalk Gap analyses are being conducted elsewhere in Delaware or Maryland. Ms. Heather Dunigan responded that similar efforts have been undertaken in Baltimore using Ecopia data and by the DVRPC, which has developed an interactive application to display its analysis. She noted that such studies are becoming more common nationwide and explained that WILMAPCO's regionwide analysis is intended to provide a planning tool for member agencies and municipalities. While the raw Ecopia dataset cannot be publicly released, derived GIS products can be shared with partner agencies.

Ms. Bulkilvish asked whether the study's primary goal is to prioritize sidewalk projects for funding. Ms. Dunigan confirmed that establishing a consistent, equitable framework for evaluating and prioritizing sidewalk needs is a key objective, noting that WILMAPCO regularly receives individual requests for sidewalks that are difficult to evaluate without a comprehensive regional approach.

Ms. Bulkilvish suggested that the list of identified gaps should be publicly available so improvements could be incorporated into other projects when opportunities arise. Ms. Dunigan indicated that this concept will likely be reflected in the study's recommendations and noted that WILMAPCO encourages agencies to address sidewalk gaps during roadway paving, rehabilitation, and other capital projects to improve entire corridors.

Mr. David Dahlstrom asked whether the analysis is based on aerial images. Ms. Dunigan confirmed that high-resolution aerial photography is used and explained that winter imagery helps improve visibility of sidewalks. She added that the imagery allows approximate measurement of sidewalk widths but cannot determine certain details, such as ADA compliance of curb ramps or pavement condition, which require field verification and public input. She also

noted that issues such as sidewalks blocked by parked vehicles may represent enforcement concerns rather than capital infrastructure gaps.

9. Walkable Community Workshops Data Reports

Mr. Leonard Bonarek presented an update on how remotely gathered speed data is being incorporated into WILMAPCO's Walkable Community Workshop reports to strengthen analysis of pedestrian safety concerns. He explained that the workshop series is conducted up to three times per year at the request of community groups concerned about pedestrian safety. Each workshop includes a presentation, a guided neighborhood walk to observe conditions and collect feedback from residents, and a mapping exercise where participants identify safety concerns. The information collected is then synthesized into a report with recommended improvements.

Mr. Bonarek noted that reviewers of previous reports often asked for more objective evidence regarding resident concerns about speeding. In response, WILMAPCO began incorporating speed data from StreetLight, a service that analyzes anonymized connected-device data to estimate traffic speeds and travel patterns. This approach allows staff to analyze much larger datasets and review historical conditions more quickly than traditional traffic studies that rely on physical counts or temporary tube counters.

Using the West Side of Wilmington as an example, Mr. Bonarek explained how the data can illustrate both average travel speeds and the frequency of higher-speed travel. While most vehicles travel within lower speed ranges, the analysis identified hundreds of daily instances of vehicles traveling at speeds of 40 miles per hour or higher on streets with a posted speed limit of 25 miles per hour. This information helps to validate community concerns about speeding and highlights the potential safety risks for pedestrians.

He added that the data is now incorporated into Walkable Community Workshop reports and presented through an interactive map that allows users to view speed information and community comments for specific street segments. Mr. Bonarek concluded that the approach has been used in the most recent workshop reports and will continue to be refined to improve how speed data is analyzed and communicated to the public and partner agencies.

To view this presentation in its entirety please [click here](#). [10m.24s.]

Mr. David Dahlstrom asked whether the speed data could be analyzed by time of day to determine when speeding is most prevalent. Mr. Leonard Bonarek responded that the data can be analyzed at a detailed level, including specific hours or time periods such as school dismissal times, to identify when higher speeds occur. He noted that while congestion may limit speeds during peak periods, speeding can still occur, particularly on less congested streets. For this analysis, however, the study examined speeds over a 24-hour period.

Mr. Dahlstrom commented that, based on his observations, speeding often occurs when roads are less congested, such as late at night or early in the morning. Mr. Bonarek acknowledged that this can occur and noted that in the Wilmington neighborhood studied, several one-way north-south streets with less congestion showed higher observed speeds than some of the busier east-west corridors.

Mr. Steve Weber of the City of Wilmington noted that StreetLight data is anonymized and may include emergency vehicles such as police, fire, or ambulances among the higher-speed

observations. Mr. Weber emphasized that while this is likely to represent a small portion of the data, it should be considered when interpreting results.

Mr. Bonarek agreed and noted that StreetLight may allow filtering by vehicle type in some analyses, though the current study included all vehicles.

INFORMATION ITEMS

13. Staff Report

Mr. Dave Gula reported the following updates:

- On January 23rd, Staff held a presentation for WHA at the Herlihy Towers.
- On January 26th, Staff attended the Ardens Town Assembly Meeting.
- On January 27th, the Southbridge Truck Bypass Study's Advisory Committee met.
- On January 29th, the Sidewalk Gap Analysis Advisory Committee met.
- On February 3rd, the Southbridge Truck Bypass Study's Management Committee met.
- On February 4th, Staff participated in a Clean Corridor Coalition (C3) Community Advisory Group meeting.
- On February 5th, the CPMC partners met to discuss the Transit Accessibility spotlight topic for Concord Pike.
- On February 9th, Staff presented on the Clubhouse Crossing project from the Ardens Transportation Plan at an Arden Town Assembly meeting.
- On February 10th, Staff attended DeIDOT's State Rail Plan update meeting.
- On February 11th, the SNCC-LUTP partners met for an update on the advisory committee.
- On February 12th, the Kirkwood Monitoring Implementation Committee partners met.
- On February 19th, the Ardens Monitoring Committee will have a joint meeting with Claymont civic leaders on the Harvey Road Lane Reduction over I-95 concept. Staff will participate in Downes Elementary School's Family Night.
- On February 23rd, the KMIC will have its first committee meeting from 4-6pm at Greenbank Mills and Phillips Farm (meeting postponed until March 16 due to weather).
- On February 24th, the Southbridge Truck Bypass Study will have a Public Workshop (meeting postponed until March 2 due to weather).
- On February 25th, the Route 9 Monitoring Committee will meet, with the next meeting scheduled for March 19th.
- On March 2nd, the Ardens Monitoring Committee will meet.
- On March 3rd, the Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group will meet.
- On March 18th, the Wilmington Initiatives will meet.
- On March 19th, the Newark Bicycle Committee will meet.
- On March 23rd, the SNCC-LUTP Advisory Committee meeting, will occur in the Appoquinimink Public Library.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Ms. Samantha Bulkilvish, from OSPC announced that Governor Meyer has officially opened a new round of Downtown Development District (DDD) applications following the signing of Executive Order 16. While this initiative is not directly related to transportation, it opens three available slots for interested parties.

Applications were formally opened on February 4th. To be eligible, all prospective applicants must attend a mandatory pre-application workshop hosted by the OSPC and the housing office. This meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24th, at 9:00 AM at the Haslam Armory.

Please share this information with any interested parties to ensure they are present for this required session.

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: Meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Attachments (0)