

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

August 20, 2026

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Air Quality Subcommittee (AQS) was held on Thursday, August 20, 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 10:00 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
Gwineth Kaminsky Rivera, City of Wilmington Planning
Shawn Kiernan, Maryland Department of Transportation
Tina Merrill, Department of Natural Resources and Environment
David Schile, Maryland State Highway Administration
Catherine Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation
Steven Weber, City of Wilmington Department of Public Works

TAC Ex-Officio Members present:

Enos Han, U.S. Federal Highway Administration, DE

TAC Members absent:

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

TAC Ex-Officio Members absent:

Amtrak
Diamond State Port Corporation
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Federal Transit Administration

Guests and Invitees:

Virginia Burke, MDOT
Gena Eleias, DelDOT
Matt Rogers, NCC Dept. of Land Use
Harry Romano, Consultant

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 July 16, 2026, Joint TAC & AQS Meeting Minutes.

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

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

None.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

ACTION ITEMS

6. To recommend use of Federal STBG, CMAQ, FTA Urbanized Area, FTA 5310, and TAP Funds in FY 2027.

Mr. Jake Thompson presented the FY27 federal funding and project status updates. In accordance with the MOU with DelDOT, the Council was asked to approve the use of federal funds, including \$9.891 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds, \$27.985 million in FTA Urbanized Area funds, \$12.23 million in CMAQ funds, \$943,000 in FTA Elderly and Persons with Disabilities funds, and \$3.06 million in Transportation Alternatives Program funds. He also reported \$5.9 million in FY27 ITMS expenditures.

Mr. Thompson provided updates on Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Program and TAP-funded projects. In New Castle County, several projects are under construction, in design, or in the planning stage, including the Old Baltimore Pike Sidewalk Improvements, Commons Boulevard Pathway, Adams Street Sidewalk Phase One, Southbridge Streetscape Improvements, and Newark Paper Mill Road/Olan Thomas Park Path. He also reviewed the status of the East Coast Greenway, 12th Street Separated Bike Lane, and other pedestrian and streetscape projects.

Mr. Thompson noted that the study for the 12th Street Separated Bike Lane is underway, with a public workshop scheduled for March. He also reported that the Two-Way King Street project may be reconsidered by the City of Wilmington, which would require reapplication for TAP funding. For FY27, new TAP projects include the City of New Castle Pathway and Crosswalks, Auburn Valley, and Old Newark Road.

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky and seconded by Ms. Cathy Smith, the TAC recommends the proposed use of Federal funds in FY 2027.

7. To recommend approval of the 2026 Congestion Mitigation and Quality (CMAQ) Performance Plan.

Mr. Bill Swiatek presented the CMAQ Performance Plan, which fulfills federal reporting requirements for the Second Performance Period Full Progress Report and Performance Plan and the Third Performance Period Baseline Report and Performance Plan. He reported that approximately half of the four-year targets were achieved during the Second Performance Period. While PHED performance was mixed between the Philadelphia and Aberdeen regions, both regions exceeded their non-SOV commute targets; however, CMAQ project emissions-reduction targets were not met in New Castle County or Cecil County.

Mr. Swiatek noted that new four-year targets were established through an interagency consultation process for the Third Performance Period. The targets anticipate increased peak-hour delay in both regions, a decrease in non-SOV commuting in the Philadelphia region, and an increase in the Aberdeen region. For CMAQ emissions reductions, DelDOT targets were adopted for Delaware and MDOT targets for Cecil County, with the new targets reflecting lower projected emissions reductions in Delaware and greater projected benefits in Cecil County.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Mr. Shawn Kiernan, the TAC recommends approval of the 2026 CMAQ Plan.

8. To recommend amending the project prioritization processes for Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Mr. Bill Swiatek reviewed proposed amendments to the TIP and RTP project prioritization processes to better align with current federal guidance regarding equity and climate considerations. Proposed changes also include removing the TAC review of project urgency and non-technical considerations from the technical scoring process and updating objectives to reflect the draft long-range plan.

The proposed scoring revisions include removing the three-point boost for projects located within non-Hispanic Black concentrations and allocating those points to increase the maximum safety score from four to seven points. Social determinants of health measures would remain but be revised to be race-neutral. Additional updates would redefine environmental justice areas as Mobility Opportunity Areas and expand mobility-challenged populations to include youth. Other terminology would be revised to emphasize affordability, opportunity, natural resource protection, and environmental resilience.

Mr. Dahlstrom asked whether the proposed changes were based on federal guidance. Mr. Swiatek clarified that the revisions were intended to align with recent federal guidance and executive orders.

Mr. Dahlstrom also asked whether pedestrian fatalities should be included as a separate measure in the crash data criteria. Mr. Swiatek explained that pedestrian fatalities were not previously included as a standalone measure in the overall TIP project prioritization process. Ms. Dunigan noted that pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and injuries are specifically considered in the TAP project prioritization process. Mr. Dahlstrom expressed concern that pedestrian safety appeared to be absent from the overall prioritization criteria.

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky and seconded by Ms. Tina Merrill, the TAC recommends amendment of the project prioritization processes for TIP and RTP with the opposition of Mr. David Dahlstrom.

9. To recommend amending the project prioritization processes or Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

Mr. Bill Swiatek presented proposed amendments to the TAP project prioritization process. The revisions include updated terminology related to social equity, transportation equity, mobility opportunities, and economic opportunity areas to better align with current federal guidance regarding equity and climate considerations. The proposed changes would also remove the two bonus points previously awarded to projects located within residential non-Hispanic Black concentrations.

Mr. Swiatek noted additional clarifications regarding mobility-challenged populations, including those living in households without vehicles, seniors, persons with disabilities, and youth. The criteria for population and employment density were also clarified to define dense areas as those with more than 40 people and jobs per acre, with no change to the associated point allocation.

Mr. Dahlstrom asked about the source and rationale for the 40 people-and-jobs-per-acre threshold. Mr. Swiatek explained that the threshold was based on regional traffic analysis zone demographic and figures represented an upper-quartile density of population and jobs within the region. Ms. Dunigan added that similar density measures had been used by other communities when the prioritization process was originally developed, although they were not widely used.

Mr. Dahlstrom expressed support for the measure and noted that it could be useful to evaluate how Maryland Priority Funding Areas (PFAs) compare with the 40-person-and-jobs-per-acre threshold. Mr. Swiatek noted that density levels vary by region and that the threshold was intended to provide an appropriate measure of density for the WILMAPCO region.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky, the TAC recommends amendment of the project prioritization processes for TAP.

10. To recommend endorsement of the Southbridge Truck Bypass Study.

Mr. Bill Swiatek presented the Southbridge Truck Bypass Study, which identifies short- and long-term strategies to reduce truck traffic in the Southbridge community while improving freight mobility. The study was guided by a Management Committee and Advisory Committee representing WILMAPCO, DelDOT, the City of Wilmington, community organizations, and other stakeholders. Extensive public engagement, including public meetings, stakeholder outreach, and a youth workshop, informed the study's recommendations.

The study combined technical analysis with community input to evaluate truck travel patterns and identify strategies, including revised signage, active rail crossing notifications, roadway improvements, land-use initiatives, and a potential long-term bypass connection. An online and door-to-door survey indicated strong community support for the recommendations and emphasized the need for timely implementation and continued community involvement. The final recommendations are organized into a phased implementation framework addressing short-, medium-, and long-term actions. The study was available for public comment from June 19 through July 19, with no comments received related to the STBS study.

Ms. Kaminsky noted that it was a very commendable effort and expressed her sincere appreciation.

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky and seconded by Ms. Samantha Bulkilvish, the TAC recommends endorsement of the Southbridge Truck Bypass Study.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

11. DelDOT's Statewide Freight Plan Update.

Ms. Gena Eleias of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), Division of Planning, presented an overview of the 2026 Delaware State Freight Plan. She explained that the plan supports DelDOT's mission of providing excellent transportation across every trip, mode, dollar, and community while emphasizing the agency's Safe System Approach. The approach focuses on safer people, vehicles, speeds, roads, lane use, and post-crash care, with the goal of eliminating fatalities and serious injuries.

Ms. Eleias highlighted the importance of freight to Delaware's economy, noting that more than 68 million tons of freight move across and through the state annually. Freight supports jobs and businesses, connects industries to regional and global markets, and contributes to reliable supply chains. The State Freight Plan is updated every four years to meet federal requirements and maintain Delaware's eligibility for National Highway Freight Program (NHFP) funding.

The presentation outlined the plan's vision of coordinating with freight partners throughout the Delmarva Peninsula to create a more efficient, multimodal freight system that strengthens the regional economy. The plan identifies nine goals: safety; freight mobility and congestion management; freight connectivity and accessibility; state of good repair; economic development; integrated freight and land use; resilience; environmental stewardship; innovation and technology; and stakeholder engagement.

Ms. Eleias discussed the challenges and strategies associated with each goal, emphasizing that freight issues are interconnected and that individual projects and strategies can address multiple needs simultaneously. Key issues included freight bottlenecks and congestion, truck parking, first- and final-mile connectivity, aging infrastructure, bridge and pavement conditions, rural freight access, land-use conflicts, flooding and extreme weather, environmental impacts, and the need for improved data and technology.

Several initiatives were highlighted, including updates to Delaware's critical freight corridors and networks, truck parking data and facilities, the Truck Parking Information System (TPIS) pilot program, Traffic Incident Management practices, connected and automated vehicle (CAV) pilot programs, multimodal connectivity studies, and the C&D Canal Rail Bridge Distribution Assessment. The presentation also addressed the relationship between freight development and land use, including the need to balance freight activity with community needs and protect industrial land and freight corridors from incompatible development.

The plan also emphasizes innovation and technology as tools for improving freight operations and preparing for future changes. Ms. Eleias highlighted the TPIS pilot in Smyrna, which uses live camera information to provide truck drivers with real-time information about parking availability. Other emerging technologies discussed included connected and automated vehicle applications, drones, unmanned aircraft systems, and advanced package delivery systems.

Ms. Eleias emphasized that successful implementation of the freight plan will require continued collaboration among DelDOT, Delaware's metropolitan planning organizations, counties and

municipalities, neighboring states, federal agencies, the University of Delaware, private-sector partners, and other stakeholders. She noted that freight movements cross jurisdictional boundaries and that effective data sharing, communication, public outreach, and technical assistance will be essential.

The presentation concluded with an overview of the Freight Investment Plan and the process for prioritizing projects for NHFP funding. Delaware's FY 2026 NHFP apportionment is approximately \$6.2 million, with eligible projects drawn from the Capital Transportation Program (CTP), MPO Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs), and long-range transportation plans. Ms. Eleias explained that projects are evaluated using multiple freight-related criteria to help prioritize investments. The final draft of the 2026 Delaware State Freight Plan is expected to be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for review in fall 2026, with final approval anticipated in winter 2026–2027.

To view this presentation in its entirety please [click here](#). [27m.06s.].

Mr. Cooper Bowers, TAC Chair, thanked Ms. Gena Eleias for the presentation and highlighted the importance of explicitly integrating land use and freight planning, noting that the two are closely interconnected.

Mr. Dave Gula also thanked Ms. Eleias for the comprehensive briefing. He emphasized the importance of public outreach and education regarding freight, particularly helping the public understand the connection between freight movement, online purchases, traffic impacts, economic activity, and employment. He noted that greater public understanding of the need for logistics facilities could help address concerns about new developments.

Ms. Eleias explained that the demand for logistics facilities is driven by economic and consumer needs and is not simply a matter of preference. Mr. Gula commended the work and expressed appreciation for the effort to communicate the importance of freight to the public.

Mr. Bowers further noted the importance of the Canal Bridge to the freight network and referenced DelDOT's ongoing study of the facility. Ms. Eleias confirmed that she is managing the project and invited TAC members to contact her with questions or comments.

12. WILMAPCO's 2026 Public Opinion Survey.

Ms. Dawn Stant presented the results of the 2026 Public Opinion Survey, which is conducted every four years in advance of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update and is used to inform the document. The survey obtained approximately 600 statistically valid responses, including about 400 from New Castle County and 200 from Cecil County. The 2026 survey methodology was modified to incorporate online panels, QR-code outreach, and telephone surveys. Several questions were also revised or removed, establishing a new baseline for future trend comparisons.

Overall, 78% of respondents indicated that the transportation system meets their needs very well or somewhat well. Satisfaction varied by mode, with respondents who have access to automobiles reporting the highest satisfaction and bicycle infrastructure receiving the lowest. Respondents who earn less than \$50,000 per year were also more likely to report that the transportation system did not adequately meet their needs. Approximately 43% of respondents reported difficulty accessing at least one destination due to transportation limitations, with Cecil County respondents reporting greater challenges.

The survey also asked about transportation funding preferences, planning priorities, land-use policies, and public outreach methods. Most respondents supported transportation improvements funded through developer fees, followed by additional fees to register inefficient vehicles, and taxing vehicle-miles-traveled instead of gas. Ensuring that the transportation system serves all communities and preserving open space and farmland ranked among the highest priorities. Approximately 80% support focusing transportation expansion projects in areas with higher population and employment concentrations, while support for bicycle improvements remained above 50%.

Ms. Stant noted modest increases in public familiarity with WILMAPCO compared with 2022, although continued outreach remains necessary. Email, online surveys, and social media were identified as effective engagement methods, with Facebook and Instagram remaining prominent platforms. The results also indicated potential value in expanding the use of short-form video content while continuing to use traditional outreach methods to reach residents who may not engage through digital platforms.

To view this presentation in its entirety please [click here](#). [10m.38s.].

INFORMATION ITEMS

9. Staff Report

Mr. Dave Gula reported the following updates:

- On August 4th, staff attended DelDOT/DTC's NRTC Planning Meeting.
- On August 5th, staff selected the proposal submitted by Wallace Montgomery and RK&K for the Limestone Road/SR 7 Land Use and Transportation Plan (LUTP).
- On August 11th, staff participated in a panel discussion on truck parking at the Mid-America Association of State Transportation Officials meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio. Staff also conducted consultant interviews for the Northern New Castle County Bike and Pedestrian Network Master Plan RFP, with RK&K selected for the project.
- On August 12th, the Southern New Castle County LUTP partners met.
- On August 13th, staff attended Delaware's Smart Growth Visioning Workshop.
- On August 18th, staff attended the Newark Traffic Committee meeting.
- On August 20th, the Route 9 Monitoring Committee will meet.
- On August 21st, staff will attend the WHA Empowerment Fair.
- On August 23rd, staff will attend the Safe Kids Delaware meeting.
- On August 25th, staff will attend the DelDOT Statewide Rail Plan MPO briefing. The Southbridge Improved Mobility Action Team will also meet.
- On August 26th, staff will attend the kickoff meeting for the Limestone Road/SR 7 LUTP Study.
- On September 1st, staff will attend DelDOT's NRTC Status Meeting.
- On September 2nd, staff will attend the Wilmington/DelDOT quarterly project coordination meeting.
- On September 3rd, the Port Terminal Truck Routing Feasibility Study partners will meet.
- On September 9th, the Southern New Castle County LUTP partners will meet.
- On September 11th, the Route 9 Monitoring Committee will conduct a streetlight and storm drain walking audit in the Rose Hill Gardens and Rosegate neighborhoods.
- On September 14th, staff will attend the West Side Grows Together community meeting.
- On September 15th, staff will attend the Newark Traffic Committee meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: Meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

Attachments (0)