

WILMAPCO Council

Action Item Summary Sheet

Meeting Date: September 10, 2026

Action Item #12: To Amend the Project Prioritization Process for Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

Description/Summary of Item:

Minor adjustments to the Project Prioritization Process for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) are proposed to better align with the current federal administration's position on social equity. Principally, this involves removing explicitly race/ethnicity-based factors in the analysis. Minor wording changes are also proposed.

Summary of Action Taken by PAC:

The PAC did not take action on this item.

Summary of Action Taken by TAC:

The TAC recommended approval at their August 20 meeting.

Summary of Action Taken by Subcommittee/Task Force (if applicable):

The Air Quality Subcommittee reviewed the Report at their August 20 meeting.

WILMAPCO Staff Recommendations:

The WILMAPCO staff recommends that Council amend the Project Prioritization Process for Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

Wilmington Area Planning Council

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WILMAPCO Executive Director
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DRAFT **RESOLUTION**

BY THE WILMINGTON AREA PLANNING COUNCIL (WILMAPCO) AMENDING THE PROJECT PRIORITIZATION PROCESS FOR THE TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) has been designated the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Cecil County, Maryland and New Castle County, Delaware by the Governors of Maryland and Delaware, respectively; and

WHEREAS, WILMAPCO and other MPOs are entrusted with Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project selection; and

WHEREAS, TAP funding is limited and many possible projects exist; and

WHEREAS, WILMAPCO has a long-established, transparent, and data-driven project prioritization process for the TAP (established in 2013 and last amended in 2021); and

WHEREAS, Federal guidance and priorities have changed; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment to the TAP project prioritization process better aligns WILMAPCO's evaluation criteria with this new guidance;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that WILMAPCO amends its project prioritization process for the Transportation Alternatives Program.

Date:

Stephanie Johnson, Chairperson
Wilmington Area Planning Council



Partners with you in transportation planning



DRAFT

PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) provides federal funding for on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, improvements for non-driver access to public transportation, environmental mitigation, recreational trail program projects, safe routes to school projects, and projects for the planning, design or construction of boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways. A minimum 20% local funding match is required. The TAP is administered in our region by Delaware's Department of Transportation, Maryland's State Highway Administration and the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO). For more information please visit: wilmapco.org/tap.

This document is an overview of WILMAPCO's technical process for prioritizing TAP project submissions for funding. The process is open, transparent, and, we hope, easy-to-understand.

JULY 2026

PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

There are many eligible TAP activities. Due to limited program funding, however, WILMAPCO considers only *transportation infrastructure* projects.

These projects – such as sidewalks, streetscaping and bicycle lanes – are individually scored on a 19 criteria index developed by our Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group (NMTWG). The criteria awards points on a proposed project's proximity to pedestrian and bicycle generating activities, its support for redevelopment, ~~social equity~~ and overall potential use. Criteria are mostly quantitative, though a few measures are judged qualitatively. Projects can receive up to 35 **33** points, with factors such as safety (5 possible points), bus stop proximity (4 possible points) and filling a gap in the nonmotorized system (4 possible points) the heaviest factors.



Proposed projects are given a final technical score, which is reviewed by the NMTWG and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The proposed project list is then sorted by technical score, and placed before the WILMAPCO Council. The Council ranks the proposed projects with input from the TAC, considering their technical score, cost-effectiveness, and other factors.

The remainder of this document provides an overview of each of the technical criteria, and the points associated with it, in turn.

REVIEW OF TECHNICAL SCORING INDEX

Bus stops

The project is located in close proximity to an existing bus stop.

- 2 – within .125 mile
- 1 – within .25 mile

The project is located in close proximity to a frequently-used bus stop (New Castle County projects only).

- 2 – within .125 mile
- 1 – within .25 mile



Community Centers

The project is located nearby a community center or post office.

2 – within .25 mile

1 – within .5 mile

Libraries

The project is located nearby a library.

2 – within .25 mile

1 – within .5 mile

Schools

The project is located nearby an elementary, middle or high school.

2 – within .5 mile

1 – within 1 mile

Parks

2 – The project is located alongside a park.

Bicycle Routes

2 – The project is located on or alongside a designated bicycle route.

Greenways

The project is located nearby an existing greenway or pathway.

2 – within .25 mile

1 – within .5 mile

Municipalities and Hometown Overlays

1 – The project is located within an incorporated municipality, or hometown overlay zone (New Castle County only)

Population and Employment Density

1 – The project is located within a dense ((population + employment) / area) (40+ people and jobs per acre) Traffic Analysis Zone.

Transportation Equity and Access Mobility Opportunities

The project is located within an Environmental Justice (EJ) Economic Opportunity (EO) or Mobility Challenged (MC) area. EJ EO areas represent concentrations of low-income and minorities economically challenged communities, while MC areas are home to concentrations of seniors, disabled and zero-car households other groups with mobility difficulties, such as people living in households without vehicles, people with disabilities, seniors, and young people. Both EO and MC areas are identified in the Mobility Opportunities Plan. Projects located within a residential area with a high percentage Black population compared to the regional average receive 2 points.

2 – within significant EJ EO area

1 – within moderate EJ EO area

2 – within significant MC area

1 – within moderate MC area

2 – within a residential Black concentration

Safety

The project is located along a road segment with pedestrian and bicycle crashes during the past three years of data. Projects may receive a maximum of 5 points, based on this sub-index:

3 – pedestrian or bicycle fatality

2 – pedestrian or bicycle injury

1 – pedestrian or bicycle crash

Abandoned Railway Corridor

1 – The project is located along an abandoned railway corridor.

Historic Element

1 – The project boasts an historic element, expressed within the submission.

Nonmotorized Gap Analysis

4 – The project closes a pedestrian or bicycle system gap, such as connecting two existing pathways.