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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Maryland Route 272 Corridor Plan

Introduction

The Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) is designated by the Governors of Delaware and Maryland as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Wilmington, Delaware metropolitan planning region. WILMAPCO is responsible for transportation planning in this region, consisting of New Castle County, DE and Cecil County, MD.

The Town of North East, Cecil County, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) / State Highway Administration (SHA), and WILMAPCO are seeking proposals to develop the Maryland Route 272 Corridor Plan (MD-272 Plan). This plan will build on prior planning work done in North East, including the Transit-Oriented Development Plan, the North East Comprehensive Plan, and the Cecil County Comprehensive Plan.

The MD-272 Plan will examine transportation improvements to the MD-272 corridor, bounded on the north by the Joseph Biggs Memorial Highway (MD-274) and on the south by Shady Beach Road and Hance Point Road.

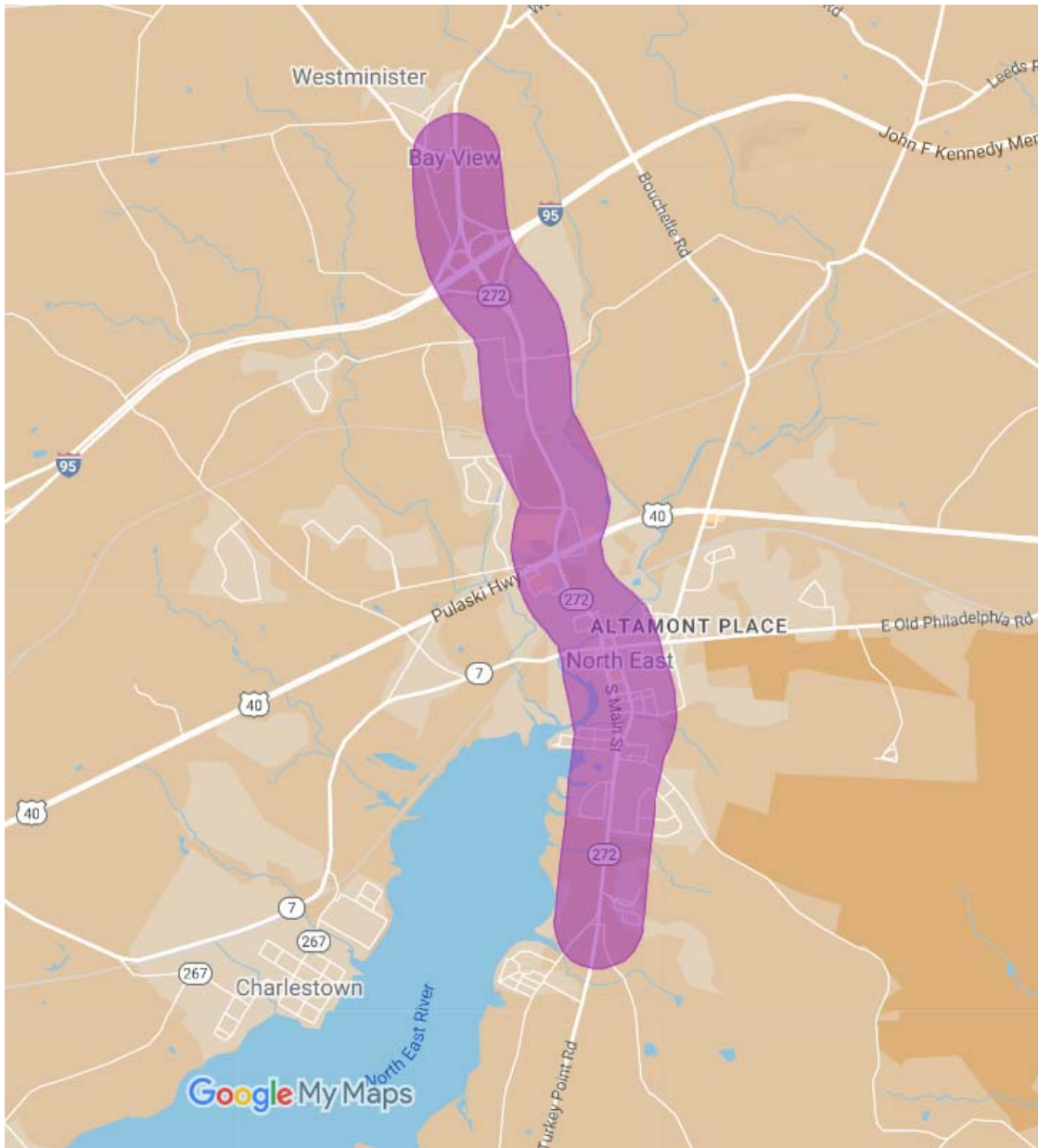
Identifying improvement needs along this corridor was Cecil County's third highest transportation priority in 2023. While targeted for future growth, the corridor is already strained under current conditions.

Development of the MD-272 Plan will be a community-driven process aimed at enhancing transportation connectivity, safety, and accessibility. It will involve active public participation, including area young people and Transportation Justice communities. The study will comprehensively inventory existing and planned transportation, land use, and development conditions, and will develop recommendations and preferred alternatives based on thorough technical analyses and community feedback. Identifying potential partners, resources, and funding sources will be crucial for expediting the implementation of the plan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Boundaries

The study area will consist of the MD-272 corridor, bounded on the north by MD-274 and on the south by Shady Beach Road and Hance Point Road, along with the lands that immediately adjoin this segment of MD-272.



Interactive Map:

https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1WZxpSVWcusISaN_31yVq5UYuLAMiOIE&usp=sharing



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Plan Phases

Development of the MD-272 Corridor Plan will be a community-driven process that will unfold in four phases:

1. **Issues, Opportunities and Constraints:** This phase will involve analyzing traffic volumes, speeds, demographic forecasts, planned developments, social equity considerations, and environmental factors.
2. **Needs and Vision:** Based on existing and projected conditions and community/stakeholder feedback, transportation and land use needs will be identified during this phase. A vision for improved transportation connectivity, safety, and accessibility will be developed.
3. **Concept Alternative Proposals and Evaluation:** Various concept alternatives will be proposed and evaluated during this phase. These alternatives will address current needs, expected growth, road safety, social equity, environmental sustainability, and resilience. Special attention will be given to improving connectivity for Transportation Justice communities, including better access to supermarkets and jobs. Alternatives may include roadway expansions, reconfigurations, traffic calming measures, transit enhancements, walking/cycling paths, and more.
4. **Preferred Concept Alternatives:** After gathering community and stakeholder feedback and considering technical benefits and costs, the Steering Committee will choose preferred alternatives. The final plan will identify preferred alternatives that benefit all road users (people walking, biking, driving, taking transit, and freight movement), along with potential funding sources for implementation.

Planning Partners

WILMAPCO will be responsible for administering the MD-272 Plan in collaboration with the Steering Committee, which may include:

- Town of North East
- Cecil County
- MDOT / SHA
- WILMAPCO
- Cecil College
- North East High School and Middle School
- Area businesses and civic interests



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Membership on the Steering Committee may evolve over time but will begin to take shape early in the planning process.

PHASE 1 (to be completed by WILMAPCO with consultant feedback)

Issues, Opportunities and Constraints

This task will be completed by WILMAPCO. The consultants, along with the Steering Committee, will review existing and planned land use, transportation, traffic, and demographics for the study area that WILMAPCO will summarize, including:

- a. Existing and planned land use and zoning
- b. Existing demographic and projections
- c. Transportation facilities
- d. Traffic conditions
- e. Environmental features including: parks, wetlands, brownfields, floodplain, sea-level rise impacts
- f. Community, cultural and social features
- g. Regional connectivity analyses to key destinations by walking, biking, driving, and bus

Deliverables – Phase 1 will include a summary report, including maps, graphics, etc., detailing existing conditions and constraints that will be prepared by WILMAPCO in coordination with the Steering Committee.

PHASE 2

Needs and Vision

Key work in Phase 2 includes:

- a. A scope of work will be finalized.
- b. A project logo will be developed to market the study in consultation with the Steering Committee.
- c. An outreach strategy, with measurable goals, will be developed in consultation with the Steering Committee. Special attention will be given to also reaching area young people and Transportation Justice (TJ) communities.
- d. The consultant will produce a short and simple PowerPoint presentation video recording to brief the community on the plan and the survey. It will be placed on the project website by WILMAPCO.
- e. The consultant will work with the Steering Committee to prepare Community Survey 1 to assess wider needs and preferences. The survey will be made available online



and in Word/PDF formats. It will be accompanied by a one-to-two-page description of the project.

- f. Consider developing and sending a postcard mailing to TJ area residents encouraging them to complete Community Survey 1 and publicize via Nextdoor/Facebook, selective flyering, and partner support.
- g. The consultant will brief area elected officials and key area business interests on the project and gather their input.
- h. A parallel process to engage community youth through a focus group or surveying will also be pursued.
- i. The Steering Committee will disseminate the survey, both online and in paper formats.
- j. \$50 should be budgeted to incentivize the completion of Survey 1 and Youth Survey 1 (\$25 each).
- k. The consultant will analyze results from the Survey and present results, along with an overview of the project at Public Meeting 1. In addition, a companion PowerPoint presentation video recording will be made available on the project webpage, along with a comment form. Recommendations for refinement made at Public Meeting 1 and via online feedback will be solicited and considered by the Steering Committee. \$20 should be budgeted for a gift card raffle during Public Meeting 1.

Deliverables – project logo, Survey 1, meeting notes from Steering Committee and Public Meeting 1 (including feedback received), video presentation, and elected official/key stakeholder outreach.

PHASE 3

Concept Alternative Proposals and Evaluation

- a. Concept alternatives will be developed based on stakeholder and public outreach, identified economic, land use, transportation and environmental issues, opportunities and constraints, and existing plans. Concept alternatives will include easily understood alternative cross-sections, designs, and maps.
- b. To determine feasibility, the preferred concept alternatives will be compared to existing and forecast conditions, using measures such as level of service, bicycle level of stress, traffic diversion, and others as appropriate for the proposed design(s).
- c. Assessment will evaluate anticipated land use, demographic, environmental and transportation impacts of the proposed designs, including their ecological sensitivity, and impacts to social equity.
- d. These results will be presented in an easy-to-understand way, both at a public meeting and in an accompanying video presentation. Concepts should include roadway capacity needs; pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including



- connections to nonmotorized networks including the East Coast Greenway; bus route changes; bus stop amenities; and green stormwater infrastructure.
- e. The consultant will brief area elected officials and key area business interests on the alternatives and gather their input.
 - f. Public Meeting 2 will be held to present and discuss concepts and analyses. An accompanying simple video of a PowerPoint presentation will be prepared by the consultant team and placed on the project website by WILMAPCO.
 - g. Community Survey 2, which will help identify preferred alternatives and priorities, will be distributed shortly before or during Public Meeting 2. It will be made available in print and online for additional feedback from area residents. It will be accompanied by a one-to-two-page description of the project/need/status.
 - h. Consider developing and sending a postcard mailing to area TJ residents encouraging them to complete Community Survey 2 and publicize via Nextdoor/Facebook, selective flyering, and through partner channels.
 - i. A parallel process to engage community youth through a focus group or surveying will also be pursued.
 - j. \$50 should be budgeted to incentivize the completion of Survey 2 and Youth Survey 2 (\$25 each). \$20 should be budgeted for a gift card raffle during Public Meeting 2.

Deliverables – Meeting notes from Steering Committee, stakeholder, and public meetings. Analysis of initial concept alternatives; video presentation, Survey 2, analysis of Survey 2 results.

PHASE 4

Preferred Concept Alternatives

- a. Based on stakeholder feedback, community outreach and technical analysis, preferred concept alternatives will be selected by the Steering Committee.
- b. Planning level cost estimates and next steps for implementation will be identified, especially regarding infrastructure needs, costs, and phasing that include compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) standards to enable eligibility for future Federal funding and will be documented in a final report. This work will include identifying municipal, county, and state powers pertaining to 1) state roads within and abutting the project area, 2) roadways and non-motorized infrastructure within the project area, 3) clarity on which federal, state, and county regulations/standards the project area must comply with and when, and 4) the identification of appropriate funding sources for recommended projects.
- c. The Final Draft Report will be presented at Public Meeting 3. An accompanying video PowerPoint presentation recording will be prepared by the consultant team and placed



on the project website by WILMAPCO. The draft report will be made available for public comment for at least 30 days.

- d. \$20 should be budgeted for a gift card raffle during Public Meeting 2.
- e. At the end of the public comment period, the Steering Committee will consider any revisions and finalize the MD-272 Plan.
- f. Presentations on the final Draft Plan will be provided, if requested, to the Town of North East and Cecil County Council meetings by WILMAPCO without consultant support.

Deliverables – Meeting notes from Steering Committee and public meeting (including feedback received) and meeting recording. Final report, including documentation of PEL Study results.

FUNDING AND ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE

This project will be funded from WILMAPCO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), available at www.wilmapco.org/upwp and/or agencies on the Steering Committee. Funding is budgeted to begin the project in the FY 2025 UPWP, but we realize it may extend beyond the FY 2025 fiscal year. As part of this RFP, we request the consultant propose a reasonable total project cost estimate and a project schedule.

DELIVERABLES

Items that will be produced by the consultant will consist of, but not be limited to:

- Draft reports as needed – one high-quality PDF copy and one electronic MS Word document.
- PowerPoint and poster boards for presentations at meetings and public workshops.
- Simple videos as described above to be posted to the project website.
- Materials for a project website, including illustrative depictions of the preferred alternative, including real-world simulations of potential alternative if determined necessary.
- Attendance at all meetings listed in this RFP, unless otherwise stated.
- Meeting summaries for all meetings and workshops, including a written record of all public comments.
- Final Report – one high quality PDF, one MS Word version and final publication format of final report. We prefer this to be in MS Word or MS Publisher.
- GIS layers/shapefiles of analysis in ESRI .shp or MapInfo .tab format, of all proposed improvements and all mapping work.



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Consultant shall submit five (5) bound copies of a Proposal/Statement of Qualifications and one electronic copy (on a USB flash-drive or via email link) for purposes of sharing with the Project Management Committee. Receipt of insufficient copies of the Proposal or not providing the required information in the desired format may result in elimination from the selection process. The submission shall include the following and provide a table of contents indicating where the required information is in the submission package:

- Identification of the consultant's project manager and a description of this person's experience with similar projects. The project manager may not change during the project without written permission from WILMAPCO.
- A description of qualifications and experience for each individual and firm participating in the project team, including an organization chart showing the relationship of everyone to the overall project work plan.
- Three current references (more recent than three years) for each individual and/or firm that will have significant and specific responsibility for this project.
- A Technical Proposal that demonstrates an understanding of the project describes the proposed approach and lists the proposed reports and products. This is limited to ten (10) pages.
- A proposed level of effort delineating the staff assigned with title, hours, and hourly rate for each task. The full cost of the proposal should also be included.
- A proposed schedule showing the timeline for each task including milestones and significant meetings or reviews.
- This project will include a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study; a collaborative and integrated approach to transportation decision-making that: 1) considers environmental, community and economic issues early in the planning process; and 2) uses information, analyses and products developed during planning to inform the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process. PEL Studies are an FHWA initiative used to help make better-informed project-level decisions and to shorten project delivery time, and they follow provisions set forth in 23 U.S.C. 168(b) (1) (A) and associated regulations under 23 CFR 450.212(d) and 450.313(e).
- A written statement that all terms and conditions contained in this RFP are accepted by the consultant.



- A statement that the consultant will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, to the end that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination.
- A declaration that the consultant is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate in employment because of race, age, color, sex, religion, national origin, mental or physical handicap, political affiliation, or marital status.
- For contracts over \$25,000, WILMAPCO will complete a search of the excluded parties listing system to ensure that the organization is not debarred or suspended from federally assisted contracts.
- The consultant shall accept all applicable Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements surrounding Lower Tier Covered Transactions. These requirements can be found within the WILMAPCO Title VI/Nondiscrimination Assurance Statement, available electronically at: www.wilmapco.org/titlevi.
- Identification of the contact person during the selection phase, including the name, address, telephone numbers and email address. This contact must be available during normal business hours.

WILMAPCO will also consider:

- Creativity in identifying planning approaches and solutions to land use and transportation problems and in presenting plans to policy makers and the public.
- The extent to which Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) are used (any firm wishing to be recognized as DBE must provide documentation such as official DBE certification.)



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EVALUATION AND SELECTION

WILMAPCO may select a short list of at least two firms who may be invited to make a presentation regarding their team and approach. The initial qualifications-based selection will be made by evaluating the proposal using these criteria:

- Clarity, readability and presentation of material, including writing style - **25%**
- Project understanding and approach as displayed in the project proposal and the interview - **35%**
- Relevant experience, team leadership and team capabilities - **35%**
- References and supporting information - **5%**

Only consultants who supply complete information will be considered for evaluation. We will base the final decision on materials submitted, the presentation, and/or contacts with references.

SUBMISSION DATES, ADDRESS AND CONDITIONS

The deadline for proposals is 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 17, 2024 at the WILMAPCO offices. Proposals received after this time and date will not be accepted nor considered. We will not accept faxed applications. Proposals will not be opened and/or reviewed before 8:30 a.m. of the morning following the deadline. Tentatively, we will interview finalists during the week of July 29, 2024.

Five (5) bound copies and one electronic copy must be mailed or hand delivered to: WILMAPCO

100 Discovery Boulevard, Suite 800
Newark, DE 19713
Attn: Bill Swiatek, AICP, Principal Planner

The selected firm(s) will assume sole responsibility for completion of the tasks required by this RFP. All work may be reviewed periodically by an advisory committee and other groups. All statements become part of the public file on this matter, without obligation to WILMAPCO. However, offerors may identify those portions of their proposals that they deem confidential, proprietary information or trade secrets and provide any justification why such materials, upon request, should not be disclosed.

WILMAPCO reserves the right to reject any or all RFP responses.



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WILMAPCO is not liable for any cost incurred by the consultant in preparation or presentation of the proposal.

For additional technical or procedural information:

Contact: Bill Swiatek, AICP

Phone: (302) 737-6205 Ext.113

E-mail: bswiatek@wilmapco.org



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