

WILMAPCO Council:

SCOPE OF WORK

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Chesapeake Connector: Freight and Passenger Rail Benefits Cecil County, Md.

Revised on January 31, 2011

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 area, which consists of New Castle County, DE and Cecil County, MD and is responsible for transportation planning in the region.

The Chesapeake Connector project will address the benefits of added track capacity on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor (NEC) on the segment between Prince and Bacon Interlockings in Cecil County, Md. for a distance of approximately 6.3 miles. This section of the NEC is currently a two-track section in a corridor that is generally a three track railroad. Although this section of track is located in Cecil County, MD, it is one of Delaware's priority rail projects and it is anticipated to provide both public and private benefits. In Amtrak's NEC Master Plan, existing two or three track railroad segments south of Claymont, DE, would be expanded to three or four tracks to enable intercity and commuter rail expansion in Delaware and Maryland; the Chesapeake Connector is cited by name as a priority project. The Chesapeake Connector project has also been included in the MARC Growth & Investment Plan.

Freight movements for Norfolk Southern (NS) can only operate within a restricted time frame between the hours of 10:00 PM until 6:00 AM. Freight trains coming from the west are forced to layover on the Port Road rail line. Delayed trains have impacts to the Port of Wilmington and rail service to the Delmarva Peninsula, and create a bottleneck that affects trains destined for the Port of Baltimore. The NEC Master Plan considers this to be a crucial freight movement, and cites a critical need as, "improved access to the Port of Baltimore and between Perryville, MD, and Newark, DE, to serve the Delmarva Peninsula." This freight movement may also require grade separation between the Port Road and the NEC, as the long, slow-moving freight trains would create congestion conflicts and safety concerns for the Acela service as they cross the corridor via the existing Perry Interlocking. Amtrak acknowledges that the existing two-track configuration will allow the extension of commuter rail service to this segment, but may not have the capacity to support future expansion of MARC or SEPTA services. Currently, Cecil County, Maryland is the only area south of New York City on the NEC without commuter rail service.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Boundaries

The boundaries for this project are specifically the 6.3 mile two-track segment of railroad between the Prince and Bacon Interlockings on the NEC in Cecil County, and the area of the Perry Interlocking in Perryville. However, the nature of this project requires a larger area in order to study the impact that this track expansion would have on freight and passenger train movements to the Port of Baltimore, the Port of Wilmington and the Delmarva Secondary. Therefore, the study area also encompasses the track movements that are necessary to move freight from the Port Road to these destinations.

Objective

The purpose of this task is to quantify passenger and freight rail opportunities for the Chesapeake Connector Project in Cecil County, Maryland. The end result should be an estimate of demand for intercity passenger rail service for Amtrak and MARC commuter services and to quantify freight benefits in terms of carloads and potential new markets. A cost/benefit analysis will also help to determine the need and the timing for any physical improvements. The study will also examine whether the necessary train movements could be facilitated utilizing existing track connections between CSX and NS, minimizing impacts on existing communities. For the purpose of this study, the third track expansion between Prince and Bacon, and the grade separation at Perry will be treated as two separate projects, with cost/benefits for each, and the final report will show separate recommendations for both projects. The study result will also provide a path forward with a series of actions that will advance this project in accordance with federal and private funding options.

This effort will provide the elements of a Service Development Plan as defined by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in identifying the purpose and need, demand and revenue forecasts and the rationale. It will also provide activities necessary for both Delaware and Maryland to move this project forward.

SCOPE OF WORK

Task A – Meetings

A kick-off meeting with the consultant will be conducted to finalize the scope of the study, obtain background information regarding the study and to discuss important features and potential outcomes of the study. It is anticipated that an additional meeting(s) will be held with WILMAPCO, DelDOT/DTC, CSX, MDOT/MTA, NS, Amtrak and other stakeholders to form an Advisory Committee at the beginning of the study. Other meetings will be held as needed during the course of the study. A final meeting will be held with the stakeholders to present the results of the study and solicit comments. It is anticipated that up to 6 meetings will be held with the Advisory Committee. WILMAPCO will take the lead and work with the consultant to coordinate scheduling of the kick-off meeting, and subsequent meetings.



The consultant will also be required to meet with representatives from Norfolk Southern, CSX, MARC/MTA, SEPTA and Amtrak at the beginning of the study to collect marketing and operational data for the cost/benefit analysis. Follow-up meetings may also be held in order to determine how track layout will impact future rail operations.

For each meeting attended, WILMAPCO will work with the consultant to prepare meeting summaries and distribute these to document and clarify any questions, resolutions, or other positive outcomes from the meetings.

Task B – Data Collection and Analysis

This study will consider the benefits of increased freight rail movement within the region, to both the freight providers and their customers. The study must also determine the existing and future needs for passenger rail services between Perryville, MD and Newark, DE. The interaction between freight and passenger rail movements, and any future increases in service must also be considered.

There are key questions that need to be answered before Delaware, Maryland, Amtrak and NS seek federal funding to design and construct the Chesapeake Connector. This study will provide the stakeholders with answers to these questions.

- What is the economic benefit to freight railroads and regional industries of adding a third track between Prince and Bacon Interlockings?
- What benefits would the Chesapeake Connector provide passenger rail operations (intercity and commuter) along the NEC in this area?
- What is the cost/benefit resulting from a grade separated crossing to the third track instead of an at-grade crossing? Where should the grade separation be located? Would it provide an expanded freight operating window on the NEC to justify the cost?
- Is the third track worth pursuing without a grade separated crossing?
- Amtrak has recently proposed a comprehensive plan for high-speed train service on the NEC. This will require upgrades to the NEC and new track ROW in some sections. Should the third track be conventional design or constructed to provide for high speed passenger rail in the future?
- What are the economic benefits to the region if this track is a high speed passenger line, as opposed to a reliever track for freight and commuter operations? Does construction to high speed standards preclude use for freight and commuter traffic?



- What impacts, if any, would the Chesapeake Connector have on passenger operation at Newark, Delaware and other potential passenger rail stations that may be opened in the future in Cecil County Maryland? How can those impacts be addressed in the design.
- What will be the impacts to the Perryville Station, and what infrastructure investments may be triggered to bring the station to full ADA compliance? Will increased passenger service trigger the need for a new, fully ADA compliant train station in Elkton?
- Double-stacking may be feasible along the NEC to access the Port of Wilmington and other locations on Delmarva. Since Amtrak has not prohibited double-stacking on the NEC, this study should consider the costs of accommodating double-stack as part of the third track segment. Would double-stacking through this area offer a competitive advantage to the Port of Wilmington over the Port of Baltimore.
- What impact will proposed track improvements here have on the Susquehanna Bridge (double-tracked) and freight operations south of Perryville?

The consultant will be responsible for coordinating data collection from stakeholders and partners. The cost/benefit analysis will require market and operational data, and scheduling information from the freight providers. Ridership projection scenarios will be developed using data from passenger carriers and demographic projections. There will be a separate analysis for the third track expansion and the grade separation to determine if each project is feasible on its own, and if not, how the projects would be phased if the physical improvements are to be implemented.

Task C – Development of Recommendations

Recommendations will be developed based the results of the analyses. Concept plans will be created for each alternative to illustrate the proposed track configuration. The study must include a cost/benefit analysis for each track layout alternative to be used for project justification/feasibility. Ridership scenarios should be segmented for the extension of MARC service to Elkton, Newark, and Wilmington. Job and tax base growth should also be developed for each segment, as should capital and operating costs. Included will be all technical documentation for the analysis performed.

Task D – Report Preparation

Upon completion of the study, a technical report will be prepared by the consultant to document the findings of the study. This report will include a study area map, tables and other graphics to clearly document the data and outcomes of the analyses. The report will include an appendix containing all raw data and other pertinent information. A draft report will be developed and submitted to WILMAPCO for review and comment and the results will be presented to the Advisory Committee and reviewed at a meeting. All

comments received from WILMAPCO and meeting attendees will then be incorporated into a final report which will be submitted to WILMAPCO and the Advisory Committee. As part of the final report, the consultant will identify a path forward for implementing any proposed improvements identified as a part of this study. The study should be completed within 12 months.

<p><u>Project Team</u> WILMAPCO DelDOT MDOT New Castle County DTC Town of Perryville Chesapeake Science and Security Corridor</p>	<p>MTA SEPTA Norfolk Southern CSX AMTRAK Univ. of DE Cecil County</p>
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Proposed Schedule

	MONTH											
TASK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Refine scope of work/sign contract												
Data Collection & Analysis												
Development of Recommendation												
Report Preparation						TR						

TR- Interim Technical report on data collected for use in analysis.

Funding

This project will be funded by the partners, through WILMAPCO’s Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). While a firm total has not been established, the budget will be primarily spent on the analysis of data to develop the final product. As part of the RFP, we ask that an estimate of the costs to perform each of the listed tasks be presented.

Deliverables

Items that will be produced by the consultant will consist of:

- Draft reports – one high-quality copy and one electronic MS Word document
- 3-4 poster boards for presentation purposes
- Attendance at 5-7 meetings at WILMAPCO to discuss project and to review draft reports as identified in the project schedule
- Produce an MS Word document of final report - one high-quality copy and one electronic document
- GIS layer of all proposed improvements

For additional technical or procedural information, contact Dave Gula.

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