

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### Southbridge Truck Bypass Study (STBS)

#### WILMAPCO Council:

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**Vacant**  
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Representative

**WILMAPCO Executive Director**  
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#### 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 City of Wilmington; the Southbridge Civic Association; the South Wilmington Planning Network; the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO); and the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) are seeking proposals to develop the *Southbridge Truck Bypass Study (STBS)*, aka, *Reducing Truck Traffic in the Southbridge Neighborhood: A Feasibility Study of Alternative, More Efficient Routes* in Wilmington, Delaware.

This study furthers a key aspect of the community's *Southbridge Transportation Action Plan (STAP)* and the *Southbridge Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP)*. An equitable redevelopment plan, the SNAP identified actions to address the community's self-identified challenges such as high poverty, limited investment, and mobility concerns. One of the mobility recommendations in the SNAP was to complete a traffic circulation study (what became the STAP, completed in 2023) to calm traffic and reduce truck traffic. The STAP recommends steps to calm speeding traffic, improve walking and bicycling, enhance bus access to food and jobs, and lessen the impact of truck traffic.

Trucks are common in and around Southbridge. About 450 large trucks pass through Southbridge each day along Heald Street and New Castle Avenue, instead of nearby roads more appropriate for trucks, such as Christiana Avenue and Terminal Avenue. In part due to their heavy truck volumes, New Castle Avenue and Heald Street are burdening facilities for Southbridge residents. Along blocks without a dedicated parking lane, homes are often separated from fast moving trucks by a five-foot sidewalk. Residents have consequently noted shaking walls, building damage, and loud noise. Exposure to air pollution – including localized circulation of excessive coarse dust and elevated diesel particulate emissions – are also concerns. The volume and impact of through truck trips also discourages walking and bicycling, which inhibits both community health and wealth.

STAP community surveys found reducing truck traffic was the community's *top transportation concern*. It outpaced other key community needs such as: adding more lighting, reducing traffic speeds, and having better stormwater management. Nearly all (95%) said reducing trucks was at least "somewhat important" with most (80%) rating it "very important."



While the “Garasches Lane Extended” project proposed in the *Route 9 Master Plan* and studied further in the *Port of Wilmington Truck Access Study* may reduce some truck trips in Southbridge’s core, a more comprehensive solution is needed. The “Pyles Lane Extension” studied in that same plan was intended to serve as the truck bypass route imagined in the historic *2006 South Wilmington Neighborhood Plan* and subsequent *2008 Southbridge Circulation Study*. We found this option did not provide an efficient enough link to Christiana Avenue to achieve truck volume reductions in Southbridge, however.

The *Southbridge Truck Bypass Study* (STBS), a recommendation from the STAP, aims to find a compelling solution to significantly reduce truck volume in Southbridge. It will examine new potential road connections south of Southbridge to link Christiana Avenue and New Castle Avenue more efficiently into and out of Wilmington. Once in place, truck drivers would self-select (or could be directed) to use this new route instead of passing through the Southbridge core (via New Castle Avenue or Heald Street).

The STAP developed several concept routes for further study. Each of these, and others that the consultant may develop, require an evaluation of feasibility for cost, travel efficiency, social equity, and environmental impacts, and the consideration of unintended consequences. Feasible routes would be modeled against one another in the study (along with future baseline conditions) to weigh their benefits, understand community preferences, and determine if they are worth pursuing.

Funding for this project was awarded as part of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Program. Please see the following for more information:

- US DOT Project Factsheet:
  - o <https://wilmapco.sharefile.com/public/share/web-sb0ad3d3de7b24371b897a6152a349e76>
- WILMAPCO Project Grant Application Narrative:
  - o <https://wilmapco.sharefile.com/public/share/web-s76494e5ad6aa414eacdec4374508e5f7>
- WILMAPCO Project Budget:
  - o <https://wilmapco.sharefile.com/public/share/web-sf7e6fc2d8b334232afa2e366a7d1f81d>

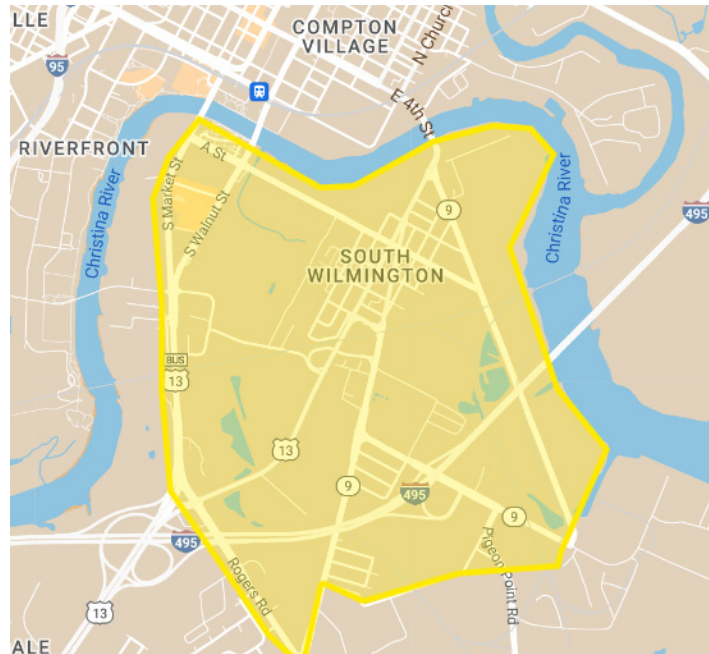
## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

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### ***Boundaries***

The initial STBS study area generally consists of South Wilmington, including the Wilmington neighborhood of Southbridge as well as the Hamilton Park and Eden Park Gardens in unincorporated New Castle County. The Christina River will serve as the northern boundary. The Christina River southwards to the Port of Wilmington will be the eastern boundary. Pyles Lane and Rogers Road will be its southern boundary. And South Market Street will serve as the study area’s western boundary.

## Study Area Map



### Overview

The STBS will identify a truck bypass route that reduces truck traffic in Southbridge while maintaining regional freight efficiency and minimizing human and environmental impacts. Public involvement will occur throughout the planning process in coordination with the Southbridge Civic Association and be strongest during Phase 3. We propose the project proceed under the following phases:

**Phase 1:** Appreciate the extremely complex nature of the study area. Understand the mobility recommendations stemming from a series of plans and projects, including: the SNAP, *Wilmington's 2028 Comprehensive Plan*, *South Market Street Master Plan*, *Route 9 Master Plan*, *Port of Wilmington Truck Access Study*, the Riverfront Transportation Infrastructure project, the *South Wilmington Shoreline Protection Plan*, and especially, the *Southbridge Transportation Action Plan (STAP)*. Understand other projects which may influence this project, including planning for wetland restoration and flood protection efforts in the eastern part of Southbridge, and area projects, such as DelDOT's Bridge 1-684 Replacement project, and others listed in the WILMAPCO Transportation Improvement Program and Regional Transportation Plan.

**Phase 2:** Beginning with the routes identified in the STAP, develop an initial listing of several potential bypass routes which may significantly reduce truck trips in Southbridge. Study the initial feasibility of these routes. This includes an examination of their impact on truck and car travel efficiency, travel patterns, and the impacts they would have on communities and the environment. Concepts found to be feasible in this phase will pass onto more advanced study in Phase 3. (This Phase includes Task 1 in the WILMAPCO Project Budget, listed on page 2).

**Phase 3:** This phase includes a cost analysis of the feasible routes and the development of a Measures of Effectiveness Matrix, renderings, and, potentially, animations to communicate their pros and cons, positioning, and functionality to community members and stakeholders. Extensive outreach will occur during this phase, including door-to-door and online community surveying, a public workshop, and parallel

outreach to area youth to understand community preferences for the alternatives presented. (This Phase includes Tasks 2 and 3 in the WILMAPCO Project Budget, listed on page 2).

**Phase 4:** Considering the technical findings and community feedback a preferred improvement will be identified. A draft report will be developed to document and convey findings. The draft report will include documentation of Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study results to hasten project implementation. (This Phase includes Tasks 3 and 4 in the WILMAPCO Project Budget, listed on page 2).

### ***Planning Partners***

WILMAPCO will be responsible for administering the Study in collaboration with the Management Committee, which will include:

- City of Wilmington Public Works
- Southbridge Civic Association (SBCA)
- South Wilmington Planning Network (SWPN)
- Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)
- Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)

The Management Committee will convene only when necessary. This committee will establish a project Advisory Committee to guide the study. The Advisory Committee will consist of a diverse community representatives, along with key area stakeholders and other government officials. Regular SBCA meetings will also serve as the primary forum for community feedback. The SWPN, the Route 9 Master Plan Monitoring Committee, and the Wilmington Initiatives group will also receive updates on the project. Additionally, the Hamilton/Eden Park Gardens Civic Association will be engaged, especially during Phase 3.

Community participation is key to ensuring a quality plan. The consultant will work with two representatives to be appointed by the Southbridge Civic Association as community liaisons. These liaisons will be given multiple one-off stipends in the form of a Visa gift card (ranging from \$25 to \$50 in value) for their participation and support of the study. This includes internal review of draft community presentations for clarity, their attendance at meetings where the study will be discussed at length, survey support, and the introduction and update of the study at agreed community meetings and workshops.

We further propose that the consultant pursue the temporary hiring and training of two Southbridge-area residents to specifically support door-to-door surveying within Phase 3 of the STBS. At least one of these contracted professionals will have experience with door-to-door surveying.

Materials for the STBS will be housed digitally on WILMAPCO's Southbridge webpage, likely as a subpage. WILMAPCO will manage updates of this page, while the consultant will be responsible for providing content updates during the study. Content updates include meeting notes and recordings, presentations and recordings, survey instruments and results, maps and reports, and relevant educational and training resources for residents if not otherwise provided by WILMAPCO.

### **SCOPE OF WORK FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES**

The Management Committee is seeking consultant support for the project as described below.

## **PHASE 1**

### ***Identify Issues, Opportunities and Constraints***

- The consultant will review existing and planned land use, transportation conditions, planned projects, and demographics for the study area. Much of this information has been gathered and presented in previous area studies, such as those listed above.
  - Required data for Phase 2 will be identified.
- The consultant will kick off the study with the Advisory Committee and begin stakeholder engagement to understand existing and planned work in and around the study area.
  - Stakeholder engagement includes the outreach and engagement of businesses and freight operators known to generate truck trips in Southbridge. These businesses and operators should be engaged throughout the course of the study to provide feedback on the plan and its recommendations as they develop.

Deliverables – WILMAPCO will prepare and manage a project webpage, while the consultant will prepare meeting notes and summaries. A project logo will be developed to market the study.

## **PHASE 2**

### ***Technical Feasibility of Potential Truck Bypass Routes***

- Examine the feasibility of various potential bypass routes and determine which routes to study. This includes an examination of their impact on truck and car travel efficiency, travel patterns, and the impacts they would have on communities and the environment via computer modeling.
  - WILMAPCO has access to Streetlight traffic data which can be shared to help in the building of a local traffic model.
  - The traffic modeling should include an understanding of truck trip origins and destinations in the study area and the destinations/freight generators inside and nearby. It is important to understand the origin and destinations of truck trips traveling through Southbridge to understand the effectiveness of any proposed bypass routes on reducing these trips.
  - Projections for traffic and demographic data should be used. This is key to the study area as some 4,000 new housing units are proposed at Riverfront East and expansion of the Port of Wilmington is planned.
- To avoid planning fatigue, STBS will largely build from the community visioning completed in the SNAP and STAP.
  - An overview of the project will be presented at Public Meeting 1, which will be in coordination with a regular in-person SBCA meeting and via online interactions on the STBS webpage. Feedback at this meeting could be collected via interactive activities.
    - The consultant will work with the Advisory Committee and Community Liaisons to prepare an introductory presentation providing an overview of the project and initial listing of potential bypass routes. The consultant will give this presentation at Public Meeting 1. A \$25 raffle drawing will be made at this meeting and a community dinner will be provided.
    - The consultant will also make a short introductory PowerPoint presentation video featuring this presentation.
    - Develop and send a postcard mailing to relevant study area residents encouraging them to attend Public Meeting 1 and visit the project webpage to learn more/provide feedback. In addition to the post card, electronic social media flyers and draft introductory text will be developed and shared with WILMAPCO.

- The consultant will, separately, brief area elected officials on the project and gather their input.

Deliverables – Memo detailing the results of Phase 2’s technical analysis; meeting notes from Advisory Committee and Public Meeting 1 (including feedback); PowerPoint presentation video; postcard mailing; social media / electronic marketing graphics and text; and elected official/key stakeholder outreach notes.

### **PHASE 3**

#### ***Cost Analysis and Public Engagement of Feasible Truck Bypass Routes***

- Determine the rough projected financial cost of routes found feasible in Phase 2.
- Develop a Measures of Effectiveness Matrix, renderings, and, potentially, animations to communicate pros and cons, positioning, and functionality to community members and stakeholders. These results will be presented in an easy-to-understand way, both at a public meeting and in an accompanying video presentation.
  - The Measures of Effectiveness Matrix will assess which concept improvements most efficiently route trucks around Southbridge, while also considering their impacts on environmental resources, social equity, stormwater and sea level rise, existing infrastructure, private property, general expense, and more.
- The consultant will work with the Advisory Committee and Community Liaisons to prepare a Community Survey, executed primarily via a door-to-door and online sample, with telephone outreach and returnable print copies being available as needed. The survey will largely debut at Public Meeting 2 and be available for a period of about 30 days afterwards. A \$50 raffle gift card drawing will be available as an incentive to complete the survey.
- A door-to-door oral-based collection of Community Survey 2 will be needed to achieve a proper sample of residents fully representative of Southbridge. We further propose that the consultant pursue the temporary hiring and training of two Southbridge-area residents to specifically support door-to-door surveying within Phase 3 of the STBS. At least one of these contracted professionals will have experience with door-to-door surveying.
- The consultant will work with the Advisory Committee and Community Liaisons to prepare a second presentation providing an overview of the project and the feasibility of bypass routes. The consultant will give this presentation at Public Meeting 2.
  - The consultant will also make a short introductory PowerPoint presentation video featuring this presentation.
  - A second elected official briefing will be offered to present the results.
  - Consider developing and sending a postcard mailing to all relevant study area residents encouraging them to attend Community Meeting 2 and complete the Community Survey. A \$25 raffle drawing will be made at this meeting and a community dinner will be provided. In addition to the post card, electronic social media flyers promoting both the workshop and survey, along with draft introductory text, will be developed and shared with WILMAPCO.
- A parallel process to engage youth and collect their feedback will be developed during this phase as well. A \$25 raffle drawing will be made available.

Deliverables – Meeting notes from Advisory Committee and public meetings (including feedback); cost analysis memo; PowerPoint presentation and video, Survey 2, analysis of Survey 2 results; postcard mailing; social media / electronic marketing graphics and text; and elected official/key stakeholder outreach notes.

**PHASE 4**

***Selection of Preferred Alternative***

- Based on stakeholder feedback, community outreach and technical analysis, a preferred truck bypass route will be selected. This improvement, along with improvements of secondary and tertiary priority, will be detailed in a Draft Final Report. The Draft Final Report will detail the planning process, feedback received, and the merits and limitations of the preferred bypass route, along with those of feasible, yet secondary and tertiary preferred routes. Next steps for implementation will be identified. This includes infrastructure needs, costs, potential implementation grants, and project phasing. Compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) standards to enable eligibility for future federal funding will also be documented in the Final Report, along with potential timelines for implementation.
  - Stakeholder engagement includes the outreach and engagement of businesses and freight operators known to generate truck trips in Southbridge. These businesses and operators should be engaged throughout the course of the study to provide feedback on the plan and its recommendations.
  
- The Draft Final Report will be presented at Public Meeting 3, which will again coincide with a SBCA meeting. Consideration will be given to an outdoor, celebratory open house style event. A \$25 raffle drawing will be made at this meeting and community lunch or dinner provided.
- A recorded PowerPoint presentation will again be posted to the project webpage.
- The draft report will be made available for public comment for at least 30 days following Public Meeting 3. Feedback at this meeting could be collected via interactive activities. Public elected officials will be offered a briefing prior to Public Meeting 3. Advertising for Public Meeting 3 will include contacting those engaged in the study previously via text and email, and general social media blasts, email notifications.
- At the end of the public comment period, the consultant and Advisory Committee will consider any revisions and finalize the STBS.

Deliverables – Meeting notes from Advisory Committee and public outreach (including feedback); PowerPoint presentation video; social media / electronic marketing graphics and text; and elected official/key stakeholder outreach notes. Final report, including documentation of Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study results.

**ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE**

PHASE	MONTH											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.) Issues, Opportunities & Constraints												
2.) Technical Analysis				⊕								
3.) Cost and Public Engagement								⊕				
4.) Selection of Preferred Route												⊕

Public Meeting 

## **FUNDING**

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This project will be primarily funded by the US DOT's FY 2023 Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program, with additional contributions from DeIDOT and the City of Wilmington. The total available funding is \$300,000. As part of the RFP, we request a cost estimate for each of the listed tasks.

## **DELIVERABLES**

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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 workshop.
- Materials for a project website, including illustrative depictions of the preferred alternative, potentially including simulations of potential alternative.
- Attendance at all meetings listed in this RFP and Advisory Committee meetings as needed.
- 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 (such as Adobe InDesign) of final report.
- GIS layers/shapefiles of analysis in ESRI .shp or MapInfo .tab format, of all proposed improvements and all mapping work.

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

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The Consultant shall submit five (5) bound copies of a Proposal/Statement of Qualifications and one electronic copy 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 located 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](http://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.)

## **EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

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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**

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The deadline for proposals is **4:30 p.m. on March 3** 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 March 24.

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, 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.

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  
Phone: (302) 737-6205 Ext.113  
Fax: (302) 286-7131  
E-mail: [bswiatek@wilmapco.org](mailto:bswiatek@wilmapco.org)