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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

I-95 CAP FEASIBILITY STUDY IN WILMINGTON, DE

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.

WILMAPCO, the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) and the City of Wilmington are seeking proposals to perform a feasibility study to create a cap over the below-grade section of I-95 between the Delaware Avenue and 6th Street bridges.

The Interstate Highway System was created as part of the Federal Highway Act of 1956, with \$25 billion allocated for the construction of 41,000 miles of new highway over a 10-year period. Interstate 95 runs along the East Coast from Miami, FL to the Canadian border in Houlton, ME. I-95 is the only primary (2 digit) interstate route that enters Delaware, running 23.43 miles from the Maryland border near Newark, DE to the Pennsylvania border near Claymont, DE. Construction of the Wilmington Expressway was begun in the early 1960s with the completion of the section from Newport, DE to downtown Wilmington in 1966 and from there to the Pennsylvania border in 1968. Delaware was the third state to complete its section of I-95. Today, this stretch of I-95 carries 110,000 vehicles per day and is part of the National Highway System, which is a network that is important to the US economy, defense and mobility.

The construction of I-95 through Wilmington resulted in the destruction of 360-370 homes between Adams and Jackson Streets, primarily impacting communities of color. The ramps to downtown were constructed as a compromise to try bringing economic development to the downtown and Riverfront to offset the loss of this neighborhood. With both elevated and below-grade sections, the construction of I-95 effectively created a wall between the West Side neighborhood and the downtown area creating a racial inequity. It also substantially increased traffic on parts of Adams and Jackson Streets, which now serve as busy service roads for the I-95 ramps instead of neighborhood streets.

To address this historic inequity created by I-95, Wilmington is now joining an ever-growing number of cities that are exploring ways to reconnect neighborhoods and provide new public spaces by creating caps over urban highways. These new lands



are being used to create green spaces, plazas and cultural amenities that can reconnect neighborhoods and encourage residents to walk and bike more in the adjacent communities.

WILMAPCO will lead this effort to study the feasibility of capping one or more sections of I-95 between the Delaware Avenue bridge to the north and the 6th Street bridge to the south. There are four other streets that bridge over I-95 in this corridor, including 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th Streets. There is also a flyover ramp from southbound I-95 that connects to the intersection of 11th Street and Adams Street. This street grid creates five potential areas that could be capped along the I-95 corridor in Wilmington. These five areas differ in size, and create an opportunity for multiple concepts to be developed utilizing some, or all, of these spaces to create new connections between neighborhoods and result in new public spaces for the residents.

This study will result in a concept(s) for a cap over I-95, including potential uses such as new public spaces or transportation facilities, as well as a cap structure that can support the preferred uses. The concept(s) will have been vetted with stakeholders through an intensive public outreach process. The final report will detail all aspects of the study, including bicycle, pedestrian and transit access to the new space from the adjacent neighborhoods. The report will also include the PEL documentation needed for the project to be eligible for local, state and federal funding.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals of improving quality of life, improving safety, and providing multimodal access (bus service, walking and cycling) will be promoted through this study.

- 1) Evaluate possible concepts for the capping of the depressed sections of I-95 in Wilmington. The study will examine which section, or sections, can be capped and what the best uses will be for those capped areas.
- 2) Lead a community driven process to develop a vision for the capped area(s) that will provide opportunities for residents of the adjacent neighborhoods and the City to enjoy new, vibrant public spaces with appropriate amenities.
- 3) Identify all feasible concepts and create cost estimates for each.
- 4) Select a preferred concept and begin Planning & Environmental Linkage (PEL) studies for the preferred concept.
- 5) Include the appropriate combination of funding opportunities that will be necessary to complete the construction of the preferred concept.

This area of Wilmington is located in a Center Transportation Investment Area (TIA), which is the highest priority TIA for investing transportation funds in the WILMAPCO region. This area also contains significant Environmental Justice (EJ) neighborhoods, which are concentrations of low income and minority populations, and a combination of moderate and significant Mobility Challenged (MC) neighborhoods, which are concentrations of seniors, people with disabilities, and households without access to an automobile.



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The project boundaries include the area of the public right-of-way for Interstate 95 between Adams Street and Jackson Street to the east and west, respectively. The Delaware Avenue bridge to the north and the 6th Street bridge to the south help to frame the study area.



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This project will include a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. PEL Studies are a collaborative and integrated approach to transportation decision-making that consider environmental, community, and economic issues early in the planning process. This information and analyses can then be utilized 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).

Project Team

The project team will manage the day-to-day administrative tasks along with the consultant team. Membership on the project team will include:

- WILMAPCO
- DeIDOT/DTC
- City of Wilmington Administration

Advisory Committee

WILMAPCO will be responsible for administering the Study in collaboration with an Advisory Committee made up of agency partners, elected officials, civic and business stakeholders that will provide input on existing conditions, best practices, and draft concepts. Membership on the Advisory Committee will include:

- Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)
- Delaware Department of Transportation (DeIDOT)
- City of Wilmington Administration
- Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC)
- New Castle County
- U.S. Congressional Officials
- City and State Elected Officials
- Neighborhood Planning Council
- Residents, business owners, property owners, United Neighbors and other interested parties

Existing Conditions and Best Practices

This task will be completed in-house by WILMAPCO staff along with the planning partners. Staff will collect this data and review, making any updates or additions to the materials based on planning partner input. The review will include a summary of similar projects around the country, as well as analysis and mapping of existing conditions data such as:

- Zoning
- Existing and planned land use
- Demographics
- Transportation facilities (including pedestrian pathways)
- Traffic conditions (i.e. congestion, intersection LOS, crashes, transit use) and existing traffic data available for use in the study
- Environmental features such as: parks, wetlands, brownfields, floodplain, sea-level rise impact areas
- Community, cultural and social features (historical assets, parks, etc.)



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Deliverables – The existing conditions report will include maps, graphics, etc., detailing existing conditions and constraints that will be reviewed by the planning partners in coordination with the Advisory Committee. All data will be available for review by the consultant team prior to Task 1.

SCOPE OF WORK FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES

The Project Team is seeking consultant support for the project as described below.

TASK 1

Community Visioning

- Work with Project Team and Advisory Committee to prepare for and hold community visioning workshops.
- WILMAPCO and an existing facilitator will compile contacts for key community stakeholders and assist with outreach including civic associations and community visioning workshops. Consultant team will work closely with WILMAPCO and facilitator to develop an approach and materials for workshops.
- Visioning Workshops will use an interactive approach to assess community preferences. (Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, workshops may be in-person, virtual, or include both types as conditions in Delaware permit.)

Deliverables – Meeting notes from Project Team, Advisory Committee, and Visioning Workshops. Materials for and outreach to area stakeholders. Materials for and outreach at Community Visioning Workshops, including a report detailing workshops and identified issues and priorities.

TASK 2

Define Assumptions and Create Initial Concepts for Analysis

- Concepts for analysis will be developed based on stakeholder and public outreach. Concepts will include plans for the cap structure, proposed land uses for the new space, and connections to neighboring communities and trail networks.
- Concept alternatives should explore community land use needs, including passive and active parks, plazas, amphitheater seating and entertainment areas; pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and bus stop amenities; streetscape amenities, and green stormwater infrastructure.
- A community meeting will be held to present concepts and the results of the analysis. Discussion will be encouraged and the team will record feedback on the preferred concept.

Deliverables – Meeting notes from Project Team, Advisory Committee, and public meeting. Analysis of initial transportation concepts. Identification of all feasible concept(s).



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TASK 3

Assess Feasibility of All Concepts

- In order to come to a conclusion on feasibility, the concepts will be compared using measures of effectiveness that will be developed by the project team.
- Assessment will evaluate anticipated land use, demographic, environmental, transportation, and community impacts of the proposed concepts.

Deliverables – Meeting notes from Advisory Committee. Report detailing the feasibility assessment.

TASK 4

Select Preferred Concept and Prepare Final Report

- Based on stakeholder feedback, community outreach and technical analysis, a preferred concept plan(s) will be selected by the Advisory Committee.
- Report will include preliminary plans or concepts needed to create the cap structure to support the proposed uses.
- Report will include renderings for land uses, including proposed public amenities and park/landscape vegetation.
- 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) standards to enable eligibility for future Federal funding, and will be documented in a final report.
- Draft report will be presented to the Advisory Committee and the public.

Deliverables – Meeting notes from Advisory Committee and public outreach. Report detailing analysis of preferred concept(s). Report will contain documentation of PEL Study results.

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE

WILMAPCO anticipates a 12-month project schedule; however, we request that the consultant teams supply an estimated schedule as part of their proposals.

TASK	MONTH											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Existing Conditions & Best Practices												
Community Visioning		i										
Define Assumptions & create initial concepts for analysis				i								
Assess feasibility of all concepts							i					
Select Preferred concept & complete final report										i		
Public Workshop i												



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FUNDING

This project will be funded from WILMAPCO's FY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), available at www.wilmapco.org/upwp and/or agencies on the Project Management Committee. As part of the RFP, we request an estimate of the costs to perform each of the listed tasks to be included.

DELIVERABLES

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

- Draft reports as needed – one high-quality copy and one electronic MS Word document
- PowerPoint and poster boards for presentations at meetings and public workshops
- Materials for a project website, including illustrative depictions of the preferred alternative.
- Attendance at up to 4 public meetings in the study area to discuss project and assist in stakeholder outreach.
- Attendance, in person or teleconference, at Project Management Committee, Advisory Committee, and/or joint committee meetings.
- 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, all proposed improvements and all mapping work.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Consultant shall submit an electronic copy of the Proposal/Statement of Qualifications for purposes of sharing with the Project Management Committee. Submissions may be via email or delivery of electronic media (e.g. flash drive). Receipt of unreadable 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 each individual to the overall project work plan. Any work citation that highlights previous modeling efforts of similar project size is recommended.
- Three current references (more recent than three years) for each individual and/or firm that will have significant and specific responsibility for this project.



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- 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 time line 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 is 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.



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- 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

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 Tuesday, June 15, 2021** at the WILMAPCO offices. Proposals received after this time and date will not be accepted nor considered. WILMAPCO is accepting only electronic submissions; we will not accept printed copies or faxed applications. Proposals will not be reviewed before 8:30 a.m. of the morning following the deadline. Tentatively, we will interview finalists during the week of **June 28, 2021**.

An electronic copy must be emailed to:

Contact: Dave Gula
E-mail: dgula@wilmapco.org

Electronic media may be mailed or delivered to:

WILMAPCO
100 Discovery Blvd. Suite 800
Newark, DE 19713
ATTN: Mr. Dave Gula, 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,



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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:

WILMAPCO
100 Discovery Blvd. Suite 800
Newark, DE 19713
ATTN: Mr. Dave Gula, Principal Planner

dgula@wilmapco.org



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