**Request for Proposal - Consultant Service**

**State of Delaware - Resilience Improvement Plan**

**Division of Transportation Resilience & Sustainability**

**Background**

Section 11405 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) established both the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Formula and Discretionary Grant Programs. The purpose of these programs are to provide funds for resilience improvements through formula funding distributed to States; competitive planning grants to enable communities to assess vulnerabilities to current and future weather events, natural disasters, and changing conditions, including sea level rise, and plan transportation improvements and emergency response strategies to address those vulnerabilities; and competitive resilience improvement grants to protect:

* Surface transportation assets by making them more resilient to current and future weather events and natural disasters, such as severe storms, flooding, drought, levee and dam failures, wildfire, rockslides, mudslides, sea level rise, extreme weather, including extreme temperature, and earthquakes;
* Communities through resilience improvements and strategies that allow for the continued operation or rapid recovery of surface transportation systems that serve critical local, regional, and national needs, including evacuation routes, and that provide access or service to hospitals and other medical or emergency service facilities, major employers, critical manufacturing centers, ports and intermodal facilities, utilities, and Federal facilities;
* Coastal infrastructure, such as a tide gate to protect highways, that is at long-term risk to sea level rise;
* Natural infrastructure that protects and enhances surface transportation assets while improving ecosystem conditions, including culverts that ensure adequate flows in rivers and estuarine systems.

The BIL provides considerable resources, including new programs and funding, to help States and other funding recipients advance this goal in the transportation sector. In addition, the BIL makes historic investments to improve the resilience of transportation infrastructure, helping States and communities prepare for hazards such as wildfires, floods, storms, and droughts exacerbated by climate change.

**Resilience Improvement Plan Development**

One way to better prepare for future hazards is through the development of a Resilience Improvement Plan. A Resilience Improvement Plan is a plan developed by a State DOT or MPO in accordance with Section 176(e) to address surface transportation system resilience to current and future weather events and natural disasters.

The PROTECT Formula Program does not require States and MPOs to develop a Resilience Improvement Plan or to incorporate a Resilience Improvement Plan in an MPO’s Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) or a Statewide Long-range Transportation Plan (SLRTP). However, it is encouraged. The PROTECT Formula Program also does not require States and MPO’s to develop a Resilience Improvement Plan before spending PROTECT Formula Program funds. However, a Resilience Improvement Plan can reduce the non-Federal cost share for a project by up to 10 percent.

If states wish to draft a Resilience Improvement Plan, the PROTECT Formula Program establishes certain required contents. The plan shall:

* Be for the immediate and long-range planning activities and investments of the State or MPO with respect to resilience of the surface transportation system within the boundaries of the State or MPO, as applicable;
* Demonstrate a systemic approach to transportation system resilience and be consistent with and complementary of the State and local mitigation plans required under section 322 of the Stafford Act; and
* Include a risk-based assessment of vulnerabilities of transportation assets and systems to current and future weather events and natural disasters, such as severe storms, flooding, drought, levee and dam failures, wildfire, rockslides, mudslides, sea level rise, extreme weather, including extreme temperatures, and earthquakes.

A systemic approach should consider the risk to the system, ideally across modes, geographic regions, and critical interdependent sectors. A Resilience Improvement Plan should address the full range of current and future weather events and natural disasters relevant to the transportation assets and system(s) addressed. A risk-based assessment of vulnerabilities should consider both the probability or likelihood that transportation assets within the State or MPO will experience potential current and future weather events and natural disasters, and the consequences of those events.

The Resilience Improvement Plan shall, as appropriate:

* Include a description of how the plan will improve the ability of the State or MPO to respond promptly to the impacts of weather events and natural disasters and to be prepared for changing conditions, such as sea level rise and increased flood risk.
* Describe the codes, standards, and regulatory framework, if any, adopted and enforced to ensure resilience improvements within the impacted area of proposed projects included in the Resilience Improvement Plan;
* Consider the benefits of combining hard surface transportation assets, and natural infrastructure, through coordinated efforts by the Federal Government and the States;
* Assess the resilience of other community assets, including buildings and housing, emergency management assets, and energy, water, and communication infrastructure;
* Use a long-term planning period; and
* Include such other information as the State or MPO considers appropriate.

A Resilience Improvement Plan should cover a period at least as long as the relevant SLRTP, MTP, or asset management plan. A longer period that considers the service lives of relevant assets is recommended.

The Resilience Improvement Plan may also:

* Designate evacuation routes and strategies, including multimodal facilities, designated with consideration for individuals without access to personal vehicles;
* Plan for response to anticipated emergencies, including plans for the mobility of emergency response personnel and equipment and access to emergency services including for vulnerable or disadvantaged populations;
* Describe resilience improvement policies, including strategies, land-use and zoning changes, investments in natural infrastructure, or performance measures that will inform the transportation investment decisions of the State or MPO with the goal of including resilience;
* Include an investment plan that: (i) includes a list of priority projects; and (ii) describes how PROTECT Formula Program funds apportioned to the State would be invested and matched, which shall not be subject to fiscal restraint requirements; and
* Use science and data and indicate the source of data and methodologies.

States are encouraged to include measurable outcomes and goals in their plans along with time frames for project implementation.

**Request for Proposal**

The Delaware Department of Transportation’s Division of Transportation Resilience & Sustainability is looking to develop a Resilience Improvement Plan (Plan) with a consultant partner. The drafting of the Plan will include all the requirements as referenced above.

Interested firms should review the information above and submit a proposal to Jim Pappas, Division Director (james.pappas@delaware.gov) with a cc to Stephanie Johnson, Assistant Director (stephanie.johnson@delaware.gov) by close of business December 16, 2022. The submitted proposal shall be a maximum of 8 pages demonstrating how the firm will develop the Plan and meet the requirements provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for Plan development and implementation along with a proposed schedule and budget.

The Department is anxious to start the Plan development and implementation so it is anticipated a firm will be selected by the end of the calendar year with an initial kickoff meeting in January 2023. We hope to have a draft of the Plan by spring 2023.

Any questions can be emailed to Jim and Stephanie in advance for a response.