



## AGENDA ITEM COVERSHEET

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**PREPARED BY:** Kim Ward, Town Clerk

**DEPARTMENT:** Clerk

**MEETING:** Town Council 1/14/2025

**SUBJECT:** Resolution of Support for the WMPO Application for a USDOT Grant

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### **BACKGROUND:**

The Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) is requesting a resolution for the FY 24-25 application to the United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) discretionary grant program from planning partners and community stakeholders. The goal of the WMPO application to the PROTECT program is to secure funding to develop a regional, transportation Resilience Improvement Plan for the Wilmington metropolitan area.

The PROTECT discretionary grant program, established by the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), aims to fund initiatives that boost the resilience of surface transportation networks like highways, public transit, ports, and intercity passenger rail. Eligible applicants for the grant program include states, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), local governments, special purpose districts or public authorities with a transportation function, and Tribal governments. Two grant award types are offered: planning grants and resilience improvement grants. The total amount of funding available is \$876 million for two applications periods, FY24-25 and FY 26. Up to \$576 million is available for the current FY 24-25 funding opportunity of which up to \$56 million is set aside for planning grants. PROTECT planning grants support the development of a Resiliency Improvement Plan that applies a systemic approach to evaluating transportation system vulnerabilities and that identifies short- and long-term planning activities and investments to improve resilience. Planning grants are funded with a 100% federal cost share, requiring no local matching funds if awarded. In addition, projects identified within a Resilience Improvement Plan then become eligible for implementation funding through the PROTECT program along with qualifying for further cost reductions if the Resilience Improvement Plan is incorporated into long-range transportation plans and/or if a specific project is prioritized within the Resilience Improvement Plan.

### **ACTION:**

Adopt Resolution 25-2320 supporting the application.