



FEBRUARY 2024

RAISE Grant Application:
**The Cresaptown Triangle
Project Infrastructure
Improvements**



**STATE HIGHWAY
ADMINISTRATION**

Project Description

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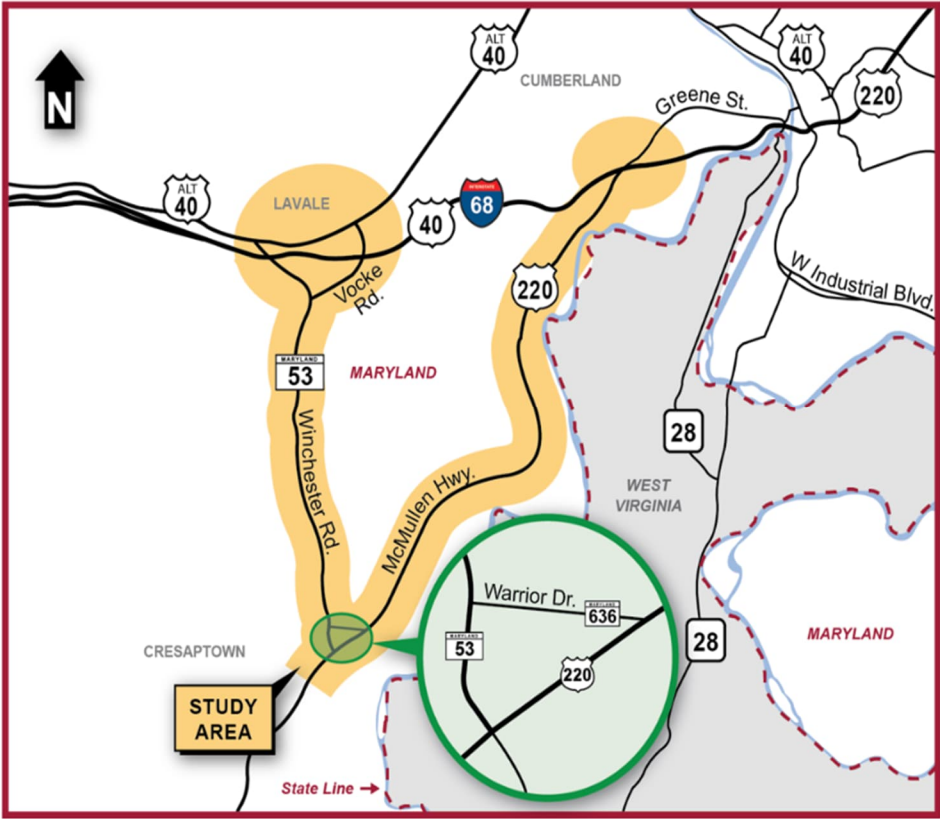


Figure 1: Project Study Area

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) requests \$6.943 million in Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant funds to support significant transportation improvements at and around the intersection of US 220 and MD 53. The Cresaptown Triangle Project (“the Project”) will positively reshape the overall functionality of transportation in a small, rural, and underserved town emblematic of Appalachian life in Western Maryland. The Project will achieve this vision by upgrading a vital freight and regional roadway corridor to be safer, more efficient, and more accessible; rerouting truck traffic from residential streets; and introducing new pedestrian infrastructure. The Project is in a defined rural area near the intersection of two major roads connecting Cresaptown with Cumberland and Frostburg, Maryland; Mineral County, West Virginia; the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS); and the Interstate 68 corridor.

The Project encompasses a range of multimodal infrastructure enhancements, such as additional sidewalks, updated signaling, and traffic wayfinding improvements, that will collectively make this nexus of freight traffic and small town life more efficient and inviting for all, thereby promoting quality of life, safety, sustainability and accessibility for travelers and surrounding communities, and strengthening connections to regionally significant job centers, such as IBM in Mineral County, West Virginia. This effort will deliver on a longstanding state priority to address a freight bottleneck while also introducing quality-of-life enhancements that will improve the functioning of daily life for residents of an underserved, disadvantaged town in Western Maryland.

Transportation Challenges

The Project will address transportation challenges that have worsened in recent years, including growing industrial traffic stemming from economic development in the area that has led to significant backups that strain roadway capacity. Combined with this increase in freight traffic, the ineffective design of the current US 220/MD 53 intersection and poor state of repair of this roadway creates a significant bottleneck that causes chronic idling by freight vehicles and resulting emissions from truck exhaust that harm air quality in this rural town. Presently, motorists on northbound US 220 who wish to access northbound MD 53 must turn left on westbound MD 636 (Warrior Drive), home to small businesses and the local volunteer fire station, and then right onto northbound MD 53, which adds about 0.4 miles of travel distance and creates local congestion and access issues.

- 1 Revised signal timings at US 220-MD 53 and US 220-MD 636 to reduce delays and improve service
- 2 Addition of turn lanes and require queue lengths
- 3 New curb and gutter, updated drainage infrastructure as necessary
- 4 Resurfacing (including new pavement markings) along US 220
- 5 Reduced speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph on US 220
- 6 Changing MD 53 from one-way SB to allow NB travel from US 220 to Brant Rd - Allows truck traffic along NB US 220 to turn left and replaces existing multi-step pattern
- 7 Addition of sidewalk along NB US 220 from Dollar General (southern project limits) to intersection at MD 53
- 8 Updated signal and crosswalks at US 220/MD 53



Figure 2: Map of Proposed Transportation Improvements

The Project will address these issues by widening a segment of southbound MD 53 from one to two lanes, creating new dedicated turn lanes with slips, introducing geometric enhancements to improve truck turns, and widening shoulders to increase traffic flow and prevent freight delays. The Project will also divert up to 20 percent of freight traffic from Warrior Drive, improving quality of life for operators and employees of local businesses and removing freight conflicts from emergency response services at the Cresaptown Volunteer Fire Department (SHA – US 220 at MD 53 Traffic Operational and Safety Analysis Report – 2023).

Additionally, the current layout of the US 220/MD 53 intersection and the absence of basic pedestrian amenities diminishes accessibility for community members. This includes the absence of a sidewalk network, which makes the junction nearly impassable for pedestrians, and a lack of ADA-compliant infrastructure at crossings and along pathways to key destinations, such as retail and grocery stores, schools, and places of worship.

Total Benefits (Discounted)	\$18.6 million
Total Costs (Discounted)	\$5.0 million
Benefit-Cost Ratio	3.72

Figure 3: Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR)

The Project will address these challenges chiefly by redesigning this intersection, as well as by adding sidewalks along a roughly 1,200-foot stretch of US 220, introducing safety improvements at crosswalks and pedestrian signals, and improving visibility for motorists that will translate to a safer environment and more complete streets for pedestrians.

The Project boasts a strong cost-benefit ratio, indicating the positive impacts of the planned roadway and pedestrian infrastructure improvements for community members and motorists.

Project History and Current Design Status

Planning for the Cresaptown Triangle Project began in 2014 with the launch of MDOT State Highway Administration’s (SHA) US 220 Project Planning Study, which focuses on roadway improvements within Cresaptown, how to improve vehicular, pedestrian, and non-driver mobility and safety, and improve regional commerce. Among the needs cited for the study were to address intersection capacity issues and resulting traffic backups at US 220 / MD 53 and US 220/MD 636 (Warrior Drive), which includes observational and community-noted US 220 northbound afternoon peak blockages of the Weis Market; the difficulty of truck turning movements at these intersections; and the broader need for improved regional roadway network connectivity in Allegany County.

The Project was notably studied earlier as part of a larger US 220 Corridor-wide planning effort encompassing 835 square miles and four jurisdictions in Western Maryland and West Virginia. However, the Cresaptown Triangle Project was singled out for an individual planning study and construction given its critical role in addressing a specific bottleneck for the broader corridor.

SHA began with public informational workshops about the Cresaptown Triangle Project in November 2014 and December 2015 to discuss the study’s purpose and need,



Figure 4: A stretch of US 220 in the Project area with no safe sidewalks for pedestrians.

collect comments from members of the public, and narrow down six build alternatives (as well as a no-build alternative) to a single, preferred option. After modifying the design for the chosen alternative, SHA presented this option (Figure 1) to the public in 2017. SHA has since completed conceptual (15 percent) design for roadway, intersection, and other improvements, and expects to reach preliminary (30 percent) design by summer of 2024. All Project components will advance to 30 percent design prior to receipt of the requested RAISE funding, after which the requested funds would be used to complete the final design, right of way, utilities, and construction for the Project.

Currently, the Project is highlighted as a top unfunded priority for the State of Maryland and local and regional interests as identified in official plans and reports, including the [Maryland Statewide Freight Plan](#), the [Maryland Consolidated Transportation Program for FY2024-2029](#), and the [Cumberland Area Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Transportation Improvement Program](#). The Allegany County Department of Public Works has also highlighted the need for the Project directly in a [letter](#) to the Maryland Transportation Secretary as part of the Capital Transportation Program planning process. Collectively, these entities as well as community members have voiced that completion of the Project will address a critical state of good repair need in Maryland’s freight network while simultaneously improving daily quality of life and accessibility with essential pedestrian and traffic safety improvements.

Project Location

The Project Area covers a triangular section of roadway and pedestrian infrastructure between US 220, MD 53, and Maryland 636 (Warrior Drive). (Figure 1)

The Project fulfills an important need for safe community access and improved traffic conditions, as well as more broadly improved connections to freight routes from both state routes and US highways and interstates, including I-68. These improved connections will help alleviate traffic and promote economic growth in this section of Appalachia in Western Maryland, including more efficient travel to employers such as IBM and the American Ballistic Laboratory, which have job centers just two miles south of Cresaptown.

Total Population	4,746
White (%)	50%
African American (%)	47%
Other Races (%)	3%
Median Income	\$54,070
Total Households	902
Residents in Poverty (%)	11%

Figure 5: Key Statistics About Cresaptown

Furthermore, the Project will improve safety conditions for community members in Cresaptown who walk to work and other destinations, such as the Dollar General and Sheetz on US 220, Cresaptown United Methodist Church (and its attached daycare facility), two other churches immediately outside the Project area, and Weis Market. Improved traffic capacity

and safety conditions for motorists and pedestrians alike will also benefit families with students who attend or utilize Cresaptown Elementary, the U.S. Army Reserve base, and the Cresaptown Sports Complex, the only park within the Project area.

Looking forward, economic development interests note that the long-range industrial redevelopment of vacant property west of US 220 is dependent on the completion of the Project, since it will help to separate local traffic from freight and other thru traffic. Improving the state of good repair and efficiency of this section of US 220 will also help forge new connections between Cresaptown and developing residential communities just outside of the town.

Equity

The Project provides a prime opportunity to directly impact a historically underinvested region in Appalachia. Cresaptown is located in Allegany County, Maryland, and is situated 0.5 miles from Census Tract 102, a USDOT-identified Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC) in West Virginia, according to the Grant Project Verification Tool and the White House Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST). Additionally, the wider US 220 corridor serves four HDCs in the Cumberland area.

With most (88 percent) residents commuting to work by car, according to five-year U.S. Census American Community Survey estimates, a significant proportion of residents in this community stand to benefit from multimodal enhancements that will reduce delays and improve traffic safety and visibility.

Roadway and Freight Network

This project will address major transportation-related obstacles at the Project area identified by SHA, which is working each year to resurface and maintain key roadways and rehabilitate or replace bridges in the state highway network. In Maryland, 85 percent of the roadway system is currently in preferred condition, and MDOT has recorded 22 poorly rated bridges in SHA's inventory, one of the lowest percentages of poorly rated bridges of any state transportation agency. Work has already been completed on intersecting routes in Western Maryland, such as the ongoing initiative to reduce rockslides and make the road safer along MD 135 at six locations from the Garrett County line to US 220 in Allegany County. By upgrading pavement conditions, road turn angles, and angles of visibility through the Project, MDOT will complement these improvements with a proper state of good repair for US 220 through Cresaptown and will lower future maintenance costs in the process.