



Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

Map delineating existing assets on the Old York Road Corridor

Shortly after my election as Commissioner in November 2007 I was appointed by State Representative Josh Shapiro to represent Ward 7 on the Old York Road Steering Committee. I was briefed by Assistant Township Manager Matt Lahaza on the work of the Committee to date and provided with all relevant materials. I have attended both of the scheduled meetings of the Committee that have occurred since I assumed office.

The Committee was formed in 2006 and includes local elected officials, Township staff and community leaders. What follows is a brief history of the work of the Committee and a report on the status of its efforts to date.

In early 2006 the Old York Road Steering Committee was convened to determine if a master plan was needed to improve the Old York Road Corridor (OYRC). After a series of meetings, in June 2006 the Committee recommended that a master plan was needed and identified several [issues](#) that such a plan could address. These issues included, but were not limited to, the lack of an identity for the corridor, the need for design consistency, poor pedestrian access, traffic congestion and a need for open space.

In August 2006, as a result of the recommendations of the Committee, Abington Township issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an Old York Road Corridor Improvement Plan. The Steering Committee identified several [goals](#) that it wanted the successful proposal to address, including, but not limited to, reinforcing a positive business climate, enhancing the aesthetic appearance, improving the physical function, coordinating public and private sector development and integrating with the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

In June 2007 the proposal from the firm of McCormick Taylor Engineers and Planners was selected from among 10 entries. See the link to the [article](#) from the Times Chronicle

(as it appears on the website of State Rep. Josh Shapiro) that describes the selection and award process. Initial funding for the completion of the plan was provided by the state through the office of State Rep. Shapiro. Abington Township matched the state funds.

The [scope of work](#) proposed by McCormick Taylor consists of four phases, three streams of activity and seventeen tasks to be completed over 12 months. Work on the plan began in October 2007. Tasks (i.e., analyzing traffic conditions, a market study, an inventory of physical conditions, etc.) within the first phase (Identifying Opportunities) across all three streams of activity (circulation elements, land use elements, market elements) are nearly completed. The first Town Meeting to present the work completed so far and to gather public input for the next phase (Visioning) is tentatively planned for March 2008.

Once a final OYRC improvement plan is completed later this year, the Township will have \$10 million in state funds, obtained through State Rep. Shapiro's office, to begin implementing elements of the plan. It is expected that the state funds can be leveraged to obtain additional public and private monies to complete the implementation of the plan's recommendations.

If you have any questions, comments or ideas, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will continue to keep you informed as events warrant it.

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