



<https://doverkentmpo.delaware.gov/>

Rail Land Use Study Introduction

September 2023

Introductions & Why Are We Here?

- Who is on the call
- As part of Dover Kent MPO's FY24 UPWP, this is one of the DelDOT-sponsored projects
- DelDOT is interested in compiling a technical identification of available land adjacent to rail corridors which could be designated and preserved for rail-supported industrial use
- This information would be intended to show the importance of local government comprehensive plans and how these documents can support state and regional rail freight plan goals and objectives, promote better coordination between local and state government, better inform rail operators' land use decisions, and attract freight related manufacturing/employment centers to Central and Southern Delaware

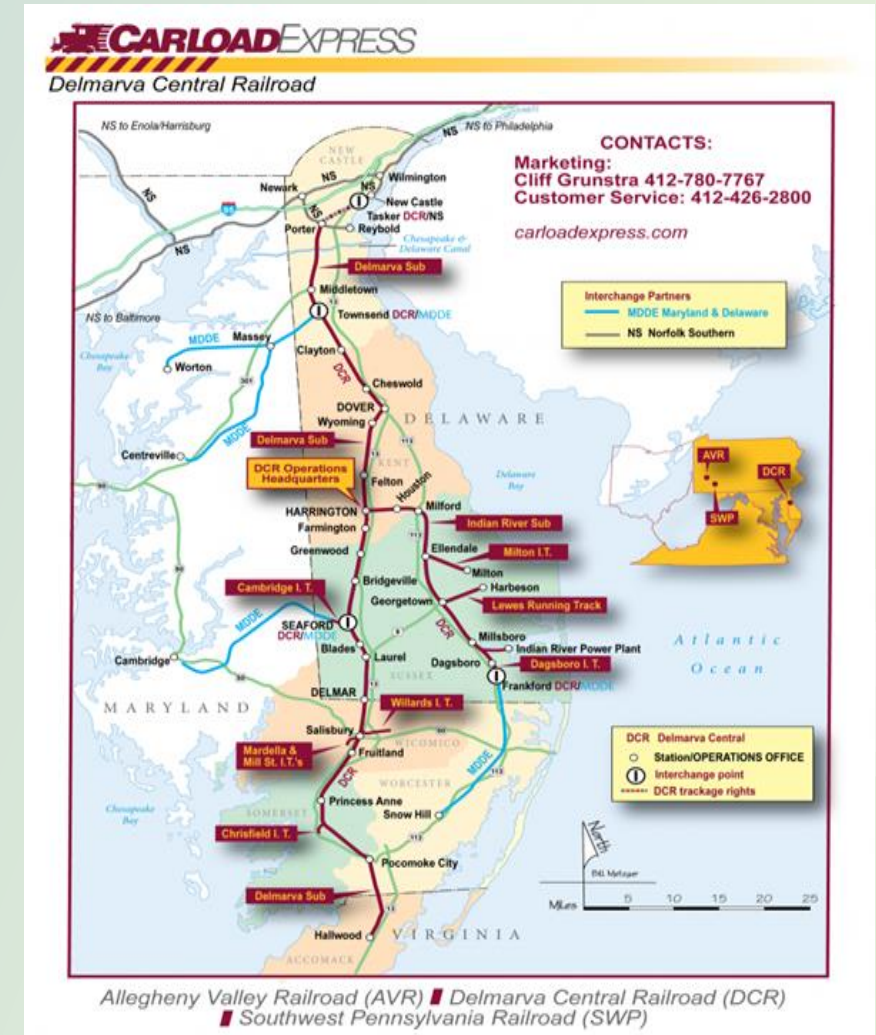
Why is Freight Rail Important?

- Recently, two large Kent County projects required rail
- For large loads, rail is more cost effective than trucking
- Industrial and manufacturing are key target sectors for economic development
- Large parcels adjacent to rail attract strong industrial and manufacturing companies
- Called out in the Statewide Freight Plan



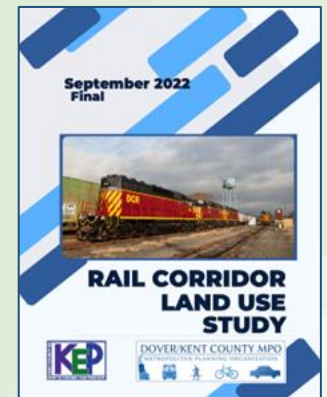
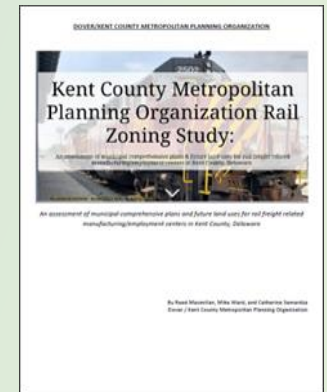
What has Changed in 20 Years?

- Delmarva Central Railroad becomes one of the short line railroads operating on the Norfolk Southern track in 2016
- Rail demand is on the rise
- Preserving land adjacent to rail for enterprises that require rail access contributes to compatible long-term land uses as well as secures opportunities for economic growth



Previous Studies

- **Dover Kent MPO - 2018 Rail Zoning Study**
 - The November 2018 study identified five recommendations to help support existing Federal, State, and Regional plan goals and objectives and identified future economic initiatives requiring additional study
- **Dover Kent MPO - 2022 Rail Corridor Land Use Study**
 - Identified large acreage parcels / parcel groupings adjacent to the rail line
 - Created an interactive mapping tool
 - Offered guidance to help communities work toward making the most of rail-adjacent properties while avoiding potential negative impacts
- **DeIDOT Delaware Freight Plan - 2022**
 - The Delaware Freight Plan was most recently updated to comply with the federal freight planning requirements introduced in November 2021 by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)
 - The draft Plan was developed from summer 2021 to fall 2022, and the Federal Highway Administration approved the Plan in December 2022
 - <https://deldot.gov/Business/freight/>

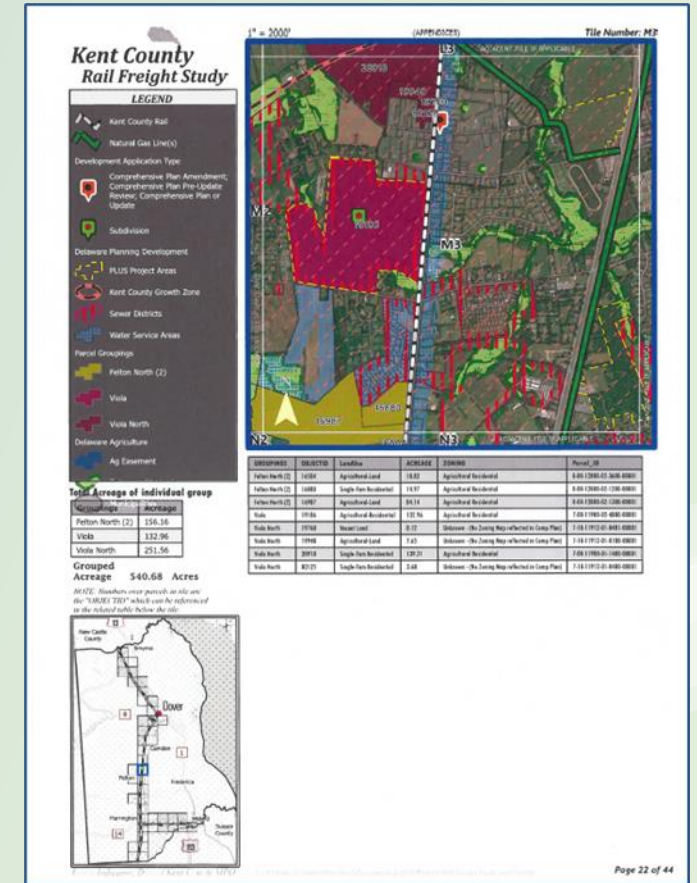


What will this Study Entail?

- **Study Area**
 - From Porter, in New Castle County, south to the Kent County line (approximately 75 miles), and the entire rail corridor in Sussex County (approximately 120 miles)
- **Comprehensive Plans Review**
 - Purpose of the review will be to ascertain if rail freight-related uses or proposed future uses are being considered, identify future land use zoning map changes regarding industrial zoning, identify potential areas where rail freight-related uses might be supported by rail spur lines
- **Process Used to Screen Parcels for Inclusion / Exclusion**
 - Large acreage with applicable frontage
 - Parcels that have the potential of being grouped into one larger parcel
 - Highly impacted with wetlands or other environmental concerns
 - Parcels in the Ag-Land Preservation program
 - Residential “Open Space” and various stand-alone residential properties
- **Detailed Examination by Municipality**
- **Maps of Parcel Groupings**
- **Summary**
- **Appendices**

Sample from Previous Study

- Interactive Map, Study & Map Tiles
 - A dynamic web-based map can be found at:
<https://dkcmpo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=62152bdabad24416aaa3d19819abf4fe>
 - Final version of the written report and map tile series are posted on the MPO website:
<https://doverkentmpo.delaware.gov/files/2023/01/Rail-Corridor-Land-Use-Study-Final-September-2022.pdf>



Summary of Anticipated Study Deliverables

- The purpose of the rail is to move freight
- Residential uses along the rail can cause interruptions
- Adjacent properties should accommodate rail and at best provide a place for those enterprises that need rail access
- If a municipality wants to encourage preservation of parcels along the rail for future commercial and industrial use, a process must be implemented to achieve that goal
- Resources and guidance that may be helpful - Concepts to consider for rail-positive zoning, sample process to facilitate a zoning change, Sample Rail Overlay Districts

Next Steps - How Can You Help?

- Gathering parcel data
 - Begin analysis
 - Share findings with stakeholders
 - Provide data
 - Engage and be responsive to requests
 - Lend expertise
 - Ambassadors and champions
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- Anticipate a first draft for review and comments by February 2024
 - Stakeholder meeting - April 2024
 - Final report to MPO PAC/TAC/Council and DeIDOT - June/July 2024

Questions / Comments / Discussion

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Thank you!