

HAMPTON ROADS RAIL CROSSING STUDY

Presented by:

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FTAC Meeting

Agenda Item #7

June 15, 2022



INTRODUCTION

- The waterways and railroads that help support the Port of Virginia and the regional economy also create a number of intermodal conflict points.
- These nearly 300 at-grade crossings throughout the region contribute to delays for roadway travelers and contribute to a number of collisions between trains and vehicles.
- The new federal transportation package includes new programs and additional funding for improving highway-rail crossings.



INTRODUCTION

- Based on the importance of freight movement to the regional economy and the new federal funding sources, the FTAC recommended that HRTPO staff prepare a regional Rail Crossing Study in FY 2023.
- The purpose of this study is to prioritize regional crossings in order to better position the region for the new and existing federal funding sources.

RAILROAD CROSSING ELIMINATION PROGRAM

- **New discretionary program included in the new federal infrastructure package (IIJA/BIL)**
- **Purpose of the program is to promote highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods**
- **\$3 billion available over 5 years**
- **Eligible applicants include States, Cities, MPOs, and Port Authorities**
- **Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the first round of funding is expected from the FRA in June 2022**

RAILROAD CROSSING ELIMINATION PROGRAM

- Eligible project types include:
 - Grade separation or closure including through use of a bridge, embankment, or tunnel
 - Track relocation
 - Improvement or installation of protective devices, signals, signs, or other measures to improve safety related to a separation, closure, or track relocation project
 - Other means to improve the safety if related to the mobility of people and goods at highway-rail grade crossings
 - The planning, environmental review, and design of an eligible project type

RAILWAY-HIGHWAY CROSSINGS PROGRAM (RHCP)

- Existing FHWA apportionment program has been continued in the new federal infrastructure package
- Purpose of the program is to provide funds for safety improvements to reduce the number of fatalities, injuries, and crashes at public railway-highway grade crossings
- Total funding available is \$1.2 billion over 5 years (\$245 million per year)
 - Virginia should continue to receive approximately \$5 million each year
- Eligible projects include any hazard elimination project at all public crossings including roadways, bike trails and pedestrian paths

DRPT STUDY

- The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is preparing an evaluation of rail crossings to assist with Railroad Crossing Elimination Program grants.
- DRPT is aiming to prepare a tentative prioritized list of crossings throughout the state this month for the initial round of Railroad Crossing Elimination Program grants.
- DRPT will prepare an ongoing priority database of crossings once more details are known about the Railroad Crossing Elimination Program after the initial NOFO is released.

NEXT STEPS

- Review the Railroad Crossing Elimination Program Notice of Funding Opportunity once it's released
- Prepare an initial study outline after the NOFO is released
- Coordinate with DRPT to ensure consistency between the two efforts

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- Questions/Comments?

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