

**Addendum to the August 9, 2022
RCS Joint Steering (Policy) Committee
and Working Group Meeting**

**Agenda Item 5
Regional Connectors Study: Step 1:
Qualitative Evaluation of Mandated
Segments and Segments Bundling –
Comments and Responses**





VIRGINIA PORT AUTHORITY

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August 3, 2022

Ms. Pavithra Parthasarathi
Deputy Executive Director, HRTPO
723 Woodlake Drive
Chesapeake, VA 23320

RE: Regional Connectors Study, Phase 3 Qualitative Analysis

Dear Ms. Parthasarathi,

The Port appreciates the opportunity to actively engage in the region's planning efforts with the HRPTO and HRTAC, and we are excited about the success the region has accomplished by working together. As stakeholders in the Regional Connectors Study (RCS), we believe that identifying specific links that accomplish congestion relief **and** provide economic opportunities will benefit the region. As the RCS team continues to evaluate the segments through the Phase 3 Qualitative Analysis component of the study, several stakeholders have shared challenges, including those relating to the Craney Island Dredge Management Area, the VA-164 Connector segment, and the I-564 corridor alignment.

The I-564 corridor is a key gateway for The Port of Virginia and since the inception of the I-564 Intermodal Connector in the late-1990's, the port has partnered with regional partners, FHWA, VDOT, US Navy, and City of Norfolk to establish the I-564 corridor investments by utilizing the FHWA guidelines to address the needs of all stakeholders. Examples of collaboration in meeting stakeholder needs include: the Air Terminal Interchange to provide enhanced access to the Navy's Commercial Vehicles Inspection Station, the new connection to the port's North Gate at Norfolk International Terminals, and the Naval Station Norfolk's Gate 6.

As a designated Port of National Defense, The Port of Virginia understands the importance of security requirements of the U.S. Navy and we recognize that security requirements change over time based on unforeseen events or conditions. Based on the uncertainty of when the I-564 cross-harbor segment will move forward to construction, we believe that security requirements at the time of design and construction may be accommodated with hardened infrastructure or technology advancements. However, based on the input and collaboration that has occurred over the last two decades, The Port of Virginia has been strategically investing in critical infrastructure with the understanding that the I-564 corridor alignment would remain in its current location and consistent with the final design plans. Examples of these investments in proximity to I-564 include:

- working with the Army Corps of Engineers to collaborate on funding and creating the deepest East Coast channel providing access to a national strategic port and Naval Station Norfolk;

- securing \$20 million in federal Port Infrastructure Development funds to expand rail capacity of the Central Rail Yard at NIT; and
- advancing a \$650 million NIT North Optimization project – with Phase 1 scheduled for completion in 2025, with \$266 million in funding provided by the Virginia General Assembly.

We appreciate the opportunity to share these comments and commit to partnering with the study's stakeholders to find solutions that address design criteria and security requirements for the VA-164 Connector on the Craney Island Marine Terminal. We look forward to continued engagement with the Regional Connectors study team, the HRTPO, and HRTAC to prioritize the region's future transportation system investments and participating in the continued success of the region.

Sincerely,



Cathie J. Vick
Chief Development and Government Affairs Officer