

ITEM #17: HAMPTON ROADS REGIONAL CONNECTORS STUDY: *Camelia Ravanbakht, HRTPO*

SUMMARY:

An update on the Hampton Roads Regional Connectors Study (formerly titled the *Study of the Remaining Components of the Hampton Roads Crossing Study (HRCS) Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)*).

Dr. Camelia Ravanbakht, HRTPO Executive Director, will brief the HRTPO Board on this item.

BACKGROUND:

During the HRTPO Board Meeting on October 20, 2016, the HRTPO Board requested HRTAC allocate up to \$7 million (\$3 million with a \$4 million contingency) toward the cost of further study of the HRCS-SEIS components not included in the Preferred Alternative:

- I-564/I-664 Connectors
- I-664 widening from the I-64/I-264/I-664 interchange at Bowers Hill to the I-64/I-664 interchange in Hampton, including the Monitor-Merrimac Memorial Bridge-Tunnel (MMMBT)
- VA 164/164 Connector

The HRTAC, at its meeting on October 20, 2016, passed a resolution approving up to \$7 million from the Hampton Roads Transportation Fund (HRTF) for this study.

At the HRTPO Board meeting on January 19, 2017, the Board authorized the Executive Director to work with HRTAC and VDOT to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was executed on May 1, 2017. Currently, the HRTPO and HRTAC have developed a draft *Project Agreement for Funding and Administration* (enclosed).

A Steering (Policy) Committee was formed, convened its first meeting on October 5, 2017, and approved the *Guidance for the Scope of Work* (attached) recommended by the Hampton Roads Regional Connectors Study Working Group.

Attachment 17

Enclosure 17: *Project Agreement for Funding and Administration between the HRTAC and the HRTPO*

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS (Action to be taken under Meeting Agenda Item #21-F:)

1. Approve the *Project Agreement for Funding and Administration*
2. Approve the *Guidance for the Scope of Work* for the Hampton Roads Regional Connectors Study.
3. Authorize the Executive Director to initiate the Request for Proposals (RFP) process.

Hampton Roads Regional Connectors Study

Guidance for Scope of Work

Prepared by HRTPO Staff for Working Group and Steering (Policy) Committee
September 2017

Study Purpose

According to the May 1, 2017 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC), Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), **the purpose of this study** is to evaluate the “feasibility, permitability, and transportation benefits” of the **following segments** not included in the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) approved HRCS SEIS Preferred Alternative (Alternative A):

- **VA 164**
- **I-564 Connector**
- **VA 164 Connector**
- **I-664 Connector**
- **I-664** (from I-64 in Hampton to US 460/58/13 in Chesapeake, *not* including Bowers Hill)

Other segments furthering the study’s specific goals and objectives (to be established under Phase I), may be added to the above five segments for evaluation in this study.

This study should establish a **regional long-term vision** that investigates 21st century transportation options that connect the Peninsula and the Southside across the Hampton Roads Harbor that enhance economic vitality and improve the quality of life in the region.

This analysis will use a baseline assumption that—at a minimum—the following projects will be built:

- I-64 Peninsula (Segments I, II, III; from Bland Blvd. to VA 199 at Lightfoot)
- I-64 Southside / High-Rise Bridge (Phase I)
- I-64 Widening including Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel (from I-664 in Hampton to I-564 in Norfolk)
- I-64/I-264 Interchange (Phases I and II)
- I-64 Express (HOT) Lanes (Segments I, II, III)

Projects emerging from this study will be considered by the HRTPO Board for its **2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**, including the **Vision Plan** portion of that document.

Background

In 2015, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), initiated the preparation of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the March 2001 Hampton Roads Crossing Study (HRCS) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

On July 25, 2016, the FHWA and Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) approved the Hampton Roads Crossing Study Draft Supplemental Impact Statement (HRCS SEIS). At its September 2016 meeting, the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), unanimously approved the HRCS SEIS **Alternative A, “modified”** to include the Bowers Hill Interchange, as the region’s Preferred Alternative. On October 20, 2016, the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC) also unanimously supported the HRTPO’s selection of Alternative A-modified, and allocated up to \$7 million of HRTF for **further study** of the HRCS SEIS components not included in the selected Alternative A.

On December 7, 2016, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) approved Alternative A and instructed VDOT to continue to work with HRTPO, HRTAC, USACE, Navy, the Port of Virginia, and other parties to advance separate studies to identify appropriate access options around Craney Island to include I-564/I-664 Connectors, I-664/MMMBT and 164/164 Connector. The resolution also directed VDOT to continue to work with HRTPO, HRTAC, USACE, and other parties to advance a separate study of the Bowers Hill Interchange in Chesapeake.

In January 2017, the HRTPO Board directed staff to work with VDOT, HRTAC, and other partners to develop a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** for supporting studies on how to move forward with the remaining segments of the SEIS and the Bowers Hill Interchange. The May 1, 2017 Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the HRTPO, VDOT, and HRTAC to advance two separate components:

- \$4 million for study of Bowers Hill Interchange following the NEPA process, to be managed by VDOT.
- \$3 million for Additional Feasibility Studies of the remaining components of the HRCS SEIS not included in the approved Alternative A, to be managed by the HRTPO. In March 2017, HRTAC approved a contingency of \$4 million to be available if additional funding is required for the completion of the HRTPO Feasibility Studies.

For further reference, see the following:

- March 2001 HRCS FEIS www.virginia.gov/projects/resources/studyhro-crossing-feis.pdf
- Dec. 2008 HRBT Expansion Feasibility Study http://virginiadot.org/news/resources/Hampton_Roads/HRB_Expansion_Feasibility_Final_Report.pdf
- Apr. 2017 HRCS SEIS http://hamptonroadscrossingstudy.org/learn_more/hrcs_draft_seis.asp

Minimum Requirements

Reflecting the MOU's specification that the "steering committee...will develop the scope of work", this "**Guidance for Scope of Work**" will assist the Steering (Policy) Committee in specifying minimum requirements for the consultant's final scope of work.

Stakeholders

- **General public**
- **Freight Industry**
- **Military**
- **Hospitality and tourism**

The interests of these stakeholders (gathered in part via interviews below) will be used by the Working Group and the Steering (Policy) Committee to develop a final scope of work.

Working Group

- Voting members- **technical staff** from "local impacted jurisdictions":
 - Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Va Beach
- Non-voting members- staff from:
 - Virginia Port Authority (VPA), US Navy, Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Coast Guard
 - VDOT and HRTAC staffs
- Staff: HRTPO staff

Steering (Policy) Committee

- Members:
 - **elected officers** from "local impacted jurisdictions": Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Va Beach
 - **representatives** from "U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the U.S. Navy (Navy), and the Port of Virginia, and other parties"
- Staff: HRTPO staff

Reports

At the end of each phase, the consultant will prepare a report documenting that phase.

Phases and Tasks

Based on the MOU's interrelated "feasibility, permitability, and transportation benefits", the consultant will base overall feasibility on **Financial Feasibility, Permitability, and Transportation Benefits** (including congestion relief) via the following phases of work:

Phase I: **Goals and Objectives**

A. Interview:

- members of Working Group and Steering (Policy) Committee
- representatives of Stakeholder groups

B. Identify goals and objectives based on the following concepts:

- A 21st Century vision for the future growth of the region
- The need for improved connectivity between the Southside and Peninsula
- Improved economic vitality, quality of life, resiliency, and accessibility

Phase II: **Alternative Identification**

Based on the above goals and objectives, identify candidate alternatives.

Phase III: **Permitability Screening**

The consultant will do an initial screening in this phase identifying any “fatal flaws” or barriers that would prevent various alternatives from advancing to construction.

Alternatives will be grouped into three categories:

1. Segments with no apparent fatal flaws that can advance to analysis
2. Segments with fatal flaws that can be removed from further consideration
3. Segments denoted with a “caution” and—depending on transportation benefit—may also advance to analysis

Phase IV: **Transportation Benefits, Community Impacts, and Financial Feasibility Analysis**

A. Develop study approach.

- Develop appropriate **relationship to NEPA**
- To provide input to HRTPO 2045 LRTP, all forecasts shall be done for **year 2045**
- 2045 regional scenario planning
 - Develop **scenarios** (land use, technology, etc.) in cooperation with HRTPO
 - Develop scenario planning techniques, outreach strategies, tools, etc.
- Use new/improved models, as appropriate
- Develop evaluation **criteria** including, but not limited to, the following:

Transportation Benefit Measures

- Congestion
- Accessibility (including Craney Island), Reliability, and Resiliency
- Multimodalism (excluding rail)
- Economic impact
- HRTPO Prioritization Tool score (for 2045 LRTP consideration)

Community Impacts:

- Social and Environmental Justice / Title VI

Financial Feasibility Measures

- Cost-effectiveness

B. Interview and brainstorming:

- members of Working Group and Steering (Policy) Committee
- representatives of Stakeholder groups

C. Identify **operationally independent** candidate projects.

D. Evaluate candidate projects based on **criteria and scenarios**.

- Minimum set of highways on which to measure impact of the subject projects:
 - The entire I-64/I-664 Beltway
 - I-564 in Norfolk
 - US17 & US258 from I-664 Suffolk to I-64 Hampton including James River Br.
 - VA 164 (Western Freeway and MLK Freeway) and Midtown Tunnel
 - I-264 (oceanfront to Bowers Hill) including Downtown Tunnel
- Based on transportation benefits, community impacts, and financial feasibility, **identify projects considered overall to be feasible**.

Phase V: **Order of Implementation**

Determine whether or not implementing the feasible projects in the order of HRTPO Prioritization Tool scores would negatively impact the transportation system (including local streets) **during interim periods**.

Communication and Outreach

The consultant will communicate with:

- the Steering (Policy) Committee via **quarterly meetings**
- the Working Group via meetings scheduled in advance of Steering (Policy) Committee meetings, with additional Working Group meetings as necessary

The consultant will develop:

- study website
- interactive public meetings
- **simulations**