

**ITEM #14: 2019 REGIONAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**  
***Robert Crum, HRTPO***

**SUMMARY:**

The 2019 Legislative Agenda has been drafted for HRTPO Board consideration and submission to the Hampton Roads Caucus of the General Assembly and the Hampton Roads Congressional Delegation. The 2019 Virginia General Assembly Session convenes on January 9, 2019. (HRTPO Resolution 2018-26 is attached).

Mr. Robert Crum, Executive Director, will brief the HRTPO Board on this item.

**BACKGROUND:**

In preparing this Legislative Agenda, staff considered input from the following sources/meetings:

- July 19, 2018 HRTPO meeting and discussion on potential legislative priorities
- August 29, 2018 Legislative Workshop between the HRTPO Board, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC), and the Hampton Roads Caucus of the General Assembly
- Previous HRTPO Legislative Agendas

In preparing the Legislative Agenda proposals for both the HRTPO and HRPDC, staff used the following guiding principles that have been successful in previous legislative sessions:

- Develop a short and targeted list of regional legislative priorities
- Include items of regional significance that benefit all jurisdictions

Please note that items can be added to this list of legislative priorities on an as needed basis by action of the HRTPO.

**Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel (HRBT) Project**

The HRTPO requests Federal and State funding for the \$3.6 Billion HRBT project. The HRBT project is the largest project in the history of Virginia. This project serves the largest Naval base in the world and the second highest number of military personnel of any metropolitan region in the country. In addition, the HRBT serves as critical infrastructure in support of the Port of Virginia, which provides imports and exports that support our nation's east coast economy. Despite the HRBT being an interstate facility that is critical to our national security and economy, the only funding currently supporting this project is from regional taxes paid primarily by the residents of Hampton Roads. The HRTPO believes that the State and Federal governments should be active funding partners for this critical interstate project.

## **Passenger Rail Service**

The HRTPO supports efforts that promote higher-speed passenger rail service between Hampton Roads and Richmond. A first step in this process would be the completion of a Tier II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Southside and Peninsula corridors by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT). The cost of this Tier II EIS has been estimated at \$24 million by DRPT. Tier II EIS work has been completed for the Richmond to Washington, DC and Richmond to Raleigh segments, while only a Tier I EIS has been completed for the Richmond to Hampton Roads segments. For Hampton Roads to be in a position to compete for federal funding for improved passenger rail service, a Tier II EIS must be advanced. The HRTPO believes it is imperative that this work be completed in a timely manner to ensure that Hampton Roads is not bypassed by the northeast corridor. In addition, the HRTPO supports projects of independent utility that improve passenger rail service between Hampton Roads and Richmond.

## **I-64 Improvements**

The HRTPO supports improvements to the I-64 corridor between Hampton Roads and Richmond to ensure that the region is connected to the I-95 corridor and urban crescent. Through the use of regional tax dollars administered by the HRTAC, the Hampton Roads region is completing improvements to the I-64 corridor that will extend to just west of Williamsburg. On the Richmond end of this corridor, improvements are currently being completed from I-295 to the Bottoms Bridge interchange, leaving approximately 25 miles of highway in between that will remain two lanes in each direction. The HRTPO believes that improvements to this “gap” should be prioritized for funding after the completion of HRBT to ensure that critical funding is not pulled from the HRBT project.

## **SMART SCALE Program**

The HRTPO recommends that the Commonwealth increase funding for the Virginia SMART SCALE Program. Round 1 of SMART SCALE had a total of \$7 billion in requests and \$1.7 billion in available funding. Round 2 had \$9.3 billion in requests and \$969 million available. The current round of SMART SCALE has a total of \$12.4 billion in requests and approximately \$900 million in available funding. The HRBT project alone has funding needs of over \$3 billion. Hampton Roads projects have competed very well under SMART SCALE; however, the program needs more funding to help ensure that the Commonwealth’s priority transportation needs are addressed.

Attachment 14

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION: (Action to be taken under Meeting Agenda Item #19-L):**

Approve the Resolution.



**HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGAIZATION  
BOARD RESOLUTION 2018-26**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
ENDORING THE HRTPO 2019 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA.**

**WHEREAS**, the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) is the federally-mandated metropolitan planning organization responsible for carrying out the transportation planning and programming process for the Hampton Roads metropolitan planning area (MPA); and

**WHEREAS**, the Hampton Roads MPA includes the Cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg; the Counties of Isle of Wight, James City, and York; a portion of the City of Franklin; and portions of the Counties of Gloucester and Southampton; and

**WHEREAS**, the HRTPO Board is the policy body of the HRTPO and is comprised of local elected officials and General Assembly members, representatives from the local public transit agencies, representatives from state transportation agencies including the Virginia Department of Transportation, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Virginia Port Authority, and Virginia Department of Aviation, and representatives from federal transportation agencies including the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and Federal Aviation Administration; and

**WHEREAS**, upon approval, this resolution will be transmitted to local governments, the Hampton Roads Caucus of the General Assembly, and the Hampton Roads Congressional Delegation.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization hereby endorses the following HRTPO 2019 Legislative Agenda:

- Pursue federal and state funding for the \$3.66 billion I-64 Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel Expansion Project
- Promote higher-speed passenger rail service between Hampton Roads and Richmond, including the completion of a TIER II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Southside and Peninsula corridors
- Pursue federal and state funding for the widening of I-64 between Hampton Roads and Richmond from Exit 205 (Bottoms Bridge) to Exit 234 (Route 199 – Lightfoot)
- Recommend that the Commonwealth increase funding to the Virginia SMART SCALE Program

**APPROVED and ADOPTED** by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization Board at its meeting on the 15th day of November, 2018.

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Thomas G. Shepperd, Jr.  
Chair  
Hampton Roads  
Transportation  
Planning Organization

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Robert A. Crum, Jr.  
Executive Director/Secretary  
Hampton Roads  
Transportation  
Planning Organization