SECTION 1: OVERVIEW
Introduction

Transportation has a direct and personal effect on each and every resident of Hampton Roads. Even if you do not drive, all the goods and services you depend on, including emergency services such as police, fire, and medical transport rely on the region’s roadway system. The Long-Range Transportation Plan, or LRTP, is the document that identifies and plans for critically important transportation improvements that impact the region’s economic vitality and every citizen's quality of life.

Regional Overview

Hampton Roads is home to more than 1.7 million residents and is projected to grow to just over two million by the year 2034. It is among the 40 largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the country, the sixth largest in the Southeast.

Hampton Roads is located in Southeastern Virginia at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. The region is divided by the James River and the Hampton Roads Harbor, one of the world’s largest natural harbors, into two sub-regions: the Peninsula and the Southside.

The region contains miles of coastal beaches and has access to other waterways, making Hampton Roads a prime East Coast tourist destination. Its location and physical features enhances strategic capabilities for the area in foreign trade, military and port facilities.

Hampton Roads includes an intricate system of roads, bridges, tunnels, and ferries which provide much needed connections on both sides of the water. The same features that provide Hampton Roads with a multitude of economic and recreational advantages also produce geographical challenges for creating and maintaining the transportation infrastructure. The region’s location and topography require many bridges and tunnels, requiring higher costs for construction and maintenance. The combination of these factors creates special challenges in developing a safe, efficient, and well maintained regional transportation system.
Regional Transportation Planning

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) were established by the federal government for the purposes of providing a regional forum for transportation planning based on a region’s shared vision of the future. MPOs:

- Plan the region’s transportation system
- Allocate federal transportation funds
- Approve the implementation of transportation projects through a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing transportation process

The MPO for the region is the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), established in 1991 as the MPO of the Peninsula and Southside. Prior to 1991, there were separate MPOs for the Peninsula (Peninsula MPO) and Southside (Southeastern Virginia MPO).

Membership of the HRTPO includes elected local representatives from the region’s 13 urban localities (the cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, Williamsburg, and the counties of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City and York), state legislative members, and other interested stakeholders, such as public transportation providers, state agencies, and assorted non-voting advisory representation from citizen interests, freight, military, aviation, and federal observers.

As the region’s MPO, the HRTPO is responsible for preparing key transportation planning and programming documents including the LRTP and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which serves as the implementation device of the LRTP. The adoption of these documents is a prerequisite for the receipt of both federal transit and highway funding.

Five Core Functions of MPOs

- Establish and maintain a fair and impartial setting for effective regional decision making with regard to metropolitan transportation planning.
- Evaluate transportation alternatives appropriate to the region in terms of its unique needs, issues, and realistically available options.
- Develop, approve, and maintain a fiscally-constrained, Long-Range Transportation Plan – at least 20 years, for the metropolitan planning area.
- Develop, approve, and maintain a fiscally-constrained Transportation Improvement Program – short range, four-year plan, containing all transportation projects that require an action by the Federal Highway Administration or Federal Transit Administration.
- Involve the public in the four functions listed above.
What is an LRTP?

The Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) serves as the blueprint for the region’s transportation development and identifies all regionally significant transportation projects for the Hampton Roads metropolitan area. The LRTP has a planning horizon of 20 years and is updated every four years to reflect changing conditions such as new planning priorities, population projections, economic change, and anticipated travel demand.

To update the LRTP, HRTPO staff examines how the region may develop over the next 20 years based upon projected population and employment growth. Changes in growth can impact demand on the regional transportation system, therefore future plans must consider alternatives to effectively address these needs. Once alternatives are determined, funds are identified to pay for new or widened facilities. This entire process requires regional cooperation and public participation.

Approach

The development of the 2034 LRTP is based on a collaborative process involving many regional stakeholders, including: elected officials, regional engineers and planners, representatives from the military, the Port of Virginia, the business community, and advocacy groups. These key stakeholders actively work together to identify, prioritize, and seek transportation funding for needed investments.

In addition to these stakeholders, the public also plays a key role throughout the development of the LRTP. It is the HRTPO’s policy that the public has reasonable opportunity to comment on the development of the LRTP from the beginning of the process, as well as continuously throughout the development of the Plan. More information regarding specific outreach strategies during the development of the LRTP are discussed in Chapter 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAKEHOLDERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2034 LRTP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Government</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chesapeake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloucester County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isle of Wight County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James City County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transit Agencies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton Roads Transit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williamsburg Area Transit Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia House of Delegates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Transportation Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Department of Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Port Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Department of Aviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk Airport Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peninsula Airport Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Federal Agencies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Department of Transportation – FHWA, FTA, FRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military – Navy, Air Force, Army, Coast Guard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Interest Groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LRTP Development Overview

HRTPO staff began working on the 2034 LRTP over four years ago. Developing a twenty-year transportation blueprint involves many steps, extensive data collection, analyses at different stages of plan development, and of course, coordination among stakeholders as well as public outreach to keep all interested parties informed and engaged.

The first steps in the process include establishing the LRTP horizon year and developing population and employment forecasts. HRTPO staff works closely with local planners to determine where growth will occur in the region in an effort to determine future transportation needs. Regional priorities and concerns are identified, which assists in the formation of the Vision and Goals for the LRTP (discussed further in Chapter 6). Candidate projects are also collected from both local planners and the general public.

As part of the development of the 2034 LRTP, a new state-of-the-art Project Prioritization Tool was crafted to assist decision-makers in maximizing scarce transportation funding. Details regarding the Prioritization Tool will be discussed in Chapter 15.

Additional steps in the process include prioritizing candidate projects and identifying transportation funding over the next twenty years. Prioritized projects are then selected based on this anticipated funding. Next, the package of transportation projects is examined to ensure that certain segments of the population are not overburdened by impacts associated with the projects. In addition, vehicle emissions are analyzed to ensure they do not exceed air quality budgets.

Once it is determined that future projects can be reasonably funded and will contribute to improving air quality, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) issue a joint Conformity Finding. After the Conformity Finding is issued, the HRTPO Board can adopt the LRTP as the Regional Transportation Plan.
LRTP Framework

As stated previously, one of the core functions of an MPO is to develop and maintain a fiscally-constrained LRTP. In other words, the LRTP cannot be a wish list of projects; instead, it must demonstrate that all projects identified in the constrained plan have adequate funding. Figure 1.2 depicts the funding framework for the LRTP.

At the base of the funding framework is the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which represents the first four years of the LRTP, including projects ready for implementation and ongoing operations and maintenance commitments.

Relationship of Planning Activities to the LRTP

In addition to the TIP, other regional programs and processes either impact or are impacted by the LRTP, including:

- Congestion Management Process
  - Process that identifies congested locations in the region
- Project Prioritization
  - Tool designed to objectively score candidate transportation projects
- Public Participation Plan
  - Outreach plan for informing and engaging citizens in the transportation planning process
- Regional Studies
  - Safety studies, Freight/Truck Studies, Corridor studies, Project/Scenario studies, etc.
- State Plans/Programs
  - VTrans, Six-Year Improvement Program, State Implementation Plan, etc.
- Federal Programs
  - State Transportation Improvement Program

The Vision Plan represents regional transportation needs in which sufficient funding has yet to be identified. Projects in this category will be considered for inclusion in the LRTP as funding becomes available.

The LRTP represents the fiscally-constrained plan. Projects identified in this group can be reasonably funded within the planning horizon of the LRTP. Each project that seeks federal funding must be included in the LRTP.
LRTP Integration with CMP

The Congestion Management Process (CMP) for Hampton Roads is an on-going process that identifies congested locations, determines the causes of congestion, ranks the most severe segments, and develops transportation strategies to reduce traffic congestion and enhance safety and mobility region-wide. Federal regulations require that a CMP be in place in all Transportation Management Areas (TMAs), which are urban areas over 200,000 in population. The first CMP report for Hampton Roads was released in 1995, and was updated in 1997, 2001, 2005, and 2010.

Federal regulations recommend that CMPs be updated as a continuous part of the metropolitan planning process, which also includes the LRTP, the TIP, and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). According to FHWA, the CMP must, at minimum, be updated often enough to provide relevant, recent information as an input to each LRTP update. Integration of all four elements (CMP, LRTP, TIP, UPWP) is a key feature of a comprehensive planning process.

The CMP is the first step in addressing regional transportation issues as it monitors the regional roadway network, identifies congestion, and develops mitigation strategies (Figure 1.3). The CMP also includes a ranking of roadways based on current congestion and other performance measures to determine where future projects are most needed. The HRTPO encourages local planners, engineers, and decision makers to strongly consider the CMP results and mitigation strategies when developing future LRTP candidate projects. Once the LRTP candidate projects are identified, data from the CMP is input into the LRTP Project Prioritization Tool in order to assist in the selection of LRTP projects. Finally, projects from the LRTP that are ready to be implemented are included in the TIP and constructed and the process begins again.
The roadways, tunnels, buses, trains, and ferries in Hampton Roads are utilized by a variety of users: from soldiers traveling to and from military bases, to truckers hauling containers of freight hundreds of miles inland, to tourists visiting the region for rest and relaxation. Meanwhile, the transportation network that provides the foundation for this regional activity is starting to show strain. Congestion is prevalent throughout the region, particularly at the region’s critical water crossings. Infrastructure is aging, with many roadways in poor condition and bridges closed due to deteriorating conditions.

Previous LRTP

As stated in the previous chapter, MPOs are charged with updating LRTPs every four years to reflect changing conditions and priorities. The 2034 LRTP will replace the 2030 LRTP, which was approved in December 2007. The 2030 LRTP was developed to accommodate a growing population, increasing vehicle ownership, rising construction costs, and a need for innovative transportation funding. To address the growing mobility needs of the region that was estimated at over $20 billion, the 2030 LRTP included approximately 100 multimodal transportation projects. The projects, funded with a projected $12 billion LRTP budget, included a new fixed guideway transit infrastructure and various arterial and expressway capacity improvements to not only help relieve congestion but also to enhance freight mobility.

As the region prepares to update the LRTP to the year 2034, the issues that shaped 2030 have intensified. Population continues to grow, vehicle ownership is increasing and construction costs are on the rise, resulting in estimated construction costs for regional transportation escalating to nearly $30 billion. As detailed in later chapters, the 2034 LRTP is comprised of 90 construction projects and studies with a total estimated cost of $7 billion. Although the anticipated construction costs associated with candidate transportation projects increased approximately $10 billion from 2030 to 2034, the estimated funds identified for a fiscally-constrained LRTP decreased by $5 billion. The need for innovative transportation funding is greater now than ever before.

This section reflects on the current state of the transportation network and recent mobility trends of the region in order to paint a picture of the transportation challenges faced by the region, the importance of addressing these challenges, and what has been done in the past to improve the transportation network. Much of the information in this section is also included in the HRTPO State of Transportation in Hampton Roads report.
Roadway Network
The Hampton Roads roadway network is largely impacted by the
topography of the region. Because of the abundance of
waterways in Hampton Roads, bridges and tunnels are a critical
component of the regional roadway network, and many
roadways funnel into these chokepoints.

The size of the Hampton Roads roadway network has increased
throughout the years. The number of lane-miles\(^1\) in the region
has risen from 18,021 in 2000 to 19,156 in 2009. This accounts
for an increase of 1,135 lane-miles, or 6 percent. However, of
this total growth, half was in local roadways that usually carry
low traffic volumes and serve neighborhood traffic. Excluding
local roadways, the amount of vehicle-miles traveled in Hampton
Roads increased at three times the rate as the amount of lane-
miles between 2000 and 2009.

Major roadway projects have been completed in Hampton Roads
since 2000, as illustrated in Maps 2.1 and 2.2 on the following
pages (table of projects located in Appendix A). Together these
49 projects added over 225 lane-miles to the regional roadway
system. Projects completed in Hampton Roads over the last ten
years include the Pinners Point Interchange, portions of the
Chesapeake Expressway, Route 17 in Chesapeake, and I-64
section widenings on the Southside and Peninsula.

\(^1\) A lane-mile is defined as the length of a roadway segment multiplied by the number of lanes.
A one-mile long, four-lane wide roadway segment would comprise four lane-miles.
Map 2.1: Major Transportation Projects Completed in Hampton Roads on the Peninsula, 2000-2011

Legend
- Roadway Projects
- Interchange Projects

Existing Roadway Network
- Existing Roadway
- Existing Interstate

Prepared by HRPO Staff
Map 2.2: Major Transportation Projects Completed in Hampton Roads on the Southside, 2000-2011

Legend

- Fixed Guideway Projects
- Roadway Projects
- Existing Roadway Network
  - Existing Roadway
  - Existing Interstate

Prepared by HRTPO Staff
**Roadway Usage**
The total amount of roadway usage in Hampton Roads, measured in terms of vehicle-miles of travel (VMT), was just over 40 million miles each day in 2009. Between 2000 and 2009, the total amount of roadway travel in Hampton Roads increased by nearly 4 million miles per day, or a total of about 11 percent. This is higher than the growth experienced both throughout Virginia (9 percent) and the United States (7 percent). However, most of the growth in roadway travel occurred early in the decade; therefore, the VMT in Hampton Roads has remained steady between 2003 and 2009.

**Roadway Congestion**
Roadway congestion, like in many other large metropolitan areas, is prevalent throughout Hampton Roads. This roadway congestion not only lowers the quality of life in Hampton Roads but also impacts regional commerce, particularly in those critical sectors that depend heavily on the regional transportation network such as freight movement, tourism, and the military.

Roadway congestion in Hampton Roads is some of the worst in the country. According to a national study by Inrix, during congested peak travel periods in Hampton Roads, an average trip takes approximately 13 percent longer to complete than during uncongested periods of the day. When compared to thirty-five similar large metropolitan areas with populations between one and three million people, the Inrix study reports that Hampton Roads had the 5th highest congested peak travel period in 2010, ranking Hampton Roads above many high profile metropolitan areas such as Baltimore, Denver, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Charlotte.

---

2 Detailed information contained in the *State of Transportation in Hampton Roads* report.
As part of the CMP, HRTPO staff analyzed congestion levels on every major roadway throughout Hampton Roads. Approximately 12 percent of the CMP roadway network operated under severe conditions (significant or severe congestion, stop-and-go traffic) during the PM peak hour each weekday afternoon in 2009. Another 20 percent of the CMP roadway network experienced moderate congestion (lower speeds, some delay) during this same peak hour, meaning nearly a third of all major roadways in Hampton Roads were either moderately or severely congested during the PM peak hour in 2009. The remaining network (68 percent) experienced low to moderate congestion levels in 2009.

Maps 2.3 and 2.4 on the following pages show roadway congestion levels throughout Hampton Roads during the PM peak hour in 2009. Some high profile congested areas include:

- Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel (I-64)
- Downtown Tunnel (I-264)
- Midtown Tunnel/Hampton Boulevard
- High Rise Bridge (I-64)
- I-64 north of Jefferson Avenue
- I-264 east of I-64
- Route 17 on the Peninsula
- I-64/I-564 in Norfolk

More information on roadway congestion throughout Hampton Roads is included in the Hampton Roads Congestion Management Process (CMP) report. The report includes an assessment of the regional roadway system, a ranking of the most congested corridors, and congestion mitigation strategies and recommended improvements for these corridors.

3 Between 3:00pm-7:00pm
Legend

- Low to Moderate Congestion (LOS A – C)
- Moderate Congestion (LOS D)
- Severe Congestion (LOS E or F)
- Non-CMP Roadways

Map 2.4: PM Peak Hour Congestion Levels in Southside Hampton Roads (2009)

**Legend**

- Low to Moderate Congestion (LOS A – C)
- Moderate Congestion (LOS D)
- Severe Congestion (LOS E or F)
- Non-CMP Roadways

**Commuting Patterns**

The roadway congestion experienced throughout Hampton Roads is largely driven by commuting decisions, such as how, when, and where the residents of Hampton Roads travel. One of the most pronounced trends over the last two decades is that more people are commuting to work by driving alone, which puts more strain on the regional roadway network than other commuting modes. In 1990, about 73 percent of all Hampton Roads commuters drove to work alone. By 2000 this percentage increased to nearly 79 percent, and in 2009 over 82 percent of all Hampton Roads residents drove alone to work. This percentage is high; among 35 metropolitan areas with populations between one and three million people, Hampton Roads had the 7th highest percentage of commuters that drove to work alone in 2009.

*Figure 2.4 - Commuting Methods in Hampton Roads, 1990, 2000, and 2009*

- **1990**: 72.8% Drive Alone, 14.3% Worked at Home, 4.1% Carpool, 2.2% Public Transportation, 5.2% Bicycle/Walked, 1.4% Other Means
- **2000**: 78.9% Drive Alone, 12.1% Worked at Home, 3.0% Carpool, 1.9% Public Transportation, 2.7% Bicycle/Walked, 1.5% Other Means
- **2009**: 82.4% Drive Alone, 8.9% Worked at Home, 2.4% Carpool, 1.4% Public Transportation, 3.4% Bicycle/Walked, 1.4% Other Means

*Source: US Census Bureau.*
This increase in driving to work alone has come at the expense of all other forms of commuting, including carpooling, public transportation, bicycling, walking, or working from home. According to the Census Bureau, just 8.9 percent of all Hampton Roads commuters carpooled in 2009, 2.4 percent bicycled or walked, 1.4 percent used public transportation, and 3.4 percent worked from home. All of these percentages have decreased from the levels seen in Hampton Roads in 1990.

In addition, commuting patterns in Hampton Roads have increasingly dispersed throughout the region. The number of Hampton Roads commuters that worked in a different locality than their residence has increased from less than 1 of every three commuters in 1970 up to over half of all commuters in 2005 (Figure 2.5). In 2009, 48 percent of all commuters in Hampton Roads are placed in this category.

These changes have impacted the amount of time it takes for commuters to travel to work. According to the Census Bureau, the mean travel time to work in Hampton Roads increased from 21.8 minutes in 1990 up to 24.1 minutes in 2000. This commuting time, however, decreased in 2009 to 23.2 minutes. (This 23.2 minute average commute time ranked Hampton Roads 9th lowest among the 35 metropolitan areas between one and three million people).
High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Network

As part of an effort to increase vehicle occupancy rates and provide a thoroughfare for express bus service, HOV lanes were first constructed on regional freeways back in 1986. Currently, there are thirty-seven miles of HOV facilities in Hampton Roads. HOV facilities in Hampton Roads require at least two persons per vehicle, with exceptions for motorcycles and licensed low emission vehicles, between 6:00 – 8:00 am and 4:00 – 6:00 pm, depending on the direction of peak travel flow. Outside of these hours, single-occupant vehicles are allowed to use the HOV facilities.

Most of the HOV facilities in Hampton Roads are concurrent facilities, meaning that the lanes are adjacent to the regular travel lanes and traffic can enter and exit the HOV lanes at any point. The HOV facility on I-64 between I-564 and I-264 is a reversible, barrier-separated facility with traffic flow going towards I-564 and Naval Station Norfolk during the morning and towards I-264 and Virginia Beach during the afternoon. These reversible HOV lanes on I-64 carry more people than the other HOV facilities in the region.
Public Transportation Network
Public transportation is a vital component of the Hampton Roads transportation system, both as a mode of transportation for those unable to drive and as a cost-effective alternative to using single occupant vehicles. The public transportation system in Hampton Roads consists of two transit agencies employing a variety of services: Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) and Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA).

Hampton Roads Transit
Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) is the regional transit provider throughout most of Hampton Roads, providing service to the cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach. HRT operates and manages a transit system that includes:

- Eighty-one fixed bus routes
- Seven Metro Area Express (MAX) bus routes
- Paddlewheel ferry service between Downtown Norfolk and Downtown Portsmouth
- Two circulator routes (Norfolk Electric Transit and VB Wave)
- Paratransit van services
- Vanpool fleet
- Commuter services via the TRAFFIX program
- Light rail service in Norfolk

HRT’s 7.4-mile light rail service, The Tide, began service in Norfolk in August 2011. The new light rail service connects various activity centers in Norfolk between the Sentara Norfolk General Hospital complex and Newtown Road (Map 2.5). In its first eight weeks with paying riders, the Tide has served approximately 5,000 trips per weekday.

---

4 HRT will discontinue service in the City of Suffolk as of December 31, 2011. Virginia Regional Transit will be the new transit provider for the City of Suffolk as of January 1, 2012.
Williamsburg Area Transit Authority

The Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA) is the public transportation provider for Williamsburg, James City County, northern York County, and Surry County. WATA operates and manages a transit system that includes:

- Nine fixed bus routes
- Trolley route
- Paratransit van service
- Historic Triangle shuttle service

Non-Motorized Network

The non-motorized regional transportation network, which includes various types of bicycle facilities and sidewalks, provides both an alternative means of transportation, and additional recreation opportunities for both residents and visitors of Hampton Roads.

As of 2007, there were 400 miles of bicycle facilities throughout Hampton Roads (Map 2.6 on the following page). These facilities range significantly in size and scope, from secluded paths in city and state parks to bicycle lanes along major thoroughfares. Of the 400 miles of bicycle facilities in the region, 177 miles are shared roadways, signed bicycle routes that do not have a portion of the roadway reserved exclusively for cyclists. 175 miles of the regional total are multi-use paths, which are separate paths from the roadway that are prohibited for use by motor vehicle traffic. The remaining 48 miles of bicycle facilities in Hampton Roads are bicycle lanes, roadways that have a portion of the pavement delineated for bicycle use only.

Many bicycle facilities have been constructed throughout Hampton Roads in recent years, both as individual projects and as components incorporated into other roadway improvement projects. An 8.5-mile former section of Route 17 in Chesapeake was converted into the Dismal Swamp Canal Trail, a multi-use path that runs parallel to the canal. Phases of the Virginia Capital Trail, which will connect Williamsburg with Downtown Richmond, have also been completed, including all of the sections in Hampton Roads.
Map 2.6 - Existing Bicycle Facilities in Hampton Roads (2007)

- **Shared Roadway**
  - 177 miles
  - 44%

- **Multi-Use Path**
  - 175 miles
  - 44%

- **Bike Lane**
  - 48 miles
  - 12%
Rail Transportation Network Mobility
With a network extending 270 miles through Hampton Roads, rail transportation provides a critical mode to move both freight and people in and out of the region.

Freight Rail
Rail is one of the primary methods of transporting goods to and from the Port of Virginia. According to the Port, twenty-eight percent of all general cargo handled by the Port in 2010 was transported by rail. This percentage does not include coal, which is hauled into Hampton Roads by rail and exported to other countries.

Freight that is moved in and out of the Port of Virginia and the region is done over a complex rail network. Two Class I railroads (Norfolk Southern and CSX Transportation) operate in Hampton Roads, as do four Class III shortline railroads (Commonwealth Railway, Bay Coast Railroad, Chesapeake and Albemarle Railroad, and the Norfolk and Portsmouth Beltline Railroad).

Maintenance and capacity improvements on the regional freight rail network, such as the opening of Norfolk Southern’s Heartland Corridor, are done within the purview of the private railroad companies with some federal and state supported public-private partnership agreements.

Passenger Rail
Intercity passenger rail service to the region is currently provided on the Peninsula, with Amtrak trains offering two daily roundtrip trains to stations in Newport News and Williamsburg along the CSX freight railway.

The number of customers using passenger rail in Hampton Roads is expected to increase, as the Commonwealth Transportation Board has approved funding for new direct Amtrak service to the Southside beginning in 2013.