

S. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Substantive edits that have been made to this Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) since the publication of the Draft SEIS are indicated with underlined text.

This Executive Summary summarizes information contained in the Hampton Roads Crossing Study (HRCS) SEIS. Specifically, this summary discusses the history of the study, alternatives considered, environmental effects of the alternatives, temporary construction effects, and next steps for the study. The summary is presented in question and answer format and includes commonly asked questions regarding the study.

1. WHAT IS AN EIS?

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is a document required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that takes into consideration the effects of a Federal agency's proposed action on the environment. NEPA requires Federal agencies to prepare an EIS when an action they are proposing has the potential to significantly affect the environment. An EIS identifies the purpose and need for the action; considers alternatives to meet the Purpose and Need; describes the affected environment; and analyzes the environmental consequences of the alternatives.

2. WHAT IS A SUPPLEMENTAL EIS AND WHY IS IT NEEDED?

Following completion of an EIS, and prior to the implementation or construction of the Preferred Alternative, new information or changes to the project may arise that have significant impacts on the environment that had not been previously considered. When this happens, the EIS is required to be supplemented. The resulting SEIS introduces up-to-date information, reconsiders alternatives, as necessary, and identifies potential mitigation for new adverse impacts. In addition, the public is afforded opportunities to review the new information and provide input before any final decisions are made.

3. WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE HRCS?

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Act of 1991 allocated funds for highway projects demonstrating innovative techniques of highway construction and finance. The Interstate 64 (I-64) crossing of Hampton Roads was included as one of the innovative projects. A Major Investment Study (MIS) of the I-64 crossing of Hampton Roads was completed in 1997. The MIS documented an initial review of alternatives to reduce congestion at the I-64 crossing. Following the MIS, the HRCS Draft EIS (DEIS) and Final EIS (FEIS) were published in 1999 and 2001, respectively, documenting the preferred alternative. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued a Record of Decision (ROD) in 2001, completing the NEPA process. Other studies were completed to further evaluate potential Hampton Roads crossing improvements. In 2003 FHWA and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) completed a re-evaluation of the FEIS that analyzed implementing a portion of the preferred alternative. That re-evaluation validated the previous decisions. In 2011 FHWA and VDOT issued an Environmental Assessment (EA)/Re-evaluation of the HRCS FEIS covering the segments of the preferred alternative including the I-664 Connector, the I-564 Connector, and the VA 164 Connector. The Re-evaluation was not advanced due to fiscal constraints; no ROD was issued. In 2012 FHWA and VDOT published the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel (HRBT) DEIS. The DEIS evaluated options for improvements to I-64 between Hampton and Norfolk. The DEIS found that the Retained Alternatives would result in high impacts to historic and private properties. High impacts, along with lack of public and political support, led FHWA to rescind the Notice of Intent (NOI) for the

project. In 2013 the 2011 EA was revised but the FHWA never made a final decision before the decision to prepare a SEIS was made. This SEIS is being prepared in part due to the time that has lapsed since the 2001 FEIS. Environmental regulations and conditions in the Hampton Roads region and have changed substantially during the fifteen years that passed since the FEIS was completed, resulting in the need for a thorough reevaluation. Additionally, the preparation of this SEIS has been supported by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

4. WHAT AREA DOES THE PROPOSED STUDY COVER?

The study covers the metropolitan region known as “Hampton Roads” in southeastern Virginia. The Study Area Corridors span several local jurisdictions including the cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Suffolk.

5. WHO IS LEADING THE STUDY?

FHWA is the lead Federal agency for the NEPA study. VDOT is the lead state agency.

6. WHAT ARE STUDY AREA CORRIDORS AND HOW WERE THEY DEVELOPED?

The Study Area Corridors are buffers around the existing and proposed road corridors which comprise the different alternatives. The Study Area Corridors capture the natural, cultural and social resources that may be impacted by improvements to those corridors. The Study Area Corridors are sufficiently wide to account for any needed right-of-way and construction impacts, while providing flexibility for efforts to avoid and minimize those impacts. The Study Area Corridors are generally defined as 250 feet on either side of the centerlines of I-64, I-564, I-664, Route 164, and proposed new location alignments. Areas around the interchanges included in the Study Area Corridors vary based on the anticipated footprint of proposed modifications; for instance, the new and existing interchanges where more extensive improvements are anticipated have larger boundaries.

7. WHAT OTHER AGENCIES ARE INVOLVED IN THE STUDY?

Other agencies include Cooperating Agencies and Participating Agencies. Cooperating Agencies are agencies other than a lead agency that have jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental resource impacted by the project. The following agencies have accepted invitations to be Cooperating Agencies: City of Hampton, City of Newport News, City of Norfolk, City of Portsmouth, City of Virginia Beach, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service, USACE, US Coast Guard (USCG), US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), and the US Navy. Participating Agencies are those with an interest in the project. Several dozen Federal and state agencies and groups, as well as the localities within and adjacent to the Study Area Corridors, have served as Participating Agencies for the study. A complete list of the agencies and their role in the study is provided in the Coordination Plan (**Appendix C**). A copy of the Agency Correspondence received to date is included in **Appendix D**.

8. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE HRCS AND WHY IS IT NEEDED?

The purpose of the HRCS is to consider alternatives that relieve congestion at the I-64 HRBT in a manner that improves accessibility, transit, emergency evacuation, and military and goods movement along the primary transportation corridors in the Hampton Roads region, including the I-64, I-664, I-564, and Route 164 corridors. The HRCS addresses the following needs:

- Accommodate travel demand – capacity is inadequate on the Study Area Corridors, contributing to congestion at the HRBT;
- Improve transit access – the lack of transit access across the Hampton Roads waterway;
- Increase regional accessibility – limited number of water crossings, inadequate highway capacity, and severe congestion decrease accessibility;
- Address geometric deficiencies – insufficient vertical and horizontal clearance at the HRBT contribute to congestion;
- Enhance emergency evacuation capability – increase capacity for emergency evacuation, particularly at the HRBT;
- Improve strategic military connectivity – congestion impedes military movement missions; and,
- Increase access to port facilities – inadequate access to interstate highway travel in the Study Area Corridors impacts regional commerce.

9. WHAT ALTERNATIVES HAVE BEEN CARRIED FORWARD FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES?

Candidate Build Alternatives 1, 2, and 9 from the 2001 FEIS have been modified and re-evaluated as Alternatives A, B, and C, respectively, in the SEIS.

10. WHAT ALTERNATIVES WERE CONSIDERED BUT NOT RETAINED FOR ANALYSIS?

The alternatives that were considered but not retained for further analysis in both the 2001 HRCS FEIS and the 2012 HRBT DEIS were re-examined for the Draft SEIS. Additional alternative concepts were also identified during the 2015 scoping period for this SEIS. The description of these alternatives and the reasons why they were not carried forward for detailed analysis are summarized in Chapter 2 of the Draft SEIS.

11. WHAT ALTERNATIVES WERE CONSIDERED IN THE DRAFT SEIS?

A range of reasonable alternatives was considered in the Draft SEIS. Specifically, five alternatives were considered: the No-Build Alternative and four Build Alternatives. The four Build Alternatives included modified versions of the alternatives retained for analysis in the 2001 FEIS (Alternatives A, B, and C). In addition, a fourth alternative was identified that is a combination of the sections that comprise Alternatives B and C. The Draft SEIS also allowed for a hybrid alternative to be identified as a Preferred Alternative (see Question 13).

Alternative A would create a consistent six-lane facility along I-64 from I-664 in Hampton to the I-564 interchange in Norfolk. A parallel bridge-tunnel would be constructed west of the existing I-64 HRBT; the tunnel width would match the expanded capacity on the approaches.

Alternative B would include all of the improvements included under Alternative A and also includes improvements along the existing I-564 corridor that extends from I-64 west across the Elizabeth River via a new bridge-tunnel. A new roadway would extend south from the new bridge-tunnel, along the east side of the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area (CIDMMA), and connect to existing VA 164. VA 164 would be widened to I-664.

Alternative C would include improvements along I-564, across the Elizabeth River, and south to VA 164 that are included in Alternative B. However, this alternative does not include improvements to I-64 or VA 164. Instead, this alternative would continue west from I-564 over water and tie into I-664. This alternative would widen I-664 from I-64 in Hampton to I-264 in Chesapeake. A parallel bridge-tunnel

would be constructed west of the existing Monitor-Merrimac Memorial Bridge-Tunnel (MMMBT); the tunnel width would match the expanded capacity on the approaches. Alternative C also converts the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes along I-564 in Norfolk to transit only. The I-564 Connector and the I-664 Connector would be constructed with one transit-only lane in each direction. These transit-only lanes continue in each direction north along I-664 to the terminus with I-64 in Hampton.

Alternative D would include improvements to I-64 between Hampton and Norfolk with a new parallel bridge-tunnel west of the existing HRBT. It also includes improvements along the existing I-564 corridor from I-64 west across the Elizabeth River via a new bridge-tunnel. A new roadway would extend south from the new bridge-tunnel, along the east side of CIDMMA, and connect to existing VA 164. VA 164 would be widened to I-664. I-664 would be widened from Hampton to Chesapeake with a new parallel bridge-tunnel west of the existing MMMBT.

12. WHAT IS AN OPERATIONALLY INDEPENDENT SECTION?

Each alternative considered in the Draft SEIS could be implemented and built using operationally independent sections (OISs). The OISs were provided for analysis purposes so that when it came time to identify a Preferred Alternative, identification of OISs could allow one alternative to incorporate less costly or less environmentally damaging sections, creating a hybrid alternative not considered in the Draft SEIS. Decision makers could employ this approach to advance an alternative that balances cost, impacts, and effectiveness while meeting the elements of Purpose and Need. More detail on OISs are provided in Chapter 2 of the Draft SEIS.

13. COULD THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE BE A COMBINATION OF THE ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED IN THE SEIS?

Consistent with the response to Question 11, the Preferred Alternative could have been a combination of OISs from the different alternatives under consideration in order to balance cost, impacts, and the alternative's ability to meet the Purpose and Need, resulting in a hybrid alternative not evaluated as a stand-alone alternative in the Draft SEIS. If decision makers selected a hybrid alternative as the Preferred Alternative, it would have been fully documented in the Final SEIS.

The SEIS includes impact information broken down by OISs to inform the development of potential hybrid alternatives (**Appendix A**).

14. WHEN WAS A PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE IDENTIFIED?

After the publication of the Draft SEIS, there was a 45-day public comment period, in accordance with 40 CFR 1506.10. This comment period included Location Public Hearings that provided an opportunity for the public to review and discuss the results of the study with study team members. Following the comment period, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) was briefed on the study. On December 7, 2016, the CTB identified Alternative A as the Preferred Alternative for the HRCS. Following the publication of this Final SEIS, VDOT anticipates requesting a ROD from FHWA to conclude the NEPA process. FHWA will only issue a ROD to complete the NEPA process for improvements that are fully funded for construction in the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). More detail is provided in **Section 2.2** of this Final SEIS.

15. HOW WAS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE IDENTIFIED?

Since publication of the Draft SEIS, the CTB identified Alternative A as the Preferred Alternative for the HRCS. Collaboration among VDOT, FHWA, and the Study's Federal Cooperating Agencies (the USACE, the USEPA, the FTA, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the US Navy, and the USCG), as well as unanimous support by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) and the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC), informed CTB's decision. HRTAC set aside \$4.031 Billion, in year of expenditure dollars, for a Preferred Alternative in the HRTPO LRTP (HRTPO January 19, 2017 Board Meeting Notes, Item #13). FHWA can only issue a ROD to complete the NEPA process for improvements that are fully funded for construction in the region's LRTP.

The HRTPO and HRTAC boards, which are composed of all of the localities along the Study Area Corridors, unanimously endorsed Alternative A as their preferred alternative on October 20, 2016. Following this action and in accordance with the Coordination Plan for the study, on November 14, 2016 VDOT requested USACE's comment and/or concurrence that Alternative A could be considered the preliminary Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA). Per the Coordination Plan, on November 16, 2016 USACE and the other federal Cooperating Agencies concurred or did not disagree to recommend Alternative A as the Preferred Alternative. Following this concurrence and in response to VDOT's request, on December 2, 2016, USACE stated that it found no reason to disagree that Alternative A may be considered the preliminarily LEDPA. This correspondence is included in **Appendix D**.

16. WHAT IS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE?

The Preferred Alternative follows the alignment and recommended improvements included in Alternative A as it was described in the Draft SEIS, with slight modifications to minimize and avoid impacts. Since the Draft SEIS, slight modifications in the proposed alignment have been developed and are documented in **Chapter 2** of this Final SEIS. These modifications include a commitment made by VDOT that there would be no permanent acquisition of Hampton University property. This has resulted in limiting the proposed limits of disturbance (LOD) along the university property and the identification of an Inventory Corridor in which the Preferred Alternative may be constructed over water. Impacts assumed within this Inventory Corridor as part of this SEIS do not represent a design commitment but a planning-level estimate that would be refined through more detailed design.

Other changes to Alternative A included in the Preferred Alternative include a commitment by VDOT to avoid the Willoughby Boat Ramp and to avoid any permanent acquisition of Navy property.

17. COULD THE IMPROVEMENTS ANALYZED IN THE SEIS BUT NOT INCLUDED IN THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE BE CONSIDERED IN THE FUTURE?

Alternative A does not propose improvements to I-564, I-664, VA 164, or the Bower's Hill (I-664 / I-264 / I-664 / US 460) Interchange, which were included in Alternatives B, C, and D in the Draft SEIS. VDOT continues to coordinate with HRTPO, HRTAC, USACE, the Navy, and the USCG to identify acceptable transportation improvements that could be made in the vicinity of the large number of federal properties in the study area. HRTPO has set aside funding to continue to study the crossing of the Elizabeth River and improvements to these other study area corridors which were considered in the HRCS Draft SEIS but not selected for implementation. These future decisions will be the subject of separate feasibility and NEPA studies.

18. IS TRANSIT BEING CONSIDERED?

The Draft SEIS and this Final SEIS discuss how transit could be included in each alternative. The Preferred Alternative includes additional capacity through which existing and future transit operations could benefit. As part of its comments on the Draft SEIS, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) recommended that the capacity expansion in the Preferred Alternative be in the form of user/vehicle or price-restricted lanes. Such restrictions may incentivize transit usage and provide mobility options for low-income populations that commute across Hampton Roads waterway. DRPT also recommends that the Preferred Alternative accommodate some form of preferential treatment for transit services to ensure competitive transit travel times and greater transit reliability. In its identification of the Preferred Alternative, CTB did not identify a specific management option such as high-occupancy toll (HOT) or HOV lanes. It is acknowledged, that such an option could be identified during the more detailed design phases that would follow an FHWA ROD. If, during these phases, a management option is identified, the CTB would be briefed on it and have the opportunity to approve it before it was advanced further. Such an option, if approved, would meet DRPT's recommendations for addressing transit within the Preferred Alternative.

19. WILL THERE BE TOLLS?

The alternatives in the SEIS were developed to accommodate general purpose lanes, HOV lanes, HOT lanes, or lanes tolled/managed in other ways. In its resolution of December 7, 2016, the CTB indicated that the board would be briefed on and have the opportunity to endorse a managed lane concept should it be identified and the appropriate analysis and financial plans are in place. As of the publication of this Final SEIS, a managed lane strategy for the Preferred Alternative, such as HOT or HOV lanes, has not yet been determined. Regardless, the HRTPO L RTP does not rely on toll revenues to construct the project. If tolls were to be utilized, it is expected that they would be limited to HOT lanes along the newly constructed lanes provided by the Preferred Alternative. In 2016, the General Assembly passed HB1069, which requires General Assembly approval before tolls can be placed on existing facilities.

20. HOW WOULD TRAFFIC ON THE HRBT AND MMMBT CHANGE?

The impact to traffic volumes on the HRBT and MMMBT depends on the alternative under consideration. In general, travel demand across Hampton Roads is projected to increase between now and 2040. This increased travel demand will result in increases in daily traffic on both the HRBT and the MMMBT even without any improvements (No-Build Alternative).

When capacity is added on either the HRBT or MMMBT, traffic will tend to shift to the facility with the most capacity. Under Alternatives A and B, the HRBT would see additional increases in traffic daily volume compared to No-Build conditions, while traffic volumes on the MMMBT would decrease slightly. Conversely, traffic volumes would decrease on the HRBT and would increase on the MMMBT under Alternative C, compared to No-Build conditions. Under Alternative D, which includes widening on both the HRBT and the MMMBT, the overall increase in traffic volumes would be spread between the two bridge-tunnels, and traffic volumes on both the HRBT and MMMBT are projected to be higher than those under No-Build conditions.

Since publication of the Draft SEIS, Alternative A has been identified as the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative does not propose improvements to I-664 or the MMMBT, which were included in Alternatives C and D in the Draft SEIS. Though these improvements are not included in the Preferred

Alternative for the HRCS SEIS, they remain regional priorities. HRTPO has set aside funding to continue to study these other corridors which were considered in the HRCS Draft SEIS. These future decisions will be the subject of separate feasibility and NEPA studies.

21. WOULD REGIONAL TRAFFIC PATTERNS CHANGE?

Regional traffic patterns would change in concert with the shift in traffic between the HRBT and MMMBT. With the capacity increase at the HRBT under the Preferred Alternative, the planning level traffic analysis used for the SEIS indicates a shift in crossing volume from the MMMBT to the HRBT compared to the No-Build Alternative. At the same time, local roadways that parallel the section of I-64 that would be widened could experience traffic volume reductions as drivers would choose to travel on improved roadways with better travel conditions.

22. WHAT IMPACTS ARE ANTICIPATED TO RESULT FROM THE ALTERNATIVES?

Potential environmental consequences of the Preferred Alternative are similar to Alternative A, with slight modifications to further reduce environmental consequences.

The NEPA study evaluates a reasonable range of alternatives and allowed for hybrid or new alternatives to be identified. The analysis of these alternatives presents the worst-case impact for the area within the determined LOD. The impacts provided throughout the SEIS and are summarized in **Table S-1**. These impacts are preliminary and are based on the current planning-level engineering which is appropriate for the NEPA analysis.

Furthermore, an Inventory Corridor has been developed to indicate the area in which the Preferred Alternative may be constructed over water. Impacts assumed within this Inventory Corridor, as part of this SEIS, do not represent a design commitment but a planning-level estimate that would be refined through more detailed design. Following the issuance of a ROD from FHWA, design refinements would be explored as the project moves into final design and extend into the permitting stages to minimize impacts to sensitive environmental, cultural, or community resources.

Table S-1: Impact Matrix

Resource	No-Build Alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Preferred Alternative
Right-of-Way number of properties (acres)	0	86 (10.3)	130 (248.9)	201 (340.6)	248 (319.6)	78 (7.3)
Residential	0	24 (0.5)	29 (0.6)	58 (1.9)	69 (2.1)	23 (0.5)
Commercial	0	6 (1.3)	10 (2.7)	23 (4.7)	23 (5.5)	2 (0.0)
Industrial	0	6 (0.9)	14 (54.8)	35 (104.2)	33 (94.1)	6 (0.9)
Institutional	0	9 (2.8)	14 (113.3)	15 (117.7)	20 (120.1)	6 (1.1)
Military	0	4 (0.6)	7 (22.5)	3 (23.2)	7 (22.5)	0
Open Space	0	14 (1.1)	27 (23.9)	59 (44.1)	66 (44.0)	14 (1.1)
Other	0	23 (3.1)	29 (31.2)	8 (44.9)	30 (31.2)	23 (3.1)
Potential Residential Relocations	0	9	9	11	20	9
Potential Commercial Relocations	0	0	0	5	4	0
Other Relocations*	0	2	4	8	9	2
Military Facilities # (acres)	0	1 (22.4)	4 (162.9)	4 (168.1)	4 (163.7)	0
Number of Census Block Groups with Environmental Justice Populations Present	0	8	17	25	35	8
Community Facilities (#)	0	2	3	4	5	0
Parks & Recreation	0	1	2	2	3	0
Place of Worship	0	0	0	1	0	0
Cemetery	0	0	0	0	0	0
School / University	0	1	1	1	2	0
Land Use (acres)	0	27.8	260.4	333.0	335.9	3.3
Residential	0	0.5	0.6	2.6	2.7	0.5
Commercial	0	1.8	3.2	6.3	7.5	<0.1
Industrial	0	0.7	72.1	119.9	112.1	0.7
Institutional	0	2.8	113.3	117.4	119.8	1.1
Military	0	20.8	47.4	40.4	47.4	0
Open Space	0	1.2	23.9	46.4	46.4	0.9
Section 4(f) Properties (#)	0	6	7	5	9	2
Farmland	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stream Impacts (linear feet)	0	0	0	547.9	547.9	0
Navigable Waters (acres)	0	147.3	215.6	369.9	480.9	175.9

Resource	No-Build Alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Preferred Alternative
Maintained Navigable Channels	0	12.3	24.4	57.1	62.3	12.3
Wetlands (acres)	0	7.8	72.6	111.5	119.9	7.6
Resource Protection Areas (acres)	0	1.1	16.0	139.8	127.1	0.9
Floodplains (acres)	0	112.6	213.3	213.3	313.3	149.2
Hampton Roads Aquatic Habitat (acres)	0	155.7	201.2	572.6	660.7	174.4
Benthic Communities	0	153.9	240.7	664.7	741.5	154.5
Essential Fish Habitat, Habitat Areas of Particular Concern, and Anadromous Fish Use Areas (acres)	0	138.4	214.3	565.4	636.3	157.7
Threatened & Endangered Species Habitat (acres)	0	1.0	111.9	163.9	153.7	1.0
Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (acres)	0	1.8	1.8	0	1.8	0.1
Terrestrial Habitat (Forested Area) (acres)	0	14.9	73.1	179.5	177.6	14.9
Water Quality	No impact	Short-term and minor, beneficial long-term impacts				Short-term and minor, beneficial long-term impacts
Historic Architecture Resources (#)	0	6	11	10	16	3
Archaeology Resources (#)	0	6	10	26	33	5
Noise Impacts (#)	0	953	1,987	1,014	2,548	953
Air Quality	No impact	Minor Short-term Impacts	Minor Short-term Impacts	Minor Short-term Impacts	Minor Short-term Impacts	Minor Short-term Impacts
Potential Hazardous Materials Sites	0	27	70	194	232	27
Visual Impacts	No impact	Minor to moderate				Minor to moderate
Energy Requirements and Conservation Potential	No impact	Minor energy requirements				Minor energy requirements

Notes: Right-of-Way data was gathered from each of the localities. Land use data was gathered from HRTPO. *
*Other includes Institutional and Industrial classifications.

23. HOW MUCH WILL EACH ALTERNATIVE COST?

Planning-level cost estimates included in the Draft SEIS reported Alternative A would cost approximately \$3.3 billion, which included a 40% contingency. Although there have been some refinements to the engineering that informed this planning-level cost estimate, the \$3.3 billion estimate is still applicable to the Preferred Alternative.

24. WHEN WILL THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE BE CONSTRUCTED?

As of the publication of this Final SEIS and assuming that FHWA issues a ROD, VDOT anticipates issuing a Request for Proposals in 2018 with a contract award occurring in 2019. Future updates and information will be made available on the VDOT website.

25. HOW HAS THE PUBLIC BEEN INVOLVED IN THE STUDY?

Public input has been solicited since the study began and will continue throughout the study process. As part of the NOI to prepare the SEIS (published in June 2015), FHWA solicited input on issues that should be considered in the study. At the same time, VDOT initiated scoping to gather information from a variety of local, state, and Federal agencies and the public. Two rounds of Citizen Information Meetings were held in July and December of 2015 to present the public with study information and to solicit feedback on the conduct of the study, Purpose and Need, and alternatives to be retained for analysis. Email updates have been regularly sent to a study mailing list which includes citizens who have requested more information on the study. The project website, www.HamptonRoadsCrossingStudy.org, has been regularly updated with study information, public meeting materials, and various technical studies and documents. The website also provides the public with an option to submit comments to VDOT at any time. EPA issued a Notice of Availability for the Draft SEIS in the Federal Register to notify the public that the document is available for review and comment, and VDOT has used a number of strategies to notify the public of the document's availability. VDOT conducted Location Public Hearings within the 45-day comment period for the Draft SEIS (held on September 7 and 8, 2016). Postcards were mailed to over 140,000 property owners 30 days before the hearing. Given the significance of the HRCS, this mailing exceeded state code requirements by notifying all properties within each zip code that intersects the study area corridors. In addition to the mailings, an email blast was sent to the project mailing list; a notification of the meeting was posted to VDOT's website and included in other social media outreach; and the meeting was advertised in local newspapers 30 days and 15 days prior to the hearing. Further, the overall document release schedule has been publicly available and shared through email blasts, community meetings, HRTPO briefings, and through the study website since the study began in 2015.

26. WHAT OPPORTUNITIES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED FOR AGENCIES TO BE ENGAGED IN THE STUDY?

At the onset of the study agencies and localities were invited to be Participating and Cooperating Agencies (see details provided in **Appendix C** [Coordination Plan]). FHWA and VDOT have held and will continue to hold regular meetings with the Cooperating Agencies to keep them informed and engaged as the study progresses. The Federal Cooperating Agencies have been asked to provide written concurrence on the various study elements including: Purpose and Need, Alternatives Considered, and the recommended Preferred Alternative/preliminary LEDPA. The Cooperating Agencies have reviewed drafts of the supporting technical documents and the SEIS. VDOT and FHWA have also had a number of meetings with the Participating Agencies and have afforded them an opportunity to review and comment

on the Purpose and Need of the project as well as the Alternatives Considered. Finally, VDOT has briefed other agencies, localities, and groups as the study has progressed.

Since the publication of the Draft SEIS, VDOT has coordinated with the Cooperating Agencies to keep them informed on the progress of the study and seek the federal Cooperating Agencies' concurrence on a recommended Preferred Alternative (see Chapter 6 for more detail). VDOT has also coordinated with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to execute a Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for the study (see Appendix I for more detail). All agency comments received during the 45-day comment period on the Draft SEIS, including at the Location Public Hearing, were considered and all substantive comments are addressed in Appendix H of this Final SEIS.

27. WHAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT WERE THERE ON THIS SUPPLEMENTAL EIS?

The public was notified when the Draft SEIS would be available for public review via local newspapers, other media outlets, postcards, email blasts, community meetings, and the Federal Register. The comment period for the Draft SEIS was August 5, 2016 through September 19, 2016. Pursuant to 40 CFR 1506.10 and 23 CFR 771.123(i), the public (including local, state, and Federal public agencies) were provided at least 45 calendar days to review and provide comments on the Draft SEIS after the Federal Register notice. VDOT also held Location Public Hearings on September 7 and 8, 2016, approximately 30 days following the Federal Register notice, pursuant to 40 CFR 1506.6(c) and 23 CFR 771.111(h). Comments were submitted to VDOT electronically using the project website (www.HamptonRoadsCrossingStudy.org) or at the Location Public Hearing by oral testimony or written comment form. Additional information regarding how to comment was included in the public notices.

Just over 600 comments were received during the 45-day comment period on the Draft SEIS. All comments received during the comment period, including at the Location Public Hearing, were considered, and all substantive comments are addressed in Appendix H of this Final SEIS.

28. WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

This Final SEIS has been prepared to document the Preferred Alternative and respond to substantive comments received on the Draft SEIS. Following the publication of this Final SEIS, VDOT will request a ROD from FHWA. Issuance of the ROD is anticipated to occur in the summer of 2017. This will complete the NEPA process and allow VDOT to advance with more detailed design and procurement activities.