

# News Release

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## VPRA Selects Construction Partners for Long Bridge-North Package & Franconia-Springfield Bypass Projects

### Selections are a significant step in Transforming Rail in Virginia Initiative

RICHMOND - The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) announced today that it has selected construction partners for two of its most significant Transforming Rail in Virginia (TRV) projects. For the Long Bridge-North Package, VPRA has selected **Skanska/Flatiron Joint Venture**, and for the Franconia-Springfield Bypass, VPRA has selected **Flatiron/Herzog Joint Venture**.

"Selecting construction partners for the Long Bridge-North Package and the Franconia-Springfield Bypass represents a significant milestone in our plan to build passenger rail infrastructure at a level not seen in generations," said **DJ Stadler, Executive Director of VPRA**. "We look forward to working with both teams in this important step toward making rail a viable transportation option and truly Transforming Rail in Virginia."

"We are eager to collaborate with both teams to bring Virginia another step closer in dramatically improving its rail infrastructure," said **Jennifer DeBruhl, Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation and Chair of the VPRA Board**. "With the Long Bridge-North Package and Franconia-Springfield Bypass, Virginians will one day be able to have more abilities to travel by train, and the economy will grow with a more efficient rail network benefitting both passenger and freight rail."

### Long Bridge-North Package

The Long Bridge-North Package will use the Progressive Design-Build project delivery method. In March, VPRA issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) seeking qualified design-build teams for the north end of the Long Bridge Project from the northern banks of the Potomac River to just south of the L'Enfant Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Station.

The selection of Skanska/Flatiron Joint Venture is a significant step towards the realization of the largest project in the Commonwealth's TRV initiative. Currently, Long Bridge is near 30%

design. The Skanska/Flatiron Joint Venture team will take the project from the design phase through construction. Early prep work is expected to begin in 2024 with full construction commencing in early 2025. Construction is expected to be completed in 2030.

The current Long Bridge – a 119-year-old railroad bridge – connects Arlington, Virginia with the District of Columbia and regularly operates at 98 percent capacity during peak periods. As a result, additional capacity is necessary to meet future demand and to relieve a major chokepoint for rail traffic along the East Coast.

The Long Bridge Project, which consists of two procurement packages (a North Package and a South Package), will construct a new modern, two-track railroad bridge and will allow for the separation of passenger and freight rail traffic, improving trip times and on-time performance for both along the corridor.

The North Package encompasses a very complicated construction area from the new bridge's northern abutment moving north to L'Enfant interlocking near L'Enfant Plaza in Washington, DC. This package includes the construction of a number of smaller bridges within the project footprint, including:

- a new rail bridge over the WMATA Portal/I-395;
- the replacement of the existing two-track Ohio Drive SW Rail Bridge with a four-track bridge;
- the replacement of the existing two-track Washington Channel Rail Bridge with a four-track bridge;
- the replacement of the existing two-track Maine Avenue SW Rail Bridge with a four-track bridge; and
- the replacement of the Maine Avenue SW Pedestrian Bridge.

While the North Package will construct rail track and a series of bridges north of the Potomac River, the Long Bridge-South Package will consist of the bridge span over the Potomac River and an adjacent bicycle-pedestrian bridge. The South Package is currently in the procurement process with a Request for Proposals to be released to shortlisted teams by VPRA in February of 2024.

The estimated cost of the entire Long Bridge Project – including both the North and South packages – is \$2.3 billion.

## **Franconia-Springfield Bypass**

The Franconia-Springfield Bypass project will be delivered using the Construction Manager/General Contractor project delivery method. After issuing a Request for Proposals and receiving responsive proposals from teams, VPRA selected Flatiron/Herzog Joint Venture.

The Franconia-Springfield Bypass will alleviate train interference at one of the most congested points in Virginia – between Fredericksburg and Washington, DC. When complete, the bypass will be an approximately 0.9-mile-long, dedicated passenger rail bridge located just south of the Franconia-Springfield Metro station. Site clearing and early construction work are expected to begin by the end of March 2024 with full construction expected to commence in 2024 and last for two years.

“Flatiron and Herzog are thrilled to partner with the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority on the Franconia-Springfield Bypass project. This partnership leverages our collective rail expertise throughout North America and strengthens Flatiron's presence in the Virginia, Maryland, and Washington D.C. area,” said **Jim Schneiderman, Flatiron Senior Vice President for Mid-Atlantic**. “Flatiron and Herzog are both committed to enhancing the well-being of communities in which we live and work. This project will do just that by reducing congestion and providing safer, more reliable rail service.”

The bypass structure will be owned by VPRA and will allow passenger trains to cross over the two existing freight tracks to reach station passenger stops on the opposite of the railroad, providing improved service for both passenger and freight trains through the area. The bypass will further VPRA's mission to create two separate rail corridors, one for passenger trains and one for freight trains and will serve both Amtrak and VRE trains.

The estimated cost of the Franconia-Springfield Bypass project is \$405 million.

## Transforming Rail in Virginia

VPRA's TRV initiative launched in 2021 with a goal to expand the availability of passenger rail throughout the Commonwealth. Through the support of VPRA and its partners, passenger rail has increasingly become the transportation option for those Virginians seeking an alternative to driving.

Amtrak, which serves as VPRA's operational partner for its Amtrak Virginia state-supported rail service, is contributing \$944 million to the TRV program.

“We celebrate this major development that will get shovels in the ground and start construction for these projects,” **Amtrak Vice President Ray Lang** said. “We are proud to partner with VPRA and share the commitment to transform transportation by creating the infrastructure to expand East Coast commuter and passenger train capacity.”

Through an innovative agreement with freight partner, CSX, VPRA was able to purchase the railroad corridor necessary to complete the TRV projects. While these projects will create dedicated passenger rail capacity, in doing so, they will also alleviate congestion on freight tracks, thereby increasing the availability of CSX freight throughput for the Commonwealth and the Port of Virginia.

“CSX congratulates VPRA on selection of construction partners for the Long Bridge North and Franconia-Springfield Bypass projects,” said **Randy Marcus Director of State Relations-VA, WV & DC for CSX Transportation**. “Infrastructure projects like these are essential to expanding capacity, improving fluidity and separating freight and passenger operations in this congested corridor. We look forward to continuing to advance our partnership with Virginia to deliver improved service to both CSX customers and VRE and Amtrak riders.”

VRE has been a strong proponent of VPRA projects since the agency's inception, and their support continues with close to \$200 million in contributions towards the TRV program.

“These two projects will be game changers for VRE, allowing us to expand service in the region,” said **VRE's CEO Rich Dalton**. “And the reduction in congestion that will result from

the separation of freight and passenger trains will significantly improve our reliability. VRE is pleased to partner with VPRA and see these projects move forward."

Expanding passenger rail throughout the Commonwealth takes cooperation from transportation partners across the state. The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority's support of the project is vital to its completion.

"NVRTA's \$23 million investment in the Franconia-Springfield Bypass Project is more than a financial contribution; it's a commitment to deliver faster, more frequent, and reliable passenger rail service to Virginia, said **Monica Backmon, Chief Executive Officer, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVRTA)**. "We take pride in this investment, as it represents our dedication to providing multimodal options to reduce congestion, ultimately moving commuters more efficiently."

Additional transportation partners who have supported the TRV initiative include the US DOT and Virginia's Congressional Delegation, who both recognize the importance of passenger rail in the Commonwealth's transportation mix.

A national model for the expansion of state-supported passenger rail service, TRV is a 10-year initiative through which the Commonwealth will acquire railroad corridors and upgrade them, increasing rail capacity with a portfolio of capital projects designed to improve reliability and increase rail service in Virginia. Through TRV, the Commonwealth will:

- increase the state-supported Amtrak service between Washington, DC and Richmond, resulting in near-hourly service along this corridor;
- increase Amtrak service to Roanoke, Newport News, and Norfolk;
- extend Amtrak service from Roanoke to the New River Valley (Christiansburg) and construct a new passenger station and platform; and
- increase VRE Fredericksburg Line service by 75 percent and add new late-night and weekend service.

## About Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority was established in 2020 to promote, sustain, and expand the availability of passenger and commuter rail service in the Commonwealth. VPRA is committed to delivering and expanding its state-supported Amtrak Virginia passenger rail service. The Commonwealth of Virginia first launched state-supported service in 2009 with one roundtrip between Washington, DC and Lynchburg, VA. Since that time, the Commonwealth's service has grown to include eight roundtrips daily with stops at 17 stations along four corridors. For more information, please visit [vapassengerrailauthority.org](http://vapassengerrailauthority.org).

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