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TO: HRPDC/HRTPO Board Members

FROM: Robert Crum, Executive Director

RE: Executive Director's Report – November 2018

Hampton Roads has been named the Grand Prize Winner in the 2018 Smart Infrastructure Challenge “Smart and Connected Development” track by Venture Smarter. HRPDC members Andria McClellan (Norfolk) and Ben Davenport (Virginia Beach) delivered the region’s proposal during the Second Annual Smart Regions Conference on October 25 in Columbus, Ohio. Their presentation received the highest overall score.

In collaboration with the HRPDC, Hampton Roads competed as a region against 70 teams from around the country for potential grant funding, project financing and support for their innovative, smart infrastructure plans. The challenge culminated in a showdown where each team gave a Shark Tank-style presentation to a panel of judges. The Hampton Roads submission included a suite of projects centered on the Regional Connectivity Ring, a dark fiber, open access ring which will proceed in a series of phases. Phase I of this initiative will connect all five Southside cities to the transatlantic cables and accelerate the growth of digitally-empowered communities and serve as the foundation for smart regional development. Phase II of this effort will extend across the Bridge Tunnels to the Peninsula and result in a similar ring among these localities.

The conference brought together city leaders, government innovators and public and private sector partners for networking and exchanging ideas. Ms. McClellan and Mr. Davenport emphasized how the region can use cutting edge technology to enhance public safety, economic development, education and service delivery. The next step in this process will involve a phase of due diligence by Venture Smarter and related partners to learn more about our regional smart infrastructure initiatives and explore opportunities for support to move the region’s initiatives forward.

The Hampton Roads Peninsula localities have reached consensus and have begun to adopt a revenue sharing framework around the Unmanned Systems Initiative which was funded through the GO Virginia Program. This framework provides a model for joint site development and revenue sharing that can be used for collaborative efforts throughout the region.

At the December Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Committee meeting, the Southside CAOs will brief the Committee on progress related to the Regional Broadband Initiative,

and the Peninsula CAOs will brief the Committee on the Unmanned Systems and revenue sharing model. Both the Unmanned Systems Initiative and Broadband Initiative were unanimously endorsed by the HRPDC as GO Virginia project submissions. Next steps for each initiative are envisioned to expand these efforts to the entire region.

The Regional CAO Committee met on November 7 and discussed the following topics:

- A team of economists from the HRPDC, College of William and Mary, Virginia Wesleyan University, Old Dominion University, the Virginia Department of Taxation and the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond provided an overview of regional economic trends and forecasts. Each CAO was asked to invite their Deputy City Manager and/or Finance Director to attend and participate in this meeting. This economic forum is held with the CAO Committee on an annual basis to provide important economic information in preparation for the upcoming budget preparation season.
- Discussion of Impact Fee legislation which is expected to be introduced in the upcoming General Assembly session.
- The CAO Subcommittee on Sea Level Rise met with Ann C. Phillips, Special Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Adaptation and Protection, to discuss potential opportunities for collaboration.

HRTPO staff continues to follow up on the discussion that occurred at the October 18 HRTPO meeting regarding the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel (HRBT) Project. Issues related to the HRBT project include:

- Financing for the existing trestles at the HRBT
- The extent and location of the High Occupancy Toll network – in response to comments raised at the October 18 HRTPO Board meeting, staff has been invited to participate in a scoping meeting for a HOT network operational analysis. This meeting will occur November 9.

Staff will provide a status report related to the HRBT project and issues raised by the HRTPO in October at the HRTPO Board's November 15 meeting.

The Executive Director met with the Elizabeth River Crossing Chief Executive Officer on October 9.

The Executive Director attended a meeting of the Hampton Roads Chamber that was hosted in the Regional Building on October 19. Virginia Secretary of Transportation Shannon Valentine and Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC) Executive Director Kevin Page provided an overview/update on regional transportation projects at this meeting.

On October 15, the Executive Director attended a meeting with the Newport News City Manager and the VDOT District Administrator to discuss potential solutions to congestion in the Jefferson Avenue area of the City.

On October 16, the Executive Director provided a presentation at the Virginia Port Authority to a contingent of business and nonprofit representatives from the Hampton Roads and Richmond Regions that are exploring opportunities for collaboration between the two regions. The Executive Director's presentation noted the following potential collaborative opportunities for the two regions:

- Advocacy for improvements to I-64 between Hampton Roads and Richmond
- Advocacy for improved passenger rail service between Hampton Roads and Richmond
- Increased funding for the Virginia Smart Scale program to fund regional transportation needs
- Extension of the Virginia Capital Trail

On October 19, the Executive Director and staff met with a representative from the Virginia Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Small Business Program to discuss opportunities for collaboration.

The HRTPO staff continues to coordinate regional transit planning activities. On October 19, the HRTPO staff hosted a meeting at the Regional Building with management from Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) and the HRT participating cities. This meeting focused on the current HRT strategic planning effort, opportunities for the creation of a regional transit backbone system, an update on the HRT budget, and the potential for the creation of a regional subsidy allocation model.

On October 23, HRPDC and HRTPO staff met with Dr. James Koch, who provided his presentation regarding the economic impact of tolls on the City of Portsmouth.

On October 24, HRTPO and HRPDC staff met with representatives from SPSA and the City of Suffolk to discuss potential access issues related to the SPSA landfill. A subsequent meeting between SPSA and staffs from the City of Chesapeake and Suffolk and VDOT has been scheduled for November 6.

The HRPDC Subcommittee on Coastal Resilience met on October 25. Members of this subcommittee include:

- Council Member Andria McClellan, Norfolk – Chair
- Mayor Donnie Tuck, Hampton – Vice Chair
- Council Member Barbara Henley, Virginia Beach
- Mayor McKinley Price, Newport News
- Mayor John Rowe, Portsmouth
- Council Member Ella Ward, Chesapeake

The Subcommittee discussed potential legislative priorities that could be considered as part of the HRPDC Legislative Agenda to address issues of coastal flooding and resiliency, and also discussed potential advocacy efforts to align the region for future funding opportunities.

The Executive Director participated in a panel discussion on October 31 at the Governor's Transportation Conference which was held in Norfolk. Mr. Crum joined Virginia Secretary of Transportation Shannon Valentine and representatives of the Greater Washington Partnership, the Northern Virginia Chamber and VDOT in a session entitled "Regional Connectivity Spurring Economic Development".

The Executive Director and members of the HRTPO and HRPDC staff attended the Kick-off Forum for the HRT Regional Transit Transformation Project on November 1 at the Slover Library in Norfolk.