



## THE VIRGINIA AVENUE TUNNEL

### Virginia Avenue Tunnel Fact Sheet

The Virginia Avenue Tunnel in southeast Washington, D.C., is a crucial element in the East Coast's rail transportation network. The tunnel allows freight trains to move among key U.S. consumer and industrial markets and the ports that connect them to the global economy. The current tunnel is more than 110 years old and near the end of its useful life. It must be replaced to ensure that the rail capacity America needs to prosper continues to be safe and available into the future.

CSX Corp., one of the nation's premier transportation providers and a Fortune 250 company, plans to invest more than \$250 million of private funding to replace the existing, single-track tunnel with a modern, two-track structure that eliminates a bottleneck in the D.C. region's rail network while facilitating the transport of double-stacked containerized freight. The project will help CSX better serve customers while reducing rail and highway congestion in the District of Columbia and the surrounding area, improve the environment, and position the Greater Washington region and the nation for economic growth.

#### **Economic Benefits to the District of Columbia**

D.C. will benefit extensively from reconstruction of the Virginia Avenue Tunnel:

- Approximately \$250 million in local benefits from direct and indirect jobs, including approximately \$5 million in taxes to the District of Columbia. The District of Columbia is making no direct financial contribution to the tunnel reconstruction and there is no federal funding for the project. Virginia contributed \$24 million.
- Local businesses and qualified D.C. employees will receive first consideration for new jobs created by the project. The CSX Virginia Avenue Tunnel team has voluntarily committed to hire workers and select contractors consistent with the spirit of the District of Columbia's First Source and Certified Business Enterprise programs.
- Improved streetscapes, enhanced green spaces, expanded recreation facilities and other community benefits funded by CSX as part of the project.

#### **Capacity Expansion Supports Regional Transportation Fluidity**

The current Virginia Avenue Tunnel is a major bottleneck for freight rail traffic into and through the District of Columbia. Expanding the tunnel to two tracks with enough vertical clearance for trains carrying double-stacked containers will:

- Improve the fluidity of freight and passenger rail services in and around the District and the Greater Washington region by double-tracking the rail network through the tunnel and removing a long-standing regional rail bottleneck.
- Reduce the impact of freight traffic on passenger service by allowing two-way traffic through the tunnel and doubling the capacity of each train transporting intermodal containers.
- Reduce highway congestion and reduce highway maintenance costs. One freight train can carry the load of more than 280 trucks.
- Reduce the risk of service disruptions and future damage to one of the region's busiest rail lines due to flooding and weather-related issues.

### **Environmental Benefits**

Rail is the most fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly form of surface transportation. Environmental groups such as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Conservation Fund, Jones Fall Watershed, and the Natural Resources Defense Council have endorsed the benefit of shipping more freight by rail. A double-stack cleared Virginia Avenue Tunnel will:

- Allow twice as many intermodal containers to move on the same number of trains, resulting in decreased fuel usage and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Carbon dioxide emissions will decrease by more than 5.5 million tons in the District, Maryland and Virginia.
- Help CSX continue to improve the efficiency of its network. Currently, CSX can move a ton of freight more than 450 miles on a single gallon of fuel, which makes moving freight by rail three times more efficient than moving freight on the highway.

### **Safety and Neighborhood Impact**

This project will significantly improve the integrity and safety of the Virginia Avenue Tunnel by replacing an aging tunnel with a new, modern structure. By reconstructing the tunnel, CSX will:

- Improve the safety of the tunnel by using newer construction technologies and practices, including updated signaling and state-of-the-art security features.
- Simultaneously reduce vibration through the District and improve tunnel drainage by installing a new concrete floor.
- Eliminate stoppages at either end of the tunnel while freight trains wait for oncoming traffic to pass, reducing train noise and emissions.

### **Neighborhood Enhancements**

The surrounding community will benefit from enhancements to streetscapes and other neighborhood improvements. CSX will:

- Improve access to Garfield Park for wheelchair-dependent individuals.
- Build a continuous bike path between 2nd and 9th Streets, connecting Garfield Park and Virginia Avenue Park.
- Enhance Virginia Avenue Park with the construction of a dedicated dog park.
- Straighten the alignment of Virginia Avenue SE within the 400 block to be consistent with the original L'Enfant Plan.
- Improve the traffic lane configuration between 5th/6th and 8th Streets to provide safer traffic conditions.
- Install landscaping and improved street lighting, traffic signals and crosswalks.

### **CSX's Commitment**

CSX is committed to completing this project the right way – safely, efficiently, and in a way that addresses concerns and enhances the neighborhood. We have established a Community Office to engage with the community throughout the process. The project team plans to work closely with residents and businesses to minimize impacts, ensure they are informed about construction plans, and together make a great neighborhood even better.