

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**



September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010

The Honorable Ray H. LaHood  
US Department of Transportation, Secretary  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

As Director of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), I am writing to request assistance with expediting the process to adhere to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements regarding Virginia Ave Tunnel expansion project. The Virginia Avenue Tunnel (VAT) project is a part of the CSX Transportation's (CSXT) National Gateway Initiative (NGI). As you are aware, the National Gateway is an \$842 million multi-state public-private partnership created to construct a double stack rail corridor between Midwestern markets and three Mid-Atlantic ports (Baltimore, Maryland; Hampton Roads, Virginia; and Wilmington, North Carolina) that service the Washington, DC area. The expansion of the VAT is the lynchpin in the overall construction of the National Gateway corridor, as it has been identified by the Mid-Atlantic Rail Operations Study as one of the most significant rail bottlenecks on the East Coast.

Due to the magnitude and anticipated impact of the project, planning for the VAT will be subject to the requirements set forth in NEPA. However, a lead federal agency has not been identified to oversee this specific project. In order to expedite the process to develop the appropriate environmental documentation, DDOT, along with the CSXT project team, would benefit from the US Department of Transportation designating a lead federal agency for the NEPA process for the VAT expansion project.

DDOT understands the local, regional and national significance of the National Gateway Initiative and I look forward to working with the various stakeholders to ensure the full benefits of the NGI are recognized.

Sincerely,

Gabe Klein  
Director, District Department of Transportation