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Director
Strategic Infrastructure Initiatives

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March 9, 2011

Ms. Karina Ricks
Associate Director
District Department of Transportation
2000 14th Street, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, DC 20009

Re: CSXT Request for Temporary Use of I-295 Air Rights and Temporary Closure of I-295 Ramp

Dear Ms. Ricks,

CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) proposes to improve freight transportation capacity through the District of Columbia (District) by adding a second track through the Virginia Avenue Tunnel (VAT) and removing vertical obstructions to accommodate double-stack container freight train operations. The construction activities associated with this project may affect the Interstate System near the VAT. Therefore, CSXT is requesting District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to consider permitting CSXT the temporary use of air rights under the Interstate 295/ 11th Street Bridges, and temporary closure of the Southeast Freeway/I-295 ramp on 8th street during the construction of the VA Ave tunnel.

The VAT, owned by CSXT, has long been identified as one of the most significant freight bottlenecks on the East Coast. Both the I-95 Corridor Coalition Mid-Atlantic Rail Operations: Phase II Study (2009) and the National Capital Region Freight Plan (2010) identify the VAT as a major congestion point for freight rail traffic. The single track through the VAT limits capacity for freight trains moving through the region. Trains may be delayed for long periods of time due to freight trains waiting their turn to pass through the tunnel. In addition, the current VAT height is not sufficient to accommodate double-stack freight trains, which require a minimum 21-foot vertical clearance.

For the VAT, CSXT has conducted a preliminary review of a number of alternatives including: rehabilitating the existing tunnel; constructing a deeper tunnel on approximately the same alignment; constructing a new tunnel on the same alignment using staged construction methods; constructing a new tunnel on the same alignment using a temporary runaround track; utilizing new or existing railroad routes; and a no-build alternative.

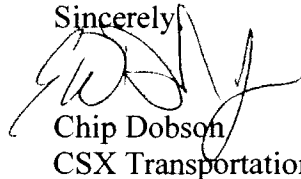
Based on this preliminary review, several of these alternatives have the potential to temporarily affect the Southeast Freeway/I-295. CSXT has identified the following two areas where approvals may be necessary for these alternatives.

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- 1) Potential temporary closure of on-ramp to Southeast Freeway/I-295 at 8th Street during the tunnel construction or rehabilitation.
- 2) Potential temporary use of air rights under the 11th Street Bridge/I-295 due to removal of roof and material over the existing tunnel and other associated project activity during the tunnel construction or rehabilitation.

CSXT appreciates the support that the DDOT has provided on the VAT project and looks forward to continuing to work closely with DDOT as the project approval process continues forward. CSXT requests guidance on how to obtain any necessary approvals for the potential temporary ramp closure and use of air rights and awaits your response.

Sincerely,



Chip Dobson
CSX Transportation, Inc.

cc: Faisal Hameed, DDOT Project Development, Environment, & Sustainability Division
Keith A. Brinker, CSXT
Stephen Flippin, CSXT