

# Regional Connectors Study Open Houses 2023 Summary

## First Round Public Meetings

### FEBRUARY 2023 OPEN HOUSES

#### Outreach activities

- Members from the study team and HRTPO attended three pop-up tabling events in Hampton Roads during which information about the Regional Connectors Study (RCS) and upcoming open houses was shared. The team visited the following locations:
  - January 19: Russell Memorial Library in Chesapeake
  - January 23: Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library in Virginia Beach
  - January 24: Hampton Main Library in Hampton
- The study team emailed the open house flyer to the following contacts for distribution:
  - Area Libraries (Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Newport News, Hampton, Virginia Beach, Suffolk, Norfolk, York County, Smithfield)
  - City communications departments (Norfolk, Portsmouth, Newport News, Suffolk)
  - HRTPO Community Advisory Committee
  - Regional Connectors Study Working Group and Steering (Policy) Committee
- PRR emailed an invitation to attend the open houses:
  - Using Mailchimp, an initial invitation and a reminder were sent to a list of 585 civic league and homeowner association contacts with an open rate of 33% (invitation) and 35% (reminder)
  - Additional emails were sent from the [connectorstudy@prrbiz.com](mailto:connectorstudy@prrbiz.com) to 107 community organizations, churches, and faith-based organizations
- HRTPO posted information on their website about pop-ups and open house
- HRTPO shared information about pop-ups and open houses in February newsletter
- Open house information posted on the RCS website

- 1.4K new users viewed the RCS website from January 1 – March 15, 2023
- HRTPO posted information about pop-ups and open houses on the HRTPO and RCS Facebook pages
- PRR placed three ads promoting the open houses. Placements made in The Virginian-Pilot (1/25), The Daily Press (1/25), and The New Journal and Guide (1/26 weekly paper)
- A media advisory was distributed and picked up by the following local outlets. See [Appendix A](#) for the Media Coverage report
  - The Virginian-Pilot
  - The Daily Press
  - WAVY Channel 10
  - 13 News Now
  - Virginia Beach Dispatch

## Open house participation

Four open houses were held February 2 – 9, 2023. See [Appendix B](#) for the Public Comment Summary report.

Date	Location	City	Participants
February 1	Pearl Bailey Library	Newport News	15
February 2	Lambert's Point Community Center	Norfolk	18
February 7	Churchland Branch Library <i>Received request to attend the April Churchland Civic League meeting</i>	Portsmouth	15
February 9	VDOT Hampton Roads District Office <i>Received request to attend the April Pughsville Civic League meeting</i>	Suffolk	20

## ONLINE OPEN HOUSE (OOH): FEBRUARY 13-MARCH 6

### Outreach activities

- OOH information posted on the RCS website
- OOH information posted on the HRTPO website
- HRTPO shared information on the HRTPO and RCS Facebook pages
- PRR emailed an invitation to participate in the OOH:
  - Using Mailchimp, an initial invitation to attend the OOH and a reminder were sent to a list of 504 civic league and homeowner association contacts with an open rate of 27% (invitation) and 37% (reminder)
  - Additional emails were sent from the [connectorstudy@prrbiz.com](mailto:connectorstudy@prrbiz.com) to 107 community organizations, churches, and faith-based organizations

### OOH participation

- The OOH was visited 348 times by 326 unique users
- Average engagement time with the site was 1 minute and 38 seconds
- 11 responses to survey questions were received
- See [Appendix B](#) for the Public Comment Summary report

## APPENDIX A: MEDIA COVERAGE

Date	Headline	Source	URL
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Colonial Heights Gazette	<a href="https://colonialheightsgazette.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/">https://colonialheightsgazette.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Idylwood News	<a href="https://idylwoodnews.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/">https://idylwoodnews.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Kings Park News	<a href="https://kingsparkwestnews.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/">https://kingsparkwestnews.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Sudley News	<a href="https://sudleynews.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/">https://sudleynews.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Manchester Dispatch	<a href="https://manchesterdispatch.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/">https://manchesterdispatch.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Virginia Beach Dispatch	<a href="https://virginiabeachdispatch.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/">https://virginiabeachdispatch.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Mont Clair Journal	<a href="https://montclairjournal.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/">https://montclairjournal.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Dranesville News	<a href="https://dranesvillenews.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/">https://dranesvillenews.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say-the-virginian-pilot/</a>

14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Virginia Beach Story	<a href="https://virginiabeachstory.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say/">https://virginiabeachstory.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Wytheville News	<a href="https://wythevillenewsstation.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say/">https://wythevillenewsstation.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	The Virginian-Pilot	<a href="https://www.pilotonline.com/news/transportation/dp-nw-connectors-study-20230214-mcdbcfsfhjeojd732jg3amqvba-story.html">https://www.pilotonline.com/news/transportation/dp-nw-connectors-study-20230214-mcdbcfsfhjeojd732jg3amqvba-story.html</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Manassas News Station	<a href="https://manassasnewsstation.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say/">https://manassasnewsstation.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Buckhall News	<a href="https://buckhallnews.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say/">https://buckhallnews.com/projects-to-improve-travel-across-hampton-roads-should-happen-now-not-years-from-now-residents-say/</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	Yahoo! News	<a href="https://news.yahoo.com/projects-improve-travel-across-hampton-233400516.html">https://news.yahoo.com/projects-improve-travel-across-hampton-233400516.html</a>
14-Feb-23	Projects to improve travel across Hampton Roads should happen now, not years from now, residents say	The Daily Press	<a href="https://www.dailypress.com/news/transportation/dp-nw-connectors-study-20230214-mcdbcfsfhjeojd732jg3amqvba-story.html">https://www.dailypress.com/news/transportation/dp-nw-connectors-study-20230214-mcdbcfsfhjeojd732jg3amqvba-story.html</a>
7-Feb-23	Possible plans to ease HRBT, MMBBT traffic congestion being reviewed	13 News Now	<a href="https://www.13newsnow.com/video/traffic/possible-plans-to-ease-hrbt-mmmbt-traffic-congestion-being-reviewed/291-9afdaaca-a4b3-40bd-a2e6-b7c70e9bef77">https://www.13newsnow.com/video/traffic/possible-plans-to-ease-hrbt-mmmbt-traffic-congestion-being-reviewed/291-9afdaaca-a4b3-40bd-a2e6-b7c70e9bef77</a>
6-Feb-23	Projects in the works to improve travel in Hampton Roads. Here's how the public can weigh in. – The Virginian-Pilot	Sudley News	<a href="https://sudleynews.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/">https://sudleynews.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/</a>

6-Feb-23	Projects in the works to improve travel in Hampton Roads. Here's how the public can weigh in. – The Virginian-Pilot	Idylwood News	<a href="https://idylwoodnews.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/">https://idylwoodnews.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
6-Feb-23	Projects in the works to improve travel in Hampton Roads. Here's how the public can weigh in. – The Virginian-Pilot	Kings Park News	<a href="https://kingsparkwestnews.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/">https://kingsparkwestnews.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
6-Feb-23	Projects in the works to improve travel in Hampton Roads. Here's how the public can weigh in. – The Virginian-Pilot	Manchester Dispatch	<a href="https://manchesterdispatch.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/">https://manchesterdispatch.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
6-Feb-23	Projects in the works to improve travel in Hampton Roads. Here's how the public can weigh in. – The Virginian-Pilot	Montclair Journal	<a href="https://montclairjournal.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/">https://montclairjournal.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
5-Feb-23	Projects in the works to improve travel in Hampton Roads. Here's how the public can weigh in. – The Virginian-Pilot	Dranesville News	<a href="https://dranesvillenews.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/">https://dranesvillenews.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in-the-virginian-pilot/</a>
1-Feb-23	Projects coming to improve travel between Peninsula and South Hampton Roads. Here's how the public can weigh in.	The Virginian-Pilot	<a href="https://www.pilotonline.com/news/transportation/vp-nw-hrtpo-public-meetings-20230201-aqh2ufovgvc3dkml5sdmvzep7u-story.html">https://www.pilotonline.com/news/transportation/vp-nw-hrtpo-public-meetings-20230201-aqh2ufovgvc3dkml5sdmvzep7u-story.html</a>
1-Feb-23	Projects in the works to improve travel in Hampton Roads. Here's how the public can weigh in.	Manassas News Station	<a href="https://manassasnewsstation.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in/">https://manassasnewsstation.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in/</a>
1-Feb-23	Projects in the works to improve travel in Hampton Roads. Here's how the public can weigh in.	Wytheville News	<a href="https://wythevillenewsstation.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in/">https://wythevillenewsstation.com/projects-in-the-works-to-improve-travel-in-hampton-roads-heres-how-the-public-can-weigh-in/</a>
18-Jan-23	HRTPO seeking final input on its Regional Connector Study	WAVY	<a href="https://www.wavy.com/traffic/hrtpo-seeking-final-input-on-its-regional-connector-study/">https://www.wavy.com/traffic/hrtpo-seeking-final-input-on-its-regional-connector-study/</a>

## APPENDIX B: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

### HRTPO REGIONAL CONNECTORS STUDY (RCS)

Public Comment Summary: March 7, 2023

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#### Overall Comments

24 responses from in-person OH comment cards, post-it notes, discussion, and online open house (OOH) general comments:

#### Question 1: What is your biggest concern for the future of travel in the region?

- 1) Congestion
  - a. Increased traffic due to induced demand
  - b. Timeline – too far in the future, the area needs congestion relief now
- 2) Tolls / Taxes
  - a. Do not increase
  - b. Fund the project in other ways
- 3) Alternatives to personal vehicles
  - a. Invest more in public transit
  - b. Include rail and ferry/barge options
  - c. Include cyclist options
  - d. Focus on BRT
- 4) Environment
  - a. Climate change/flooding
  - b. Historical preservation
  - c. Impact on property owners (losing property)
  - d. Pollution in adjacent communities
  - e. Hampton Blvd. truck pollution and pedestrian safety
- 5) Infrastructure
  - a. Risk to CBBT failing / maintenance
  - b. Coordination with smaller projects
  - c. Coordination with regional services such as Amtrak

### **Question 2: Would additional bridge-tunnels be helpful to your travels?**

More yes than no answers. Multiple responses included the caveat that it would be more helpful if public transit such as BRT or rail options were included/ prioritized.

### **Question 3: What major harbor crossing highways do you travel most frequently? What is your overall experience?**

- Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel, I-64, I-664, James River Bridge, Monitor Merrimac Memorial Bridge-Tunnel
- Most comments suggested people avoid the above listed routes during rush hour but general experience is neutral

### **Question 4: What else? ... other comments**

- Concern that more/wider roads will not solve congestion and will exasperate it in the future
- Concerns that the plan does not include mass transit or cyclist considerations
- Consideration of expansion's impact on loss of homes and businesses

## **Segment Specific comments from OOH**

### **SEGMENT 1a: 11 responses**

#### **Anticipated benefits:**

- Improves traffic away from MMBT
- More capacity between peninsula and southside
- Removes I-664 choke point
- Alleviates pressure on I-64 and HRBT

#### **Burdens to region and communities:**

- Tolls and taxes
- Cost to the cities
- More stormwater runoff from roads
- Increased development
- Impact on communities next to VA 164 and Rt. 17 as overflow routes

#### **Suggestions for balancing benefits and burdens:**

- Keep speeds low
- Add rail options



- Genuine fair-market value if property ownership is impacted
- No tolls

## **SEGMENT 2:** 9 responses

### **Anticipated benefits:**

- Reduced traffic on Hampton Blvd.
- Removes congestion in Suffolk
- Builds on/confirms previous studies

### **Burdens to region and communities:**

- Tolls
- Cost to the cities
- Might add to burden on MMBT
- Increased development

### **Suggestions for balancing benefits and burdens:**

- Extend this to Rt. 17
- Convert VA 164 into a bypass segment
- Genuine fair-market value if property ownership is impacted
- Include environmental improvements
- No tolls

## **SEGMENT 3:** 10 responses

### **Anticipated benefits:**

- Reduced traffic on Hampton Blvd.
- Reduced commute times

### **Burdens to region and communities:**

- Cost
- Environmental impact

### **Suggestions for balancing benefits and burdens:**

- Plan segments together to reduce cost and length of construction time
- No tolls or increased taxes

- Combine with Segment 5 to create an alternative to the I-64 HRBT crossing

#### **SEGMENT 4:** 7 responses

##### **Anticipated benefits:**

- Reduced traffic and trucks on Hampton Blvd.
- Improved access to Naval Station
- Benefits boaters

##### **Burdens to region and communities:**

- Might result in increased traffic on VA 164 unless combined with VA 164 widening
- Construction impacts
- Tolls

##### **Suggestions for balancing benefits and burdens:**

- Connect I-564 and I-664
- Build this last

#### **SEGMENT 5:** 6 responses

##### **Anticipated benefits:**

- Benefits commercial industry
- Improves traffic on Hampton Blvd.

##### **Burdens to region and communities:**

- More congestion on I-664
- Congestion during construction
- Tolls

##### **Suggestions for balancing benefits and burdens:**

- No need for this segment
- No tolls
- Move the cost burden to commercial industry