

From: [White House Press Office](#)
To: [Pat Watkins](#)
Subject: PORT OF SAVANNAH: We Can't Wait: Obama Administration Announces 5 Major Port Projects to Be Expedited
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THE WHITE HOUSE
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July 19, 2012

We Can't Wait: Obama Administration Announces 5 Major Port Projects to Be Expedited

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, as part of its *We Can't Wait* initiative, the Administration announced that 7 nationally and regionally significant infrastructure projects will be expedited to help modernize and expand 5 major ports in the United States, including the Port of Jacksonville, the Port of Miami, the Port of Savannah, the Port of New York and New Jersey, and the Port of Charleston. As part of a Presidential Executive Order issued in March of this year, the Office of Management and Budget is charged with overseeing a government-wide effort to make the permitting and review process for infrastructure projects more efficient and effective, saving time while driving better outcomes for local communities. These are the first 7 of the initial 43 projects that will be expedited by the Executive Order – additional expedited infrastructure projects will be announced in the coming weeks.

“One way to help American businesses grow and hire is to modernize our infrastructure,” said President Obama. “That’s why in March I asked my Administration to identify important projects across the country where Federal review could be expedited. Today’s commitment to move these port projects forward faster will help drive job growth and strengthen the economy.”

The Obama Administration is also announcing the establishment of a White House-led Task Force that will consist of senior officials from various White House offices, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Departments of Transportation, Commerce, Homeland Security, and the Treasury. The Task Force will develop a Federal strategy and coordinated decision making principles that focus on the economic return of investments into coastal ports and related infrastructure to support the movement of commerce throughout the Nation. For more information on the Task Force, please click [HERE](#).

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Port of Jacksonville

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One of the critical steps in modernizing and expanding the Port of Jacksonville is to finalize the federal feasibility study examining the costs and benefits of deepening

the harbor. Nationally, feasibility studies take an average of 10 years and the expedited process announced today will shave 7 years off of that timeline, committing the federal government to finalize the study by April of 2013, years ahead of previous projections. Today, the Administration also announced that it will commit to completing all permits for the Jacksonville Port Intermodal Container Facility by July of 2013.

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Jacksonville Harbor

Coordinating Agency: US Army Corps of Engineers

Target date for completing all Federal permit and review decisions: April 2013

The Army Corps is completing a feasibility study to examine the benefits and costs of deepening the Federal navigation channel at the port from its existing authorized project depth of 40 feet up to maximum project depth of 50 feet to accommodate larger cargo vessels and other ships. The Army Corps is applying its modernized planning process for potential long-term infrastructure investments to this ongoing study, and expects to complete its recommendations for improvements several years earlier than originally anticipated. The Port of Jacksonville plans to construct a new Intermodal Container Facility concurrently with the navigation improvements that will vastly improve the efficient movement of goods.

Jacksonville Intermodal Container Facility

Coordinating Agency: US Department of Transportation

Target date for completing all Federal permit and review decisions: July 2013

A new Intermodal Container Facility (ICTF) at the Port of Jacksonville will increase the capacity of the port to handle containers that arrive or depart by rail, and thereby will reduce truck traffic on local and regional roads. The ICTF will include a five-track rail yard, two wide-span electric cranes, and a paved area for stacking containers and several support uses, including a road a gate for truck movement of cargo, a parking area, and storm water retention facilities. The facility will also use zero-emission, wide-span electric cranes for all lift operations. This \$45 million project is being financed through a public-private partnership, including US Department of Transportation TIGER grant funding of \$10 million serving as an example of the expanded outreach and coordination by DOT to help non-traditional grantees navigate the environmental review process, from start to finish, in an efficient manner to meet the aggressive timelines associated with an innovative funding program. This port-side investment compliments the ongoing work by the Corps of Engineers helping maintain and increase the economic competitiveness of the port as expansion of the Panama Canal commences in the coming years.

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Port of Miami

The Administration today committed to completing all federal reviews for the Port

of Miami by August of 2012, and expects to complete the deepening of the channel this year.

Miami Harbor

Coordinating Agency: US Army Corps of Engineers

Target date for completion of all Federal permit and review decisions: August 2012

The Army Corps is working with the Port of Miami to construct an authorized project that involves deepening the Federal navigation at the port from its current depth of 42 feet to a depth of 50 feet. The project would enable the port to accommodate larger cargo vessels and other ships, ultimately facilitating a more efficient movement of goods. Through a progressive partnership with the State of Florida, which has provided all of the funds needed to construct this project, the time frame for its construction has been advanced by years. The Corps expects to complete the deepening of the Federal navigation channel by late 2012. Related infrastructure improvements include landside investments funded in part by the Department of Transportation.

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Port of Savannah

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The Administration today committed to completing all federal reviews for the Port of Savannah by November of 2012.

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Savannah Harbor

Coordinating Agency: US Army Corps of Engineers

Target date for completing all Federal permit and review decisions: November 2012

The Army Corps has completed a feasibility report that examined the benefits and costs of deepening the existing channel at Savannah Harbor from its current depth of 42 feet to a depth of 47 feet. The proposed project would enable the Port of Savannah to accommodate larger cargo vessels and other ships, ultimately facilitating more efficient movement of goods. The study involved a multiyear collaborative effort with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Interior and the Department of Commerce, all of whom must also approve the final report. As a result of this collaboration, the project includes an extensive mitigation plan, which is an integral part of the recommended improvements and are intended to restore, preserve, and adaptively manage the surrounding ecosystem, which includes the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge.

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Port of New York and New Jersey

The Administration today committed to completing all federal permit and review decisions for the Bayonne Bridge by April of 2013, shaving months from the schedule. In addition, the Administration will complete all remaining federal reviews for the New York and New Jersey Harbor by May of 2013.

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New York and New Jersey Harbor

Coordinating Agency: US Army Corps of Engineers

Target date for completing all Federal permit and review decisions: May 2013

The Port of New York and New Jersey is the largest port on the East Coast. Through the port's major container terminals, waterborne cargo moves to all parts of the United States and throughout the world. The Army Corps is in the final stages of constructing an authorized project that will deepen existing Federal channels that provide access to four container terminals to a depth of 50 feet, enabling the navigation channel to accommodate larger cargo vessels and other ships, ultimately facilitating a more efficient movement of goods. The Corps expects to complete this \$1.6 billion project in 2014. In order to fully realize the potential economic returns from this improvement to the navigation channel, the Port also plans to raise the Bayonne Bridge.

Bayonne Bridge Raising

Coordinating Agency: US Coast Guard

Target date for completing all Federal permit and review decisions: April 2013

The Port of New York and New Jersey plans to raise the height of the Bayonne Bridge by 2016 in order to provide enough vertical clearance to allow access to the Port's main container terminals by larger container vessels able to transit to the Port of New York/New Jersey due to deepening of the New York Harbor's navigation channels by the Army Corps of Engineers. This project, which is estimated to cost \$1 billion paid with the Port Authority funding, involves raising the roadway from 151 feet to 215 feet above mean high water, while preserving the bridge's historic arch. Effective coordination between the Port Authority and the Coast Guard (the federal coordinating agency) and with other Federal agencies, is anticipated to reduce the overall permit decision-making and review timelines by several months.

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Port of Charleston

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The Administration today committed to completing all federal reviews for the Port of Charleston by September of 2015.

Charleston Harbor

Coordinating Agency: US Army Corps of Engineers

Target date for completing all Federal permit and review decisions: September 2015

Under its planning modernization process, the Army Corps is implementing an aggressive planning schedule for the Charleston Harbor Feasibility Study that will examine the benefits and costs of deepening the Federal navigation channel for Charleston Harbor from its existing depth of 45 feet to a maximum of 50 feet to

accommodate larger cargo vessels and other ships, ultimately facilitating a more efficient movement of goods. The study is expected to be complete within 3 years – much earlier than the over 10 year average.

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The White House · 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW · Washington DC 20500 · 202-456-1111