



# PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

James Salmon  
302.571.6409

## **DRBA Commission Adopts 2024 Capital Improvement Program** *Allocates \$132 Million to Improve Vital Infrastructure in Delaware, New Jersey*

**NEW CASTLE, Del.** – The Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) Commissioners adopted the agency’s 2023 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) along with an Authority-wide Five-Year Strategic Plan for the agency’s airports and crossing facilities. The 2024 CIP of \$132.7 million is comprised of \$116.7 million in Authority resources and nearly \$16 million in federal, state, and local grant funds. The board action took place at the bi-state agency’s monthly meeting held in the James Julian Boardroom at the DRBA Administrative Complex in New Castle, Delaware

“A healthy, reliable infrastructure network is vital for economic growth and prosperity,” said Vince Meconi, Chief Operations Officer for the DRBA. “Millions of people rely on our family of transportation services to move goods and services, get to a family vacation or to commute to work every day. This CIP is an investment in our collective future.”

The Five-Year Strategic Plan contains one hundred and twenty major capital projects at the Delaware Memorial Bridge (DMB), the Cape May-Lewes Ferry (CMLF), the Forts Ferry (FF), the Wilmington Airport (ILG), the Millville Executive Airport (MIV), the Cape May Airport (WWD), the Delaware Air Park (33N) and the Civil Air Terminal (CAT) and serves as a planning tool for long-term infrastructure needs and resource allocation.

The CIP includes the following major projects:

**Ship Collision Protection - DMB:** This project provides a protection system meeting current standards and consists of eight 80-foot diameter dolphin structures, two at the approach of each tower pier. Through 2023, the Authority has expended nearly \$44 million on this project. It has an estimated DRBA cost of \$25,240,000 in 2024 and \$18,016,000 in the out years (2025-2028).

**War Memorial Refurbishment- DMB:** The project programs the design and restoration of the existing War Memorial. It will also add the names of all military personnel from Delaware and New Jersey who were killed in the Vietnam War and subsequent conflicts to the main monument. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$4,500,000 in 2024. This effort has no anticipated annual operating cost impact.

**Annual Bridge Steelwork Repairs - DMB:** This project makes miscellaneous steelwork repairs to preserve the bridge's steelwork while maintaining safety and operational service levels. Work typically includes replacement of worn bearing assemblies, access platforms, maintenance of steel connections,

installing new safety features, suspender rope replacement, and other items. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$6,200,000 in 2024 and \$47,000,000 in the out years.

**Annual Maintenance Bridge Span Painting - DMB:** The annual bridge inspection report recommends continued repairs to the coating system of the Delaware Memorial Bridge to protect the structural steel on specific spans. The project will strip affected areas to bare metal and recoat with a 3-layer protective overcoat system. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$8,338,000 in 2024 and \$25,525,000 in the out years.

**Cape May Approach Roads Rehabilitation - CMLF:** Pavements at the toll approach are deteriorating and improvements are necessary to maintain expected levels of service at the Cape May Terminal. The project proposes the design and construction for roadway reconfigurations at the terminal entrance, improvements to the approach roads, and the replacement of Cape May highway signage. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$3.1 million in 2024 and \$1.9 million in the out years. The project is partially funded in the amount of slightly more than \$2.4 million by the New Jersey DOT.

**Annual Vessel Maintenance & Dry Docking- CMLF:** The project programs annual capital expenditures for the three (3) vessels, particularly in areas that preserve these assets and improve passenger safety and operational reliability. Planned projects include but are not limited to: vessel shipyard dry dockings, purchase of life saving equipment, seating replacements, systems efficiency upgrades, generator overhauls, and miscellaneous improvements. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$3,305,000 in 2024 and \$43,913,000 in the out years.

**Beach Drive Improvements – CMLF:** Beach Drive is presently a narrow two-lane Lower Township owned road with no shoulders or dedicated pedestrian access. Improvements consist of widening the lanes, adding a protected pedestrian walk and bikeway, and street lighting. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$250,000 in 2024 and \$1,250,000 in the out years.

**New Vessel Design & Construction – CMLF:** This project includes the design and construction to replace vessels in the ferry fleet. Design will include all stages of design for the new vessels from concept to final design. Project management/construction support will cover all emergent needs during contract bidding, construction, and post-construction. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$2,000,000 in 2024 and \$107,130,000 in the out years. It is anticipated that the project will be partially funded with federal assistance.

**Fender Replacements- CMLF:** High strength fiberglass fender panels were installed during the late 1990s at both terminals to resist vessel impact along the bulkhead. These panels have reached the end of their service life and are being replaced with steel panels similar in shape and size. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$874,000 in 2024 and \$936,000 in the out years.

**Terminal Improvements- ILG:** This project programs the cost to finalize design of the improvements as needed to expand and modify the terminal, including hold room capacity, and frontage improvements, as well as expand opportunities for improved customer service. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$1,951,000 in 2024 and \$4,659,000 in the out years.

**Hotel Demolition- ILG:** The Authority has acquired control of a hotel adjacent to the Wilmington Airport terminal building, which it does not plan to operate. The project will demolish existing hotel buildings

and provide for immediate temporary parking. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$2,847,000 in 2024 and \$502,000 in the out years.

**New Multi-Purpose Building- MIV:** The existing terminal building's layout and condition are not conducive to future terminal functions and the facility is poorly located. This project programs for the construction of a new multi-purpose building located in a more optimal location for future expansion. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$50,000 in 2024 and \$5,950,000 in the out years.

**New Box Hangars – MIV:** There is a need for additional hangars at the Millville Airport. The project programs the design and construction of new box hangars to address this demand. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$500,000 in 2024. The project is partially funded in the amount of approximately \$1.5 million by the Federal Aviation Administration.

**Third Multi-Tenant Building- WWD:** Cape May Airport has experienced increased development and business interest. The Authority has constructed and fully leased two multi-tenant buildings, and there is demand for more. The project provides for the construction of an additional multi-tenant light industrial building to accommodate new tenancy requests. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$1,000,000 in 2024 and \$4,341,000 in the out years.

**Hangar Bank "F" Construction- 33N:** There is a need for additional hangars at the Delaware Air Park. The project programs the construction of additional box hangars to address this demand. This project has an estimated DRBA cost of \$578,000 in 2024. The project is funded in the amount of approximately \$844,000 by the Federal Aviation Administration.

#### **About the Delaware River and Bay Authority**

The DRBA, a bi-state governmental agency created by Compact in 1962, owns and operates the Delaware Memorial Bridge, the Cape May- Lewes Ferry, and the Forts Ferry Crossing. The DRBA also manages two airports in New Jersey (Millville Executive Airport and Cape May Airport) and three in Delaware (Wilmington Airport, Civil Air Terminal and Delaware Airpark). All DRBA operating revenues are generated through the bridge, ferry and airport facilities. For more information, visit [www.drba.net](http://www.drba.net).