



**South
Carolina
Ports**

NEWS RELEASE

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UNION PIER DESIGN PROCESS ANNOUNCED

Design process will create an attractive cruise terminal at the north end of Union Pier to fit contextually within Charleston's unique character

Charleston, SC – The South Carolina State Ports Authority (SCSPA) announced today that the Union Pier cruise terminal design planning process will include a series of public meetings and input opportunities throughout the coming months.

The first public meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 10 from noon until 1:30 p.m. at the current Passenger Terminal, located at 196 Concord Street. The May public meeting will begin focus on the cruise terminal portion of the Union Pier plan. Two additional public meetings will be held sometime in early summer.

“Almost two years ago, the port shared with the community the need to improve Charleston’s existing cruise ship terminal that was built nearly 40 years ago,” said SCSPA President Jim Newsome. “At that time, we embarked upon an open, transparent, and collaborative planning process for the Union Pier property that continues with the cruise terminal design process.”

The new cruise terminal’s location is shifted north on the Union Pier property at the site of an existing cargo-handling facility. Conversion of the existing structure should begin this year, with a targeted opening date of the new cruise terminal by late 2012.

The goal of the Union Pier project is to create an attractive terminal that functions efficiently, conforms to all of today’s security standards, provides passengers with an appropriate welcome and introduction to Charleston, has minimal impacts on neighboring communities and fits contextually within Charleston’s special character.

“Through this process, the port and the experienced design team led by CH2M Hill, with input from community leaders, will move forward expediently to design a world-class cruise terminal,” added Newsome.

Benefits of the Union Pier Plan include shifting cargo operations off Union Pier, significantly reducing cargo-related traffic, and freeing up more than 35 acres for world-class redevelopment, providing the opportunity for unparalleled public access to the waterfront.

“Our port is one of the area’s and the state’s major economic drivers, and the maritime activities related to the local cruise industry bring our community many economic benefits, including much-needed jobs and revenue,” added Newsome.

In 2010, the cruise business in the Charleston area supported more than 400 jobs and \$37 million in total economic output in 2010, including \$16 million in wages and \$3.5 million in tax revenues.

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Design Process Announced – add one

Additional economic benefits will be realized with the conversion of the new terminal, including an estimated economic contribution of \$43 million and more than 300 jobs.

In December 2010, the SCSPA issued \$170 million in new revenue bonds to fund several major projects, including funds to renovate a current structure on the north end of Union Pier for the new cruise terminal facility. Shifting the cruise operation north is a key element of the Union Pier Concept Plan, which was developed with extensive public involvement (<http://www.UnionPierPlan.com>).

The cruise terminal design project covers all architectural and engineering plans, contract documents, costs and schedules necessary to convert the existing building into a cruise passenger terminal. The project will include the terminal building, parking, security, berth, baggage handling and other amenities necessary to efficiently handle one cruise vessel at a time.

The public is encouraged to submit feedback and comments throughout the design process through www.UnionPierPlan.com.

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