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**PORT FREEPORT CELEBRATES RAIL GROUNDBREAKING**

**FREEPORT, TX (August 21, 2017)** – Port Freeport and their honored guests joined together for a groundbreaking ceremony marking the commencement for construction of the Phase 1 of the Parcel 14 Rail Development. The rail project has been one of the port’s long term strategic objectives for many years and will enhance landside accessibilities and supply chain efficiencies for the Port’s current and future users and for Brazoria County’s Petrochemical Industry.

Parcel 14 is a 250-acre site adjacent to State Highway 36 (SH36) traversing between FM 1495 and the Brazos River Diversion Canal. The site will be developed into a multimodal industrial park complete with new warehousing facilities for plastic resins packaging, cross-docking activities and distribution centers. Additional areas of the site have been earmarked for new vehicle processing and storage. Union Pacific Railroad will offer manifest train service on the new rail infrastructure.

Phyllis Saathoff, Executive Director/CEO, said, “In addition to adding rail capacity to Port Freeport’s infrastructure portfolio, the new rail facility will enhance our partnerships with area industry, and will be the first step in future connections to the Texas International Trade Corridor.”

In July, Port Freeport Commissioners approved the issuance of a notice to proceed to James Construction for the \$21 million Parcel 14 Rail Development Project. Approximately 21,000 linear feet of rail track will be constructed consisting of a 6,000-foot lead track spurring from the Union Pacific main line at Cherry Street, that crosses SH 36, and then connects to three ladder tracks of approximately 5,000 feet each.

“The Port is pleased to begin work with James Construction on this new rail project to support the business needs of our current and future customers and create jobs and economic prosperity for the area.

With the opening of the expanded Panama Canal and the oil and gas renaissance experienced in this region and the new resin production coming on line, growth at Port Freeport will continue,” said Port Freeport Chairman Paul Kresta.

The construction is scheduled to begin August 2017, with the new rail infrastructure being fully operational by July 2018.

Port Freeport is ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in chemicals and 26<sup>th</sup> in containers. The Channel serves Dow Chemical, Phillips 66, BASF, Tenaris, Vulcan Material, Mammoet, Freeport Liquefied Natural Gas (FLNG), American Rice, Dole, Chiquita, Seaway, Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) and Hoegh Autoliners.

Port Freeport is committed to keeping the local community informed of our operation and results. If you have questions or comments about this article, please email or call Jason Miura, Director of Business & Economic Development.

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**PHOTO CUTLINE: Representatives from Port Freeport Commission, Executive Staff, and James Construction break ground for Phase 1 of the Parcel 14 Rail Development.**