Gulf and East Coast ports have their eye on the Panama Canal widening project, which will allow bigger ships to come from Asia starting in 2016. Here is an August 2015 survey of projects at the top 13 ports. *

- PHILADELPHIA: Dredging is under way to deepen the port’s main channel to 45 feet.
- BOSTON: Dredging will start soon to deepen the channel to 47 feet.
- BALTIMORE: Recent projects deepened the middle of the Chesapeake Bay to 50 feet.
- NY-NJ: Dredging to 50 feet was finished in 2014. A new project will raise the Bayonne Bridge, clearing the way for larger ships.
- CHARLESTON: Plans to deepen the channel to 50 feet could be completed by 2019.
- NORTH CAROLINA: Expansion in Wilmington includes four high-capacity container cranes.
- NORFOLK/HAMPTON ROADS: Depths could go from 50 to 55 feet. New rail links will streamline delivery to Atlanta and Chicago.
- JACKSONVILLE: Work to deepen the port from 40 feet to 47 feet could start in 2016.
- MIAMI: A project to deepen the channel to 50 feet will be done in summer 2015. New tunnel will connect trucks directly to I-95.
- PORT EVERGLADES: Plans are under way to widen and deepen the channel to 50 feet, add berths and bring freight rail into the port.
- NEW ORLEANS: Master plan would double capacity by 2028. Mississippi River draft is 45 feet with potential to go to 50 feet.

*RANKINGS based on 2014 Journal of Commerce throughput data.

**ROOM FOR GROWTH**

How the top East Coast port compares to the busiest ports in Europe and Asia, based on 2014 JOC data for throughput in 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs)

- NY-NJ: 5.8 million (Global rank: 26)
- Rotterdam: 12.3 million (Global rank: 11)
- Shanghai: 35.3 million (Global rank: 1)