

CHAPTER 2

OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND AGENCY COORDINATION



D.C. TO RICHMOND SOUTHEAST HIGH SPEED RAIL

2 OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND AGENCY COORDINATION

This chapter describes the public involvement and agency coordination activities for the Washington, D.C. to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail (DC2RVA) Tier II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) employed many forms of public outreach to engage diverse audiences, inform them of the Draft and Final EIS, and offer a variety of ways to contribute their input. DRPT and FRA have also coordinated extensively with local, state, and federal agencies and jurisdictions throughout the environmental review process. The public, agency, and elected official comments received in response to these coordination efforts were instrumental in defining the scope of the Project, in preparing the Draft EIS and this Final EIS, and in defining the Preferred Alternative.

2.1 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Based on the geographic extent of the Project, DRPT implemented an extensive public involvement process to keep the public informed of the latest Project information and to provide opportunities to ask questions and inform the development of the EIS. Chapter 6 of the Draft EIS included detailed descriptions of the various communication methods employed for the Project. Application of these same communication tools was continued after the publication of the Draft EIS and the associated public hearings. A brief summary of each is provided below:

Newspaper and Online Advertising. DRPT placed multiple advertisements in local, regional, and specialty newspapers along the Project corridor prior to each round of public meetings held prior to publication of the Draft EIS: Scoping (four meetings), Alternatives Development (three meetings), and Alternatives Review (three meetings). Similar advertisements were placed for the five public hearings which were held subsequent to publishing of the Draft EIS. DRPT also placed Spanish-language ads in newspapers which target Hispanic communities. In conjunction with the print ads, DRPT also placed electronic, interactive ads in the Fredericksburg Free-Lance Star and Richmond Times Dispatch websites and also through the Washington Post Digital advertising to reach people through news sites and other partner websites in the Project area.

Targeted Title VI Outreach. DRPT identified Title VI audiences throughout the corridor for targeted outreach during the course of the Project. Email notifications were sent to Title VI groups and organizations, and outreach materials were distributed at transit agencies, community centers, libraries, and Hispanic and faith-based organizations in areas with higher populations of low-income residents and areas with higher populations with limited English proficiency (LEP). For all public involvement and agency outreach materials and events, targeted communication options were available to assist Title VI audiences, and DRPT translated all broad outreach media—such as meeting handouts and comment forms, newspaper ads, flyers, and press

releases – to Spanish. Any remaining handouts, including the Spanish versions, were distributed after each meeting to libraries in areas with higher concentrations of Hispanic populations to encourage their understanding and participation.

Project Contact Mailing List. DRPT created and maintained a Project mailing list for stakeholder groups and members of the public. Requests to be added to the mailing list could be made at any time, including through the Project website and at all public meetings. DRPT delivered Project updates, newsletters, and public meeting invitations to those on the mailing list via email, and printed and mailed materials for individuals not readily reachable by email. All flyers, rack cards, bookmarks, meeting handouts, and emails were also translated to Spanish. At the time of publication of the Draft EIS in September 2017, there was a maximum of approximately 4,225 organizations, agencies, and individuals listed on the Project Contact Mailing List.

Property Owner Notifications. In accordance with Section 33.2-1011 of the Code of Virginia, DRPT mailed property owner notification letters to allow access to properties for Project field surveys. In advance of the June 2015 Alternatives Development Public Meetings and the October 2017 Public Hearings, DRPT sent postcards to these same property owners and any property owners located within 500 feet in each direction from the centerline of the existing tracks.

E-Newsletters. DRPT distributed E-newsletters at key milestones throughout the Project to highlight details and outcomes of public meetings, explain the study process, provide updates on alternatives and recommendations, remind readers how and where to comment, and provide other timely insight. Spanish-speaking audiences were encouraged to request assistance if needed; however, no requests were received during the course of the Project.

Project Website. On October 6, 2014, DRPT launched the Project website: <http://www.DC2RVArail.com>. It serves as key reference for all public information, and DRPT continually updates the website with current and relevant information. The website also accepts comments and includes translation and font enlargement features.

Project Press Releases and Media Advisories. DRPT issued press releases at Project kick-off and prior to public meetings, and also made them available on the Project website. DRPT also issued media advisories prior to the public meetings to invite the media to attend and provide meeting coverage. To garner more media attention, DRPT contacted key media outlets to follow up on releases and offered to provide other information to inform news stories. These efforts resulted in over 188 news stories published during the announcement of each phase of public meetings held on the Project, ranging from the Scoping meeting in 2014 through the most recent Public Hearings for the Draft EIS in 2017 (see Section 2.1.1 below for details).

Project Brochure. DRPT prepared two Project brochures – one at the onset of the Project and an updated version in fall 2016. DRPT mailed the first brochure to 553 elected officials, libraries, faith groups, and chambers of commerce and disseminated the second brochure at key stakeholder and public meetings. Electronic versions of the brochures are available on the Project website.

Social Media. The purpose of the Project's social media efforts is to broaden outreach, increase awareness of the Project, and provide engagement opportunities to stakeholders who might not otherwise participate. DRPT summarized the content of social media posts to check for the most discussed topics and potential new issues not identified through traditional means and used social media to perform real-time evaluation of Project information and locate geographic areas with higher or lower levels of stakeholder participation. As of July 2018, Social Media profiles included 522 followers on Twitter (@dc2rvail) and 504 followers on Facebook (dc2rvairail).

2.1.1 Project Launch to Public Hearings

On October 6, 2014, 30 days in advance of the first Scoping public meeting, DRPT initiated the Project's public outreach to alert the public, agencies, and media of the Project's inception. The Project launch included formal publication by FRA of a Notice of Intent (NOI) for the Project in the *Federal Register* on October 23, 2014.¹

Public outreach announcements for the launch were developed in conjunction with public outreach announcements for the Scoping public meetings and included a group of web "splash" pages; an electronic survey; social media posts; an email message to contacts in the Project database; an initial press release to key local and regional print and electronic media—including a Spanish version to limited English proficiency media outlets; and a Project brochure that was distributed to regional libraries, faith groups, transportation agencies, chambers of commerce, and elected officials encouraging them to share Project information with their communities and customers.

Public involvement throughout the remainder of the Project was based on several key milestones, which are summarized below and described in detail in Chapter 6 of the Draft EIS.

- **Scoping.** The purpose of scoping is to introduce the Project and to provide an early and open forum for identifying public concerns and clearly defining the environmental issues and alternatives to be examined in the EIS. DRPT and FRA held four open house style public Scoping meetings for the Project on November 5, 6, 12, and 13, 2014. Scoping meetings were held along the corridor in Alexandria, Quantico, Ashland, and Richmond. An online meeting launched on October 27, 2014 was also hosted on the Project website.
- **Alternatives Development.** DRPT held a second round of three public meetings on June 1, 2, and 3, 2015. Alternatives Development meetings were held in Alexandria, Fredericksburg, and Richmond. The topics covered at these open house meetings included the Draft Purpose and Need Statement, alternatives development process, and preliminary rail alignment options.
- **Alternatives Review.** DRPT held another round of three public information meetings on December 8, 9, and 10, 2015, again in an informal open house format. The Alternatives Review meetings were held in Springfield, Fredericksburg, and Richmond. At these meetings, DRPT presented updated information on alternatives development, and topics covered included the review of alternatives and preliminary information and methodology for rail operations, modeling, engineering, and environmental analyses.
- **Draft EIS.** The public hearings are described in Section 2.1.2 below.

All comments received during the public meetings were reviewed, documented, and included in the Project's administrative record. Outreach materials included reference to several methods by which people could submit comments and questions regarding the Project. These methods included:

- Submission of comment form at in-person meetings
- Mailing the hardcopy comment form to the Project office

¹ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2014/10/23/2014-25219/environmental-impact-statement-for-the-southeast-high-speed-rail-project-from-washington-dc-to>

- Submission via the electronic comment form on the Project website
- Emailing the Project email address, info@dc2rvarail.com
- Calling the toll-free Project hotline (information in English and Spanish)

Comments received during specific comment periods informed decision making for that specified milestone. Comments submitted outside of the comment periods informed DRPT’s understanding of public sentiment regarding the Project and, in some cases, provided unique information, like property and historic resource details that helped guide alternatives development efforts. DRPT responded to comments that included information requests (e.g., specific landowner concerns or general Project information questions) by email, unless otherwise requested. DRPT also hosted meetings, made phone calls, and provided information by mail.

2.1.2 Public Hearings for the Draft EIS

After publishing the Draft EIS, DRPT held five public hearings along the corridor on October 10, 11, 17, 18, and 19, 2017 to solicit public comments on the Draft EIS. The hearings were held from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in Richmond and Ashland and from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. in Alexandria, Fredericksburg, and Quantico. The public hearings consisted of two parts: an informal open house, during which the public could review Project information and talk to subject matter experts; and a formal comment period during which the public could speak for the record. Table 2.1-1 provides the meeting date, location, and number of attendees at each public hearing.

Table 2.1-1: Public Hearings

Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Meeting Attendance ¹
October 10, 2017	Main Street Station 1500 East Main Street, Richmond, VA	94
October 11, 2017	Patrick Henry High School 12449 W. Patrick Henry Road, Ashland, VA	169
October 17, 2017	Hilton Alexandria Old Town 1767 King Street, Alexandria, VA	77
October 18, 2017	James Monroe High School 2300 Washington Avenue, Fredericksburg, VA	43
October 19, 2017	National Museum of the Marine Corps 18900 Jefferson Davis Highway, Triangle, VA	27

Note: 1. Attendance numbers based on DC2RVA sign-in sheets.

Upon arrival at the hearings, attendees were asked to sign in and were given a comment form and a public hearing handout that provided background on the study (materials were produced in English and Spanish). The open house portion of the hearings included 19 staffed informational boards that included the following:

- Review of alternatives
- Socioeconomics
- Property Acquisition Process
- Historic and Archaeological Resources
- Natural Resources
- Air, Noise, and Vibration
- Transportation
- Train Frequency

Detailed maps and map books were also presented, and Project subject matter experts were available to answer questions. The open house remained staffed during the formal comment portion of the public hearings.

The formal comment portion of the hearings were held in a separate space from the open house areas and began at 6:30 p.m. in Richmond and Ashland and 7:30 p.m. in Alexandria, Fredericksburg, and Quantico. DRPT opened the formal comment portion of the hearings and allotted each speaker three minutes to state their comments. Comments and questions provided during the public hearings were documented for the Project record, and DRPT did not provide responses to questions and comments during this hearing. After those who had signed up to speak gave their comments, the Hearing Officer opened the floor to any additional speakers who wished to come to the microphone and provide their name and comment for the record. Once all comments were provided, the Hearing Officer concluded the public hearing and let attendees know that the Project team was available in the open house area to answer any additional questions. Attendees were invited to submit a written comment during the meeting, by mail, or online to be included in the record.

A self-guided online meeting was also made available through the duration of the Draft EIS comment period (September 8, 2017 to November 7, 2017) and included a review of the Draft EIS and the same display information as the in-person meetings. All public hearing materials were posted on the Project website.

The public was invited to provide comments about the Project during and after each hearing through various formats. The last two options below applied to the public hearings only, whereas the first five were offered during the first three sets of public meetings for the Project as well.

- Submission of comment form at in-person meetings
- Mailing the hardcopy comment form to the Project office
- Submission via the electronic comment form on the Project website
- Emailing the Project email address, info@dc2rvarail.com
- Calling the toll-free Project hotline (information in English and Spanish)
- Submission via the online meeting
- Verbally via the Court Reporter

DRPT prepared a Draft EIS Public Hearing Summary Report² that describes the format and content of the public hearings, documents public outreach efforts before, after, and during the Draft EIS comment period, and summarizes comments received from agencies, organizations, and the general public.

2.1.3 Public Comment on the Draft EIS

The 60-day comment period for the Draft EIS ran from September 8, 2017 to November 7, 2017. During this time, DRPT received more than 14,000 comments from 4,247 individual commenters, with most citizens commenting on several topics or issues. All comments received were fully considered; DRPT reviewed each comment, categorized and appropriately grouped them by topic. Table 2.1-2 provides a summary of the 4,247 individual commenters, and Table 2.1-3

² Available on the Project website: <http://dc2rvarail.com/resources/public-meeting-archive/>

provides a summary of the 14,170 comments, indicating the number of times a particular topic, or issue, was mentioned. The top ten primary issues that were commented on were:

- Alignments through the Ashland Area
- Specific Landowner Issues (such as property-specific impacts from the Project, including property access or property acquisition)
- Alignments through the Richmond Area
- General support of Project
- Alignments through the Northern Virginia Area
- Economics impacts
- Farmland impacts
- Road/bridge impacts
- Emergency response impacts
- Safety

Note that petitions that were sent in as form letters were captured as separate comments for the purposes of the count in Table 2.1-2 and Table 2.1-3. Refer to Section 2.4.2 of this Final EIS for summary of public comment and DRPT’s detailed responses, which are included as Appendix C of this Final EIS.

Table 2.1-2: Draft EIS Comment Summary – Number of Commenters

Comment Format	Number of Commenters
Email	2,561
Letter	74
Phone Call	2
Public Hearing Court Reporter Transcript – Alexandria	10
Public Hearing Court Reporter Transcript – Ashland	40
Public Hearing Court Reporter Transcript – Fredericksburg	6
Public Hearing Court Reporter Transcript – Quantico	2
Public Hearing Court Reporter Transcript – Richmond	12
Project Website Online Comment Form	769
Project Hotline Voicemail	12
Petition	3
CAC Ashland / Hanover Comment	5
Agency Letter / Email	53
Form / Duplicate Submissions	698
Total	4,247

Table 2.1-3: Draft EIS Comment Summary – Primary Topics

Primary Issues	Number of Topics within Comments
ADA Accommodations	5
Agency Coordination	15
Air Quality	29
Alignments-Ashland	5,630
Alignments-Fredericksburg	24
Alignments-Northern Virginia	988
Alignments-Richmond	1,069
Alternatives	16
Bicycle and Pedestrian	123
Biological Resources	25
Capacity	190
Community Facilities and Services	74
Compatibility Projects/Plans	14
Construction	46
Cumulative Impacts	4
Economics	724
EIS Process	15
EJ/Social/Title VI	9
Emergency Response	387
Energy	1
Errata	4
Farmland	631
General Opposition	68
General Support	1,051
Hazardous Materials Transport	9
Health Impacts	5
Historic and Cultural Resources	100
Information Request	27
Land Use	6
Mailing List Request	21
Mitigation	29
Mobility	7
Noise & Vibration	57
Other	9
Ownership and Operations/Maintenance	5
Parking	23
Parks and Recreation	26

► Continued.

Table 2.1-3: Draft EIS Comment Summary – Primary Topics

Primary Issues	Number of Topics within Comments
Project Schedule	5
Public Involvement	12
Purpose and Need	9
Road / Bridges	585
ROW	14
Safety	265
Section 4(f)	9
Service	112
Specific Landowner Issues	1,463
Stations	100
Technology	72
Visual/Viewshed	21
Water Resources	37
Total	14,170

2.1.4 Additional Public Outreach

This section describes the public outreach for the Project, in addition to the public meetings, hearings, and comment periods.

2.1.4.1 Public Meetings Hosted by Outside Organizations

In addition to the public meetings hosted by DRPT, DRPT was also asked to present at three public meetings held by outside organizations. These meetings were requested by local jurisdictions, citizens, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to discuss proposed alternatives in their areas. Table 2.1-4 provides the meeting host, date, location, and number of attendees at each meeting. During these meetings, DRPT gave a brief Project update presentation and answered questions from the audience. Topics raised during the question and answer sessions included the study process, property impacts, passenger and freight rail service, Project cost, rail within the I-95 corridor, noise and vibration, eliminated alternatives, safety, economics, Purpose and Need, Project outreach, and train speeds. Comment forms were available at these meetings, collected, reviewed, and logged in the Project database. Additionally, DRPT collected sign-in sheets and added attendees to the Project contact mailing list.

Table 2.1-4: Outside Organization Hosted Meetings

Meeting Host	Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Meeting Attendance ¹
Virginians for High Speed Rail; Town of Ashland	February 4, 2016 (6:30 – 8:30 p.m.)	Ashland Town Hall 101 Thompson Street Ashland, VA 23005	17
Hanover County	April 4, 2016 (6:30 – 8:30 p.m.)	Patrick Henry High School 12449 W. Patrick Henry Road Ashland, VA 23005	402
Spotsylvania County	July 11, 2016 (6:30 – 8:30 p.m.)	Fredericksburg Christian High School 9400 Thornton Rolling Road Fredericksburg, VA 22408	233

Note: 1. Attendance numbers based on DC2RVA sign-in sheets.

2.1.4.2 Small Group Informational Meetings

As shown in Table 2.1-5, DRPT participated in more than 45 small group informational meetings with interested organizations throughout the corridor, in many cases at the request of the organizations themselves. Notifications about these meetings were issued from the requesting agency/organization, and all meetings were open to the public. Feedback received at these meetings focused on ways that DRPT could collaborate to improve Project communication.

Table 2.1-5: Small Group Informational Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Type / Attendees	Topics
November 3, 2014	Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, GWRideConnect, Arlington Transit, Dinwiddie County, Federal Railroad Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Information Officer Update Regarding Upcoming Public Meetings
March 12, 2015	Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule Hispanic Community Outreach Strategy
March 12, 2015	Ridefinders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule Public Outreach Strategy
March 12, 2015	AAA Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule Senior Citizens Outreach Strategy
March 15, 2015	Historic Fredericksburg Foundation Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Overview Project Engagement Opportunities
March 19, 2015	East Coast Greenway Alliance, Virginia Bicycling Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Purpose and Need Barriers to Greenway, Private Freight Right-of-Way
March 19, 2015	Mayfield Civic Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Overview, including Activities and Schedule Field Studies Public Engagement Opportunities
May 13, 2015	Caroline County, City of Alexandria, Marine Corps Base Quantico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Information Officer Update Regarding Upcoming Public Meetings
May 22, 2015	Hampton Roads Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Overview Project Activities and Schedule
July 15, 2015	DuPont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Overview Project Activities and Schedule
September 9, 2015	Neabsco Beach Way Homeowners Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Overview Neabsco Creek Bridge
October 15, 2015	City of Richmond Public Information Office, Greater Richmond Transit Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Overview December 2015 Public Meeting Outreach Strategy
November 10, 2015	City of Richmond Office of Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title VI Outreach Strategy
November 10, 2015	City of Richmond Social Services Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title VI Outreach Strategy
November 10, 2015	Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title VI Outreach Strategy
November 12, 2015	Fairfax County Public Information Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Overview December Public Meetings

► Continued – see end of table for notes.

Table 2.1-5: Small Group Informational Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Type / Attendees	Topics
November 13, 2015	Fairfax County Department of Transportation - Public Information Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ December Public Meetings
November 17, 2015	City of Richmond, City of Fredericksburg, Springfield Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business Groups/Chambers of Commerce Update Regarding Upcoming Public Meetings
February 3, 2016	Transportation Association of Greater Springfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
June 9, 2016	Randolph-Macon College, Town of Ashland, Hanover County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Ashland Area Alternatives ▪ Potential Impacts to College
June 14, 2016	Civil War Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural Resources
July 27, 2016	Randolph-Macon College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ashland Area Alternatives ▪ Potential Impacts to College
August 22, 2016	Virginia Association of Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview
September 15, 2016	American Council of Engineering Companies, Virginia Transportation Networking Luncheon [Presentation]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
September 19, 2016	Arlington/Alexandria Phase II Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
October 27, 2016	Hap Connors – Commonwealth Transportation Board, Fredericksburg District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
November 3, 2016	Northern Virginia Transportation Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
November 3, 2016	Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
November 16, 2016	Crystal City Civic Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
November 17, 2016	Northern Virginia Transportation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
December 5, 2016	Richmond Area Locality Workshop: City of Richmond, Henrico County, Chesterfield County, Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, and Federal Railroad Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Richmond Recommendations ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
January 18, 2017	Alexandria Transportation Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
March 28, 2017	Ashland Study Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities ▪ Potential Impacts to Town of Ashland and Hanover County
June 5, 2017	Virginia Department of Historic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule
July 13, 2017	Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Department of Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule

► Continued – see end of table for notes.

Table 2.1-5: Small Group Informational Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Type / Attendees	Topics
October 24, 2017	Alexandria City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolution to comments on Draft EIS
November 9, 2017	Special Commonwealth Transportation Board Meeting - Ashland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Concerns
March 15, 2018	Woodbridge Potomac Communities Civic Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update and Schedule
April 4, 2018	Virginia Department of Historic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update AH Phase I in LOD
May 16, 2018	City of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update and Schedule
August 7, 2018	Virginia Department of Historic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Impacts to Cultural Resources in Shockoe Valley
September 10, 2018	National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Virginia, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Virginia Department of Historic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Impacts to Cultural Resources in Shockoe Valley
October 15, 2018	Historic Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update Potential Impacts
October 24, 2018	Town of Ashland Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update and Schedule
November 2, 2018	Elegba Folklore Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update and Schedule
December 3, 2018	National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Virginia, Historic Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Impacts to Cultural Resources in Shockoe Valley

Note: Rows highlighted in gray denote meeting that was held subsequent to the release of the Draft EIS in September 2017.

2.1.4.3 Town of Ashland/Hanover County Community Advisory Committee

Through the alternatives development process and related community meetings, DRPT recognized the unique nature of the Town of Ashland and Hanover County, and that many of the alternatives for greater rail capacity in this area generated community concerns. As a result, DRPT implemented a community-based effort to supplement the corridor-wide DC2RVA public involvement activities described above and to help inform DRPT's recommendation for a Preferred Alternative that provides the required rail capacity through the Town of Ashland/Hanover County area.

As part of this community-based effort, DRPT established a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to take a more intense look at all previous options, identify any potential new options to meet the Purpose and Need of the DC2RVA Project, and suggest mitigation strategies to address Project impacts. The CAC was specifically requested to:

- Review all alternatives studied during the preparation of the Draft EIS, including those considered but already dismissed during the alternatives development process
- Recommend alternative(s), including new alternatives or modifications to alternatives, to meet the Project Purpose and Need
- Identify and represent the concerns of members' communities
- Apply a structured and transparent approach seeking consensus

The CAC consisted of 14 members from the below organizations. Each organization nominated individuals to participate in the committee. CAC member organizations are listed below in alphabetical order:

- Town of Ashland
- CSX Transportation
- Hanover County
- Randolph-Macon College
- Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization

DRPT Director Jennifer Mitchell acted as chairperson of the committee and technical subject matter experts for the Project presented findings and answered questions at the meetings.

The CAC met monthly from May through September 2017 for a total of five meetings. The CAC members were notified by email and were encouraged to share the meeting details with the public. All meetings were open to the public, with specific meeting times set aside specifically for verbal comment by the public, with a limit of 2 minutes per citizen. The comment period was open until all individual commenters were able to provide their input at each meeting. Each of the CAC meetings included a full video recording available after the meeting on the Project website. The video offered the public who were unable to attend the opportunity to view the same information when it was most convenient for them. All public comments and questions were reviewed by the DRPT staff, and responses were prepared and shared with the CAC as part of the decision-making process.

Table 2.1-6 provides the meeting date, location, and number of attendees at each CAC meeting.

Table 2.1-6: CAC Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Type	Meeting Location	Meeting Attendance ¹
May 22, 2017	CAC Meeting	Hanover County Administration Building Board of Supervisors	90
June 26, 2017	CAC Meeting	Randolph-Macon College	60
July 25, 2017	CAC Meeting	Randolph-Macon College	280
August 28, 2017	CAC Meeting	Randolph-Macon College	80
September 11, 2017	CAC Meeting	Randolph-Macon College	60

Notes: 1. Attendance numbers are based on DC2RVA sign-in sheets.

Row highlighted in gray denotes meeting that was held subsequent to the release of the Draft EIS in September 2017.

It is important to note that the CAC process was not meant to replace the Draft EIS public hearings and public comment period. Members of the public were encouraged to also provide comments on the Draft EIS once the document was made publicly available on September 8, 2017.

Refer to Section 3.3 of this Final EIS for a description of the CAC recommendations as they pertain to selection of the Preferred Alternative. Refer to Appendix G of this Final EIS for the final summary report on all CAC activities, which was published in October 2017.

2.2 AGENCY COORDINATION

DRPT and FRA conducted extensive agency coordination throughout the course of the Draft EIS. More than 35 agencies were invited to be Cooperating or Participating Agencies. Cooperating Agencies include those agencies that have jurisdiction by law or special expertise and typically:

- Participate in scoping
- Provide staff support
- Assist with analyses, field reviews, and public meetings
- Review documentation

The Draft and Final EIS are meant to assist Cooperating Agencies in fulfilling their jurisdictional and NEPA responsibilities. Table 2.2-1 presents the Cooperating Agencies³ for the DC2RVA Project.

Participating Agencies also have an interest and remain involved throughout the Project, but they typically do not have as active a role as Cooperating Agencies. The Participating Agencies for the DC2RVA Project are also presented in Table 2.2-1.



Amtrak, WMATA, and VRE (Participating Agencies) in the DC2RVA Corridor

³ USFWS was also invited to be a cooperating agency but did not respond. Although USFWS is not a cooperating agency, they did participate in a phone conference with the cooperating agencies on August 31, 2015. USFWS requested information regarding proposed Project alignments. DRPT worked with USFWS to provide this information and respond to other USFWS comments.

Table 2.2-1: Cooperating and Participating Agencies

Cooperating Agencies	
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Participating Agencies	
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)	Marine Corps Base (MCB) Quantico
Amtrak	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG)/National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
Arlington County	Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC)
Caroline County	Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA)
Chesterfield County	Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC)
City of Alexandria	Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)
City of Colonial Heights	Prince William County
City of Fairfax	Richmond Regional Planning District Commission/Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO)
City of Fredericksburg	Spotsylvania County
City of Richmond	Stafford County
Crater Planning District Commission/Tri-Cities Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)	Town of Ashland
Dinwiddie County	Town of Dumfries
District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT)	Town of Quantico
Fairfax County	Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR)
Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO)	Virginia Port Authority
George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC)	Virginia Railway Express (VRE)
Hanover County	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
Henrico County	

2.2.1 Agency Meetings

Early and continuous agency coordination provides support for Project development. The first agency meeting was the agency scoping meeting for federal, state, and local agencies conducted on November 3, 2014. The intent of the meeting was to introduce the Project; explain the study process; refine the Purpose and Need; review concerns and comments; and begin to identify alternatives for consideration. Comments and input from the agencies attending were welcomed. DRPT also held agency meetings on June 25, 2015 and March 31, 2016, to update the federal, state, and local agencies on Project activities and receive feedback. Table 2.2-2 provides a summary of the inter-agency meetings held to date.

Table 2.2-2: Interagency Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Attendees	Topics
November 3, 2014	16 attendees, representing FRA, USACE, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), VDOT, MWCOG, RRTPO, Stafford County, Spotsylvania County, Henrico County, Chesterfield County, and the City of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Served as Agency Scoping Meeting ▪ Project Introduction ▪ Study Process Explanation ▪ Purpose and Need Refinement ▪ Identify Alternatives for Consideration ▪ Concerns and Comments on the Project from Attendees
June 25, 2015	20 attendees, representing FRA, USACE, EPA, FHWA, and VDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Update on Project Activities to Date ▪ Ongoing and Upcoming Project Deliverables ▪ Concerns and Comments on the Project from Attendees
March 31, 2016	24 attendees, representing FRA, USACE, EPA, Amtrak, VDOT, VRE, WMATA, MWCOG, RRTPO, Stafford County, Hanover County, Chesterfield County, City of Fredericksburg, and MCB Quantico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update on Project Activities to Date ▪ Ongoing and Upcoming Project Deliverables ▪ Concerns and Comments on the Project from Attendees
February 9, 2017	Attendees representing VDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule
February 22, 2017	Attendees representing VRE and FRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule
January 4, 2018	24 attendees representing Amtrak, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule
January 17, 2018	2 Attendees representing FRA and DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Concerns and Schedule
March 6, 2018	Attendees representing NCDOT, VRE, Amtrak, FRA, CSX, DDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service Development Plan Kickoff
March 6, 2018	Attendees representing NCDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduling

Note: Rows highlighted in gray denote meetings that were held subsequent to the release of the Draft EIS in September 2017.

In addition to the larger agency meetings, DRPT scheduled smaller agency-specific meetings as needed to discuss particular resources and topics in greater detail. Table 2.2-3 lists these agency-specific meetings and includes a brief summary of the discussion topics.

Table 2.2-3: Agency Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Attendees	Topics
September 3, 2015	USACE–Norfolk District, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wetlands Methodology Permit Requirements
September 16, 2015	EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Overview Climate Change and Resiliency Wetlands Environmental Justice, Relocations, and Public Outreach Air Quality Secondary and Cumulative Impacts Stormwater
November 30, 2015	USACE–Norfolk District, DEQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streams and Wetlands Field Review Meeting–Segments 6, 7, and 8¹
December 16, 2015	USACE–Norfolk District, DEQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streams and Wetlands Field Review Meeting–Segments 10 and 11¹
February 3, 2016	USACE–Norfolk District, DEQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streams and Wetland Field Review Meeting–Segments 11 and 12¹
May 19, 2016	United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Overview Threatened and Endangered Species Inventories and Survey
July 21, 2016	USACE–Norfolk District, DEQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streams and Wetland Field Review–Segment 21¹
May 11, 2018	USACE- Norfolk District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> James River Floodwalls
May 24, 2018	USACE – Norfolk District Regulatory Branch, EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft EIS Comments and Responses; Permit Coordination; Mitigations
June 6, 2018	EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft EIS Comments and Responses

Note: 1. See Section 2.3 of the Draft EIS for a description of DC2RVA corridor segments.

Rows highlighted in gray denote meetings that were held subsequent to the release of the Draft EIS in September 2017.

2.2.2 Distribution of the Draft EIS

On September 8, 2017, the EPA published in the Federal Register EPA’s weekly Notice of Availability (NOA) that included the Draft EIS. Publication of the NOA initiated the 60-day public involvement period. DRPT distributed the Draft EIS to 325 federal, regional, state, and local agencies, elected officials, and other interested parties for their review and comments. The document was also made available for public viewing at public libraries and government centers along the corridor, as well as on the Project website (www.DC2RVArail.com). The complete distribution list is included in Chapter 8 of the Draft EIS.

2.2.3 Additional Agency/Stakeholder Coordination

This section describes DRPT’s additional coordination efforts, including task force meetings, coordination with local agency and officials, and Section 106 and Section 4(f) coordination.

2.2.3.1 Task Force Meetings

Because the Project involves rail infrastructure owned by CSX Transportation (CSXT) and utilized by multiple operators, DRPT formed a task force of the transportation providers in the corridor to ensure effective communication and coordination of Project information. DRPT hosted task force meetings quarterly, or as needed at Project milestones, beginning in August 2014. Participants at the task force meetings typically included FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, Virginia’s Office of the Attorney General (OAG), and DDOT. The task force meetings began with an initial kick-off meeting followed by a series of updates on Project activities and the schedule. There have been 15 meetings held between the Project’s conception and July 2018. The meetings have served as an important tool for coordination amongst the primary Project stakeholders.

The main objectives of the task force were:

- To serve as the “Core Project Team”
- To be briefed on major Project milestones and to keep appropriate staff informed of the Project progress
- To serve as advisors to the lead agency for the EIS
- To provide technical review and input to complete certain parts of the study

Table 2.2-4 provides a summary of the task force meetings to date.

Table 2.2-4: Task Force Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Attendees	Topics
August 18, 2014	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, VRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Introduction ▪ Early Project Concerns
January 8, 2015	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, OAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General Update of Project Activities ▪ FRA Agreement with DRPT ▪ Freight Growth and Modeling ▪ Freight and Passenger Rail Capacity ▪ VRE Station Planning and Development ▪ Long Bridge ▪ Basis of Design
April 8, 2015	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, Virginia Office of the Attorney General (OAG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose and Need ▪ Service Goals ▪ Alternatives Development ▪ Public Involvement
May 19, 2015	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose of June Public Meetings ▪ Materials to be Presented at June Public Meetings ▪ Issues that arose during Locality Meetings ▪ Key Provisions of Basis of Design
June 29, 2015	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, OAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule ▪ Service Goals ▪ Engineering Options Overview

► Continued – see end of table for notes.

Table 2.2-4: Task Force Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Attendees	Topics
September 30, 2015	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, OAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule ▪ Alternatives Development ▪ Screening Results: Potomac to Staples Mill ▪ Screening Status: Richmond ▪ Ridership Model Development ▪ Preliminary Service Plan ▪ Streamlining Projects
January 27, 2016	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, DDOT, OAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule ▪ Operations Modeling Methodology ▪ Alternatives Review ▪ Draft EIS Content
May 11, 2016	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, DDOT, OAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule ▪ Locality Update ▪ Build Alternatives and No Build Alternative ▪ Ridership Forecasting ▪ FASTLANE Grant Application
August 16, 2016	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, OAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule ▪ Build Alternatives and No Build Alternative ▪ Preliminary Ridership Estimates
November 2, 2016	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule ▪ Alternatives Review ▪ Community Outreach ▪ Ridership Modeling Update ▪ Atlantic Gateway
February 2, 2017	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, DDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule ▪ Alternatives Review ▪ Ridership Modeling Update ▪ Preliminary Engineering Update ▪ Atlantic Gateway ▪ Long Bridge
July 12, 2017	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, DDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule ▪ Summary of Alternatives Review ▪ Public Hearing Schedule and Timeline ▪ Town of Ashland and Hanover County Area Community Advisory Committee Update
February 8, 2018	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, DDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Update and Schedule ▪ CTB Decision on Recommended Preferred Alternative ▪ Preliminary Engineering Update ▪ Service Development Planning
July 10, 2018	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, DDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preliminary Engineering ▪ Service Development Plan ▪ Final EIS format and documentation, including Draft EIS comment responses
November 7, 2018	FRA, DRPT, VDOT, CSXT, Amtrak, VRE, DDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service Development Plan ▪ Final EIS Update and Timeline ▪ Section 106 Coordination ▪ Network-wide Modeling Results

Note: Rows highlighted in gray denote meetings that were held subsequent to the release of the Draft EIS in September 2017.

2.2.3.2 Local Agencies and Officials Coordination

Beyond agency coordination with departments within localities, DRPT also specifically engaged local officials during the Project’s development. In total, DRPT conducted over 60 meetings with local agencies and officials to provide Project briefings and updates, gather feedback on alternatives, and answer questions. The organizations and meeting dates are listed in Table 2.2-5.

Table 2.2-5: Local Agency and Official Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Attendees	Topics
December 3, 2014	City of Richmond Mayor’s Staff, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Richmond Station Locations ▪ Relation to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
November 19, 2014	Delegate Manoli Loupassi, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Richmond Station Locations
March 12, 2015	Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO), DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Fredericksburg Region Outreach Strategy
March 12, 2015	RRPDC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Title VI Outreach Strategy
April 29, 2015	Hanover County, Town of Ashland, Richmond Region Planning District Commission, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service Goals ▪ Alternatives Development
May 1, 2015	City of Fredericksburg, FAMPO, GWRC, Stafford County, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service Goals ▪ Alternatives Development
May 1, 2015	MWCOG Transportation Planning Board, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
May 4, 2015	Chesterfield County, City of Richmond, Henrico County, RRPDC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service Goals ▪ Alternatives Development
May 7, 2015	PRTC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
May 7, 2015	RRPDC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
May 8, 2015	NVTC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
May 14, 2015	Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
May 18, 2015	GWRC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
May 20, 2015	MWCOG Policy Board, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
September 24, 2015	RRPDC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
November 9, 2015	Caroline County, City of Fredericksburg, FAMPO, GWRC, Stafford County, Spotsylvania County, VDOT, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
November 9, 2015	FAMPO Technical Committee, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
November 10, 2015	Chesterfield County, City of Richmond, Henrico County, RRPDC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
November 12, 2015	Hanover County, Town of Ashland, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening

► Continued – see end of table for notes.

Table 2.2-5: Local Agency and Official Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Attendees	Topics
November 13, 2015	NVTC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
November 15, 2015	PRTC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
November 16, 2015	FAMPO Policy Committee, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
November 19, 2015	NVTA, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Alternative Development and Screening
December 1, 2015	Chesterfield County, City of Richmond, Henrico County, RRPDC, FRA, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Richmond Area Rail Conditions and Alternatives Development
March 2, 2016	Hanover County, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Hanover County Field Studies ▪ Ashland Area Alternatives
March 9, 2016	Chesterfield County, City of Richmond, Henrico County, RRPDC, DRPT, FRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Richmond Area Station Site Planning
March 22, 2016	City of Richmond, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Richmond Station Facilities
March 22, 2016	Henrico County, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Henrico Station Facilities
April 4, 2016	Stafford County, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
April 7, 2016	Spotsylvania County, FAMPO, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
April 14, 2016	Caroline County, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
April 28, 2016	Hanover County, Town of Ashland, RRPDC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule ▪ Ashland Area Alternatives ▪ Randolph-Macon College
May 2, 2016	City of Fredericksburg, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
May 23, 2016	Arlington County, City of Alexandria, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
May 24, 2016	Speaker William Howell, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
May 27, 2016	House of Delegates Transportation Chair Ron Villanueva, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
July 28, 2016	CTB, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview
September 21, 2016	CTB, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Briefing
October 11, 2016	Caroline County Board of Supervisors, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Overview ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
October 18, 2016	CTB, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
October 25, 2016	MWCOG Regional Transportation Subcommittee, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
November 1, 2016	CTB, Town of Ashland, Hanover County, Randolph-Macon College, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Tour of Ashland Area
November 3, 2016	PRTC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
November 3, 2016	NVTC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule
November 17, 2016	NVTA, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Activities and Schedule

► Continued – see end of table for notes.

Table 2.2-5: Local Agency and Official Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Attendees	Topics
November 28, 2016	VDOT, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Justice and ADA Compliance
November 28, 2016	Governor McAuliffe, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Briefing
December 1, 2016	RRTPO, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule
December 6, 2016	CTB, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule Project Alternatives
December 14, 2016	Henrico County Board of Supervisors, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule
December 20, 2016	Fredericksburg Mayor/City Council Briefing, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule
January 9, 2017	FAMPO Technical Committee, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule
January 11, 2017	FAMPO Transportation Advisory Group, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule
January 18, 2017	Alexandria Transportation Commission, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule
January 23, 2017	FAMPO Policy Committee, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule
February 3, 2017	Ashland Safety Summit Meeting, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Activities and Schedule
April 17, 2017	Ashland Officials and Stakeholders, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Updates Creation of Community Advisory Committee
July 11, 2017	RRPDC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update and Schedule
August 21, 2017	GWRC/FAMPO Policy Board, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update and Schedule
September 7, 2017	RRPDC, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update and Schedule
October 24, 2017	CTB, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update and Schedule
October 25, 2017	WMATA, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potomac Yard and ROW
November 21, 2017	WMATA, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Concerns Alexandria Area Alternatives
January 26, 2018	City of Alexandria, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft EIS Comments
February 2, 2018	Arlington County, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft EIS Comments
February 21, 2018	WMATA, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft EIS Comments
March 8, 2018	ACHP, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update and Schedule
May 16, 2018	City of Richmond, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update and Schedule
June 28, 2018	ACHP, National Trust, NPS GW Parkway, Alexandria Archaeology, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-Final EIS Project effects
August 29, 2018	City of Richmond, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Impacts to Shockoe Bottom
November 8, 2018	City of Richmond, Parks and Recreation, DRPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update Section 4(f) Discussion

Note: Rows highlighted in gray denote meetings that were held subsequent to the release of the Draft EIS in September 2017.

In addition to the meetings with local officials listed in Table 2.2.5, DRPT also met with members of Virginia’s Congressional delegation on May 19, 2016 in Cannon House Office Building, Room Cannon 5C. Representatives from the offices of Senator Tim Kaine, Senator Mark R. Warner, Representative Don Beyer, Representative Gerald Connolly, Representative Robert J. Wittman, Representative Dave Brat, and Representative Robert C. Scott all participated in the meeting. Attendees discussed the various area-specific options along the corridor, as well as FASTLANE funding and how the Project could complement DRPT’s Atlantic Gateway suite of projects.⁴

DRPT provided additional outreach to elected officials during key Project milestones, as shown in Table 2.2-6. More than 300 elected officials were contacted and included on the Project’s email database to receive newsletters and other Project updates.

Table 2.2-6: Elected Official Targeted Outreach

Date	Format	Content
October 22, 2014	Direct Mailing #1	Project notification providing notice that FRA and DRPT were initiating preparation of a Tier II EIS for the Washington, D.C. to Richmond, VA, rail corridor.
May 18, 2015	Direct Mailing #2	Project update providing schedule information on public meetings to take place in early June. The update also shared that the Project’s Purpose and Need statement was completed, preliminary rail alignment options had been developed, and alternative screening criteria had been identified.
November 10, 2015	Email #1	Project update that early stages of the alternatives screening process were completed and input from the June 2015 public meetings was incorporated to develop a range of viable alternative improvements for detailed evaluation.
September 12, 2017	Email #2	Project notification providing notice of the Draft EIS document release.
September 27, 2017	Email #3	Project notification providing notice of the Draft EIS Public Hearing times, dates, and locations.
September 27, 2017	Email #4	Project invitation to attend Draft EIS Public Hearing.
October 10, 2017	Email #5	Project notification to inform officials about Draft EIS Public Hearing meeting materials.
November 2, 2017	Email #6	Project notification indicating that the Draft EIS Public Hearing Comment Period closes soon.

Note: Rows highlighted in gray denote communications distributed subsequent to the release of the Draft EIS in September 2017.

⁴ The Atlantic Gateway is a \$1.4 billion partnership that focuses on the I-95 corridor between Washington, D.C. and Fredericksburg, VA. Partially funded by a federal FASTLANE grant, the program utilizes an innovative public/private partnership to leverage a suite of multi-modal improvements along one of the nation’s busiest corridors. The FASTLANE, or Fostering Advancements In Shipping And Transportation For The Long-Term Achievement Of National Efficiencies, grants are part of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act § 1105; 23 U.S.C. 117. The competitive FASTLANE grants provide financial assistance to nationally and regionally significant freight and highway projects that meet the program’s goals of improving safety, reducing congestion, generate economic benefits, improve connectivity, enhance resiliency, improve roadways vital to national energy security, and address the impacts of population growth on the movement of people and freight (www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/).

2.2.3.3 Section 106 Coordination and Consultation

DRPT coordinated with numerous property owners and officials with jurisdiction over resources protected under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), with particular focus on resources where the Project alternatives would likely result in an adverse effect to cultural or historic properties.

Agencies involved in this dialogue included ACHP, Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), USACE, American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP), and United States DOI. Complete details on Section 106 coordination and consultation are included in Appendix E of this Final EIS.

2.2.3.4 Section 4(f) Coordination

DRPT coordinated with the owners of parkland resources protected under Section 4(f) of the *U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) Act of 1966* (23 U.S.C. 138). Letters were sent in summer 2017 to owners of all Section 4(f) parkland resources that could potentially be affected by the Project. Based on comments received, design revisions were made to reduce the Project’s limits of disturbance (LOD) in areas adjacent to parks. Based on the revised LOD, letters were sent in Fall 2018 to all resource owners for resources with permanent impacts or temporary occupancy.

Temporary and permanent impacts of the Preferred Alternative to the Section 4(f) resources are quantified in Chapter 6 of this Final EIS, which also includes complete details of Section 4(f) coordination. Concurrence of Section 4(f) use(s) have been received from the respective resource owners, copies of which are provided in Appendix E of this Final EIS.



National Park Service–Stonewall Jackson Shrine (Area 4, Central Virginia)

2.3 COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Virginia's Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) establishes the administrative policies and oversees transportation projects and initiatives for the Commonwealth's transportation system. The CTB is made up of 17 members appointed by the governor, and typically meets on a monthly schedule. The CTB allocates transportation funding to specific projects, locates routes, and provides funding for highways, rail, and public transportation projects. The CTB Rail Committee, a subgroup of the CTB, meets separately and works with DRPT staff on policies, procedures, special projects, and reports related to rail.

2.3.1 CTB Coordination – Scoping through Draft EIS

Because of the scale of the DC2RVA Project, DRPT began briefing the CTB on DC2RVA in advance of procurement for this Project at the CTB Workshop on July 16, 2014. DRPT updated the Rail Committee informally through the scoping and alternatives development process as the Draft EIS was developed. DRPT provided formal updates at the September 20, 2016, Rail Committee and Workshop. DRPT presented its preliminary recommendations for the DC2RVA Project at the CTB Workshop on December 6, 2016, while the Draft EIS was in review by FRA. The recommendations presented in December 2016 were identical to those documented in the Recommendation Report (Appendix I of this Final EIS) with the deferral of a recommendation of a Preferred Alternative for Area 5 in the Town of Ashland/Hanover County Area. As described above in Section 2.1.4.3, Ashland/Hanover CAC, comments from local officials and citizens in this area requested that DRPT review its alternatives development process with greater public involvement. DRPT and community members engaged the CTB through updates and public comments at CTB workshops and Rail Committee meetings, as well as a CTB tour of the Town of Ashland and Hanover County on November 1, 2016. The tour served as a fact-finding mission for the CTB so that they could view the scale of potential rail alignments in relation to the existing landscape and receive an update on the overall Project.

DRPT made formal presentations to the full CTB and CTB Rail Committee throughout 2017 (after publication of the Draft EIS):

- February 15, 2017 CTB Rail Committee
 - Reported on status of FRA's Draft EIS review and DRPT's request to conduct a separate NEPA effort for the Ashland/Hanover area due to unique land use conditions and longer-range need.
- April 18, 2017 CTB Rail Committee
 - Reported that DRPT was preparing refined operations analysis to confirm that the infrastructure proposed in the Draft EIS will meet the Purpose and Need of the full DC2RVA Project, particularly with regard to the proposal to retain a two-track railroad through the Town of Ashland.
 - Reported that FRA could not separate the section for Area 5 through Ashland from the DC2RVA Project for further analysis in a separate NEPA effort, since the EIS for the DC2RVA Project provides an FRA Record of Decision for a contiguous corridor-wide service improvement from Washington, D.C. through Richmond, VA.
 - Conveyed that the CAC will be convened for the Ashland/Hanover area, and FRA supports the CAC process as additional community involvement to inform the development of the alternatives presented in the EIS.

- Reviewed DRPT recommendations for Areas 1–6 and reported that the Draft EIS would not contain a DRPT recommendation of a Preferred Alternative for Arlington (Area 1) and Ashland/Hanover (Area 5).
- September 19, 2017 CTB Rail Committee and CTB Workshop
 - Presented results of the CAC, in collaboration with CAC Member Barbara Nelson of the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization.
 - CSXT expressed its concern that a 3-2-3 option would result in freight delays.
- October 23, 2017 CTB Rail Committee
 - Reported results of refined operations analysis modeling, which showed that most freight delays outside of the Project corridor are caused by forecasted freight growth through 2045 and are not attributable infrastructure constructed or service improvements implemented under the DC2RVA Project, particularly with a two-track railroad through Ashland in Alternative 5A.
 - Recommended phased implementation and coordination with the railroads and operators to address potential future delays both inside and outside the corridor.
- October 23, 2017 CTB Workshop
 - Reviewed previous DRPT recommendations for each area of the DC2RVA corridor.
 - Reported on the Draft EIS Public Hearings and presented a draft comment summary.
- November 9, 2017 CTB Rail Committee
 - Held in Ashland. The Virginia Secretary of Transportation encouraged participation by all CTB members, not just CTB Rail Committee Members. Ten out of 17 CTB Members attended.
 - Presented results of the DC2RVA Public Hearing process and Draft EIS comment period.
 - Announced DRPT’s Recommended Preferred Alternative as Alternative 5A, as defined in the Draft EIS, also known as “3-2-3,” for the Town of Ashland/Hanover County area (Area 5).
 - Reviewed DRPT’s rationale for both the Ashland/Hanover area and Richmond area recommendations.
 - Presented Draft CTB Resolution for the December CTB action.
- December 5, 2017 CTB Rail Committee
 - Reported on status of DC2RVA developments, noting the many comments and letters received on the Draft EIS.
 - Noted that a Project Recommendation Report will be distributed to CTB members at the end of the month reflecting the CTB vote on the alternatives selected.
 - The proposed DC2RVA resolution was to be voted on during the action meeting on the following Wednesday.

In addition to DRPT’s presentations, members of the CTB had the opportunity to discuss issues and ask questions. Public comment periods were provided at each CTB Rail Committee and each CTB Action Meeting. Meeting minutes and video recordings of these meetings are available online at www.ctb.virginia.gov/public_meetings.

2.3.2 CTB Resolution on Recommended Preferred Alternative

CTB voted to adopt a resolution regarding DRPT's Recommended Preferred Alternative for DC2RVA at its December 6, 2017 CTB Action Meeting. Refer to Section 3.4 of this Final EIS for a description of the resolution, and Appendix H of this Final EIS for a copy of the resolution.

2.4 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIS

FRA and DRPT received comments on the Draft EIS from agencies and organizations (summarized in Section 2.4.1) and the general public (summarized in Section 2.4.2). DRPT provided responses to substantive comments in Appendix B (agency and organization) and Appendix C (public) of this Final EIS. In general, substantive comments are those that question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information and methodology in the Draft EIS or present new information not considered in the Draft EIS, and cause changes or revisions in one or more alternative or environmental resource.

2.4.1 Agencies and Organizations

Thirty-four agencies and organizations provided comments on the Draft EIS during the 60-day comment period. DRPT carefully reviewed each letter and provided detailed responses and explanations to each comment, concern, and request. Refer to Appendix B of this Final EIS for copies of the original comment letters along with DRPT's and FRA's detailed responses to each. These detailed responses include reference to information provided in both the Draft EIS and this Final EIS, and are the outcome of ongoing agency coordination that has occurred since the publication of the Draft EIS and receipt of the agency comment letters.

The following sections summarize the substantive comments from each agency or organization to which DRPT provided a response. Responses to substantive comments are incorporated by way of minor corrections, clarifying explanations, or supplemental documentation, as needed, into the content of the appropriate sections of this Final EIS.

Many agency and organization comments included the following topics, which did not warrant changes to the methodologies or information provided in the Draft EIS. Notwithstanding, DRPT provided responses to these topics within the detailed responses provided in Appendix B of this Final EIS.

- Overall position/opinion for or against the Project.
- Preference for and/or opposition to a specific alignment or Build Alternative that was evaluated in the Draft EIS.
- Suggestion of additional alternatives to consider, most of which were considered but dismissed during the 2002 Tier II EIS or do not align with the implementing actions that were the outcome of the 2002 Tier II EIS and ROD.
- Request for detailed information or data that is beyond the scope of the NEPA document and would be developed during the final design and permitting process, which would occur in the future after Project funding becomes available and incremental improvements are scheduled. To address these requests, DRPT has added Chapter 7 to this Final EIS to describe future steps of the Project.
- Requests for ongoing coordination beyond the NEPA phase of the Project; refer to Section 7.8 of this Final EIS for details of Project regulatory actions, approvals, and commitments.

2.4.1.1 Federal Agencies

Refer to Appendix B1 of this Final EIS for detailed responses to Federal agency letters (which are presented in the same order as below).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region III. EPA provided technical comments on the Project’s Purpose and Need, alternatives, and several environmental resources including: aquatic resources, stormwater management, noise, environmental justice, children’s health, indirect and cumulative effects (ICE), and air quality. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within environmental resources.
- Clarifications to: freight movement as a Project need; definition of temporary/permanent impacts; safety of hazardous materials transport; weather resiliency design; and noise and additional considerations as part of the ICE evaluation.
- Addition of: compliance with Executive Order 13045 *Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks*; and updated Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPaC) information for threatened and endangered species.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). USACE commented on the Project’s Purpose and Need, alternatives, and aquatic resources, particularly regarding analysis methodology and mitigation. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates clarifications to: freight movement as a Project need; definition of temporary/permanent impacts; potential mitigation for invasive species; functionality of tidally-affected wetlands; and reduced environmental impacts from Preferred Alternative 5A infrastructure. This Final EIS also incorporates Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Department of the Interior (DOI). DOI commented directly on the Draft Section 4(f) evaluation. In response to these comments, the Final Section 4(f) Evaluation (Chapter 6 of this Final EIS) includes clarification to address potential impacts to smaller park units as well as the overall park for the two units of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park (Stonewall Jackson Shrine and the area near Prospect Hill). This Final EIS also incorporates Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features and/or mitigation measures.

Additionally, DOI submitted comments on the Draft EIS on behalf of: the National Park Service (NPS)/National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC); the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail; the Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park and Richmond National Battlefield Park; and the American Battlefield Protection Program. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within environmental resources.
- Updates to: potential impact to the George Washington Memorial Parkway, Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary, Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, and archaeological surveys.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The FAA determined that it had no federal action or approval with regard to the Project.

2.4.1.2 State Agencies

Refer to Appendix B2 of this Final EIS for detailed responses to state agency letters (which are presented in the same order as below).

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). DEQ is responsible for coordinating the Commonwealth of Virginia’s review of federal environmental documents submitted under NEPA and as such, included the following additional reviewing agencies, localities, and planning district commissions in their comments on the Draft EIS:

- Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
- Department of Health (VDH)
- Department of Historic Resources (DHR)
- Richmond Regional PDC
- Crater PDC
- Virginia Outdoors Foundation
- Town of Ashland
- City of Fredericksburg
- Fairfax County

DEQ summarized all comments received and provided recommendations and requirements for minimizing potential impacts from the Project and for compliance with applicable legal requirements for the following resources and activities: water quality and wetlands; subaqueous lands and tidal wetlands; erosion and sediment control; stormwater management; air pollution control; solid and hazardous wastes and hazardous materials; natural heritage resources; recreational resources, scenic rivers and byways; state parks; historic resources; public water supplies; septic tanks and drainfields; open space; Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas; local participation; pollution prevention; water conservation; and energy conservation. DEQ also provided regulatory and coordination needs for each of these topics. In addition, DEQ provided the complete comments from the reviewing agencies as an appendix to their comments.

In response to these comments in their entirety, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within environmental resources.
- Updates to: surface water intakes; archeological surveys; rail operations modeling (specifically in regard to testing infrastructure through the Ashland Area); and reduced environmental impacts from Preferred Alternative 5A infrastructure.
- Addition of: an expanded discussion of public health and safety; updated Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPaC) information for threatened and endangered species; and discussion of the Rusty patched bumble bee (a protected species).
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR). DHR confirmed that it did not have any additional comments on the Draft EIS, beyond comments provided per the Section 106 process (refer to Appendix E of this Final EIS for details on agency comment and coordination per Section 106).

2.4.1.3 Local Agencies

Refer to Appendix B3 of this Final EIS for detailed responses to local agency letters (which are presented in the same order as below).

Arlington County. Arlington County provided detailed comments on natural resources, specifically within Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary and Long Bridge Park, as well as on potential Project impacts to planned infrastructure at Long Bridge Park. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minimization of the Project footprint in Area 1, as described in Section 4.3.1 of this Final EIS.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Arlington County-Department of Parks and Recreation. The Department of Parks and Recreation provided comments primarily in response to FRA's request for the County's concurrence in FRA's preliminary Section 4(f) determination, prior to the publication of the Draft EIS document. This Final EIS incorporates the County's comments into the Final 4(f) Evaluation (included as Chapter 6 of this Final EIS).

City of Alexandria. The City of Alexandria provided a detailed list of comments and questions on the following topics: planned future projects; property acquisition; construction impacts and timeframe; population growth; noise and vibration; roadway network and traffic impacts; parkland resources; Section 4(f) evaluation; visual assessment; station parking facilities; proposed wall locations; air quality; potential contamination; stormwater; energy; land use; stakeholder coordination; and water quality. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within a variety of environmental resources, as requested by the City.
- Updates to: GIS information, specifically in regard to park boundaries and associated Project impacts; and Section 6(f) resources.
- Minimization of the Project footprint in Area 2, as described in Section 4.3.2 of this Final EIS.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Fairfax County. Fairfax County provided comments on water quality (specifically in regard to the Pohick Seeps conservation area) and park resources under their jurisdiction, including Old Colchester and Mason Neck West parks. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Prince William County. Prince William County provided comments in regard to: train service/station stops; crossing treatments (at-grade and grade-separated); transit connectivity; visual impacts; noise impacts, specifically in residential areas; and cultural resources, specifically visual impacts to Neabsco Creek from Rippon Lodge, and Cockpit Point Civil War Park. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within document text, as requested by the County.
- Addition of: an analysis of the potential impacts on Rippon Lodge and its viewshed.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

City of Fredericksburg. The City of Fredericksburg requested additions to the Project scope of work, based on a resolution that was passed by unanimous resolution by the City Council, in regard to: viaducts/overpasses; bicycle/pedestrian access; station infrastructure; and sound mitigation. The City also noted consistency of the Project with their Comprehensive Plan. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within document text.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Spotsylvania County. The Spotsylvania County Planning Department provided comments in regard to: emergency management and commerce considerations for the East Coast and international trade; bicycle and pedestrian considerations; consistency with County comprehensive planning; and safety concerns of at-grade crossings. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within document text.
- Addition of an expanded discussion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities/public safety.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Hanover County. Hanover County provided the resolution that their Board of Supervisors adopted, which expressed support for Draft EIS Build Alternative 5A. The County also summarized and compared potential impacts to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic resources of the Ashland-Hanover County area. These data are consistent with the evaluations prepared by DRPT that resulted in the recommendation and approval of Alternative 5A as the Preferred Alternative, as detailed within Chapter 4 of this Final EIS.

Henrico County. Henrico County provided comments in regard to: Staples Mill Road Station improvements; prioritization of improvements; overpasses/bridges; cultural resources; parcel acquisition; noise impact, specifically in residential areas; stormwater management; and bicycle/pedestrian connectivity, specifically in regard to U.S. Bike Route 1. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Updates to archeological surveys.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

City of Richmond. The City of Richmond noted their support for Draft EIS Build Alternative 6F and provided detailed comments on the following topics: platform length, checked baggage service, and crew change infrastructure at Main Street Station; cultural and historic resources in the Main Street Station/Shockoe Bottom area; service development planning; property impacts; new wye track location; project phasing; flood walls; roadway crossings (at-grade and grade-

separated); traffic impacts; bicycle and pedestrian crossings; and consistency with the City’s comprehensive plan. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within document text.
- Addition of: an expanded discussion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities/public safety; community/historical context of the Richmond Main Street Station/Shockoe Bottom area; a revised location of the turning wye and service yard in Richmond; and justification for Preferred Alternative selection, including Main Street Station infrastructure as part of Alternative 6F.
- Updates to archeological survey and architectural study in the Main Street Station/Shockoe Bottom area.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

2.4.1.4 Section 106 Consulting Parties

DRPT received comments on the Draft EIS from the following Section 106 Consulting Parties:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▪ National Trust for Historic Preservation | ▪ Historic Richmond |
| ▪ Civil War Trust | ▪ City of Alexandria - Planning and Zoning |
| ▪ Hanover County Historical Commission | |

Comments from these Consulting Parties were in regard to historic and archaeological resources along the corridor and the continuation of the Section 106 consultation process for the Project. Appendix E of this Final EIS details the comments and coordination for Section 106. Additionally, refer to Appendix B4 of this Final EIS for detailed responses to Consulting Party letters.

2.4.1.5 Operators

Refer to Appendix B5 of this Final EIS for detailed responses to Operator letters (which are presented in the same order as below).

CSXT. CSXT, the operator of the railroad in the Project corridor, submitted comments accompanied by a report performed by Cambridge Systematics that analyzed results of the preliminary operations modeling presented in the Draft EIS. CSXT’s primary comment was that the proposed infrastructure improvements are insufficient to support contemplated increases in passenger traffic. The following themes were prevalent throughout CSXT comments:

- Draft EIS is consistent with FRA requirements, however, the capacity analysis does not show the following:
 - Proposed infrastructure improvements are not sufficient to enable reliable operations of projected train schedules.
 - The burden of extended running times and freight delays fall on CSXT’s freight traffic
 - Modeling does not “follow best practices.”
- Passenger trains will hinder CSXT’s future use of any available capacity.
- Draft EIS Build Alternative 5A (the “3-2-3” option) in Ashland will be a major bottleneck for freight operations.

- DRPT’s Recommended Preferred Alternative (as presented in Chapter 7 of the Draft EIS) does not have significant freight benefits.
- Projected freight delays were expected to be much higher than base case delays.
- None of the original 2045 modeling cases “dispatched” to completion.
- DRPT should consider alternative capacity configurations, including:
 - Four tracks in parts of the corridor.
 - Use of the Buckingham Branch for some through-traffic and integrating the Buckingham Branch into full modeling, not just as a stand-alone analysis.
- In response to these comments, DRPT conducted refined operations modeling, in coordination with FRA, to test the Project infrastructure and additional scenarios, and modify certain assumptions. These efforts are summarized in Section 3.2 of this Final EIS and fully presented in Appendix F. Additionally, this Final EIS includes Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Norfolk Southern (NS). NS commented that the Draft EIS was limited in geographic and operational scope and had concerns regarding the No Build scenario. In response to the comments on operational scope, DRPT conducted refined operations modeling, in coordination with FRA, to validate the Project infrastructure, test additional scenarios, and modify certain assumptions; these analyses included an expanded geographic analysis area beyond the Project corridor. These efforts are summarized in Section 3.2 of this Final EIS and fully presented in Appendix F.



CSXT Freight Service in the DC2RVA Corridor

Amtrak. Amtrak commented on rail operations, specifically in regard to potential constraints and in relation to their own network modeling, and indicated preference for new right-of-way corridors to increase performance, particularly in the Ashland area. In response to these comments, this Final EIS includes a summary of the rationale for using the existing alignment through the Ashland area, and Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures. Note that while Amtrak is a Participating Agency for the Project (see Section 2.2), Amtrak is included as an “Operator” for the purposes of this comment-response discussion.

Virginia Railway Express. VRE supported the conclusions of the Draft EIS but expressed issues with design details of proposed additional tracks through VRE stations. VRE provided detailed comments on the following topics: Project timeline; design criteria; noise and vibration mitigation; alternatives / suggestions for the preferred alternative in the area of VRE operations; and impact of changes to major infrastructure on cost, schedules, and operations. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within a variety of environmental resources, including the description of the No Build alternative.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. WMATA provided comments on the following topics: construction impacts in relation to their “zone of influence” policy (a zone boundary that often falls outside of WMATA’s right-of-way); impacts to their planned Metrorail station to be located at Potomac Yard (anticipated to be opened in late 2021 or early 2022); parcel ownership; and retaining walls and noise mitigation, specifically within the City of Alexandria. In response to these comments, this Final EIS includes Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures. Additionally, the planned Metrorail Station at Potomac Yard is included in the detailed mapbook of the Preferred Alternative (Appendix L of this Final EIS), and discussion of it was added the Cumulative Effects section (Section 5.20.2 of this Final EIS).

2.4.1.6 Other Organizations

Refer to Appendix B6 of this Final EIS for detailed responses to Other Organization letters (which are presented in the same order as below).

Randolph-Macon College. Randolph-Macon College provided a summary of its history, its economic/educational impacts, and its plan for growth, and provided comments on: opposition to a third rail at-grade through Ashland; safety concerns regarding Draft EIS Build Alternative 5A (the “3-2-3” option); and support for a western bypass option. As indicated by the CTB’s resolution for the Project (included as Appendix H of this Final EIS), the Preferred Alternative for the Project is being advanced in such a manner that avoids and/or minimizes permanent property impacts to the College; refer to Section 4.3.5 of this Final EIS for description of the Preferred Alternative through the Ashland area, including description of changes that were made subsequent to the Draft EIS. Further, the Commonwealth of Virginia has recognized the need to improve pedestrian and vehicle crossing safety in Ashland, and has committed to working with the FRA, Town of Ashland, Randolph-Macon College, CSXT, and other stakeholders on improving crossing safety in the Town of Ashland independent of the DC2RVA Project, as indicated in the CTB Resolution for the Project on December 6, 2017.

Sierra Club. The Sierra Club (Falls of the James section) expressed support for the Project in general and specifically for a station location at Main Street in Richmond. The Sierra Club further advocated for toll money support and use of solar powered facilities for rail projects; indicated that construction should meet high standards for erosion and sedimentation control; promoted a proposed north-south bikeway along the rail corridor. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC). SELC expressed support for improving passenger and freight rail in Virginia and provided detailed comments on the following topics: identification of near- and immediate-term projects; support of use of existing right-of-way/opposition to bypass alignments; use of the CSXT S-Line in Richmond; cultural resources in the Main Street Station area; and coordination with CSXT. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the following:

- Minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within document text.
- Addition of: community/historic context of the Main Street Station/Shockoe Bottom area, including updates to archeological surveys.
- Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Preservation Virginia. Preservation Virginia provided detailed comments regarding the evaluation of potential impacts to cultural resources in the Main Street Station/Shockoe Bottom area. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates the addition of community/historic context of the Main Street Station/Shockoe Bottom area, including updates to archeological surveys and architectural studies, and Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

Hampton Roads Chamber, Virginia Chamber, and Virginia Maritime Association. These three organizations provided similar comments: indicating support for the goal of additional passenger service, but without negatively influencing Virginia's freight rail network (existing and future freight service demands) and access to the Port of Virginia. Section 1.2 of this Final EIS confirms accommodation of freight rail as a Project Purpose and Need.

Virginians for High Speed Rail (VHSR). VHSR indicated support of the goal of the Project and provided detailed comments for the Ashland and Richmond areas including: support of a trench option/opposition to a "3-2-3" option through Ashland; and support of use of the A-Line and routing of trains to Main Street Station, in Richmond.

VHSR additionally recommended identification of smaller near- and intermediate-term projects within the overall DC2RVA Project, to allow for prioritization of funding. In response to these comments, this Final EIS incorporates minor text modifications, for clarification or correction, within document text, and Project commitments, including agency coordination, permitting/regulatory compliance, final design features, and/or mitigation measures.

2.4.2 General Public

The general public submitted more than 14,000 comments (from 4,247 individual commenters) regarding the Project during the formal comment period and public hearing process that followed publication of the Draft EIS, as described in Section 2.1.2.1. Most comments came from individuals living, working, or having property interests in the Project area, particularly within Ashland and Richmond. DRPT carefully reviewed each comment, concern, and request and compiled them into broad subject matter categories, which generally parallel the chapter structure of the Draft and Final EIS documents:

- Study Process
 - Purpose and Need
 - Proposed Train Service/ Operations/Schedule
 - Public Involvement
 - Other Considerations
- Evaluation of Alternatives
 - Corridor Options Not Evaluated in the Draft EIS
 - Ashland Area Alternatives
 - Richmond Area Alternatives
 - Station Evaluation
- Environmental Impacts
 - General
 - Traffic/Transportation
 - Right-of-way/Displacements/ Property Value
 - Land Use
 - Community Facilities/Title VI/ Environmental Justice
 - Farmland
 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities
 - Cultural Resources
 - Natural and Water Resources
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Air Quality
 - Visual / Aesthetic
 - Hazardous Materials
 - Indirect and Cumulative Effects
 - Safety
- Funding, Implementation, and Construction

Appendix C of this Final EIS identifies public comments within these categories from individual and form letters and provides DRPT’s and FRA’s detailed responses to address substantive comments within these topics. The comments presented in Appendix C convey the substance of the comments made, but do not necessarily quote comments verbatim and condense similar comments together into a single topic. The responses include reference to information provided

in both the Draft EIS and this Final EIS and are the outcome of ongoing analyses and coordination that have occurred since the publication of the Draft EIS. Responses to substantive comments are incorporated by way of minor corrections, clarifying explanations, or supplemental documentation, as needed, into the content of the appropriate sections of this Final EIS.

Many citizens commented on topics that did not warrant changes to methodology or information provided in the Draft EIS. Notwithstanding, DRPT provided responses to these topics within the detailed responses provided in Appendix C:

- Suggestion of additional alternatives to consider, most of which were considered but dismissed during the 2002 Tier II EIS or do not align with the implementing actions that were the outcome of the 2002 Tier II EIS and ROD.
- Request for detailed information or data that is beyond the scope of an environmental document and would be developed during the final design and permitting process.
 - Environmental documentation for the Project is based on conceptual engineering, which is approximately a 10 percent design level. Chapter 5 of this Final EIS clarifies the use of temporary and permanent impacts. Temporary impacts at the conceptual design level are a fixed offset from the permanent impact limits; this is an allowance for possible construction means and methods that may exceed the permanent impact limits. Final design would clarify the potential construction means and methods that might be used to eliminate or mitigate temporary impacts.
 - Final design would occur in the future should Project funding becomes available and incremental improvements are scheduled. To address these requests, DRPT added Chapter 7 to this Final EIS to describe future steps of the Project.

DRPT did not provide individual responses to comments containing a general disposition to the Project, such as preference for or opposition to a specific alignment or Build Alternative that was evaluated in the Draft EIS. Notwithstanding, all comments received were considered as part of the selection process for the Preferred Alternative for this Final EIS. Additionally, DRPT addressed specific property questions directly with property owners.