



*Federal Railroad Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation*



*Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation*



**Richmond/Hampton Roads  
Passenger Rail Project**

# Tier 1 Final EIS

August 2012





**Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project**  
**Final Program Environmental Impact Statement**  
**and**  
**Section 4(f) Evaluation**

Pursuant to:

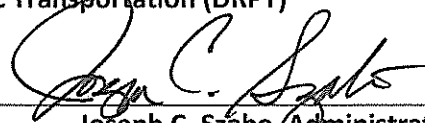
National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, (42 U.S.C. Section 4321 et seq.)  
National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Section 106 (16 U.S.C. Section 470f)  
Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f) (49 U.S.C. Section 303)  
FRA Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts (64 Fed. Reg. 28545 (May 26, 1999))

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**Abstract:** This Tier I Final EIS documents the Preferred Alternative, described as Build Alternative 1 in the Tier I Draft EIS, which proposes passenger rail service to the Southside/Norfolk Southern (NS) route at speeds up to 90 mph and continues current and planned Amtrak service on the Peninsula/CSXT route at conventional speeds of up to 79 mph. This document summarizes the environmental impacts of the Preferred Alternative in comparison to the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives. Comments received on the November 2009 Tier I Draft EIS have been reviewed and incorporated into this Tier I Final EIS. Responses to comments are also provided in Appendix F of this document.



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Appendix E – Hazardous Materials (refer to Tier I Draft EIS)
Appendix F – Public Involvement (updated)
• Notice of Availability
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Appendix G – Travel Forecasting Methodology (refer to Tier I Draft EIS)
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Appendix I – List of Acronyms (refer to Tier I Draft EIS)
Appendix J – List of Preparers (refer to Tier I Draft EIS)
Appendix K – References (refer to Tier I Draft EIS)



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## ES.0 Introduction

In December 2009, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) issued the Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project for public comment and advertised dates for public hearings in accordance with FRA guidelines. As a result of the analysis conducted as part of the Tier I Draft EIS and public comments received on the document, DRPT recommended and the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) endorsed Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds (MAS) of up to 90 mph be selected as the Preferred Alternative (Resolution of the CTB, February 17, 2012). FRA concurs in the Commonwealth's identification of the Preferred Alternative for this Tier I Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS). The Preferred Alternative is shown in Figure ES-1.

## ES.1 Tier I EIS Process

The purpose of the Tier I EIS for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is to assess the potential environmental effects of the proposed action and to meet federal requirements for the project to be potentially eligible for federal funds. For this Tier I FEIS, FRA is the lead federal agency from which DRPT may seek High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail funds for the project. During project scoping, no cooperating agencies were identified. However, federal, state and local agencies were involved during the development of the Tier I document.

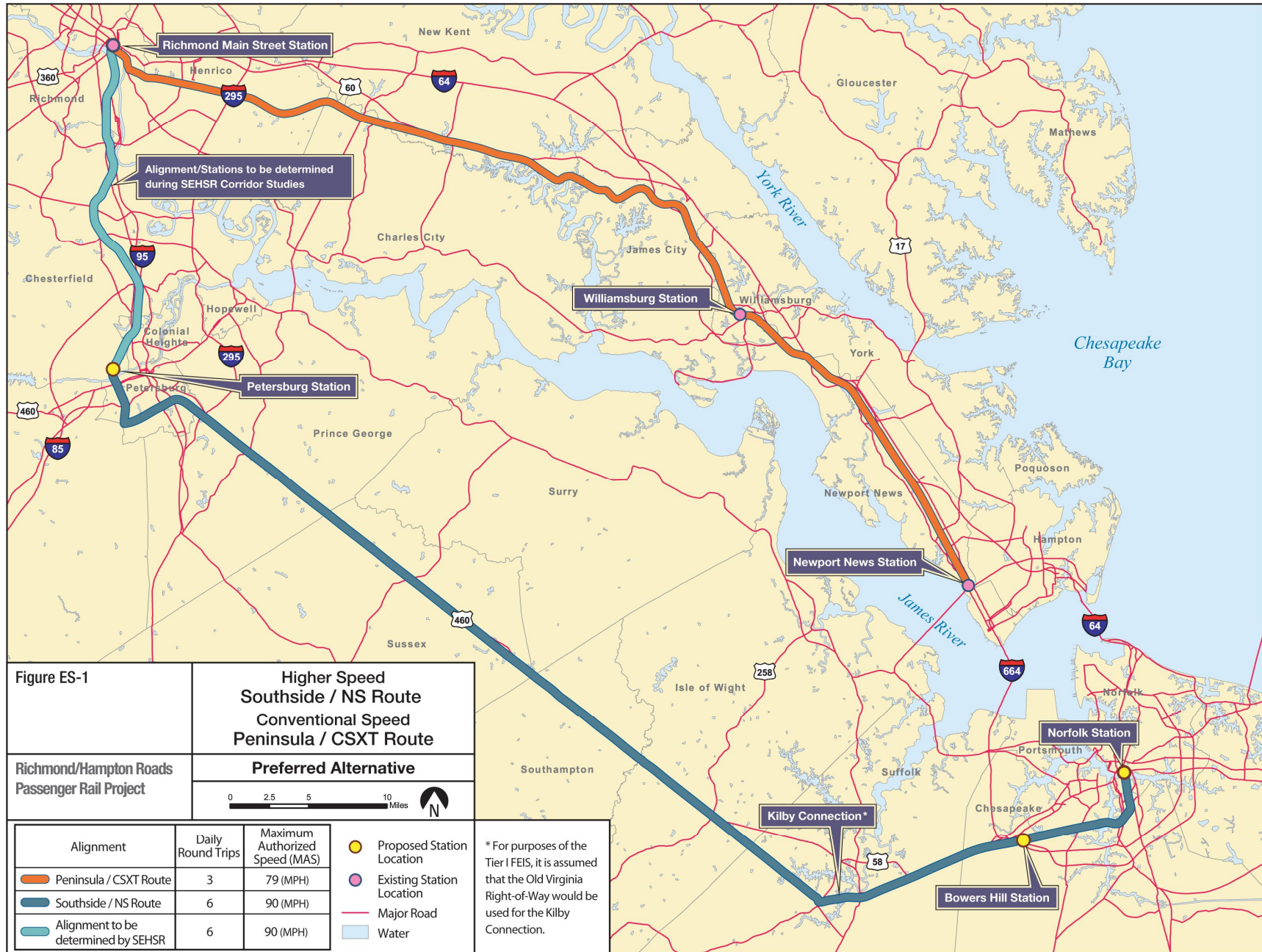
A Tier I EIS is a broad-level document that provides enough information to support decisions that are ready to be made at the time. As provided for in the Council on Environmental Quality National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) implementing regulations, "tiering" refers to the coverage of general matters in broader environmental impact statements with subsequent narrower statements or environmental analyses incorporating by reference the general discussions and concentrating solely on the issues specific to the statement subsequently prepared (40 CFR §1508.29). Following a Tier I EIS, Tier II documentation is prepared to offer more detailed analysis of the proposed action. In the case of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project, the decisions to be made at this stage of project development are on the proposed rail route and general station locations for investing in higher-speed rail, frequency of train service, and maximum authorized speeds. Decisions, such as locations for storage and maintenance facilities/yards and definitive station locations, are deferred to future phases of project development during Tier II documentation. As such, this Tier I EIS provides a general overview of the existing conditions along the proposed rail routes and identifies potential effects to resources through the use of readily available information and data. Potential impacts were evaluated using a conservative "worst case" to quantify impacts, where practical, due to the fact that specific rail infrastructure improvements needed and locations of such improvements have yet to be specifically identified.

### ES.1.1 Development of the Tier I Final EIS

This Tier I Final EIS documents the comments received on the Tier I Draft EIS and generally describes the potential environmental consequences of the Preferred Alternative, based on the analysis conducted for the Tier I Draft EIS. Information contained here within will be updated during the Tier II evaluation of the Preferred Alternative as appropriate and necessary.

For comparison, both the Status Quo and No Action alternatives are also documented in this Tier I Final EIS.

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### ES.1.2 Key Project Milestones

Several key NEPA milestones mark the progression of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. The project has accomplished the following key milestones:

- Alternatives Development
- Project Scoping
- Development of the Tier I Draft EIS
- FRA approval of the Tier I Draft EIS Release of the Tier I Draft EIS for public comment
- Public Hearings
- Review of public comments received
- Identification of the Preferred Alternative by DRPT.
- Endorsement of a Preferred Alternative by the CTB

After the endorsement of the Preferred Alternative by the CTB in February 2010, the project team advanced to the next milestones in the project's development:

- Prepared responses to public comments received
- Incorporated public responses into the Tier I Final EIS
- Preparation of the Tier I Final EIS
- FRA concurrence of the Preferred Alternative
- FRA approval of the Tier I Final EIS
- Release of the Tier I Final EIS for public review

After the release of the Tier I Final EIS for public review, a 30-day review period will be established from the date of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Federal Register notice announcing the availability of the Tier I Final EIS. After the allotted review time, a decision regarding the Record of Decision (ROD) will be made by FRA. The ROD is the last step needed to advance the project to next phases of project development, likely Tier II ("project level") environmental documentation assessing specific impacts of the Selected Alternative and initiating preliminary engineering.

### ES.2. Meeting the Purpose and the Need for the Project

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide a competitive transportation choice between Richmond and the Hampton Roads region that would effectively and efficiently expand the region's transportation system capacity and provide residents, tourists and visitors with a broader array of reliable transportation choices. The project, or proposed action, represents a response to numerous transportation related needs in the corridor arising from the growth of the regional economy. Currently, few alternatives to the private automobile are available to corridor residents, employees and tourists. This lack of travel choice affects the quality of life in the corridor.

The Preferred Alternative proposes to provide increased frequency and higher speed passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Preferred Alternative meets the purpose of the project by:

- Responding to the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), which authorized a program of high-speed rail corridors nationwide, in particular as a link to the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor at the urging of the Commonwealth of Virginia;
- Providing a competitive and more reliable transportation choice for people traveling to and from the Hampton Roads region; and
- Providing a choice that would effectively and efficiently expand the region's transportation system capacity and provide residents, tourists and visitors with a broader array of transportation options.

Several interrelated conditions and trends exhibited in the larger travel region and study area contribute to the need for improvements in the transportation system. The Preferred Alternative addresses the following needs established by the project:

- Establishes regional linkages and improves travel time and trip reliability;
- Limits growth in highway congestion;
- Develops the multimodal transportation system;
- Improves safety;
- Improves air quality;
- Encourages economic development; and
- Helps facilitate hurricane evacuation.

### **ES.2.1 Description of the Preferred Alternative**

The Preferred Alternative proposes to provide passenger rail service from Richmond to points southeast, ending at Norfolk and Newport News. Service to Norfolk will be provided via the Southside/Norfolk Southern (NS) route with a maximum authorized speed (MAS) of 90 mph and service to Newport News will continue along the Peninsula/CSXT route with MAS of 79 mph, as shown in Figure ES-1.

DRPT has determined that the connection from the CSXT "A" Line to the Southside/Norfolk Southern route will occur at the northeast quadrant of the CSXT/NS off-grade railroad crossing just north of Collier Yard in south Petersburg. This option allows direct linkage to the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) CSXT main line from the Norfolk Southern line from Norfolk, reduces the number of passenger rail lines going through Petersburg, and maximizes the dual benefit opportunity of utilizing the SEHSR Tier II EIS alignment analysis through Petersburg.<sup>1</sup> The North Collier connection allows the Norfolk trains to use the SEHSR Petersburg routing alternative and station location, limits potential freight and passenger train conflicts within the yard itself, and limits potential conflicts and congestion that arises from Norfolk Southern freight trains stopping and working at Poe Yard, the only other potential access to the Norfolk line. The SEHSR Tier II EIS project process will identify the preferred routing through Petersburg where all alternatives are on common alignment and has proposed four (4) preliminary potential station locations to be evaluated: 1) Dunlop, 2) Ettrick, 3) West Washington Street, and 4) Collier/Squirrel Level Road/Halifax Road. The selection of a station location will be the subject of subsequent environmental review and documentation by the project proponent.

From Petersburg, the Southside/NS route parallels the existing Route 460 roadway passing through Suffolk and Chesapeake before terminating in Norfolk. In general, the route is predominantly rural between Petersburg and Suffolk and transitions to a more suburban/urban environment in Chesapeake and Norfolk. Successful implementation of service on the Southside/NS route would also require reactivation of the former Virginian Railway tracks near Kilby. The Southside/NS route currently supports freight and Amtrak passenger operations between Richmond and Petersburg. Freight trains operate exclusively between Petersburg and Norfolk, although passenger trains previously operated along this route until 1971.

Starting in Richmond, the Peninsula/CSXT route on the north side of the James River would use the existing CSXT line between Richmond and Newport News. Currently, both freight and Amtrak passenger rail service operate along this route. This route is generally parallel to Interstate 64 and passes through Providence Forge and Williamsburg before terminating in Newport News. In general, the route is predominantly rural east of Richmond to Williamsburg, where the study area transitions to a more suburban/urban setting. This route includes passenger rail stations at Main Street Station, Williamsburg and Newport News.

### **ES.3 Summary of Public and Agency Comments Received**

The Tier I Draft EIS was widely distributed to various elected officials; federal, state, and local agencies; and provided to libraries and municipalities along the corridor. In total, 32 hard copies and 271 CD versions of the report were distributed. In addition, the document was also available for review on the project web site and at public libraries along both study routes. Chapter 7.0 Public Involvement provides greater detail on the public involvement process accompanying the Tier I Draft EIS.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on SEHSR, please see <http://www.sehsr.org/>.

Three public hearings were held in January 2010 in Richmond, Newport News, and Norfolk. The public hearings were well attended with over 700 people attending the three meetings.

Agencies and individuals were provided the opportunity to comment on the Tier I Draft EIS through several avenues, including verbal comments at each public hearing, written comments, online comment forms and *Survey Monkey*, a web-based tool to conduct and assimilate survey responses.

Approximately, 630 agencies, individuals, interest groups, and stakeholders provided comments on the Tier I Draft EIS, resulting in over 1,200 individual comments (846 written comments and 410 comments received via *Survey Monkey*). Each commenter was designated with a unique identification number to track and compile comments into comment/response matrices. In general, the majority of the comments received from the public were in support of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's (HRTPO) resolution that adopted an Enhanced Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. The Enhanced Alternative 1, as adopted by the resolution, endorsed the designation of a "High-Speed Rail" corridor along the Norfolk Southern/US Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph; and in conjunction with the high-speed rail corridor, the enhancement of the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/Amtrak/I-64 corridor. However, the Preferred Alternative presented in this Tier I Final EIS does not consider MAS of more than 90 mph and therefore is not the same alternative as presented by the HRTPO resolution.

## ES.4 Summary of Potential Environmental Consequences of the Preferred Alternative

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and as part of the Tier I EIS process, FRA and DRPT assessed the potential impacts to the social and natural environment. DRPT identified impacts on a more general and qualitative basis consistent with a Tier I level review. More detailed analysis will be conducted during the Tier II analysis and documentation of the Preferred Alternative. Table ES-1 provides a summary of the potential environmental of the Preferred Alternative. For more detailed information of potential environmental consequences, see Chapter 3.0 Environmental Consequences of this Tier I Final EIS.

**Table ES-1: Summary of the Preferred Alternative**

Measure (applicable section of EIS)	Status Quo	No Action <sup>1</sup>	Preferred Alternative
<b>Operations (Chapter 2.0)</b>			
Route(s)	Peninsula/CSXT	Peninsula/CSXT	Southside/NS & Peninsula/CSXT
No. of Trains	2 roundtrips/day	3 roundtrips/day <sup>2</sup>	Southside: 6 roundtrips/day Peninsula: 3 roundtrips/day
Stations	Existing Richmond (Main Street Station), Williamsburg, and Newport News	Existing Richmond (Main Street Station), Williamsburg, and Newport News	Southside: Petersburg, Bowers Hill, downtown Norfolk Peninsula: Existing Richmond (Main Street Station), Williamsburg, and Newport News
Service Type	Conventional	Conventional	Southside: Higher-speed up to 90 mph Peninsula: Conventional
Maximum Authorized Speed (MAS)	Up to 79 mph	Up to 79 mph	Southside: up to 90 mph Peninsula: up to 79 mph
<b>Costs (Chapter 4.0)</b>			
Capital Costs (millions \$2008)	NA	NA	\$475.4
Cost per Rider (\$2008)	High rider estimate: \$64.43 Low rider estimate: \$68.84	High rider estimate: \$45.83 Low rider estimate: \$50.04	High rider estimate: \$106.03 Low rider estimate: \$125.27

Measure (applicable section of EIS)	Status Quo	No Action <sup>1</sup>	Preferred Alternative
<b>Environmental Effects (Chapter 3.0)</b>			
<b>Transportation (Sections 3.1-3.2)</b>			
Estimated Probable Ridership (2025)	High rider estimate: 262,300  Low rider estimate: 245,500	High rider estimate: 464,800  Low rider estimate: 425,700	High rider estimate: 1,110,000  Low rider estimate: 939,600
On-time performance	70%	72% (projected)	84% (projected)
Trip time - vehicle/rail (savings)	0:37 (minutes)	0:52 (minutes)	0:53 (minutes)
<b>Grade Crossing Safety (Section 3.3)</b>			
Need for Grade Crossing Consolidation/Closures	No	No	Yes
<b>Air Quality (Section 3.4)</b>			
Effects on Regional Air Quality	Likely contributes to degradation of regional air quality	Provides some benefit to regional air quality	Provides greatest benefit to regional air quality
<b>Noise and Vibration (Section 3.5)</b>			
Sensitive Land Uses Identified	Yes	Yes	Yes
Noise and Vibration Impacts	Continues current conditions	Increase in frequency of noise exposure	Increase in frequency of noise exposure/New noise source
<b>Energy (Section 3.6)</b>			
Annual Energy Use (billions of BTUs)	6	9	31
% annual Energy Use over Status Quo	NA	50%	417%
<b>Land Use (Section 3.7)</b>			
Consistency with Regional/Local Adopted Plans	Does not meet specified goals related to transportation, regional connectivity, economic growth	Does not meet specified goals related to transportation, regional connectivity, economic growth	Supports specified goals related to transportation, regional connectivity, economic growth along both routes
Requires Conversion of Land Use	No	No	Potentially on Southside/NS route (Kilby Connection, new station locations)
<b>Communities (Section 3.8)</b>			
Population and Employment (existing and proposed)	No change	Potential increase	Likely increase
Environmental Justice (disproportionate adverse impacts expected?)	No	No	No
Communities/ Community Facilities	Continues current conditions	Continues current conditions	Southside/NS route: Potential grade crossing closures could impact community cohesion  Peninsula/CSXT route: Continues current conditions
<b>Federally Owned Land, Open Space, Parklands, State Forests, Wildlife Refuges and Conservation Easements (Section 3.9)</b>			
Federally Owned Land	No impact	No impact	No impact
Open Space, Parklands, State forests, Conservation Easements	Continues current conditions	Minimal potential for proximity effects (noise)	Potential for proximity effects (noise) along both routes
Wildlife Refuges	No impact	No impact	No impact (alignment is north of the Dismal Swamp)
<b>Farmlands (Section 3.10)</b>			

Measure (applicable section of EIS)	Status Quo	No Action <sup>1</sup>	Preferred Alternative
Farmlands, Agriculture	No impact	No impact	Potential impacts(Kilby connection)
<b>Visual and Aesthetic Characteristics (Section 3.11)</b>			
Change in Visual and Aesthetic Characteristics	Continues current conditions	Continues current conditions	Alterations in aesthetic/visual character expected near proposed Bower's Hill and Norfolk stations
<b>Utilities (Section 3.12)</b>			
Utility Relocations	No	Unlikely	Potentially
Potential Disruption in Services	No	Unlikely	Potentially
<b>Contamination and Hazardous Materials (Section 3.13)</b>			
Recognized Environmental Conditions (REC) Identified	Yes	Yes	Yes
Potential to Encounter RECs	No	Unlikely	Potentially
<b>Cultural Resources (Section 3.14)</b>			
Architectural Resources	No impacts	Impacts unlikely	Potential for proximity effects, primarily along Southside/NS routes
Archaeological Resources	No impacts	Impacts unlikely	Potential to impact where infrastructure improvements require additional ROW
<b>Geologic Resources (Section 3.15)</b>			
Mines	No impacts	No impacts	Inactive mines identified
<b>Hydrologic/Water Resources (Section 3.16)</b>			
Surface waters	No impact	Impacts unlikely	Potential to impact where infrastructure improvements require additional ROW
Floodplains	No impact	Impacts unlikely	Potential to impact where infrastructure improvements require additional ROW
Wetlands	No impact	Impacts unlikely	Potential to impact where infrastructure improvements require additional ROW
Water Quality	No impact	Impacts unlikely	Greater potential for increased run-off with new impervious surfaces at new stations
Coastal Zone	No impact	Impacts unlikely	Potential to impact coastal resources
<b>Biological Resources (Section 3.17)</b>			
Protected Species	No impact	Impacts unlikely	Potential for impacts near Williamsburg Amtrak Station and Bower's Hill Station
Protected Habitats	No impact	Impacts unlikely	Potential for impacts where infrastructure improvements require additional ROW
<b>Section 4(f)/6(f) (Section 3.18)</b>			
Section 4(f) Resources	No impact	Impacts unlikely	Potential for proximity effects along both routes
Section 6(f) Resources	No impact	Impacts unlikely	Impacts unlikely

<sup>1</sup>Some infrastructure improvements may be required for implementation of the No Action Alternative to accommodate the additional roundtrip planned. Specific infrastructure improvements have not been determined as part of this Tier I EIS.

<sup>2</sup>Under the No Action Alternative, the daily roundtrips of conventional passenger service will increase by 1 roundtrip based on planned service increases by Amtrak. It assumed that this additional roundtrip would be in place in advance of the implementation of high-speed rail along the NS/Southern route.

As previously stated, the Preferred Alternative incorporates passenger rail to both the Southside/NS route and the Peninsula/CSXT route. Hence, the Preferred Alternative requires infrastructure improvements along the Southside/NS route to accommodate the proposed passenger rail service. Currently, the Southside/NS route carries freight rail only and would require improvements to accommodate the proposed speed (up to 90 mph) of the passenger service in addition to stations and necessary rail infrastructure to accommodate both freight and passenger operations, such as passing sidings.

While the necessary infrastructure improvements to implement the Preferred Alternative have greater capital costs and potential to affect both the human and natural environment, the Preferred Alternative provides greater benefits in terms of:

- Mobility,
- Regional linkage to the SEHSR corridor and Northeast Corridor through increased service and speed,
- Limiting highway congestion growth, and
- Hurricane evacuation.

The Hampton Roads area, located in Virginia's coastal plain, is rich with natural resources. As such, a review of the study corridor identified numerous wetlands, floodplains and wildlife habitats along and crossed by both rail routes. During the public comment period, numerous comments were received on protecting sensitive resources, such as wetlands. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers specifically commented on the number of potential wetland impacts and that mitigation would be required for all unavoidable impacts. The Corps reiterated the importance on avoiding and minimizing impacts to these sensitive resources.

Commenters also identified sensitive land uses, historic properties, and open spaces along both routes. Impacts to these resources can occur either by a direct impact, such as a property take, or direct physical impact; proximity effects, such as introducing a new element adjacent to sensitive land uses that would alter or impair the intended use of the sensitive land use; or by a temporary adverse effect during construction. It is unlikely that direct impacts to these resources would occur as a result of the Preferred Alternative.

For purposes of this document, potential impacts to these resources are closely linked to construction activities that may alter existing rail infrastructure and right-of-way width, such as construction of sidings to allow for passing, potential alterations to existing structures along the rail lines, and potential facilities, such as passenger stations. Because this is a Tier I EIS, detailed engineering was not conducted as part of this study; therefore, site specific impacts along either rail route could not be identified during this phase of study. Site specific impacts would be documented as part of a Tier II analysis and documentation. It is expected that through proper planning and context sensitive design that impacts can be avoided and minimized where possible. DPRT will continue coordination with overseeing agencies, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, throughout the next phases of project development to ensure unavoidable impacts are mitigated appropriately.

## **ES.5 Project Commitments and Next Steps**

Upon issuance of a ROD, the project will be ready to advance to Tier II documentation for the Selected Alternative. During Tier II analysis, all data presented in this Tier I Final EIS will be updated to address site specific impacts to identified resources. Project commitments include:

- Field surveys to identify specific impacts to identified resources;
- Update data sources;
- Continued agency coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Virginia Marine Resources Commission, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries;
- Continued coordination with local jurisdictions along both the Southside/NS route and Peninsula/CSXT route;

- Continued coordination with Amtrak, NS, and CSXT;
- Continued coordination with SEHSR project;
- Continued public outreach on project advancement;
- Development of specific mitigation strategies for identified impacts; and
- Development of funding strategies.



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# CHAPTER 1 PURPOSE AND NEED

Through the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) proposes passenger rail service improvements in the major east-west travel corridor linking Richmond and the Hampton Roads region of Virginia. The purpose of the project is to deliver predictable, consistent, and shorter travel times; augment the existing transportation infrastructure; and help relieve highway congestion and freight rail capacity constraints.

The following sections identify the project and the purpose of, and the need for, the project. This chapter also provides project background and a description of the project area, including an overview of the Hampton Roads region and the Richmond/Hampton Roads corridor. Finally, this chapter provides a matrix of the goals and objectives that will be used to evaluate which alternatives best meet the project's purpose and need as defined in this chapter.

## 1.0 Introduction

DRPT, in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), prepared the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Tier I Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) to document the Preferred Alternative, selected as a result of the Tier I Draft EIS and public hearings. This Tier I Final EIS was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended; Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR §§ 1500-1508); and FRA's Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts (64FR 28545).

On February 23, 2004, the FRA published in the Federal Register a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a Tier I EIS for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project.<sup>2</sup> In December 2009, FRA published in the Federal Register a Notice of Availability (NOA) to advise the public and other participating agencies that the Tier I Draft EIS was available for public review and comment. The NOA also identified locations where the document could be reviewed and noted dates, times and locations for the public hearings.

The focus of this Tier I EIS is to support decisions regarding technology, maximum operating speeds and alignment, including approximate station locations. Preparing a program-level or "tiered" NEPA document provided DRPT and FRA the ability to make those decisions while leaving the more detailed decisions, such as specific station locations and route refinements, to the next phase of environmental evaluation in the Tier II NEPA documentation.

The program-level Tier I EIS documents address the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project?
- Why do we need it?
- What are the potential regional impacts of such a system?
- What is the best general location for the system (i.e. what general route); and
- How does high-speed rail compare with other travel options within the corridor?

Environmental analyses for each Alternative were performed based on readily available data. Because this is a program-level document, specific "build" actions will not be taken as a result of this environmental documentation.

Since the public hearings in January 2009, DRPT has selected and the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)<sup>3</sup> has endorsed Alternative 1 as the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 consists of higher speed passenger service along the Southside, with a maximum operating speed of up to 90 mph, and conventional service along the Peninsula). FRA has concurred in the Commonwealth's identification of the Preferred

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/rrdev/hamptonnoi.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) is a governor appointed board that establishes the administrative policies for Virginia's transportation system and allocates funding to specific projects, locates routes and provides funding for highways, railways and public transit. DRPT presents various projects for approval by the CTB before advancing them.

Alternative for the Tier I Final EIS. As the lead Federal Agency, FRA will use this Tier I EIS as the basis for issuing a Record of Decision (ROD) formally designating a Selected Alternative. Following completion of this Tier I EIS, DRPT will determine a determination will be made by the DRPT whether to move forward to implement a higher speed rail program in the region. Should the Commonwealth determine to advance a higher speed rail program in this region; a plan will be developed, consistent with the ROD, to identify specific actions needed to fully implement the project. .

Moving forward, DRPT will prepare Tier II project-level environmental documents that examine impacts related to potential route alignments of the Selected Alternative. FRA and DRPT will work together to determine the type of Tier II environmental document(s) to be prepared. The Tier II environmental documents could include any of the following three types based upon the proposed federal action involved:

- Categorical Exclusions (CEs) for actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant environmental effect.
- Environmental Assessments (EAs) for actions in which the significance of the environmental impact is not readily apparent. An EA can lead to the development of an EIS or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).
- Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for projects where it is known that the action will have significant environmental effect.

The Tier II studies would be more detailed in nature, as appropriate to the action, and would continue the public involvement effort already begun in this Tier I EIS. These detailed environmental analyses will assess the environmental impacts of each action and identify ways to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts. The FRA, DRPT and cooperating federal agencies would use the Tier II studies to determine the exact location and magnitude of each action, such as number of tracks, types of structures, station locations and configuration, routing within existing right-of-way, bypasses, etc. As Tier II documents are completed, the permitting process (as appropriate) would be initiated and completed, and the construction process could proceed.

## 1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action includes passenger rail service improvements in the major east-west travel corridor linking Richmond and the Hampton Roads region of Virginia via two existing principal transportation facilities: the existing CSXT/Amtrak route from Richmond to Newport News north of the James River on the Virginia Peninsula (Peninsula/CSXT) and the Norfolk Southern rail route south of the James River between Petersburg and Norfolk (Southside/NS), including the abandoned Virginian line in Chesapeake. The proposed action provides for a combination of higher speed rail service along the Southside/NS route and conventional service along the Peninsula/CSXT route.

No passenger rail service currently operates on the Southside/NS Route being evaluated. Successful implementation of this service improvement would require re-establishing a link between the NS track and tracks utilized by CSXT and Amtrak passenger trains in Petersburg. The DRPT has determined that the connection from the Southside/NS route will occur at the northeast quadrant of the off grade railroad crossing between CSXT and Norfolk Southern just north of Collier Yard in south Petersburg. The railroads are parallel to two principal highway facilities serving this corridor. The Peninsula/CSXT Route is parallel to I-64 while the Southside/NS Route is parallel to Route 460. Both highways experience congestion and related safety problems.

Currently, Amtrak's Staples Mill Road Station, located almost 27 minutes by rail north of the Main Street Station in downtown Richmond, is the primary rail passenger station serving Richmond. Amtrak trains destined for points south of Richmond stop at the Staples Mill Road Station but bypass the Main Street Station by operating on the CSXT A Line (the former Atlantic Coast Line route) to reach Petersburg, Virginia. The current station location does not support the City of Richmond's desire to attract development and foster economic growth in the Downtown area. Consequently, Amtrak recently restored service to the Main Street Station at the request of the City of Richmond in order to foster economic growth in downtown Richmond. At present, Amtrak service to Newport News via the Peninsula/CSXT Route uses the most eastern station tracks

at this facility. Working with DRPT and Amtrak, the City of Richmond is interested in restoring full rail passenger service into, and through, the station southward to Petersburg.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the Downtown Richmond Main Street Station is the terminus for intercity passenger rail service improvements evaluated in this Tier I Final EIS.

### 1.1.1 Project Study Area

Figure 1-1 depicts the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project study area. The project study area is bounded by I-95 in the west, I-64 in the north, Route 460 on the south and Norfolk in the east, forming a trapezoidal pentagon shape. The James River effectively splits the study area into Peninsula and Southside route options and service alternatives.

The project has impact beyond the immediate study area and therefore addresses the greater travel shed in which the project would serve. Issues regarding operating schedule, freight rail operations and capacity constraints, and ridership are examined in this regard. This project is unique in that these issues—ridership, capacity, and scheduling—require the analyses to assess numerous factors falling outside the study area. To properly address these unique issues, the greater travel shed includes geographic regions identified in Figure 1-2. This is an essential concept for this study, in that most of the origin and destination trips that this project aims to capture are in the 100-to-500 mile travel market, whether by intercity bus, air, or private auto.

### 1.1.2 Hampton Roads and Richmond Region

Hampton Roads is the name given to the southeastern region of Virginia. Hampton Roads is the birthplace of Colonial America. It is home to Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement, and to Colonial Williamsburg. These early colonial settlements have become heritage tourist attractions. Colonial Williamsburg is the state's second most popular tourist attraction, bringing over 700,000 visitors annually to the area. Virginia Beach, at the furthest end of the corridor, attracts over 3 million annual visitors to its beaches, restaurants and shops.

The region's most notable geographic characteristic is proximity to a variety of waterways, especially its deep water port at Hampton Roads. Bordered on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, Hampton Roads is where the James, Nansemond and Elizabeth Rivers empty into the Chesapeake Bay. The region is blessed with the world's largest natural harbor, which has given the ports an important role in the region's economic development and history. The Norfolk Naval Base is the largest naval installation in the world, and by population the largest military base of any kind in the world. There are approximately 109,000 active naval personnel stationed in the Norfolk area, and over 40,000 civilians work at the area's naval installations.

The Hampton Roads and Richmond regions are the second and third largest metropolitan areas in the Commonwealth, with populations of 1.6 and 1.1 million people respectively. The Hampton Roads region includes the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg; and the counties of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Mathews, Southampton, Surry and York; and Currituck in North Carolina.

The region is connected to Richmond and Petersburg, which are located along the I-95 corridor at the western boundary of the study area, principally by I-64 and the CSXT railroad north of the James River on the Peninsula and south of the James River by Route 460 and the Norfolk Southern railroad. Because of geographic constraints and regional land-use patterns, I-64 functions as the primary link between Southeast Virginia and the rest of the state.

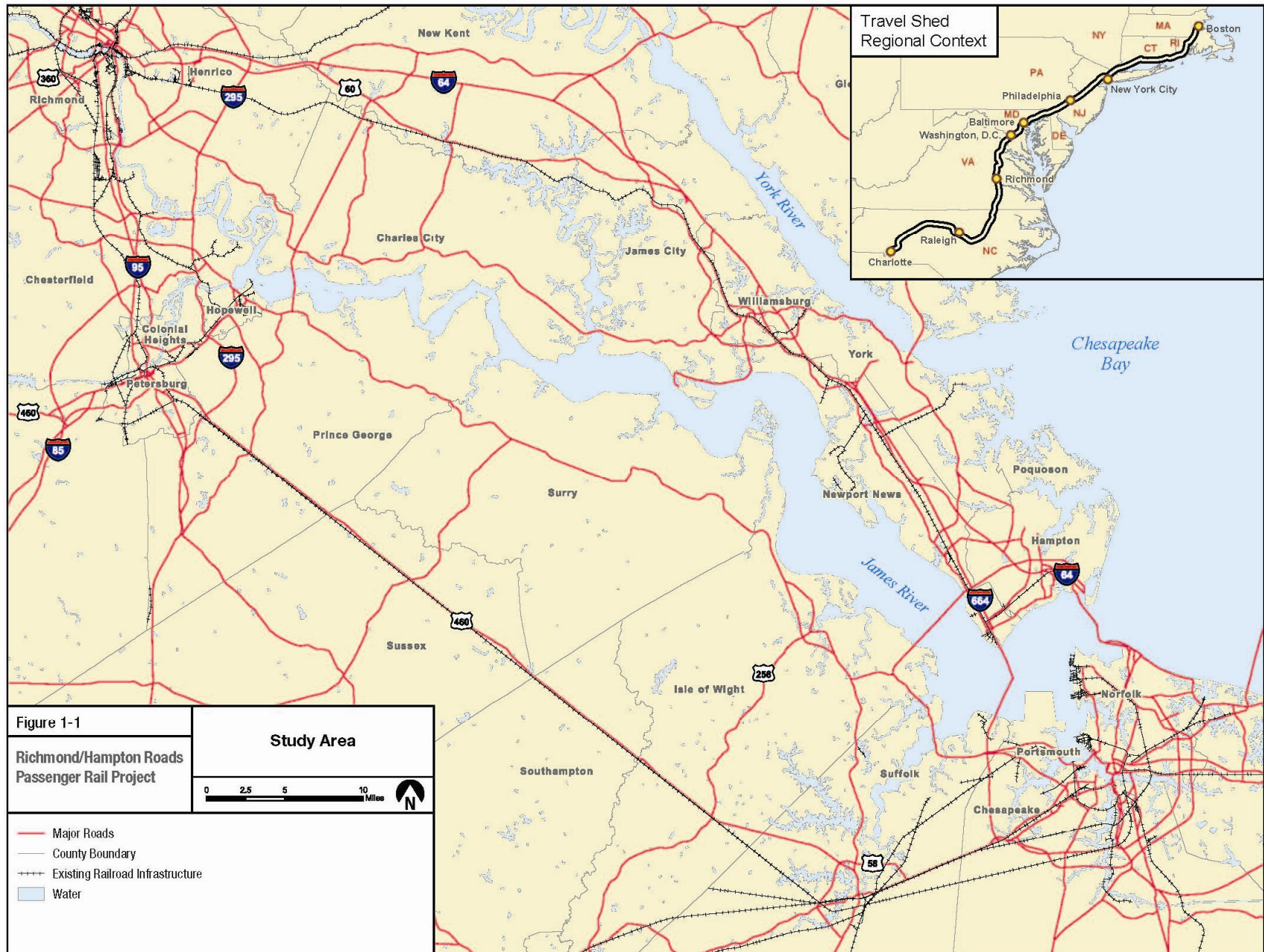
Richmond is the state capital. Regional travel patterns within the study area are greatly influenced by the large concentrations of population and employment centers located at each end of the corridor.

As is typical of sprawl development patterns throughout the United States, population growth and economic development forecasts indicate that the highest growth rates are at the edges of the urbanized areas. This will cause population and employment patterns to be more dispersed, adding to localized travel on area highways, especially on I-64 and routes that lead to I-64.

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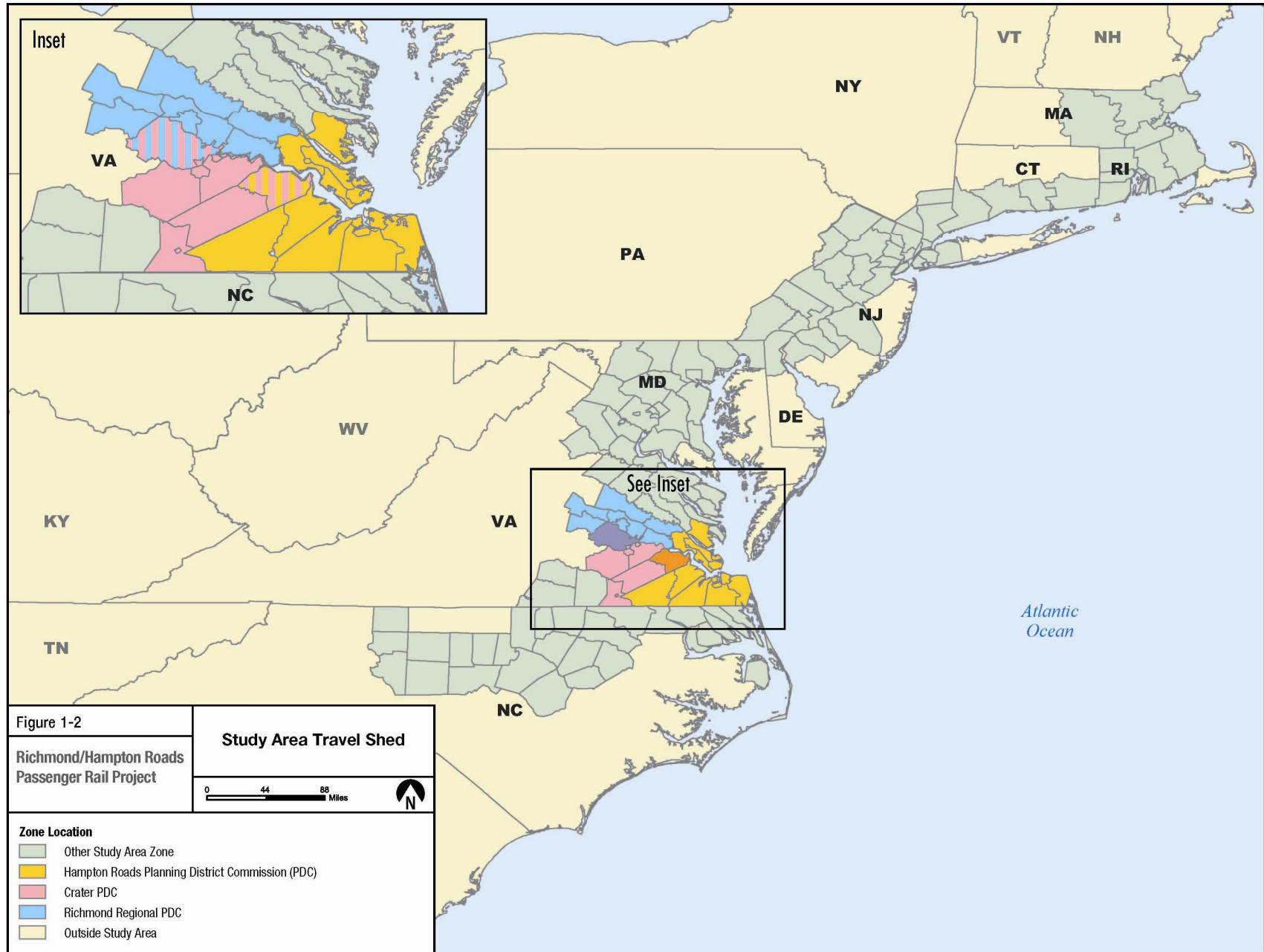
<sup>4</sup> Amtrak *Auto Train* would not use Main Street Station but would continue to follow its current route between Acca Yard and Petersburg.

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Route 460 on the south side of the James River provides a link for seaport cargo and airfreight delivery between the ports and airports in both Hampton Roads and the Richmond-Petersburg area. Therefore, it serves as an important shipping route and carries a large amount of truck traffic. The percentage of through truck traffic along Route 460 is higher and growing faster than alternate routes, such as Route 58 and I-64. Future traffic volumes will result in increased travel delays on Route 460 due to capacity limitations caused in part by traffic signals and the lack of access control.<sup>5</sup>

The CSXT rail line on the Peninsula is an active freight corridor primarily utilized for coal and general cargo trains. The rail corridor is also the route of Amtrak passenger trains connecting Richmond, Williamsburg and Newport News. Amtrak provides connecting thruway bus services to Norfolk and Virginia Beach. The Norfolk Southern rail line on the south side of the James River carries a significant amount of coal and intermodal rail traffic to and from the Norfolk ports. Passenger rail service on this line ended in 1971. Freight rail traffic on both lines is increasing, which may create capacity constraints limiting rail traffic growth and constraining economic development related to port and intermodal freight traffic activities if not addressed by the rail line owners.

### 1.1.3 Existing Passenger Transit Service in the Corridor

A varied network of surface transportation options exists between Richmond and Hampton Roads. However, public transportation is limited to urbanized areas.

**Passenger Rail Service** - Amtrak currently operates conventional rail service providing two round trips per day between Richmond and Newport News, with thruway bus service between the Newport News station, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach. These trains also serve Williamsburg as an intermediate stop between Richmond and Newport News. In 2007, there were 158,559 passengers served by the existing train service to/from Newport News (including those using the connecting bus service). Most of these passengers travel to/from Washington, New York, and other locations in the Northeast Corridor. Regional and urbanized area traffic is steadily increasing, which affects intercity trips by delaying travelers where capacity is constrained. With population in the region projected to grow substantially over the next 20 years, intercity and regional travel will also increase. This growth in travel will increase congestion.

**Intercity Bus** - Greyhound and Carolina Trailways Lines, collectively, operate nine round trips in the corridor. Service on the south side of the James River is extremely limited, with only one Carolina Trailways bus scheduled. Bus service on the north side of the river ranges in travel time from 1-hour-45 minutes to 2-hours-50 minutes between Richmond and Norfolk. Passengers from Petersburg to South Hampton Roads are routed via Richmond and Newport News, with an average travel time of over four hours.

**Local Public Transportation** - Existing transit services are provided by a number of local transit operators in the corridor. These services could provide an efficient means of distribution within the context of the proposed passenger rail system. The transit agencies operating in the corridor include:

- Greater Richmond Transit Company;
- Petersburg Area Transit;
- Hampton Roads Transit; and
- Williamsburg Area Transport.

## 1.2 Project Background and Planning History

### 1.2.1 Study Context

DRPT has been actively studying intercity rail passenger services throughout the Commonwealth as an outgrowth of the 1995 Statewide Intermodal Long-Range Transportation Policy Plan<sup>6</sup>. As an important element of the economic development goals of the Commonwealth, the Long-Range Transportation Policy Plan required DRPT to identify strategic passenger and freight rail intermodal corridors in the Commonwealth

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<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.route460ppta.org/> for information on US Route 460 Location Study.

<sup>6</sup> *Virginia Statewide Intermodal Long-Range Transportation Policy Plan*, June 1995, prepared by Virginia Department of Aviation, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Virginia Department of Transportation, Virginia Port Authority.

and the needed project improvements in these corridors to support improved passenger rail and double-stack intermodal freight rail services. DRPT has encouraged the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to support these projects and incorporate these corridors into their regional transportation plans. All of the passenger rail corridors currently under evaluation use Richmond Main Street Station as the central hub within Virginia.

The 2008 Virginia Statewide Rail Plan discusses the current state of the Commonwealth's rail system as well as challenges facing the system, such as the increasing demand for freight and passenger service, accommodating population growth, transportation system capacity limits, and quality of life issues, such as the increase in fuel prices and the decline in air quality.<sup>7</sup> To address these issues and improve the overall rail system, the Statewide Rail Plan proposes several projects to address rail needs in the Commonwealth. The projects identified in the plan include high-speed and intercity passenger rail initiatives, including the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) project and Richmond/Hampton Roads passenger rail projects.

### **1.2.2 Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor (SEHSR)**

The SEHSR Corridor was formally designated as an emerging high-speed rail corridor under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), reauthorized by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The SEHSR Corridor reaches from Washington, D.C. south to Richmond, VA, Petersburg, VA, Raleigh, NC, Greensboro, NC, and Charlotte, NC, and potentially to Atlanta and Macon, GA. Following this designation, a number of extensions have been added by the USDOT, including the Richmond to Hampton Roads Corridor in 1996. The corridor now extends from Washington, D.C. through Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Figure 1-3 depicts the federally designated SEHSR Corridor.

The Commonwealth of Virginia, the FRA, CSXT, Amtrak, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Rail Division (NCDOT) all have worked collaboratively to advance the study and construction of the SEHSR Corridor. Numerous studies of the SEHSR Corridor between Charlotte, Richmond, and Washington, D.C. have contributed to the development of this high-speed rail corridor.

In August 1999, the NCDOT and DRPT initiated a tiered environmental study process of the SEHSR project. The SEHSR Corridor was first studied at a Tier I level of environmental analysis through the Southeast High Speed Rail Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) from Charlotte, NC to Washington, D.C. The Tier I EIS presented a corridor level review of the alternatives. The study partners, including DRPT, NCDOT, FRA, and FHWA, determined that the SEHSR program should be analyzed using the incremental high-speed rail approach using fossil fuel train sets.<sup>8</sup> This approach would minimize impacts to both the human and natural environments by utilizing, as much as possible, existing rail infrastructure and right-of-way, thus reducing the initial capital investment. The proposed SEHSR Corridor adds to the national high-speed rail network, furthering a goal of achieving an economically efficient, environmentally sound, and globally competitive nationwide intermodal transportation network.

The SEHSR Tier I Final EIS was issued in June 2002. In October 2002, FRA and FHWA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) designating a preferred alternative. The ROD supports the phased incremental development approach to high speed rail in the corridor, thereby reducing the potential for environmental impacts by maximizing the use of the existing infrastructure and right of way.

After the issuance of the ROD, Virginia and North Carolina partnered to develop the segment of the SEHSR Corridor from Richmond to the Raleigh. The Draft Tier II EIS for the Richmond to Raleigh segment is complete and was signed by FRA in May 2010. Public hearings were held in July 2010 in both North Carolina and Virginia. Upon issuance of the ROD for the Tier II EIS, right-of-way and permit acquisition can then begin.

On January 28, 2010 FRA announced that Virginia and North Carolina would receive \$620 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to make incremental improvements in the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor. For the portion of the SEHSR Corridor between Charlotte and Raleigh, NCDOT and FRA are currently working on Tier II NEPA documents for a series of projects that, when complete, will allow for passenger operations of up to 90 miles per hour (MPH). In addition, FRA and Virginia executed an

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<sup>7</sup> The plan is available at <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/>.

<sup>8</sup> High-Speed Ground Transportation for America, US DOT – FRA, September, 1997.

agreement in October 2011 obligating \$43.3 million for preliminary engineering and Tier II environmental studies for the portion of the SEHSR Corridor between Richmond, VA and Washington, DC.

In 1996, the United States Secretary of Transportation, at the request of the Commonwealth of Virginia, expanded the federally designated SEHSR Corridor to include a link from Richmond to Hampton Roads. The designation did not specify which rail route would be utilized between Richmond and Hampton Roads. Two previous studies of rail service to Hampton Roads have been conducted: the I-64 Major Investment Study, prepared by VDOT in 1999<sup>9</sup> and a 2002 study conducted by DRPT on the feasibility rail development in the corridor.<sup>10</sup> These studies found that higher speed passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads was a feasible goal, provided that requisite infrastructure improvements are constructed. The need for these improvements was also established. The studies provided the foundation for the initiation of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project, the development of preliminary goals and objectives, and project alternatives.

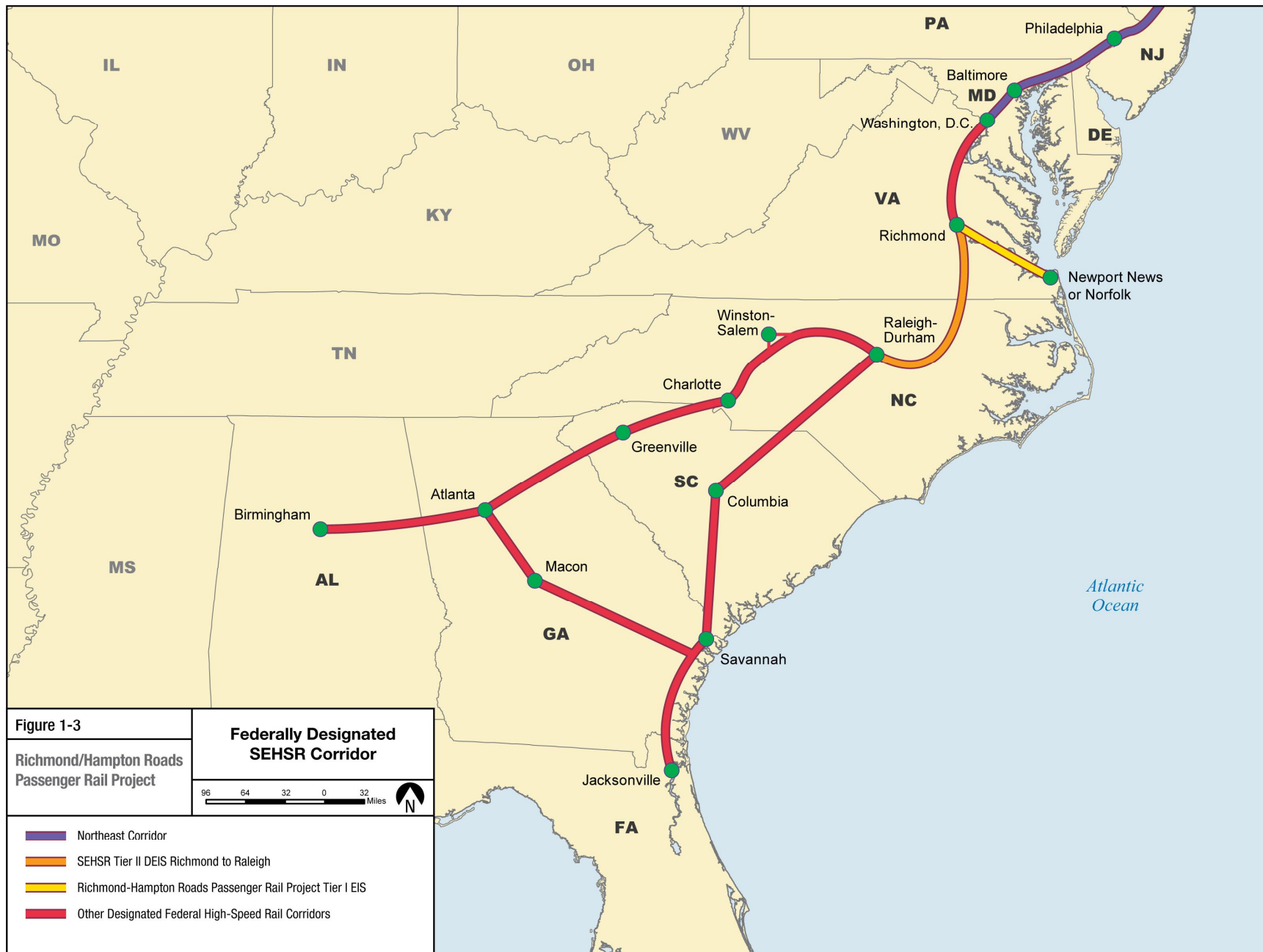
The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is proposing to use the SEHSR project segment from Richmond to Petersburg in its route analysis from Richmond Main Street Station to Norfolk. Detailed analysis of this segment is contained in the SEHSR Tier I Documents and the Tier II document under development. The Tier I documents and current information about the Tier II documents can be found at [www.sehsr.org](http://www.sehsr.org).

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<sup>9</sup> *I-64 Major Investment Study (Evaluation of Hampton Roads High Speed Rail)*. March 1999, prepared by Parsons Brinkerhoff, for the Virginia Department of Transportation.

<sup>10</sup> *Richmond to South Hampton Roads High-Speed Rail Feasibility Study*, April 2002, prepared by Parsons for the Virginia for the Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

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### 1.2.3 Previous Richmond to Hampton Roads Area Studies

**I-64 Major Investment Study** - In 1999, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) completed the Interstate 64 (I-64) Major Investment Study (MIS). The I-64 MIS Locally Preferred Alternative included plans for the widening of I-64 and recommendations for double tracking the entire rail corridor, increasing the maximum train speed to 110 mph, and increasing the frequency of passenger trains to eight round trips per day on the CSXT rail line on the Peninsula parallel to I-64.

**Richmond to South Hampton Roads High-Speed Rail Feasibility Study** - In 2002, DRPT completed a study of the feasibility of high-speed rail between Richmond and South Hampton Roads. The study examined both the CSXT route on the Peninsula north of the James River and the Norfolk Southern (NS) route via Petersburg parallel to the Route 460 Corridor on the south side of the James River. The study examined operating plans for services on both sides of the James River. The study suggested that the Peninsula/CSXT Route would require reinstallation of double track. The study developed an alignment and operating plan for the Southside/NS Route that would support the requirements of all potential users of the NS rail line with the goal that all operators and sponsors—intercity passenger, commuter, and freight railroads—could operate passenger and freight services at higher levels of traffic with greater reliability than those operating on the corridor at present. The study found that high-speed rail is feasible, provided that requisite infrastructure improvements are constructed to alleviate potential conflicts with freight rail operations. Moreover, this study identified three possible alignments through Petersburg that would connect to the NS track leading to Norfolk. During the public involvement process and coordination with the local agencies, the Ettrick Connection was found to be the alternative most favored by the localities. All the Petersburg connection alternatives were found to involve significant capital investment in new rail infrastructure, including a new or rebuilt bridge across the Appomattox River.

**Route 460 Location Study** – The Route 460 Location Study Draft EIS was approved by FHWA in June 2005. The proposed action involves the construction of a new limited access east-west highway facility between Route 58, in the City of Suffolk, and I-295, in Prince George County, Virginia. The study area extends approximately 55 miles and includes the counties of Prince George, Sussex, Surry, Southampton, Isle of Wight, and the City of Suffolk. Alternatives for the U.S. 460 study originally included a rail envelope, complementing improvements to the highway facility. However, due to the planned alignments of the improved Route 460 highway being unsuitable for a rail line when compared to the existing Norfolk Southern line, the reservation of a rail envelope was abandoned early in the Route 460 Location Study. The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) approved the Locally Preferred Alternative in November 2005 and adopted a resolution resolving “that the Commonwealth, along with other stakeholders, continue to study and seek solutions to maximize the use of rail freight in the corridor.” The Final EIS for the Route 460 Location Study was completed in June 2008 and FHWA issued a ROD in September 2008<sup>11</sup>.

## 1.3 Purpose

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide a competitive transportation choice between Richmond and the Hampton Roads region that would effectively and efficiently expand the region’s transportation system capacity and provide residents, tourists, and visitors with a broader array of reliable transportation choices. The project, or proposed action, represents a response to numerous transportation related needs in the corridor arising from the growth of the regional economy. Currently, few alternatives to the private automobile are available to corridor residents, employees, and tourists. This lack of travel choice affects the quality of life in the corridor. Continued dependence on automobile travel contributes to the growing congestion on the principal highway facilities, namely I-64, and Route 460; contributes to the nation’s dependence on foreign sources of oil for transportation fuels; and degrades the environment by increasing mobile sources of greenhouse gases.

Specifically, the proposed Richmond to Hampton Roads passenger rail service would accomplish the following:

- **Regional Linkage and Improve Travel Time** - Improve regional linkage and travel time to Hampton Roads by improving the reliability and frequency of passenger rail connections from the

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<sup>11</sup> See <http://www.route460ppta.org/> for the FEIS and ROD for the Route 460 Location Study.



region to the Southeast, Northeast, and Mid-Atlantic regions at Richmond Main Street Station by way of the proposed Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor;

- **Limit the Growth of Traffic Congestion** – Limit the growth of congestion on roads and airports by diverting car and airplane trips to trains by providing improved transportation choices for the traveling public, particularly special populations such as the elderly and the disabled;
- **Multimodal System Development** – Improve rail system capacity and public transit connections resulting in a more balanced use of the overall transportation system while minimizing environmental impacts;
- **Safety** – Reduce accidents by diverting auto traffic to rail and improving grade crossings;
- **Air Quality and Energy Efficiency** - Improve air quality and energy efficiency by diverting automobile users to trains;
- **Economic Development** – Enhance economic opportunities, tourism and regional competitiveness by improving the freight and passenger rail system; and
- **Hurricane Evacuation** – Provide expanded transportation system capacity for more effective evacuation of the Hampton Roads region during weather emergencies.

The following sections in this report outline why the proposed action is needed and how it would fulfill the project purpose in the study area.

## 1.4 Need for Transportation Improvements

Several interrelated conditions and trends exhibited in the larger travel region and study area contribute to the need for improvements in the transportation system. These needs include the following, which are described in further detail in this section:

- Regional linkages and improve travel time;
- Limit growth in highway congestion;
- Multimodal system development;
- Safety;
- Air Quality and Energy Efficiency;
- Economic development; and
- Hurricane evacuation.

Other conditions that are of concern include the air quality impacts from mobile source emissions and limitations to existing intercity passenger transportation service in the study area.

### 1.4.1 Regional Linkages and Improve Travel Time

As travel demand grows, intercity transportation by air, bus, and private auto increasingly suffer from congestion and delays—especially during peak travel periods, holidays, and inclement weather. Accompanying declines in levels of service negatively impact the transportation network and its users and affect regional linkages and, ultimately, competitiveness. Regional linkages and total travel time to Hampton Roads can be improved by increasing the frequency and improving the reliability of passenger rail connections from the region to the southeast, northeast, and mid-Atlantic regions at Richmond Main Street Station (or Petersburg) by way of the proposed Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor.

Total travel time is the time spent getting to a station or airport, waiting for the scheduled departure, getting to the boarding area, time spent in the vehicle, checking and retrieving luggage, and traveling to the ultimate final destination. Total travel time is affected by reliability and frequency of service. Projected increases in automobile travel time are largely caused by increased travel demand causing increased congestion in a constrained highway network. Increasing the frequency of passenger rail service reduces the amount of waiting time and makes the choice of rail more viable for many trips.

Reliability is the delivery of predictable, consistent travel times that remain the same over a long period of time. Increasing congestion on roadways, airports and freight railroads are adversely affecting travel time reliability. Weather related events are an additional source of travel disruption and delay that affect travel time reliability.

Over the last several decades, the increase in air traffic has far outpaced increases in airport capacity, creating delays. The finite number of air slots available for commercial air traffic and subsequent delays has an impact on travelers in terms of time and inconvenience. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) projections indicate total annual domestic passenger growth at 4.3 percent through 2015.<sup>12</sup> Frequent air travelers often look for more time-competitive and reliable ways to travel, avoiding overcrowded airports, airliners filled to capacity, and the incessant delays caused by air capacity constraints and weather. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has identified and recommended actions to prevent projected growth in delays, including the development of high-speed passenger rail service as a potential means of diverting short haul air traffic trips (500 miles or less).<sup>13</sup>

The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project could directly compete for air travelers in the less than 500 mile travel market. Rail travel is highly competitive with air travel in these short haul markets, taking into account the time required at the airports and the time required traveling between the airport and the city centers. Rail service does not often include long terminal times and most stations are located in the middle of cities and activity centers. According to the FAA's 10 percent sample of airline passengers, about 650,000 of the 1.9 million enplanements at Norfolk International Airport in 2006 were to short haul markets within the Northeast Corridor (NEC) or North Carolina. Passenger rail provides a competitive alternative to these trips, and a reduction in trips through Norfolk International would improve the flow of remaining passengers through the airport.

#### **1.4.2 Limit Growth of Highway Congestion**

Over the past 20 years, the number of highway vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and the number of registered vehicles in the Commonwealth continued to outpace the expansion of lane miles or freeway capacity. This growth in VMT has produced increasing amounts of congestion on the transportation network. Vehicle travel in Virginia increased by 29 percent between 1990 and 2002. Travel increased from 60.2 billion vehicle miles of travel (VMT) to 77.5 billion VMT. Vehicle travel in Virginia is projected to increase by another 40 percent by 2020, to 108 billion. Highway lane miles increased over the same period at a rate of about 1.2 percent annually.

##### **1.4.2.1 I-64 Corridor**

The I-64 MIS collected traffic volume data and projected future traffic volumes for 27 defined segments of the roadway. The 1996 baseline traffic volumes ranged from 39,400 to 140,000 for Average Summer Daily Traffic. As would be expected, traffic volumes were the heaviest near urbanized areas with the lowest traffic volumes occurring in the central sections of the highway. The highest volumes were recorded in the eastern sections near Newport News and ranged from 96,000 to 140,000 vehicles. Level of service (LOS) is a measure used by traffic engineers to determine the effectiveness of highways. The transportation LOS system uses the letters A through F to grade highway effectiveness, with A being best and F being worst. LOS A is best described as conditions where traffic flows freely and all motorists have complete mobility between lanes. LOS E is an unstable flow. LOS F is the lowest measurement of efficiency for a road's performance and is best described as stop and go traffic flow.

During the AM peak, 9 of the 27 segments of the roadway operate at a level of service (LOS) E or F in one or both directions. In the PM peak hour, 15 of the 27 segments of the roadway operate at LOS E or F in one or both directions. If no improvements were made to the I-64 Corridor, congestion would seriously degrade system performance with 92 percent of the highway expected to operate at LOS E or worse and 50 percent of the highway operating at LOS F conditions. The I-64 MIS concluded that simply improving the roadway through widening was insufficient to reduce congestion to manageable levels.

More recent annual average daily traffic (AADT) data provided through VDOT indicates continued strong traffic growth throughout the I-64 corridor. The table below presents historical AADT across three locations in the I-64 corridor, plus the average annual growth rates for two time periods. While growth has slowed a bit in the last six years in the Richmond (Henrico County location) region, growth continues to be strong. In the Eastern end of the corridor, strong growth has been maintained or increased over the past six years.

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<sup>12</sup> FAA Forecast Fact Sheet for Fiscal Years 2004 and 2015.

<sup>13</sup> USDOT, FRA. High-Speed Ground Transportation for America, September 1997.

**Table 1-1: Interstate 64 Historical AADT**

Interstate 64 AADT			
Year	I-295 to VA 33 (Henrico County)	VA 33 to VA 30 (New Kent County)	Yorktown Rd. to Ft. Eustis Blvd (Newport News)
1990	39,850	27,130	56,975
1995	47,000	37,000	66,000
2000	62,000	39,000	71,000
2005	68,000	47,000	86,000
2006	71,000	48,000	91,000
AAGR (90-06)	3.7%	3.6%	3.0%
AAGR (00-06)	2.3%	3.5%	4.2%

Source: VDOT

Continued traffic growth in the corridor will be ongoing, as indicated by population and employment forecasts (see Tables in the section below) for the region. Based on their 2004 regional transportation model, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission forecasts that by 2025 travel times between downtown Norfolk and downtown Richmond will increase by about 20 minutes, a 15 percent increase from 2000, and travel times between Williamsburg and Richmond will increase by about 17 minutes, about 30 percent higher than 2000.

There are no confirmed plans to increase the capacity of I-64, and with transportation funding challenges in Virginia, congestion relief cannot be counted on. While passenger rail in the corridor will not solve the highway congestion and growth issues, it will provide travelers with another alternative while also taking some cars off the road. As I-64 is the only interstate linking Richmond and Hampton Roads and air travel is not a cost or time efficient alternative in the corridor, each passenger rail trip between the metro areas represents one less intercity highway trip (not accounting for new or "induced" rail trips) using I-64. Additionally, in cases where passengers are able to walk or use transit to access stations, rail travel could provide some, though very minor, local congestion relief.

As an alternative to congested highways, passenger rail provides reliable travel times. Proposed service in the corridor would be designed to operate with an on-time performance averaging 90 percent. This is a desired benefit for travelers who otherwise have to account for unpredictable highway and/or tunnel congestion when making their travel plans.

#### 1.4.2.2 Route 460 Corridor

Route 460 provides a link for seaport cargo and airfreight delivery between the ports and airports in both Hampton Roads and the Richmond-Petersburg Metropolitan Area. Therefore, it serves as an important shipping route and carries a large amount of truck traffic. Route 460 truck volumes within the study area currently range from approximately 2,600 to near 4,100 trucks per day, with through truck volumes near 3,700. This represents between 6 percent and 34 percent of all vehicles on Route 460. The percentage of through truck traffic along Route 460 is higher and growing faster than on alternate routes such as Route 58 and Interstate 64. Along Route 460, the percentage of through trucks has increased by 13 percent since 1990. On Route 58 and Interstate 64, the percentage of through trucks has declined by 8 percent and 6 percent respectively.

Waterborne freight shipments to, from, and within Virginia are projected to increase from 24 million tons in 1998 to 40 million tons by 2020, an increase of 67 percent. The majority of this freight (59 percent) will be arriving and departing from the ports of Hampton Roads. To accommodate this increasing demand, two new port facilities will open in the future, increasing freight shipments from the ports. Route 460 has roadway design deficiencies that result in numerous problems related to safety, and accommodation of truck traffic. Route 460 does not comply with current VDOT design standards for roads of similar purpose and functional class. Route 460 is classified as a rural principal arterial, according to guidelines published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). Using this classification, it does not meet VDOT's rural arterial design standards for lane width, median width, left turn lane protection, shoulder width, clear zone protection and access control.

**Table 1-2: Route 460 Historical AADT**

Route 460 AADT			
Year	East of I-295 (Prince George County)	Suffolk/Isle of Wight Line	West of I-64/ I-664 (Chesapeake)
1990	9,950	13,200	32,000
1995	14,000	15,000	44,000
2000	13,000	11,000	55,000
2005	16,000	16,000	67,000
2006	16,000	16,000	69,000
AAGR (90-06)	3.0%	1.2%	4.9%
AAGR (00-06)	3.5%	6.4%	3.9%

Source: VDOT

The increasing truck traffic on Route 460, combined with the geometric deficiencies of the existing roadway, has led to operational problems. Residents traveling to and from the eastern sections of the Hampton Roads region tend to travel the I-64 corridor in order to avoid these issues along Route 460. As truck traffic continues to increase in the future with the opening of the new ports, automobile traffic will likely continue to shift to I-64, further adding to the congestion issues. Rail passenger service in the corridor would provide an intercity alternative for these travelers.

### 1.4.2.3 Third Crossing

A major area of discussion in the Hampton Roads region is the potential building of a new Third Crossing over/under the Hampton Roads stretch of the James River to help ease the current and projected congestion over the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel and the Monitor-Merrimac Bridge Tunnel. While there is no definite plan to add a Third Crossing, the growth within the region is causing concern that the present capacity provided by the two existing crossings will be insufficient to meet future demands. In the region today, the tunnels are often congested, especially during peak periods and holidays. When planning trips, travelers who use one of the tunnels need to take into account the congestion and the unpredictable travel time. Passenger rail service in Norfolk and on the Southside would provide travelers an additional, reliable alternative for trips requiring crossing the Hampton Roads.

### 1.4.3 Multimodal System Development

Given significant federal investment to build the Interstate highway system and fund airport construction and operate the air traffic control system, it is not surprising that 97 percent of intercity travelers in this country choose the relative convenience of autos (90%) and airplanes (7%), and only one percent travel by passenger rail. Other developed western nations provide travelers with more balanced options—bus and rail trips are 24.6 percent of long distance trips in Japan and 14 percent in Italy, Germany, France and Britain. The lack of intercity travel options in the U.S., where people travel nearly twice as many miles each year as their European or Japanese counterparts yet have fewer travel options, has contributed to growing congestion levels on our freeways and at our airports.

The I-64 MIS found that a more balanced investment strategy produced lower congestion and improved LOS on more highway segments than highway improvements alone. Consequently, the I-64 MIS concluded with a recommendation for improved passenger rail service.

However, it also must be pointed out as a practical consideration that people using rail passenger services must rely on local highway connections to travel to the rail station, much the way people travel to airports. Hampton Roads is a very automobile-dependent environment. Hampton Roads is very spread out and few new rail stations are planned—this is a limiting factor in terms of attracting people's use of passenger rail service. Local transit services and better taxi and rental car facilities must accompany any planned improvements in rail passenger service.

### 1.4.4 Safety

For the Richmond Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Service to divert travelers from other transportation modes, potential riders must have confidence that the service is not only fast and reliable, but also as safe as or safer than other modes. Nationally, passenger rail is one of the safest ways to travel. Railroad safety in

the U.S. has steadily improved over the past several decades, despite increases in both rail traffic and highway traffic crossing rail lines at-grade.

Significant growth in freight rail activity is expected by 2025. The movement of goods and services throughout the Commonwealth and service to the ports and industry is expected to increase by 40 percent. Currently, Virginia's railroads move 30 percent of the freight, nearly 123 million tons of freight per year. The balance of the freight activity within the Commonwealth is relegated to the region's already overburdened highway network and available commercial air slots. The Port of Virginia is one of the largest ports on the Atlantic Coast and is an important gateway for international commerce. The Virginia Port Authority has been exploring plans to double its on-dock rail capacity at Norfolk International Terminals to meet growing demand. In addition to expansion at the Port of Virginia, the Maersk Group, a shipping and logistics company, built and opened in 2008 a marine terminal in Portsmouth to bring goods into the United States and distribute them throughout the East. The terminal will generate road and rail traffic in the surrounding areas. This increased freight traffic will have implications on the existing rail infrastructure as well as impacts on highway system capacity, LOS and safety. For example, Route 460 in the study area has higher accident, injury, and fatality rates than similar facilities statewide. Four-lane undivided roadways usually have higher than average crash rates due to the lack of median and access control and the impact that turning vehicles have on slowing traffic flows and increasing crash potential. Also, a high percentage of vehicles traveling on Route 460 are trucks. Larger vehicles increase accident severity. Of the 555 crashes documented by VDOT along the corridor from 1999 to 2001, 76 crashes involved tractor-trailers (14 percent). Approximately half of the fatal crashes in the Route 460 corridor involved tractor-trailers. Crashes involving tractor-trailers constituted approximately 28 percent of all property damage related to vehicle crashes. With more and more traffic on the highways, the potential for accidents increases.

A comparison between Route 460 and the average of four-lane roadways in Virginia confirmed Route 460's higher-than-average crash rates. The crash fatality rate for Route 460 in the study area is 220 percent greater than non-Interstate four-lane freeways, with the injury crash rate 164 percent greater. Compared with divided roadways with no access control, the crash fatality rate in the Route 460 corridor is 137 percent greater; and the injury crash rate is 107 percent greater. The need to improve safety on Route 460 has been cited by the public via comments submitted to VDOT, and also by transportation managers of distribution centers located within the study area. Adding more trucks to this rural arterial road will be hazardous to the traveling public. Conversely, passenger rail is one of the safest modes of intercity transport. In 2002, the number of U.S. fatalities on passenger trains was seven passengers or just .02 percent of all transportation fatalities in comparison to autos, which were 37,187 or 83 percent.<sup>14</sup>

The I-64 Major Investment Study showed a significant increase in traffic, accompanying congestion and the number of accidents. The I-64 traffic analysis estimated a 21 percent increase in the number of accidents between 1996 and 2015. These accident estimates took into account the safety enhancements and benefits attributable to ITS strategies expected to be in place in 2015. In addition, certain areas of I-64 tend to be more vulnerable to accidents, especially at interchanges.

However, throughout the Commonwealth accidents involving rail service have declined in the past several decades due to improvements at grade crossings. Rail accidents along the CSXT rail line in the I-64 Corridor are infrequent. The DRPT, in cooperation with VDOT, has been making special efforts to improve crossing safety. Efforts by Virginia include the construction of highway and pedestrian bridges over rail lines. In addition, Virginia has been expanding the use of protection devices at private crossings. Virginia has participated in the testing of active physical barriers to prevent motorists from violating the highway-grade crossing warning devices. Virginia is installing constant warning time protection devices within the corridor between Richmond, VA and Washington, DC.

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<sup>14</sup> Distribution of Transportation Fatalities by Mode, Table 2-4 in 2002, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 2005.

In the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), the United States Congress established funding specifically intended to improve highway-rail crossings and accommodate high-speed rail. Section 1103 (c) of the TEA-21 provides funds for the High-Speed Rail Crossing Improvement Program. The purpose of this program is to reduce or eliminate the hazards at highway-rail grade crossings in designated high-speed rail corridors. Work eligible for funding includes:

- Installation or improvement of warning devices;
- Improvement of track circuitry which activates warning devices;
- Improvements such as crossing surfaces, improved sight distances, crossing illumination;
- Closure of crossings with or without attendant highway relocations;
- Grade separation construction or reconstruction; and
- Combining crossing warning systems with advanced train control and/or intelligent highway traffic control systems.

The safety improvements discussed above will result in improved overall rail passenger safety within the rail corridor when compared to existing rail service and other modes of transportation currently serving the area.

In addition, Virginia participates in the Federal Railroad Administration's safety inspection program. The program involves state and federal inspectors working together to inspect the condition of the rail infrastructure. Inspection elements covered by the program include equipment, signal systems, track and operating practices. The FRA has established Track Safety Standards that are based on train speeds. The standards specify nine classes of track, with the class of track determined by the maximum speed of trains on that track segment, ranging from 10 mph to a maximum of 200 mph. Higher track classifications require correspondingly higher safety standards.

#### 1.4.5 Air Quality and Energy Efficiency

Increased public investment in passenger rail could help achieve our national goals of reducing dependence on foreign oil and improving air quality. Relative to other modes of transport, passenger rail emits less air pollution than automobiles or airplanes and has the capacity to carry far more passengers than any other mode.

Several counties located within the Richmond/Hampton Roads Corridor are experiencing air quality impacts from mobile source emissions. Areas of the country where air pollution levels persistently exceed the national ambient air quality standards for any pollutant may be designated as a "non-attainment" area for that pollutant. The majority of counties within the Richmond to Hampton Roads project area have been designated as non-attainment. This issue has been addressed by the study area MPOs through their respective Long Range Transportation Plans. Automobile emissions are harmful and contribute to ozone formation. As VMT and congestion increase within the corridor, air quality impacts may become more pronounced.

Diverting some auto traffic to passenger rail service may result in less pollution.<sup>15</sup> A recent analysis of the 11 federally-designated proposed high-speed rail corridors found that investing in these systems could yield significant air quality benefits. If all 11 high-speed rail systems were built, there would be a total emissions savings of 6 billion pounds of carbon dioxide per year (2.7 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>)<sup>16</sup> Overall, high-speed rail is estimated to generate approximately half of the emissions it saves by enabling passengers to switch from other modes. Savings from avoided automobile and airplane trips are the primary sources of the emissions savings; together these two modes make up 80 percent of the estimated emissions savings from all modes.<sup>17</sup>

Passenger rail is also less energy intensive. Current intercity passenger rail service uses approximately 25 percent less energy than airplanes or personal autos and light trucks. Today 56 percent of airline take-offs are for trips under 500 miles<sup>18</sup>. An interconnected system would allow bus and rail to be a competitive energy-

<sup>15</sup> SEHSR Washington, DC to Charlotte, NC – Tier I DEIS, August 2001.

<sup>16</sup> One million metric tons CO<sub>2</sub> (MMTCO<sub>2</sub>) = 2,205 million pounds CO<sub>2</sub>.

<sup>17</sup> Winkleman, Steve and Albert Benedict, Peter Haas and Jen McGraw; "High Speed Rail and Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the U.S." Center for Clean Air Policy, working paper.

<sup>18</sup> "Climate Matters: Transportation Demand and GHG Emission Reduction", working paper from Center for Clean Air Policy, Center for Neighborhood Technology, and the Surface Transportation Policy Project, 2003.

reducing alternative. By shifting a significant percentage of the intercity trips that are currently on the least efficient modes—auto and air—to the more efficient modes—bus and rail—the U.S. could save billions of barrels of oil each year and the problems that accompany its use.

Improving passenger rail would also improve the system for freight rail, which is also more efficient for goods movement. On average, railroads are at least three times more fuel efficient than trucks.<sup>19</sup> Reducing VMT could improve energy efficiency by reducing the total amount of fuel consumed and by improving the efficiency of trains on a per passenger mile basis.

#### 1.4.6 Economic Development

Improved rail connections between Hampton Roads and other metropolitan areas can help to manage regional growth pressures and improve economic competitiveness. Building a stronger intercity passenger rail system would create additional jobs, could be a catalyst for local economic development near rail stations and could continue to serve and enhance the tourism industry. This is particularly critical for the Main Street Station in Downtown Richmond and increasing train travel to Williamsburg and Hampton Roads. Traffic congestion and delay compound the cost of doing business in the region and makes it less attractive than other deep water ports on the East Coast.

Significant growth in population within the entire travel shed impacts the travel needs of its residents. Population growth in Virginia and within the corridor has occurred over the past several decades. This trend is projected to continue into the future. Approximately two million additional people are projected to live in Virginia by 2025, mostly in areas that are already heavily populated.<sup>20</sup> Table 1-3 shows 2000 population and the projected population for 2025 within 5-mile and 15-mile radii of the potential station stops. Several of the potential station areas demonstrate significant population growth by 2025.

**Table 1-3: Corridor Population Data**

Station Stops	For Year 2000		For Year 2025		Percent Change	
	5 Mile	15 Mile	5 Mile	15 Mile	5 Mile	15 Mile
Richmond Main Street	249,115	740,651	275,553	974,650	10.6 %	31.6%
Williamsburg	52,473	203,299	77,455	280,790	47.6 %	38.1%
Newport News Amtrak	177,891	640,898	197,714	736,410	11.1 %	14.9%
Petersburg	68,946	218,666	88,672	346,742	28.61%	58.57%
Bowers Hill	132,935	679,426	160,058	779,368	20.4 %	14.7%
Norfolk Downtown	299,466	908,961	312,405	1,025,522	4.3 %	12.8%

Source: 2026 LRTP for Crater Planning District Commission; Hampton Roads Planning District Commission; and Richmond Regional Planning District Commission.

In recent years, Virginia's employment has outperformed the nation in terms of employment growth and continues to grow at significant levels. The Commonwealth is expected to add an additional 1.9 million new jobs by 2025. Total employment in the region is projected at 6.3 million jobs in 2025, up from 4.4 million in 2000.<sup>21</sup> Most of the growth is predicted to occur in the urban regions of the Commonwealth. Strong employment growth is indicated in the potential station areas within the corridor. Table 1-4 shows employment growth between year 2000 and projected year 2025 within 5-mile and 15-mile radii of the proposed stations in the major urban areas of the corridor. Most station areas demonstrate significant growth by 2025, especially within a 5-mile radius of each area.

<sup>19</sup> AASHTO Rail Committee. "Intercity Passenger Rail Transportation." Bottom Line Report series, 2002, p. 29.

<sup>20</sup> VTrans 2025 - Phase 3 and Final Report to the General Assembly, November 17, 2004.

<sup>21</sup> VTrans 2025 - Phase 3 and Final Report to the General Assembly, November 17, 2004.

**Table 1-4: Corridor Employment Data**

Station Stops	For Year 2000		For Year 2025		Percent Change	
	5 Mile	15 Mile	5 Mile	15 Mile	5 Mile	15 Mile
Richmond Main street	261,964	594,161	265,447	766,975	1.3 %	29.1%
Williamsburg	55,336	117,174	68,618	158,658	24.0 %	35.4%
Newport News Amtrak	121,849	414,469	145,317	467,571	19.2 %	12.8%
Petersburg						
Bowers Hill	45,327	478,012	66,717	544,965	47.2 %	14.0%
Norfolk Downtown	250,358	639,316	287,121	713,807	14.7 %	11.7%

Source: 2026 L RTP for Crater Planning District Commission; Hampton Roads Planning District Commission; and Richmond Regional Planning District Commission.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly 17 percent of the Commonwealth's population has a disability. Combined with this, the Commonwealth's aging population is projected to increase to 18 percent of the population at retirement age by 2025. These demographic changes are likely to change travel characteristics.<sup>22</sup> In addition, approximately 17 percent of Commonwealth residents reside in areas without public transportation. The percentage without adequate access is far greater. Nearly 200,000 households do not own personal vehicles, mostly in the same areas where public transportation is unavailable. The VTRANS 2025 Initiative has identified needed transportation improvements and options for these populations in their long-term transportation plan in terms of access, leisure travel, and special needs. Rail passenger service addresses this need by providing people with viable travel options other than automobile or air.

Improved passenger rail will provide service to the major activity centers and high growth areas throughout the corridor. The transportation system in many of these areas is dominated by auto travel, as the airports are located outside of the activity centers. High growth in these areas could produce strain on the highway infrastructure and the system could approach capacity. Passenger rail service within close proximity or walking distance to residents and employment centers would provide another alternative to support the population and employment growth in the corridor, without adding autos to the highway system.

Locating passenger rail within activity centers will also provide an intercity travel mode for households who do not own a car. Additionally, passenger rail could offer a desirable travel alternative for the aging population, who may be wary of driving themselves.

One of the major economic drivers of the Hampton Roads area is tourism, including Virginia Beach and attractions in Williamsburg and throughout the region. If highway congestion continues to increase, tourists may look for other locations to visit. Significant delays, especially through the tunnels, already slow traffic to/from Virginia Beach, and with strong population and employment growth predicted for the region, the traffic and delays will only increase. Improved passenger rail service in the region will offer tourists another alternative which offers more reliable travel times, especially during the peak periods and holidays.

### 1.4.7 Hurricane Evacuation

Intercity passenger rail can provide critical mobility during times of crisis to help evacuate citizens or equipment and keep the economy moving. In the wake of September 11th, 2001, ridership on the Northeast Corridor jumped 60 percent for a 2-week period while the airline industry was grounded and public anxiety was high. Conversely, the impact from a lack of mobility options during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita was tragic as Gulf Coast residents had either no means for personal evacuation or were forced to endure day-long traffic jams. Providing people with travel options enhances mobility and can save lives and aid in the evacuation prior to a storm.

Route 460 is a designated hurricane evacuation route for south side Hampton Roads communities. Data from the Hurricane Emergency Response Plan indicates that the total number of people evacuating dwelling units south of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel ranges from 103,200 to 421,000. The number of vehicles evacuating from these dwelling units ranges from 41,300 to 151,700. These figures do not include the employment-based population and freight operations that may also be evacuating during an emergency. Additionally, these figures do not include the residents and tourist populations for northeastern North Carolina, including portions of the Outer Banks that would evacuate using Route 168 through Chesapeake.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.



Clearance times estimated for these vehicles range from three to 26.75 hours for cities located in south side Hampton Roads. Capacity improvements through the improvement of passenger rail service could reduce the clearance time during an emergency.

Despite Route 460's important role for hurricane and emergency evacuation, the roadway is susceptible to the effects of severe weather. During two recent hurricanes, this primary evacuation route was closed due to effects caused by these storms. The existing Route 460 has a narrow right-of-way that does not provide either a clear zone or shoulders adjacent to the travel lanes. The narrow right-of-way contributed to the amount of storm debris blocking the travel lanes during Hurricane Isabel in September 2003. In 1999, heavy rainfall from Hurricane Floyd caused flooding along the Blackwater River with the river crest (about nine feet above the surface of the roadway) rendering Route 460 impassible for over a week.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has recently begun developing new hurricane evacuation plans that call for using passenger rail service to provide additional capacity to evacuate ambulatory, elderly and other special needs populations.

## 1.5 Transportation Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives were developed based on the transportation needs described above. Goals that were included in regional long-range transportation plans were also incorporated. Goals and objectives were further refined with public and agency participation during scoping. The goals and objectives provided an important framework for the study process and the evaluation of transportation corridors and modal technologies. The goals and objectives are as follows (See Table 1-5):

**Table 1-5: Transportation Goals and Objectives**

Goals		Objectives
1	Regional linkage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve trip reliability</li> <li>• Reduce trip time</li> </ul>
2	Limit growth of highway congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit growth in ADT volumes</li> <li>• Increase rail passengers</li> <li>• Provide mode choice</li> </ul>
3	Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade crossing protection</li> <li>• Right-of-way</li> <li>• Hurricane evacuation</li> </ul>
4	Cost Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize system value by balancing costs and benefits</li> <li>• Return on investment</li> </ul>
5	Minimize environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air quality standards met</li> <li>• Avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to wetlands, floodplains and critical habitat</li> <li>• Minimize operating noise</li> <li>• Avoid/minimize adverse impact to sensitive land uses, historic properties and open spaces</li> </ul>

## 1.6 Tier I EIS Development Process

The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier I EIS began with a Notice of Intent (NOI) published in the Federal Register on February 23, 2004 announcing the intent to prepare an EIS. Following the NOI, the scoping process began and was designed to inform the public, interest groups, and involved agencies about the proposed project, alternatives, and issues for public and agency review and input. The main goal of the scoping meetings was to encourage the active participation of the public and agencies early in the decision-making process. As part of these outreach efforts during scoping, a public participation plan was developed by DRPT. The public participation program included several different elements designed to target specific audiences in a variety of ways. One such targeted audience was the Technical Working Group (TWG) consisting of elected and appointed public officials in the affected communities and other concerned stakeholders. The project team held formal meetings with the TWG, public workshops and information meetings, and presentations to general interest groups in the corridor and elsewhere in the study area. In accordance with FRA procedures, the Tier I Draft EIS was made available to the public for 30 days prior to holding public hearings (See 64 28545 §9(b)(5) of FRA's Environmental procedures). The formal comment period was held between December 18, 2009 and February 12, 2010. DPRT held public hearings in January

2010 in various locations within the study corridor to solicit comments on the Tier I Draft EIS. More detail on public and agency coordination efforts is provided in Chapter 7 of this Tier I Final EIS.

The scoping meetings provided the public with an opportunity to review the proposed alternatives and communicate issues and concerns about those alternatives. The scoping process also helped DRPT and FRA to define the alternatives to be examined in the study and the impacts to be considered, and it enabled the establishment of goals and objectives that guided the evaluation of alternatives.

The Tier I EIS process has been divided into five phases:

- Phase 1 – Scoping;
- Phase 2 – Alternatives Development;
- Phase 3 – Alternatives Analysis (AA);
- Phase 4 – Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS, Hearing); and
- Phase 5 – Tier I Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS, ROD).

At the onset of the EIS, a wide range of alternatives were developed based on prior studies, scoping input and planning, cost, community input, and financial issues. Following public and agency review of the Tier I EIS and the issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD) by the FRA, the project will be further refined and mitigation measures finalized during preliminary engineering for the Selected Alternative. These activities occur during preparation of the Tier II documentation of the Selected Alternative. Following completion of appropriate Tier II documents and funding commitments, the project could be advanced into acquisition, final design/permitting, and construction.

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# CHAPTER 2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

## 2.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the range of alternatives considered in the Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and a definition of the alternatives evaluated in this Tier I Final EIS. This chapter summarizes the development and subsequent screening of a wide range of conceptual alternatives developed to accommodate frequent and higher speed passenger rail service in the Richmond to Hampton Roads study area, with connections to the larger national network of passenger rail transportation on the East Coast. Detailed discussions on the identification and screening of route and station alternatives can be found in the *Alternatives Development Report, November 2005*<sup>23</sup>. More detail on the alternatives evaluated in the Tier I Draft EIS can be found in the *Richmond Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier I Draft EIS, November 2009*<sup>24</sup>.

### 2.1 Definitions of Terms

Several terms referring to conventional, higher speed and high-speed rail are used in this Tier I Final EIS document. The definitions of each term are provided below.

Conventional speed trains have maximum operating speeds of 79 mph.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has sponsored the development of high-speed ground transportation (HSGT). HSGT is a family of rail transportation options that is time-competitive with air and/or automobile travel on a door-to-door basis for trips in the approximate range of 100 to 500 miles. This is a market-based, not a speed-based definition: it recognizes that the opportunities and requirements for HSGT differ markedly among different pairs of cities that address long-term passenger transport needs in heavily populated corridors. The term “corridor” means a natural grouping of metropolitan areas and travel markets that, by their proximity and configuration, lend themselves to efficient service by ground transport.

High-speed rail in common usage refers to train operating speeds that exceed 150 mph, such as the Amtrak *Acela*, which operates in the Northeast Corridor (NEC) and reaches 150 mph at two locations between New York City and Boston, or the *TGV* in France and *Shinkansen* in Japan. Higher speed rail refers to trains that operate at speeds in excess of the conventional 79-mph speed limit for Amtrak on most routes outside the NEC, including speeds up to 110 mph. Consequently, speed options for this Tier I Final EIS include 79 mph for the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives and 90 mph for aspects of the higher speed Preferred Alternative. No high-speed rail alternative (speeds exceeding 110 mph) was carried forward for detailed analysis in this Tier I Final EIS. The Preferred Alternative refers to the alternative identified by the FRA and DRPT as the alternative that has been selected as a result of the findings of the Tier I Draft EIS and public hearings. The Preferred Alternative is what was originally defined as Build Alternative 1 (Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed) at MAS of up to 90 mph in the Tier I Draft EIS and is further described in this Tier I Final EIS.

### 2.2 Alternatives Development and Evaluation Process

The development and evaluation of alternatives in the Tier I Draft EIS utilized a two-level screening approach to identify and evaluate corridor level alternatives. The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) created a Technical Working Group (TWG) for the project that assisted FRA and DRPT and provided input in each stage of the alternatives evaluation screening. The TWG consisted of elected and appointed public officials in the affected communities and other concerned stakeholders. Initially, DRPT and FRA combined ideas and concepts from project scoping that could potentially satisfy the project purpose and need. These corridor route and service options, in addition to data from prior studies and comment from the TWG, were combined into a list of Initial Alternatives. The screening process to identify viable alternatives was completed in two stages of alternatives evaluation, refinement, and elimination. The initial stage of screening evaluated a wide range of program improvements that would be necessary for the implementation of higher

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<sup>23</sup> Report can be found at <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/projects/hamptonpassenger.aspx>.

<sup>24</sup> Tier I Draft EIS can be found at <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/projects/hamptonpassenger.aspx>

speed passenger rail service. These improvements were assessed for their suitability with respect to the known physical and policy constraints of the Richmond to Hampton Roads study area. The purpose of this step was to eliminate any alternatives that did not meet the project purpose and need or that had fatal flaws with regard to cost or environmental impact. The result of this screening was the identification of the three Build Alternatives in addition to the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives studied in this Tier I Draft EIS.

The second stage of screening was accomplished through the Tier I Draft EIS process and included the evaluation of the five alternatives based on the project purpose and need, established project goals and objectives, cost, and environmental and related impacts. These alternatives included routes and route combinations along with speed options. The evaluation of those five alternatives is presented in the Tier I Draft EIS.

Based on the Screen II findings and TWG comments, the FRA and DRPT identified five alternatives for full evaluation in the Tier I Draft EIS. For a detailed discussion of the screening process and initial alternatives evaluated, refer to the *Alternatives Development Report, November 2005*.

### **2.3 Tier I Draft EIS Alternatives**

At the completion of the Screen I stage of project definition and evaluation, two viable route alternatives remained. These alternatives were combined with operating plan elements in Screen II that resulted in a detailed definition of alternatives as described below and summarized in Table 2-1.

Each Build Alternative was defined to include several components: technology, propulsion, route, approximate station locations and operating speeds. As determined in the Screen I level of evaluation, all of the Build Alternatives will include train equipment compatible with the SEHSR. Rail operations would provide a maximum 110-mph operating speed utilizing diesel-electric propulsion. The routes evaluated in the Tier I Draft EIS included options that would utilize the railroad facilities on both sides of the James River, with Norfolk Southern on the Southside and CSXT on the Peninsula. Station locations and operating speeds were combined with these elements to define the alternatives.

As part of the alternatives development process, potential station sites were identified from earlier studies or from comments raised during the scoping process. A storage and maintenance facility would be required as part of all Build Alternatives; however, the exact location and operational parameters of the storage and maintenance facilities have not been developed. Specific features of station locations and storage and maintenance facilities will be evaluated in more detail during the Tier II EIS process.

Speed options were combined with the physical features of the routes to define each of the Build Alternatives. Conventional speed options on the Southside/NS route were included to examine the ridership and environmental impacts of providing similar levels of passenger rail service on both sides of the James River. All alternatives were limited to a combination of nine total trains in each direction due to capacity constraints between Richmond and Washington, DC.

### **2.4 Alternatives Evaluated in the Tier I Final EIS**

For purposes of this Tier I Final EIS, the Status Quo, No Action and Preferred Alternatives are being evaluated based on the findings of the Tier I Draft EIS and public hearings. In order to consistently evaluate the impacts associated with new service operating over the two routes, the chapters of this document have been formatted to discuss the affected environment of each route with the Southside/NS route appearing first, followed by the Peninsula/CSXT route. The environmental consequences write-up provides a discussion of impacts for each of these alternatives as defined below. The discussion examines the potential physical impacts and where applicable, the differences in impacts based on operating speeds and frequency of service. Table 2-2 at the end of this section summarizes the characteristics of the alternatives being evaluated in this Tier I Final EIS.

**Table 2-1: Summary of Alternatives Evaluated in Tier I Draft EIS (2025)**

Alternative	Description	Stations	Operations	Preliminary Capital Cost Estimates (millions \$2008)		Preliminary Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs (millions \$2008)	
				90 mph	110 mph	90 mph	110 mph
Status Quo	Existing Conventional Rail on Peninsula/CSXT route	Peninsula/CSXT route: Existing Richmond, Williamsburg, and Newport News Amtrak Stations	2 daily round-trip trains on Peninsula/CSXT at 79 mph	NA	NA	No train	No train
No Action	Existing and Currently Planned Conventional Rail on Peninsula/CSXT route	Peninsula/CSXT route: Existing Richmond, Williamsburg, and Newport News Amtrak Stations	3 daily round-trip trains on Peninsula/CSXT at 79 mph	NA	NA	\$21.3 (at 79 mph)	\$21.3 (at 79 mph)
Alternative 1	New Higher Speed passenger service on Southside/NS route, in addition to existing and currently planned Conventional Rail on Peninsula/CSXT as described by the No Action	Southside/NS route: Existing Richmond*, Petersburg*, and new stations at Bowers Hill and downtown Norfolk. Peninsula/CSXT route: Existing Richmond, Williamsburg, and Newport News Amtrak Stations.	6 daily round-trip trains on Southside/NS at 90 to 110 mph 3 daily round trip trains on Peninsula/CSXT at 79 mph	\$475.4	\$543.0	\$80.0	\$81.4
Alternative 2a	New Higher Speed passenger Service on Peninsula/CSXT route  New conventional speed passenger service on Southside/NS route	Peninsula/CSXT route: Existing Richmond and Williamsburg stations and a new downtown Newport News station.  Southside/NS route: Existing Richmond*, Petersburg*, and new stations at Bowers Hill and downtown Norfolk.	6 daily round-trip trains on Peninsula/CSXT at 90 to 110 mph  3 daily round-trip trains on Southside/NS at 79 mph	\$742.3	\$844.2	\$77.9	\$79.4
Alternative 2b	New Higher speed passenger service on Peninsula/CSXT route	Peninsula/CSXT route: Existing Richmond* and Williamsburg stations and a new downtown Newport News station	9 daily round-trip trains at 90 to 110 mph	\$330.0	\$431.9	\$71.7	\$72.4

Source: AECOM/Parsons Transportation Group, November 2005.

\*The CSX segment between Richmond and Petersburg along the Southside/NS Route was not evaluated for environmental impacts as part of the Tier I Draft EIS. This segment, including potential Petersburg station improvements, is being evaluated in the SEHSR Tier II Draft EIS. Additional improvements required at Main Street Station for high-speed rail service were not evaluated for the Tier I Draft EIS, and will be included in a separate corridor or local development plan for Washington, DC to Richmond.

### 2.4.1 Status Quo Alternative

This is a true “do-nothing” alternative for comparison to the other alternatives being considered. It assumes that no operational or physical changes would be made to the existing Amtrak service operating on the Peninsula/CSXT route and that no service would be added on the Southside/NS route. Two daily round-trip trains would continue to operate at maximum speeds up to 79 mph between Richmond and Newport News using the existing stations: Richmond Main Street, Williamsburg and Newport News. Figure 2-1 shows the Status Quo Alternative.

### 2.4.2 No Action Alternative (Existing and Planned Peninsula Conventional Service)

The No Action Alternative consists of the existing transportation network and committed highway, rail, and airport improvement projects in the Richmond to Hampton Roads Corridor. This alternative provides an alternative for comparative evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of the Build Alternatives in 2025. Figure 2-1 shows the route of the No Action Alternative. The No Action Alternative includes:

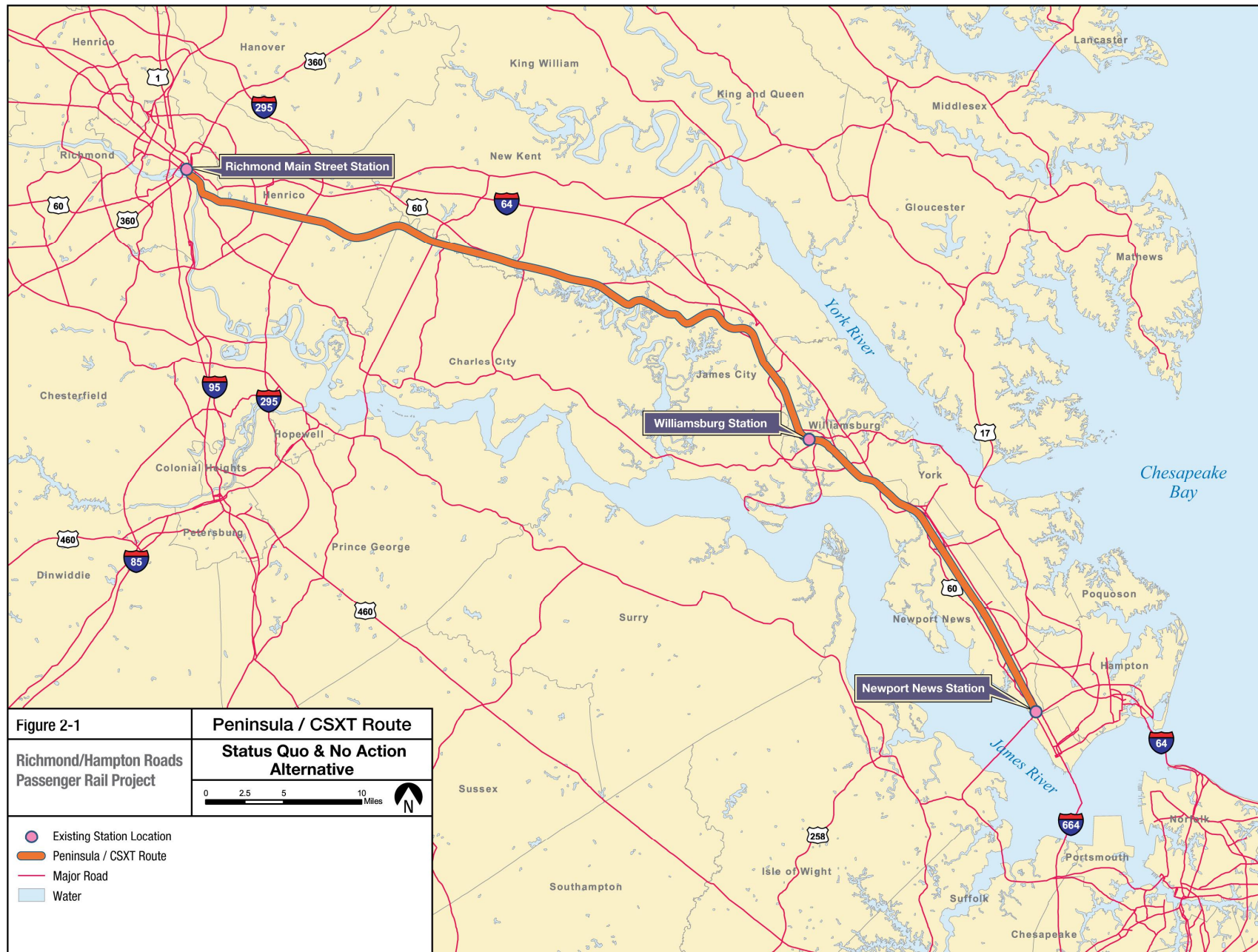
- Major highways and arterials that make up the roadway network (for auto and bus travel);
- Existing and currently planned conventional passenger rail service (three round-trips daily);
- Intercity bus service;
- Local public transit services;
- Freight railroad services and planned and committed improvements;
- Air travel; plus
- Projects of all modes that are included in the regional MPO constrained Long Range Transportation Plans.

It is important to note that the No Action Alternative contains no new expenditures beyond those already programmed; consequently it is considered a zero cost option when compared to the Build Alternatives. It is assumed that any improvements necessary to implement the additional roundtrip would occur in advance of the advancement of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project.

The No Action Alternative also makes no provision for any improvement of rail service beyond what is already being operated and currently planned. It assumes the operation of three daily round-trips of conventional speed Amtrak passenger service between Richmond and Newport News connecting to Washington, DC operating on the CSXT alignment on the Peninsula. This is an additional daily round-trip, which is in Amtrak’s long range plan. The No Action Alternative also includes planned and committed railroad improvement projects in the CSXT right-of-way in support of planned freight rail improvements. The No Action Alternative, required by NEPA/CEQ regulations, provides a comparison baseline alternative from which to assess the impacts of the Build Alternatives being evaluated. (Figure 2-2)

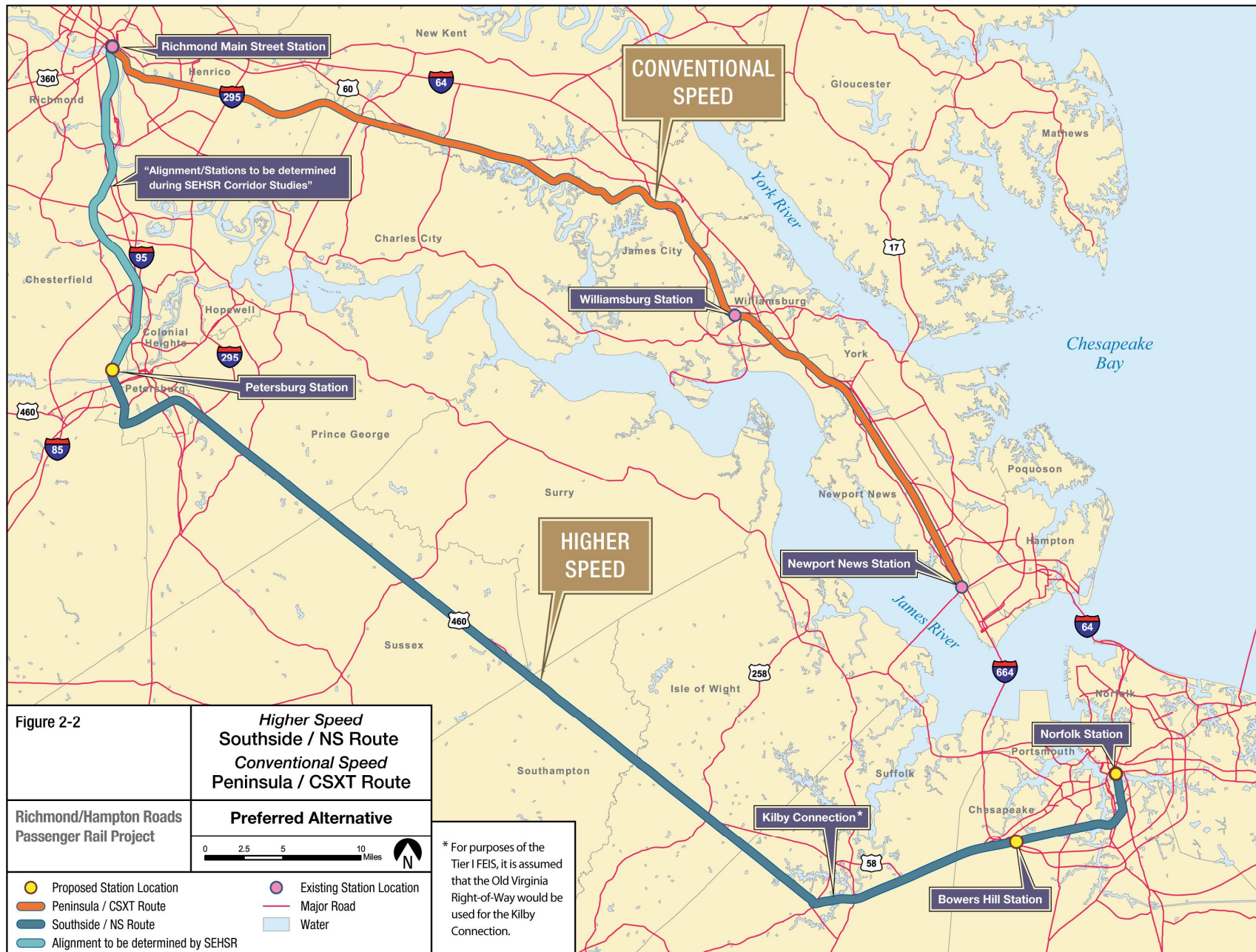
Amtrak has provided plans that include this enhanced service, which is included in the regional transportation network. The Amtrak service currently operates at conventional speeds (maximum 50 mph for freight operations and 79 mph for passenger operations) on tracks shared with CSXT freight operations. . The portion of the service between Richmond and Newport News currently stops at stations in Richmond, Williamsburg, and Newport News.

In January 2008, DRPT issued the *Advancing Passenger Rail in the Commonwealth of Virginia, Short-Term Action Plan, Part 1*. The Newport News to Washington, DC service corridor was identified as an opportunity to provide enhanced passenger rail service in Virginia. The Action Plan provides for one additional round-trip per day on the Peninsula operating at conventional speeds and is consistent with Amtrak’s plans for the route. This proposed short-term service expansion is reflected in the No Action Alternative.





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### 2.4.3 Preferred Alternative- Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed Rail

The Preferred Alternative is the same as Build Alternative 1 defined in the Tier I Draft EIS with the MAS of 90 mph. This alternative serves both sides of the James River. It assumes three daily round-trip trains operating at conventional speeds along the Peninsula/CSXT route, completed under the No Action Alternative, and uses the existing Richmond Main Street Station, Williamsburg Station and Newport News Stations and ultimately new higher speed passenger rail service along the Southside of the James River with six daily round-trip trains, operating at speeds up to 90 mph. Stations along the Southside/NS route include the existing Main Street and Petersburg Stations and new stations at Bowers Hill and Norfolk. Figure 2-2 shows the Preferred Alternative.

The new Southside service would begin in Richmond, travel through Petersburg and terminate in downtown Norfolk. The portion of the Southside route between Richmond Main Street Station and Petersburg, including station improvements in Petersburg, is being evaluated as part of the SEHSR Tier II EIS. This Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project alternative and the SEHSR Project would share the same route between Richmond and Petersburg. Once the SEHSR alignment for this section is finalized, which is anticipated in fall 2011, subsequent analysis would include the engineering, design and construction of these improvements if this route is part of the selected alternative. This Tier I Final EIS provides generalized cost estimates for the Petersburg section to permit equal evaluation of the alternatives and to enable this project to be considered independently of the SEHSR project.

The Preferred Alternative on the Southside Higher Speed Rail route continues from Petersburg to Suffolk and then uses a portion of the right-of-way of the abandoned Virginian Railway Line between Kilby and Algren. This line parallels the existing operating NS freight line between Suffolk and Norfolk. A new connection between the existing NS line and the abandoned Virginian Railway line would be required in the vicinity of Kilby. This connection would likely require new right-of-way to accommodate the transition between lines. This route alignment decreases the level of potential impact to the existing freight operations in this area. The existing double track on the NS line between Petersburg and Norfolk is augmented with a single passing siding, the Ivor Middle Track, about ½-mile long. Other middle tracks existed earlier, when Norfolk and Western operated passenger trains on the route and the sidings allowed faster trains to run past slower freight trains. New passenger operations would require more passing capacity, possibly through reinstallation and extension of former sidings. The use of the abandoned Virginian Railroad right-of-way between Kilby and Norfolk would reduce impacts to freight railroad operations but would require considerable expense to acquire and reintroduce railroad operations. Signal improvements would need to be installed to meet FRA regulations for territories operating at 90 mph.

The stations proposed for this alternative include the existing Richmond Main Street, Williamsburg and Newport News stations on the Peninsula route; and the Petersburg, proposed Bowers Hill and proposed Downtown Norfolk stations on the Southside route. The Richmond Main Street Station would be improved to accommodate higher speed rail service. However, the cost of these improvements has not been evaluated for the Tier I Final EIS and will be included in corridor development plans for the Washington, DC to Richmond corridor. The Washington, DC to Richmond corridor track capacity improvements must be completed prior to implementation of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. All stations would have parking facilities. In the case of Norfolk, existing downtown parking facilities could be used. Existing parking at the Richmond station may be augmented to accommodate more parking spaces.

Potential station locations in the Petersburg area are being evaluated as part of the SEHSR Tier II EIS, and preliminary costs have been included in this Tier I Final EIS for comparison purposes. The stations in Bowers Hill and Downtown Norfolk would involve the construction of new stations. The Bowers Hill Station would serve the large Southside geographic area beyond Norfolk and Portsmouth. This location could provide a strong interface between passenger rail service and automobile traffic at I-264 and the Hampton Roads Beltway (I-64/664). Preliminary analysis suggests that a suitable location could be established just east of the Algren track connection at the crossing of Homestead Road. Other potential station sites examined did not have adequate highway access or sufficient space for station facilities. The station in Downtown Norfolk is located just north of the Elizabeth River and east of the Harbor Park baseball stadium, terminating near I-264 and Park Avenue. The Downtown Norfolk station would serve the markets of Norfolk and Portsmouth, providing a central location with access to and from the regional transportation network. A planned light rail line serving this region could provide an additional local transit interface.

**Table 2-2 Summary of Alternatives Evaluated in Tier I Final EIS**

<b>Alternative</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Stations</b>	<b>Operations</b>	<b>Preliminary Capital Cost</b>	<b>Preliminary Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs (millions \$2008)</b>
Status Quo	Existing Conventional Rail on Peninsula/CSXT route	Peninsula/CSXT route: Existing Richmond, Williamsburg, and Newport News Amtrak Stations	2 daily round-trip trains on Peninsula/CSXT at 79 mph	NA	No Train
No Action	Existing Conventional Rail on Peninsula/CSXT route	Peninsula/CSXT route: Existing Richmond, Williamsburg, and Newport News Amtrak Stations	3 daily round-trip trains on Peninsula/CSXT at 79 mph	NA	\$21.3 (at 79 mph)
Preferred Alternative	New Incremental Conventional to Higher Speed Rail Service on Southside/NS route; and Existing Conventional Rail on Peninsula/CSXT route	Southside/NS route: Existing Richmond, Petersburg, and new stations at Bowers Hill and downtown Norfolk. Peninsula/CSXT route: Existing Richmond, Williamsburg, and Newport News Amtrak Stations	6 daily round-trip trains on Southside/NS at 90 mph 3 daily round-trip trains on Peninsula/CSXT at 79 mph	\$475.4	\$80

# CHAPTER 3 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

## 3.0 Introduction

The U.S. Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ's) regulations for implementing the procedural provision of NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508) state that the "Human environment shall be interpreted comprehensively to include the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment." Supplementing CEQ's regulations are FRA's Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts (64 Fed. Reg. 28545 (May 26, 1999)). FRA's Procedures further establish the requirements to assess environmental impacts of actions and legislation proposed by FRA.

In accordance with the aforementioned regulations and procedures, this chapter describes the existing environmental conditions in the areas that would be affected by the Preferred Alternative identified by FRA and DRPT in comparison to both the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives and to evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with constructing and operating the Preferred Alternative, as described in Chapter 2 of this document. This chapter also presents potential program-level mitigation strategies to avoid or reduce those impacts. At the end of each section, there are also recommended next steps to be considered as the project advances into more detailed analysis of the Preferred Alternative during Tier II analysis. This chapter also considers, and reflects as appropriate, input received during the comment period for the Tier I Draft EIS. No new analysis has been conducted as part of the preparation of this Tier I Final EIS. However, some information has been refined to focus on the Preferred Alternative, in particular as it relates to the Peninsula/CSX route and use of the existing Newport News Station as the terminus for this route.

This Tier I Final EIS concentrates primarily on the issues related to intercity passenger rail operations between Richmond and Newport News and between Petersburg and Norfolk. The environmental impacts associated with route alternatives between Richmond and Petersburg are being studied by the SEHSR. Detailed analysis of this segment is contained in the SEHSR Tier I EIS and SEHSR Tier II EIS document under development.<sup>25</sup>

The SEHSR Tier II EIS will identify specific actions needed to fully implement high speed rail in the portion of the SEHSR corridor between Richmond and Raleigh, including the identification of specific alignments, station locations, and number of train stops, detailed environmental and engineering analyses and more accurate capital cost estimates. During the Tier II process, planning will be done to avoid, minimize and mitigate environmental impacts. This EIS provides generalized cost estimates for the Richmond - Petersburg section for comparative evaluation of alternatives.

## 3.1 Travel Demand

This section describes passenger rail demand projections for the Richmond/Hampton Roads study area. It includes an analysis of passenger ridership forecasts and impacts on travel times.

Passenger rail travel demand is the primary measurement of transportation benefits for this project. Ridership travel demand measures the potential attractiveness of a new passenger rail service investment for the traveling public. Several measures of ridership were examined to determine the impacts associated with the build alternatives. These measures include average annual passenger rail trips for the Preferred Alternative and the change in ridership when compared to the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives.

### 3.1.1 Methodology

Travel demand analysis was initially performed for the project and reported in the Travel Demand Methodology and Results Report in April 2005, and updated in March 2008 ([http://www.rich2hrrail.info/pages/mp\\_reports.html](http://www.rich2hrrail.info/pages/mp_reports.html)). The travel demand model applied in this analysis was

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<sup>25</sup> SEHSR Tier I documents and current information about the Tier II documents can be found at [www.sehsr.org](http://www.sehsr.org).

developed from extensive market research and observed travel volumes and service characteristics by travel mode that were conducted and assembled in study area markets in the southeast and other regions<sup>26</sup>. For application in this study area, data describing travel within the Richmond/Hampton Roads region was used, including existing travel trips by mode and purpose, and population/employment market growth. More detail describing the methodology used for the analysis can be found in Section 3.1.1 of the Tier I Draft EIS and in the previously referenced Travel Demand Methodology and Results Report.

### 3.1.2 Regulatory Requirements

In addition to the requirements established by CEQ implementing regulations for consideration of environmental impacts, Section 14(n)(13) of FRA's Procedures specifically states that "The EIS should assess the impacts on both passenger and freight transportation, by all modes, from local, regional, national and international perspectives. The EIS should include a discussion of both construction period and long-term impacts on vehicular traffic congestion."

### 3.1.3 Affected Environment

The Richmond/Hampton Roads study area stretches approximately 120 miles from Virginia Beach and southeastern Hampton Roads to the western suburbs of Richmond. I-64 connects the Peninsula/CSXT route from end-to-end and Route 460 connects the Southside/NS route from end-to-end. The mouth of the James River presents a natural barrier in the study area, separating the Peninsula from the Southside. Two crossings, the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel and the Monitor-Merrimac Bridge-Tunnel, provide automobile access from the Southside to the Peninsula.

The travel demand study area includes the portion of I-95 in the Northeast Corridor stretching from Petersburg to Boston, MA; including Washington, DC; Baltimore, MD; Philadelphia, PA; and New York, NY. The study area also includes the portion of the I-85 Corridor consistent with the proposed SEHSR project, stretching between Petersburg and Charlotte, NC; including Raleigh, NC; Durham, NC; Greensboro, NC; and Winston-Salem, NC.

Amtrak intercity passenger rail service, Greyhound intercity bus service, and direct airline service operate in the study area. Currently Amtrak provides two daily round-trip trains between Newport News and Richmond, with through service to the Northeast Corridor. Amtrak also provides service between Newport News and the Southeast through connections in Richmond.

Greyhound provides six direct daily round-trips between Norfolk and Richmond, but provides limited direct intercity bus service to destinations outside the Richmond/Hampton Roads region. Greyhound provides one direct daily round-trip between Norfolk and Washington, DC, three direct daily round-trips between Norfolk and New York, NY, and no direct daily round-trips between Norfolk and Charlotte, NC.

Though there is no direct air travel service between the three major airports within the study area, (Norfolk International, Newport News-Williamsburg International, and Richmond International), the airports provide direct daily service to all of the major cities in the northeast and southeast.

### 3.1.4 Environmental Consequences

This section provides an overview of the potential effects of travel demand, followed by a discussion of the Status Quo, No Action and Preferred Alternative. Future travel conditions will be analyzed in more detail and additional ridership forecasts will be prepared as part of any Tier II analysis.

#### 3.1.4.1 Range of Passenger Rail Ridership Forecasts

As described above, the analysis and prediction of future intercity passenger rail travel demand began with quantifying existing travel by mode, geography, and trip purpose. The analysis included an examination of existing automobile, air, rail and intercity bus trips to and from the Hampton Roads region. Total intercity

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<sup>26</sup> Phase II – New Orleans to Mobile Corridor Development Plan, Ridership and Revenue Forecasts prepared for Southern Rapid Rail Transit Commission (January 2005); Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor, Ridership and Revenue Forecasts in Support of the Amtrak Cascades Plan for Washington State 2003-2023 Update (July 2003); Southeast High-Speed Rail (SEHSR) and other corridor studies for adjacent states in the Southeast (1997-2008); California intercity passenger rail forecasting in the Pacific *Surfliner*, *Capitol*, and *San Joaquin* corridors for Amtrak and California (1996-2008).

travel trips in 2025, the forecast year, were estimated to be approximately 28 million annual trips in both directions. The 28 million annual trips refer to total annual 2025 intercity travel trips between Hampton Roads and Richmond and between Hampton Roads and other communities along the Northeast Corridor and the proposed SEHSR system from New York, NY to Charlotte, NC. This estimate is based on projected population and employment growth in the study area, and the future highway network as described by the MPOs in the study area. This estimate represents an increase over current conditions, and does not include the impact of proposed improvements to passenger rail service in the corridor.

Table 3-1 summarizes the estimated range of probable 2025 ridership to/from Hampton Roads for the proposed alternatives. All of the ridership results are shown in total and relative to the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives that provide conventional (79 mph maximum) speed service along the existing Amtrak Peninsula/CSXT route.

**Table 3-1: Estimated Range of Probable Passenger Rail Ridership (2025)**

	Status Quo 79 mph	No Action 79 mph	Preferred Alternative 90 mph
	Peninsula/CSXT high	262,300	464,800
Peninsula/CSXT low	245,500	425,700	212,500
Southside/NS high	0	0	886,700
Southside/NS low	0	0	727,100
<b>Total High</b>	262,300	464,800	1,110,100
<b>Total Low</b>	245,500	425,700	939,600
<b>Difference from 79 mph Status Quo Alternative</b>			
High		202,500	847,800
Low		180,200	694,100
<b>Difference from 79 mph No Action Alternative</b>			
High			645,300
Low			513,900

Source: *Travel Demand Methodology and Results*, revised March 2008.

The forecast passenger rail ridership results for 2025 reflect changes in service frequencies; improved connections; population and employment growth over the planning time horizon; improved on-time performance; and highly competitive rail travel times when compared to highway travel times. The significant increase in ridership forecast for the No Action Alternative when compared to the Status Quo Alternative reflects the addition of one daily round-trip train between Richmond and Newport News. SEHSR trains would serve the Richmond Main Street Station, providing faster, more frequent service to Washington DC. The link to the Northeast Corridor at Richmond would ultimately enable connection via Amtrak to major markets in the Northeast and Southeast, such as New York, Boston, Raleigh and Charlotte.

These ridership and revenue results are presented as a range to highlight the sensitivity to key assumptions in the ridership forecasting model: 1) the on-time performance of the proposed service and 2) the future highway speeds outside the Richmond/Hampton Roads study area. The forecasts at the lower end of the range assume:

- The on-time performance (OTP) of the proposed service will not improve from the existing 72 percent in the study area today, and
- The highway speeds outside the Richmond/Hampton Roads corridor will not change in the future.

The forecasts at the higher end of the range assume:

- The future on-time performance of the proposed service will be 90 percent, and
- The future highway travel times outside the Richmond/Hampton Roads study area will increase in a similar magnitude as the increase in future highway travel times within the Richmond/Hampton Roads study area as shown by the MPO models.

A detailed explanation of the assumptions used in the travel demand model is contained in Appendix G of the Tier I Draft EIS (Travel Forecasting Methodology, April, 2005, revised March 2008).



### 3.1.4.2 Impact on Travel Times

The impact on travel times between origins and destinations in the Richmond/Hampton Roads study area was evaluated using several representative trips from within the study area to Charlotte, New York, Richmond and Washington, DC. The selected origins include terminal stations on each route in the study area. The terminal station on the Peninsula/CSXT route is the existing Newport News Amtrak Station. The terminal station on the Southside/NS route is Downtown Norfolk.

Table 3-2 presents a summary comparison of the travel times, frequency and designed on-time performance (OTP) for each of the representative rail trips under the Preferred Alternative and changes from the Status Quo and No Action alternatives for the 90 mph option. All of the travel times represent total travel time, including transfer-related wait time (for trips to Charlotte, NC) and in vehicle (on-mode) travel time. The travel times and frequencies are based on existing and proposed schedules.

Future improved passenger rail services between Richmond and Hampton Roads along the two routes would benefit from new capital investment in the railroads to improve speed, capacity, and OTP. OTP of approximately 90 percent is expected for any new service associated with this project. The proposed capital improvements have been designed to support this specific OTP goal.

**Table 3-2: Summary of Station-to-Station Round Trips and On Time Performance for Alternatives (90 mph)**

		79 mph Status Quo				79 mph No Action				Southside NS Preferred Alternative			
Station 1	Station 2	Daily Round Trips	Travel Time	MAS <sup>1</sup> (mph)	OTP <sup>2</sup>	Daily Round Trips	Travel Time	MAS <sup>1</sup> (mph)	OT P <sup>2</sup>	Daily Round Trips	Travel Time	MAS <sup>1</sup> (mph)	OTP <sup>2</sup>
Newport News - Existing Amtrak Station	Richmond - Main Street	2	1:25	79	72%	3	1:11	79	72%	3	1:11	79	72%
	Washington, DC	2	4:13	79	72%	3	3:32	79	72%	3	3:32	79	72%
	New York, NY	2	8:38	79	72%	3	7:03	79	72%	3	7:03	79	72%
	Charlotte, NC <sup>3</sup>	1	11:07	79	72%	2	8:41	79	72%	2	8:41	79	72%
Norfolk	Richmond - Main Street									6	1:35	90	90%
	Washington, DC									5.5 <sup>4</sup>	3:35	90	90%
	New York, NY									5.5 <sup>4</sup>	6:31	90	90%
	Charlotte, NC <sup>3</sup>									3	6:37	90	90%

<sup>1</sup> MAS - Maximum Authorized Speed

<sup>2</sup> OTP - On Time Performance

<sup>3</sup> Trips to Charlotte are via connection in Richmond or Petersburg. Riders from Newport News to Charlotte always transfer in Richmond. Riders from Norfolk to Charlotte transfer in Petersburg in Alternatives 1 and 2a.

<sup>4</sup> Statistical calculations produced an additional half trip. Operating plan provided an extra frequency in one direction.

There is not a feasible transfer to Charlotte for every Hampton Roads-Richmond train; therefore there are fewer frequencies to Charlotte than other cities.

Notes:

-In the low-end ridership forecasts, OTP for all alternatives is assumed to be 72%.

-In Alternatives 1 and 2a Newport News and Norfolk are served by two separate rail routes.

-Blank cells indicate no service between the station pairs for the specific alternative.

Source: *Travel Demand Methodology and Results*, revised March 2008.

Travel times were also estimated for representative automobile trips utilizing the 2025 highway network forecast. Table 3-3 summarizes the travel times for automobile trips originating in either downtown Norfolk or downtown Newport News and terminating in New York, Richmond or Washington, DC.

**Table 3-3: Summary of Highway Travel Time for Automobile Trips (2025)**

Origin	Destination	Miles	Travel Time	Average Speed
Newport News	Richmond	83	2:02	41 mph
	Washington, DC	188	4:35	41 mph
	New York, NY	370	8:54	42 mph
Norfolk	Richmond	100	2:28	40 mph
	Washington, DC	204	5:01	41 mph
	New York, NY	359	8:43	41 mph

Source: *Travel Demand Methodology and Results, March 2008.*

Table 3-4 summarizes the total travel time required for highway and passenger rail trips in certain markets among the alternatives. The total travel time includes two major components: rail travel time and access/terminal time. The rail travel time includes the time spent on the train, while the access/terminal time includes the automobile access time at both ends of the trip and the time spent at the rail station. In each market, the table provides the rail travel time, the access/egress time, the total time, and the rail station used on the Hampton Roads end of the trip. For comparison, the estimated 2025 highway travel time is provided for each market.

The Preferred Alternative saves travelers time compared with highway travel in all cases, with time savings increasing as the trip length increases.

Though the total rail travel time is less than highway time in all the markets and alternatives, the attractiveness of rail is less in the shorter distance markets. In the shorter distance markets, the access/terminal time is a larger component of the total travel time than in the longer trips. Based on experience gained through traveler behavior research and intercity passenger rail studies for Amtrak and many states, travelers are much more sensitive to access/terminal time than to rail travel time, and are more likely to choose the automobile over rail in cases where a higher portion of the rail trip time is composed of access/terminal time.

Compared to the longer distance markets between Hampton Roads and the Northeast Corridor, the expected rail market share is lower in the Richmond/Hampton Roads study area. In shorter distance markets (50-100 miles), intercity rail service is much less competitive with the door-to-door automobile travel time. The following discussion summarizes the findings for each of the alternatives evaluated.

During the public hearings on the Tier I Draft EIS, many people commented on the desire for the higher speed of 110 mph; however, analysis found that the option that includes an increase in speed from 90 mph to 110 mph does not improve travel time savings significantly due to factors such as speed-restricted zones<sup>27</sup> encountered along the routes and the fact that the amount of speed increase over the distance being analyzed results in a smaller ratio of time savings as compared to the time savings that could be achieved by other alternatives. In the analysis prepared for the Tier I Draft EIS, the estimated potential travel time savings at 90 mph was shown to have a significant positive effect on the competitive position of the Hampton Roads region within the broader statewide and national economy.

<sup>27</sup> Speed restricted zones are areas where operating speeds are reduced.

**Table 3-4: Summary of Total Travel Time for Alternatives (90 mph)**

Summary of Total Travel Time - 90 mph Alternatives (Year 2025)							
Origin	Destination		Highway	79 mph Status Quo	79 mph No Action	Preferred Alternative	
Norfolk	Richmond	Rail Travel Time		1:25	1:11	1:35	
		Access/Terminal Time		1:20	1:20	0:41	
		Total Time	2:38	2:45	2:31	2:16	
		HR Station		NPN	NPN	NFK	
	Washington, DC	Rail Travel Time			4:13	3:32	3:35
		Access/Terminal Time			1:24	1:24	0:45
		Total Time	5:10		5:37	4:56	4:20
		HR Station			NPN	NPN	NFK
	New York, NY	Rail Travel Time			8:38	7:03	6:31
		Access/Terminal Time			1:26	1:26	0:47
		Total Time	8:38		10:04	8:29	7:18
		HR Station			NPN	NPN	NFK
Newport News	Richmond	Rail Travel Time		1:25	1:11	1:11	
		Access/Terminal Time		0:34	0:34	0:34	
		Total Time	2:00		1:59	1:45	1:45
		HR Station			NPN	NPN	NPN
	Washington, DC	Rail Travel Time			4:13	3:32	3:32
		Access/Terminal Time			0:38	0:38	0:38
		Total Time	4:33		4:51	4:10	4:10
		HR Station			NPN	NPN	NPN
	New York, NY	Rail Travel Time			8:38	7:03	7:03
		Access/Terminal Time			0:40	0:40	0:40
		Total Time	9:00		9:18	7:43	7:43
		HR Station			NPN	NPN	NPN

Rail Station Codes:

NPN - Existing Newport News Amtrak Station

NFK - Proposed Downtown Norfolk Station

### 3.1.4.3 Status Quo Alternative

The Status Quo Alternative assumes that the existing passenger rail service remains at two daily round-trip trains operating at conventional speeds along the Peninsula/CSXT route. Annual projected ridership for 2025 for the Status Quo Alternative is expected to increase by approximately 100,000 from 2007 levels to between 245,500 to 262,300 riders. Table 3-1 summarizes 2025 ridership estimates. 2007 ridership data is provided in Appendix G of the Tier I Draft EIS. The 2025 OTP is expected to remain at 72 percent. See Tables 3-2 for projected OTP.

Future highway travel times between Richmond and Hampton Roads and the Northeast Corridor are predicted to increase, which enhance the attractiveness of rail, increases the overall rail mode share, and decrease the attractiveness of highway travel. Coupled with the uncertainty of automobile fuel costs in the future (though not taken into account in the modeling process), rail travel in this study area could be a very competitive choice.

### 3.1.4.4 No Action Alternative

Annual projected ridership for 2025 for the No Action Alternative is expected to range from 425,700 to 464,800 riders (see Table 3-1 for range of ridership). This represents a significant increase compared to estimated Status Quo ridership. OTP is expected to remain at 72 percent. As stated for the Status Quo Alternative, highway travel times between Richmond, Hampton Roads and the Northeast Corridor are expected to increase. This makes rail a competitive choice within this area. See Table 3-2 for projected OTP.

### 3.1.4.5 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)

Annual projected ridership for 2025 for Alternative 1 is expected to range from 939,600 to 1,162,200 riders. (This range incorporates the low end annual ridership for trains operating at 90 mph and the high end of trains operating at 110 mph as shown in Table 3-1).

OTP was evaluated for conventional speeds for the Peninsula/CSXT route and for the 90 mph for the Southside/NS route. The projected results are presented below:

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>Peninsula/CSXT Route</u>	<u>Southside/NS Route</u>
▪ Conventional Speed (79 mph)	72%	--
▪ 90 mph	--	90%

As stated for the Status Quo Alternative, highway travel times between Richmond, Hampton Roads and the Northeast Corridor are expected to increase. This makes rail a competitive choice within this area.

### 3.1.4.6 Impacts on Competing Modes

**Table 3-5** below demonstrates the impacts of the proposed rail alternatives across all modes of transportation. The table represents the incremental travel trips across all modes compared to the Status Quo alternative, based on the 90 mph/high end forecasts. With the increased rail service provided in the Preferred Alternative, both total automobile and air travel trips decrease. Most of the new rail travel trips are diverted from automobile, with approximately 400,000 automobile trips diverted to rail (Note: since average automobile occupancy is above 1, the actual automobiles removed from roads are fewer than the automobile trips presented).

As shown in Table 3-5, the total incremental rail trips are higher than the trips diverted from automobile. The difference represents new (or induced) trips resulting from the new passenger rail service provided. In the three Build alternatives, the induced rail trips represent over 300,000 of the incremental rail trips.

**Table 3-5: Summary of Incremental Travel Trips Across All Modes**

<b>2025 Travel Trip Increment Compared to Status Quo (90 mph/High End Forecasts)</b>			
	<b>Auto</b>	<b>Air</b>	<b>Rail</b>
Status Quo Alternative	0	0	0
No Action Alternative	-104,000	-24,000	202,500
Preferred Alternative	-393,000	-135,000	847,800

Source: Travel Demand and Methodology and Results, March 2008.

### 3.1.5 Potential Mitigation Strategies

Section 3.1 analyzes the project in the context of the existing travel conditions to determine how the benefit of improved rail service would affect existing travel conditions. Hence, no potential mitigation strategies are proposed. As details for the Preferred Alternative are developed further analysis of ridership in the context of existing and future travel conditions would be conducted and included in subsequent Tier II documentation.

### 3.1.6 Subsequent Analysis

Further analyses of the Preferred Alternative may be performed in order to address details not considered in the Tier I Draft EIS. The most important task related to travel demand would be the development of an optimized rail timetable for the Preferred Alternative. The analysis would be an iterative process which would address the optimal frequency and time of day requirements by market, while also considering the cost required to provide the service. The analysis would have implications on the project's ridership, capital costs and operating costs. The timetable optimization process should be coordinated with the latest SEHSR plans, Richmond-Washington rail plans, and other rail corridor initiatives within Virginia.

Additionally, depending on the amount of time that passes between the completion of this Tier I EIS and additional analyses, updated travel market data, demographic data and forecasts should be included in the travel demand model. The update should include the latest MPO base year and future year highway networks; the latest MPO, statewide, and national socio-economic data and forecasts; and the latest Amtrak

and air travel market data. New license plate surveys would not be necessary, but on-board rail surveys should be considered.

## 3.2 Regional Highway and Localized Traffic Impacts

This section presents the regional highway and localized traffic impacts, as well as the potential parking impacts of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. Highway, passenger transportation service (e.g., intercity bus, rail, multimodal and transit facilities), freight shipment, and parking issues were evaluated in this analysis.<sup>28</sup>

### 3.2.1 Methodology

The traffic, transit, circulation and parking analyses for the Tier I Draft EIS focused on a broad comparison of potential impacts on intercity travel demand, traffic, transit, circulation and parking along the routes and at stations for the Rail Build Alternatives. The potential impacts for each of these alternatives were compared to the No Action and Status Quo Alternatives.

#### 3.2.1.1 Determination of Traffic and Regional Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Regional and corridor impacts on highway congestion are measured through changes in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), levels of service for freeways, street lanes and intersections. The Status Quo Alternative and the No Build Alternative highway networks are the baseline for all evaluations of the impacts of the Rail Build Alternatives. Average daily traffic volumes were identified using the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) *Average Daily Traffic Volumes* publication for 2004. A description of the methodology for estimating travel demand, or ridership, used in this analysis is contained in the *Travel Demand Methodology and Results Report*, April 2004, revised March 2008.

#### 3.2.1.2 Localized Traffic Impacts at Rail Stations

The traffic and transportation impacts for each rail station were determined by examining the total annual ridership. However, the ridership forecast does not examine mode of access/egress and, therefore, does not differentiate between park-and-ride trips and drop-off trips. Drop-off trips impart additional traffic onto the roadway network because each drop-off consists of a trip to the rail station and a trip from the rail station, whereas a park-and-ride trip consists of only a single trip at the time of departure. Based on the mode of access survey prepared by Amtrak for the Hampton Roads region in 1995, it was assumed that 70 percent of riders' trips would either be dropped-off by auto or taxi.

Average daily auto trips were computed by assuming an average automobile mode share of 90 percent; that is, 90 percent of passengers would arrive in a vehicle that would add an auto trip to the highway network, which includes taxis. Trips not included in this 90 percent include walking trips, transit trips, bicycle trips and others.

Average peak-hour auto trips were calculated by assuming that 15 percent of the daily trips would occur during the peak hour. This figure is somewhat higher than typical of suburban areas, but a conservatively high figure was used due to the periodic trip peak characteristics caused by train arrivals and departures.

It should be noted that, by definition, the average daily auto trips will be exceeded approximately half the time, so this discussion is intended for planning purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for a comprehensive analysis of the rail station's traffic characteristics. The exact location of all rail stations has not yet been determined. Generalized locations are discussed. More detailed local rail station area traffic and parking analysis would be conducted as a part of the Tier II analysis when the specific route alignment has been selected.

## 3.2.2 Regulatory Requirements

In addition to the requirements established by CEQ implementing regulations for consideration of environmental impacts, FRA's Procedures (64 FR 28545 §14(n)(13)) specifically states that "The EIS should assess the impacts on both passenger and freight transportation, by all modes, from local, regional, national

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<sup>28</sup> The planning horizon year for the analysis is 2025 based on available data from MPO long range plans.

and international perspectives. The EIS should include a discussion of both construction period and long-term impacts on vehicular traffic congestion.”

### 3.2.3 Existing and Future Traffic and Regional Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

The ability of the Preferred Alternative to alter travel patterns on a regional basis can be evaluated through the number of auto trips taken and corresponding changes in VMT. Auto trips include park-and-ride and drop-off trips to rail stations.

Most of the traffic in the region is related to daily commutes. The travel market served by high-speed intercity passenger rail service attracts different types of trips. It is unlikely that the additional rail trips generated by the Preferred Alternative would cause a measurable reduction in automobile traffic on major highways such as Interstates 64 and 95 (I-64 and I-95, respectively), but they do contribute capacity to the respective transportation corridors. According to the ridership forecast presented in Section 3.1, the Preferred Alternative would generate an incremental increase of between 652,300 and 899,900 rail passenger trips annually when compared to the Status Quo Alternative, or an average of approximately 2,000 additional riders per day. When compared to the No Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would generate an incremental increase in rail passenger trips of between 472,100 and 697,400 annually, or an average of approximately 1,400 riders.

Some of these riders would likely be traveling by rail instead of by automobile along I-64, U.S. 460, and I-95, but these riders would make up a small fraction of the total travel trips in these corridors. Long-distance travelers are more likely than commuters to travel in multiple-occupant vehicles, and some of these trips may use routes other than I-64 and I-95, depending on their ultimate origins and destinations. It is unlikely that half of the riders would divert vehicles from the interstate routes, but in order to fully assess the potential effects of highway-rail diversion, a 50 percent rate is assumed for the purposes of this discussion. This assumption is based on the license plate survey conducted as part of the 2004 Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Study. Also based on that same survey, the average vehicle occupancy rate along U.S. Route 460 and I-64 was 1.75 people across all trip purposes, thus for every 1,750 passengers, the Preferred Alternative would divert 1,000 vehicles.

According to the VDOT *Average Daily Traffic Volumes* 2004 publication, I-64 carried approximately 126,000 vehicles per day across the Hampton/Newport News city limit in 2004. Assuming even a moderate ½-percent-per-year growth rate, the volume would be expected to increase to approximately 140,000 vehicles per day by 2025. A reduction of 1,000 vehicles (estimated from the approximate measure of 2,000 new rail riders per day) caused by diversion to rail would amount to only approximately seven-tenths of one percent. This fraction is small enough that the resultant decrease in traffic would not be measurable, given the normal daily and seasonal fluctuations in traffic volume.

The section of I-64 with the lowest traffic volume is between Route 155 and Route 33 in New Kent County. In this section, traffic volume measured approximately 40,000 vehicles per day in 2004 and might be expected to increase to approximately 45,000 per day by 2025. The reduction of 1,000 vehicles would amount to a larger fraction of the total, approximately 2.3 percent in this portion of I-64. However, the lowest-volume section is also the least congested section, so the reduction would be of less benefit to the remaining through traffic.

The effects on I-95 would be even less pronounced. I-95 carried 145,000 vehicles per day at the I-64 interchange in 2004 and could increase to 160,000 per day by 2025. The 1,000-vehicle diversion would amount to a reduction of only approximately 0.6 percent.

Furthermore, there is a well established tendency for traffic to rebalance itself to account for changes in traffic conditions. If a travel time savings did occur on the I-64 or I-95 routes, the savings likely would be immediately offset by the induced demand of additional vehicles that would divert to the affected routes.

### 3.2.4 Localized Traffic Impacts at Rail Stations

Detailed analysis of localized traffic impacts at rail stations would be assessed as part of the Tier II analysis and documentation. This section describes the potential traffic impacts at the rail stations proposed for the Preferred Alternative.

### 3.2.4.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route Stations

**Newport News Amtrak Station** - The existing Newport News Amtrak Station would remain open under the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives, as well as under the Preferred Alternative. There would be no change to the existing traffic characteristics around the existing Newport News Amtrak Station under the Status Quo Alternative. Traffic volumes would increase around the station in the No Action Alternative and Preferred Alternative due to the proposed increase in service, one additional round trip along the Peninsula/CSXT route.

**Williamsburg Amtrak Station** – The existing Williamsburg Station would remain in use by the Status Quo, No Action and Preferred Alternative.

**Traffic Forecast** - Few trips are expected from any non-auto mode at the Williamsburg Amtrak Station, but carpool trips are expected to be significant. It is likely that carpool trips would cause the auto mode share to drop below 90 percent, but 90 percent was used for this analysis to avoid underestimating the number of automobile trips. The traffic forecast for the Williamsburg Amtrak Station is presented in Table 3-6.

**Table 3-6: Williamsburg Amtrak Station Trip Forecast**

Alternative	Annual Ons and Offs, 2025	Annual Trips Generated <sup>1</sup>	Average Daily Auto Trips <sup>2</sup>	Average Peak-Hour Auto Trips <sup>3</sup>
Status Quo	93,248	139,872	326	33
No Action	154,398	231,597	539	54
Preferred Alternative (90 mph)	148,332	222,498	518	52

Notes:

1. Assumes 50% park-and-ride trips (one trip per rider) and 50% drop-off trips (two trips per rider).
2. Assumes auto mode share of 90 percent.
3. Assumes 15 percent of daily traffic during peak hour.

Source: Travel Demand Methodology and Results, AECOM, March 2008<sup>29</sup>.

**Vehicular Access/Egress** - Existing access to the Williamsburg Amtrak Station is provided from the south, along Armistead Avenue and North Boundary Street north of Lafayette Street. The proposed station improvements include a second access point from the north, via a driveway intersecting North Henry Street just north of the railroad crossing.

The ability to access the station from multiple points is a traffic operational advantage because it helps reduce trip length and disperses trips among more than one access point. However, the proposed North Henry Street access point must be carefully integrated with the existing driveway nearby to avoid traffic conflicts. It may be appropriate to consolidate the rail station driveway and the existing driveway onto a new roadway. More detailed analysis to determine what roadway improvements will be necessary will be conducted during Tier II analysis, as described in Section 3.2.7 of this chapter.

VDOT's 2004 *Average Daily Traffic Volumes* publication shows that Lafayette Street (Route 5) carries approximately 10,000 vehicles per day east of North Henry Street, and that Henry Street (Route 132) carries 5,400 vehicles per day south of Lafayette Street and approximately 6,800 vehicles per day north of Lafayette Street. The modest volume entering the rail station, coupled with the multiple access points, would not suggest the need for intrusive traffic controls at a new North Henry Street driveway intersection; however, further traffic control analysis will be included with the Tier II analyses.

Near the Williamsburg Amtrak Station, the new intersection created on North Henry Street north of Lafayette Street may present safety challenges due to its proximity to the railroad, the adjacent private parking lot, and the signalized intersection of Henry and Lafayette Streets. Changes to the cross-section of North Henry Street may be needed at this location.

**Pedestrian Access/Egress** - Existing pedestrian access to the rail station occurs from the south, and it is likely that all pedestrian access would occur from the south under any alternative. Pedestrian facilities exist on North Henry Street to include sidewalks with pedestrian crossing gates north of the railroad crossing.

<sup>29</sup> The Travel Demand Methodology and Results report can be reviewed at: [http://www.rich2hrrail.info/pages/mp\\_reports.html](http://www.rich2hrrail.info/pages/mp_reports.html)

### 3.2.4.2 Southside/NS Route Stations

**Downtown Norfolk Rail Station** - The proposed Norfolk Rail Station is sited on the north bank of the Elizabeth River just east of the Harbor Park baseball stadium. Access would be provided from Park Avenue. The total number of trips to and from the rail station was computed as shown in Table 3-7.

The auto mode share in Norfolk was estimated at 85 percent instead of 90 percent, accounting for the slightly greater likelihood that patrons would arrive at the station by transit. The rail station would be located adjacent to a proposed Hampton Roads Transit light rail transit station as well as the downtown bus circulator. In addition, the share of daily auto trips that would occur in the peak hour was set at 10 percent due to the more urban character of the site.

The traffic forecast shows a higher number of trips than at the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station (see the following subsection), approximately 250 peak-hour trips for the Preferred Alternative.

**Vehicular Access/Egress** - Access to the rail station is complicated by the presence of the parking lot for the Harbor Park stadium. It is expected that access to the rail station would occur from the existing stadium access point, along Park Avenue just west of Holt Street. However, the access point may need to be reconfigured to permit safe and efficient use by both rail and stadium patrons. It may be desirable to reconfigure the access point so that it is directly opposite Holt Street. This would permit the intersection to be signalized more efficiently if needed, and it would avoid the traffic operational problem of interlocking left-turns on Park Avenue.

**Table 3-7: Norfolk Rail Station Trip Forecast**

Alternative	Annual Ons and Offs, 2025	Annual Trips Generated <sup>1</sup>	Average Daily Auto Trips <sup>2</sup>	Average Peak-Hour Auto Trips <sup>3</sup>
Status Quo	0	0	0	0
No Action	0	0	0	0
Preferred Alternative (90 mph)	633,111	949,667	2,212	221

Notes:

1. Assumes 50% park-and-ride trips (one trip per rider) and 50% drop-off trips (two trips per rider).
2. Assumes auto mode share of 85 percent.
3. Assumes 10 percent of daily traffic during peak hour.

Source: Travel Demand Methodology and Results, AECOM, March 2008 ([http://www.rich2hrrail.info/pages/mp\\_reports.html](http://www.rich2hrrail.info/pages/mp_reports.html))

Park Avenue carries one lane westbound and two lanes eastbound in the vicinity of the site. With this configuration, a single vehicle stopped in the westbound lane waiting to turn left into the parking lot would block all westbound traffic on the street. Depending on future traffic volume forecasts, it may be desirable to reconfigure Park Avenue with a westbound left-turn pocket in the vicinity of Holt Street.

**Pedestrian Access/Egress** - Care will be taken to ensure that an adequate access route to the rail station exists for pedestrians, cyclists, and persons with disabilities. They may comprise a small fraction of the total trips, but due to the urban nature of the site, some passengers would likely access the rail station using non-motorized modes.

**Bowers Hill Rail Station** - A proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station could be sited to provide access via Military Highway, which carries US-13 and US-460 in the vicinity of the station. A preliminary trip forecast for the Bowers Hill Rail Station was prepared based on rail ridership estimates. The trip forecasts are presented in Table 3-8 and discussed further below.



**Table 3-8: Bowers Hill Rail Station Trip Forecast**

Alternative	Annual Ons and Offs, 2025	Annual Trips Generated <sup>1</sup>	Average Daily Auto Trips <sup>2</sup>	Average Peak-Hour Auto Trips <sup>3</sup>
Status Quo	0	0	0	0
No Build	0	0	0	0
Preferred Alternative (90 mph)	241,917	362,876	845	85

**General Notes:**

1. Assumes 50% park-and-ride trips (one trip per rider) and 50% drop-off trips (two trips per rider).
2. Assumes auto mode share of 90 percent.
3. Assumes 15 percent of daily traffic during peak hour.

Source: Travel Demand Methodology and Results, AECOM, March 2008. ([http://www.rich2hrrail.info/pages/mp\\_reports.html](http://www.rich2hrrail.info/pages/mp_reports.html))

At the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station, the traffic forecast shows approximately 85 peak-hour trips for the Preferred Alternative. At the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station, few trips are expected from any non-auto mode, but carpool trips are expected to be significant. It is likely that carpool trips would cause the auto mode share to drop below 90 percent, but 90 percent was used for this analysis to avoid underestimating the number of automobile trips.

**Vehicular Access/Egress** - Even the largest trip forecast, 85 trips per hour, is fairly modest and traffic volumes at this level would not generally indicate the need for a traffic signal at the rail station entrance. Military Highway carries approximately 7,600 vehicles per day in the vicinity of the proposed station, according to VDOT's 2004 *Average Daily Traffic Volumes*<sup>30</sup> publication. This traffic level appears to be well within the roadway's capacity; initial observations suggest that the addition of an access point to the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station would not adversely affect capacity on the highway. However, a complete traffic signal warrant analysis would be conducted as design progresses.

Military Highway is a four-lane, undivided cross-section in the vicinity of the rail station and the grade-separated crossing of the railroad. Well away from the railroad crossing, the highway widens to a four-lane divided cross-section. The wide grass median in the divided portion of the highway permits the use of left-turn pockets at intersections. Preliminary analysis conducted by the project team suggests that the highway should be reconfigured in the vicinity of the proposed Bowers Hill Station to provide a left-turn pocket for northwest-bound traffic entering the rail station. Such a facility would improve the safety and traffic operational characteristics of the station access point. It may also be desirable to consider a right-turn deceleration lane into the rail station for southeast-bound traffic. To avoid the need to reconstruct the bridge over the railroad, the station's access point should be situated well away from the bridge. This would allow the roadway to fully taper back to an undivided cross-section before reaching the bridge. As planning and design of the Bowers Hill Rail Station progresses during the Tier II analysis, more detailed traffic analysis would be conducted to determine appropriate roadway configurations to accommodate passenger traffic at this station.

**Pedestrian Access/Egress** - The suburban location of the Bowers Hill Rail Station suggests that virtually all approaching and departing trips would occur by car. The station's access to Military Highway would be at least 1,000 feet away from the nearest intersection on either side, and approaching traffic volume is forecast to be relatively low. As noted earlier, it would be desirable to construct a left-turn storage lane on northwest-bound Military Highway for traffic entering the station; this improvement would have a large public safety benefit. The rail station's access roadway design should also account for the crest vertical curve of the highway as it crosses the railroad; this vertical curvature may impede sight distance for traffic both entering and exiting the rail station.

### 3.2.5 Local Parking Impacts

There should be very minimal to no negative impacts on existing parking spaces by construction of the Preferred Alternative. There is no anticipated loss of existing parking spaces in front of existing businesses and residences. Each rail station would be constructed or modified to enhance existing rail station parking

<sup>30</sup> [http://www.virginiadot.org/info/resources/AADT\\_PrimaryInterstate\\_2004.pdf](http://www.virginiadot.org/info/resources/AADT_PrimaryInterstate_2004.pdf)

and facilities or add parking spaces where none currently exist within safe, convenient walk access of the station. Rail station parking would be sized in accordance with estimated passenger demand for each station in order to avoid and minimize parking spill-over into neighborhoods or commercial areas adjacent to the station area. Table 3-9 summarizes the parking requirements forecast for each rail station and the sections below describe the potential parking impacts for the stations along each route.

**Table 3-9: Parking Requirements at Rail Stations**

Alternative	Rail Station			
	Bowers Hill	Norfolk	Newport News	Williamsburg
Status Quo	0	0	0	49
No Action	0	0	0	49
Preferred Alternative (90 mph)	94	252	0	46

**General Notes:**

1. Only Hampton Roads residents would park at stations.
2. 52 percent of all trips are made by Hampton Roads residents (Source: 2004 License Plate Survey).
3. 29 percent of all Hampton Roads residents park at the station (Source: 1995 Amtrak Survey).
4. Average trip duration is 3 days (Source: 1995 Amtrak Survey).
5. Average Vehicle occupancy by trip purpose: 1.4 business, 2.1 recreation, 1.6 other (Source: 2004 License Plate Survey).
6. Parking at Williamsburg Station is currently constrained and would remain constrained under the Status Quo Alternative, the No Action Alternative and Preferred Alternative .

Source: Travel Demand Methodology and Results, March 2008.

### 3.2.5.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route Rail Stations

**Newport News Amtrak Station** - In the Status Quo Alternative, service along the Peninsula/CSXT Route would remain the same. No changes to parking at the existing Newport News Amtrak Station are warranted. In the No Action Alternative and Preferred Alternative, additional parking demand would likely be generated by increased ridership.

**Williamsburg Amtrak Station** - The existing Williamsburg Amtrak Station offers very limited parking at up to 49 spaces. In this constrained condition, the parking supply is not sufficient to meet the demands of either the Status Quo Alternative, the No Action Alternative or Preferred Alternative as shown in the forecast in Table 3-9.

One possible option for additional space is a vacant parcel approximately one acre in size north of the Williamsburg Amtrak Station that could be used for expanded parking and station facilities. The peak average demand of 120 spaces could be served by a surface parking lot on a parcel this size, but it would use approximately 85 percent of the parcel. It may be desirable to enlarge the parcel slightly if additional space is needed for other station facilities. The parking demand forecast and parking facilities at the Williamsburg Amtrak Station would be subjected to more refined analysis in subsequent analysis.

### 3.2.5.2 Southside/NS Route Stations

**Downtown Norfolk Rail Station** - As noted in Table 3-12, the Downtown Norfolk Rail Station was estimated to require an average of approximately 250 parking spaces for the Preferred Alternative with 90-mph service. There is limited vacant land available for construction of new surface parking near the proposed Downtown Norfolk Rail Station. However, significant parking exists in the stadium's parking lot, and there are a total of approximately 2,000 parking spaces, owned by the City of Norfolk, within walking distance of the stadium. Some of these nearby parking spaces could potentially be designated by the city for the use of rail passengers.

Conflicting demands for parking would occur during events at Harbor Park. The stadium has a seating capacity of 12,067, and nearby parking facilities are often stressed during stadium events. Designating 250 to 270 spaces for rail passengers would make approximately 13 percent of the nearby parking spaces unavailable for stadium patrons, further stressing supply during stadium events.

It would be possible to permit rail passengers to use the Harbor Park parking lot without specifically designating the spaces for rail use. This would permit the spaces to be used by either rail passengers or stadium patrons as needed. However, when train arrivals or departures coincide with stadium events, this

approach would likely mean that rail passengers would be unable to locate appropriate long-term parking nearby.

It would also be possible, although costly, to construct a multi-level parking garage on the site of the existing surface parking lot between Harbor Park and the proposed rail station. The additional parking supply could be shared between the two uses or designated for individual uses.

In either case, if rail and stadium parking is provided in the same physical lot, the parking payment facilities must be carefully integrated. Currently, parking facilities near the stadium usually charge a flat fee during stadium events; this rate is unlikely to be appropriate for rail passengers. Long-term parking rates are usually based on the length of the stay to discourage vehicles from parking for very long periods. Also, the parking payment system should be designed to avoid charging drivers who arrive at the rail station to drop off or pick up rail passengers, even during stadium events. It may be possible to configure an electronic parking payment system, using parking tickets or similar means, to correctly bill all three uses—stadium patrons, long-term rail passengers, and drop-off traffic—using a single lot and payment point. However, there are also advantages to maintaining completely separate parking facilities for rail passengers.

**Bowers Hill Rail Station** - As shown in Table 3-9, the average parking demand at the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station would be approximately 100 cars under the Preferred Alternative. At the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station, a parcel of land approximately 2.5 acres in area has been potentially identified for station facilities. The site is currently vacant and could easily accommodate a surface parking lot.

In surface parking lots, one acre of land can usually accommodate approximately 140 parking spaces. As such, the 100 spaces under the Preferred Alternative would require approximately 0.7 acre, well within the 2.5-acre parcel proposed for the station facilities.

Further analysis of parking demand would be required to refine the parking demand estimates at the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station. Average parking demand is sufficient for high-level planning, but the parking supply should exceed average demand to satisfy above-average demand levels.

### 3.2.6 Potential Mitigation Strategies

Mitigation strategies that minimize the project's impact on highways, local roads, and parking would vary depending on the nature of the impact. For example, physical improvements could be made to intersections and roadways. For existing intersections with traffic signals and where rights-of-way are available, additional turning lanes and through lanes could be added.

Peak hour traffic impacts at stations would be minimal. Intercity rail travel demand does not have the same peak traffic characteristics as commuter rail systems. Hence, it is expected that access/egress traffic impacts would be evenly spread out over the entire service period and would occur when trains arrive and depart.

Additional methods to improve the capacity of highway intersections and arterials without physical improvements are possible. These methods are typically called Transportation Systems Management (TSM) improvements. Transportation system assessments typically find that the highway system, while appearing to be saturated, is operating at less than peak efficiency. Minor investments could either preserve the system for future needs or enhance the operation to a more optimal level. This would be desirable since these actions can assist day-to-day travel and forestall the time when major investments will be more urgently required. Additionally, other strategic investments for specific new facilities or programs could be made that relieve existing problems. These types of actions can include provisions for bike facilities or actions to reduce travel through incentives for transit and carpooling. Congestion management and incident management programs also could help reduce delay.

Elevated pedestrian walkways could be provided to eliminate the pedestrian traffic conflicts with turning and crossing vehicles. This would also help reduce delays to vehicular traffic.

Station, parking lot and maintenance facility designs could include operational and geometric improvements that maintain, wherever reasonably possible, traffic conditions at acceptable levels of service. In general, mitigation would include the realignment of local traffic patterns and the creation of additional parking.

Bus routes and other feeder systems could be rerouted to serve the passenger rail stations in addition to normal routes. It is expected that the impact to other modes of transit would be insignificant.

Measures would be established to encourage and promote access to passenger rail stations by high-occupancy vehicle modes as well as by pedestrian access and non-motorized vehicles. These measures could include bicycle facilities, convenient pedestrian access, pedestrian scale enhancements, cooperative agreements with transit and private shuttle services. System design and layout would accommodate multimodal transfers by providing means of direct access to other transit modes and by making multimodal connections convenient and safe.

### 3.2.7 Subsequent Analysis

Subsequent Tier II analysis for the Preferred Alternative would include the following:

- Traffic signal warrant analysis
- Parking demand analysis
- Pedestrian and bicycle access and safety analysis
- Traffic demand and control analysis at station locations

## 3.3 Grade Crossing Safety Impacts and Railroad Operations

This section describes the safety concerns at highway-rail grade crossings and pedestrian safety associated with higher speed rail service and railroad operations. These concerns were examined in more general terms given the broad scope of the Tier I Draft EIS. Other issues regarding passenger safety, security and operational safety will be addressed in the Tier II analyses for the Preferred Alternative.

### 3.3.1 Methodology

All existing public and private highway-rail grade crossings along the Peninsula/CSXT and Southside/NS Routes were identified. A reasonable assumption as to the percentage of highway-rail grade crossing closures for each route was identified based on prior corridor studies performed for FRA, Amtrak, states and regional authorities. This analysis does not identify particular grade crossings that would merit closure. Additional design analysis and consultations with citizens and elected officials along each route would precede the identification of crossing closures and separations and would be identified during Tier II analysis.

Potential impacts to pedestrian safety related to grade crossings and at stations have been evaluated at a high level. For the Tier I Draft EIS, only general areas of potential conflict were identified. More detailed study would be required for Tier II analyses of the Preferred Alternative.

Effects on rail operations were identified through the engineering feasibility analysis completed for the Richmond to Hampton Roads Alternatives Analysis (*Engineering Feasibility Analysis Technical Memorandum, November 2005*). This analysis focused on areas along the existing rail lines that would have capacity restrictions related to either increased train frequencies or operational speeds.

### 3.3.2 Regulatory Framework

In addition to the requirements established by CEQ implementing procedures for consideration of environmental impacts, FRA's Procedures (64 FR 28545 §14(n)(13)) specifically states that "The EIS should assess the impacts on both passenger and freight transportation, by all modes, from local, regional, national and international perspectives. The EIS should include a discussion of both construction period and long-term impacts on vehicular traffic congestion." Under the topic of public safety (64 FR §14(n)(18)), the procedures state, "The EIS should assess the transportation or use of any hazardous materials which may be involved in the alternatives, and the level of protection afforded residents of the affected environment from construction period and long-term operations associated with the alternatives."

Both FRA and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have responsibility for highway-rail grade crossing safety. The FRA regulates the aspects of grade crossing safety related specifically to train activated warning devices. The FHWA is responsible for public grade crossing issues that affect highway safety. Title 49 of the U.S. Code covers enacted federal legislation pertaining to railroads. Specifically, Chapters 51, 201, 203, 205, 207, 209, 211, and 213 pertain to safety related issues.

The FRA provides guidance on its web site pertaining to highway-rail crossings through several publications, such as "Highway-Rail Grade Crossings – A Guide to Crossing Consolidation and Closure" and "Guidance on Traffic Control Devices at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings." The FRA has also published the "Compilation of

State Laws and Regulations on Matters Affecting Highway-Rail Crossings.” This compilation provides information on various state laws and regulations pertaining to safety issues and railroads. This addresses the Commonwealth of Virginia’s policies. In Virginia, the Commonwealth Transportation Board has statutory authority over elimination or consolidation of multiple grade crossings. Virginia has outlined specific safety-related regulations that are required of railroads. As planning for the project progresses, consideration should be given to these policies.

The FHWA provides regulations guiding highway traffic control devices such as circular advance warnings, crossbucks, pavement markings, bells, gates and flashing lights. The FHWA provides guidance for traffic controls at highway-rail crossings in the “*Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highway, Part 8 Traffic Controls for Highway-Rail Grade Crossings, November 2003.*”<sup>31</sup>

### 3.3.3 Affected Environment

#### 3.3.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

**Grade Crossings** - Numerous public and private crossings are located along this route. Private crossings are mostly related to farms; however, they can be related to residential, recreational or industrial properties. Table 3-10 shows the number and types of crossings along the Peninsula/CSXT route. Current safety measures at public crossings include stand-alone flashers, flashers with gates, and crossbucks. Flashers with gates currently do not protect private crossings along this route.

**Pedestrian Safety** - Along the Peninsula/CSXT Route, three Amtrak stations exist today, including the Richmond Main Street, Williamsburg, and Newport News Amtrak Stations. Richmond Main Street Station is elevated and pedestrian safety is not considered an issue. Pedestrian safety concerns related to the stations along this route include the proposed park-and-ride lot at the Williamsburg Amtrak Station. Since space is limited around the Williamsburg Amtrak Station, one site being considered for a park-and-ride lot is on the opposite side of the tracks from the station. Additionally, the existing freight and passenger rail lines for this route run through some small towns and cities. Based on field reviews, limited fencing exists to prevent pedestrians from trespassing on the tracks at potentially dangerous locations.

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<sup>31</sup> [http://www.wbdg.org/ccb/FHWA/mutcd\\_p1.pdf](http://www.wbdg.org/ccb/FHWA/mutcd_p1.pdf)

Table 3-10: Inventory of Existing Highway-Rail Grade Crossings

Segment	Line	Miles	Number of Public Crossings	Public Crossings per Mile	Number of Private Crossings	Private Crossings per Mile	Total Crossings	Total Crossings per Mile
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>								
City of Richmond	Richmond to Newport News	1.26	0	0	0	0	0	0
Henrico County	Richmond to Newport News	13.74	5	0.36	1	0.07	6	0.44
Charles City County	Richmond to Newport News	4	2	0.5	2	0.5	4	1
New Kent County	Richmond to Newport News	13	6	0.46	16	1.23	22	1.69
James City County	Richmond to Newport News	12.3	2	0.16	8	0.65	10	0.81
City of Williamsburg	Richmond to Newport News	6.1	2	0.33	0	0	2	0.33
York County	Richmond to Newport News	2.4	1	0.4	0	0	1	0.4
James City County	Richmond to Newport News	1.45	0	0	0	0	0	0
City of Newport News	Richmond to Newport News	19.65	4	0.2	1	0.05	5	0.25
<b>Route Sub-Total</b>		<b>73.9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0.68</b>
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>								
City of Petersburg	Petersburg-Kilby	1.55	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prince George County	Petersburg-Kilby	10.3	5	0.49	3	0.29	8	0.78
Sussex County	Petersburg-Kilby	16.85	6	0.36	5	0.3	11	0.65
Southampton County	Petersburg-Kilby	8.36	1	0.12	4	0.48	5	0.6
Isle of Wight County	Petersburg-Kilby	9.19	6	0.65	2	0.22	8	0.87
City of Suffolk	Petersburg-Kilby	5.45	3	0.55	0	0	3	0.55
City of Suffolk	Kilby Connection	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	0
City of Suffolk	Virginian - Kilby to Algren	9.81	7	0.71	9	0.92	16	1.63
City of Chesapeake	Virginian - Kilby to Algren	1.21	2	1.65	0	0	2	1.65
City of Chesapeake	Virginian - Algren to S. Norfolk	10.18	10	0.98	3	0.29	13	1.28
City of Chesapeake	NS Main Line	1.64	3	1.83	0	0	3	1.83
City of Norfolk	NS Main Line	1.26	3	2.38	2	1.59	5	3.97
<b>Route Sub-Total</b>		<b>77.3</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0.36</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>0.96</b>

**Rail Operations** - The Peninsula/CSXT Route alternatives would utilize former Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) right-of-way from Richmond Main Street Station to Downtown Newport News. CSX Transportation (CSXT) is the successor in interest to the C&O railroad. Amtrak is the National Railroad Passenger Corporation and is the only operator of passenger trains along this route.

The CSXT Main Line between Richmond Main Street Station (milepost CA84.9) and the present Newport News Amtrak Station (milepost CAE14) is a combination of single and double track segments, nearly 71 miles long. Current maximum freight train speed on the line is 50 mph. This track presently is maintained to FRA Class 4<sup>32</sup> standards that allow passenger train operating speeds of 79 miles per hour. There are currently several sections of double track and only one signal-controlled siding on the line between Richmond and Newport News.

### 3.3.3.2 Southside/NS Route

**Grade Crossings** - Similar to the Peninsula/CSXT route, numerous public and private crossings exist along the Southside/NS route. Table 3-10 also shows the number and types of crossings along the Southside/NS Route. Current safety measures at public crossings include stand-alone flashers, flashers with gates, and crossbucks. Flashers with gates are not included at any private crossings along this route today.

**Pedestrian Safety** – The passenger rail stations currently in operation along the Southside/NS route are the Richmond Main Street station and the Ettrick station in Chesterfield County. Richmond Main Street Station is elevated and pedestrian safety is not considered an issue. Traffic impacts around the Ettrick station are being evaluated as part of the Southeast High-Speed Rail (SEHSR) Tier II analysis. Many small towns exist along the route. Based on limited field reviews, there appears to be limited fencing to keep pedestrians from trespassing on the tracks at potentially dangerous locations.

**Rail Operations** - The Southside/NS route between Richmond and Norfolk would utilize segments of the existing CSXT “S” and “A” Lines between Richmond and Petersburg, which is the former Seaboard Air Line and Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. The Southside/NS Route between Petersburg and Downtown Norfolk would use portions of the former Norfolk & Western Railway and Virginian Railroad right-of-way. (Improvements to the CSXT “A” Line between Richmond and Petersburg and connections between the CSXT “A” Line and the former Norfolk & Western Railway in Petersburg are the subject of the SEHSR Tier II analysis). Norfolk Southern (NS) is the successor in interest to the former Norfolk & Western Railway. Segments of the Virginian Railway are abandoned but the right-of-way is intact.

Initiation of high-speed rail service between Richmond and Norfolk utilizing the Southside/NS route would require a connection between the north-south Richmond to Charlotte and Florida route and the east-west Petersburg to Norfolk route. The connection between the two routes would occur north of Collier Yard in south Petersburg. SEHSR will determine preliminary engineering for the Richmond to Petersburg section. Once the SEHSR alignment is finalized, this project, the subsequent analyses or the proposed Norfolk conventional intercity passenger rail project will determine in detail the necessary engineering to provide the connection.

The NS Main Line is a high-volume double track mainline between Petersburg (Poe), and Brico (Kilby) (where the NS line crosses the CSXT Portsmouth Subdivision), 51 miles long, with no curves. Current freight train speed on the line is 60 mph for intermodal trains and 50 miles per hour for other freight trains. There is currently one passing track on the line between Poe and Kilby and it is slightly more than one-half-mile long.

It is proposed that the higher speed rail service would utilize the former Virginian (VGN) route between Kilby and South Norfolk, rather than the entire length of the NS main line between Kilby and South Norfolk. This is to avoid the high level of traffic and train activity in the vicinity of Portlock Yard and the operation of high-speed trains through downtown Suffolk on the NS line. The VGN route also has the advantage of a suburban station site at the proposed Bowers Hill Rail station. The line's favorable geometry makes it a good candidate for higher speed rail service; however, the numerous grade crossings present potential problems that would need to be mitigated.

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<sup>32</sup> Following a series of major derailments in the 1970s, the Federal Railroad Administration was given statutory authority to define track safety standards for all U.S. railroads (49 Code of Federal Regulations 213.9). These standards defined nine track classes, with Class 1 being the lowest and Class 9 the highest. Specific geometry and condition standards were established for each class of track, and speed limits (defined separately for freight and passenger traffic) also were defined. Specific signal and train control standards also were developed for higher-speed track.

The corridor of the former VGN Jarratt Subdivision - Algren to South Norfolk would be upgraded to connect with the NS main line at South Norfolk (milepost V 5.2) where the VGN crosses the N&W on its way to the Sewells Point Terminal. The proposed route would continue on the NS main line to the proposed Downtown Norfolk Rail station near Harbor Park Stadium. The station tracks would be located west of the Park Avenue grade crossing. Station platforms would be located on the west, or downtown Norfolk side of the double-track NS Lamberts Point Line. Two station tracks would be located adjacent to the line, and the platform would be located between them.

### **3.3.4 Environmental Consequences**

#### **3.3.4.1 Status Quo Alternative**

The Status Quo Alternative involves continuing the current passenger rail operations along the Peninsula/CSXT route. This involves two daily round-trip trains operating at conventional speeds. Existing operational relationships between passenger and freight service would remain. No infrastructure improvements, other than routine maintenance, would be provided under this alternative.

At-grade railroad crossings with highways, trains and automobiles are exposed to the risk of collision. The risk for such incidences would remain the same under the Status Quo Alternative. Because higher speed rail would not be operating on this route, no high-speed related grade crossing improvements would be implemented. If such improvements are proposed by other projects within the study area, then an analysis of impacts associated with those improvements and mitigation strategies would be the responsibility of the implementing agency.

Furthermore, the potential for effects on pedestrian safety would remain the same as it is today. Given that the majority of the existing tracks along both corridors are at-grade, the risk of pedestrians crossing the tracks illegally is always a concern. Since no infrastructure improvements are considered as part of the Status Quo Alternative, there would be no impacts to railroad operations other than for routine maintenance.

#### **3.3.4.2 No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative includes the addition by Amtrak of one additional round-trip train, operating at conventional speeds, along the Peninsula/CSXT route. In total, three round-trip daily trains would be provided. There would be no significant infrastructure improvements related to the operation of this additional train and no improvements at all to the Southside/NS route under the No Action Alternative.

Under the No Action Alternative, it is assumed that the existing conditions would remain the same except for the addition of one daily train. Existing operational relationships between passenger and freight service would remain. Because higher speed rail would not be operating on this route, no high-speed related grade crossing improvements would be implemented. If such improvements are proposed by other projects within the study area, then an analysis of impacts associated with those improvements and mitigation strategies would be the responsibility of the implementing agency.

Furthermore, the potential for effects on pedestrian safety would remain the same as it is today. Given that the majority of the existing tracks along both corridors are at-grade, the risks of pedestrians crossing the tracks illegally are always a concern. Since no infrastructure improvements are considered as part of the No Action Alternative, there would be no impacts to railroad operations other than for routine maintenance.

#### **3.3.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Build Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)**

The Preferred Alternative combines the No Action Alternative (one additional daily train initiated by Amtrak on the Peninsula/CSXT route) with higher speed passenger rail service along the Southside/NS route. Thus, three daily round-trip trains operating at conventional speeds would operate along the Peninsula/CSXT route and six daily round-trip trains operating ultimately at 90 mph would operate along the Southside/NS route.

Operational relationships between passenger and freight rail service would be assessed during Tier II analysis. Appropriate infrastructure would be provided to enable operations without conflicts between freight and passenger rail services.

The increase in rail traffic frequency and the higher speeds associated with this alternative would increase the risk exposure for automobile collisions with trains at highway-rail crossings. Improved passenger rail service can and should be accompanied by reduced risk of motor vehicle/train collisions. To reduce this exposure to collision, the number of at-grade crossings should be reduced to improve safety along the Southside/NS route.



Accordingly, this study has developed a preliminary program to manage the approximately 124 public and private crossings on the active and abandoned rail lines that have been identified as potential passenger rail routes. These measures and considerations are discussed in Section 3.3.5 below, Potential Mitigation Strategies.

For speeds up to 90 mph, it is estimated that 17 percent of the public grade crossings and 42 percent of private grade crossings potentially would be closed on the Southside/NS route based on regulatory guidance provided by FRA. Table 3-11 presents a preliminary count of the crossings that would remain open. Additional design analysis and consultations with citizens and elected officials along the Southside/NS route would precede the identification of grade crossing closures and separations. For grade crossings that would likely remain open, the higher speed rail service implementation program would install safety enhancements to effectively create a sealed corridor<sup>33</sup>. Detailed analysis of grade crossing closures and required safety measures to mitigate specific impacts of the closures, including costs, would be conducted during the Tier II analysis of the Preferred Alternative.

Some areas along the Southside/NS route affected by higher speed passenger rail service would likely experience greater potential for impacts to pedestrian routes and safety. These areas are the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station and Downtown Norfolk Rail Station, because rail stations do not currently exist in these areas. As planning for the project progresses, specific pedestrian and safety concerns and measures would be identified. It is assumed that ten percent of this route would be fenced. Potential mitigation strategies for improved pedestrian safety are provided in Section 3.3.5.

Effects on the railroad would result from construction activities and operational changes related to increased passenger rail frequencies. Construction of the higher speed rail system would involve a limited number of changes in the railroad corridor and the upgrade of existing track and facilities within the railroad owned right-of-way. An initial broad range of improvements has been defined as necessary to provide adequate track structure and sufficient capacity to reliably operate freight rail, support the introduction of higher speed passenger rail service, and provide the same level of service and operational capacity for freight operations that presently exists along the analyzed routes. Some of the related enhancements that would occur as a result of implementing higher speed passenger rail service may provide a benefit to freight operations.

The types of improvements that would be included are projects to:

- Upgrade the track structure,
- Upgrade signal systems,
- Realign selected curves to permit higher operating speeds and reduce trip time,
- Reconfigure, relocate, eliminate or install interlockings,
- Construct additional trackage,
- Restore abandoned track,
- Improve safety at the highway-rail grade crossings,
- Install right-of-way fencing, and
- Improve stations.

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<sup>33</sup> A "sealed corridor" is defined by the FRA as innovative, low-cost techniques to significantly reduce or eliminate incidents of highway vehicles bypassing crossing gates, which would virtually eliminate grade crossing incidents.

Table 3-11: Number of Grade Crossings That Will Remain Open – 90 mph Train Speeds

Segment	Line	Miles	Number of Public Crossings	Public Crossings per Mile	Number of Private Crossings	Private Crossings per Mile	Total Crossings	Total Crossings per Mile
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>								
City of Richmond	Richmond to Newport News	1.26	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Henrico County	Richmond to Newport News	13.74	5	0.36	1	0.07	6	0.44
Charles City County	Richmond to Newport News	4	2	0.50	2	0.50	4	1.00
New Kent County	Richmond to Newport News	13	6	0.46	16	1.23	22	1.69
James City County	Richmond to Newport News	12.3	2	0.16	8	0.65	10	0.81
City of Williamsburg	Richmond to Newport News	6.1	2	0.33	0	0.00	2	0.33
York County	Richmond to Newport News	2.4	1	0.41	0	0.00	1	0.41
James City County	Richmond to Newport News	1.45	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
City of Newport News	Richmond to Newport News	19.65	4	0.20	1	0.05	5	0.25
<b>Route Sub-Total</b>		<b>73.9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0.68</b>
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>								
City of Petersburg	Petersburg-Kilby	1.55	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Prince George County	Petersburg-Kilby	10.3	2	0.19	1	0.10	3	0.29
Sussex County	Petersburg-Kilby	16.85	6	0.36	3	0.18	9	0.53
Southampton County	Petersburg-Kilby	8.36	1	0.12	3	0.36	4	0.48
Isle of Wight County	Petersburg-Kilby	9.19	4	0.44	1	0.11	5	0.54
City of Suffolk	Petersburg-Kilby	5.45	3	0.55	0	0.00	3	0.55
City of Suffolk	Kilby Connection	1.5	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
City of Suffolk	Virginian - Kilby to Algren	9.81	6	0.61	3	0.31	9	0.92
City of Chesapeake	Virginian - Kilby to Algren	1.21	2	1.65	0	0.00	2	1.65
City of Chesapeake	Virginian - Algren to S. Norfolk	10.18	8	0.79	3	0.29	11	1.08
City of Chesapeake	NS Main Line	1.64	3	1.83	0	0.00	3	1.83
City of Norfolk	NS Main Line	1.26	3	2.38	2	1.59	5	3.97
<b>Route Sub-Total</b>		<b>77.3</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0.70</b>

Both freight and passenger train operations could be affected during construction of the Preferred Alternative between Richmond and Newport News and Petersburg and Kilby. The construction of the Southside/NS route could affect freight operations on NS tracks between Petersburg and Kilby and between South Norfolk and Norfolk and operations between Petersburg and Richmond on CSXT. It is unlikely that rail operations on the Peninsula/CSXT route would be affected. Impacts may consist of speed restrictions on operations through construction zones and possible track downtime to allow for construction of connections and upgrades of existing tracks. However, mitigation measures and best practices would be implemented to minimize significant adverse impacts during construction. Freight rail and intercity passenger rail traffic would be maintained throughout the construction period. Coordination with the railroads would minimize any adverse effects. The following describes the critical locations of potential conflicts:

The primary locations for potential operational conflicts along the Southside/NS route are the following:

- The CSXT S Line from Main Street Station to Centralia,
- The CSXT A Line from Centralia to Petersburg,
- Petersburg,
- NS Main Line between Petersburg and Suffolk, and
- Suffolk to Norfolk Terminal.

A direct rail connection at Petersburg from Richmond to Norfolk has not existed for many years. Ongoing environmental studies of the SEHSR project managed by the FRA, NCDOT and DRPT are addressing the issues described in the first four bullets above. A subsequent effort will address the selection of the recommended route to Raleigh, NC and the connection between the CSXT main line through Petersburg and the NS main line to Norfolk.

This Tier I EIS concentrates primarily on the issues related to intercity passenger and freight rail operations between Petersburg and Norfolk. Consequently, the environmental impacts associated with the alternatives between Richmond and Petersburg are being studied by the SEHSR and are incorporated into this report by reference.

### 3.3.5 Potential Mitigation Strategies

**Grade Crossings** - Potential mitigation strategies would be identified through discussion and coordination with the freight and passenger rail operators, the FRA, the FHWA, appropriate state and local authorities, and the community. Typical mitigation measures include grade separation or elimination, where warranted, and the construction of access roads that would provide access to a location where either a fully protected four-quadrant gate or grade separation is warranted. A subsequent more detailed analysis would identify specific concerns and additional appropriate mitigation in the Tier II analysis.

Implementation of higher speed rail service for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project would result in higher train speeds and frequencies over existing rail lines and would involve restoration of train service on the now abandoned Virginian Railway line in Suffolk. For these reasons, highway-rail crossing safety would require concerted attention as the planning and design process continues. In particular, each crossing would require study, both individually and in combination with neighboring crossings, to assess the degree of risk that it poses, the opportunities for mitigating that risk, and the cost-effectiveness of the various treatment options. Risk assessment depends on a host of factors including the geometry of the crossing; the type, speed, and volume of motor vehicle and rail traffic; and the protective devices in place or available. Community needs, including access to nearby properties such as hospitals and health care facilities, require particular attention.

Grade crossing hazards can be eliminated through grade separations and crossing closures. Crossing hazards can be reduced through safety measures including four-quadrant gates, barriers that have longer gate arms and median barriers. These measures have been implemented by numerous states to treat the different types of crossings across a specific route. The North Carolina Sealed Corridor Initiative<sup>34</sup>, for example, serves as a model for grade crossing hazard elimination through the use of creative, cost-effective solutions. Video surveillance at specific unimproved and improved crossings has proven that advanced

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<sup>34</sup> <http://www.bytrain.org/Safety/sealed.html>.

highway-rail crossing protection systems, such as four-quadrant gates and median barriers, reduce driver "run-around" violations by as much as 98 percent and thus significantly reduce the risk of train/auto collisions.

The elimination of grade crossings to achieve higher speed passenger rail service would require mitigation measures to avoid potential negative impacts on localized traffic congestion and emergency response time as well as access and egress to businesses and residences. A detailed analysis of the environmental consequences of grade crossing closures will be necessary during the Tier II analysis of the Preferred Alternative.

Any comprehensive grade crossing plan needs to address the full range of improvement options. These include consolidating groups of crossings, grade-separating heavily used crossings, closing selected crossings and applying known techniques for reducing hazards at the remaining open crossings. In addition, proper treatments must be applied to private crossings where fatalities can and do occur despite the infrequency of use by motor vehicles.

**Specific Grade Crossing Considerations**<sup>35</sup> - Many engineering and operational considerations would affect the ultimate details of a comprehensive grade crossing plan. The considerations are discussed in the following subsections.

**Train Speeds** - Protection would be provided, as deemed appropriate, to address grade crossings through which passenger trains would operate at speeds up to 90 mph.

**Constant Warning Times** - Higher train speeds would require the timing in the track circuits (which actuate grade crossing gates and flashing lights) to be held down for a longer period of time to initiate warnings sufficiently in advance of the arrival of the faster trains. The warning time at crossings with fixed circuits must be set for the fastest possible train. However, this creates a potential problem when a slow train approaches the crossing and the gates are held down for a longer period of time. Some motorists lose patience with the situation, and drive around the gate at the risk of a collision. Constant Warning Time circuits could offset this problem by automatically adjusting the length of the warning to a time appropriate to the speed of each individual oncoming train.

**Four-Quadrant Gates and Median Barriers** – A barrier system where at-grade crossings can remain open may be implemented through a system of four-quadrant gates wherein four gates, instead of two, are lowered across the traffic lanes blocking both directions of traffic on both sides of the rail line and median barriers are placed down the center of the roadway. The FRA's recent experience has shown that four-quadrant gates and median barriers effectively obstruct motor vehicle operators from driving around the gates after they are lowered.

**Effect on Train Speed of Crossings Located on Curves** - Raising the maximum authorized speed on a curve containing a grade crossing creates serious concerns. Mitigation measures might not be practical on a heavily traveled street or highway and may require that these crossings be closed or grade-separated. Analysis will be required to develop a recommendation for each crossing.

**Sidings and Crossings** - Railroad sidings, either to be constructed or extended, should be in place to minimize the number of grade crossings that would be blocked by stopped freight or passenger trains waiting to pass by another train. Planning for grade crossing improvements needs to take into consideration the location of sidings. Community needs for access by emergency motor vehicles demand careful attention in locating, treating, or eliminating highway-rail grade crossings.

**Contemplated Grade Crossing Program** - Based on all the considerations described above, the DRPT has developed a potential list of grade crossing actions that would support the trip-time goals and safety prerequisites of high-speed rail development in the corridor. The contemplated options include:

- Eliminating grade crossings, which can be accomplished by:
  - Closing the crossing to vehicular traffic,
  - Providing a grade separation, or
  - Relocating the railroad;

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<sup>35</sup> The information in the following sections is based on material initially developed for the 2004 *Transportation Planning for the Richmond-Charlotte Corridor Report*, published by the FRA.

- Upgrading protection devices, for example from crossbucks to gates and flashing lights, or from gates that cover only half the road in each direction to four-quadrant gate barriers that cover the entire road to block drivers from “running around” the crossing;
- Keeping crossings as-is in areas where the level of protection is already appropriate for the contemplated train speeds and road traffic levels;
- Reopening crossings on abandoned rights of way with upgraded protection;
- Expanding or moving crossings to comply with the engineering improvements described in other sections of this document (e.g.: new sidings or changes to curves); or
- Adding well-protected crossings where they do not exist today. The ratio of crossing eliminations (closures, separations and relocations) to crossing additions for the corridor as a whole is projected as four to one.

**Pedestrian Safety Mitigation** - Potential mitigation strategies will need to be identified through discussion and coordination with the freight and passenger rail operators, the FRA, and the FHWA and appropriate state and local authorities. Typical mitigation measures include pedestrian grade separation, where warranted, and the construction of protective fencing to separate pedestrian pathways and activities from the railroad right-of-way and near locations where trespassing is likely to occur such as schools, churches, and other facilities that attract pedestrian traffic. As more detailed analysis is conducted for the Preferred Alternative, specific concerns and appropriate mitigation will be identified. This will be addressed during the Tier II analysis.

**Strategies to Mitigate Freight Railroad and Amtrak Impacts** - Three strategies have been identified for the design of features and operations to increase service efficiency along these routes:

1. Create track connections, modify interlockings, and make additional operational improvements that would result in segments of track where freight and passenger train conflicts would be minimized in Petersburg (west end) and at Suffolk (east end);
2. Provide a passing siding (second or third track) of sufficient length in the most effective location so that passenger trains could pass slower trains without either train being required to stop;
3. Design passenger schedules so that trains traveling in opposite directions “meet” in terminals or pass at locations where freight and passenger rail operations would not be disrupted.

### 3.3.6 Subsequent Analysis

Subsequent analysis would include collecting more detailed information pertaining to grade crossings, pedestrian safety and rail operations for the Preferred Alternative. As mentioned in Section 3.3.5 Potential Mitigation, community outreach and meetings with local officials, rail operators, the FRA and the FHWA would have to occur to determine specific highway-rail crossing closures or safety improvements. In addition, statistics pertaining to safety and other specific areas of potential concern could be identified and appropriate mitigation proposed. Greater coordination with the FRA, rail operators, and Amtrak would also be undertaken to determine specific effects of the project on current freight and passenger rail service operations.

## 3.4 Air Quality

An air quality evaluation was conducted to identify the potential impacts related to the proposed alternatives. In general, however, the proposed high-speed rail project is expected to contribute to the region’s long-term attainment of clean air goals by contributing to an overall reduction in vehicle emissions. The results of the air quality evaluation are described in the following sections.

### 3.4.1 Methodology

#### 3.4.1.1 Relevant Pollutants

“Air Pollution” is a general term that refers to one or more chemical substances that degrade the quality of the atmosphere. Individual air pollutants degrade the atmosphere by reducing visibility, damaging property, reducing the productivity or vigor of crops or natural vegetation, or reducing human or animal health. Regulations for air pollutant emissions exist to protect human health and welfare, and the environment.

The federal agency that develops and enforces the regulations that help govern air quality is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The 1970 Federal *Clean Air Act* (42 U.S.C. § 7401 et. seq. (1970)) established *National Ambient Air Quality Standards* (NAAQS) to protect the public health. Eight air pollutants

have been identified by the EPA as being of concern nationwide: carbon monoxide, sulfur oxides, hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides, ozone, particulate matter sized 10 microns or less, particulate matter with a size of 2.5 microns or less and lead. The sources of these pollutants, their effects on human health, and their concentrations in the atmosphere vary considerably. A brief description of each pollutant is given below.

**Carbon Monoxide** - Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless and odorless gas that is a product of incomplete combustion. In most areas, motor vehicles are responsible for the major portion of ambient CO levels. CO is absorbed by the lungs and reacts with hemoglobin to reduce the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood. At low concentrations, CO has been shown to aggravate the symptoms of cardiovascular disease. It can cause headaches and nausea, and at sustained high concentration levels, can lead to coma and death.

**Sulfur Oxides** - Sulfur Oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>) constitute a class of compounds of which sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and sulfur trioxide (SO<sub>3</sub>) are of great importance. The health effects of SO<sub>x</sub> include respiratory illness, damage to the respiratory tract, and aggravation of respiratory diseases such as asthma, bronchitis and emphysema. Motor fuels, particularly diesel fuel, contain small amounts of sulfur that are oxidized and emitted in vehicle exhaust.

**Hydrocarbons** - Hydrocarbons (HC) include a wide variety of organic compounds emitted principally from the storage, handling and use of fossil fuels. Hydrocarbons are evaluated, along with nitric oxide, for their primary role in the formation of ozone.

**Nitrogen Oxides** - When combustion temperatures are extremely high, as in motor vehicle engines, atmospheric nitrogen may combine with oxygen to form various oxides of nitrogen. These pollutants are generally referred to as NO<sub>x</sub>. Of these, nitric oxide (NO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) are the most significant compounds. Nitric oxide is a colorless and odorless gas. It is relatively harmless to humans and quickly converts to NO<sub>2</sub>. NO<sub>x</sub>, like HC, is of concern primarily because of its role in the formation of ozone.

**Ozone** - Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) is a strong oxidizing agent and a pulmonary irritant that affects the respiratory mucous membranes, other lung tissues and respiratory functions. These effects are directly related to the total ozone concentration and can occur at very low exposure levels. Exposure to ozone can result in symptoms such as tightness in the chest, coughing, and wheezing, and can ultimately result in asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are a general class of hydrocarbons (compounds containing hydrogen and carbon) and are a precursor to the formation of the pollutant ozone. When VOCs and nitrogen oxides accumulate in the atmosphere and are exposed to the ultraviolet component of sunlight, formation of ozone occurs. While concentrations of VOCs in the atmosphere are not generally measured, ozone is measured and used to assess potential health effects.

**Particulate Matter** - Particulate matter (PM), is composed of small solid particles and liquid droplets. Suspended particulates refer to particles less than 100 micrometers (or microns) in nominal aerodynamic diameter, and PM<sub>10</sub> refers to particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns and smaller. Particulates enter the body by way of the respiratory system. Particulates over 10 microns in size remain in the nose and throat and are readily expelled. Particles 10 microns and smaller can reach the air ducts (bronchi) and the air sacs (alveoli). These fine particulates have been associated with increased respiratory diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema; cardiopulmonary disease (heart attack); and cancer. In general, the particulates may include dust, soot, and smoke which may be irritating but not usually poisonous. Particulates may also include bits of solid or liquid substances that may be highly toxic. Of particular concern are those particles that are smaller than or equal to 10 microns and 2.5 microns in size, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, respectively. The data collected through many nationwide studies indicates that most of the PM<sub>10</sub> is the product of fugitive dust, wind erosion and agricultural and forestry sources, while a small portion is the product of fuel combustion processes. In the case of PM<sub>2.5</sub>, the combustion of fossil fuels accounts for a significant portion of this pollutant. Airborne particulate matter has a negative impact on the respiratory system.

**Lead** - Lead (Pb) is no longer considered to be a pollutant of concern for transportation-related projects. The major source of lead in ambient air was from motor vehicles burning fuels containing lead additives. However, lead emissions from these sources have been nearly eliminated as unleaded gasoline has replaced leaded gasoline nationwide.

### 3.4.1.2 Pollutants of Concern

The pollutants that are most important for this air quality impact analysis are those that can be traced principally to motor vehicle engines and electrical power plants. In the study area, ambient concentrations of CO and O<sub>3</sub> are predominantly influenced by roadway motor vehicle activity. Emissions of HC, NO<sub>x</sub> and

PM10/2.5 come from both mobile and stationary sources while emissions of SO<sub>x</sub> and Pb are associated mainly with various stationary sources. Pollutant emissions from diesel locomotives are expected to be minor. This is partly due to the small proportion of existing and expected future train activity in the project study area compared with existing and expected roadway motor vehicle activity as well as the higher speed at which trains travel. In addition, EPA locomotive emission regulations are anticipated to result in a gradual reduction in the level of emissions generated by train activity in the foreseeable future.

CO is the primary pollutant used to indicate the potential for adverse air quality impacts from motor vehicles in general, and at roadway intersections in particular. This is because roadway motor vehicles produce most of the ambient CO, and emission rates of CO from vehicles are relatively high compared to emissions of other pollutants. The federal and state ambient air quality standards are set up in such a way that, should adverse impacts occur, the CO standard would most likely be exceeded first. Accordingly, CO is the main pollutant of concern for the air quality analysis.

Similarly, because ozone is a regional pollutant that is formed in the presence of VOC and NO<sub>x</sub>, ozone is evaluated indirectly through its precursors. However, because the CO standard would be exceeded first before either NO<sub>2</sub> or VOC, only CO is included in the modeling analysis. As a result, concentrations of ozone are typically measured directly in the atmosphere rather than through modeling predictions.

### 3.4.2.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

In addition to the requirements established by CEQ implementing procedures for consideration of environmental impacts, FRA's Environmental Procedures (64 FR 28545 §14(n)(1)) specifically states that "There should be an assessment of the consistency of the alternatives with Federal and State plans for the attainment and maintenance of air quality standards."

The *Clean Air Act* of 1970, as amended, is the basis for most federal air pollution control programs. The EPA under the Clean Air Act regulates air quality nationally. The EPA delegates authority to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) for monitoring and enforcing air quality regulations in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The *Virginia State Implementation Plan* (SIP), developed in accordance with the Clean Air Act, contains the major Commonwealth-level requirements with respect to transportation in general. VDEQ is responsible for preparing the SIP and submitting it to the EPA for approval. VDEQ also works with local and regional agencies that have air quality responsibilities.

Under the authority of the Clean Air Act, the EPA established a set of *National Ambient Air Quality Standards* (NAAQS) for various "criteria" air pollutants. The NAAQS and the *Virginia Ambient Air Quality Standards*, which are identical, are listed in Table 3-12<sup>36</sup>. Presently, there are NAAQS for six criteria pollutants: O<sub>3</sub>, CO, NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, PM of diameter 10 microns or less (PM10) and 2.5 microns or less (PM2.5), and Pb. Compliance with these standards must be achieved by any project to be constructed in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Clean Air Act also requires the EPA to specify geographic areas of the country that have measured pollutant concentrations exceeding the levels prescribed by the air quality standards (non-attainment areas). It classifies non-attainment areas and specifies compliance deadlines for these areas. The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is located in several counties and municipalities, which are located in the EPA defined Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News (Hampton Roads) and Richmond-Petersburg air quality designation areas. The Richmond-Petersburg region is currently designated as marginal non-attainment areas for 8-hour ozone. However, both areas are in attainment for 1-hour ozone and all other pollutants including CO, particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5), NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, and Pb.

The Hampton Roads and the Norfolk-Richmond areas, including the study area, are in attainment for CO. However, this region is considered a maintenance area due to past violations. Thus the SIP requirements do not apply to CO with respect to the project. Both areas are also in attainment for NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, PM10, PM2.5 and Pb.

Under the authority of the CAA, Federal entities are prohibited from taking actions in nonattainment or maintenance areas which do not conform to the State implementation plan (SIP) for the attainment and maintenance of the NAAQS. The purpose of conformity is to ensure Federal activities do not interfere with the budgets in the SIPs, that Federal activities cause or contribute to new violations, and to ensure attainment and maintenance of the NAAQS. FRA actions are covered under General Conformity (58 FR 63214).

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<sup>36</sup> 40 CFR 50, National Primary and Secondary Ambient Air Quality Standards.

**Table 3-12: National and Virginia Ambient Air Quality Standards**

Pollutant	Standard Type	Averaging Period	Standard Value
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Primary and Secondary <sup>b</sup>	8-Hour average	9 ppm (10 mg/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>c</sup>
	Primary and Secondary	1-Hour average	35 ppm (40 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	Primary and Secondary	Annual arithmetic mean	0.053 ppm (100 µg/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>c</sup>
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	Primary and Secondary	1-Hour average	0.12 ppm (235 µg/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>d</sup>
		8-Hour average	0.08 ppm (155 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	Primary and Secondary	Annual arithmetic mean	50 µg/m <sup>3</sup> <sup>e</sup>
		24-Hour average	150 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	Primary and Secondary	Annual arithmetic mean	15 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
		24-Hour average	65 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
Lead (Pb)	Primary and Secondary	Quarterly mean	1.5 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
Sulfur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	Primary	Annual arithmetic mean	0.03 ppm (80 µg/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>0.14</sup>
	Primary	24-Hour average <sup>f</sup>	ppm (365 µg/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>0.50</sup> ppm
	Secondary	3-Hour average	(1300 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )

a Short-term standards (1 to 24 hours) are not to be exceeded more than once per calendar year.

b Former national secondary standards for carbon monoxide have been repealed.

c Pollutant concentrations are reported in parts per million (ppm), milligrams per cubic meter (mg/m<sup>3</sup>) or micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m<sup>3</sup>).

d Maximum daily 1-hour (8-hour) average. The ozone standard is attained when the expected number of days with maximum hourly (8-hourly) average concentrations above the value of the standard, averaged over a three-year period, is less than or equal to one.

e For each particle size, the annual PM standard is met when the three-year average of the annual mean concentration is less than or equal to the value of the standard. The 24-hour PM<sub>10</sub> (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) standard is met when the three-year average of the annual 99th (98th) percentile values of the daily average concentrations is less than or equal to the value of the standard.

f National standards are block averages rather than moving averages.

Note: CO, NO<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, and PM are transportation related pollutants

Source: National (40 CFR 50) and Virginia (9 VAC 5, Chapter 30) Primary and Secondary Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Because the study area is located in an ozone non-attainment area, a conformity determination is required. A project conforms to the SIP if it comes from a conforming metropolitan transportation plan. The transportation plans for the region include the Richmond Area 2026 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)<sup>37</sup> and the Hampton Roads 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)<sup>38</sup>. The passenger rail project is included in the Hampton Roads long-range plans, plans that have been found by VDOT to conform to the SIP. The EPA and the FRA have concurred in that conformity determination for the RTP. Therefore, the project conforms to the SIP.

### 3.4.3 Existing Conditions

This section summarizes measured ambient air quality data for the region including the study area. VDEQ maintains a statewide network of monitoring stations that routinely measure pollutant concentrations in the ambient air. These stations provide data to assess compliance with the NAAQS and to evaluate the effectiveness of pollution control strategies. The relevant monitored pollutants are ozone, NO<sub>2</sub>, CO, PM, and SO<sub>2</sub>.

#### 3.4.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

Table 3-13 presents the maximum measured concentrations for these pollutants measured at representative monitoring stations nearest to the study area, as reported by the VDEQ for 2005.

<sup>37</sup> 2023 Long-Range Transportation Plan, Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, Richmond, VA, April 8, 2004, <http://www.richmondregional.org/>.

<sup>38</sup> 2030 Regional Transportation Plan, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, Chesapeake, VA, December 2007, [http://www.hrmpo.org/MPO\\_Reports.asp](http://www.hrmpo.org/MPO_Reports.asp).



**Table 3-13: 2005 Monitored Ambient Air Quality in the Vicinity of the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

Pollutant	Monitor Location	Averaging Period	Maximum Concentration	Second Maximum Concentration
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	7341 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond	1 Hour	3.2ppm	3.0 ppm
		8 Hours	1.8 ppm	1.5 ppm
	158-W, Science Museum of VA, DMV & Leigh, Richmond	1 Hour	2.8 ppm	2.2 ppm
		8 Hours	1.4 ppm	1.4 ppm
	700 Shell Road, Hampton	1 Hour	4.8 ppm	2.2 ppm
		8 Hours	1.5 ppm	1.4 ppm
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	158-W, Science Museum of VA, DMV & Leigh, Richmond	Annual	0.015 ppm	Not applicable
	Shirley Plantation, Route 5, Charles City Co.	Annual	0.019 ppm	Not applicable
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	Shirley Plantation, Route 5, Charles City Co.	1 Hour	0.091 ppm	0.086 ppm
		8 Hours	0.078 ppm	0.077 ppm
	2401 Hartman Street Math & Science Ctr., Henrico Co.	1 Hour	0.104ppm	0.097 ppm
		8 Hours	0.087 ppm	0.082 ppm
700 Shell Road, Hampton	1 Hour	0.086 ppm	0.086 ppm	
	8 Hours	0.078 ppm	0.075 ppm	
Particulate Matter (PM10)	181-A1, NOAA Lot, 2nd St & Woodis Ave., Norfolk	24 Hours	47 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	37 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
		Annual	22 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable
Particulate Matter (PM2.5)	Shirley Plantation, Route 5, Charles City Co.	24 Hours	30 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	26 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
		Annual	11.8 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable
	2401 Hartman Street Math & Science Ctr., Henrico Co.	24 Hours	32 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	28 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
		Annual	12.9 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable
4949-A Cox Road, Glen Allen, Henrico Co.	24 Hours	28 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	28 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	
	Annual	12.8 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable	
700 Shell Road, Hampton	24 Hours	27 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	27 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	
	Annual	12.6 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable	
Sulfur Dioxide	158-W, Science Museum of VA, DMV & Leigh, Richmond	3 Hours	0.054 ppm	0.045 ppm
		24 Hours	0.017 ppm	0.016 ppm
		Annual	0.005 ppm	Not applicable
	Shirley Plantation, Route 5, Charles City Co.	3 Hours	0.065 ppm	0.059 ppm
		24 Hours	0.016 ppm	0.015 ppm
		Annual	0.005 ppm	Not applicable
700 Shell Road, Hampton	3 Hours	0.044 ppm	0.038 ppm	
	24 Hours	0.012 ppm	0.012 ppm	
	Annual	0.003 ppm	Not applicable	

Source: VDEQ, as reported to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency AIRData website (<http://www.epa.gov/air/data/geosel.html>).

### 3.4.3.2 Southside/NS Route

Table 3-14 presents the maximum measured concentrations for these pollutants measured at representative monitoring stations nearest to the study area, as reported by VDEQ for 2005.

During the comment period of the Tier I Draft EIS, DEQ's Air Quality Division stated that portions of the proposed alternatives may be located within ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) maintenance areas and emission control areas for the VOCs and NO<sub>x</sub>, which are contributors to ozone pollution.

### 3.4.4 Environmental Consequences

In order to determine the potential effects on air quality, the estimated probable annual ridership for 2025 was used to ascertain the extent to which each alternative would attract ridership by rail versus automobile. For the Tier I Draft EIS, an estimated range of probable ridership was calculated for the year 2025 and is discussed in detail in Section 3.1. It is assumed that emissions reduction would be highly correlated to ridership attraction. To the extent that the alternatives would reduce the number of autos on the road (sevenths of one percent of total I-64 traffic, as described in Section 3.2.3, for example), a reduction in regional emissions and concentrations of carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter would be expected.

Table 3-15 shows the estimated range of probable ridership for 2025. This data shows a substantial increase in ridership between the Status Quo Alternative and the No Action Alternative. An increase in probable ridership is expected up to nearly three times the Status Quo ridership in the Low range and up to nearly 3.5 times the Status Quo ridership in the High range for the Preferred Alternative. In terms of air quality, these ridership numbers for the Preferred Alternative equates to eliminating substantial numbers of vehicles from roadways in the region and associated vehicular emissions.

The following subsections describe the probable effects of each alternative on air quality in the context of probable ridership. A detailed air quality assessment will be conducted as part of the Tier II analysis of the Preferred Alternative. At that time, the role of locomotive emissions in regional air quality would be assessed. In addition, the potential effect of project-related motor vehicle emissions on local roadways in the vicinity of stations would be assessed.

**Table 3-14: 2005 Monitored Ambient Air Quality in the Vicinity of the Southside/NS Route**

Pollutant	Monitor Location	Averaging Period	Maximum Concentration	Second Maximum Concentration
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	7341 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond	1 Hour	3.2ppm	3.0 ppm
		8 Hours	1.8 ppm	1.5 ppm
	158-W, Science Museum of VA, DMV & Leigh, Richmond	1 Hour	2.8 ppm	2.2 ppm
		8 Hours	1.4 ppm	1.4 ppm
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	158-W, Science Museum of VA, DMV & Leigh, Richmond	Annual	0.015 ppm	Not applicable
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	Beach, Intersection of Co. Roads 655 & 654, Chesterfield Co.	1 Hour	0.091 ppm	0.085 ppm
		8 Hours	0.078 ppm	0.077 ppm
	Tidewater Comm. College, Frederic Campus, Suffolk	1 Hour	0.084 ppm	0.084 ppm
		8 Hours	0.080 ppm	0.076 ppm
	Tidewater Research Station, Hare Road, Suffolk	1 Hour	0.090 ppm	0.089 ppm
		8 Hours	0.079 ppm	0.079 ppm
Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	181-A1, NOAA Lot, 2nd St & Woodis Ave., Norfolk	24 Hours	47 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	37 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
		Annual	22 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable
Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	6700 Strathmore Road, Roof Of Armory, Chesterfield Co.	24 Hours	29 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	26 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
		Annual	12.9 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable
	181-A1, NOAA Lot, 2nd St & Woodis Ave., Norfolk	24 Hours	26 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	26 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
		Annual	13.4 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable
5636 Southern Boulevard, Virginia Beach	24 Hours	30 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	29 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	
	Annual	11.7 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable	
Sulfur Dioxide	158-W, Science Museum of VA, DMV & Leigh, Richmond	3 Hours	0.054 ppm	0.045 ppm
		24 Hours	0.017 ppm	0.016 ppm
		Annual	0.005 ppm	Not applicable

Source: VDEQ, as reported to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency AIRData website (<http://www.epa.gov/air/data/geosel.html>).

**Table 3-15: Estimated Range of Probable Ridership (2025)**

Annual Ridership	Status Quo 79 mph	No Action 79 mph	Preferred Alternative
			90 mph
High	262,300	464,800	1,110,100
Low	245,500	425,700	939,600
<b>Difference from 79 mph Status Quo Alternative</b>			
High		202,500	847,800
Low		180,200	694,100
<b>Difference from 79 mph No Action Alternative</b>			
High			645,300
Low			513,900

Source: Travel Demand Methodology and Results, as revised March 2008.

#### **3.4.4.1 Status Quo Alternative**

The Status Quo Alternative is based on existing conditions and the funded and programmed transportation improvements that will be developed and in operation by 2030. All passenger rail service conditions would remain the same. There would continue to be two daily round-trip trains along the Peninsula/CSXT Route operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph. No physical or operational rail improvements would be made other than routine maintenance.

The Status Quo Alternative does not provide any additional passenger rail service along the Peninsula/CSXT route or any passenger rail service on the Southside/NS route. The Southside/NS route would remain as a freight rail line only. The probable 2025 ridership estimates presented in Table 3-15 indicate that regional travel volumes will increase substantially. If passenger rail service is not available to absorb a portion of these volumes, an associated increase in regional traffic emissions can be expected. This alternative establishes the air quality baseline by which the Preferred Alternative can be compared.

#### **3.4.4.2 No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative provides one additional round-trip train (three round-trip trains in all) to the existing Amtrak service that operates on the Peninsula/CSXT route. This additional trip would operate at conventional speeds. As shown in Table 3-15, the estimated range of probable ridership for the No Action Alternative would be 73 to 77 percent greater than the Status Quo Alternative ridership. As described in Section 3.4.4 above, it can be assumed that greater use of rail service as opposed to automobile would occur on a regional level. This attraction would eliminate associated vehicular emissions, thereby having a beneficial effect on regional air quality compared to current conditions and the Status Quo Alternative.

#### **3.4.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Build Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)**

The Preferred Alternative has the potential to affect regional air quality on both sides of the James River by reducing regional automobile travel. Because the Preferred Alternative provides passenger rail service on both the Peninsula/CSXT and Southside/NS routes, based on the 2025 estimated probable ridership shown in Table 3-15, it can be assumed that greater use of rail service as opposed to automobile would occur on a regional level, thereby having a greater beneficial effect on regional air quality compared to the Status Quo and No Action alternatives.

Construction activities can result in short-term impacts on ambient air quality. These potential impacts include direct emissions from construction equipment and trucks, increased emissions from motor vehicles on the streets due to disruption of traffic flow, and fugitive dust emissions. These impacts would be temporary, and would affect only the immediate vicinity of the construction sites and their access routes. Emissions from project related construction equipment and trucks would be much less than the total emissions from other industrial and transportation sources in the region, and therefore, are expected to be insignificant with respect to compliance with the NAAQS.

Potential construction activities could include rail enhancements and structural improvements along existing track, as necessary, as well as construction of stations, parking facilities, and storage and maintenance facilities.

Roadway traffic disruption due to lane closures, detours, and construction vehicles accessing the sites can cause congestion, which can increase motor vehicle exhaust emissions. Fugitive dust emissions could occur during demolition, ground excavation, material handling and storage, movement of equipment at the site, and transport of material to and from the site. Fugitive dust would most likely be a problem during periods of intense activity and would be accentuated by windy and/or dry weather conditions.

#### **3.4.4.4 Comparative Discussion of Alternatives**

The probable 2025 ridership estimates presented in Table 3-15 indicate that regional travel volumes will increase substantially compared to current conditions. If increased passenger rail service is not available to absorb a portion of these volumes, as would be the case in the Status Quo Alternative, an associated increase in regional automobile emissions can be expected. The No Action Alternative and the Preferred Alternative would each attract ridership that would otherwise travel by automobile, thereby having some beneficial effect on air quality by reducing vehicular emissions. The No Action Alternative would attract the least ridership, thereby having a higher beneficial impact on air quality compared to the Status Quo, but the least beneficial impact compared with the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative would potentially

have the highest beneficial effects on regional air quality as it would attract similarly high probable ridership. In examining these results, the Preferred Alternative would benefit regional air quality by reducing regional vehicle travel by automobile.

Upon review of the Tier I Draft EIS, the DEQ Air Quality Division stated that “any alternative to road travel will be environmentally beneficial.”

### **3.4.5 Potential Mitigation**

With respect to regional emissions and conformity, the project is included in the conforming Hampton Roads regional transportation plan. Moreover, probable ridership attraction in all alternatives except the Status Quo Alternative would have a beneficial effect on air quality by reducing automobile emissions. For these reasons, mitigation measures are not warranted with respect to compliance with the general conformity requirements and regional air quality.

Although these impacts will not be analyzed until the Tier II EIS, temporary direct emissions from construction equipment are not expected to produce adverse effects on local air quality provided that all equipment is properly operated and maintained. If required, traffic management techniques are available during the construction period that would mitigate increased emissions from traffic congestion due to lane closures, detours and construction vehicles accessing sites. Mitigation techniques could include development of site-specific traffic management plans; temporary signage and other traffic controls; designated staging areas, worker parking lots (with shuttle bus service if necessary), and truck routes; and prohibition of construction vehicle travel during peak traffic periods.

DEQ’s Air Quality Division noted in their comments that future documents should address all applicable regulatory requirements for air emissions due to the construction and operation of any proposed facilities, including 9VAC 5-50-60 et seq. governing fugitive dust emissions and 9 VAC 5-130 et seq. for open burning. Also, permits may be required for any fuel burning equipment.

Potential fugitive dust impacts would be mitigated through good housekeeping practices such as water sprays during demolition; wetting, paving, or landscaping exposed earth areas; covering dust-producing materials during transport; limiting dust-producing construction activities during high wind conditions; and providing street sweeping and tire washes for trucks leaving the site.

### **3.4.6 Subsequent Analysis**

Subsequent analysis would include a detailed air quality assessment as part of the Tier II analysis of the Preferred Alternative and potential station locations are evaluated in detail. At that time, the role of locomotive emissions in regional air quality would be assessed. As well, the potential effect of project-related motor vehicle emissions on local roadways in the vicinity of stations would be assessed.

## **3.5 Noise and Vibration**

A noise and vibration assessment was conducted to identify the potential for impacts for each of the proposed alternatives. The noise and vibration assessment was conducted in accordance with the Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA) *High-Speed Ground Transportation Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* guidelines<sup>39</sup>, which specify the type of analysis appropriate for a Tier I EIS. The results of the preliminary noise and vibration assessment are described in the following sections. Noise and vibration analysis would be updated in the Tier II analysis for the Preferred Alternative.

### **3.5.1 Methodology**

#### **3.5.1.1 Noise**

During the preliminary phase of the project, when details of the alternatives are not fully developed, a screening assessment is conducted to estimate the potential for impact. Unlike the detailed assessment that is typically completed as part of a Tier II analysis, the screening assessment gives a conservative estimate of

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<sup>39</sup> This analysis is based on the *High-Speed Ground Transportation Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration, Washington, DC, December 1998 standards, and does not reflect the October 2005 revision. Screening distances in the 2005 update are less than those established in the 1998 version; therefore the estimates provided in this screening assessment are conservative.

the potential impacts and helps define the areas along the routes within the study area where future impacts are most likely. More detailed assessments would be conducted during Tier II evaluations.

The FRA guidelines prescribe distances within which an impact may occur between a passenger rail noise source and existing land uses. Freight rail noise is not factored into this assessment. The FRA developed these distances based on factors relating to equipment type; in this procedure, operating factors such as speed are not relevant. Table 3-16 lists the distances for various land use categories and source types. For example, potential noise impacts at quiet suburban or rural residences from a route that shares an existing rail line could occur within approximately 900 feet as measured from the centerline of the rail route. The FRA screening distances take into account the noise impact criteria, the type of project and the sensitivity of the surrounding land uses to noise. Using the screening distances provided, a total area (in acres) of potentially impacted noise-sensitive land uses was calculated within the Peninsula/CSXT route and Southside/NS route study areas. The relative size of the areas of potential noise impact was then compared among the alternatives.

**Table 3-16: Screening Distances for Noise Assessments (in feet)**

Type of Project Route	Ambient Type	Steel-Wheeled
Shared with Existing Rail Line	Urban/Noisy Suburban	450
	Quiet Suburban/Rural	900
Shared with Existing Highway	Urban/Noisy Suburban	450
	Quiet Suburban/Rural	700
New Route (previously Undeveloped land)	Urban/Noisy Suburban	450
	Quiet Suburban/Rural	900

1. Measured from centerline of guideway or rail route

Source: *High-Speed Ground Transportation Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration, Washington, DC, December 1998.

### 3.5.1.2 Vibration

During the preliminary phase of the project, when details of the various alternatives are not fully developed, a screening assessment is conducted to estimate the potential for impact. Unlike the detailed assessment that is typically completed as part of a Tier II analysis, the screening assessment gives a conservative estimate of the potential impacts and helps define the areas within the study area where future impacts are most likely. More detailed assessments would be conducted during Tier II evaluations of the Preferred Alternative.

The FRA noise and vibration guidelines<sup>40</sup> prescribe distances within which an impact may occur between a passenger rail vibration source and existing land uses. Freight-related vibration is not factored into this assessment. Table 3-17 lists the distances for various land use categories, source types and frequencies of service. For example, potential vibration impacts for residential land uses with infrequent train service of less than 40 events per day is 100 feet for high-speed trains traveling between 100 and 200 mph. The FRA screening distances take into account the vibration impact criteria, the type of project and the sensitivity of the surrounding land uses to vibration. Using the screening distances provided, a total area (in acres) of potentially impacted vibration-sensitive land uses was calculated within the Peninsula/CSXT route and Southside/NS route study areas. The relative size of the areas of potential vibration impact was then compared among the alternatives.

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.fra.dot.gov/Pages/253.shtml>

**Table 3-17: Screening Distances for Vibration Assessments (in feet)**

Receptor Land Use Category	Train Frequency <sup>1</sup>	Train Speed	
		Less than 100 mph	100 to 200 mph
Residential	Frequent	120	220
	Infrequent	60	100
Institutional	Frequent	100	160
	Infrequent	20	70

1. Frequent events include pass-bys greater than 70 per day, while infrequent events include pass-bys less than 70 per day.

Source: *High-Speed Ground Transportation Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration, Washington, DC, December 1998.

### 3.5.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

The noise assessment was conducted in accordance with the FRA *High-Speed Ground Transportation Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*<sup>41</sup> guidelines. These guidelines, along with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*<sup>42</sup>, form the basis for determining the potential noise impacts associated with high-speed and conventional-speed rail and transit projects. The FRA updated the noise and vibration guidelines for high-speed ground transportation studies in October 2005<sup>43</sup> after the surveys for the Tier I Draft EIS analysis were completed utilizing the 1998 guidance and standards. The effect of using the 1998 standards is to increase the area of potential effect. The 2005 standards are more specific. The 2005 standards will be utilized in the Tier II environmental analysis of the Preferred Alternative.

, In addition to the requirements established by CEQ implementing procedures for consideration of environmental impacts, FRA's Procedures (64 FR 28545 §14(n)(3)) specifically states that "The alternatives should be assessed with respect to applicable Federal, State, and local noise standards, especially those enforced by the FRA for railroad equipment, yards and facilities including 49 CFR Part 210 *Railroad Noise Emission Compliance Regulations*."

### 3.5.3 Affected Environment

#### 3.5.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

The existing ambient environment along the Peninsula/CSXT route is fairly typical of developed urban and suburban communities. The existing noise conditions along the Peninsula/CSXT route alignment include several ambient sources ranging from traffic noise along roadways to existing freight and passenger train activity. However, based on existing freight train activity, the ambient noise levels are dominated by CSXT freight trains particularly in the vicinity of at-grade crossings due to the federally mandated warning horn soundings. Ambient noise measurements and existing ground-borne vibration measurements were not conducted along the Peninsula/CSXT route as part of this Tier I EIS.

#### 3.5.3.2 Southside/NS Route

The existing ambient environment along the Southside/NS route is fairly typical of less developed rural communities divided by a heavily used freight rail route. The existing noise and vibration conditions along the Southside/NS route include several ambient sources ranging from traffic noise along roadways to existing freight train activity. However, based on existing freight train activity, the ambient noise and vibration levels are dominated by Norfolk Southern (NS) freight trains, particularly in the vicinity of at-grade crossings, due to the federally mandated warning horn soundings. Ambient noise measurements and existing ground-borne vibration measurements were not conducted along the Southside/NS route as part of this Tier I EIS.

<sup>41</sup> *High-Speed Ground Transportation Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration, Washington, DC, December 1998.

<sup>42</sup> *Transit Noise and Vibration Impacts Assessment: Final Report*, Federal Transit Administration, Washington, DC, April 1995.

<sup>43</sup> *High-Speed Ground Transportation Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration, Washington, DC; October 2005.

### 3.5.4 Environmental Consequences

#### 3.5.4.1 Status Quo Alternative

The Status Quo Alternative is based on existing conditions and the funded and programmed transportation improvements that will be developed and in operation by 2030. All passenger rail service conditions would remain the same. There would continue to be two daily round-trip trains along the Peninsula/CSXT route operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph. No physical or operational rail improvements would be made other than routine maintenance.

Train warning horns are required at grade crossings, and fifty grade crossings exist along the Peninsula/CSXT route. It is expected that the Status Quo Alternative would not create any changes to noise and vibration levels as currently experienced.

#### 3.5.4.2 No Action Alternative

**Noise** - The No Action Alternative assumes that one additional round-trip train traveling at conventional speeds would be added to the Peninsula/CSXT route. No passenger rail service would be added to the Southside/NS route, where freight rail operations would continue as planned by NS. In comparison with the Status Quo Alternative, which would provide the existing two daily roundtrips along the Peninsula/CSXT route, the No Action Alternative would increase rail operations in the corridor by 50 percent. Thus, the area of potential noise exposure would increase in size geographically by 50 percent. Based on the 900-foot screening distance listed in Table 3-20, the potential areas of noise exposure in the study area would range from none in Charles City County to over 478 acres in James City County. As shown in Table 3-18, approximately 1,544 acres of noise-sensitive land use would be potentially exposed as a result of the No Action Alternative.

**Table 3-18: Potential Areas of Noise and Vibration Exposure (in acres) and Number of Grade Crossings for No Action Alternative**

County/City	Noise Exposure Area <sup>1</sup> (acres)	Vibration Exposure Area <sup>2</sup> (acres)
Richmond	16.7	4.2
Henrico County	447.0	111.7
Charles City County	0.0	0.0
New Kent County	8.0	2.0
James City County	478.6	119.7
Williamsburg	86.1	21.5
York County	33.3	8.3
Newport News	474.6	118.6
<b>Total Area for No Action Alternative</b>	<b>1,544.2</b>	<b>386.1</b>
<b>Total Grade Crossings for No Action Alternative</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>NA</b>

1. The FRA screening distances of 900 feet was used to compute the potential areas of noise exposure.

2. The FRA screening distances of 100 feet was used to compute the potential areas of vibration exposure.

Source: DMJM Harris, October 2005.

Additionally, the No Action Alternative includes 50 grade crossings that would require the sounding of train warning horns. Due to the increased service, the sounding of train warning horns is expected to result in increased noise exposure at several sensitive receptor locations in the vicinity of the grade crossings.

Noise levels from construction activities, although temporary, could create a nuisance condition at nearby sensitive receptors. Exposure to excessive noise levels varies depending on the types of construction activity and the types of equipment used for each stage of work. Project construction activities may include track-laying and relocation, station stop construction, and construction of commuter parking facilities.

**Vibration** - Based on the 100-foot screening distance for infrequent events listed in Table 3-17, the potential areas of vibration exposure are expected to range from no impacts in Charles City County to 119 acres in James City County. As shown in Table 3-18, approximately 386 acres are expected to be potentially impacted due to vibration as a result of the No Action Alternative. In comparison with the Status Quo Alternative, vibration exposure under the No Action Alternative would be the same because vibration exposure is not measured cumulatively.

### 3.5.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Build Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)

**Noise** - The Preferred Alternative would provide the three round-trip train service described for the No Action Alternative and introduce passenger rail service (six round-trips) to the Southside along the NS freight line. Based on the 900-foot screening distance listed in Table 3-16, the potential areas of noise exposure are expected to range from no impacts in Charles City County to over 478 acres in James City County along the Peninsula/CSXT route. For the Southside/NS route, potential areas of noise exposure are expected to range from no impacts in Surry County to over 745 acres in Prince George County. As shown in Table 3-19, approximately 3,580 acres are expected to be potentially exposed due to noise as a result of the Preferred Alternative. This total acreage is substantially larger in size (132%) than the impact area of the No Action Alternative due to the addition of operations on the Southside/NS route.

**Table 3-19: Potential Areas of Noise and Vibration Exposure (in acres) and Number of Grade Crossings for the Preferred Alternative**

County/City	Noise Exposure Area <sup>1</sup> (acres)	Vibration Exposure Area <sup>2</sup> (acres)
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>		
Richmond	16.7	4.2
Henrico County	447.0	111.7
Charles City County	0.0	0.0
New Kent County	8.0	2.0
James City County	478.6	119.7
Williamsburg	86.1	21.5
York County	33.3	8.3
Newport News	474.6	118.6
<i>Total Area for Peninsula/CSXT Route</i>	<i>1,544.2</i>	<i>386.1</i>
<i>Grade Crossings</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>NA</i>
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>		
Prince George County	745.4	186.3
Sussex County	292.2	73.0
Surry County	0.0	0.0
Southampton County	364.6	91.1
Isle of Wight County	303.3	75.8
Suffolk	708.1	177.0
Chesapeake	196.4	49.1
Portsmouth	166.3	41.6
Norfolk	5.8	1.4
<i>Total Area for Southside/NS Route</i>	<i>2,036.7</i>	<i>509.2</i>
<i>Grade Crossings</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>NA</i>
<b>Total Area for the Preferred Alternative</b>	<b>3,580.9</b>	<b>895.3</b>
<b>Total Grade Crossings for the Preferred Alternative</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>NA</b>

1. The FRA screening distances of 900 feet was used to compute the potential areas of noise exposure.

2. The FRA screening distances of 100 feet was used to compute the potential areas of vibration exposure.

Source: AECOM, October 2005.

The Preferred Alternative is expected to include 124 at-grade crossings that would require the sounding of warning horns. For this Tier I EIS it has not been determined which grade crossings would be closed or potentially grade separated. The sounding of warning horns is expected to result in increased noise impacts at several sensitive receptor locations in the vicinity of the grade crossings.

Noise levels from construction activities, although temporary, could create a nuisance condition at nearby sensitive receptors. Exposure to excessive noise levels varies depending on the types of construction activity and the types of equipment used for each stage of work. Project construction activities may include track-laying and relocation, station stop construction and construction of parking facilities.

**Vibration** - Based on the 100-foot screening distance for infrequent events listed in Table 3-17, the potential areas of vibration exposure are expected to range from no impacts in Charles City County and 119 acres in James City County along the Peninsula/CSXT route. For the Southside/NS route, potential areas of impact



for vibration are expected to range from no impacts in Surry County to almost 190 acres in Prince George County. As shown in Table 3-19, almost 895 acres are expected to be potentially exposed due to vibration as a result of the Preferred Alternative. This total acreage is substantially larger in size (132%) than the exposure area of the No Action Alternative and Status Quo Alternative due to the addition of passenger rail operations on the Southside/NS route.

Vibration levels from construction activities for the Preferred Alternative, although temporary, could create a nuisance condition at nearby sensitive receptors. Exposure to excessive vibration levels varies depending on the types of construction activity and the types of equipment used for each stage of work. Project construction activities may include track-laying and relocation, station stop construction and construction of parking facilities.

#### 3.5.4.4 Comparison of Alternatives

**Noise** - In this Tier I analysis, potential noise exposure was determined based on the number of train trips and the location of the trips, i.e., along the Peninsula/CSXT route and/or along the Southside/NS route. The Status Quo Alternative would provide the existing two daily round-trips along the Peninsula/CSXT route. The No Action Alternative would increase operations in the corridor by 50 percent. Thus, the area of potential noise exposure would increase in size geographically by 50 percent (to a total of 1,544 acres) under the No Action Alternative.

The Preferred Alternative would provide the new three round-trip train service described for the No Action Alternative and introduce passenger rail service (six round-trips) to the Southside along the NS freight line. A total area of approximately 3,580 acres is expected to be potentially exposed due to noise as a result of the Preferred Alternative. This area is substantially larger in size (132%) than the impact area of the No Action Alternative due to the addition of operations on the Southside/NS route.

**Vibration** - The potential areas of vibration exposure under the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives are expected to range from no exposure in Charles City County to 119 acres in James City County. Approximately 386 acres are expected to be potentially exposed due to vibration as a result of the No Action Alternative. In comparison with the Status Quo Alternative, vibration exposure under the No Action Alternative would be the same because vibration exposure is not measured cumulatively. Approximately 895 acres are expected to be potentially exposed due to vibration as a result of the Preferred Alternative. This total acreage is substantially larger in size (132%) than the exposure area of the No Action Alternative and Status Quo Alternative due to the addition of operations on the Southside/NS route.

#### 3.5.5 Potential Mitigation – Noise

Detailed noise analysis would be conducted during Tier II evaluations for the Preferred Alternative. At that time, strategies to avoid or minimize noise impacts would be examined for feasibility and incorporated into the project design, and strategies to mitigate the remaining unavoidable impacts would be examined. Noise control and mitigation strategies that could be examined include:

- Selection and maintenance of equipment, such as ballast mats and wheel truing;
- Operational controls such as reducing train horn noise in compliance with the Quiet Zone requirements in FRA's whistle ban regulation<sup>44</sup>; and
- Installation of noise buffers, barriers and screening.

During the construction phase, noise control measures may be required to ensure compliance with all federal and local guidelines and noise limits. For example, noise specifications could require contractors to use properly maintained and operated equipment, including the use of exhaust mufflers according to the equipment manufacturer's specifications. Additional noise control measures could be incorporated into the construction specification documents as determined to be necessary during final design. Several areas of potential noise control during construction include:

- Temporary noise barriers erected between noisy activities and noise-sensitive receptors;
- Use of sonic/vibratory pile-drivers rather than impact pile-driving near noise-sensitive receptors; and

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<sup>44</sup> Final Rule on the Use of Locomotive Horns at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings, August 17, 2006, 49 CFR Parts 222 and 229.

- Rerouting construction traffic along roadways that minimize noise impacts at nearby noise-sensitive receptors.

### 3.5.6 Potential Mitigation – Vibration

Detailed vibration analysis would be conducted during Tier II evaluations of the Preferred Alternative. At that time, strategies to avoid or minimize vibration impacts would be examined for feasibility and incorporated into the project design, and strategies to mitigate remaining unavoidable impacts would be examined. Vibration control and mitigation strategies that could be examined include:

- Selection of least vibration-producing equipment and construction techniques;
- Operational controls such as restricting vibration-inducing activities to locations with no potentially affected receptors or restricting vibration-producing activities to less sensitive times of day.

Vibration control measures would be considered during the preparation of the Tier II analysis of the Preferred Alternative and future construction to ensure compliance with all federal and local construction limits. For example, vibration specifications could require contractors to use alternative construction methods and equipment, including the use of vibratory pile drivers rather than impact pile drivers. Additional vibration control measures could be incorporated into the construction specification documents as determined to be necessary during final design.

The areas for potential vibration control during construction include:

- Utilizing alternative construction methods that avoid impact pile driving near vibration-sensitive receptors, such as residences, schools and hospitals. Whenever possible, use of drilled piles or sonic/vibratory pile drivers to reduce excessive vibration;
- Rerouting truck traffic away from vibration-sensitive receptors; and
- Requiring contractors to use Best Available Control Technologies (BACT) to limit excessive vibration.

### 3.5.7 Subsequent Analysis

Subsequent analysis would be undertaken during Tier II analysis to determine specific noise and vibration impacts. Subsequent analysis would include the following:

- Measuring ambient conditions;
- Analyzing future operations;
- Determining impacts; and
- Determining appropriate mitigation.

## 3.6 Energy

A preliminary energy assessment was conducted to estimate the potential energy needs and savings for each of the alternatives. This section examines the proposed project's potential energy needs by alternative and its effects on the region's energy resources. Implementation of the proposed project would be expected to result in changing dynamics of all vehicle classes with regard to vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Changes in VMT, in turn, would affect energy consumption. The results of the preliminary energy assessment are described in the following sections.

### 3.6.1 Methodology

Since diesel-powered locomotives are expected to be used for the selected alternative, the energy consumption rates utilized in this preliminary assessment are based on diesel-powered locomotives. For this assessment, annual energy consumption was determined based on the number of round-trip train miles traveled annually for each alternative. Using the low and high annual ridership estimates for the project, energy use per passenger-mile was also determined for each alternative.

In these calculations, energy use factors for intercity rail reported in the Department of Energy's *Transportation Energy Data Book*, 26<sup>th</sup> Edition, were used. These included annual energy use in British Thermal Units (BTUs) and BTU per passenger mile. A BTU is a unit of measure that describes the amount of

energy or heat consumed. Technically, one BTU is the amount of energy needed to raise one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit. One BTU is also the energy produced by burning one wooden match.

Based on the analysis presented in Section 3.1, the project is not expected to result in a substantial diversion of automobiles to rail; therefore, potential diversion is not considered in the energy consumption equation.

### 3.6.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

Several federal regulations are applicable when considering the energy needs of any federally-funded high-speed rail project, including the following:

In addition to the requirements established by CEQ implementing procedures for consideration of environmental impacts, FRA's Environmental Procedures (64 FR 28545 §14(n)(10)) specifically states that "The EIS shall assess in detail any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of energy resources likely to be involved in each alternative and any potential energy conservation, especially those alternatives likely to reduce the use of petroleum or natural gas, consistent with the policy outlined in Executive Order 12185."

Executive Order 12185, Conservation of Petroleum and Natural Gas (December 17, 1979, 44 F.R. § 75093), encourages additional conservation of petroleum and natural gas by recipients seeking federal funding.

The 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) builds on the initiatives established in the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA21) and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). ISTEA identified planning factors for use by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) in developing transportation plans and programs. Under the ISTEA, MPOs are required to "protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life" and are required to consider the consistency of transportation planning with federal, state and local energy goals (U.S. Department of Transportation 2002b). SAFETEA-LU provides new requirements for the statewide and metropolitan planning process.

### 3.6.3 Affected Environment

The *Transportation Energy Data Book: Edition 26-2007*, reported that highway vehicles were responsible for approximately 80 percent of all transportation energy use in 2005. Non-highway modes (air, water, pipeline, rail) account for the remaining 20 percent, with air travel accounting for nearly half of the non-highway energy use. Rail accounts for approximately two percent of transportation energy use. Traveling by rail is one of the most fuel efficient modes of transportation due to factors such as aerodynamics and the low rolling resistance of steel wheels on steel rails.

#### 3.6.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

The estimated round-trip train mileage between the Richmond Main Street Station and the existing Newport News Station is approximately 150 miles. Currently, Amtrak operates two round-trip trains daily along the Peninsula/CSXT route, which is equivalent to approximately 5.8 billion BTUs annually.

#### 3.6.3.2 Southside/NS Route

Currently, there is no passenger rail service along the Southside/NS route since Amtrak ceased Norfolk operations in the late 1970's. The rail line supports freight operations only. The estimated round-trip train mileage between the Richmond Main Street Station and Norfolk is approximately 196 miles.

### 3.6.4 Environmental Consequences

Based on the analysis provided in Section 3.1, it is unlikely that the additional rail trips generated by the Preferred Alternative would cause a measurable reduction in automobile traffic on major roadways such as Interstates 64 and 95. According to the ridership forecast, the Preferred Alternative would generate an incremental increase of between 694,100 and 847,800 passengers annually when compared to the Status Quo, or an average of approximately 2,100 riders per day.

Some of these riders would likely be using rail in lieu of an automobile trip along I-64, U.S. 460 and I-95, but these riders would be a small fraction of the total trips in the corridors. Long-distance travelers are more likely than commuters to travel in multiple-occupant vehicles, and some of these trips may use routes other than I-64 and I-95, depending on their ultimate origins and destinations. It is unlikely that as many as half of the incremental riders would divert a vehicle from the Interstate routes, but in order to fully assess the potential effects of highway-rail diversion, that rate is assumed for the purpose of this discussion. According to the

license plate survey, the average vehicle occupancy rate along U.S. 460 and I-64 is 1.75 across all trip purposes, thus for every 1,750 passengers, the project would only divert 1,000 vehicles.

For both I-64 and I-95, it is expected that only a small fraction of vehicles would divert to rail. Given the normal daily and seasonal fluctuations in traffic volumes, this would not be a measurable reduction in traffic volume along these corridors. Thus, the number of vehicles diverting to rail would likely be negligible in terms of energy savings.

Annual energy consumption was determined for each alternative based on the number of round-trip train miles traveled annually. Daily train mileage for each alternative was converted to annual energy use by dividing annual train miles by the Department of Energy's annual intercity rail energy use factor. Table 3-20 shows the resulting annual energy use estimate for each alternative in year 2025. The Status Quo Alternative would use 6 billion BTUs, while the No Action Alternative would use 9 billion BTUs per year. Energy uses would be 31 billion BTUs annually for the Preferred Alternative.

Annual energy use directly correlates with the number of trips. For example, a 50 percent increase in trips between the No Action and Status Quo Alternatives would yield a 50 percent increase in energy use. Increasing the trip rate from two in the Status Quo Alternative to nine under any one of the Preferred Alternative would result in an approximately 333 to 417 percent increase in energy use depending on route mileage.

Energy use per passenger mile (expressed as BTU/passenger mile) was calculated for each alternative. This value was calculated for both the Low and High annual ridership estimates for the project. The results presented in Table 3-20 demonstrate relatively small differences in energy use among the alternatives. For example, some economy would occur in the No Action Alternative (145 BTUs High and 154 BTUs Low) compared to the Status Quo Alternative (122 BTUs High and 134 BTUs Low) due to a higher ratio of ridership to the number of trips in the No Action Alternative.

**Table 3-20: Energy Use Estimates**

Route/Trips/Train Mileage	Status Quo	No Action	Preferred Alternative
Peninsula # of trips/day	2	3	3
Peninsula # of miles/day	300	450	450
Southside # of trips/day	0	0	6
Southside # of miles/day	0	0	1,176
Total trip mileage/day	300	450	1,626
Total trip mileage/year	109,500	164,250	593,490
% trips greater than the Status Quo	NA	50%	442%
% trips greater than the No Action	NA	NA	261%
<b>Annual Energy Use (reported in billions BTUs)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31</b>
% annual energy use greater than the Status Quo	NA	50%	417%
% annual energy use greater than the No Action	NA	NA	244%
Annual ridership (High)	262,300	464,800	1,110,100
Annual passenger miles (High)(reported in millions)	39	70	201
<b>BTU/passenger mile (High)</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>154</b>
Annual ridership (Low)	245,500	425,700	939,600
Annual passenger miles (Low)(reported in millions)	37	64	178
<b>BTU/passenger mile (Low)</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>182</b>

<sup>1</sup> Multiplier based on Table 2.12 of the Transportation Energy Data Book, 26th Edition.

Note: numbers may vary in calculation due to rounding.

Under the High ridership scenario for the Preferred Alternative, energy use per passenger mile (152 to 155 BTUs) would be only slightly higher than the Status Quo Alternative (145 BTUs), meaning that the ratios of ridership to trips in the Preferred Alternative would be fairly similar to that of the Status Quo Alternative. In the Low ridership scenario, energy use per passenger mile (182 to 190 BTUs) would be higher than the Status Quo Alternative (154 BTUs), meaning that the ratios of ridership to trips in the Preferred Alternative would be

lower than that of the Status Quo Alternative. In other words, in the Low ridership scenario, lower ridership would yield higher energy use per passenger mile.

Discussions of estimated energy use by each alternative are provided below.

#### **3.6.4.1 Status Quo**

The Status Quo Alternative assumes that the existing two round-trips along the Peninsula/CSXT route would remain and no passenger service would be provided on the Southside/NS route. Energy consumption would remain the same as required for the existing service, at approximately six billion BTUs annually as shown in Table 3-20. Annual energy use would be lower than the No Action and Preferred Alternative as the Status Quo Alternative would provide the fewest trips.

Energy use per passenger mile would be approximately 154 BTUs in the Low ridership scenario and 145 BTUs in the High ridership scenario. Energy use per passenger mile would be higher than that of the No Action Alternative, but lower than the Preferred Alternative.

#### **3.6.4.2 No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative assumes three round-trip trains along the Peninsula/CSXT route. There would be no significant infrastructure improvements related to the operation of this additional train and no improvements at all to the Southside/NS route under the No Action Alternative. .

Annual energy use (nine billion BTUs) would be approximately 50 percent higher than the Status Quo Alternative as the No Action Alternative would provide 50 percent more trips. For the same reason, annual energy use would be lower than that of the Preferred Alternative which would provide more trips.

As shown in Table 3-20, energy use per passenger mile would be approximately 134 BTUs in the Low ridership scenario and 122 BTUs in the High ridership scenario. Energy use per passenger mile would be lower than that of the Status Quo and the Preferred Alternative due to a higher ratio of ridership to trips.

If construction in some areas is required to make accommodations for the additional round-trip train on the Peninsula/CSXT route, some additional energy would be expended on a short-term basis.

#### **3.6.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)**

The Preferred Alternative would provide service to both routes by combining the No Action Alternative with higher speed passenger rail service on the Southside/NS route. Three daily round-trip trains would operate along the Peninsula/CSXT route and six daily round-trip trains would operate along the Southside/NS route. Annual energy use would be approximately 31 BTUs, or approximately 417 percent more energy than the Status Quo Alternative and approximately 244 percent more energy than the No Action Alternative. The Preferred Alternative would provide approximately 442 percent more trips than the Status Quo Alternative and approximately 261 percent more trips than the No Action Alternative. Annual energy use would be higher than that of either the Status Quo or No Action Alternatives due to the greater mileage on the Southside/NS route where all new trips would be located.

As shown in Table 3-20, energy use per passenger mile would be approximately 182 BTUs in the Low ridership scenario and 154 BTUs in the High ridership scenario. Energy use per passenger mile would be higher than that of the Status Quo Alternative, particularly in the Low ridership scenario, and that calculated for the No Action Alternative.

During construction of the project, additional energy would be expended beyond what would be used for the normal operation. This additional energy would be consumed on a short-term basis by construction of improvements required to implement the service and by construction-related delays to existing freight and passenger rail service.

#### **3.6.5 Potential Mitigation**

Energy conservation measures could be considered during construction and operations to minimize overall project energy needs. For example, an energy plan could be implemented that would encourage energy conservation measures including, but not limited to, the following:

- Use energy-efficient equipment;
- Incorporate energy-saving techniques during construction;

- Avoid unnecessary idling of construction equipment;
- Consolidate material delivery whenever possible to ensure efficient vehicle utilization;
- Schedule delivery of materials during non-rush hours to minimize fuel use lost to traffic congestion and thereby maximize overall vehicle fuel efficiency;
- Encourage project employees and contractors to carpool; and
- Maintain equipment and machinery in good working condition, especially those using fossil fuels.

**3.6.6 Subsequent Analysis** Subsequent analysis during Tier II environmental documentation could include more detailed analysis on energy consumption and ways to encourage energy efficiency for the Preferred Alternative. More specific effects on energy consumption and/or energy conservation related to stations, equipment, and operations could be the focus of this subsequent analysis.

### 3.7 Land Use

This section describes the existing and future land use characteristics along each of the proposed alignments, determines the consistency of each alternative with local planning and describes the potential effects on land use of possible land conversions due to new right-of-way acquisition for each alternative.

#### 3.7.1 Methodology

The potential compatibility of the proposed alternatives with existing land uses was evaluated based on the sensitivity of various land uses to the changes that may occur with the introduction of conventional or high-speed passenger rail service and associated infrastructure. For example, homes and schools are more sensitive to proposed changes that may result in increased noise and vibration or increased levels of traffic congestion. Industrial uses are typically less sensitive to these types of changes because noise and vibration, and to some extent traffic, tend to interfere less with normal industrial activities. For the purposes of this study, potential impacts were considered low if existing land uses within a proposed alignment or station area were found to be compatible with the land use changes that may result from the proposed project.

The type of improvement that would be associated with each of the alternatives would also affect the level of potential impact. Improvements such as potential widening of an existing right-of-way or the need for new right-of-way were considered to have a low compatibility with agricultural land. Conversely, if the improvement were to be contained within the existing right-of-way, the alternative was considered to be compatible with agricultural land. Summarized below are the generalized potential compatibility ratings of existing and planned land use types with the alternatives, including potential alignment and station options.

- **Low Compatibility** - Single-family residential, neighborhood park, habitat conservation area, elementary/middle school, agricultural (new right-of-way needed).
- **Medium Compatibility** - Moderate density multifamily residential, high schools, community parks, low intensity industrial, hospitals.
- **High Compatibility** - Business park/regional commercial, high density multifamily residential, existing or planned transit center, high intensity industrial park, service commercial, commercial recreation, college, transportation/utilities, high intensity government facilities, airport or train station, agricultural (no new right-of-way needed).

Future land use compatibility was evaluated based on a review of all land use and transportation plans adopted by the cities/counties located within the study area. The documents were examined to assess an alternative's potential consistency with the goals and objectives defined therein. The project was considered compatible if any of the project alternatives was located in areas planned for transportation multimodal centers or corridor development, redevelopment, economic revitalization or transit-oriented development. Compatibility was considered low if any of the alternatives was potentially inconsistent with local or regional planning documents.

#### 3.7.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

In addition to the requirements established by CEQ implementing procedures for consideration of environmental impacts, FRA's Environmental Procedures (64 FR 28545 §14(n)(15)) specifically states that "The EIS should assess the impacts of each alternative on local land use controls and comprehensive

regional planning as well as on development within the affected environment, including, where applicable, other proposed Federal actions in the area.”

### 3.7.3 Affected Environment

This section describes the current land use patterns within 300 feet on either side of each route and within ½-mile of each station. This land use study area is sufficiently sized to enable existing and future land uses to be characterized, to determine project consistency with local planning in the vicinity of the alternatives, and to assess the potential effects of possible land use conversions resulting from right-of-way acquisition for the project. It also provides a review of land use plans identified for each study route.

#### 3.7.3.1 Existing Land Use Patterns

The following section describes the existing land uses for each city/county included in each of the proposed alignments.

**Peninsula/CSXT Route** - The primary land uses along the Peninsula/CSXT route include agricultural, commercial/office space industrial, residential and undeveloped. Developed land uses along the Peninsula/CSXT route are concentrated in Richmond, Henrico, Williamsburg and Newport News. Figure 3-1 shows the land uses along the route. Land uses within each jurisdiction located along the Peninsula/CSXT route are described below:

- **City of Richmond** - The City of Richmond makes up approximately six percent of the Peninsula/CSXT study area. The proposed route would use the existing Main Street Station. Land use along the route in Richmond is primarily characterized by commercial/office space and industrial. Other land uses in this urban setting include government, institutional, parks, recreation, and open space, and residential. Approximately seven percent of the area along the route is undeveloped.

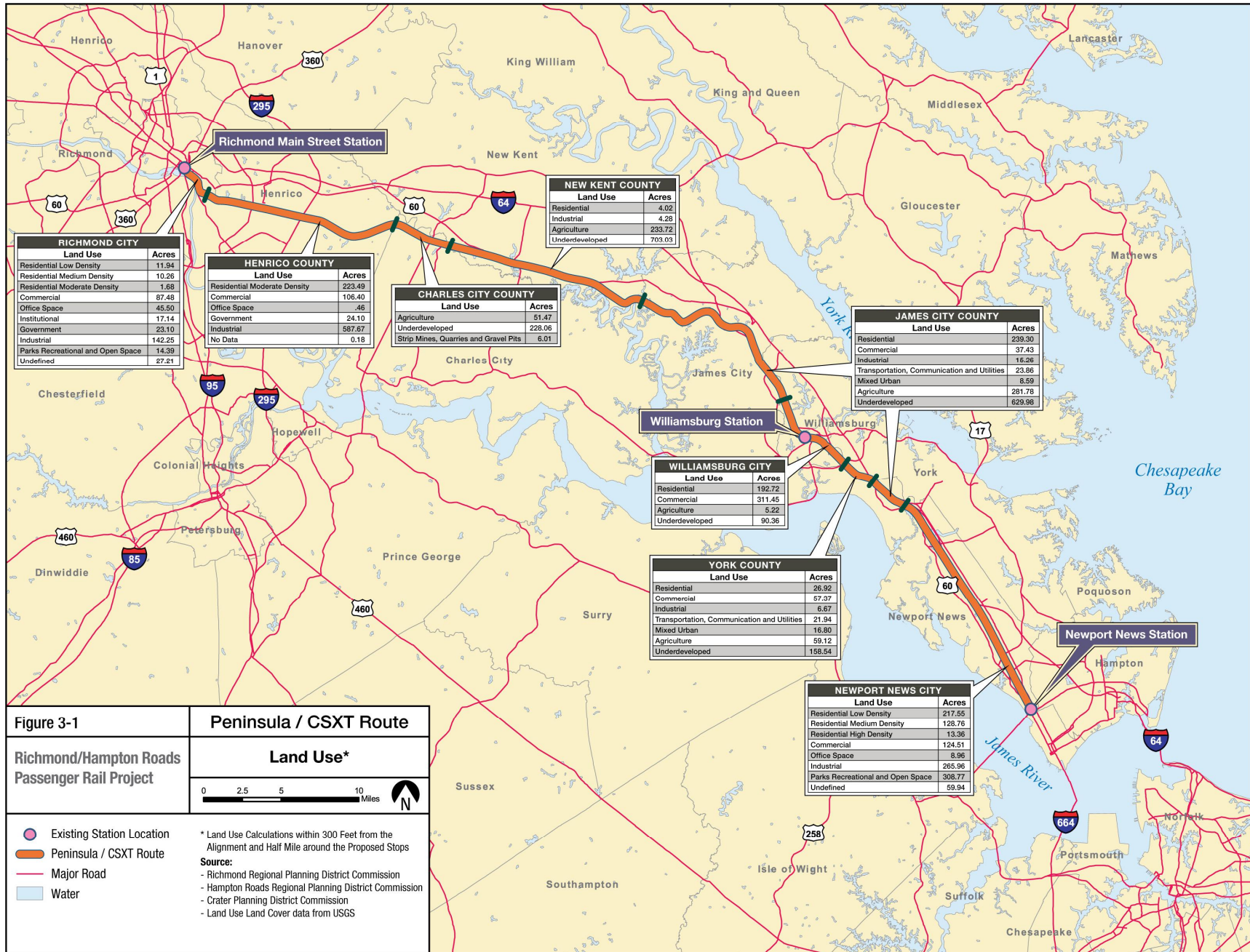
Current land uses surrounding the Main Street Station are 43 percent commercial and office space, 34 percent industrial, and 11 percent institutional and government. The remaining land uses are residential and parks and open space.

- **Henrico County** - Henrico County makes up approximately 16 percent of the study area. Primary land uses along the route within this county are mainly characterized by industrial and residential. Other land uses in this area include commercial/office space and government.
- **Charles City County** - Charles City County makes up approximately four percent of the study area. Land uses in this area are mainly agricultural and undeveloped. A small percentage of the land use along the route is characterized as strip mines, quarries and gravel pits.
- **New Kent County** - Approximately 16 percent of the study area is located within New Kent County. As in Charles City County, the land uses in New Kent County are chiefly agriculture and undeveloped. A small percentage of the land use is industrial and residential.
- **James City County** - James City County makes up about 20 percent of the study area. Within this section of the route, land uses are primarily characterized by agricultural, residential and undeveloped land. A smaller percentage of the area land use is commercial, industrial, mixed urban, or transportation, communications, and utilities.
- **City of Williamsburg** - Approximately ten percent of the study area is located in Williamsburg. Land uses along this part of the route are mostly commercial and residential with a small percentage undeveloped or agricultural.

The use of the existing Williamsburg Amtrak Station is proposed for all of the alternatives considered using the Peninsula/CSXT Route. An expanded park-and-ride lot is also proposed for this station location. The land uses around this station are 36 percent residential and 41 percent commercial. The remaining land uses are undeveloped or agricultural.

- **York County** - York County makes up about 6 percent of the study area. Almost half of the land uses in York County are undeveloped. Other primary land uses in this area of the route include agriculture and commercial. A smaller percentage of the land uses are comprised of industrial, mixed urban, residential, and transportation, communications, and utilities.







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- **City of Newport News** - Approximately 22 percent of the study area is located within Newport News. Land uses in this area are mostly industrial and residential, with some commercial/office space, parks, recreation, and open space, and a smaller undefined area.

The existing Amtrak Station in Newport News would be used as part of the Status Quo Alternative, the No Action Alternative and the Preferred Alternative. Land uses in this area are 31 percent residential, 27 percent parks, recreation, and open space, 24 percent industrial, and 11 percent commercial. The remaining uses are office (1 percent) and undefined (5 percent).

**Southside/NS Route** - The primary land uses along the Southside/NS Route include agricultural, industrial, residential and undeveloped. Developed land uses, which include industrial, commercial, and residential, along the Southside/NS route are concentrated in Prince George County, the City of Chesapeake, the City of Portsmouth, and the City of Norfolk. Figure 3-2 shows the land uses along the route. Land uses within each jurisdiction located along the Southside/NS route are described below:

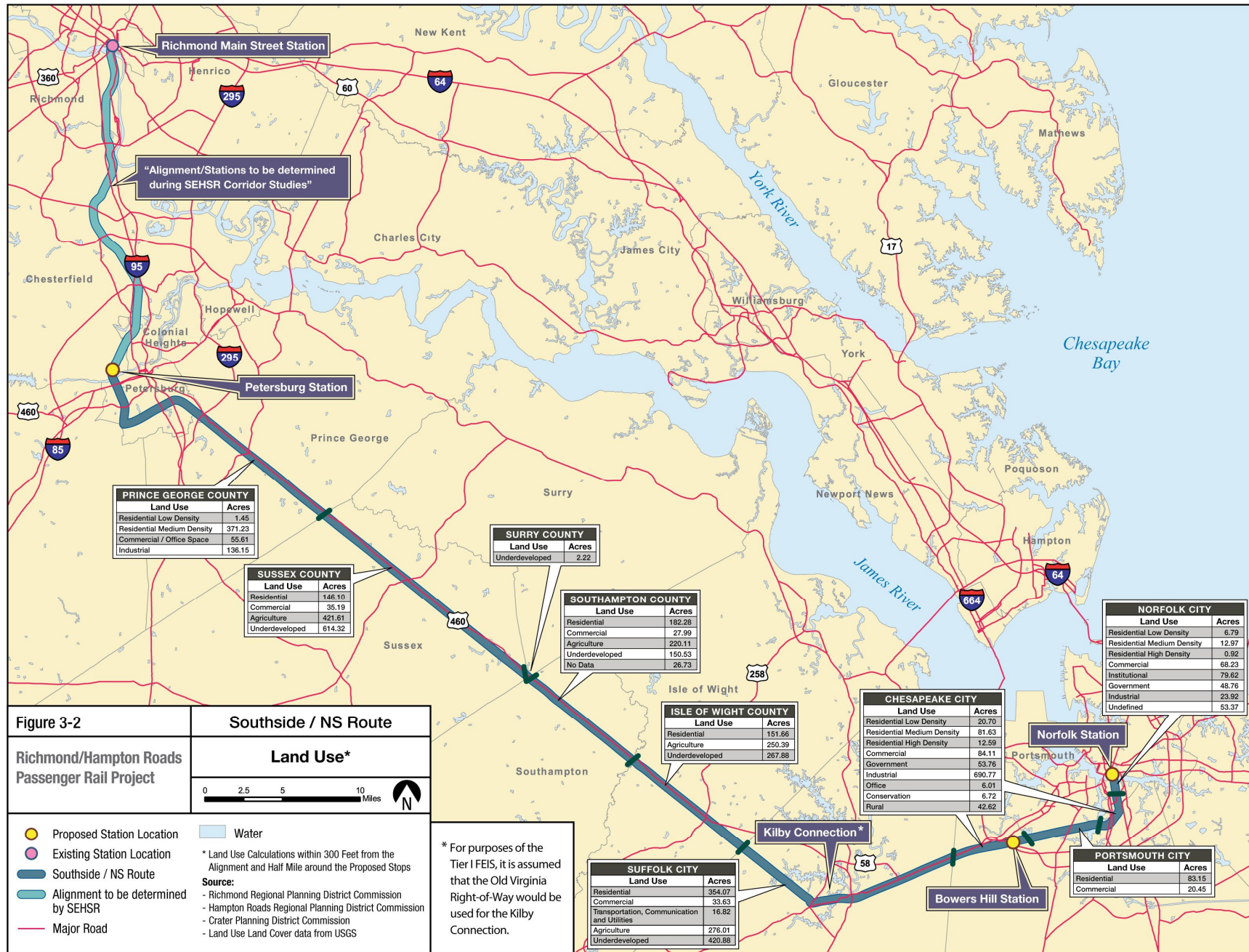
- **Prince George County** - Prince George County makes up approximately ten percent of the Southside/NS study area. Land use along the route in Prince George County is primarily residential and industrial with a small percentage of land utilized for commercial and office space.
- **City of Sussex** - The City of Sussex makes up about 22 percent of the Southside/NS study area. Land uses along the route in this area are mostly agricultural and undeveloped. Other uses include residential and, to a lesser extent, commercial.
- **Surry County** - Surry County makes up less than one percent of the Southside/NS study area. Land use for this portion of Surry County is classified as undeveloped.
- **Southampton County** - Southampton County makes up about 11 percent of the Southside/NS study area. Land uses along the route in this area are mostly agricultural, residential and undeveloped. A small percentage of the land uses in this area is commercial.
- **Isle of Wight County** - Isle of Wight County makes up about 12 percent of the Southside/NS study area. Land uses along the route in Isle of Wight County are agricultural, residential and undeveloped.
- **City of Suffolk** - Approximately 20 percent of the study area is located in the City of Suffolk. Land uses in this section of the route are chiefly agricultural, residential and undeveloped. A small percentage of the land uses in this area are commercial and transportation, communication, and utilities.

A station is proposed in the vicinity of Bowers Hill, just off of Military Highway, for the Preferred Alternative only. Land uses surrounding the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station location are 87 percent industrial and 13 percent commercial.

- **City of Chesapeake** - Approximately 18 percent of the study area is located in the City of Chesapeake. Land uses in this section of the route are primarily industrial. Other land uses include commercial/office space, government, residential and agricultural/rural. A very small percentage of the area is a conservation area.
- **City of Portsmouth** - Approximately two percent of the study area is located in the City of Portsmouth. Land uses in this section of the route are primarily residential and commercial. A very small percentage of the area is an agricultural area.
- **City of Norfolk** - Approximately five percent of the study area is located in the City of Norfolk. Land uses in this section of the route are mainly institutional, government and commercial. Other land uses include industrial and residential. A moderate portion of the land uses in this area is undefined.

A station is proposed in this section of the Southside/NS route near the Harbor Point Stadium. A park-and-ride facility is also proposed for this station. Land uses surrounding the proposed station area are 47 percent government and institutional, 24 percent commercial, 7 percent residential, 16 percent undefined and 5 percent industrial.

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### 3.7.3.2 Review of Land Use Plans

As part of the land use analysis, comprehensive and long-range plans were reviewed for localities located within the project corridors. Several of the plans have elements that relate specifically to the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project or passenger rail in general. The most recent plans and their objectives are listed in Table 3-21.

**Table 3-21: Land Use Plans and Transportation Objectives**

Plan	Transportation Objectives
<b>State Plans</b>	
Virginia Department of Transportation. 2004. <i>VTrans 2025, Virginia's Statewide Multimodal Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Phase 3 and Final report to the General Assembly</i>	The plan does not specifically address the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project; however, the plan supports the development of transit networks in the state and specifically addresses the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Mobility Multimodal Investment Network.
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. 2004. <i>The Virginia State Rail Plan, A Multimodal Strategy to Meet the Commonwealth's Passenger and Freight Transportation Needs through 2025</i>	The plan describes the two proposed routes of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project.
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>	
Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). 2004. <i>2026 Long-Range Transportation Plan</i>	Objectives stated in the plan that relate to the proposed project include: supporting efforts to provide expanded passenger rail service, including high-speed rail, to and through the Richmond region; supporting local and regional efforts to plan for commuter rail in the Richmond region; and securing a reliable and dedicated source of funds for public transportation and intercity rail.
City of Richmond. <i>City of Richmond's Master Plan 2000-2020</i>	The plan calls for the development of high-speed passenger rail service connecting Richmond to other areas in Virginia and along the East Coast. In the short-term, the plan calls for the preservation of right-of-way for potential transit routes for elements of the plan that are not to be implemented in the near future.
City of Richmond. 2004. <i>Downtown Plan Richmond</i>	The Richmond Downtown Plan specifies that "appropriate track upgrades should be made to maximize the use of the Main Street Station as the regional rail transit hub," which includes "improvements to or elimination of grade crossings that would facilitate future high-speed rail service to Newport News."
Henrico County. 2009. <i>Vision 2026 –Comprehensive Plan</i>	The plan lists the following policies to guide the provision of rail services in the County. (1) Participate in regional efforts to monitor and evaluate the potential demand for passenger trains within the County. (2) Consider potential station locations in the design of mixed-use development, particularly in areas where preferred routes have been identified.
New Kent County. 2003. <i>Vision 2020: New Kent County Comprehensive Plan</i>	The plan supports the development and expansion of passenger rail services between Richmond and Hampton Roads along the CSXT route, including reestablishing passenger rail service at Providence Forge.
Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC). 2003. <i>Village Visions: New Kent County Providence Forge</i>	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is supported by the plan and includes a possible rail stop at Providence Forge.
Hampton Roads Planning District Commission. 2007. <i>Hampton Roads 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan</i>	This plan does not include the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. It does support the expansion of rail transit service in portions of this project's study area.
James City County. <i>2003 Comprehensive Plan</i>	The Plan specifically addresses the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project and supports plans for the CSXT route. The plan supports the continuation of feasibility and impact studies to develop a high-speed rail system preferably utilizing the CSXT route.
City of Williamsburg. 2006. <i>The City of Williamsburg 2006 Comprehensive Plan</i>	The plan supports the development and implementation of improved high-speed rail service, with the Williamsburg Transportation Center serving as the regional hub.

Plan	Transportation Objectives
York County. 2005. <i>Charting the Course to 2025, The Comprehensive Plan</i>	The York County Comprehensive Plan supports the development of enhanced rail service on the Peninsula, including higher speed rail service along the CSXT route, and encourages further feasibility studies of high-speed rail.
City of Newport News. 2000. <i>Framework for the Future</i>	The plan does not address the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project specifically; however, the plan concludes that "high-speed rail should be extended to Norfolk and Virginia Beach through the Third Crossing of Hampton Roads."
City of Hampton. 2006. <i>Hampton's Community Plan - Land Use &amp; Community Design and Transportation Summary of Recommendations</i>	The plan states in the Transportation Element that the city will "maintain and enhance passenger rail connections between the city and the rest of the country."
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>	
Crater Planning District Commission (CPDC). 2004. <i>Tri-Cities Area Year 2026 Transportation Plan</i>	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is cited as an example of how passenger rail service could be implemented to improve connections between modes.
CPDC. 2005. <i>Tri-Cities Area MPO Unified Transportation Planning Work Program (UTPWP) FY 2006</i>	Objectives of the plan are to monitor the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project and to coordinate study progress with local governments particularly focusing on land use impacts, at-grade crossings safety and land parcel access.
Hampton Roads Planning District Commission. 2007. <i>Hampton Roads 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan</i>	As stated above, this plan does not include the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. It does support the expansion of rail transit service in portions of this project's study area.
Hampton Roads Planning District Commission. 2007. <i>Vision 2020: The Southampton County Comprehensive Plan</i>	Transportation goals of the plan include recognizing and promoting the value of rail and encouraging the improvement of such facilities.
City of Suffolk. 2006. <i>Comprehensive Plan for 2026</i>	The plan states that exploration of exclusive right-of-way for new rail service should be considered.
Chesapeake County. 2006. <i>2026 Comprehensive Plan</i>	City will preserve railroad right-of-way along corridors where passenger rail may be a future consideration.
City of Virginia Beach. 2003. <i>2003 Comprehensive Plan Policy Document Master Transportation Plan</i>	The plan calls for the city to "continue to pursue high-speed rail connections to Southside Hampton Roads." Of the two routes presented in the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project, the city prefers the Southside/NS route.
City of Portsmouth. 2005. <i>Destination 2025: Setting a Bold New Course, A Comprehensive Plan</i>	Policy #7 of the Transportation Element is to connect the land use pattern to a supportive, multimodal transportation system. Plan does not address the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project.
City of Norfolk. 2002. <i>A Vision for the Next Decade Norfolk 2010</i>	Plan includes a multimodal transfer facility serving a high-speed rail system and development oriented toward transit.

### 3.7.4 Environmental Consequences

#### 3.7.4.1 Status Quo Alternative

The Status Quo Alternative is based on existing conditions and the funded and programmed transportation improvements that will be developed and in operation by 2030. All passenger rail service conditions would remain the same. There would continue to be two daily round-trip trains along the Peninsula/CSXT route operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph. No physical or operational rail improvements would be made other than routine maintenance.

Land use and local communities will change between 2008 and 2030 as a result of population growth and changes of economic activity in cities and counties within the study area. Although some changes in land use compatibility with passenger rail service may result from these changes in economic activity in the study area and/or from the projects in the Status Quo Alternative, it was assumed that projects included in the Status Quo Alternative would include typical design and construction practices to avoid or minimize potential impacts. Moreover, these projects would be subject to a separate project-level environmental review process to identify potential impacts and to include feasible measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate potential impacts. It is not expected that any conversion of existing land uses to transportation would be required for the Status Quo Alternative as no additional right-of-way would be required.

The Status Quo Alternative would not be consistent with some of the land use plans reviewed for the study routes because it would not meet specified goals and objectives related to transportation, regional connectivity and economic growth.

#### **3.7.4.2 No Action Alternative**

Under the No Action Alternative, trains would continue to operate at a maximum of 79 mph between Newport News and Richmond. One additional daily round-trip would be added. Trains would serve the existing Newport News Amtrak Station, Williamsburg Amtrak Station, and Richmond Main Street Station. The same land use effects described for the Status Quo Alternative would also occur with the No Action Alternative, i.e. land use and local communities will change as a result of population growth and changes in economic activity within the study area, and/or from land use effects related specifically to passenger rail operations.

The No Action Alternative would not be consistent with some of the land use plans reviewed for the study routes because it would not meet specified goals and objectives related to transportation, regional connectivity and economic growth. It is not expected that any conversion of existing land uses to transportation would be required for the No Action Alternative as no additional right-of-way would likely be required.

#### **3.7.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Build Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)**

Under the Preferred Alternative, existing Amtrak service would remain the same along the Peninsula/CSXT route. The alternative would combine the No Action Alternative with higher speed passenger rail service on the Southside/NS route. The Preferred Alternative would primarily utilize existing rail lines and keep within the railroad rights-of-way within affected counties and cities with the exception of one area near Kilby, VA and two others in the vicinity of the proposed Bowers Hill and Norfolk stations, which would require additional right-of-way. Since the stations proposed for the Peninsula/CSXT route are the existing Amtrak stations and no improvements are proposed, no adverse land use impacts are expected in the areas surrounding them.

A portion of the Southside/NS route would use part of the abandoned Virginian Railway between Kilby and Bowers Hill. In order to make this connection between the existing Norfolk Southern line and the Virginian, a small segment of new rail right-of-way may be required in the vicinity of Kilby. In the vicinity of the proposed Bowers Hill Station on the Southside/NS route, the land use is predominantly industrial with some commercial. The location is considered highly compatible with existing land uses because industrial land uses would be insensitive to potential aesthetic and noise and vibration effects of the proposed project. Land uses in the vicinity of the proposed Norfolk Station are primarily institutional, government, and commercial. The location is considered highly compatible with the existing land uses because of the high intensity of governmental, institutional and commercial development. Given the need for additional right-of-way, there would likely be a conversion of the existing land use to a transportation use. These potential conversions would be investigated further during Tier II analysis.

The introduction of passenger rail service would be consistent with policies and actions stated in plans for cities located along the study routes. Each plan emphasizes the development of intercity rail service, reducing the reliance on cars for transportation and transit-oriented development. No potentially adverse land use impacts are anticipated.

The proposed station locations for the Southside/NS route would be consistent with the Suffolk *Comprehensive Plan for 2026* (Suffolk 2006), *A Vision for the Next Decade Norfolk 2010* (Norfolk 2002), and the *Hampton Roads 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan* (HRPDC 2007), which place a high priority on strengthening and restoring the downtown areas, including the development of a multimodal transit center.

#### **3.7.5 Potential Mitigation**

Land use variances may be required by affected localities; therefore, coordination with affected localities would be performed. Mitigation measures would be site specific and would be determined in consultation with localities during the Tier II analysis.



### 3.7.6 Subsequent Analysis

Environmental evaluations of the Preferred Alternative should address the following in the Tier II analysis:

- Land use studies for the specific alignment and station areas potentially impacted, including evaluation of potential land use conversion, potential growth and potential community benefits.
- Relocation impact analysis for potentially displaced housing and businesses.

### 3.8 Community Impacts and Environmental Justice

This section provides a summary of the demographics of the study area and evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project on population and employment. This section also addresses environmental justice in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order (EO) 12898.

#### 3.8.1 Methodology

##### 3.8.1.1 Population and Employment

The defined study area for the demographic analysis consists of 300 feet on either side of the centerline of each of the routes and a 5-mile radius from each of the proposed stations. The information and data presented in this section were obtained from the U.S. Census 2000 data. Population and employment projection data were obtained from the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC)<sup>45</sup>, the Crater Planning District Commission (CPDC), and the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC). The RRPDC and CPDC provided 2000 data and 2031 projections, while the HRPDC provided 2000 data and 2030 projections. For consistency, the data reported here are for the year 2025.

##### 3.8.1.2 Environmental Justice

The environmental justice analysis is based on identifying the presence of minority and low income populations within the defined study area. Concentrations of minorities and other special population groups in the study area were identified through analysis of U.S. Census 2000 data at both the county and the census tract level. The individual tract data were compared to the countywide data to determine if any of the tracts would qualify as having large concentrations of minority or low income populations. The federal guidance for evaluating environmental justice issues is found in *Guidance for Federal Agencies on Key Terms in Executive Order 12898*, which was developed by the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice, August 1995. Based on this guidance, a tract in this study is categorized as having a large concentration of either minority or low income population if:

- At least 50 percent of the population in the census tract is minority or low income; or
- The minority or low income population in the tract is at least 10 percent greater than the average of the minority or low income population in the county.

##### 3.8.1.3 Communities and Community Facilities

This section describes the types of community facilities that occur along both study routes and the potential impacts of the proposed alternatives on these facilities. Through field visits and using satellite imaging made publicly available by Google Earth (v4.2), an initial inventory of community facilities was conducted within a half-mile of each station or within 300-feet of the railroad right-of-way.

This section does not discuss the specific impacts of the alternatives; rather, it discusses these topics in general terms. For example, a potential impact on a community could be the creation of a new physical barrier that would isolate one part of an established community from another, and thereby potentially result in a physical disruption to community cohesion. More detailed analysis on these types of facilities and communities would be conducted during the Tier II analysis.

#### 3.8.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

In addition to the requirements established by CEQ implementing procedures for consideration of environmental impacts, Section of FRA's Environmental Procedures (64 FR 28545 §14(n)(20)) specifically

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<sup>45</sup> Data provided by the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization do not cover the entire jurisdiction for Charles City County and New Kent County. Data reported here are for the portion of each locality included under the planning commission.

states that “The EIS should address environmental justice considerations as required by Executive Order 12898, “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations” and the DOT Order on Environmental Justice” (DOT Order 5610.2). The assessment should identify the probable impacts of a project on the community and its facilities, socioeconomic impacts, and the potential for disproportionate adverse impacts on minority and low income populations within the community. This section provides a qualitative assessment of the potential impacts of the alternatives on the community and includes an Environmental Justice evaluation. Tier II analysis will include a more detailed examination of potential impacts of the Preferred Alternative, including a detailed evaluation of means to avoid or minimize impacts through design and mitigation strategies to offset remaining unavoidable impacts.

### 3.8.2.1 Demographics, Communities and Community Facilities

The FRA Environmental Procedures were promulgated pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires any federal government agency to assess impacts of any proposed action that could significantly affect the quality of the natural and human environment. Further, the U.S. Council on Environmental Quality’s (CEQ’s) Regulations for implementing the procedural provision of NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508) state that the “[h]uman environment shall be interpreted comprehensively to include the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment.”

### 3.8.2.2 Environmental Justice

EO 12898 requires that “each federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low income populations.” The federal guidance for evaluating environmental justice issues is found in *Guidance for Federal Agencies on Key Terms in Executive Order 12898*, which was developed by the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice, August 1995.

When determining whether environmental effects are disproportionately high and adverse, agencies are to consider the following three factors to the extent practicable:

- Whether there will be an impact to the natural or physical environment that significantly and adversely affects a minority or low income population. Such effects may include ecological, cultural, human health, economic or social impacts on minority communities or low income communities when those impacts are interrelated with impacts on the physical environment;
- Whether environmental effects are significant and have, or may have, an adverse impact on minority populations or low income populations that appreciably exceeds, or is likely to appreciably exceed, those to the general population or other appropriate comparison group; and
- Whether the environmental effects occur or would occur in a minority population or low income population affected by cumulative or multiple adverse exposures from environmental hazards.

## 3.8.3 Affected Environment – Population and Employment Characteristics

### 3.8.3.1 Population

**Peninsula/CSXT Route** - The population within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area grew eight percent from 1990 to 2000 and is projected to increase by approximately 23 percent by 2025. The station areas where the greatest population growth is expected are at the Williamsburg Amtrak Station at 48 percent, and at the Newport News Amtrak Station at 11 percent. The greatest concentrations of population along this route are within the cities of Richmond and Newport News. Table 3-22 shows the population growth data for areas surrounding the stations within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area.

**Southside/NS Route** - In general, the population of the communities within the Southside/NS route study area grew by approximately six percent from 1990 to 2000 and is projected to increase by approximately 16 percent by 2025. Population growth around the proposed Bowers Hill and Norfolk Downtown stations is projected to be 20 and four percent, respectively. Table 3-22 shows the population growth data for areas surrounding the stations within the Southside/NS route study area.

**Table 3-22: Study Route Population Data**

Station	For Year 2000		For Year 2025		Percent Change	
	½ Mile	5 Mile	½ Mile	5 Mile	½ Mile	5 Mile
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>						
Richmond Main Street	3,407	249,115	4,846	275,553	42.2 %	10.6 %
Williamsburg Amtrak	8,440	52,473	9,995	77,455	18.4 %	47.6 %
Newport News Amtrak	7,403	177,891	6,617	197,714	-10.6 %	11.1 %
<b>Totals</b>	<b>19,250</b>	<b>479,479</b>	<b>21,458</b>	<b>550,722</b>	<b>50.0 %</b>	<b>69.3 %</b>
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>						
Proposed Bowers Hill	3,362	132,935	4,652	160,058	38.4 %	20.4 %
Proposed Norfolk Downtown	8,842	299,466	8,490	312,405	- 4.0 %	4.3 %
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12,204</b>	<b>432,401</b>	<b>13,142</b>	<b>472,463</b>	<b>34.4 %</b>	<b>24.7 %</b>

Source: 2026 Long Range Plan for Crater Planning District Commission, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission and Richmond Regional Planning District Commission.

### 3.8.3.2 Employment

**Peninsula/CSXT Route** - From 1990 to 2000, employment within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area increased by approximately nine percent, and is expected to increase by 18 percent by 2025. Employment growth over the same period in the areas surrounding the Williamsburg and Newport News Amtrak stations is expected to be the greatest at 24 and 19 percent, respectively. Table 3-23 shows the projected employment growth for each of the station areas within the Peninsula/CSXT route.

Employment in the study area is primarily located in the City of Richmond (42 percent). Twenty percent is located in the City of Newport News, 25 percent is located in Henrico County and the City of Hampton, and the remaining employment is located in the rest of the counties and cities.

**Southside/NS Route** - From 1990 to 2000, employment within the Southside/NS route study area increased by 13 percent, and is expected to increase by ten percent by 2025. Over the same period, employment is expected to increase by 47 percent in the proposed Bowers Hill Station area and 15 percent in the Norfolk Downtown Station area. Table 3-23 shows the projected employment growth for each of the station areas within the Southside/NS route study area.

Along this route, 40 percent of employment is located in the City of Norfolk, 30 percent is in the City of Chesapeake and 22 percent is in the City of Portsmouth. The last eight percent is located in the remaining counties.

**Table 3-23: Study Route Employment Data**

Station	For Year 2000		For Year 2025		Percent Change	
	½ Mile	5 Mile	½ Mile	5 Mile	½ Mile	5 Mile
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>						
Richmond Main Street	63,926	261,964	61,483	265,447	- 3.8 %	1.3 %
Williamsburg Amtrak	18,323	55,336	14,630	68,618	- 20.2 %	24.0 %
Newport News Amtrak	5,926	121,849	5,838	145,317	- 1.5 %	19.2 %
<b>Totals</b>	<b>88,175</b>	<b>439,149</b>	<b>81,951</b>	<b>479,382</b>	<b>-25.5%</b>	<b>44.5%</b>
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>						
Proposed Bowers Hill	4,799	45,327	6,780	66,717	41.2 %	47.2 %
Proposed Norfolk Downtown	11,185	250,358	10,505	287,121	- 6.1 %	14.7 %
<b>Totals</b>	<b>15,984</b>	<b>295,685</b>	<b>17,285</b>	<b>353,838</b>	<b>35.1 %</b>	<b>61.9 %</b>

Source: 2026 Long Range Plan for Crater Planning District Commission, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission and Richmond Regional Planning District Commission.

### 3.8.3.3 Race and Ethnicity

**Peninsula/CSXT Route** - In 2000, the racial mix by Census Tract in the Peninsula/CSXT route study area was relatively consistent with the counties located within the study area. Table 3-24 shows the percentage of minorities within the study area by county/city compared to the counties/cities as a whole. In this Tier I Draft EIS analysis, qualifying minority populations within the defined study area occurred in the City of Richmond, Henrico County, the City of Newport News and the City of Hampton. At the Census Tract level, qualifying minority population percentages, i.e. 81 to 100 percent, occurred around the Richmond Main Street,

Williamsburg, and Newport News stations. Figure 3-3 shows the areas within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area with the greatest concentrations of minorities.

**Table 3-24: Minority Population along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

Location	Percent Minority	Percent Minority in Study Area
<b>Virginia</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>n/a</b>
City of Richmond	64%	64%
Hanover County	13%	8%
Henrico County	34%	70%
Charles City County	65%	47%
New Kent County	21%	14%
James City County	20%	17%
City of Williamsburg	23%	20%
York County	23%	24%
City of Newport News	51%	50%
City of Hampton	53%	55%
Isle of Wight County	28%	18%
<b>Total Study Area</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>55%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

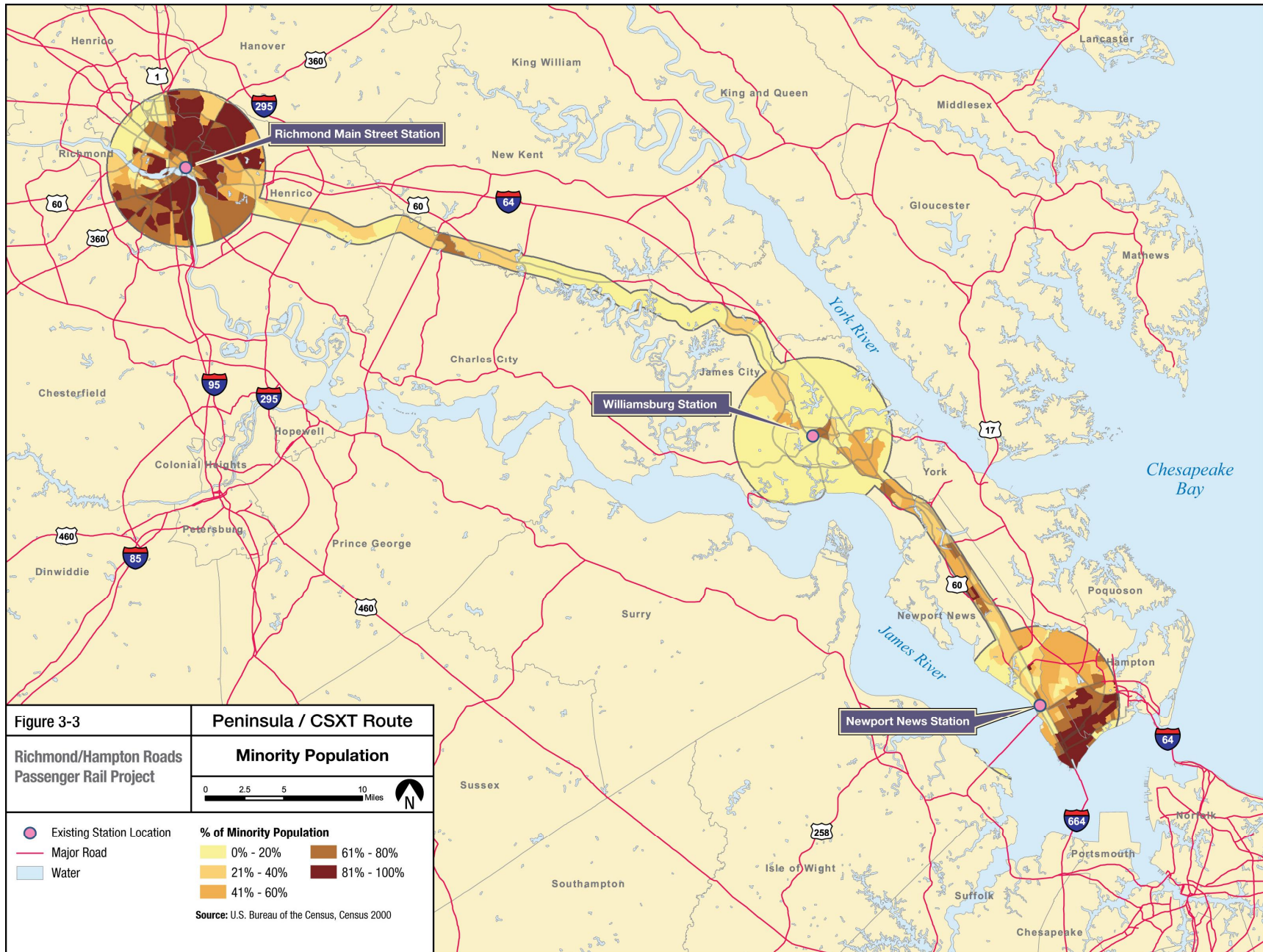
**Southside/NS Route** - The racial mix in the Southside/NS route study area by Census Tract is relatively consistent with the counties as a whole. Table 3-25 shows the percentage of minorities located within the study area by county/city compared to the counties/cities as a whole. In this Tier I analysis, qualifying minority populations within the defined study area occurred in Chesterfield County, Dinwiddie County, the City of Colonial Heights, the City of Petersburg, the Sussex County, Surry County, the City of Suffolk, the City of Portsmouth, and the City of Norfolk. Figure 3-4 shows the areas within the Southside/NS route study area with the greatest concentrations of minorities. At the Census Tract level, qualifying minority population percentages, i.e. 81 to 100 percent, occurred around the proposed Petersburg, Bowers Hill and Norfolk Stations.

**Table 3-25: Minority Population along the Southside/NS Route**

Location	Percent Minority	Percent Minority in Study Area
<b>Virginia</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>n/a</b>
Chesterfield County	23%	48%
Dinwiddie County	35%	39%
City of Colonial Heights	11%	11%
City of Petersburg	80%	82%
Prince George County	38%	41%
Sussex County	63%	64%
Surry County	53%	52%
Southampton County	44%	37%
Isle of Wight County	28%	21%
City of Suffolk	45%	54%
City of Chesapeake	32%	42%
City of Portsmouth	53%	56%
City of Norfolk	50%	61%
City of Virginia Beach	26%	38%
<b>Total Study Area</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>53%</b>

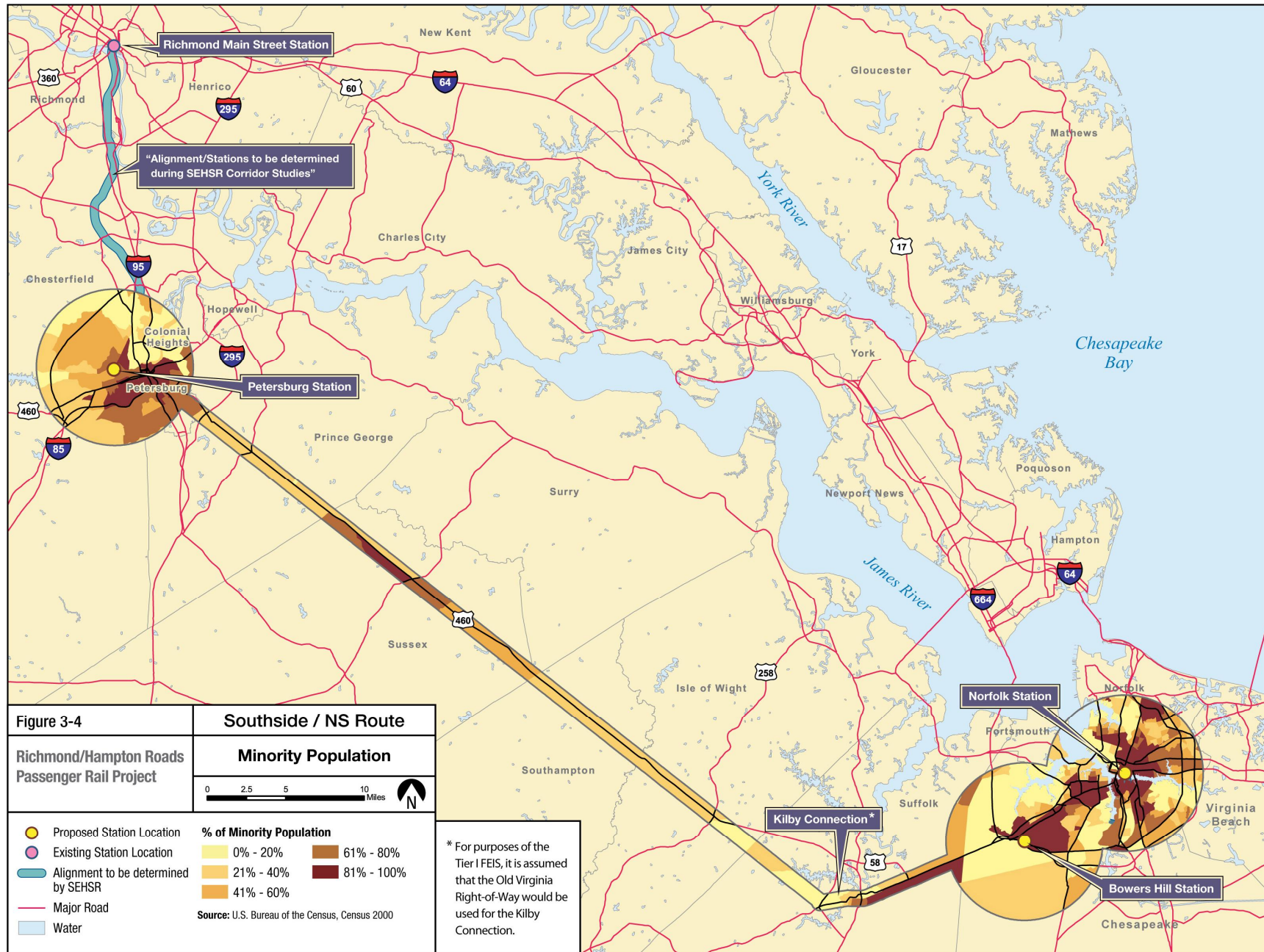
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

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### 3.8.3.5 Income and Poverty

According to the Council on Environmental Quality's Environmental Justice Guidance under the National Environmental Policy Act (1997), "Low income populations in an affected area should be identified with the annual statistical poverty thresholds from the Bureau of the Census' Current Population Reports." Thus, the poverty data reported in this Tier I Final EIS are directly from Census 2000 tables and are calculated on a per capita basis.

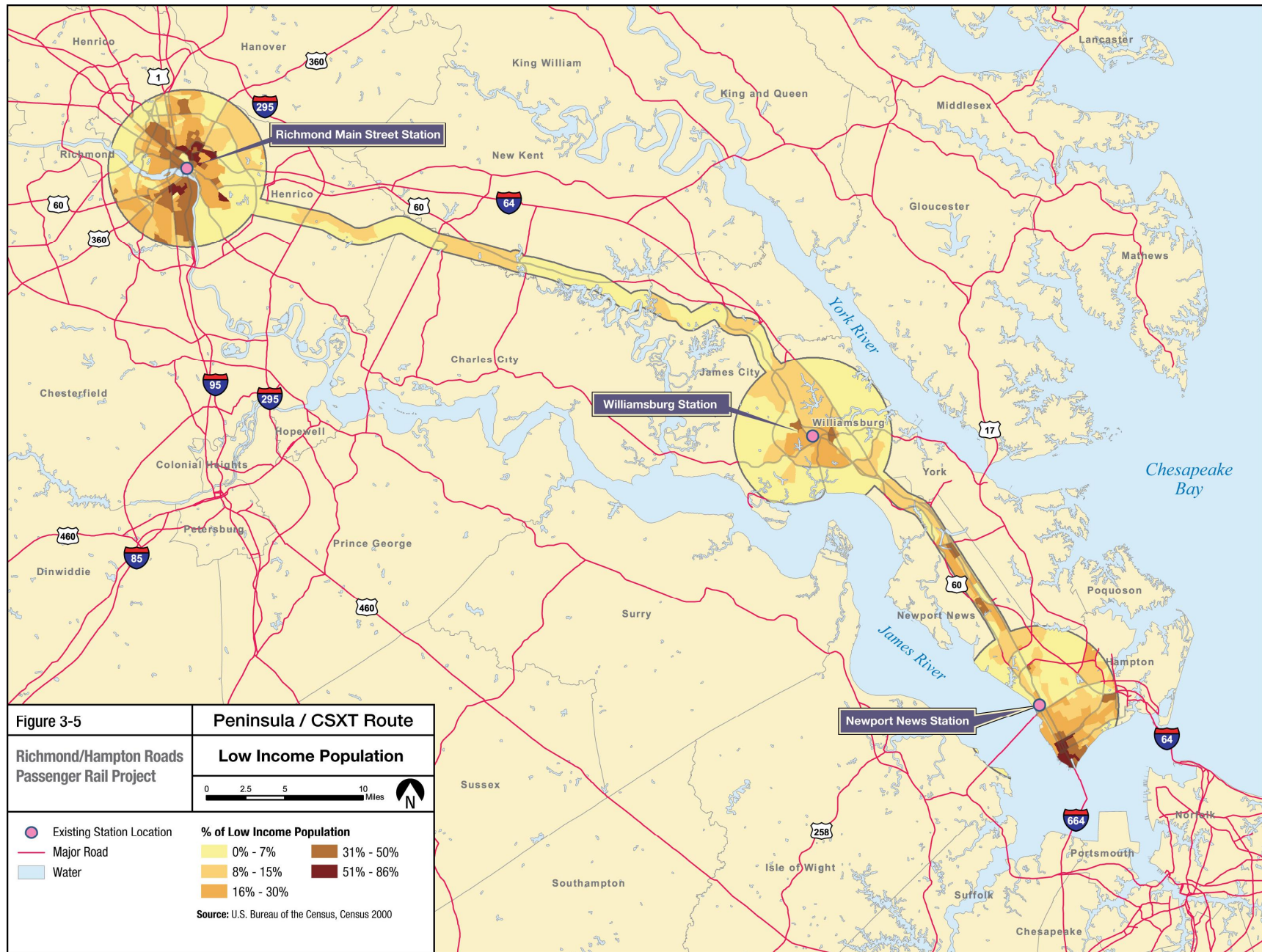
**Peninsula/CSXT Route** - Of the areas within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area, the City of Richmond and the City of Newport News have the highest concentrations of low income populations. Twenty-three percent of the City of Richmond portion and 19 percent of the City of Newport News portion of the study area are below the poverty level. However, for the purposes of this study, these areas do not fit the criteria for an environmental justice area since the portion of the study area is neither 50 percent low income nor 10 percent greater than the county average. In the Tier I Draft EIS analysis, no populations within the study area met the criteria as low income populations. Table 3-26 and Figure 3-5 show the concentrations of low income populations within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area.

**Table 3-26: Income and Poverty along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

Location	Median Household Income	Percent Below Poverty Level	Percent Below Poverty Level within Study Area
<b>Virginia</b>	\$46,677	9%	n/a
City of Richmond	\$31,121	20%	23%
Henrico County	\$49,185	6%	11%
Hanover County	\$59,223	4%	3%
Charles City County	\$42,745	11%	6%
New Kent County	\$53,595	5%	6%
James City County	\$55,594	6%	7%
City of Williamsburg	\$37,093	11%	11%
York County	\$57,956	4%	5%
City of Newport News	\$36,597	13%	19%
City of Hampton	\$39,532	10%	10%
Isle of Wight County	\$45,387	8%	4%
<b>Total Study Area</b>	<b>\$46,184</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>17%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000

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**Southside/NS Route** - The percentage of the population living below the level of poverty within the Southside/NS route study area is relatively consistent with the counties as a whole. The areas within the study area with the highest concentrations of low income are Surry County, the City of Suffolk, and the City of Norfolk. Twenty-five percent of the population in the Surry County portion of the study area was living below the level of poverty in 2000, as opposed to 10 percent for the county as a whole. Similarly, 21 percent of the City of Suffolk portion of the study area was living below the level of poverty, as opposed to 13 percent of the city as a whole. Twenty-two percent of the study area population within the City of Norfolk was living below the poverty level as opposed to 17 percent of the entire city. However, for the purposes of this study, these areas do not fit the criteria for an environmental justice area since the portion of the study area is neither 50 percent low income, nor 10 percent greater than the county average. In the Tier I Draft EIS analysis, no populations within the study area met the criteria as low income populations. Table 3-27 and Figure 3-6 show the concentrations of low income populations within the Southside/NS route study area.

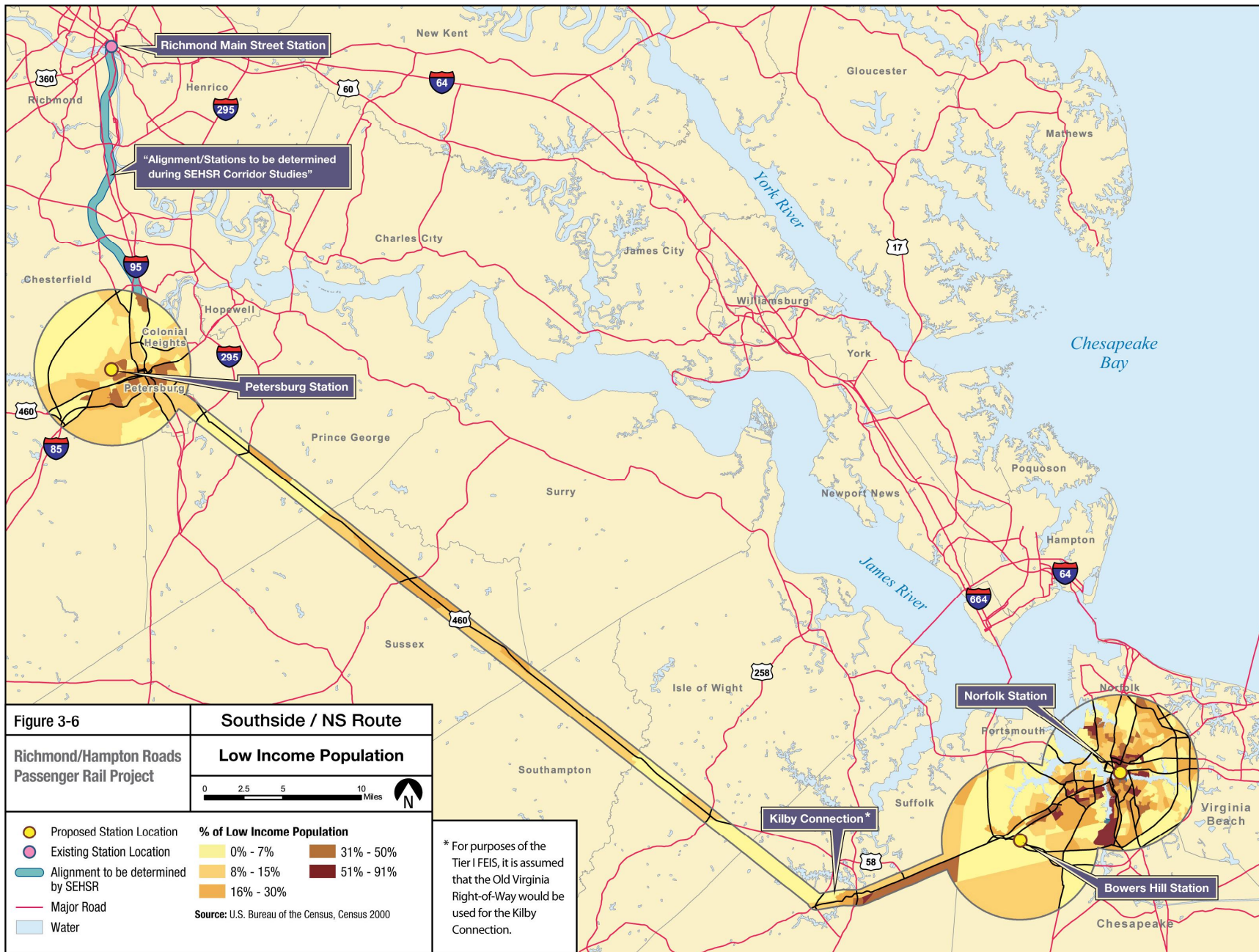
**Table 3-27: Income and Poverty along the Southside/NS Route**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>Percent Below Poverty Level</b>	<b>Percent Below Poverty Level within Study Area</b>
<b>Virginia</b>	\$46,677	9%	n/a
Chesterfield County	\$58,537	5%	8%
Dinwiddie County	\$41,582	9%	10%
City of Colonial Heights	\$43,224	6%	6%
City of Petersburg	\$28,851	19%	13%
Prince George County	\$49,877	7%	6%
City of Sussex	\$31,007	13%	18%
Surry County	\$37,558	11%	25%
Southampton County	\$33,995	13%	14%
Isle of Wight County	\$45,387	8%	8%
City of Suffolk	\$41,115	13%	21%
City of Chesapeake	\$50,743	7%	11%
City of Portsmouth	\$33,742	15%	18%
City of Norfolk	\$31,815	17%	22%
City of Virginia Beach	\$48,705	6%	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$39,345</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>17%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

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### 3.8.3.6 Communities and Community Facilities

#### Peninsula/CSXT Route

**Community Facilities** - Community facilities that exist within the study area include emergency response facilities, such as fire and rescue, hospitals, government and community centers, schools, museums and places of worship (to include all structures related to all denominations). Table 3-28 below lists the number of facilities from the initial inventory conducted as part of the Tier I Final EIS. In addition to those facilities listed for Richmond Main Street Station, there are several historical sites and parks in the vicinity of the station. The table shows the number of facilities located within a half-mile radius of each station or within 300 feet of the railroad right-of-way.

**Table 3-28: Number of Community Facilities along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

Location	Type of Facility	Number
Richmond Main Street Station	Church	3
	Government	3
	Hospital	2
	Museum	1
	School	2
Town of Providence Forge	Fire Department	1
	Church	1
City of Williamsburg	Church	4
	School	4
Williamsburg Amtrak Station	Church	5
	Fire Department	1
	School	4
	Stadium	1
	Visitor Center	1
City of Newport News	Church	2
	Hospital	1
	School	1
Newport News Amtrak Station	Church	6
	School	3

Source: USGS Topographic Quadrangles for cities/counties within study areas, Google Earth 2009.

**Communities** - The Peninsula/CSXT route study area is more developed than the Southside/NS route. Towns and cities along the Peninsula/CSXT route include Richmond, Sandston, Roxbury, Providence Forge, Lanexa, Toano, Norge, Lightfoot, Williamsburg and Newport News. The area between the City of Richmond and the City of Williamsburg is relatively rural with development concentrations around towns. Scattered residential properties and farms exist between towns. Areas of the route closer to, and within, the City of Williamsburg and the City of Newport News are increasingly more suburban to urban.

#### Southside/NS Route

**Community Facilities** - The community facilities located within the study area are primarily hospitals, recreation areas/centers, schools and places of worship (to include all structures related to all denominations). Table 3-35 lists the number of facilities from the initial inventory conducted as part of the Tier I Draft EIS. The table shows the number of facilities located within a half-mile radius of each station or within 300 feet of the railroad right-of-way.

**Table 3-29: Number of Community Facilities along Southside/NS Route**

Location	Facility	Type of Facility
Richmond Main Street Station	3	Church
	3	Government
	2	Hospital
	1	Museum
	2	School
Town of Disputanta	1	School
Town of Waverly	1	Church
Town of Zuni	1	Church
Town of Windsor	1	School
	1	Church
City of Suffolk	5	Church
City of Chesapeake	1	Church
Proposed Bowers Hill Station	0	None
City of Norfolk	1	Church
Proposed Norfolk Station	7	Church
	1	Entertainment
	1	Recreation Center
	7	School

Source: USGS Topographic Quadrangles for cities/counties within study areas, Google Earth 2009.

**Communities** - Several small towns and cities are located within the Southside/NS route study area, including Disputanta, Waverly, Wakefield, Ivor, Zuni, Windsor, Suffolk, Chesapeake and Norfolk. Most of these are rural with the exception of the Cities of Chesapeake and Norfolk, which are fairly urbanized. For most of the small towns, there is a town center with businesses and other commercial properties along a main street with residential properties and farmland surrounding them.

### 3.8.4 Environmental Consequences

This section summarizes the findings of the Tier I Draft EIS analysis of potential environmental effects of the construction and operation of the Status Quo, No Action, and Build Alternatives. A refined assessment of potential effects on communities and environmental justice will be undertaken in the Tier II analysis for the Preferred Alternative.

#### 3.8.4.1 Status Quo Alternative

Under this alternative, no major improvements are proposed. It includes two daily round-trip trains on the Peninsula/CSXT route only. Trains would continue to operate at a maximum of 79 mph between Newport News and Richmond. The trains would continue to serve the existing Newport News Amtrak Station, Williamsburg Amtrak Station and Richmond Main Street Station.

**Population and Employment** - Under the Status Quo Alternative, existing and proposed population and employment would likely remain the same given that no higher speed passenger rail improvements would be made. The benefits of improved mobility options and greater accessibility to other cities that could affect population and employment would not occur.

**Environmental Justice** - Environmental justice populations identified along the Peninsula/CSXT route would not be adversely or disproportionately impacted by the Status Quo Alternative. Those environmental justice populations identified along the Southside/NS route would be unaffected since no passenger rail service would be provided. Under the Status Quo Alternative, no environmental justice populations or other community would benefit from improved mobility options and greater accessibility to other cities that would occur under the Preferred Alternative and to some extent the No Action Alternative.

**Communities and Community Facilities** - Under the Status Quo Alternative, no improvements to passenger rail service would be implemented and therefore, no impacts to community facilities or community cohesion would result.

### 3.8.4.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative includes the addition of one daily round-trip train on the Peninsula/CSXT route only, for a total of three daily round-trip trains. Trains would continue to operate at a maximum of 79 mph between Newport News and Richmond. They would serve the Newport News Amtrak Station, Williamsburg Station, and Richmond Main Street Station. There would be no significant infrastructure improvements related to the operation of this additional train and no improvements at all to the Southside/NS route under the No Action Alternatives.

**Population and Employment** - Under the No Action Alternative, population and employment levels along the Peninsula/CSXT route may increase slightly as a result of the mobility benefit of the additional conventional speed train service. This benefit is anticipated to be less than the benefit that could be achieved by higher speed and more frequent passenger rail service, but higher than the Status Quo Alternative.

**Environmental Justice** - Implementing additional passenger rail service along the Peninsula/CSXT route could create both beneficial and adverse impacts on all populations, including environmental justice populations. Increased service would provide a mobility benefit, while also likely increasing noise from train warning horns at existing at-grade crossings. These noise impacts would not likely be considered disproportionate since horn blows are required for all grade crossings. Environmental justice populations identified along the Peninsula/CSXT route would not be adversely or disproportionately impacted by the No Action Alternative.

Along the Southside/NS route, all populations, including environmental justice populations, would experience no change in mobility and no new impacts due to the project as no new passenger rail service would be provided under the No Action Alternative.

**Communities and Community Facilities** - The addition of one daily round-trip train along the Peninsula/CSXT route would likely have a negligible impact on communities, community facilities and community cohesion. The site-specific effects of the one additional train and subsequently more frequent horn blows were not fully evaluated as part of the Tier I Draft EIS. Communities, community facilities and community cohesion would not be affected along the Southside/NS route given that no passenger rail service would be provided.

### 3.8.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)

The Preferred Alternative would serve both the Peninsula and the Southside routes with three daily round-trip trains on the Peninsula/CSXT route and six daily round trip-trains on the Southside/NS route. The Peninsula service would remain the same as described for the No Action Alternative, with three 79 mph maximum speed daily round- trip trains between Newport News and Richmond, serving the existing Newport News, Williamsburg and Richmond stations.

The Southside service would include six daily round-trip trains operating at speeds of 90 mph between the proposed Downtown Norfolk, the proposed Bower's Hill, Petersburg, and Richmond Main Street Stations. The Southside service would require infrastructure improvements—additional right-of-way would be required for track expansion, the proposed rail connection at Kilby and the two proposed stations at Bowers Hill and Downtown Norfolk.

**Population and Employment** - Similar to the No Action Alternative, population and employment levels along the Peninsula/CSXT route under the Preferred Alternative may increase slightly as a result of the mobility benefit of the additional conventional speed train service.

On the Southside/NS route, population and employment levels under the Preferred Alternative may increase as a result of the mobility benefit of the additional conventional speed train service. The specific effects of the proposed rail service on population and employment growth rates and subsequent housing demand were not identified at the Tier I EIS level of environmental review. These issues will be further investigated during the Tier II analysis.

**Environmental Justice** - Similar to the No Action Alternative, implementing additional, conventional speed passenger rail service along the Peninsula/CSXT route in the Preferred Alternative could create both beneficial and adverse impacts on all populations, including environmental justice populations. Increased service would provide a mobility benefit, while additional service would likely increase noise from train warning horns at existing at-grade crossings. Some areas may also receive beneficial impacts of reduced

freight horn noise and crossing safety at road crossings due to grade separations that may be undertaken or crossings that may be closed. Noise impacts would not likely be considered disproportionate since horn blows are required for all grade crossings.

All populations within the Southside/NS route study area, though, would likely experience both benefits and impacts from new passenger rail service. All populations have the potential to experience more impacts than those within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area due to the introduction of a new service to the Southside/NS route. Possible adverse impacts to all populations, including environmental justice populations, would be related to quality of life, which could include noise and vibration impacts, barrier effects, aesthetics, and safety, particularly near at-grade crossings. Information pertaining to barrier effects is discussed in the following section, potential visual and aesthetic effects is discussed in Section 3.11, and a preliminary noise and vibration impact assessment is included in Section 3.5. Grade crossing safety is discussed in Section 3.3. During the Tier I EIS analysis, a disproportionate impact on environmental justice populations is not anticipated since all populations in the study area may be affected.

In contrast, all populations including environmental justice populations within the Southside/NS route study area would benefit from improved mobility options and greater accessibility that would be provided by new passenger rail service. Moreover, much of the route under the Preferred Alternative would be located within the existing right-of-way, which would serve to reduce the potential for adverse effects regarding land conversions to rail use.

**Communities and Community Facilities** - Negligible impacts on communities, community facilities or community cohesion are expected as a result of the Preferred Alternative for the Peninsula/CSXT route.

Impacts on community cohesion have not been fully evaluated as part of the Tier I EIS; however, potential impacts have been assessed. Currently, there is no passenger rail service along the Southside/NS route. Given that under the Preferred Alternative higher speed passenger rail service is proposed along the Southside/NS route, it is likely that some grade crossing closures would occur and community cohesion may be affected. More detailed analysis of community cohesion impacts will be evaluated as part of the Tier II analysis.

It is unlikely that community facilities within the Southside/NS Route study area would be adversely impacted as a result of introducing higher speed passenger rail service. The most likely effects to these resources would be proximity effects, such as an altered visual setting at stations and the potential increase in noise and vibration due to increased train frequencies and speeds. Community facilities that have the greatest potential to be impacted would be those closest to the proposed stations. More detailed analysis is warranted to determine specific impacts to community facilities with the study area, and would be carried out as part of the Tier II analysis.

The other potential impact that may occur would be related to potential grade crossing closures. Depending on the relationship of some community facilities to potential closures, there may be some impact on access to community facilities. Of particular concern would be how the potential closures might affect emergency response times and other persons trying to access emergency facilities. More detailed analysis of grade crossing closures and the proximity to emergency routes and facilities would be undertaken during the Tier II analysis.

### **3.8.5 Potential Mitigation**

Any adverse impacts to the identified populations'/communities' quality of life could require mitigation. Possible mitigation measures include the use of sound barriers, enhanced protection at grade crossings, pedestrian overpasses and alternative construction methods to lessen the temporary effects on populations. As planning for the project progresses, more detailed mitigation measures will be identified and evaluated.

Given that specific facilities and communities, as well as impacts, have not been identified, it would be premature to evaluate potential mitigation. However, potential mitigation might include implementing measures that would reduce the impacts of noise and vibration, and coordinating with the localities to determine primary transportation routes and emergency routes.

### 3.8.6 Subsequent Analysis

The subsequent environmental evaluations for the Preferred Alternative would address the need for the following studies:

- Evaluation of the project's effect on population and employment growth.
- Evaluation of potential land use conversion and community benefits.
- Review of potential localized impacts on neighborhoods and communities, in addition to potential community enhancements and benefits of the project.
- Relocation impact analysis for potentially displaced housing and businesses.
- Pedestrian and vehicular circulation studies.
- Evaluation of potential disproportionate effects on environmental justice populations.

### 3.9 Federally Owned Land, Open Space, Parklands, State Forests, Wildlife Refuges and Conservation Easements

This section identifies federally owned land, open space, parklands, state forests, wildlife refuges and conservation easements within the study area and describes potential impacts to these resources.

#### 3.9.1. Methodology

In order to identify recreation lands within the study area, research was conducted using various federal, state and local websites. All recreational resources were identified within 300 feet from either side of the centerline of both the Peninsula/CSXT and Southside/NS routes. Acreage of parklands within the 600-foot study area was calculated to indicate the potential for impacts. More detailed evaluation of actual impacts would be carried out during the Tier II environmental analysis.

In order to identify any potential Section 6(f) resources within the study area, a review of the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS), Land & Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF), and Detailed Listing of Grants by County were reviewed online at the L&WCF website.

#### 3.9.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (Title 49 U.S.C. §303) and Section 6(f) of the U.S. Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (16 U.S.C. 4601-4 et seq.) provide protection to parklands, recreation areas, historic areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges. Section 4(f) protects these lands from acquisition and conversion to transportation uses. Section 6(f) preserves, develops and assures the quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources through the purchase and improvement of recreational lands and requires that certain conditions be met before conversion of these resources can occur. Use of these lands requires a Section 4(f) Evaluation to determine the extent of impacts, avoidance alternatives and measures to minimize harm to these resources. (A discussion of potentially affected cultural resources is provided in Section 3.14. Potential Section 4(f)/6(f) resources are discussed further in Section 3.18.)

The Virginia General Assembly enacted the Open Space Land Act in 1966 and authorized state/local agencies and conservation groups in Virginia to use easements for conservation purposes. An easement consists of a legal agreement between a landowner and a state/local agency or conservation group. Conversion or diversion of a conservation easement under the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) must be approved by the VOF Board. State agencies do not have the power of eminent domain over open-space easements.

#### 3.9.3. Affected Environment

##### 3.9.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

Twenty recreation and federally owned resources have been identified along the Peninsula/CSXT route. According to the U.S. Department of the Interior Land & Water Conservation Fund Act detailed listing of grants by county, Waller Mill Park owned by the City of Williamsburg has been purchased or enhanced with Land & Water Conservation Funds. This means that this park is eligible for protection under Section 6(f). The recreation and federally owned resources are listed in Table 3-30. See Figure 3-7 for a map of open space, parks and recreational lands along the Peninsula/CSXT route.

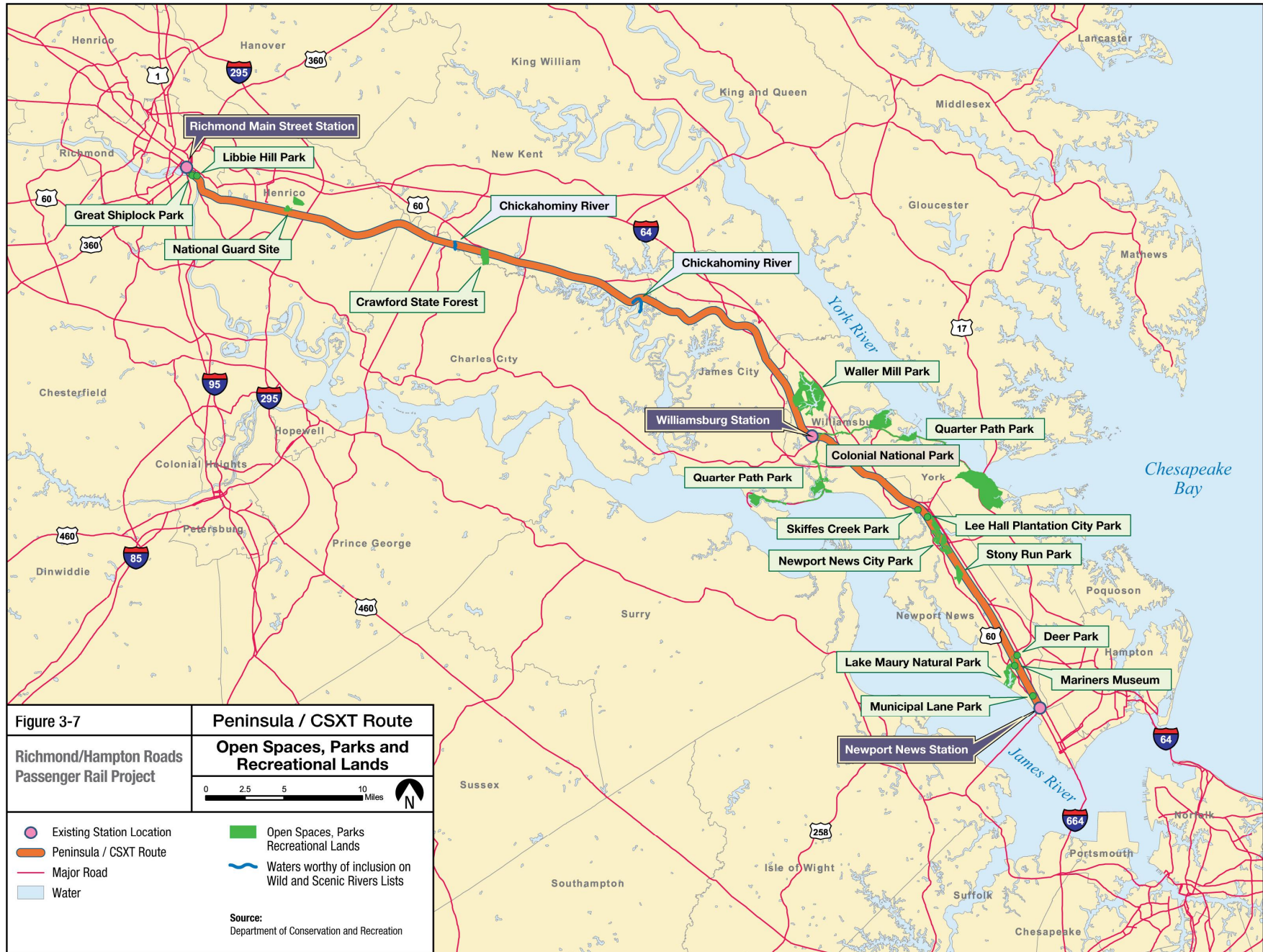
During the comment period for the Tier I Draft EIS, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Division of Planning and Recreational Resources (DPRR), stated that in addition to the resources identified in the Tier I Draft EIS, several other resources were of importance along the Peninsula/CSXT route, to include:

- Potential Scenic Chickahominy River,
- Proposed trail corridor for the East Coast Greenway, and
- Proposed extension of the Virginia Capital Trail, a regionally significant multi-use trail.

**Table 3-30: Recreation and Federally-Owned Resources along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

Resource	Type	Ownership	Public Access	Location	Acreage within Study Area
Great Shiplock Park	City Park	City of Richmond	Yes	City of Richmond	4.44
Libbie Hill Park	City Park	City of Richmond	Yes	City of Richmond	0.22
National Guard Site	Military Installation	National Guard	No	Henrico County	5.50
VOF Open Space Easement	Conservation Easement	VOF	No	New Kent County	37.89
Crawford State Forest	State Forest	VOF	Yes	New Kent County, Charles City County	37.85
Waller Mill Park	Local Park	City of Williamsburg	Yes	York County	1.30
Colonial National Historical Park (Colonial Parkway)	Historical Park	NPS	Yes	City of Williamsburg	4.75
Quarterpath Park	Local Park	City of Williamsburg	Yes	City of Williamsburg	0.05
Lee Hall Plantation City Park	City Park	City of Newport News	No-presumed closed	City of Newport News	4.73
Newport News City Park	City park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	112.69
Skiffes Creek Park	Local Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	1.58
Stony Run Park	Local Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	23.50
Deer Park	City Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	1.05
Lake Maury Natural Park	Local Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	36.75
Municipal Lane Park	Local Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	2.58
Mariners Museum Park	Private Museum/Estate	Mariners Museum	Yes	City of Newport News	0.03
<b>Total</b>					<b>274.91</b>

Source: National Park Service, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Department of Forestry and local jurisdictions.





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### 3.9.3.2 Southside/NS Route

Four recreation and federally owned resources have been identified along the Southside/NS route. None of these were identified as being Section 6(f) resources. The recreation and federally owned resources are listed in Table 3-31. See Figure 3-8 for a map of open space, parks and recreational lands for the Southside/NS route.

During the comment period for the Tier I Draft EIS, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Division of Planning and Recreational Resources (DPRR), stated that in addition to the resources identified in the Tier I Draft EIS, several other resources were of importance along the Southside/NS route, to include:

- Potential Scenic Byway Route 40
- Potential Scenic Blackwater and Appomattox Rivers
- Designated Falls of the James River

**Table 3-31: Recreation and Federally Owned Resources along the Southside/NS Route**

Resource	Type	Ownership	Public Access	Location	Acreage Study Area
Lake Kilby Park	Local Park	City of Suffolk	Yes	City of Suffolk	0.98
Great Dismal Swamp	National Wildlife Refuge	National Park Service	Yes	City of Suffolk	47.75
Town Point Park/Harbor Point Park Civic Facility	City Park	City of Norfolk	Yes	City of Norfolk	9.01
U.S. Ammunition Depot	U.S. Ammunition Depot	U.S. Department of the Navy	No	City of Chesapeake	21.20
<b>Total</b>					<b>78.94</b>

Source: National Park Service, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Department of Forestry and local jurisdictions.

## 3.9.4 Environmental Consequences

### 3.9.4.1 Status Quo Alternative

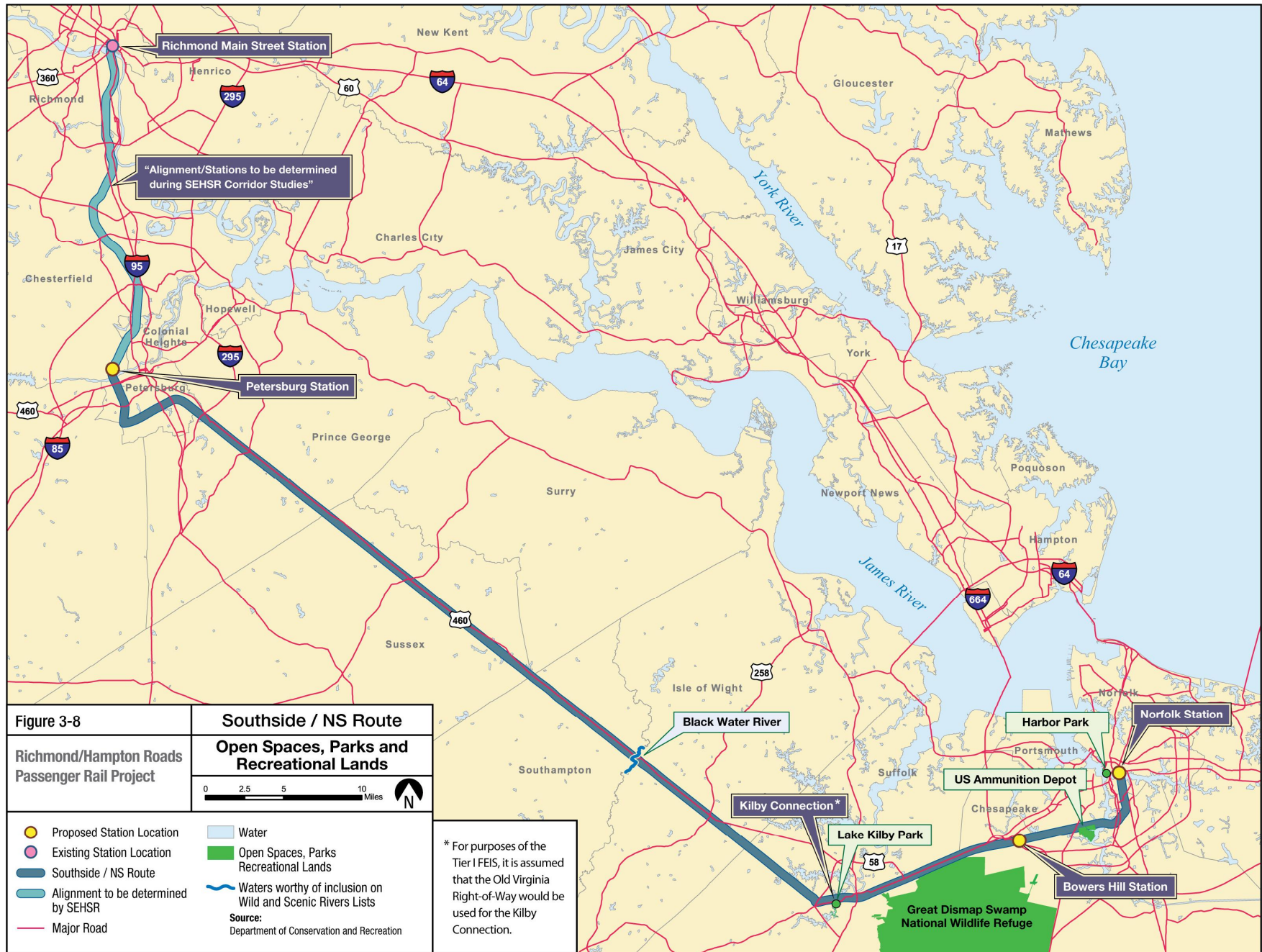
Under the Status Quo Alternative, there would be no additional passenger rail service on the Peninsula/CSXT route. The existing passenger rail service of two round-trip trains per day would remain. The Southside/NS route would be continued for use by freight operations only as planned by Norfolk Southern. Since no physical or operational improvements would occur under the Status Quo Alternative to either route, no impacts to the recreation or federally-owned land listed in Tables 3-30 and 3-31 would occur.

### 3.9.4.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, one additional passenger rail train would be added to the existing Peninsula/CSXT route and would operate at a maximum speed of 79 mph. In total, there would be three daily round-trip trains operating between Richmond and Newport News. There would be no significant infrastructure improvements related to the operation of this additional train and no improvements at all to the Southside/NS route under the No Action Alternative.

Potential impacts to parklands could occur from property acquisition, physical alterations to property, or proximity effects, such as noise or visual impacts. . No additional right-of-way would be required. It is unlikely that the operations of an additional round trip would result in any adverse proximity effects. Therefore, it is unlikely that any "use" of a Section 4(f) property would occur as part of the No Action Alternative.

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Waller Mill Park owned by the City of Williamsburg has been identified as having received grant funds from the L&WCF, and the property is considered a Section 6(f) resource. Under the No Action Alternative, it is not anticipated that any additional right-of-way would be required, and therefore no conversion of land at this property is likely to occur.

Comments from DCR DPRR on the Tier I Draft EIS stated that there is one Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) easement located in New Kent County along the Peninsula/CSXT route and that VOF does not anticipate any impacts to this easement from the proposed project.

### **3.9.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)**

The Preferred Alternative would combine the No Action Alternative with higher speed passenger rail service on the Southside/NS route. The potential types of impacts to recreation and federally owned lands would be the same as described under the No Action Alternative. Potential impacts could include property acquisition, physical alternations to property, or proximity effects, such as noise or visual impacts.

As described for the No Action Alternative, no “uses” of Section 4(f) protected resources are expected for the Peninsula/CSXT route. In areas where recreation and federally-owned resources have been identified along the Southside/NS route, improvements outside the existing rail right-of-way that would impact these resources would be avoided where possible. The majority of rail improvements would take place within the existing railroad right-of-way. New right-of-way could be required for track bed expansion and would be required for the Kilby rail connection, the Bowers Hill Station, and the Downtown Norfolk Station. Based on the available mapping used for this analysis, additional right-of-way needs do not coincide with identified recreation or federally owned lands. However, proximity effects, such as noise and vibration from an increase in trains passing, may occur. As stated for the No Action Alternative, only a screening level analysis for noise and vibration was conducted for the Tier I EIS. More detailed analysis is needed to determine if proximity effects would occur and the severity of those effects on the resources identified.

Although the proposed Southside/NS route would pass through both Lake Kilby Park and Town Point Park, the route would use existing tracks. It is not anticipated that any additional right-of-way would be required; if additional right-of-way is needed, then a permanent use of these properties could result. Town Point Park may also have the potential to be affected temporarily for construction of the proposed station and related facilities in downtown Norfolk. A determination of park boundaries is needed to determine if a permanent or temporary adverse use would occur.

The US Department of the Interior reviewed the Tier I Draft EIS and provided comments regarding the use of the abandoned Virginian Railway, a portion of which runs adjacent to the Dismal Swamp, a National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS is concerned that there could be significant impacts on the Refuge. Specific impacts cited by the USFWS include bear and other wildlife movement, increased wildlife strikes/mortality (particularly bear), disturbance to wildlife living within the corridor, wetlands impacts from construction, changed hydrology associated with widening the right-of-way and altering flow in the ditches, and impacts to and loss of wildlife habitat due to widening the right-of-way. Because of the Preferred Alternative’s spatial relationship to the Refuge, the USFWS has stated that they will provide extensive recommendations on needed studies to assess the range of impacts and their consequences on the Refuge and its wildlife.

In areas where station and parking facilities are proposed, some minor visual impacts may occur. Table 3-32 summarizes the potential effects to recreation and federally owned resources along the Southside/NS route for the Preferred Alternative. As the project progresses, more detailed research on the types of activities conducted at each resource, public access and exact property boundaries would be conducted to determine the extent of any potential impacts. Section 3.18 of this Tier I Final EIS discusses the preliminary Section 4(f) resources identified potential impacts and potential Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) implications.

**Table 3-32: Potential Effects to Recreation and Federally Owned Resources for the Preferred Alternative**

Resource	Relation to Rail Route	Potential Effects
Lake Kilby Park	Tracks pass through resource	Proximity effects such as noise/vibration from increased train frequencies and speeds
Great Dismal Swamp	Tracks are adjacent to resource	Proximity effects such as noise/vibration from increased train frequencies and speeds, potential conflicts with transient species on Great Dismal Swamp property
Town Point Park	Tracks pass through resource	Proximity effects such as noise/vibration from increased train frequencies and speeds, minor visual impacts from proposed station/parking, temporary construction impacts possible
U.S. Ammunition Depot	Tracks are adjacent to resource	Unlikely to be affected

Source: AECOM, October 2005

Likely construction effects may include temporary use of property for staging equipment and temporary disturbances to access and activities. Construction effects may also include temporary land disturbances, such as impacts to vegetation and increased sediment and erosion. If construction staging or access is proposed in or adjacent to a recreation or federally owned land, then coordination with the property owner would be required. A Section 4(f) evaluation would also need to be completed for any potential use of Section 4(f) resources.

### 3.9.5. Potential Mitigation

As the project progresses, specific impacts would be identified and analyzed in a project level Section 4(f) evaluation during the Tier II analysis. At that time, appropriate mitigation measures would be determined by coordinating with the resource owner. However, potential mitigation might include use of best management practices during construction activities and specific park enhancements or potential land replacement for long-term adverse impacts. Proximity effects to parks could be mitigated through context sensitive design, plantings and sound barriers. Should these resources be affected temporarily during construction activities, public access would remain and construction activities would be conducted in a manner that would least disturb the use of these facilities. The resources, if impacted, would be restored to pre-construction or better conditions after construction activities are complete.

The Virginia Department of Forestry indicated that areas of existing groupings and/or clusters of trees and natural vegetation should remain to provide aesthetic and environmental benefits, thereby reducing future open space maintenance costs.

### 3.9.6. Subsequent Analysis

During the Tier II analysis of the Preferred Alternative, more detailed research on the types of activities conducted at each resource, public access and exact property boundaries and ownership would be conducted to determine the extent of any potential impacts. The analyses would include:

- Descriptions of the uses and functions of each of the resources and identification of resource boundaries; total size of resources; specific services and facilities; and access.
- Specific potential impacts on each resource, including property acquisition, if any; physical impacts, proximity impacts and temporary impacts resulting from proposed operations and infrastructure improvements to accommodate higher speed passenger rail service.
- Documentation of consultation with the affected federal, state and local jurisdictions and owners/operators of the identified resources.

## 3.10 Farmlands and Agriculture

This section describes the farmlands and agricultural uses along each of the proposed routes and summarizes the potential effects that could occur as a result of the proposed improvements associated with the introduction and addition of conventional and high-speed passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads.

### 3.10.1 Methodology

Literature research was the principal method used to gather information about the geologic resources within the study area. Soil and prime farmland data were compiled from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Additional information was obtained from websites, review of aerial mapping, local and regional plans, and communications with representatives from various federal, state and local agencies.

### 3.10.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

In addition to the requirements established by CEQ implementing procedures for consideration of environmental impacts, FRA's Environmental Procedures (64 FR 28545 §14(n)(11)) states that consideration of use of natural resources be given.

The USDA defines prime farmland<sup>46</sup> as land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oil seed crops that is also available for these uses. Prime farmland can be cropland, pastureland, forestland, or other land but not urban built-up land or water. Land designated as prime farmland has the soil quality, growing season and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Similarly, soils that do not necessarily meet the criteria to be listed as prime farmland, but produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods, are considered soils of statewide importance.

The protection of prime farmland is promulgated under—the Farmland Protection Policy (Title 7 U.S.C. Chapter 73). The purpose of the policy is to minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses and to assure that federal programs are compatible with state, local and private programs and policies to protect farmland.

In addition to prime farmlands, the Commonwealth of Virginia has Agricultural and Forestal Districts (AFDs) that protect and enhance agricultural and forestal land as economic and environmental resources. The AFD was enacted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1977. AFDs consist of large tracts of forested land or farmland conserved for the production of food, crop, timber and other agricultural and forestal products. It is a special land use set up and administered by localities, similar to zoning. Landowners who form AFDs qualify for lower tax rates, avoid nuisance ordinance restrictions and protect their land from governmental or other actions that encourage development.

Acquisition of land is restricted within an AFD, and eminent domain cannot be utilized as long as the land is part of an AFD. Conversion of an AFD to other uses is a lengthy process requiring public notice and ruling by the locality's governing body, such as a Board of Supervisors.

### 3.10.3 Affected Environment

#### 3.10.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

Prime farmland information obtained from the City of Richmond, Henrico County, James City County, York County, and the City of Newport News indicates that, in general, these localities have isolated parcels of prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance located within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area. Larger parcels of prime farmland are concentrated in the center of the Henrico County portion of the study area.

According to the Soil Survey of James City and York counties, most soil types in the portion of the route within these areas are considered prime farmland soils with the exception of the City of Williamsburg.

Within the northern portion of the City of Newport News, prime farmland is common in the study area. In the center of the City of Newport News, the study area crosses a relatively large area of farmland of statewide importance. Table 3-33 quantifies, by city/county, the types of farmland within 300 feet of the centerline of the Peninsula/CSXT route. Figure 3-9 is a map of farmlands within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area.

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<sup>46</sup> [http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/nra/nri/?cid=nrcs143\\_014122](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/nra/nri/?cid=nrcs143_014122)



**Table 3-33: Farmland Soils within the Study Area of the Peninsula/CSXT Route (Acres)**

City/County*	Prime Farmland	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Prime Farmland, If Drained
Richmond	3	11	0
Henrico	305	21	20
Charles City	56	13	0
New Kent	290	58	115
Newport News	488	76	6
<b>Total Acreage:</b>	<b>1142</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>141</b>

\*Specific areas of prime farmland soils are not available for York County, James City County, and the City of Williamsburg.

**Agricultural and Forestal Districts** - AFDs have been identified within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area and are listed in Table 3-34 and mapped in Figure 3-10.

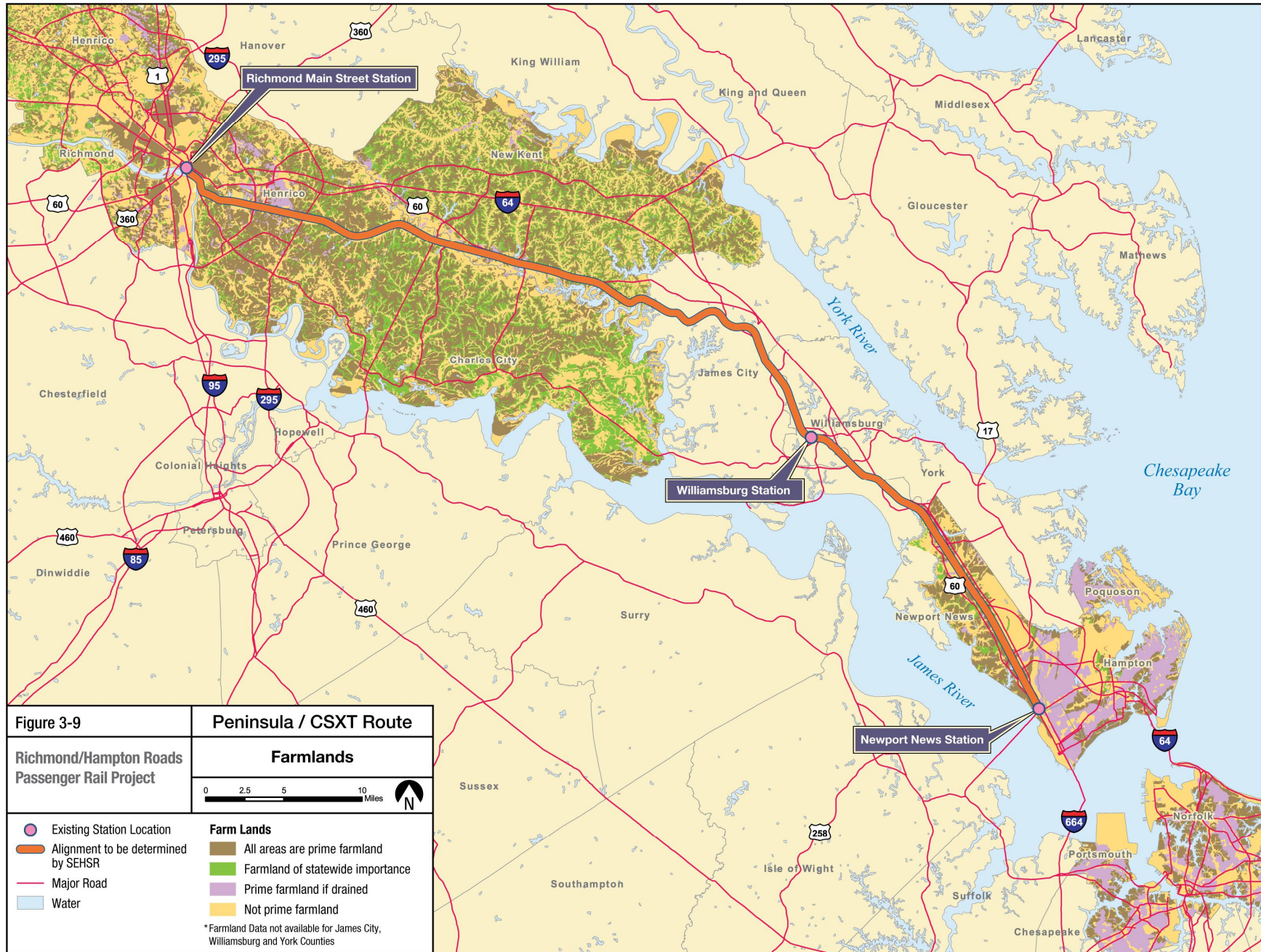
**Table 3-34: Agricultural and Forestal Districts within the Peninsula/CSXT Route Study Area**

AFD Name	Location	Acres within 300 feet
Mill Creek AFD-7-86	James City County	84.20
Hill Pleasant AFD-3-86	James City County	27.20
Mount Castle AFD	New Kent County	1.25
East Providence AFD	New Kent County	14.98
Osborne AFD	New Kent County	4.40
<b>Total Acreage:</b>		<b>132.03</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

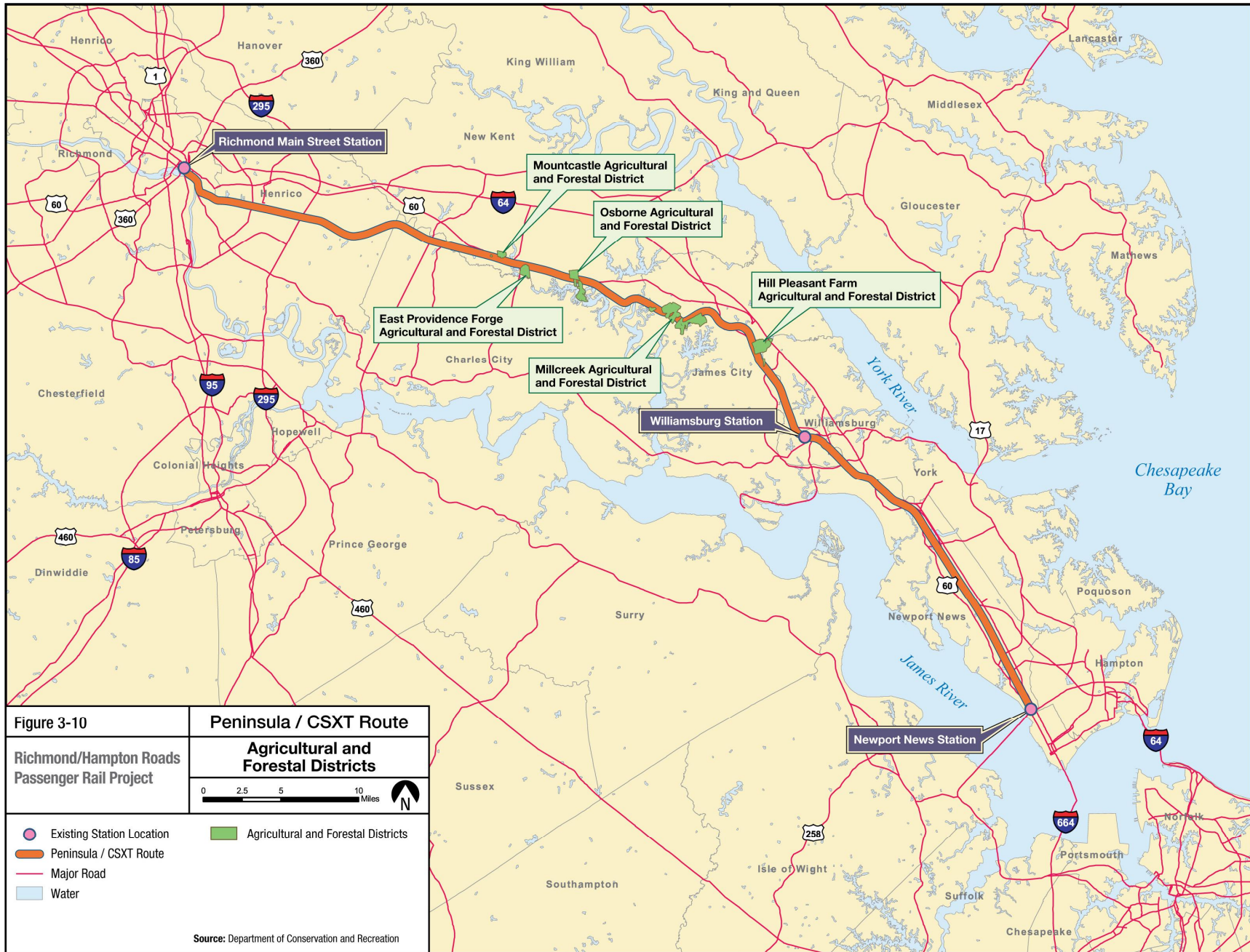
### 3.10.3.1 Southside/NS Route

Prime farmland information along the Southside/NS route was obtained for the City of Petersburg, Prince George County, the Sussex County, Southampton County, Isle of Wight County, the City of Suffolk, and the City of Chesapeake. Most of the soil in the Southside/NS route within the localities of Petersburg, Prince George, and Sussex is considered prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance. Most of the areas that are not prime farmland are associated with streams and tributaries. There are isolated areas of prime farmland if drained.



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A majority of the land in the Southside/NS route within Isle of Wight County is not considered prime farmland; however, there are a few isolated areas of prime farmland in the portion of the study area located within the county. In the southern portion of Isle of Wight County, western and eastern portions of the City of Suffolk, and the western portion of the City of Chesapeake, there are relatively large areas of soil considered to be prime farmland if drained. In the center of Isle of Wight County in the study area, there are a few isolated areas of prime farmland, but most of the soil is considered not prime farmland. The developed areas within the eastern end of the study area in the City of Chesapeake are not considered prime farmland. Table 3-35 quantifies, by location, the types of farmland within 300 feet of the centerline of the Southside/NS route. Figure 3-11 is a map of farmlands along the Southside/NS route.

**Table 3-35: Farmland Soils within Study Area of the Southside/NS Route (Acres)**

Location*	Prime Farmland	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Prime Farmland, If Drained
Prince George	365	217	73
Southampton	456	3	66
Isle of Wight	172	1	240
Suffolk	254	18	288
Chesapeake	32	0	211
Hampton	7	0	115
<b>Total Acreage:</b>	<b>1286</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>993</b>

\*During Tier II documentation, all soil information will be updated pending available data.

**Agricultural and Forestal Districts** - There are no AFDs within the Southside/NS route study area.

### 3.10.4 Environmental Consequences

#### 3.10.4.1 Status Quo Alternative

Under the Status Quo Alternative, all passenger rail service conditions would remain the same. There would continue to be two daily round-trip trains along the Peninsula/CSXT route operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph. No physical or operational rail improvements would be made, other than routine maintenance. There would be no impacts to farmlands or AFDs associated with the Status Quo Alternative.

#### 3.10.4.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, one round-trip train would be added to the Peninsula/CSXT route for a total of three daily round-trip trains operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph between Newport News and Richmond. There would be no infrastructure improvements related to higher speed passenger rail and, therefore, no impacts to farmlands or AFDs are expected under the No Action Alternative.

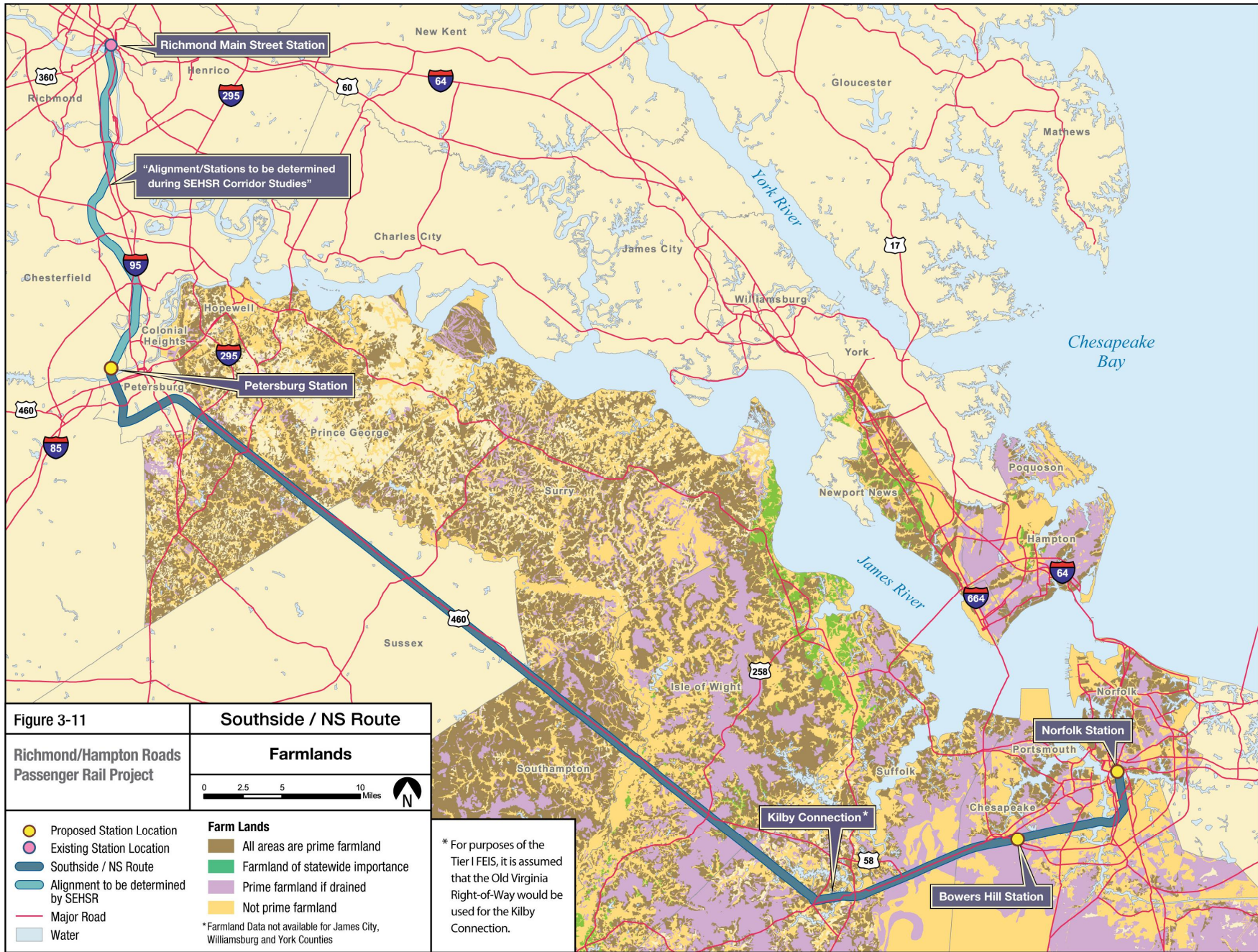
#### 3.10.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)

Under the Preferred Alternative, conventional speed passenger rail service would be maintained on the Peninsula/CSXT route and new higher speed passenger service would be added to the Southside/NS route. Since there is no passenger rail service currently running along the Southside/NS route, infrastructure improvements would be required to accommodate the addition of passenger rail.

As part of the Preferred Alternative, no upgrades to the Peninsula/CSXT route would be required that would extend beyond existing rail right-of-way. Parking at Main Street Station in Richmond may be improved and it is unknown, at this point, if this would require additional right-of-way. This will be determined in subsequent Tier II analysis. Prime farmland and AFDs exist within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area; however, given that improvements would not likely require additional right-of-way, no impacts to farmlands or AFDs would be expected to occur. The area surrounding Main Street Station is all urban developed land and if additional right-of-way is required, it would not impact prime farmland, soils of statewide importance, or any AFD.

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Upgrades to the existing Southside/NS route track would be required in order to accommodate higher speed passenger rail service. Currently only freight rail operates along this line. New stations with parking facilities would be provided at the proposed Bowers Hill location and Downtown Norfolk. Upgrades would also include a new rail connection in the vicinity of Kilby.

There are no AFDs adjacent to the Southside/NS route, but prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance have been identified. While the majority of improvements would take place within the existing rail right-of-way, potential impacts to prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance may occur where additional right-of-way is likely required. Prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance exist in the vicinity of the proposed Kilby rail connection, the proposed Bowers Hill Station and Downtown Norfolk. Given that Downtown Norfolk is an urban environment, it is unlikely prime farmlands would be impacted by the proposed Norfolk station.

Construction related impacts may occur associated with grading, earth removal and construction of new embankments or alterations of existing embankments at bridge approaches. No expansive excavation is anticipated. Any impacts to agriculturally designated soils will be coordinated with relevant state and local agencies. Geotechnical investigations and subsurface studies will be conducted prior to any construction activities to assess site specific soil characteristics.

### **3.10.5 Potential Mitigation**

For any conversion of prime farmlands, a Farmland Impact Rating Form, as required by the Farmland Protection Policy Act, would be completed and appropriate mitigation would be determined. Farmland conversion mitigation may include providing permanent protection of comparable farmland or paying a fee to protect farmland. It is unlikely that any active or inactive farm would be adversely affected; however, coordination with appropriate local and state agencies would be conducted to determine impacts and site-specific mitigation as appropriate. Potential impacts resulting from construction would be mitigated through the use of best management practices. In accordance with local requirements, erosion and sediment control plans would be prepared and implemented.

### **3.10.6 Subsequent Analysis**

Subsequent analysis for the Preferred Alternative may include:

- Additional coordination with the NRCS to identify revised data and to determine the extent and specific locations of prime farmland and soils of statewide importance in areas where additional right-of-way would be required; and
- Subsurface testing to ascertain specific soils conditions in areas where additional right-of-way would be required.

## **3.11 Visual and Aesthetic Quality**

This section describes the visual and aesthetic quality and the potential to alter the visual characteristics of both routes through the implementation of higher speed rail service and related amenities.

### **3.11.1 Methodology**

An overall general visual assessment of the existing aesthetic conditions was conducted for each route. Each route was driven to get an understanding of the aesthetic conditions along the route and to identify if potentially visually sensitive resources or viewers were present. In addition to driving the routes, photographs taken along the rail routes (via hi-rail vehicles) and maps were used to ascertain the visual characteristics of the study routes. This assessment is not intended to be a detailed visual assessment. More detailed analysis would be conducted during the Tier II analysis.

### **3.11.2 Legal and Regulatory Context**

In addition to the requirements established by CEQ implementing procedures for consideration of environmental impacts, of FRA's Procedures (64 FR 28545 §14(n)(12)) specifically states that "The EIS should identify any significant changes likely to occur in the natural landscape and in the developed environment. The EIS should also discuss the consideration given to design quality, art and architecture in project planning and development as required by DOT Order 5610.4.(Implementation of Decision to Address Environmental Design Considerations in Environmental Impact Statements)" Consideration of local

community design guidelines would be part of the Tier II analysis when detailed engineering and architectural information would be developed for the selected alternative.

### **3.11.3 Affected Environment**

#### **3.11.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route**

The Peninsula/CSXT route follows existing CSXT railroad tracks between Richmond and Newport News. The tracks are currently used for both freight and passenger service. The Main Street Station in downtown Richmond is at the western end of the study area. The surrounding area is densely developed with a mix of commercial, industrial and transportation uses. Adjacent to the station, I-95 is elevated as are the tracks coming into and leaving the station. The tracks remain elevated as they parallel the James River and Kanawaha Canal, eventually becoming at-grade.

After leaving Main Street Station, the tracks veer east into Henrico County. Development patterns along the alignment transition from urban residential-commercial to more industrial and sparse residential development accented with agricultural crop fields. As the route continues east into New Kent County, the study area becomes more agricultural and residential consisting of mostly single family dwellings. The landscape is relatively flat, with the exception of slight variations in elevation near creeks and rivers, such as the Chickahominy River. This general landscape theme continues into Charles City County.

As the route moves into James City County, it approaches several small towns, including Toano and Norge, before reaching the City of Williamsburg. Mostly industrial-type buildings and residential structures are located adjacent to the tracks through Toano and Norge. Through the City of Williamsburg, the route runs along the north side of the historic district. The Williamsburg Amtrak Station is adjacent to municipal buildings. Some undeveloped, forested land exists on the north side of the tracks at the station. Also, a hotel is located north of the tracks near the station.

The aesthetic character changes as the route leaves historic downtown Williamsburg to a more suburban setting. Major roadways parallel the tracks on either side of the route. Scattered along the railroad tracks is a mix of residential and commercial properties.

Continuing southeast into the City of Newport News, the area becomes very densely developed with a mix of commercial properties, industrial buildings and residential neighborhoods. As the route approaches downtown Newport News, the area becomes mostly residential before it becomes dominated by industrial properties. The route terminates within the rail yard behind a multilevel parking garage.

**Potentially Sensitive Views/Resources/Viewers** - Potentially sensitive views and resources within the study area would likely include some of the recreational and cultural resources identified along the route, as described in Sections 3.9 and 3.14, respectively. No other particularly sensitive views or resources were identified as part of the Tier I Draft EIS. Potentially sensitive viewers along the route would likely include any visitors to cultural resources or recreation areas, and residents that live adjacent to any proposed improvements such as new stations or parking facilities. More detailed study would be conducted during the Tier II analysis to determine if other potentially sensitive views, resources or sensitive viewers exist within the study route.

#### **3.11.3.2 Southside/NS Route**

From Petersburg, the existing tracks run southeast through the counties of Prince George, Sussex, and Southampton. These counties consist of large plots of farmland where peanuts, tobacco, cotton and other crops are grown. Toward the eastern section of Prince George County, the existing tracks pass through the small town of Disputanta. Residences and community facilities lie in extremely close proximity to the existing tracks. As the tracks run southeast over relatively flat terrain, the landscape consists of single family homes or commercial properties such as the large solid waste disposal facility and landfill in Sussex. A rock quarry and feed and fertilizer plants are the only industrial properties along an otherwise completely rural stretch of land that leads into Southampton County.

The existing tracks continue to directly parallel Route 460 through farmland. As the route approaches the eastern county line of Southampton, agricultural fields give way to densely forested land around the Blackwater River.

The tracks running through Isle of Wight County cut through a rural landscape that remains primarily undeveloped. Many low-lying, swampy areas exist within the Southside/NS Route study area. The

landscape is similar in Suffolk County, where the existing tracks cross over Lake Kilby before heading east through the Great Dismal Swamp, a large national wildlife refuge that lies between the cities of Suffolk and Chesapeake. A station is proposed for Bowers Hill, a small town that lies on the western side of the City of Chesapeake. In the vicinity of this proposed station are single family homes on the southern side of the existing tracks and a trucking storage and cargo loading facility on the northern side of Military Highway.

From Bowers Hill, the route crosses the Elizabeth River and cuts through the City of Chesapeake before coming to an end on the northern bank of the Elizabeth River in Norfolk. Currently, the proposed location of the station in Downtown Norfolk is north of the Elizabeth River in between I-264 to the west and U.S. 460 to the east near what is currently a parking lot for the adjacent Harbor Park baseball stadium.

**Potentially Sensitive Views/Resources/Viewers** - Potentially sensitive views and resources within the Southside/NS route study area would likely include some of the recreational and cultural resources identified along the route, as described in Sections 3.9 and 3.14 respectively. No other particularly sensitive views or resources were identified as part of the Tier I Draft EIS evaluation. Potentially sensitive viewers along the route would likely include any visitors to cultural resources or recreation areas and residences that live adjacent to any proposed improvements such as new stations or parking facilities. More detailed study would be conducted during the Tier II analysis to determine if other potentially sensitive views, resources or sensitive viewers exist within the study route.

### **3.11.4. Environmental Consequences**

#### **3.11.4.1 Status Quo Alternative**

Under the Status Quo Alternative, all passenger rail service conditions would remain the same along the Peninsula/CSXT route. Only freight rail operations would operate along the Southside/NS route. There would continue to be two daily round-trip trains along the Peninsula/CSXT route operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph. No physical or operational rail improvements would be made other than routine maintenance; thus, there would be no changes to the rail line that would introduce new visual elements or alter the visual and aesthetic characteristics described. Therefore no visual or aesthetic effects are expected to occur.

#### **3.11.4.2 No Action Alternative**

Under the No Action Alternative, one additional passenger rail train would be added to the existing Peninsula/CSXT route and would operate at a maximum speed of 79 mph. Only freight rail operations would operate along the Southside/NS Route. In total, there would be three daily round-trip trains operating between Richmond and Newport News along the Peninsula/CSXT route. There would be no changes to the rail line that would introduce new visual elements or alter the visual and aesthetic characteristics described. A particularly sensitive visual resource along this route is Colonial Williamsburg and the Colonial Parkway, both in the Williamsburg area. However, no improvements are planned in this area. Therefore no visual or aesthetic effects are expected to occur.

#### **3.11.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)**

The Preferred Alternative combines the No Action Alternative with higher speed passenger rail on the Southside/NS route. As described for the No Action Alternative, no elements would be added to the current landscape along the Peninsula/CSXT route that would have impacts to visual or aesthetic resources. However, necessary infrastructure improvements along the Southside/NS route would introduce new visual elements to the existing landscape.

Potentially sensitive views or resources along the Southside/NS route include recreational and cultural resources, as described in Sections 3.9 and 3.14, respectively. One potential particularly sensitive resource along the Southside would be the Dismal Swamp, a designated National Wildlife Refuge. However, an abandoned rail bed runs adjacent to the swamp that would be used for the proposed route. More detailed analysis will be needed during Tier II documentation to ascertain conditions along the rail line and to determine if visual impacts would occur. Correspondence from the USFWS on the Tier I Draft EIS, specifically related to the Dismal Swamp, stated that "...FWS will provide extensive recommendations on needed studies to assess the range of impacts and their consequences on the Refuge and its wildlife."

New elements along the Southside/NS route would include a new rail connection at Kilby and the proposed Bowers Hill and Downtown Norfolk stations and associated parking. The new rail connection at Kilby would have a minimal effect on the surrounding landscape because it would be at-grade with the existing rail lines in

the area. Additionally, grade separations and consolidations of roadways would be expected along the proposed route and would result in road or rail overpasses along the corridor. The location of potential grade separations will be identified in the Tier II analysis, and therefore, potential visual impacts cannot be assessed at this time.

The proposed station facilities at Bowers Hill and Downtown Norfolk would introduce new visual elements to the existing landscape. The station at Bowers Hill is near the intersection of Interstates 64 and 264 along Military Highway. A large parcel of land on the northern side of Military Highway is currently used as a cargo staging area where large, rectangular metal boxes are loaded onto and off of passing trains. Also adjacent to the proposed location are some residential properties. The addition of a new station would alter the existing visual setting and may impact residential properties near the site. The Downtown Norfolk station is in the vicinity of a baseball stadium and a large surface parking lot. North of the site are many roadways, including I-264, which is elevated in the vicinity of the project. Given the surrounding visual character of this area, it is unlikely that introducing a station in this general location would have a negative visual effect on the area. Context-sensitive design features could be used to make the station fit into the surrounding architectural styles.

### **3.11.5 Potential Mitigation**

More detailed analysis is needed to determine the extent of adverse impacts on the visual and aesthetic quality of the study routes that may require mitigation. However, impacts to the visual environment could be minimized through context-sensitive design and plantings around new facilities. Detailed mitigation measures would be defined during Tier II EIS analysis.

### **3.11.6 Subsequent Analysis**

Detailed analysis would be performed for the Preferred Alternative to identify potential visual intrusions into residential, park and open space areas, and in particular to the Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. For each of the proposed station sites, further analysis would be conducted in consultation with local agencies to develop an understanding of the relationship of the proposed station architecture, parking lots, lighting systems and other features to the surrounding natural and manmade settings and the historic context of the surrounding landscape setting. The analysis would identify the potential for blockage of valued views, the areas where shadows would be cast and the areas where the scale, form, line and color of project facilities could be designed to complement the surrounding landscape. The analysis would be used to provide a basis for considering specific measures that could be integrated into the final station designs to reduce the visual impacts of the stations on their surroundings. Similar analyses would be completed for grade separations where appropriate. Coordination with the USFWS will continue as planning for the project progresses.

## **3.12 Utilities**

This chapter describes the utilities that likely occur and could be affected by the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. Potential impacts to those utilities are discussed. This is not intended to be a complete inventory of utilities along the routes, but rather this serves as a preliminary investigation of potential utilities and potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of the alternatives.

### **3.12.1 Methodology**

For the Tier I EIS, the types of likely utilities and potential impacts were identified for the study area. The presence of utilities were identified through a review of aerial photographs, mapping available from several internet sites, site-specific photographs taken by project staff, random field visual inspections, review of local government websites, and documentation contained in the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) Tier II EIS relative to possible utility owners in the study area.

During the Tier I Draft EIS, the study team evaluated the various recommended site-specific and linear improvements to determine whether they would remain within the existing railroad rights-of-way or require enhancements to land adjacent to the rail line. In the limited number of occasions when land was not owned by a railroad company, the aerial photographs were evaluated to determine any potential impacts.

### **3.12.2 Legal and Regulatory Context**

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that all major federal actions assess potential impacts to the built and natural environment. Utilities are considered to be a commodity or service for public use and

therefore require consideration in the environmental process. Utilities can have a major impact on the design and planning of facilities and therefore must also be considered as planning and design of the project progresses.

### 3.12.3 Affected Environment

Utilities are, by definition, a commodity or service provided for public use. The study area for both routes contain infrastructure for water treatment and supply, sanitary sewer collection and treatment, storm water collection and discharge, electric generation and distribution, communication facilities and cabling, natural gas storage and distribution, petroleum storage and trans-flo facilities, solid waste collection and management facilities, and interstate pipelines. Many utilities run adjacent to roadway and rail rights-of-way. Initial coordination efforts with utility providers/companies were not undertaken as part of this Tier I EIS.

#### 3.12.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

**Water and Sewer** - Cities and most towns within the Peninsula/CSXT route study area maintain and operate water treatment and supply facilities. Some of the rural counties and communities have joined to form regional water authorities that function similar to municipal water systems. The infrastructure for water systems varies throughout the study areas. Each system may include different combinations of major structures such as treatment plants, pumping stations, and water towers/tanks. Most water systems will include minor structures, i.e., fire hydrants, meters, valves and back-flow preventers. A network of underground pipes interconnects these major and minor structures. These pipes may also be attached to bridges to cross natural or manmade features.

As with water treatment and supply, sanitary sewer collection and treatment facilities exist in the cities and most towns within the study areas. There are a limited number of regional sewer authorities. With the exception of treatment plants and certain types of pump stations, most sanitary sewer infrastructure is subsurface. Manholes for system access or air-release provide surface evidence of the sanitary sewer system. Sanitary sewer pipes may be seen at aerial crossings of streams or when attached to bridges crossing natural or man-made features.

Storm water collection and discharge occur throughout the study area regardless of population or development. These underground systems may be as simple as a single pipe carrying drainage underneath the roadbed or as complicated as a network of pipes connecting drainage inlets designed to collect and detain drainage from heavily developed areas.

**Electric** - Dominion Virginia Power provides and maintains the majority, if not all, of the electric generation and distribution systems within the study areas for the alternatives. Power plants within the study areas are generally located near rivers or bodies of water with generators powered by hydraulics, coal-fired or nuclear energy. The distribution system from these plants include high voltage lines on towers, substations, transmission lines both above and below ground, ground and pole-mounted transformers, and service lines.

**Communication Facilities** - Communication facilities along railroads began in the late 1800s with the installation of telegraph poles and cables. As technology improved, the communication facilities increased in importance. Communication facilities exist in all study areas ranging from microwave towers for train communications to fiber optics for national telecommunications. The communications infrastructure includes both freestanding and guyed towers (towers supported by cables), signal-boosting stations, and both aerial and underground cabling.

**Natural Gas** - Residences and businesses throughout Virginia use natural gas for cooking, space heating and water heating. The infrastructure that supplies natural gas consists of interstate distribution pipes, compressor stations, underground storage tanks, and distribution pipe systems. Cost-effective delivery of natural gas depends on volume sales that require the location of distribution systems in centers of population or industry.

**Petroleum Products** - Refined petroleum products used in vehicles, home heating, and industry are delivered by rail and by interstate pipelines to trans-flo facilities located in Portsmouth, Petersburg, and Richmond<sup>47</sup>. These products are stored in large tanks that are grouped in "tank farms." Photos reviewed did not indicate the presence of any tank farms within the study limits. Distribution of the petroleum products from

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<sup>47</sup> <http://www.transflo.net/?fuseaction=terminal.find>

these tank farms is generally by tanker truck crossing railroads at-grade. This presents a safety issue and also creates an impact to this utility since the tank farms must be accessible by both rail and truck traffic.

**Solid Waste Collection** - Most municipalities within the study area either manage their own solid waste collection program or contract with a private enterprise to manage a program for the municipality. These programs determine a system of collection and disposal of solid waste that ranges from large household trash cans emptied into carts or trucks to facilities for sorting waste into large dumpsters or compactors. Based on the type of solid waste, the container of waste is emptied at either a landfill or a recycling facility.

### **3.12.3.2 Southside/NS Route**

It is reasonable to assume that utilities within the Southside/NS route study area are similar to the kinds of utilities identified for the Peninsula/CSXT route study area.

## **3.12.4 Environmental Consequences**

### **3.12.4.1 Status Quo Alternative**

The Status Quo Alternative would not provide any improvements other than routine maintenance to the existing passenger rail service along the Peninsula/CSXT route. Similarly, there would be no change in the Southside/NS route; it would continue to operate freight trains only. No impacts to utilities would occur.

### **3.12.4.2 No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative would provide one additional passenger service round-trip operating at conventional speeds along the Peninsula/CSXT route. It is likely that multiple utilities run within or adjacent to the existing railroad right-of-way. There would be no infrastructure improvements related to higher speed passenger rail and, therefore, no long-term impacts on utilities are expected under the No Action Alternative.

### **3.12.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)**

As part of the Preferred Alternative, both routes would have passenger rail service. The Preferred Alternative combines the No Action Alternative (on the Peninsula/CSXT route, the current two trains per day plus the planned additional train) with higher speed passenger service to the Southside/NS route. It is likely that multiple utilities run within or adjacent to the existing railroad right-of-way along both the Peninsula/CSXT and Southside/NS routes. Many factors, such as location, depths, and criticality of utilities will need to be identified in order to make determinations on potential disruptions and relocations of utilities. As stated for the No Action Alternative, no long-term impacts are expected along the Peninsula/CSXT route.

The Preferred Alternative would require infrastructure improvements mostly to the Southside/NS route. Additional right-of-way would be required along the Southside/NS route. Areas that could potentially have the most affect on utilities would be where track bed widening is required, where potential grade separations may occur, and in proximity to the Kilby connection, the proposed Bowers Hill Station and the Downtown Norfolk Station. Coordination with utility operators would be needed to ascertain which utilities exist in these locations as well as to determine connections to water, sewer, etc., for new facilities such as the proposed Bowers Hill Station and Downtown Norfolk Station. As a result, some utility lines may need to be relocated. It is expected that any disruptions in service would be temporary and normal service would resume upon completion of construction activities.

### **3.12.5 Potential Mitigation**

Specific impacts to utilities have not been identified and, therefore, precise mitigation measures cannot be recommended at this time. However, it should be possible to minimize most impacts through utility operator/owner involvement during preliminary design of a Preferred Alternative. If utilities are impacted then coordination with municipalities and utility owners would be conducted to develop relocation and construction phasing plans around peak usage hours to minimize utility disruptions.

### 3.12.6 Subsequent Analysis

The subsequent analyses required for project environmental documentation would focus on project-specific impacts that reflect more precise definitions of the right-of-way, the proposed station locations, and operations. Areas of further study should include the following:

- Determine which utilities exist;
- Coordination with utility providers determine utility locations; and
- Develop plans to minimize utility impacts.

### 3.13 Contaminated and Hazardous Materials

The section identifies and provides an overview of known sources and/or potential suspected sources of contaminated and hazardous materials that may exist within the study area.

#### 3.13.1 Methodology

The greatest potential to disturb contaminated or potentially contaminated and hazardous waste sites is in areas where new rail right-of-way may be acquired and where more significant earth disturbing activities would likely occur, such as at proposed station locations and the Kilby rail connection along the Southside/NS route. A database records search was completed by screening specific federal and state on-line databases of sites located within and proximate to a half-mile radius of each of the existing and proposed rail stations to identify the presence of any potential or existing sources of contaminated/hazardous materials. A similar search was conducted for the vicinity of the Kilby rail connection. Research regarding the study area was confined to the previous investigations, as detailed later in this section. The government database sources reviewed during the Tier I Draft EIS analysis include:

- The EPA's Comprehensive Emergency Response Compensation and Liabilities Information System (CERCLIS) Website at <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/cursites/index.htm>
- The EPA's Envirofacts Data Warehouse Website at <http://www.epa.gov/enviro/>
- The VDEQ Reported Releases Website at <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/tanks/dwnllib.html#petdbf>
- The VDEQ Registered Tanks - Website at <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/tanks/dwnllib.html#petdbf>
- The VDEQ Volunteer Remediation Cleanup Sites (Completed and Planned) Website at <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/vrp/pubrecord.html>
- The VDEQ Solid Waste Facilities Website at <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/waste/s-waste.html>

The above databases should provide the necessary preliminary information to ascertain the potential presence of contaminated sites that are within and surround the specified project area(s). A more detailed Phase I Environmental Assessment in accordance with ASTM Standard E1528-00 will be conducted as part of the Tier II analysis to determine the presence and/or extent of any known contaminated sites that may impact the project. The information in the databases was provided on a statewide basis. The required information from each database was subsequently refined from the statewide listings to a city-wide level. Each of these databases was further reduced to street levels by identifying all streets, roadways, highways, etc., that were known to be located within a ½-mile of the proposed rail stations. Using Yahoo<sup>®</sup>, Mapquest<sup>®</sup>, or similar software, each listing was then located via the provided address to identify if the site is present within (or proximal) to a ½-mile of the proposed rail stations. Given the limitations of these mapping programs, sites that were identified to be located immediately adjacent to the ½-mile radius of the proposed rail stations have been conservatively included. A field survey that cross-references the annotated databases would be required to more accurately plot their respective locations.

In addition, selected information from the Tier I EIS for the Southeast High-Speed Rail Project, the I-64 Major Investment Study and the Route 460 Location Study Draft EIS was reviewed for areas surrounding each proposed station to further identify any potential areas of concern on the Peninsula/CSXT and Southside/NS routes.

Furthermore, the DEQ-Waste Division commented on the Tier I Draft EIS and concurred that in each area where any work is to take place, the applicant should conduct an environmental investigation on and near the property to identify any solid or hazardous waste sites or issues before work can commence. The investigation should include a search of waste-related databases, as provided in DEQ's comments.



### 3.13.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

The regulations of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), VDEQ, and the Virginia Waste Management Board govern the activities that surround the generation, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes. In addition, these agencies, in part, regulate the identification, investigation and remediation of contaminated sites in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The governing EPA regulations include: the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act; the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, including the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act; the Toxic Substances Control Act; and the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984, as codified in 40 CFR et al.

### 3.13.3 Affected Environment

A variety of source activities or materials at and/or surrounding the proposed routes and stations could result in contaminant concentrations exceeding the respective VDEQ clean up criteria. Some of these influences may include:

- Current or historic retail petroleum operations,
- Current and former industrial processes and properties,
- Underground storage tanks at or near a proposed route,
- Heating oil storage facilities and/or emergency generators,
- Military installations and activities,
- Motor vehicle (auto and truck) releases and emissions,
- Waste oils and maintenance activities,
- Landfills and illegal/improper disposal activities,
- Historic fill material,
- Naturally occurring compounds and metals,
- Current or historic farming activities,
- Regional or localized contamination, and
- Current and historic railroad operations.

Using the on-line databases detailed in Section 3.13.1, information regarding potentially contaminated sites was collected and refined in context to the specific proposed stations. The complete findings of these efforts are included in Appendix E of the Tier I Draft EIS. The types of listings and locations identified during the tier I Draft EIS are summarized in the tables below. It should also be noted that the nature (e.g. types of contaminants, etc.) and extent of each listing is not known as it was not provided in the databases, but rather only locations of known occurrences are identified. Based on the information gathered, it does not appear that any of these known occurrences would result in a "fatal flaw"<sup>48</sup> for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. Further investigation would be needed to provide more detailed information during the Tier II evaluations for the Preferred Alternative.

#### 3.13.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

Sites that potentially could contain contaminated and/or hazardous materials were identified within the study area. The majority of these sites were located near or within the more urbanized and industrial areas close to the Richmond Main Street Station and the Newport News Downtown Station. Contaminated and/or hazardous materials sites were identified at a lesser frequency surrounding the Williamsburg Amtrak Station and the existing Newport News Station. Any rehabilitation or upgrades of the current Newport News passenger station (or any current facility), however, would require additional investigation, identification, and probable abatement of asbestos containing materials (ACM) and lead-based paint (LBP). The types of listings and locations are summarized on Table 3-36.

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<sup>48</sup> A site constituting a "fatal flaw" would include an identified contaminated area that would require extensive remediation, such as an EPA CERCLIS Site on the National Priority List. No such sites were identified within the study area in the Tier I Draft EIS analysis. Further investigations would occur during subsequent analysis.

**Table 3-36: Potentially Contaminated/Hazardous Material Sites Within a Half-Mile of the Proposed Peninsula/CSXT Route Stations**

Existing/ Proposed Stations	Government Database								
	EPA CERCLIS Sites		VDEQ Reported Releases		VDEQ Registered Storage Tanks	VDEQ Volunteer Remediation Cleanup Program		VDEQ Solid Waste Facilities	
	On the NPL	Not on NPL	Case Open	Case Closed	# of Facilities	Planned	Completed	Active	Closed
Richmond	0	1	1	37	59	1	0	1	6
Williamsburg	0	1	0	28	21	1	0	0	3
Newport News	0	0	0	6	14	0	0	0	0

NPL: Nationally Priority List

Additionally, the I-64 Major Investment Study closely paralleled the Peninsula/CSXT route. According to the findings of the I-64 Study, numerous potential contaminant sources were identified that may pose an impact to that project which may also affect the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. However, based on the level of analysis conducted as part of the Tier I Draft EIS, it does not appear that any of these known occurrences would be a “fatal flaw” for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. Further investigations of potential contamination and contaminated sites would be conducted during Tier II analysis for the Preferred Alternative.

### 3.13.3.2 Southside/NS Route

Sites that potentially could contain contaminated and/or hazardous materials were identified within the study area. As detailed in Table 3-37, the locations of a majority of these sites were identified to be near or within the more urbanized and industrial areas of the project area that surround the Norfolk Downtown Station. Contaminated and/or hazardous material sites were identified at a lesser frequency surrounding the proposed station at Bowers Hill.

Additionally, a review of the Route 460 Location Study Draft EIS prepared by the Virginia Department of Transportation indicates that 15 potentially contaminated sites may warrant further evaluation due to the proximity of the respective sites to the project route. The majority of these sites are contained along the route immediately north of Waverly, and between the Blackwater River and Route 256 near Windsor.

**Table 3-37: Potentially Contaminated/Hazardous Material Sites within a Half-Mile of the Proposed Southside/NS Route Stations**

Existing/ Proposed Station	Government Databases								
	EPA CERCLIS Sites		VDEQ Reported Releases		VDEQ Registered Storage Tanks	VDEQ Volunteer Remediation Cleanup Program		VDEQ Solid Waste Facilities	
	On the NPL	Not on NPL	Case Open	Case Closed	# of Facilities	Planned	Completed	Active	Closed
Petersburg <sup>1</sup>	0	0	0	9	22	1	2	3**	9
Bowers Hill	0	1	1	3	4	0	0	1	1
Norfolk	0	0	1	18	30	0	0	1*	1

1. For purposes of analysis, the existing Amtrak Station at Ettrick was included to ascertain existing conditions along this portion of the Southside/NS route. The location of this station is not part of the Tier I Draft EIS.

NPL: National Priority List

\*: Includes Un-Permitted Facilities

\*\* : Includes Non-Constructed Facilities

The area between Kilby and Algren along the Southside/NS route was also searched to identify potential contaminated/hazardous materials sites using the EPA's Envirofacts Data Warehouse. A new rail connection between the NS line and CSXT Portsmouth subdivision line would be required to accommodate passenger rail service on this route. This connection would require new rail right-of-way. No Superfund, toxic releases

or water dischargers were identified in the vicinity of the proposed connection. One hazardous waste site was identified approximately ½-mile south of the proposed connection area.

### **3.13.4 Environmental Consequences**

#### **3.13.4.1 Status Quo Alternative**

Currently, Amtrak operates two round-trip trains daily along the Peninsula/CSXT route at conventional speeds. The Status Quo Alternative does not include any improvements, other than routine maintenance, to the existing Amtrak service on the Peninsula. It is not expected that this alternative would disturb any areas of potential or known contaminated materials within the Peninsula/CSXT route.

#### **3.13.4.2 No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative would provide one additional round-trip train, for a total of three daily round-trip trains, at conventional speeds along the Peninsula/CSXT route. There would be no infrastructure improvements related to higher speed passenger rail and, therefore, no impacts are expected on any areas of potential or known contaminated materials under the No Action Alternative.

#### **3.13.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)**

The Preferred Alternative serves both the Peninsula/CSXT and Southside/NS routes as it combines the No Action Alternative (three round-trip trains daily) with higher speed passenger service (six round-trip trains daily) along the Southside/NS route. As stated for the No Action Alternative, impacts to contaminated/hazardous materials sites are unlikely along the Peninsula/CSXT route. However, improvements along the Southside/NS route carry a greater potential for impact because more infrastructure improvements would be needed to provide higher speed passenger rail service along the existing NS freight line. Major improvements to the Southside/NS route requiring new right-of-way include a new rail connection at Kilby, the Bowers Hill Station, and the Downtown Norfolk Station.

Contaminated and hazardous materials sites are known to exist within the ½-mile radius established around existing and proposed stations and in the vicinity of the Kilby rail connection. However, based on the information gathered for the Tier I Draft EIS evaluation, no specific areas of contamination that would create a “fatal flaw” were identified. More in-depth investigations are required, especially in areas where new right-of-way is to be acquired, to determine the presence and to what extent contamination exists. This alternative may require the mitigation and/or remediation of contaminated sites or materials. Where possible, contaminated sites or materials encountered during construction would be addressed as they are detected.

Encountering contaminated sites or materials during construction could potentially impact the schedule and cost of the project. Additionally, the nature and extent of the contaminated sites or materials would require developing specific environmental health and safety planning with regard to the workers, the surrounding communities and the environment. Material handling plans, personal protection, workplace monitoring, alternative designs and methods of construction would need to be evaluated and adjusted to limit the impact from contaminated materials.

### **3.13.5 Potential Mitigation Measures**

Encountering any contaminated materials would require mitigation, remediation and/or removal, as well as protection from those contaminants during the construction of the project.

A Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) prior to the design and construction of the proposed improvements should be conducted for the Preferred Alternative and proposed station locations. This PSI would include a more thorough review of the potential areas of concern and could include sampling of the soils and groundwater along the proposed route and station stops. Sampling protocol would be biased toward the improvements emphasizing deeper (more prominent) excavations (e.g. footers, stormwater retention areas, utilities, etc.), and toward known areas of concern and/or specific properties. This data would confirm the presence/absence of any contaminated materials.

Additional remedial investigations or actions would depend on the types, frequencies and amounts of contamination encountered (if any). Impacted media or materials that could be encountered include the site soils, groundwater, underground or above ground storage tank systems, and asbestos containing materials (should any buildings or structures require demolition).

Any work with regard to contaminated or hazardous materials undertaken as part of a preliminary investigation, design or construction of the Preferred Alternative should be completed in accordance with all local, state, and federal regulatory requirements.

As noted by the DEQ-Waste Division, the removal, relocation or closure of any regulated aboveground or underground petroleum storage tank; the installation of any aboveground storage tanks (>660 gallons); or discovered evidence of a petroleum release during construction would be reported to DEQ, as authorized by Virginia Code 62.1-44.34.8 through 9 and 9 VAC 25-580-10 *et seq.*

### 3.13.6 Subsequent Analysis

Subsequent analysis for contaminated and hazardous materials sites could include the following:

- Site reconnaissance,
- Conducting environmental site assessments,
- Additional database research,
- Review of historical land uses for the Preferred Alternative, and
- Review of agency records and agency consultation.

### 3.14 Cultural Resources

This section describes historic resources previously identified by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) and potential resources identified by DRPT during limited field reviews of the study area that have the potential to be affected.

#### 3.14.1 Methodology

Historic resources were identified for the Peninsula/CSXT and Southside/NS routes through the use of existing documentation, such as the Route 460 Location Study conducted by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), VDHR Data Sharing System (DSS) and a review of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). As determined in consultation with VDHR, the area of potential effect was determined to be 500 feet on either side of the centerline of each rail route (for a total of 1,000 feet). A Phase I archaeological or architectural study was not conducted for this Tier I Draft EIS. More detailed evaluation would be conducted in the Tier II environmental analysis of the Preferred Alternative.

In addition to research conducted on the VDHR DSS, a windshield survey was conducted for the Peninsula/CSXT route. This was done so that both routes could be evaluated more evenly. Due to other studies in the region, the same level of documentation is not available for the Peninsula/CSXT route as is for the Southside/NS route. Furthermore, in a September 2005 meeting, DRPT and VDHR decided that it was highly likely that both rail routes under evaluation have elements, or have been associated with events, that may make them eligible for listing on the NRHP and, as a result, determined that further investigation of the CSXT Railroad was necessary. The NS Railroad within the study area, as previously discussed, has been documented and evaluated during the Route 460 Location Study conducted by VDOT.

DRPT conducted initial coordination with the VDHR, which is the Commonwealth's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), to discuss the approach for this Tier I Draft EIS regarding the known and potential resources along both routes. In addition to coordination with VDHR, DRPT also contacted the Virginia Council on Indians to determine the presence of Native American tribes within the study area. (See Appendix B Agency Correspondence of the Tier I Draft EIS)

#### 3.14.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

Federal agencies are required to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 47 (f), as amended in addition to NEPA requirements (Section 101(b)(4)). Section 106 also mandates that federal agencies provide an opportunity for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the SHPO, and other interested parties to consult on federal undertakings.

Protection of Historic Properties, 36 CFR 800.16, defines historic properties to include archaeological sites, prehistoric and historic districts, sites, buildings, structures or any object that may be eligible for inclusion in the NRHP as maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. In order to qualify for inclusion, properties must

meet certain criteria and possess integrity as defined by the Secretary. These criteria are set forth in 36 CFR 60.4, Criteria for Evaluation, and are specified below:

“The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture that is present in districts, buildings, structures and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.”

In addition to the aforementioned regulations, historic properties are also protected under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, as amended (49 U.S.C. 303(c)). Section 4(f) states that the U.S. Department of Transportation may not approve the use of land from a publicly owned park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or historic site of national, state or local significance unless there is no prudent and feasible alternative to the use of that land. If such land is required, then all possible measures to minimize harm must be employed. A discussion of Section 4(f) resources is included in Section 3.18 of this Tier I EIS.

**Sacred Native American Lands** - Under Section 101(d)(6)(A) of the National Historic Preservation Act (NRHP) (16 U.S.C. 470), properties of traditional religious and cultural significance to an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization may be eligible for listing on the NRHP. In addition to the protection afforded by the Act, Executive Order 13007 “Indian Sacred Sites” requires federal managing agencies to accommodate access to and ceremonial use of sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and to avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sites. It also requests that when possible, the confidentiality of those sites be maintained. Executive Order 13007 also mandates that agencies develop procedures for reasonable notification of proposed actions or land management policies that may restrict access to, ceremonial use of, or adversely affect sacred sites.

### **3.14.3 Affected Environment**

#### **3.14.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route**

According to the VDHR DSS, a total of 47 architectural resources have previously been identified for the Peninsula/CSXT route. Of those, 11 have been recommended eligible for listing or are currently listed on the NRHP. The remaining 36 are either not recommended eligible for listing on the NRHP, or the historic significance has not yet been determined. Forty-one archaeological sites were identified along the route. Table 3-38 summarizes the architectural resources that have been previously identified and recommended eligible for listing or are listed on the NRHP, and Table 3-39 summarizes the archaeological resources. A complete list of all resources identified by the DSS for the Peninsula/CSXT route is provided in Appendix C Historic Resources of the Tier I Draft EIS. Figure 3-12 is a map of known cultural resources along the Peninsula/CSXT route. It should be noted that the figure does not include those resources for which historic significance is undetermined.

**Table 3-38: Architectural Resources Eligible or Listed in the National Register of Historic Places along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

VDHR ID #	Property Name	Date	Location	County/City	Date Listed on NRHP (if known)	Date Listed on VA Landmarks Registry (if known)
121-0171-0002	Warehouse (Site), James River Canal	N/A	Gamble's Hill	Richmond		
127-0192	Saint John's Church Historic District	1800s	22 <sup>nd</sup> Street on west, Marshall Street on east	Richmond		
127-0171	James River and Kanawha Canal Historic District	1800ca	Peach Street to intersection of Sleepy Hollow Road	Richmond/Henrico	8/26/71	9/9/69
043-0439	Aviation General Supply Depot	1917	508 Bickerstaff Road	Henrico		
043-0306	The Cedar Works Warehouse	1885 ca	Old Osborne Turnpike, Route 5	Henrico		
063-0218	Little Roxbury	1920	Route 615	New Kent	9/15/70 Expansion Accepted: 1/17/91	6/2/70 Expanded: 4/17/90
047-0034	Norge Historic District	Post 1840	Richmond Road, Peninsula Street, Peach Street	James City		
121-0009	Hilton Village Historic District	1918	Adjacent to east bank of James River, approximately 2 miles north of Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock	Newport News	6/23/69	11/5/68
121-0050	Lee's Mill Earthworks	1862	280 Rivers Ridge Circle	Newport News	6/23/03	3/19/03
121-0016	Lee Hall	1859	163 Yorktown Road	Newport News	12/5/72	8/15/72
121-5068	Village of Lee Hall Historic District	1881	Near Intersections of Warwick Boulevard (Rt. 60) and Ripley Street	Newport News		

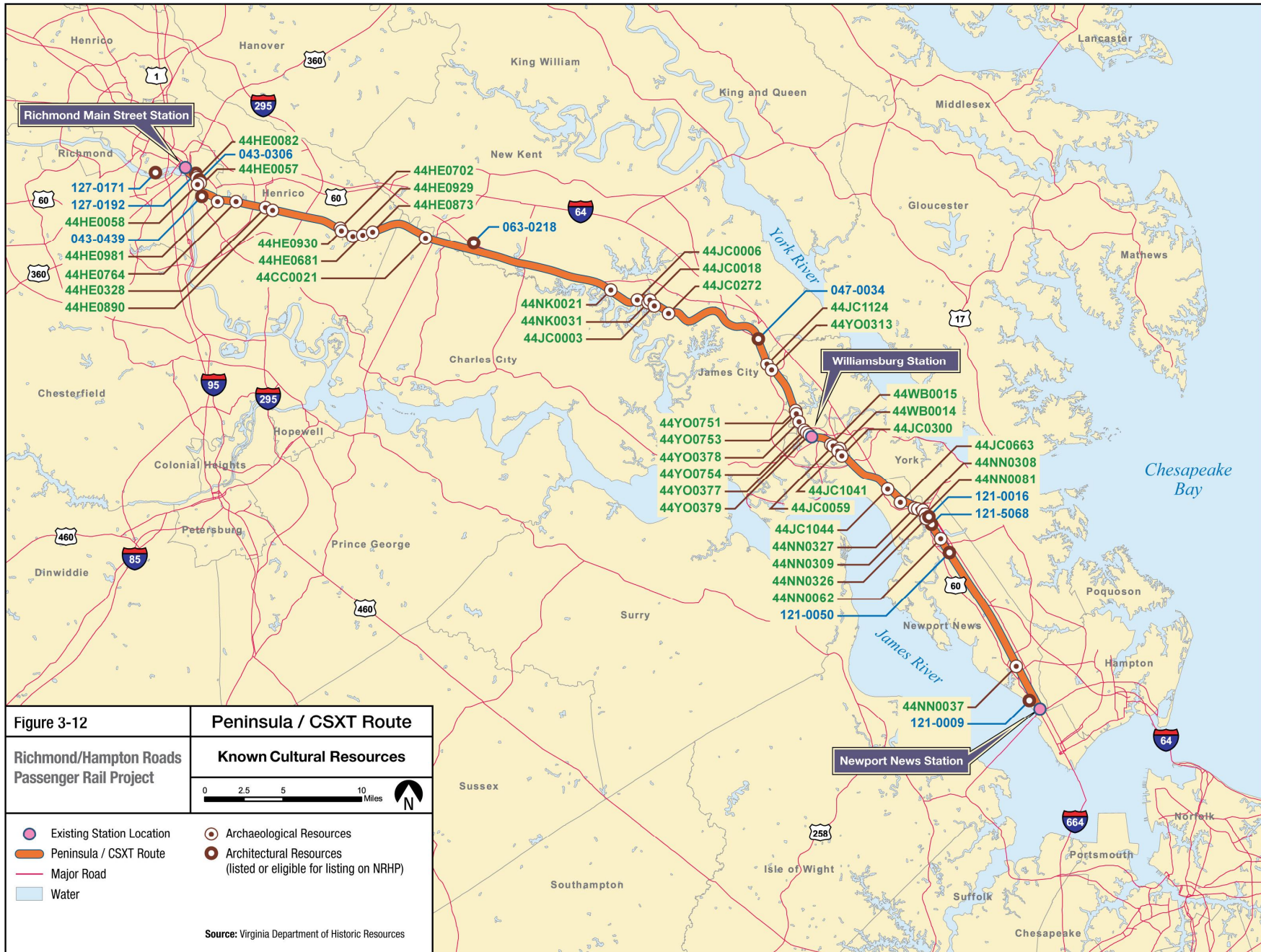
Source: VDHR DSS, September 2005

**Table 3-39: Archaeological Resources Identified Along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

VDHR Site #	City/County	Site Class	Cultural Designation	Temporal Designation
44HE0082	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> century
44HE0057	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Middle Archaic
44HE0058	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Native American/Indeterminate	Woodland, 20 <sup>th</sup> /19 <sup>th</sup> Century
44HE0981	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	African American, Euro-American	19 <sup>th</sup> Century
44HE0764	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric/Unknown
44HE0328	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A
44HE0890	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> century: 1 <sup>st</sup> half
44HE0929	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric/Unknown
44HE0930	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric/Unknown
44HE0702	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A
44HE0681	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> century: 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter
44HE0873	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter
44CC0021	Charles City	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Woodland
44NK0031	New Kent	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	17 <sup>th</sup> Century: 1 <sup>st</sup> Half
44NK0021	New Kent	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	18 <sup>th</sup> Century
44JC0018	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric
44JC0006	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric
44JC0003	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Woodland
44JC0272	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	Roughly 19 <sup>th</sup> Century
44JC1124	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	19 <sup>th</sup> Century
44YO0313	York	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	18 <sup>th</sup> Century
44YO0753	York	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A
44YO0751	York	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter
44YO0754	York	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	20 <sup>th</sup> Century
44YO0378	York	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	18 <sup>th</sup> Century
44YO0377	York	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	18 <sup>th</sup> Century
44YO0379	York	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A
44WB0014	Williamsburg	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	17 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter
44WB0015	Williamsburg	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	17 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter
44JC0300	James City	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A
44JC0059	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter
44JC1041	James City	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A
44JC1044	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 2 <sup>nd</sup> half
44JC0063	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	20 <sup>th</sup> Century
44NN0327	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter
44NN0326	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	19 <sup>th</sup> Century
44NN0062	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric/Unknown
44NN0037	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	N/A
44NN0081	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	18 <sup>th</sup> Century
44NN0309	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Late Woodland 17 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter
44NN0308	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Middle Woodland 17 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter

Source: VDHR DSS, September 2005







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During the cursory survey, 21 additional resources of potential historic significance were identified along the rail route. No in-depth research of these areas was conducted to provide an eligibility determination. More detailed evaluation of these areas may be warranted in the Tier II environmental analysis of the Preferred Alternative. These areas are identified in Table 3-40.

**Table 3-40: Areas of Potential Historic Significance along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

General Location	Description of Resource
City of Richmond; Dock Street and 26 <sup>th</sup> Street	Bascule lift bridge along south side of canal
City of Richmond; along north side of Dock Street	Converted warehouses to residential properties
City of Richmond; Orleans Street	Switch house
Henrico County; north of Cedar works	Rail yard
Henrico County; Bickerstaff Road	Air Reduction Sales Company AIRCO (now used as Central Virginia Concrete Corporation)
Henrico County; 1100 block of Bickerstaff Road	Three houses circa 1900
Henrico County; Miller Road	Farmhouse circa 1850
Charles City County; White Oak Swamp vicinity of Elko Road and CSXT tracks	Area part of Seven Days Battlefields (June 20-30, 1862)
New Kent County; Providence Forge	Town includes several elements that warrant investigation such as a 1920s tourist camp, freight building at railroad and Route 155, Courthouse and Route 155 old hotel
New Kent County; Webers and SR 1101 along Route 60	Country Store
New Kent County; Route 60 and Rockahock Road	Patsy's Diner
New Kent County; Allen Road and Rockahock Road	Hotel
James City County	Diascund Village circa 1850s, several structures adjacent to railroad dating to the late 19 <sup>th</sup> century
James City County; Berkley Town Road	Early 20 <sup>th</sup> century housing
City of Williamsburg; between Penniman Road and CSXT tracks	Odd area of open land, may indicate potential for archaeological site
York County; 609 Penniman Road	1920s house
James City County; Monument Drive (off of Penniman)	Collection of single family homes dating over 50 years; architectural style is Colonial Revival residential
York County; Along Penniman Road near intersection of Route 199	Four properties dating to the early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
York County; Along Route 199	Five houses
James City County; Between Howard and Jackson Street	Four early 20 <sup>th</sup> century houses
City of Newport News	Several old railroad depots that have been destroyed (archaeological potential)

Source: DMJM Harris windshield survey, September 2005

\*It has not been determined if these resources are included in the VDHR DSS. These findings only indicate areas that may merit further investigation and documentation. These resources should be further investigated during subsequent analysis.

**CSXT Railroad** - The project route would use the existing facilities now owned and operated by the CSXT Railroad, between the City of Richmond and the City of Newport News. This line is actively used by Amtrak to provide passenger rail service and also by CSXT for freight rail service.

**History** - The CSXT line was originally constructed between 1880 and 1882 by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company (C&O). The C&O traces its origins to the Louisa Railroad of Louisa County, Virginia, begun in 1836, and the James River & Kanawha Canal Company (1785). By 1850, the Louisa Railroad had been built east to Richmond and west to Charlottesville, and renamed the Virginia Central. The railroad kept extending its reach westward through the mountains of the Alleghany Plateau, and by the late 1850s almost completed the lines through to Charleston and the Kanawha River. However, the Civil War brought a halt to the expansion.

During the Civil War, the Virginia Central was one of the Confederacy's most important lines, carrying food from the Shenandoah region to Richmond, and transporting troops and supplies back and forth. By the end of the war, most of the railroad had been destroyed by the fighting.

After the war, the company rebounded, solicited outside support and successfully engaged Collis P. Huntington of New York to become involved in the project. Huntington was well known as one of the key participants involved in building the Central Pacific portion of the Transcontinental Railroad. He had a vision

of a railroad that would run from coast to coast under one management, and he saw the Virginia Central as a way to achieve that goal. He funded the construction efforts, and the line was rebuilt and completed westward to the Ohio River. The intent was to link the Tidewater coast of Virginia with the “Western Waters.” By 1873 the line was open and functioning to Hawks Nest, West Virginia.

Although the intent of the system was to link the east with Huntington’s Western and Mid-Western holdings, the line stopped at the Ohio River, where it linked with packet boats to transport the goods on the river. The mineral resources in the region were not fully accessible to the market yet, and when the financial panic of 1873 hit, the railroad also suffered and went into receivership in 1878. When reorganized, it was renamed the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company. After that time, coal resources began to be realized in the west and were shipped eastward. To reach the Virginia coast, in 1881 the Peninsula Subdivision was built from Richmond to the new city of Newport News, located in Hampton Roads, the east’s largest ice-free port.

Transportation of coal to Newport News, where it was loaded and transported to the Northeast, became a staple of the C&O’s business at this time. In the later 1880s this line, as well as much of the C&O system, was rebuilt with ballasted roadbed, enlarged and lined tunnels, steel bridges, heavier steel rails, and new, larger, railcars and locomotives. With coal coming from southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky, the fortunes of the company and the Peninsula line continued to rise.

The C&O continued to expand its regional scope by acquiring new branches and companies through the first half of the twentieth century, and even during the Great Depression when many other railroads were collapsing. During the 1930s, many lines were double tracked, bridges were rebuilt, rail was upgraded, roadbeds enhanced and other improvements were made.

During World War II, the C&O played a major role in transporting troops and materiel to the ports. The railroad transported tens of thousands of soldiers, equipment and armaments as the U.S. used the Hampton Roads Port of Embarkation as a principal departure point for the European Theater. The invasion of North Africa was staged and loaded here, using the C&O facilities at Hampton Roads.

The C&O continued to grow and prosper in the years following the war, bringing innovations and improvements that changed the face of rail engineering and travel during the 1950s and early 1960s. In 1963, the company affiliated with the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company, and under the leadership of Hays T. Watkins, the C&O, B&O and Western Maryland became the Chessie System, taking the name that had been used unofficially for many years. The Chessie System then merged with many other railroads of the southeast to form CSX.

The CSX line today, extending from Richmond to Hampton Roads, for the most part follows the same historic route as it was first planned in 1881. Historically, stations were built during the late 19th century at Providence Forge, Norge, Williamsburg, Lee Hall, Amoco, Hampton Roads Transfer, Old Point Junction and Newport News. Most of these locations had frame passenger stations, some combined with freight stations, and some had brick freight houses as well. The railroad was carried across the numerous streams and waterways along the Peninsula by a variety of bridges, both steel and concrete, most of which have likely been replaced over the years. Currently, the line still functions carrying freight and passengers between Richmond and Hampton Roads.

Based upon its continued use as a railroad since 1881, its location on or adjacent to its original route, and its historical importance tied to the transportation of coal to market, as well as the important transportation function it served as the major embarkation route and point during World War II and its association with an important individual, it is possible that the Peninsula Branch of the CSXT Railroad would be eligible for the NHRP. It may potentially meet Criterion A for its historical importance, Criterion B for its association with Colis Huntington, and potentially Criterion C, for its engineering and design features.

### **3.14.3.2 Southside/NS Route**

According to the VDHR DSS, a total of 59 architectural resources have previously been identified for the Southside/NS route. Of those, 10 are recommended eligible for listing or are listed on the NRHP, while the remaining 49 are either not recommended eligible for listing on the NRHP or the historic significance is undetermined. Seven archaeological sites were identified along the route. Table 3-41 summarizes the architectural resources previously identified as being recommended eligible or listed on the NRHP and Table 3-42 summarizes the archaeological resources. A complete list of all resources identified by the DSS for the Southside/NS route is provided in Appendix C of the Tier I Draft EIS. Figure 3-13 is a map of known historic

resources along the Southside/NS route. It should be noted that the figure does not include those resources for which historic significance is undetermined.

**Table 3-41: Architectural Resources Eligible or Listed in the National Register of Historic Places along the Southside/NS Route**

VDHR ID #	Property Name	Date	Location	County/City	Date Listed on the NRHP (if known)	Date Listed on the VA Landmarks Registry (if known)
091-5098	Norfolk & Petersburg Railroad	ca 1858	Parallel to Route 460 as it extends southeast to northwest across Isle of Wight, Southampton, Sussex and Prince George Counties.	Isle of Wight Southampton Sussex Prince George		
046-5101	Hobbs Property/6635 Windsor Blvd	1933	6635 Windsor Boulevard	Isle of Wight Zuni		
328-0001	Windsor Railroad Station/Windsor Depot/Norfolk and Western Railroad	1866	15 West Railroad Street	Isle of Wight Windsor		
133-5138	Joel E. Harrell and Sons/Smithfield Packing Company Plant No. 5	ca 1941	110 Virginia Ham Drive	Suffolk Magnolia		
133-0072	Suffolk Historic District and Expansions	Post 1742	Bank Street Market Street Clay Street Poplar Street N&W Railroad Tracks County Street Central Avenue Grayson Court Liberty Street Hill Street Pinner Street Chestnut Street North Street Pine Street W. Washington Street	Suffolk		
133-5040	West End Historic District and Boundary Expansion	1865	The West End neighborhood is roughly bounded by the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad to the north, the Norfolk and Western Railroad (N & W) to the south, Linden Avenue, Wellons Street and Pender Street to the east, and Brewer Street and Causey Avenue on the west.	Suffolk	1/16/04  Expansion Accepted: 11/27/04	
131-0055	South Norfolk Historic District	Post 1890	Northern end of the City of Chesapeake in the area generally known as South Norfolk	Chesapeake	1/27/89	12/2/87
131-5325	Sunray Agricultural (Rural) Historic District	1908	Biernot Road/I-64/Carlise Road/Compaz Road/Danberry Street/East Road/Hertz Road/Homestead Road/Old State Road/ Peach Avenue/Seldon Road/Sondej Avenue/Sunray Avenue/Truitt Road	Sunray Chesapeake	Listing Pending	3/19/03

VDHR ID #	Property Name	Date	Location	County/City	Date Listed on the NRHP (if known)	Date Listed on the VA Landmarks Registry (if known)
131-0389	House/604 Homestead	1923	604 Homestead Road	Sunray Chesapeake		
122-0590	Colonna's Shipyard	1920	400 Indian River Road	Norfolk		

Source: VDHR Data Sharing System, September 2005

**Table 3-42: Archaeological Resources Previously Identified along the Southside/NS Route**

VDHR ID #	City/County	Site Class	Cultural Designation	Temporal Designation
44PG0218	Prince George	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Late Woodland
44PG0142	Prince George	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> Century
44PG0309	Prince George	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	20 <sup>th</sup> Century
44PG0143	Prince George	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter
44PG0143	Prince George	Terrestrial, open air	Native American Indeterminate Indeterminate	Late Archaic 20 <sup>th</sup> Century 19 <sup>th</sup> Century
44SX0223	Sussex	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric/Unknown
44SX0320	Sussex	Terrestrial, open air	Historic	Unknown
44PM0050	Portsmouth	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Woodland

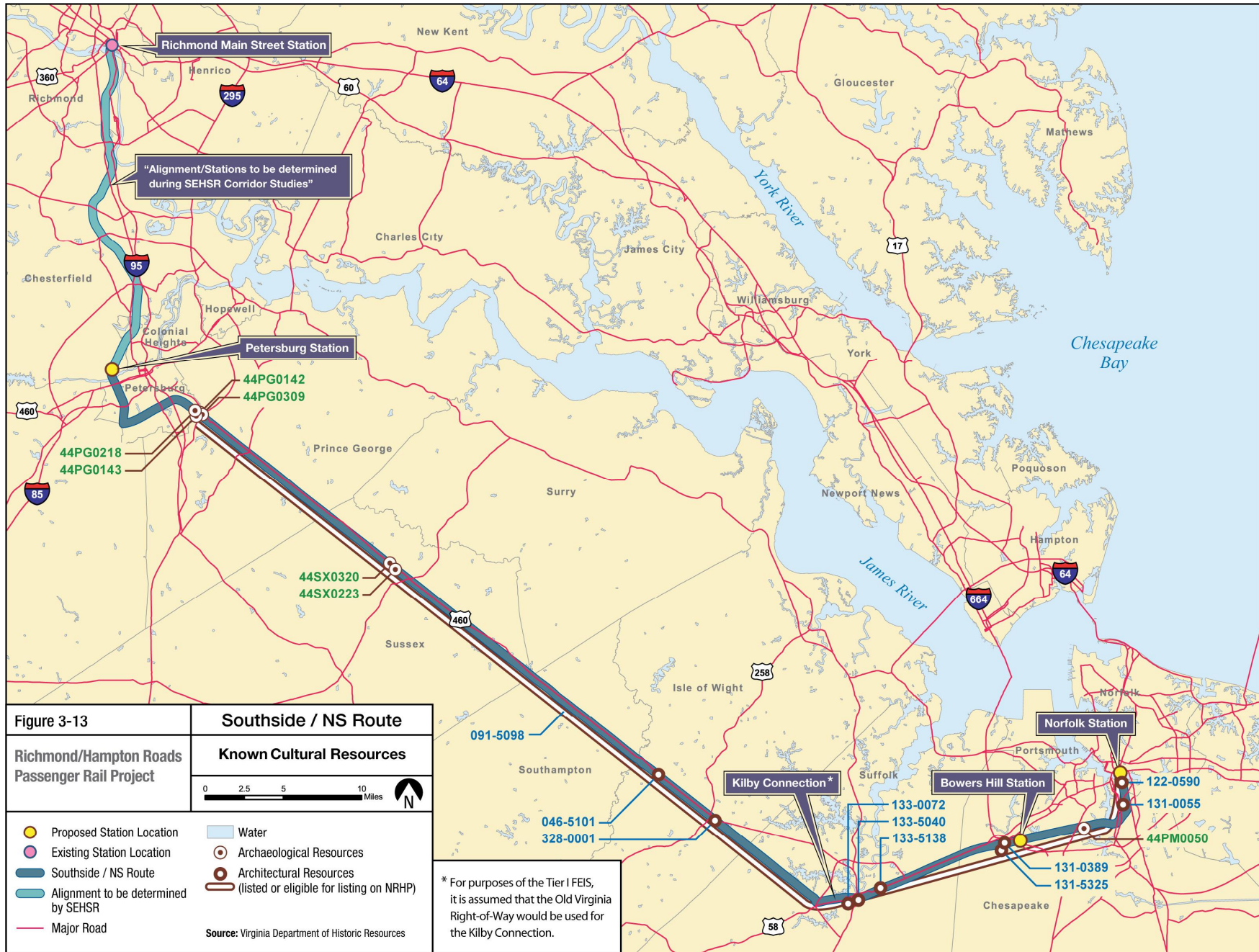
Source: VDHR Data Sharing System, September 2005

In addition to information provided by the VDHR DSS, information collected during the Route 460 Location Study<sup>49</sup> pertaining to the eligibility of the Norfolk Southern Railroad, formerly the Norfolk & Petersburg Railroad (VDHR #091-5098), was reviewed. The cultural resources component of the U.S. 460 Location Study was determined to be relevant to the Tier I Draft EIS as the study covered the geographic area of the Southside/NS route and contained sufficient detail regarding cultural resources to meet Tier I analysis needs. For these reasons, the Location Study was used in lieu of the more general windshield survey methodology that was used for the portion of the project along the Peninsula/CSXT route.

Results of the VDHR study and coordination with VDHR determined that the Norfolk Southern Railroad has the potential to warrant inclusion in the NRHP under Criterion A (association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history) for its association with the region's economic and transportation history (VHDR correspondence with VDOT February 22, 2005 and March 9, 2005 regarding Route 460 Location Study).

**The Virginian Railway** - A portion of the abandoned Virginian Railway would be utilized by the Southside/NS route between Kilby and the proposed Bowers Hill station. Since this portion of the rail line was abandoned in 1959 as a result of the Virginian's takeover by Norfolk & Western, the abandoned property is now owned by the cities of Suffolk and Chesapeake.

<sup>49</sup> Virginia Department of Transportation, 2004. Route 460 Location Study and Draft Environmental Impact Statement. On website at [www.route460ppta.org](http://www.route460ppta.org).



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**History** - The Virginian Railway was a Class I railroad located in Virginia and West Virginia. The line was created to transport coal from southern West Virginia to Hampton Roads. The railway was completed in 1909 by its founders William N. Page and Henry H. Rogers. The Virginian Railway was operated on the premise of "paying up front for the best." This, combined with all new infrastructure and no debt, allowed the railway to operate more efficiently than its larger competitors. This is considered to be an accomplishment like no other in the history of U.S. railroading. The Virginian Railway was able to do this because it used construction techniques that were not available when larger railroads had been built 25 years earlier. In addition, the work was funded using Henry Rogers' own personal fortune; therefore, there was no public debt. The railway soon became known as "The Richest Little Railroad in the World."

Part of this rail line played an important part in 20<sup>th</sup> century U.S. Naval history. During both World Wars, the Virginian Railway carried high quality coal from the mountains of West Virginia to Sewell's Point, where a major naval station and airbase existed. The base was established in 1917. Part of this establishment at Sewell's Point included a coal pier that supplied coal to naval ships and submarines during both World Wars.

During World War I, the United States Railroad Administration (USRA) took over the operation of railroads in the United States in hopes of creating a more efficient rail system that could better support the war effort. Under this initiative, the Virginian Railway was jointly operated with the Norfolk & Western Railway. After the war, railroads were returned to their rightful owners and competitive status. The Norfolk & Western maintained an interest in the Virginian Railway and made several attempts to acquire it. In the late 1950s, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) approved the Norfolk & Western and Virginian Railway merger. This merger also played a historical role in the era of major railroad mergers. It is said to be the merger that began the movement for railways to merge so that they could become more competitive against highways, air travel and other modes of transport.

### **3.14.4 Environmental Consequences**

#### **3.14.4.1 Status Quo Alternative**

Under the Status Quo Alternative, there would be no additional passenger rail service on the Peninsula/CSXT route. The existing passenger service of two round-trip trains per day would remain. The Southside/NS route would be continued for use by freight operations as planned by Norfolk Southern. No impacts to cultural resources associated with this alternative would occur.

#### **3.14.4.2 No Action Alternative**

Under the No Action Alternative, one additional passenger train would be added to the existing Peninsula service and would operate at a maximum speed of 79 mph. In total, there would be three daily round-trip trains operating between Richmond and Newport News. There would be no infrastructure improvements related to higher speed passenger rail and, therefore, no impacts to cultural resources are expected under the No Action Alternative.

#### **3.14.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)**

Cultural resources have been identified along both the Peninsula/CSXT and Southside/NS routes. No impacts on cultural resources are expected to occur along the Peninsula/CSXT route since the Amtrak service proposed (three daily round-trip trains) would not require major infrastructure improvements resulting in new rail right-of-way. Alternative 1 would provide higher speed passenger rail service (six daily round-trip trains) on the Southside/NS route. There is the potential to impact cultural resources along the Southside/NS route, given the proposed major infrastructure improvements and additional right-of-way required under this alternative. Additional right-of-way may be required for track expansion, the proposed rail connection at Kilby, and the two proposed stations at Bowers Hill and Downtown Norfolk. It is unlikely that any identified cultural resources along this route would be directly affected, but proximity effects to these resources may occur. Proximity effects may include altering the visual setting and increased noise and vibration due to increased train frequencies for resources within immediate vicinity of the proposed improvements.

Archaeological resources identified within the study area have less potential to be affected given that the majority of the study area has been disturbed over time. As the project progresses and the locations and footprints of improvements are better defined, archaeological resources known to exist within those limits would be investigated to determine if impacts will occur.



As discussed above, it is possible that the Peninsula Branch of the CSXT Railroad may be eligible for the NRHP. A detailed field survey and historical assessment would have to be conducted prior to any formal determination of eligibility being prepared for the railroad resource. These activities would be carried out during the subsequent analysis of any proposed federal undertaking involving the Peninsula/CSXT route. .

The NS rail line along the Southside/NS route also has the potential to be eligible for inclusion in the NRHP, as previously documented by the Route 460 Location Study. A final determination of eligibility for the rail line itself and potential effects would be necessary. This would include a determination of contributing and noncontributing resources, determination of a period of historic significance and the development of a boundary for the resource. DRPT will pursue these determinations with VDHR during Tier II documentation.

A portion of the abandoned Virginian Railway would be utilized by the Southside/NS route between Kilby and the proposed Bowers Hill station. More detailed study pertaining to the Virginian Railway is necessary in order to determine if it is potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP. The railway would need to be surveyed and evaluated according to National Register criteria during Tier II investigations.

Further evaluations and coordination with VDHR would be undertaken during the Tier II environmental analysis to determine actual impacts to resources identified and the eligibility of undetermined resources along the Peninsula/CSXT route and/or Southside/NS route. Early coordination with VDHR indicates that both of the proposed routes will likely have an effect on historic properties should major infrastructure improvements occur. VDHR recommends that the FRA and DRPT initiate the Section 106 review process early in the Tier II evaluation of the Preferred Alternative.

Two Native American tribes were identified within the vicinity of the study area. Efforts were made by DRPT and FRA to contact the tribes (Appendix C of the Tier I DEIS); however, no response from these tribes was received as of the date of this document. During subsequent analysis, additional outreach to these tribes will occur.

### **3.14.5 Potential Mitigation**

Since detailed impacts to specific cultural resources have not been determined, no mitigation measures are proposed at this time. As the project progresses and impacts are determined, appropriate mitigation measures will be coordinated with DRPT and VDHR. For any uses of historic properties, Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act will require a more detailed evaluation and determination of specific impacts and, if necessary, proposed mitigation strategies. Mitigation measures would be detailed in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the involved parties, which may include FRA, DRPT, ACHP, VDHR and others. The MOA might require context-sensitive design or rehabilitation of historic structures or sites to mitigate potential impacts.

### **3.14.6 Subsequent Analysis**

The level of resource identification and analysis undertaken for the Tier I Draft EIS is appropriate to use to compare the relative potential for impacts among the alternatives. During the Tier II analysis, compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, will be completed. The subsequent analysis required for project environmental documentation would focus on project-specific impacts that reflect more precise definitions of the right-of-way, the proposed station locations and operations. Areas of further study would include the following:

- Further evaluations and coordination with VDHR to determine actual impacts to resources identified and the eligibility of undetermined resources along the Preferred Alternative.
- Formally determine the NRHP eligibility for the Preferred Alternative and potential effects. The railway(s) would need to be surveyed and evaluated according to NRHP criteria. This would include a determination of contributing and noncontributing resources, a period of significance and the development of a boundary for the resource.
- Two Indian tribes were identified within the vicinity of the study area. DRPT and FRA contacted the tribes by written letter; however, no response from these tribes was received as of the date of this document. During subsequent analysis, additional outreach to these tribes will occur.
- Develop appropriate mitigation measures for any unavoidable impacts to historic properties.

## 3.15 Geologic Resources

This section describes the existing geologic conditions, including topography, soils and mineral resources within the study area. It also provides a discussion of the potential impacts to these resources by the alternatives under consideration for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project.

### 3.15.1 Methodology

Research was the principal method used to gather information about the geologic resources within the study area. Geology and topography was obtained from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) maps and atlases. Soil and prime farmland data were compiled from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Data and information related to mineral resources was obtained from the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy, as well as the USGS. Additional information was obtained from websites, local and regional plans, and personal communications with representatives from various federal, state and local agencies.

### 3.15.2 Regulatory Requirements

Laws regarding sole source aquifers and prime farmlands are pertinent to defining geological resources. The Sole Source Aquifer Protection Program is authorized by the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 (SDWA). The SDWA was originally passed to protect public health by regulating the nation's public drinking water supply. It was amended in 1986 and 1996, and requires many actions to protect drinking water and its sources—rivers, lakes, reservoirs, springs and groundwater. Aquifers are designated as "Sole Source" to protect drinking water supplies in areas with few or no alternative sources of potable water.

The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy administers the laws for the rights of owners of land adjacent to Mineral Mines (Code of Virginia, Title 45). The laws mostly pertain to mine safety.

### 3.15.3 Affected Environment

#### 3.15.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

**Geology** - The western portion of Richmond lies within the Piedmont Province. The rest of the Peninsula/CSXT route lies within the Coastal Plain Physiographic Province, which extends from New Jersey to Florida and includes all of Virginia east of the Fall Line. The Fall Line is the easternmost extent of Rocky River rapids, the point at which east-flowing rivers cross from the hard igneous and metamorphic rocks of the Piedmont to the Coastal Plain. The Coastal Plain is underlain with Pliocene and Miocene sedimentary rocks that dip gently eastward. These rocks are made up of relatively soft, unconsolidated layers of Cretaceous and younger clay, sand and gravel. At the northern end of the City of Williamsburg, the study area crosses a band of Middle Eocene through Paleocene sedimentary rocks. The closest sole source aquifer to the study area is the Columbia and Yorktown-Eastover Multi-aquifer System, which underlies the Virginia portion of the Delmarva Peninsula.

**Topography** - As discussed in the Geology Section above, only a small portion of the Peninsula/CSXT route is located within the Piedmont Province. A large portion of the study area lies within the Coastal Plain Province. The topography within the Coastal Plain is mainly flat with gently rolling hills. As the Coastal Plain advances towards the east, the elevation gradually decreases.

As the Piedmont Province transitions into the Coastal Plain, the elevation in the study area decreases. The elevation in the Peninsula/CSXT route within Richmond is approximately 60 feet above sea level, which increases to approximately 150 feet above sea level in western Henrico County and then drops to approximately 80 feet above sea level in the eastern portion of Henrico County. The elevation varies between 10 feet and 30 feet above sea level as it parallels the Chickahominy River within New Kent County and then rises to 30 to 40 feet above sea level in northern James City County. Within Newport News City, the elevation gradually decreases to approximately 20 feet above sea level at the eastern terminus of the study area.

**Soils** - A majority of the soil types in the Peninsula/CSXT route have low shrink-swell potential<sup>50</sup> and are well suited for rail transportation. Two soils in the Piedmont are the Cecil and Iredell soil series, which have a moderate and very high shrink-swell potential, respectively. Common soils in Virginia's Coastal Plain that have high shrink-swell potential are the Ackwater, Bohicket, Chickahominy, Craven and Peawick soil types. Generally, the soils on steep slopes are subject to erosion. The Caroline soil is an example of a soil type that has a relatively high erosion factor that indicates soil susceptibility to sheet and rill erosion by water. The most common soil types in the study area are discussed below.

Much of the soil in the portion of the study area located in Richmond is made up of urban land soil due to development within the city. Within Henrico County, urban land and gravel pit soils are common; however, Kinston, Mantachie and Atlee soil types make up the greatest percentages of soil in the study area. Within Charles City and New Kent Counties, Altavista, Roanoke, Nawney and Tomotley soils occur most frequently in the study area. The most common soils from Richmond through New Kent County are not highly erodible.

According to the soil survey of James City and York Counties and the City of Williamsburg, Virginia, the majority of the study area within James City County lies within the Kempsville-Emporia-Suffolk and Slagle-Emporia-Uchee general soils. These soils are deep, well-drained, dominantly loamy or clayey, and gently sloping to very steep. Urban Land and the Udorthents-Dumps complex make up a large percentage of the soils in the portion of the study area located within the City of Newport News. These areas have been disturbed by excavation and grading.

**Mineral Resources** - The Commonwealth of Virginia produces more than 30 different mineral resources at a combined annual value of nearly \$2 billion. Virginia is within the top ten coal and crushed stone producing states. Gold, copper, arsenic, manganese, iron and many other minerals have been mined in the state. Sand, clay, limestone, granite, slate, mineral sands, vermiculite and kyanite are examples of minerals currently mined.

Active and inactive mine location information was obtained from the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy, Division of Mineral Mining in a Year 2005 data layer. The center points of mine locations were identified in relation to the Peninsula/CSXT route. Mines within a buffer area of 300 feet from the centerline of the study area have a potential for impacts from project implementation. No active mines were identified within the study area. However as summarized in Table 3-43, five inactive mines were identified. The table contains the county locations of the mines and the distance of the mines' center points from the centerline of the route.

**Table 3-43: Inactive Mines Adjacent to the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

Location	Mineral(s)/ Type of Mine	Distance to the Proposed Alignment (feet)
Newport News (City), near intersection of Fort Eustis Boulevard/Jefferson Avenue	sand/pit	271
New Kent, near Route 60 and Old Telegraph Road	sand & gravel/pit	163
Henrico, 37 <sup>th</sup> Street, off of Route 5	sand & gravel/pit	102
Henrico, 37 <sup>th</sup> Street, off of Route 5	sand & gravel/pit	134
Henrico, near intersection of Darbytown Road/Fergus Boulevard	sand & gravel/pit	225

Source: Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy, Division of Mineral Mining

### 3.15.3.2 Southside/NS Route

**Geology** - The majority of the Southside/NS route lies within the Atlantic Coastal Plain Physiographic Province, with the western most portion of Richmond lying within the Piedmont Province. The Coastal Plain is underlain with Pliocene and Miocene sedimentary rocks, which are relatively soft, unconsolidated layers of Cretaceous and younger clay, sand and gravel.

**Topography** - As discussed in the Geology Section above, only a small portion of the Peninsula/CSXT portion of the study area is located within the Piedmont Province. A majority of the study area lies within the

<sup>50</sup> Shrink-swell potential, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, refers to the shrinking of soils when dry, and the swelling when wet. Shrinking and swelling can damage roads, dams, building foundations and other structures.

Coastal Plain Province. The topography within the Coastal Plain is mainly flat with gently rolling hills. As the Coastal Plain advances towards the east, the elevation gradually decreases.

Within Richmond, north of the James River, the elevation is approximately 60 feet above sea level. The elevation rises to between 100 and 140 feet above sea level within Chesterfield County. Near the City of Petersburg, the elevation varies from 60 feet above sea level north of the city to 140 feet above sea level east of the city. Through Prince George and Sussex Counties the elevation varies between 70 and 130 feet above sea level. The elevation decreases toward the east to approximately 70 feet above sea level in northern Southampton County and dips to 10 feet above sea level within the floodplain of the Blackwater River. The elevation varies between 50 and 75 feet above sea level in Isle of Wight County and the City of Suffolk. Near the City of Chesapeake, the Great Dismal Swamp is relatively flat with a few ridges at approximately 20 feet above sea level. At the terminus of the Southside/NS route near the mouth of the James River, the elevation is approximately ten feet above sea level.

**Soils** - Overall, a majority of the soils along the Southside/NS route have low shrink-swell potential and are well suited for rail transportation. Within the Piedmont Province, Cecil and Iredell soil types have a moderate and very high shrink-swell potential, respectively. Common soils in Virginia's Coastal Plain that have high shrink-swell potential are the Ackwater, Bohicket, Chickahominy, Craven, Levy and Peawick soil types. Generally, soils on steep slopes are subject to erosion. The Montrose soil is an example of a soil type that has a relatively high erosion factor that indicates soil susceptibility to sheet and rill erosion by water. The most common soil types in the study area are discussed below.

Most of the study area within Prince George and Southampton Counties lies adjacent to Slagle and Emporia soil types. These soils are deep and moderately well drained, formed in fluvial and marine sediments on uplands. If these soils are on a slope higher than two percent, they have a potential to be highly erodible land.

Within Isle of Wight County, Myatt and Slagle soil types are the most common in the study area. These soils are made up of fine sandy loam and are not highly erodible unless the Slagle soil slope has a percentage greater than two percent.

Loamy Udorthents, which is potentially highly erodible land, is the most common type of soil in the Southside/NS route within the City of Suffolk. Sandy and loamy soils such as Eunola, Torhunata and Rains are also common in the study area within the City of Suffolk. Within the City of Chesapeake, the Udorthents-urban land complex and Tomotley soil types are the most common in the study area. These soils are not highly erodible.

**Mineral Resources** - The Commonwealth of Virginia has over 400 different minerals within its borders. More than 30 different mineral resources are produced in Virginia, at a combined annual value of nearly \$2 billion. Virginia is within the top ten coal and crushed stone producing states. Gold, copper, arsenic, manganese, iron, and many other minerals have all been mined in Virginia. Sand, clay, limestone, granite, slate, mineral sands, vermiculite and kyanite are examples of minerals currently mined.

Active and inactive mine locations were obtained from the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy, Division of Mineral Mining in a Year 2005 data layer. The center points of mine locations were identified in relation to the Southside/NS route. Mines within a buffer study area of 300 feet from the centerline of the route have a higher potential for impacts from project implementation. No active mines were identified within the study boundaries. As summarized in Table 3-44, three inactive mines were identified within approximately 300 feet of each side of the centerline of the Southside/NS route. The table contains the locations of the mines and the distance of the mines' center points from the centerline of the Southside/NS route. Due to the potential margin of error, the center point of the inactive mine that is approximately 315 feet from the centerline of the study area was included in the table.

**Table 3-44: Inactive Mines Adjacent to the Southside/NS Route**

Location	Mineral(s)/Type of Mine	Distance to Proposed Alignment (feet)
Richmond (City), off of Trenton Avenue	clay/pit	228
Suffolk (City), near intersection of Indian Trail Road/Lake Cohoon Road	sand & gravel/pit	315
Suffolk (City), near intersection of Indian Trail Road/NS rail line	sand & gravel/pit	200

Sources: Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy, Division of Mineral Mining; Google Maps

### 3.15.4 Environmental Consequences

#### 3.15.4.1 Status Quo Alternative

Under the Status Quo Alternative, all passenger rail service conditions would remain the same. There would continue to be two daily round-trip trains along the Peninsula/CSXT route operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph. No physical or operational rail improvements would be made, other than routine maintenance. There would be no impacts on geologic features, topography, soils or mineral resources associated with the Status Quo Alternative.

#### 3.15.4.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative includes only planned improvements to the existing transportation network and 2004 committed highway, rail, and airport improvement projects. Specifically, the No Action Alternative includes the addition of one daily round-trip passenger rail train along the Peninsula/CSXT route. Under the No Action Alternative, there would be a total of three daily round-trip trains operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph between Newport News and Richmond. There would be no passenger rail service provided on the Southside/NS route. There would be no infrastructure improvements related to higher speed passenger rail and, therefore, no impacts on geologic resources are expected under the No Action Alternative.

#### 3.15.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)

As part of the Preferred Alternative, no upgrades to the Peninsula/CSXT route would be required that would extend beyond existing rail right-of-way. Parking at the existing Main Street Station in Richmond may be augmented and it is unknown at this point if that would require additional right-of-way. No physical impacts on the existing geologic features, topography, soils and mineral resources would occur along the Peninsula/CSXT route.

Upgrades to the existing Southside/NS route track would be required in order to accommodate higher speed passenger rail service. Currently only freight rail operates along this line. New stations with parking facilities would be provided at Bowers Hill and Downtown Norfolk. Upgrades would also include a new rail connection in the vicinity of Kilby. Impacts would be minimal to geologic features, topography and soils. Construction related impacts may occur associated with grading, earth removal, grade crossing separations and construction of new embankments or altering existing embankments at bridge approaches. No expansive excavation is anticipated. Geotechnical investigations and subsurface studies would be conducted prior to any construction activities to assess site-specific soil characteristics.

No active mines were identified along the Peninsula/CSXT or Southside/NS routes. However, several inactive mines were identified. While it is unlikely that impacts to these mines would occur, agency coordination with the Virginia Department of Mines, Mineral, and Energy, Division of Mineral Mining, the EPA, and other federal, state, and local agencies would be conducted during subsequent analysis to ensure that no impacts to these mines would occur and to identify any potential safety hazards associated with these mines.

### 3.15.5 Potential Mitigation Strategies

Potential impacts resulting from construction would be mitigated through the use of best management practices. In accordance with local requirements, erosion and sediment control plans would be prepared and implemented.

### 3.15.6 Subsequent Analysis

Subsequent analysis for the selected alternative would likely include:

- Subsurface testing to determine underlying geologic and soil conditions; and
- Additional coordination with the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy, Division of Mineral Mining to ascertain potential safety hazards of identified mines.

### 3.16 Hydrologic and Water Resources

This section describes water resources to include surface waters, water quality, wetlands, floodplains, floodways and coastal zones within the study area. It also provides a preliminary assessment of potential effects to these resources.

During the comment period of the Tier I Draft EIS, comments were received from agencies, interested parties and the public on the potential for wetland impacts. All expressed concern over the reported acreage of potential wetland impacts. It should be noted that the information provided as part of this Tier I EIS relied on readily available information. As such, the information provided on potential wetland impacts is an overly conservative estimate of potential impacts. The information presented includes all previously identified wetlands within the potential impact area. It is not expected that all wetland acreages noted would be affected as most improvements would likely occur within existing right-of-way. As documented by the Tier I Draft EIS, impacts would likely be isolated to areas where additional right-of-way may be required to accommodate sidings for passing trains and proposed stations. The Tier II analysis will identify wetland impacts more accurately for the Preferred Alternative and coordinate closely with the overseeing regulatory agencies.

#### 3.16.1 Methodology

Surface waters, wetlands and floodplains were identified using Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping of the study area. Jurisdictional wetlands contained within the study area were estimated based on review of National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps, which were quantified using GIS. NWI mapping was established to generate information about the characteristics, extent and status of the nation's wetlands and deepwater habitats. Wetland delineations will be conducted for the Preferred Alternative using the three-parameter approach as prescribed in the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory, 1987). This wetland delineation will be included in a request for Jurisdictional Determination (JD) from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The JD confirms the Corps concurrence with the wetland delineation. The wetland delineation methodology would include analysis of three parameters: hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils and hydrology indicators. No field surveys to confirm the NWI wetland data were conducted for the Tier I Draft EIS wetland investigation. Field investigations and jurisdictional wetland delineations will be conducted as required during the subsequent environmental analysis for the Preferred Alternative.

Floodplains were identified using Q3 Flood Data obtained from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Q3 Flood Data is a digital representation of certain features of FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Map mapping product, intended for use with desktop mapping and GIS technology. Study areas vary depending upon the proposed improvements (e.g., rail stations) being evaluated. The study area for surface waters, wetlands, floodplains and floodways is 300 feet from each side of the existing route centerline. For areas surrounding existing and proposed rail stations and parking facilities, the study area is evaluated within a 500-foot radius.

The Virginia Coastal Program was reviewed to determine those jurisdictions within the study area that are included in Virginia's Coastal Zone. For portions of the study area that are included in the coastal zone, a Federal Consistency Determination will be required.

Precise locations and exact sizes of proposed stations and parking areas are not yet known and will be further evaluated at a later date. Impacts to natural resources are qualitatively discussed but have not been quantified for the Tier I Draft EIS. In addition, regulatory permits and approvals that may be necessary for the proposed routes were identified and are described herein.

### 3.16.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

The FRA's Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts (Sections 14(n)(2), (5), (6), and (9)) require consideration of environmental impacts of an action in an EIS, including potential effects on water quality, wetlands, waterways and floodplains in the context of federal, state and local regulations .

When evaluating water quality, Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act requires that the Commonwealth of Virginia provide a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Priority List to the EPA. This list, contained in the 303(d) Report on Impaired Waters in Virginia, is a compilation of waters in the state that do not meet water quality standards. Most impaired waters require the development of TMDLs. A TMDL is the total amount of a pollutant that a water body may receive from all sources without exceeding water quality standards. Impaired bodies of water within the Southside/NS route and the Peninsula/CSXT route study area were evaluated.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, as well as the Virginia Water Protection Permit Program, requires authorization for activities which include placement of dredge and fill material and/or mechanized land clearing, ditching, draining, channelization or other excavation activities into the waters of the United States, including wetlands adjacent to those waters. In Virginia, both the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have jurisdiction over wetland impacts.

Impacts to floodplains were evaluated pursuant to Executive Order 11988, *Floodplains Management*, which prohibits floodplain encroachments that are uneconomic, hazardous or result in incompatible uses of the floodplain; as well as any action which would cause a critical interruption of an emergency transportation facility, a substantial flood risk or adverse impact to the floodplain's natural resource values.

Coastal zones are protected and managed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as reauthorized in 1990 (CZMA). The CZMA provides legislation to "preserve, protect, develop, and where possible, restore and enhance the resources of the nation's coastal zone for this and succeeding generations." The act also encourages and assists states to protect the natural resources, such as wetlands, floodplains, estuaries, beaches, dunes barriers, fish and wildlife and their habitats, within the coastal zone. In 1986, the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Area was established to protect and manage Virginia's Coastal Zone.

A federally approved Coastal Program authorizes a state to require federal action within a coastal zone to be consistent with the state's Coastal Program laws and enforceable policies. Since Virginia has a federally approved Coastal Program, federal activities within the Coastal Zone require a Federal Consistency Determination. VDEQ is responsible for the Federal Consistency Determination review and approval.

### 3.16.3 Affected Environment

#### 3.16.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

**Surface Waters** - Surface water resources in the study area include tidal and non-tidal wetlands, rivers, streams, lakes and ponds. These surface waters are divided between the James River Basin and the York River Basin. The Peninsula/CSXT route closely follows the boundary of the James and York River Basins with most of the study area within the James River Basin. Figure 3-14 is a map of surface waters and floodplains along the Peninsula/CSXT route.

**James River Basin** - The James River Basin is located in the central portion of Virginia and is approximately 10,206 square miles, making it the largest river basin in Virginia. The James River Basin drains approximately one-fourth of the state's water resources. Over 65 percent of the basin is forested, approximately 19 percent is cropland and pasture, and approximately 12 percent is urban. Major tributaries to the James River are Craig Creek and Willis Creek, as well as the following rivers: Jackson, Cowpasture, Maury, Tye, Rockfish, Slate, Rivanna, Appomattox, Chickahominy, Pagan, Nansemond and Elizabeth. Surface waters within the James River Basin ultimately discharge to the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia.

**York River Basin** - The York River Basin lies in the central and eastern portions of Virginia and is approximately 2,662 square miles. Approximately 65 percent of the land area is forested, approximately 20 percent is farmland and pasture and approximately 10 percent is urban. Major tributaries include the Pamunkey and Mattaponi Rivers. Surface Waters within this river basin ultimately discharge to the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia.

It should be noted that there are no rivers within Virginia classified as Wild and Scenic Rivers by the National Park Service. However, several sections of the Chickahominy River along the Peninsula/CSXT route within

Charles City County and New Kent County are considered worthy of inclusion by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**Water Quality** - Primary factors that influence pollutant loading on water quality include the type, size and biological diversity of the receiving bodies of water, potential for dispersion, size of the catchment area, and relative effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures such as total suspended solids (TSS) removal and suspended detention time for removal of other pollutants. At this level of analysis, impairment of smaller study area bodies of water was not determined. Evaluation of these bodies of water can be conducted at a later date, as necessary, to determine if impairments exist in these smaller bodies of water.

As set forth in the Final 2006 305(b)/303(d) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report<sup>51</sup>, named surface waters which are classified as impaired within the Peninsula/CSXT route area include the James River, Chickahominy River and Diascund Creek. Some common causes of impairments in these waters include fecal coliform, PCBs found in fish tissue, pH and low dissolved oxygen.

**Wetlands** - Wetland systems within the study area include Lacustrine Limnetic (L1), Lacustrine Littoral (L2), Palustrine Aquatic Bed (PAB), Palustrine Emergent (PEM), Palustrine Forested (PFO), Palustrine Scrub-Shrub (PSS), Palustrine Unconsolidated Bottom (PUB) and Riverine Lower Perennial (R2). Palustrine Unconsolidated Shore (PUS), Riverine Tidal (R1), and Riverine Lower Perennial (R2). Palustrine wetlands are freshwater systems which may contain forest, emergent or scrub-shrub vegetation. Lacustrine wetlands are open water and deepwater systems. Riverine wetlands consist of persistently or periodically moving water contained within a channel or ditch, and Estuarine wetlands are brackish. PFO are the most abundant wetlands within the study area. A total of 99 wetland systems are crossed by, or are immediately adjacent to the existing Peninsula/CSXT route. Within the rail route, wetlands range in size from less than one-half acre to greater than 150 acres. As shown in Table 3-45, the Peninsula/CSXT route area contains approximately 600 acres of wetlands. Most of these are within Henrico County (252 acres), while no wetlands are contained within York County. There are no wetlands within a 500-foot radius of the existing rail station at Newport News. Figure 3-15 is a map of the wetland areas along the Peninsula/CSXT route.

**Floodplains and Floodways** - In cooperation with state and local governments, FEMA has developed flood boundary and flood insurance mapping. Since not all local governments within the study area participate in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), floodplain information was not available for all localities within the study areas.

The NFIP defines a floodplain as any land area susceptible to being inundated by water. The floodplain includes both the floodway and the floodway fringe. The floodway is defined as the channel of the stream and adjacent floodplain area that should be kept free of any encroachment so that a 100-year flood event may occur without increasing the level and extent of base flood elevations. The base, or 100-year flood, is defined as an event that is equaled or exceeded, on average, once every hundred years. The floodway fringe, or the 100-year floodplain, is the area between the floodway boundary and the outer limits of the 100-year floodplain boundary.

**Table 3-45: Peninsula/CSXT Route-- Total Wetland Acreage by Locality**

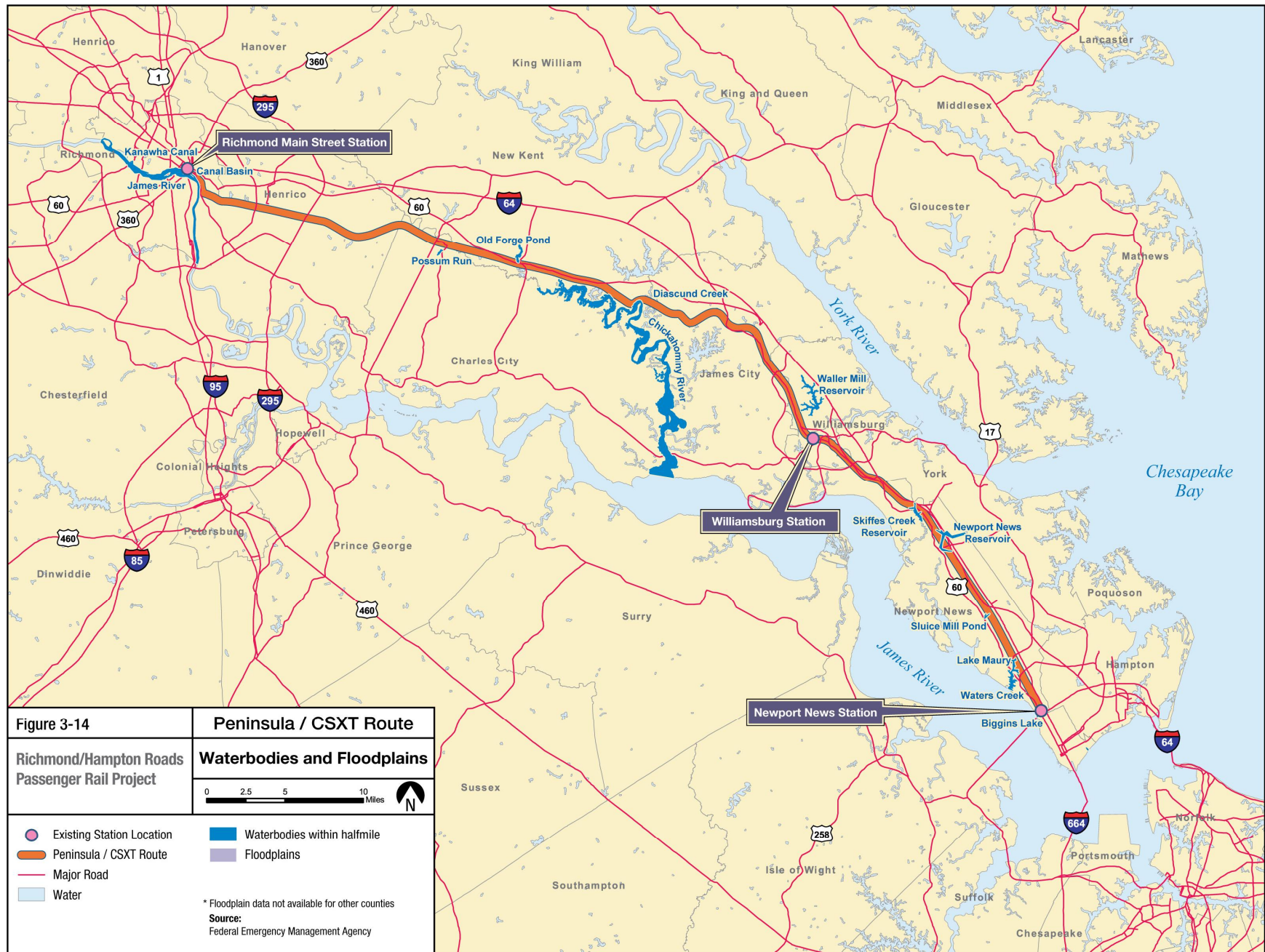
Location	Approximate Total Acreage of Wetlands Within Study Area*
Richmond	29
Henrico	252
Charles City	89
New Kent	136
James City	55
York	0
Williamsburg	0
Newport News	40
Total Acres	601

\*The approximate total acreage is based on wetland areas identified within the 300-foot boundary on either side of the centerline and within a 500-foot area around proposed station locations.

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/wqa/ir2006.html>

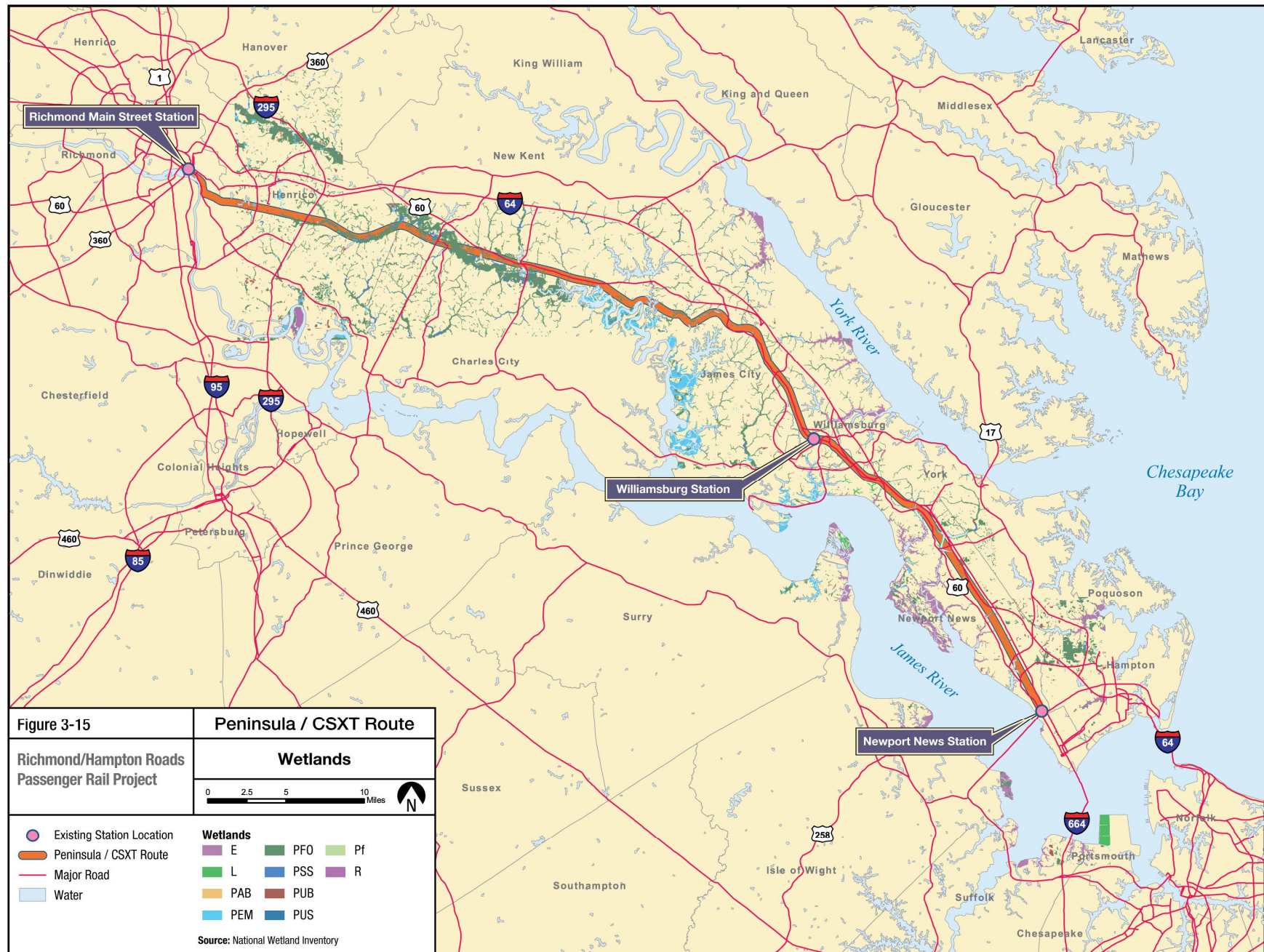


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Along the Peninsula/CSXT route, FEMA floodplain mapping was not available for the following counties and cities: Richmond, Henrico, Charles City, New Kent, James City and York. The 100-year floodplain is generally found adjacent to or near major surface waters and smaller tributaries. These include Skiffes Creek Reservoir, Newport News Reservoir, Stony Run, Lukas Creek, Sluice Mill Pond and Lake Maury. Based on GIS mapping, the existing Peninsula/CSXT route is located within the 100-year floodplain boundaries of all of the aforementioned bodies of water.

**Coastal Zone Management** - According to the VDEQ Virginia Coastal Program, the following cities, and counties are located within the coastal resource management area on the Peninsula/CSXT route:

- Cities
  - Richmond
  - Williamsburg
  - Newport News
- Counties
  - Henrico
  - New Kent
  - Charles City
  - James City
  - York County

### 3.16.3.2 Southside/NS Route

**Surface Waters** - Surface water resources in the study area include tidal and non-tidal wetlands, rivers, streams, lakes and ponds. Surface waters in the study area are either part of the James River Basin or the Chowan River Basin. Along the study area, areas located within the Chowan River Basin are situated approximately between Petersburg and Suffolk/Chesapeake, while the remaining route is in the James River Basin. Each of these basins is discussed below. Figure 3-16 is a map of surface waters and floodplains along the Southside/NS route.

**James River Basin** - The James River Basin is located in the central portion of Virginia and is approximately 10,206 square miles, making it the largest river basin in Virginia. The James River Basin drains approximately one-fourth of the state's water resources. Over 65 percent of the basin is forested, approximately 19 percent is cropland and pasture, and approximately 12 percent is urban. Major tributaries to the James River are Craig Creek and Willis Creek, as well as the following rivers: Jackson, Cowpasture, Maury, Tye, Rockfish, Slate, Rivanna, Appomattox, Chickahominy, Pagan, Nansemond and Elizabeth. Surface waters within the James River Basin ultimately discharge to the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia.

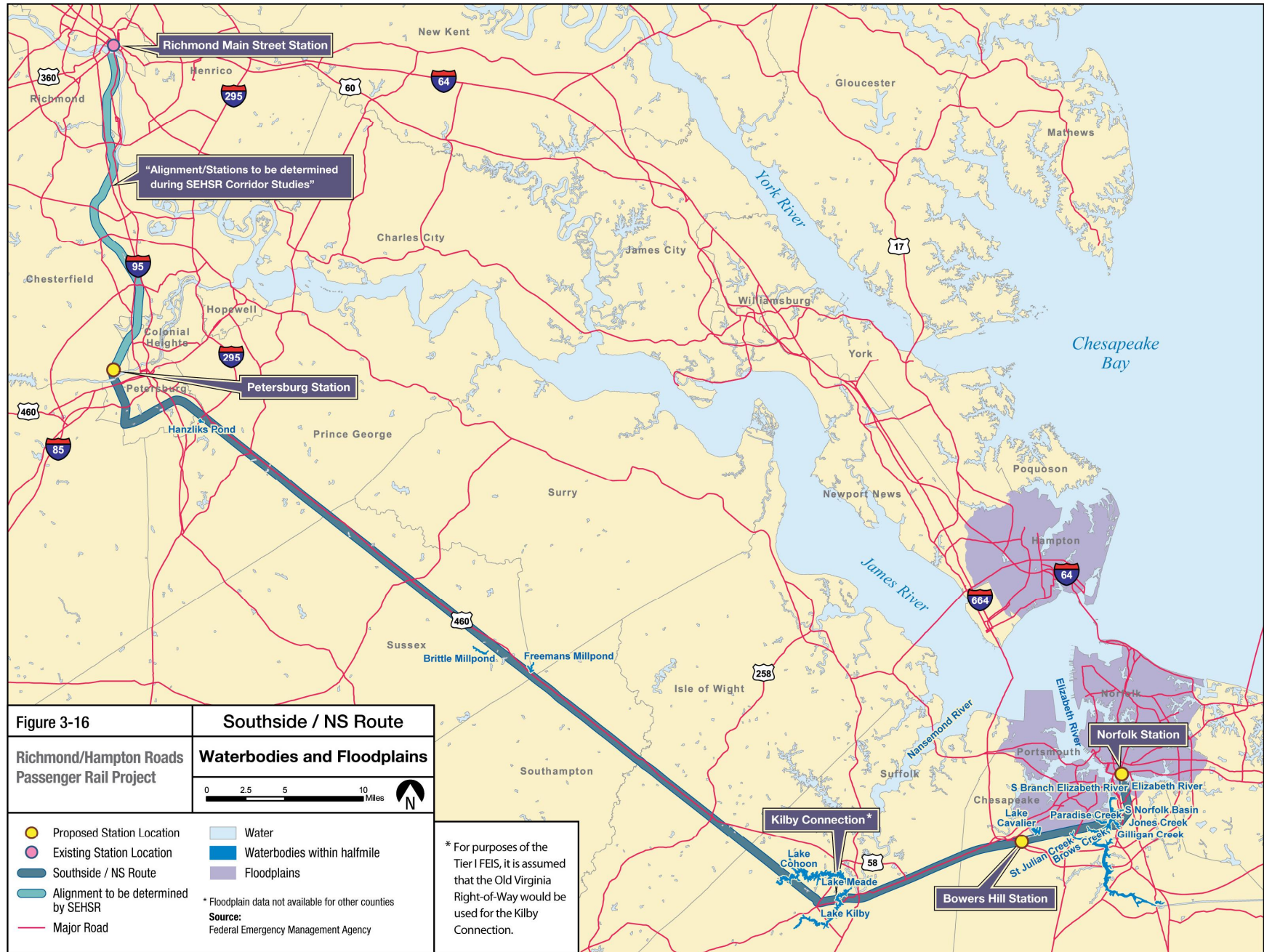
**Chowan River Basin** - The Chowan River Basin is located in the southeastern portion of Virginia and is approximately 4,061 square miles. This basin is mostly rural with approximately 64 percent of its land covered by forest. Cropland and pasture comprise approximately 28 percent of the basin, while approximately 6 percent is classified as urban. Major tributaries include the Nottaway, Meherrin and Blackwater Rivers. Surface waters within the Chowan River Basin ultimately discharge to the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina.

There are no rivers within Virginia classified as Wild and Scenic Rivers by the National Park Service. However, the General Assembly of Virginia added the Blackwater River in Isle of White and Southampton Counties and the Cities of Franklin and Suffolk from Proctor's Bridge at Route 621 to its confluence with the Nottaway River at the North Carolina line as a component of the Virginia Scenic Rivers System. The Southside/NS Route crosses the Blackwater River in the vicinity of Zuni, Virginia.

**Water Quality** - Primary factors that influence pollutant loading on water quality include the type, size, and biological diversity of the receiving bodies of water, potential for dispersion, size of the catchment area, and relative effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures such as total suspended solids (TSS) removal and suspended detention time for removal of other pollutants. At this level of analysis, impairment of smaller study area bodies of water was not determined. Evaluation of these bodies of water can be conducted at a later date, as necessary, to determine if impairments exist in these smaller bodies of water.

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As set forth in the 2006 Virginia Water Quality Assessment 305(b)/303(d) Integrated Report (Integrated Report) (VDEQ, 2004), named surface waters which are classified as impaired were evaluated within the study area. Out of the ten named bodies of water in the study area, four are designated as impaired, including the Blackwater River, the Eastern and Southern Branches of the Elizabeth River and St. Julian Creek. Some common causes of impairment in these waters include fecal coliform, exceeded general benthic standards, tributyltin and low dissolved oxygen.

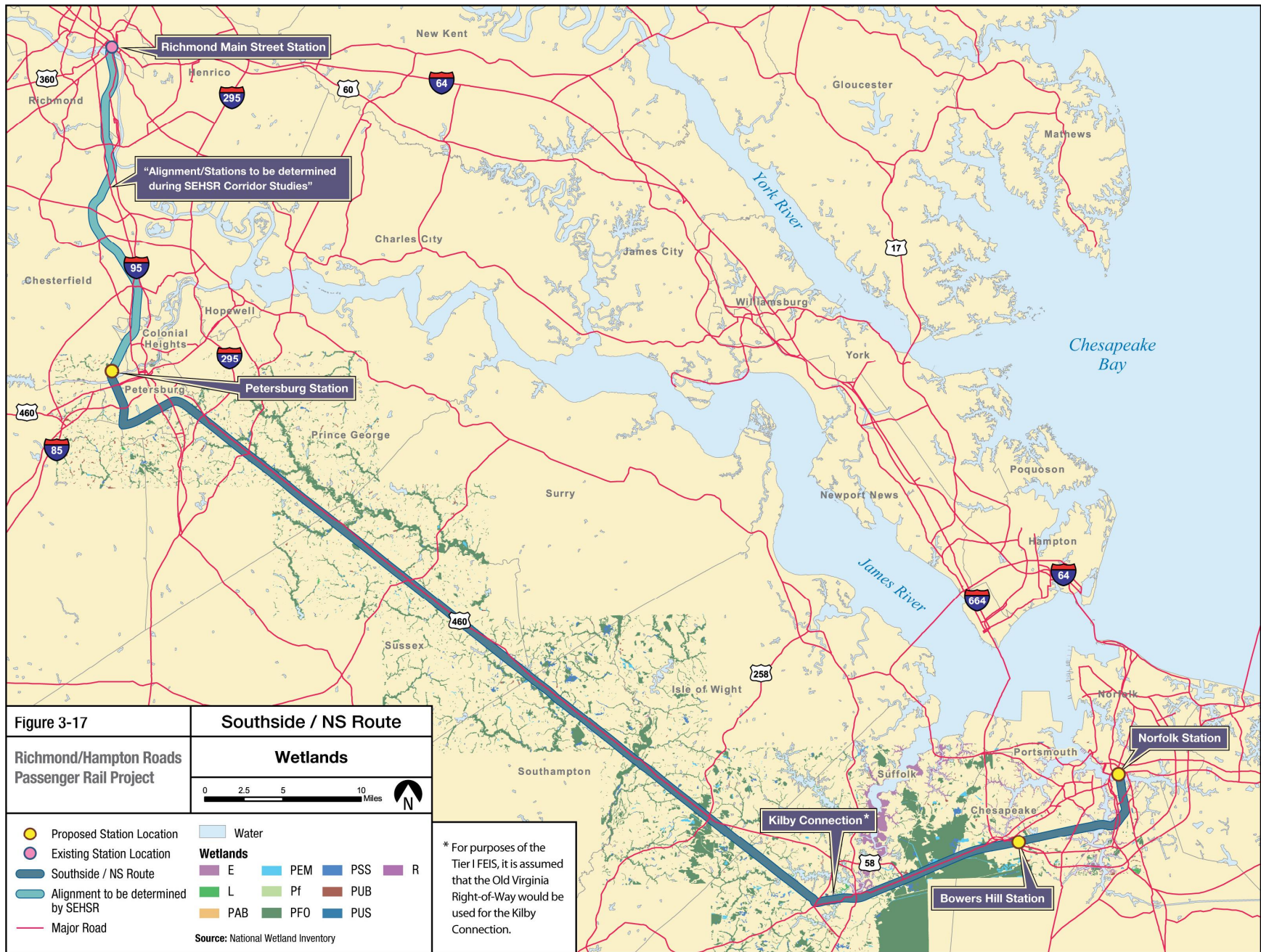
**Wetlands** - Wetland systems within the study area, as classified by the National Wetlands Inventory, include Estuarine Subtidal (E1), Estuarine Intertidal (E2), Lacustrine Limnetic (L1), Palustrine Emergent (PEM), Palustrine Forested (PFO), Palustrine Scrub-Shrub (PSS), Palustrine Unconsolidated Bottom (PUB), Palustrine Farmed (Pf), and Riverine Lower Perennial (R2). Palustrine wetlands are freshwater systems which may contain forest, emergent or scrub-shrub vegetation. Lacustrine wetlands are open water and deepwater systems. Riverine wetlands consist of persistently or periodically moving water contained within a channel or ditch, and Estuarine wetlands are brackish. PFO are the most abundant wetlands within the study area. A total of 142 wetland systems are crossed by or immediately adjacent to the existing Southside/NS route. Within the rail route, wetlands range in size from less than one-half acre to greater than 20 acres. As shown in Table 3-46, the Southside/NS route area contains a total of 435 acres of wetlands, most of which are within Sussex County (89 acres) with the least amount of wetlands occurring in Surry County (1 acre). Wetlands within the existing and proposed rail station study area range in size from approximately one-half acre to greater than six acres and consist of Palustrine and Estuarine systems. Three wetlands are within the study area of the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station and two wetlands are within the proposed Norfolk Rail Station study area. The study area for the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station contains 4.42 acres of PFO and the proposed Norfolk Rail Station study area contains 8.35 acres of E1. Figure 3-17 is a map of the wetland areas along the Southside/NS route.

**Floodplains and Floodways** - In cooperation with state and local governments, FEMA has developed flood boundary and flood insurance mapping. Since not all local governments within the study area participate in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), floodplain information was not available for all localities within the study area.

The NFIP defines a floodplain as any land area susceptible to being inundated by water. The floodplain includes both the floodway and the floodway fringe. The floodway is defined as the channel of the stream and adjacent floodplain area that should be kept free of any encroachment so that a 100-year flood event may occur without increasing the level and extent of base flood elevations. The base, or 100-year flood, is defined as an event that is equaled or exceeded, on average, once every hundred years. The floodway fringe, or the 100-year floodplain, is the area between the floodway boundary and the outer limits of the 100-year floodplain boundary.

The 100-year floodplain and areas which are between the limits of the 100-year and 500-year flood are generally found adjacent to or near major surface waters and smaller tributaries. Along the rail route, FEMA floodplain mapping was not available for the following counties and cities: Petersburg, Prince George, Sussex, Surry, Southampton, Isle of Wight, Suffolk and Chesapeake; hence, potential floodplain impacts could not be identified in these areas. Within the City of Norfolk, the Norfolk Rail Station and portions of the existing Southside/NS route are located within floodplains associated with the Southern and Eastern Branches of the Elizabeth River. As such, these floodplains may be impacted by the proposed project. Within the City of Portsmouth, floodplains which may be impacted are associated with St. Julian Creek, Browns Creek, Paradise Creek and the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River. Figure 3-16 is a map of the bodies of water and floodplains along the Southside/NS route.

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**Coastal Zone Management** - Virginia's coastal zone encompasses 29 counties, 17 cities and 42 incorporated towns. According to the VDEQ Virginia Coastal Program, the following cities and counties are located within the coastal resource management area of the Southside/NS route:

- Cities
  - Suffolk
  - Chesapeake
  - Portsmouth
- Counties
  - Prince George
  - South Hampton
  - Isle of Wight

**Table 3-46: Southside/NS Route – Total Wetland Acreage by Locality**

Location	Approximate Total Acreage of Wetlands Within Study Area*
Petersburg	14
Prince George	53
Sussex	89
Surry	1
Southampton	73
Isle of Wight	39
Suffolk	85
Chesapeake	70
Portsmouth	3
Norfolk	8
Total Acres	435

\*The approximate total acreage is based on wetland areas identified within the 300-foot boundary on either side of the centerline and within a 500-foot area around proposed station locations.

### 3.16.4 Environmental Consequences

#### 3.16.4.1 Status Quo Alternative

Under the Status Quo Alternative, all passenger rail service conditions would remain the same. There would continue to be two daily round-trip trains along the Peninsula/CSXT route operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph. No physical or operational rail improvements would be made, other than routine maintenance.

As previously stated, the current passenger rail service uses the existing CSXT rail line. This rail right-of-way crosses several bodies of water including the James River Canal Basin, Diascund Creek, Skiffes Creek Reservoir, Newport News Reservoir, Stony Run, an unnamed body of water, Sluice Mill Pond and Lake Maury. There are several unnamed bodies of water within 300 feet of either side of the study area's centerline. Approximately 601 acres of wetlands are within the study area and include wetlands classified as L1, Lacustrine Littoral (L2), Palustrine Aquatic Bed (PAB), PEM, PFO, PSS, PUB, R2, PUB, Palustrine Unconsolidated Shore (PUS), Riverine Tidal (R1), and R2. The study area does cross or encroach on areas designated as 100-year floodplains. Within the City of Newport News, the existing passenger service route is located within the 100-year floodplain of the Skiffes Creek Reservoir, Newport News Reservoir, Stony Run, Lukas Creek, Sluice Mill Pond and Lake Maury. The existing rail line is also within Virginia's coastal resource management areas.

While surface waters, wetlands, floodplains and coastal zone management areas exist within the study area, DRPT does not anticipate that any of these resources would be impacted by the Status Quo Alternative.

#### 3.16.4.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the existing freight and passenger rail service would remain along the Peninsula with the addition of one round-trip train per day, operating at conventional speeds. The proposed

operational change would not require additional right-of-way. There would be no infrastructure improvements related to higher speed passenger rail and, therefore, no impacts are expected to surface waters, wetlands, floodplains and coastal zone management areas under the No Action Alternative.

### **3.16.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)**

Hydrologic and water resources have the potential to be impacted under the Preferred Alternative. This alternative combines the No Action Alternative with higher speed passenger rail service along the Southside/NS route. As described for the No Action Alternative, impacts would not be expected to occur to these types of resources along the Peninsula/CSXT route. Physical improvements would be needed for the existing NS freight rail line in order to operate higher speed passenger rail service, which could result in impacts. Improvements to the Southside/NS rail line include a new rail connection at Kilby, which would require additional right-of-way, and new passenger rail stations with parking at Bowers Hill and Downtown Norfolk.

The Southside/NS rail line crosses several bodies of water including the Blackwater River, Lake Meade, Browns Creek, the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River, Gilligan Creek and the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River. Several bodies of water are within 300 feet of either side of the route's centerline or within the 500-foot radius of the proposed Bowers Hill and Norfolk rail stations. Potential impacts that might affect these bodies of water include permanent clearing of vegetation, fill placement in waters for railway right-of-way widening, railway stations and parking areas. Long-term surface water impacts could occur as a result of permanent fill placement in or disturbance of bodies of water, such as bridge span widening and the addition or extension of culverts. These impacts may potentially alter the natural characteristics of these resources, resulting in changes in water temperature, increased nutrients and sedimentation, and alterations in stream channel circulation. These impacts would likely occur on a localized basis where the existing rail line and proposed improvements cross existing bodies of water.

Water quality could be affected by additional run-off generated by new impervious ground surfaces associated with track bed widening, and the proposed Bowers Hill and Norfolk Stations (e.g., for parking lots, new structures). Pollutants associated with train operations and motor vehicles, including buses and automobiles using parking areas and pick-up/drop-off facilities, include leaked gasoline and other petroleum products, antifreeze and lubricants. These pollutants deposited on impervious ground surfaces may be carried to downstream bodies of water, thereby adversely affecting water quality unless appropriate and effective stormwater management facilities are constructed to manage additional run-off and filter pollutants and sediment.

Bridge construction or widening may impact the water quality of surface waters crossed by the study area due to permanent stream bank vegetation removal and additional shading of bodies of water. Vegetation removal and additional shading impacts may result in bank destabilization and associated sedimentation, increased turbidity, altered flow rates, and possible temperature fluctuations within the stream channel. These impacts would be localized in nature (i.e., at bridge crossing locations) and would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable.

As previously mentioned, there are approximately 435 acres of wetlands within the study area for the Southside/NS route. Wetlands identified are classified as Estuarine Subtidal (E1), Estuarine Intertidal (E2), Lacustrine Limnetic (L1), Palustrine Emergent (PEM), Palustrine Forested (PFO), Palustrine Scrub-Shrub (PSS), Palustrine Unconsolidated Bottom (PUB), Palustrine Farmed (Pf) and Riverine Lower Perennial (R2). However, it is unlikely that all wetlands identified by mapping would be impacted. Floodplains have also been identified along the Southside/NS route. Permanent wetland and floodplain impacts may occur in specific locations where new track bed, rail stations and parking areas are introduced in or adjacent to these areas. Where possible, widening of the track bed would occur away from jurisdictional wetlands. Rail stations and parking areas would be located in areas where no wetlands exist or wetland impacts would be minimal. Jurisdictional wetland delineations would be included in subsequent analysis and wetland impacts would be quantified as part of that evaluation. It is important to note that in many floodplain locations the existing rail bed is already elevated, such that floodplain impacts would likely be minimal.

Effects on any of the Commonwealth's coastal uses or resources may include, but would not be limited to, impacts to wetlands, public recreation areas, significant wildlife habitat areas, coastal high hazard areas (such as floodplains) and waterfront development areas. The Southside/NS route encompasses portions of



Virginia's coastal zone and has the potential to affect coastal resources. Therefore, a federal consistency determination will be required. A federal consistency determination will be prepared for the Preferred Alternative during subsequent analysis. The review is conducted by the Environmental Impact Review Office of VDEQ. The review period for federal agency activities and development projects is 60 days. A copy of the required federal consistency determination outline is provided in Appendix D of the Tier I Draft EIS; however during the comment period for the Tier I Draft EIS, DEQ noted that a new federal consistency outline exists. During preparation of the Tier II documentation, the revised outline will be used.

**Potential Construction Impacts** - Impacts related to construction activities would be temporary and minimized through the use of best management practices. During construction, vegetation would be cleared and soil exposed due to grubbing, earth moving and grading, and other construction-related activities. These activities may cause soil erosion and subsequent sedimentation in downstream receiving waters. Temporary access for construction activities and equipment may also impact hydrologic and water resources. Other potential construction-related activities that could affect hydrologic and water resources include increased risk of potential contamination associated with the presence of heavy equipment (e.g., fuels, lubricants, etc.) and construction-related chemicals (e.g., paints, concrete additives, etc.).

### 3.16.5 Potential Mitigation and Required Permits

#### 3.16.5.1 Potential Mitigation

Direct impacts to water resources would be minimized to the extent practicable through avoidance and minimization strategies in the project design, such as the use of bridge spans and retaining walls; Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction, such as minimizing vegetation disturbance and soil exposure where possible; expeditious re-establishment of permanent vegetative cover following construction; use of silt fencing and hay bales; temporary dewatering where necessary; and stabilized construction access to and from the project site (e.g., use of sediment pads for removal of mud from construction vehicles and cleaning of vehicles prior to leaving the construction site). Following construction, permanent BMPs may be used, such as detention or retention basins and grassed swales.

Minimizing or restricting the use of nutrient-bearing fertilizers or using stormwater management facilities could effectively prohibit or minimize nutrient loading in receiving bodies of water. Where there is an increase in impervious ground surfaces, permanent stormwater management measures would be implemented to avoid and/or minimize an increase in peak run-off rates and promote groundwater infiltration within a given drainage area. A long-term stormwater management plan would be prepared to maintain water quality and groundwater recharge within the study area.

The Virginia Water Protection permit regulations state that "mitigation means sequentially avoiding and minimizing impacts to the extent practicable, and then compensating for remaining unavoidable impacts of a proposed action." When Virginia Water Protection permits are issued, such "permits should contain requirements for compensating impacts on wetlands" and "...such compensation requirements shall be sufficient to achieve no net loss of existing wetlands acreage and functions..."

In Virginia, both VDEQ and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have jurisdiction over and decision-making participation regarding wetland mitigation. Federal wetlands mitigation policy is guided by a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the USACE and the EPA.<sup>52</sup> As with VDEQ, the MOA outlines a three-step approach for wetland mitigation sequencing under the Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines, as follows: 1) avoidance, 2) minimization and 3) compensation for unavoidable wetland impacts. USACE also embraces the concept of "no net loss of wetlands". The purpose of this concept is to restore and maintain the chemical, biological and physical integrity of "waters of the United States," specifically wetlands.

Proposed improvements associated with both of the proposed routes would likely result in unavoidable impacts to wetlands. However, these impacts would be avoided to the greatest extent practicable, especially in consideration of facilities such as potential rail stations and parking area locations, as there is some flexibility in the placement of these facilities.

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<sup>52</sup> <http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/guidance/wetlands/mitigate.cfm>



Wetland impact avoidance and minimization strategies would be evaluated and implemented throughout the design process. Coordination with VDEQ and USACE would occur as necessary throughout the design and permitting phase to identify avoidance and minimization strategies and critical mitigation locations. Methods to avoid wetland impacts would be evaluated and these methods would be employed wherever possible in the design. Minimization typically focuses on decreasing the footprint of the proposed project or strategic placement of project elements outside of wetlands. Examples of avoidance and mitigation strategies that may be implemented as part of the design include maintenance of the existing right-of-way width, use of bridge spans, retaining walls and widening away from wetlands or bodies of water in locations where these resources narrow.

Avoidance and minimization approaches would be effectively employed for improvements to both the Southside/NS route and the Peninsula/CSXT route. Examples of avoidance and minimization strategies include:

- Strict enforcement of BMPs to control sedimentation and enhance water quality during and after project construction;
- Minimizing clearing and grubbing activities;
- Decreasing or eliminating discharges to streams;
- Reduction of fill slopes at stream/wetland crossings;
- Sensitive placement of drainage structures;
- Use of spanning structures or bottomless culverts over streams to maintain existing hydrology and stream flow characteristics;
- Reestablishment of vegetation on exposed areas immediately following disturbance;
- Avoidance or minimization of in-stream activity; and,
- Use of responsible litter control practices.

Compensatory mitigation is defined in the Virginia Water Protection Program regulations as "actions taken that provide some form of substitute aquatic resource for the impacted aquatic resource" (9 VAC 25-210-10). Compensatory mitigation is generally not considered until anticipated impacts to waters of the United States have been avoided and minimized to the greatest extent practicable. It is recognized that the "no net loss of wetlands" functions and values may not be achieved in every regulated action. In these instances, appropriate and practicable compensatory mitigation is required for unavoidable adverse impacts which remain after all appropriate and practicable minimization has been achieved. Compensatory actions often include restoration, creation, and enhancement of waters of the United States, and wetlands. Such actions should be undertaken in areas adjacent to or contiguous to the discharge site if practicable. The USACE Norfolk District and VDEQ have developed recommendations for wetland compensatory mitigation. These recommendations would be employed in the development of a compensatory mitigation approach for the proposed routes.

Compensatory mitigation, as recommended by VDEQ may include:

- Wetland creation or restoration;
- Stream restoration;
- Purchase or use of wetland mitigation bank credits at a VDEQ-approved mitigation bank;
- Contributing to a VDEQ approved in-lieu fee fund;
- Preservation of existing wetlands and streams when utilized in conjunction with creation, restoration or mitigation bank credits; or,
- Preservation or restoration of upland buffers adjacent to surface waters when utilized in conjunction with creation, restoration or mitigation bank credits.

Mitigation ratios for impacts to forested wetlands are typically two acres constructed to every one acre impacted (2:1); 1.5:1 for scrub-shrub wetlands; and 1:1 for emergent wetlands. However, mitigation ratios required by VDEQ and/or USACE may be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Where widening of the existing route would occur within a floodplain, impacts would be avoided or minimized to the greatest extent practicable to minimize loss of flood storage capacity and to reduce an increase in the base year flood elevation. Mitigation measures include limiting fill placement within the floodplain through maintenance of the existing right-of-way width, the use of bridge spans, retaining walls, and widening where floodplains are narrow. A stormwater management plan would be implemented as necessary to retain stormwater during flooding events, control downstream flooding and attenuate peak storm discharges for conditions both during and after construction.

### **3.16.5.2 Required Permits**

Construction and implementation of higher speed passenger rail for the Preferred Alternative would likely require multiple federal, state and local permits from various agencies to include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ), Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC), and local wetlands boards (LWB).

The **Virginia Water Protection Permit** covers many of the permits that would be required for implementation of the Preferred Alternative. The Commonwealth of Virginia participates in a joint permit process for projects that may require permits from local agencies. The Joint Permit Application (JPA) would be submitted through the VMRC for distribution to participating agencies, as applicable. Specifically, the regulatory authorities of participating agencies include:

- USACE regulates activities in waters of the United States, including wetlands, under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Section 10 of the rivers and Harbors Act and Section 103 of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act.
- VMRC regulates activities on State-owned submerged lands, tidal wetlands, and dunes/beaches.
- DEQ regulates activities in state waters and wetlands under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, under State Water Control Law and Virginia Administrative Code Regulations.
- LWBs regulate activities in tidal wetlands and dunes/beaches under Code of Virginia.

### **Coastal Zone Consistency Determination**

The Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program (CRMP) is a networked program with several agencies administering the enforceable coastal zone management policies. VDEQ is the lead agency for the CRMP, and is responsible for coordinating Virginia's review of federal consistency determinations and certifications with cooperating agencies.

### **Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) Program, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (VDCR) Stormwater Management Plan**

Section 402 of the Clean Water Act established the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System to limit pollutant discharges into streams, rivers and bays. In Virginia, VDEQ administers the federal program as the VPDES. VDEQ regulates stormwater discharge associated with "industrial activities," while VDCR regulates stormwater discharges from construction sites.

VDCR's construction site stormwater permits require construction operators disturbing equal to or more than one acre of land to develop and implement a stormwater management plan (also called a stormwater pollution prevention plan) that uses BMPs for erosion and sediment control at the construction site. Permits for construction sites do not typically require monitoring but require that the operator regularly inspect stormwater discharges from the site to ensure that BMPs are controlling the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable and are meeting water quality standards. Upon approval, VDCR certifies that a project is designed to minimize erosion and sedimentation into adjacent bodies of water. A stormwater management plan approved by VDCR would be required for the proposed project.

### **Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (VDCR) Division of Soil and Water Conservation**

Railway companies that undertake land-disturbing activities of greater than 2,500 square feet in a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area (or 10,000 square feet outside of Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas) for the construction, installation, and maintenance of lines must file general erosion and sediment control (ESC) specification annually with DCR for review and approval. DRPT must comply with their annual ESC

specifications approved by DCR. All regulated land-disturbing activities, including work conducted on company property and all easements owned by another party, must have a project-specific ESC plan developed in accordance with the DCR approved annual specifications. The repair or rebuilding of tracks, right-of-way, bridges, communication facilities and other related structures and facilities of a railroad company are exempt under §10.1-560 of the Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Law Regulations (VESCL). Construction of company buildings, facilities, and other structures are not covered by VESCL §10.1-563.D, and therefore, must comply with the requirements of the appropriate local ESC Program.

DRPT must have a certified Responsible Land Disturber in charge of and responsible for carrying out the project specific ESC plan and the land-disturbing activity. A two-week notification is required in advance of land disturbing activities.

### **Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act**

The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act<sup>53</sup> is enforced by individual localities in Virginia. Each locality determines the compliance of a project with the Act and may require information such as the type of vegetation present and the amount of vegetation proposed to be cleared as a result of project construction. Therefore, approval for either the Peninsula/CSXT route or the Southside/NS route would be required from the following localities:

- Peninsula/CSXT Route
  - Newport News
  - James City County
  - Williamsburg
  - Richmond
  - Henrico
  - New Kent
- Southside/NS Route
  - Chesterfield Colonial Heights/Petersburg
  - Prince George
  - Surry
  - Isle of Wight
  - Suffolk
  - Portsmouth
  - Chesapeake
  - Norfolk

### **3.16.6 Subsequent Analysis**

During the comment period of the Tier I Draft EIS, comments were received regarding potential impacts to water resources. In particular, the USACE commented on the extent of potential impacts on aquatic resources and the methodology used to identify potential impacts. During the Tier I Draft EIS, a conservative approach was used to identify potential impacts on both the Peninsula/CSXT route and Southside/NS route as specific engineering and areas of potential right-of-way needs were uncertain. Even under the Preferred Alternative, track improvements may be necessary to accommodate the additional conventional-speed roundtrip. As planning for the Preferred Alternative advances, the methodology to assess impacts will be refined to be more specific as it relates to identified engineering needs. Specifically, the USACE requests that the following measures be undertaken during the Tier II documentation:

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<sup>53</sup> [http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/chesapeake\\_bay\\_local\\_assistance/theact.shtml](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/chesapeake_bay_local_assistance/theact.shtml)

- Projected stream and wetland impacts at a level of detail sufficient to compare the alternatives be included.
- Provide specific measures to address avoidance and minimization, including the location of such measures.
- Address compensation for unavoidable impacts to wetlands and streams
- Identify suitable areas for restoration of wetlands to compensate for forested wetlands at a 2:1 ratio in the impacted watersheds.
- Every effort should be made to avoid impacting important aquatic communities (bottomland hardwoods and cypress-dominated communities).
- Section 404 permitting will be required, in addition a Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 may also be required.
- USACE designates FRA as the lead federal agency to fulfill the collective federal responsibilities under Section 106 for the proposed undertaking; as such the Norfolk District authorizes FRA to conduct Section 106 coordination on its behalf. Any Memorandum of Agreement prepared by FRA under 36 CFR 800.6 should include the following clause in the introductory text: *“WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 10 and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, a Department of the Army permit will likely be required from the Corps of Engineers for this project, and the Norfolk District has designated FRA as the lead federal agency to fulfill federal responsibilities under Section 106; and”*

The DEQ, through its clearinghouse, also commented on potential impacts to water resources as documented in the Tier I Draft EIS. During the Tier II documentation, VDEQ recommends the following:

- VMRC states that, should construction activities result in impacts to State-owned submerged lands and/or tidal wetlands, permits from the VMRC and or the local wetlands boards may be required. Mitigation measures for unavoidable impacts should be considered as part of the future evaluation process.
- The DEQ-Tidewater Regional Office recommends that the Tier II EIS incorporate more exact quantitative data regarding the quantity of wetlands. All efforts should be taken to minimize adverse impacts to surface waters, including wetlands. DRPT must comply with Section 404(b)(1) guidelines of the clean Water Act and the Commonwealth’s wetland mitigation policies.

Subsequent analysis to further identify potential impacts on hydrologic and water resources would be required for the Preferred Alternative during subsequent analysis. The subsequent analysis will include the following.

- Field surveys of potential surface water impacts to further analyze potential impacts on water quality and to seek required permits from the appropriate agencies.
- Analysis of how the different alignment options would contribute to total additional impervious ground surfaces and the subsequent potential additional impacts on surface run-off. This analysis would also identify potential mitigation measures.
- Application for necessary permits.
- Field investigations and jurisdictional wetland delineations, which would include the quantification of wetland impacts.
- Both the Peninsula/CSXT and Southside/NS routes encompass portions of Virginia’s coastal zone and have the potential to effect coastal resources. Therefore, a federal consistency determination will be required for any Build alternative selected. The review would be conducted by the Environmental Impact Review Office of VDEQ.

### 3.17 Biological Resources

This section provides a general description of terrestrial and aquatic biological resources and habitats, as well as rare, threatened and endangered species known to occur within the vicinity of the study area.

### 3.17.1 Methodology

Terrestrial and aquatic biological resources and habitats within the study area were assessed by reviewing topographic, aerial photographs and other USGS mapping, as well as agency websites and other relevant information. The study area is 300 feet from each side of the existing route centerline. For areas surrounding existing and proposed rail stations and parking facilities, the study area is evaluated within a 500-foot radius. Precise locations and exact sizes of stations, parking areas and grade separations are not yet known and will be further evaluated during the Tier II evaluations for the Preferred Alternative.

In order to determine federal and state species listed within the study area, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Threatened and Endangered Species Database System was searched for cities and counties within the study area. In addition, the Virginia Fish and Wildlife Information Service website was reviewed for wildlife resources within the study area.

Coordination with the USFWS, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (VDCR) and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) was undertaken during the scoping process and at the initiation of the Tier I Draft EIS. Coordination letters can be found in Appendix B of the Tier I Draft EIS.

### 3.17.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

Terrestrial habitats outside of private or public preserves, management areas, parks or other legally protected areas have no special regulations limiting their use. However, plant and wildlife species within these areas are afforded legal protections. VDGIF regulates non-endangered wildlife at the state level. Federal protection also occurs for non-endangered wildlife under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, last amended in 1986. This Act provides protection for all native migratory game and non-game birds with exceptions for the control of species that cause damage to agricultural or other interests.

Aquatic habitats are protected under a variety of regulations that limit their use or destruction. A detailed discussion of the aquatic habitats protected under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act can be found in Section 3.16.

Plant and animal species whose populations have declined to a point where extinction is imminent are afforded legal protection under federal and state laws. Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 is the main legislation that regulates federally listed threatened and endangered species and designated critical habitats. The USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service have authority in identifying those species in danger of extinction and provide for their management and protection.

The Commonwealth of Virginia has enacted legislation through the Endangered Plant and Insect Species Act of 1979 and Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended in 1977. Three Commonwealth agencies have authority over state-protected species and maintain species listings: VDGIF, VDCR and VDACS.

Commonwealth agencies involved in species and habitat management and protection include VDGIF, VDCR, VDACS, and the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC). VDGIF has developed *Virginia's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy* (VDGIF, 2005) to identify and manage wildlife species of greatest conservation need within the Commonwealth. VDGIF has the legislative mandate to manage Virginia's white-tailed deer resources including maintaining their habitat, managing their damage to other resources and property, and providing opportunities for recreation and education.

### 3.17.3 Affected Environment

#### 3.17.3.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route

The terrestrial habitats and their corresponding wildlife within the study area occur within a mixture of developed and undeveloped landscapes. For habitats to be suitable for wildlife species they must provide food, shelter, nesting sites and water. The types of terrestrial habitats found within the study area include landscaped, agricultural, transitional and forest.

One area of particular importance along the Peninsula/CSXT route is the Elko West Conservation Site. According to VDCR, the existing rail line intersects this site. VDCR designates conservation sites throughout the Commonwealth based on the natural heritage resources and habitats these areas support. The Elko West Conservation Site is considered to be a site of "high significance" by VDCR.

Surface water resources provide aquatic habitats throughout the study area. As discussed in Section 3.16, surface water resources within the study area include tidal and non-tidal wetlands, rivers, streams, lakes and ponds. VDGIF indicates that the James River is designated as an Anadromous Fish Use Area. Anadromous fishes are those that spend all or part of their adult life in salt water and return to freshwater streams and rivers to spawn. This designation limits in-water activities during certain times of the year when anadromous fish spawn. None of the streams within 300 feet of the Peninsula/CSXT route is subject to the special provisions of trout fishing under the Virginia Administrative Code (4 VAC 15-330-50 and 140). Table 3-47 provides a general description of the types of habitat along the route and the types of species supported by each habitat.

**Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species** - There are 39 federal and state-protected species listed for the Peninsula/CSXT route. A complete list of these species, their status, and habitat requirements is provided in Appendix B of the Tier I DEIS.

Based on coordination with USFWS and VDGIF, two species of concern have been known to occur in the vicinity of the Williamsburg Amtrak Station. According to VDGIF, a bald eagle's (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nest is located approximately 1.5 miles from the Williamsburg Amtrak Station and the federal/state listed small-whorled pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*) is also within proximity to this station. Additionally, the James River is also designated as a Confirmed Anadromous Fish Use Area. A complete list of protected species for the Peninsula/CSXT route is located in Appendix B of the Tier I Draft EIS.

**Table 3-47: General Habitats and Species along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

Type of Habitat	General Description	Types of Species Supported by Habitat
Landscaped	Includes residential, commercial and institutional areas with manicured lawns and plantings; provides little habitat for wildlife.	Common yard birds (such as Northern Mockingbird, American Robin, Northern Cardinal)  Small mammals (such as amphibians, reptiles, eastern chipmunk, gray squirrel)
Agricultural	Includes grain and hay fields and pastures; does not provide suitable nesting/shelter but provides feeding sites.	Various birds, raccoons and white-tailed deer, small mammals and several species of snakes
Transitional	Occurs where agricultural land has been abandoned or forests have been disturbed and land is in various stages of plant succession.	Wildlife species that prefer a mix of open grassland and scrub-shrub areas
Forested	Includes deciduous, evergreen and mixed forest land; generally associated with parks, stream valleys and wetlands areas in the study areas.	Great diversification of wildlife species to include mammals, reptiles and amphibians
Aquatic	Includes surface waters, floodplains and wetlands.	Waterfowl, reptiles, amphibians, various fish species (such as catfish, rockfish, largemouth bass, white shad and sunfish)

Source: DMJM Harris, October 2005

### 3.17.3.2 Southside/NS Route

The types of habitats and species found along the Southside/NS route are the same as described in Section 3.17.3.1 for the Peninsula/CSXT route.

**Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species** - There are 43 federal and state-protected species listed for the Southside/NS route study area. A complete list of these species, their status and habitat requirements is provided in Appendix B of the Tier I Draft EIS.

Based on coordination with the USFWS and VDGIF, three species of concern have been known to occur in the vicinity of the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station in Chesapeake. These species include the bald eagle

(*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), canebrake rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*) and the Dismal Swamp southeastern shrew (*Sorex longirostris fisheri*). A complete list of protected species for the Southside/NS route is located in Appendix B of the Tier I Draft EIS.

### 3.17.4 Environmental Consequences

#### 3.17.4.1 Status Quo

Under the Status Quo Alternative, all passenger rail service conditions would remain the same. There would continue to be two daily round-trip trains along the Peninsula/CSXT route operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph. Only freight rail operations would operate along the Southside/NS route. No physical or operational rail improvements would be made to the Peninsula/CSXT route other than routine maintenance. There would be no impacts to biological resources or rare, threatened or endangered species.

#### 3.17.4.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative includes only planned improvements in the existing transportation network and 2004 committed highway, rail and airport improvement projects in the study corridor. Specifically, the No Action Alternative includes the addition of one daily round-trip train along the Peninsula/CSXT route. Under the No Action Alternative, there would be a total of three daily round-trip trains operating at maximum speeds of 79 mph between Newport News and Richmond. There would be no infrastructure improvements related to higher speed passenger rail and, therefore, no impacts are expected to biological resources or rare, threatened or endangered species under the No Action Alternative.

VDCR has expressed concern over a particular area, the Elko West Conservation Site along the Peninsula/CSXT route, in which several protected species are located. In addition, VDGIF indicated the James River has been designated as a Confirmed Anadromous Fish Use Area.

It is not expected that any wildlife or habitat would be disturbed by implementing the No Action Alternative. It is unlikely that any infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate the additional service would require additional rail right-of-way that would impact the Elko West Conservation Site. There are no planned improvements that would likely require in-water activity in the James River. Furthermore, the protected species that have been known to occur in the vicinity of the Williamsburg Amtrak Station would not be impacted because no expansions of the station or parking facilities are proposed under the No Action Alternative.

#### 3.17.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)

The Preferred Alternative combines the No Action Alternative with the provision of higher speed passenger rail on the Southside/NS route. As stated for the No Action Alternative, no impacts to species or habitats are expected to occur on the Peninsula/CSXT route. However, given that major infrastructure improvements would be required along the Southside/NS route, impacts may occur from permanently clearing vegetation and filling or disturbing bodies of water including wetlands. A related effect would be the potential increase in the impervious ground cover that would result in decreasing soil infiltration of rain water, which generally contributes to tributary base flow. Additionally, the increase in impervious ground cover could increase run-off during rain events that could carry additional sediment and other pollutants to nearby bodies of water. These impacts may alter the natural characteristics of aquatic habitats, resulting in changes in water temperature, increased nutrient and sediment loads, and alterations in stream channel circulation. These impacts would most likely occur in a localized area where the routes directly cross the bodies of water.

The greatest potential for impacts to habitats and species would occur in areas where infrastructure improvements would be required outside of the existing rail right-of-way to include track bed expansion, the proposed rail connection at Kilby, and the proposed stations and parking at Bowers Hill and Downtown Norfolk. As part of this alternative, parking at the Main Street Station in Richmond would be augmented to some degree.

VDGIF records indicate that there are several protected species in the vicinity of the proposed Bowers Hill Rail Station. A bald eagle's (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nest is located less than two miles from the proposed location. The proposed station is located outside of the primary and secondary management zones of this nest; therefore, VDGIF does not anticipate any significant adverse impact to the nest. VDGIF records also indicate the occurrence of the state endangered canebrake rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*) and state

threatened Dismal Swamp southeastern shrew (*Sorex longirostris fisheri*) in proximity to this station. In order to address potential impacts to these species, VDGIF recommends a formal habitat assessment at the proposed site of the Bowers Hill Rail Station if it is part of the Preferred Alternative during the Tier II analysis.

In a letter dated August 15, 2005, the USFWS indicated that this project is not likely to affect federally listed or proposed species or adversely modify critical habitats. As the project progresses and more detailed information becomes available, coordination will continue with federal and state agencies to determine potential effects.

In a letter dated August 19, 2005, VDCR also indicated that there is concern over a particular area, the Elko West Conservation Site along the Peninsula/CSXT route, in which several protected species are located. VDCR recommends further coordination with the USFWS and VDACS to ensure compliance with legislation regarding these species.

During the comment period for the Tier I Draft EIS, U.S. Department of the Interior (USDOI) commented that federally listed species occur within the vicinity of both routes of the proposed project alternatives and that the FRA and DRPT must determine whether or not the project may affect any of these species. If during subsequent analysis federally protected species would be affected, consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 would be required. The USDOI raised concerns about the project's potential effects on the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. The USDOI notes that the Refuge serves as a major migratory bird breeding, migration, and wintering area. The Refuge also provides valuable habitat for passerine birds (songbirds) raptors, wading birds, other non-game migratory birds, and black bears (*Ursus americanus*). The USDOI further stated that if Alternative 1 was carried forward as the Preferred Alternative that the FWS will provide extensive recommendations on needed studies to assess the range of impacts and their consequences on the Refuge and its wildlife.

Similarly, DCR stated that it is concerned about construction impacts to aquatic species at bridge crossings, as well as in previously undisturbed areas, especially wetlands. The Peninsula/CSXT route intersects within the Elko West Conservation Site and coastal plain depression ponds are located along the Southside/NS route. The Elko West Conservation Site represents a site of very high significance to the Commonwealth. Additionally, coastal plain depression ponds are unique wetlands that can produce high biological diversity and may provide habitat for many rare plant and animal species.

**Potential Construction Impacts** - Minimal short-term effects to terrestrial biological resources and habitats are anticipated as a result of constructing the Build Alternatives and could include the temporary clearing of vegetation for construction equipment and the stockpiling of soil, ballast, or other construction materials. Spills from construction vehicles could occur, allowing pollutants such as fuels, lubricants, paints and concrete additives to enter adjacent bodies of water. Additionally, short-term noise, vibration and air pollution from construction equipment and activities could temporarily affect terrestrial habitats and their corresponding wildlife.

### 3.17.5 Potential Mitigation Measures

Field investigations or surveys would be conducted to determine the likelihood of impacts to listed species and their habitats found within the study area during subsequent analysis of the Preferred Alternative. Critical habitats and species assessments would be conducted in accordance with all applicable federal and state regulations. Appropriate mitigation would be coordinated with federal and state agencies.

In order to minimize construction effects and minimize disturbance of terrestrial and aquatic habitats and wildlife, best management practices would be used. Local ordinances would be followed for erosion, sediment and stormwater controls during construction to minimize any potential effects on aquatic resources. For terrestrial habitats that might be temporarily disturbed by construction, pre-construction conditions would be restored once construction is complete as required by the overseeing agency.

### 3.17.6 Subsequent Analysis

Subsequent analysis may include field surveys to determine the extent and type of general and sensitive biological resources, including formal biological assessments for protected species and consultation with the USFWS, VDGIF, VDCR, and VDACS as needed. The boundaries of the Elko West Conservation Site would



be confirmed to avoid and/or minimize affects to this site. DGIF and DCR comments recommended the following steps be taken during the preparation of the Tier II documentation:

- Conduct species surveys in wetland impact areas.
- Implement and adhere to all applicable state and local erosion and sediment control/storm water management laws and regulations at bridge crossings and where new timbers will be installed.
- Coordinate with the USFWS and DACS to ensure compliance with protected species legislation, include the Swamp pink and the New Jersey Rush.
- Coordinate with DCR's Division of Natural Heritage if a significant amount of time passes before the project is implemented, since new and updated information is continually added to the Biotics Data System.
- Provide preliminary engineering and station locations to DCR as they become available, so that DCR may provide more detailed comments.
- Address in the Tier II impacts on listed species or habitats.
- Coordinate with DGIF regarding possible impacts to wildlife.
- Provide DGIF with a shapefile of the alternative corridors and/or maps of specific work sites along with a description of the proposed work so that additional recommendations about ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to wildlife.

### 3.18 Sections 4(f) and 6(f)

This section discusses the properties that are protected under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act and Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act. This is not intended to be a complete Section 4(f) Evaluation but rather an inventory of properties that will likely require Section 4(f) documentation. As more detailed studies are completed for the Preferred Alternative during Tier II analysis, other properties that may be afforded protection under the provisions of Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) may be identified.

#### 3.18.1 Methodology

Public parks, recreation areas, wildlife refuges and historic resources were identified for the study area through the use of readily available information and limited field reviews. At this point in the study, impacts to these resources have not been fully identified. For recreational resources, a defined study area of 300 feet from either side of the centerline of the right-of-way (for a 600-foot total study area) was used. For historic resources, a defined study area of 500 feet from either side of the centerline (for a 1,000-foot total study area) was used as determined by VDHR during DRPT's coordination with them. Resources listed are those that have the greatest potential to be affected. For a complete discussion on park and recreation resources, see Section 3.9. For a complete listing of cultural resources identified, refer to Section 3.14 and Appendix C – Historic Resources of the Tier I Draft EIS. Only potential effects to these potential Section 4(f)/Section 6(f) resources have been identified for consideration.

#### 3.18.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

##### 3.18.2.1 Section 4(f)

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation of 1966 (49 U.S.C. 303), as amended, protects public parks and recreational lands, wildlife refuges, and historic sites of national, state, or local significance from acquisition and conversion to transportation use. Use of these publicly owned lands is prohibited for a transportation use unless there are no other prudent and feasible alternatives to the use and only if the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such sites.

Section 4(f) applies when a "use" of a protected property occurs. A "use" is defined as a permanent, temporary adverse or proximity effect. These uses are defined below.

- A **permanent use** occurs when a transportation project incorporates the resource into the transportation facility, including a fee simple or permanent easement.

- A **temporary adverse** use occurs when a transportation project temporarily occupies any portion of the resource and results in an adverse condition. Certain conditions must be met in order for a temporary use not to be considered adverse.
  - The duration of the occupancy must be less than the time needed for the construction of the project and there must not be a change in ownership.
  - There are no anticipated permanent adverse physical changes or interference with activities or purposes of the resource on a temporary or permanent basis.
  - There must be a documented agreement between the appropriate federal, state or local officials having jurisdiction over the resources regarding the aforementioned conditions.
  - The nature and magnitude of the changes to Section 4(f) resources are minimal and the land is restored to the same or better condition.
- A **proximity effect** (also referred to as constructive use) occurs when the resource is not physically occupied but the proximity effects of the transportation project (including mitigation) are so severe that the activities, features or attributes that qualify the property for Section 4(f) protection are substantially impaired.

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) amended Section 4(f) to allow the FHWA, FTA and FRA to determine that certain uses would have only a de minimus, or no adverse effect, on a protected resource provided that the responsible party with jurisdiction over the affected property agrees in writing. In this context, a de minimus impact is a minor impact that does not adversely affect the activities, features or attributes of the Section 4(f) property. For example, SHPO concurrence on a no adverse effect determination would be required for a *de minimus* finding on a historic property.

### 3.18.2.2 Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act

Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (L&WCF) of 1965 preserves, develops, and assures the quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources through purchase and improvement of recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and similar resources. The Act provides funding for the federal acquisition of park and recreation lands and matching grants for state and local governments. Once a property is purchased using these funds, these lands are protected from conversion to land uses other than public outdoor recreation uses.

A conversion of a 6(f) protected property occurs when the property is converted to anything other than outdoor recreation. A conversion of use must be in accordance with an existing statewide outdoor recreation plan and must be approved by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. If a conversion does occur, then the land must be replaced with a property of equivalent value and usefulness. Temporary uses for construction are not considered a conversion if the property is restored to its original condition after construction.

### 3.18.3 Potential Section 4(f) and 6(f) Resources

#### 3.18.3.1 Parks

**Peninsula/CSXT Route** - In all, fifteen park resources were identified within the study area for the Peninsula/CSXT route. All of the resources identified for this route have the potential to be affected. The resources are listed in Table 3-48 and mapped in Figure 3-18.

**Table 3-48: Potential Recreational Resources along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

Resource	Type	Ownership	Public Access*	Location	Acreage within Study Area
Great Shiplock Park	City Park	City of Richmond	Yes	City of Richmond	4.44
Libbie Hill Park	City Park	City of Richmond	Yes	City of Richmond	0.22
VOF Open Space Easement	Conservation Easement	Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF)	No	New Kent County	37.89
Crawford State Forest	State Forest	Virginia Department of Forestry	Yes	New Kent County, Charles City County	37.85
Waller Mill Park**	Local Park	City of Williamsburg	Yes	City of Williamsburg	1.30
Colonial Williamsburg National Historical Park	Historical Park	National Park Service	Yes	James City County, City of Williamsburg, York County	4.75
Quarterpath Park	Local Park	City of Williamsburg	Yes	City of Williamsburg	0.047
Lee Hall Plantation City Park	City Park	City of Newport News	No-presumed closed	City of Newport News	4.73
Newport News City Park	City Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	112.69
Skiffes Creek Park	Local Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	1.58
Stony Run Park	Local Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	23.50
Deer Park	City Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	1.05
Lake Maury Natural Park	Local Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	36.75
Municipal Lane Park	Local Park	City of Newport News	Yes	City of Newport News	2.58
Mariners Museum Park	Private Museum/Estate	Mariners Museum	No	City of Newport News	0.03

Source: National Park Service, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Department of Forestry and local jurisdictions.

\*Public Access is based on readily available information. No confirmation of access has been conducted.

\*\*Section 6(f) property

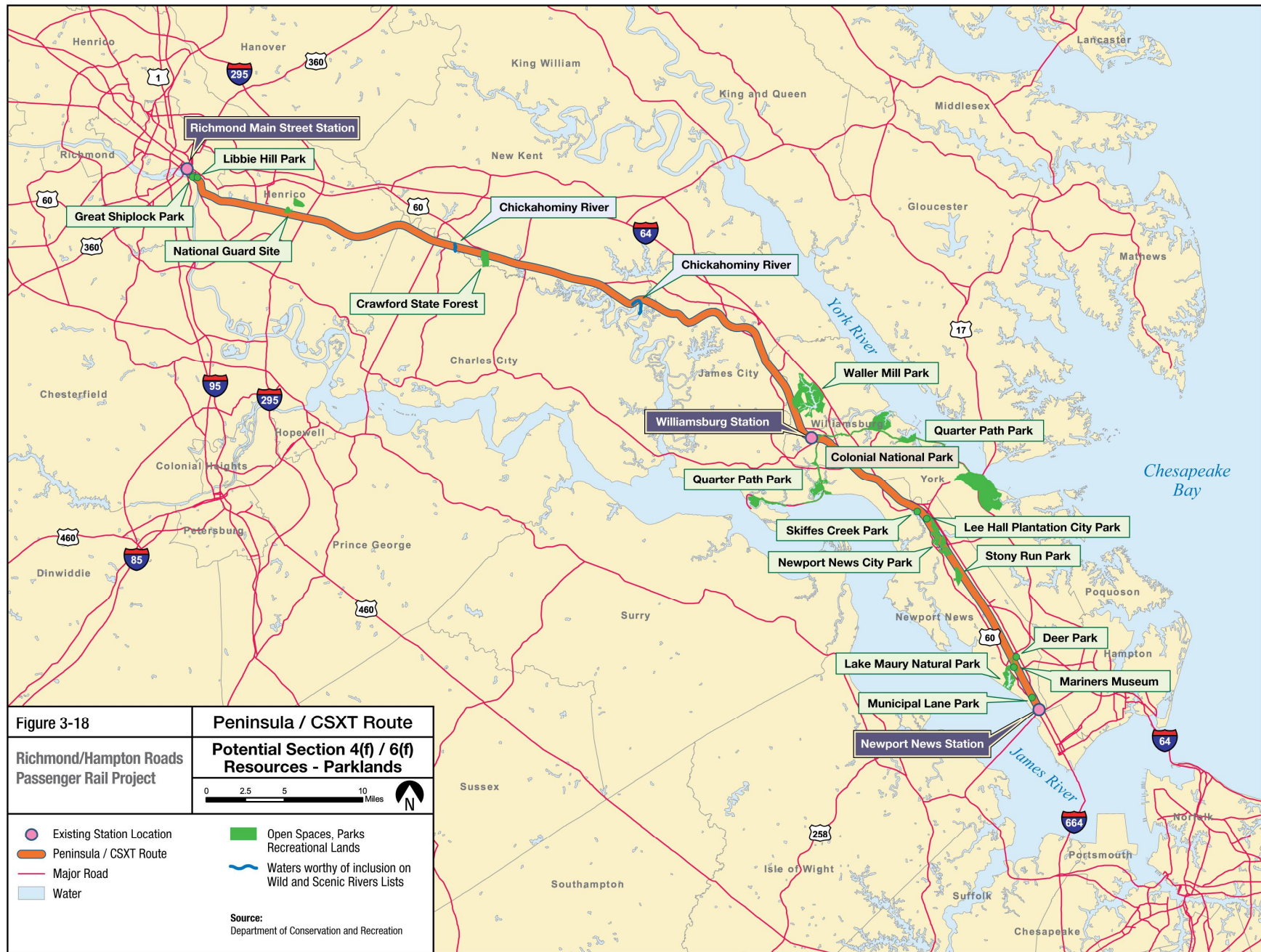
**Southside/NS Route** - In all, three park resources were identified for the Southside/NS route. Each of those resources was identified as having the potential to be affected. The resources are listed in Table 3-49 and mapped on Figure 3-19.

**Table 3-49: Potential Recreational Resources along the Southside/NS Route**

Resource	Type	Ownership	Public Access*	Location	Acreage within Study Area
Lake Kilby Park	Local Park	City of Suffolk	Yes	City of Suffolk	0.98
Great Dismal Swamp	National Wildlife Refuge	National Park Service (NPS)	Yes	City of Suffolk	47.75
Town Point Park/ Harbor Park Civic Facility	City Park	City of Norfolk	Yes	City of Norfolk	9.01

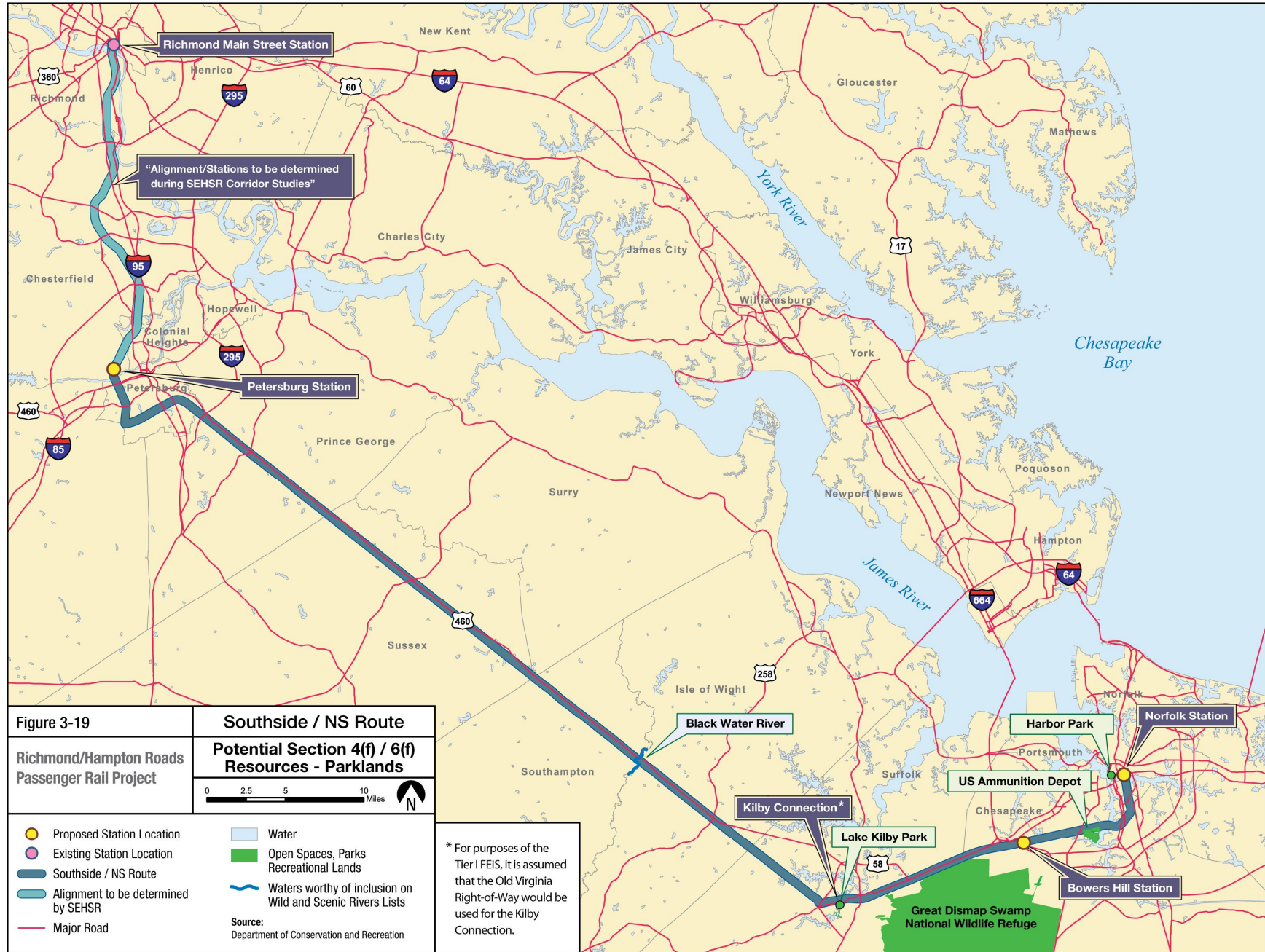
Source: National Park Service, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Department of Forestry and local jurisdictions.

\*Public Access is based on readily available information. No confirmation of access has been conducted.



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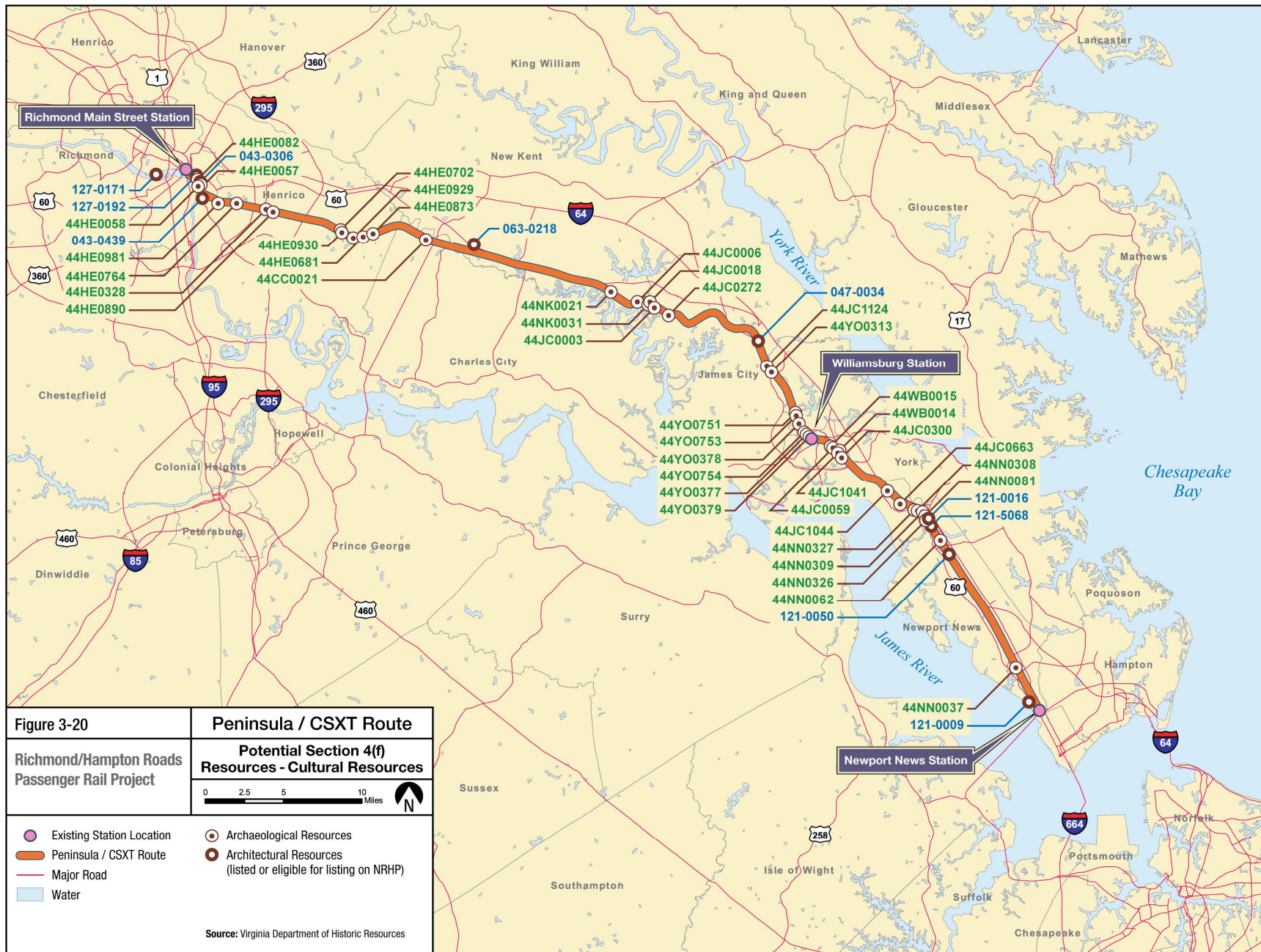
### 3.18.3.2 Cultural Resources

**Peninsula/CSXT Route** - The VDHR Historic Resources Data Sharing System (DSS) is a database of resources that have been evaluated by others and reported to VDHR. According to the VDHR DSS, a total of 47 architectural resources along the Peninsula/CSXT route were evaluated for potential eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Of those, 11 have been recommended eligible for listing or are listed on the NRHP. The remaining 36 are either not recommended eligible for listing on the NRHP, or the historic significance has not yet been determined. Forty-one archaeological sites were identified along the route. Table 3-50 summarizes the architectural resources that have been previously identified as being recommended eligible or listed on the NRHP and Table 3-51 summarizes the archaeological resources. A complete list of all resources identified from the DSS for the Peninsula/CSXT route is provided in Appendix C of the Tier I Draft EIS, Cultural Resources Identified. Figure 3-20 shows the locations of cultural resources located along the Peninsula/CSXT route.

**Southside/NS Route** - According to the DSS, a total of 59 architectural resources have previously been identified for the Southside/NS route. Of those, 10 are recommended eligible for listing or are listed on the NRHP, while the remaining 49 are either not recommended eligible for listing on the NRHP or the historic significance is undetermined. Seven archaeological sites were identified along the route. Table 3-60 summarizes the architectural resources previously identified as being recommended eligible or listed on the NRHP and Table 3-52 summarizes the archaeological resources. A complete list of all resources identified by the DSS for the Southside/NS route is provided in Appendix C of the Tier I Draft EIS, Cultural Resources Identified. Figure 3-21 shows the locations of cultural resources located along the Southside/NS route.

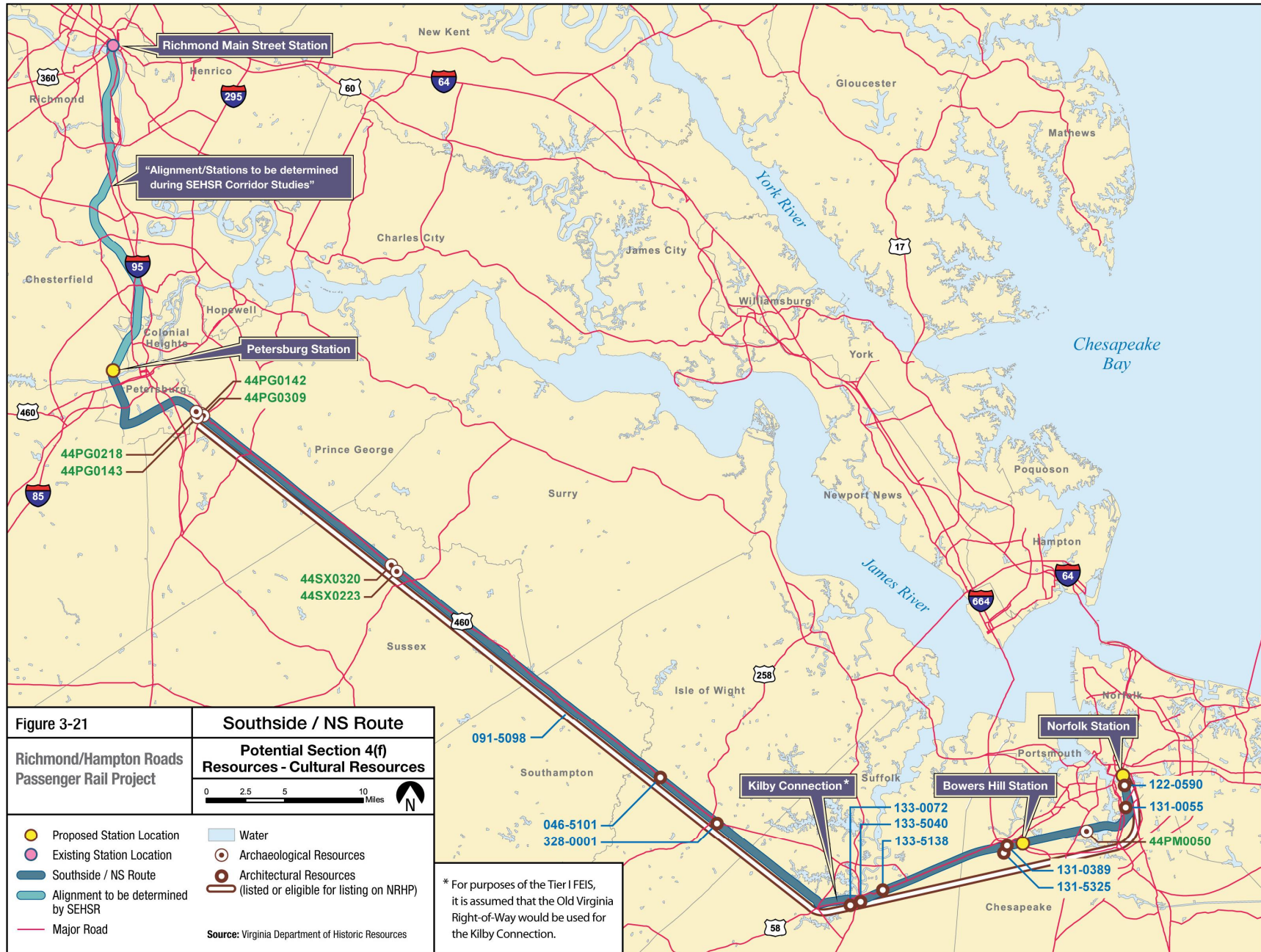


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**Table 3-50: Architectural Resources Eligible or Listed in the National Register of Historic Places along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

<b>DHR ID #</b>	<b>Property Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>County/City</b>	<b>Property Description</b>	<b>Date Listed on NRHP (if known)</b>	<b>Date Listed on VA Landmarks Registry (if known)</b>
121-0171-0002	Warehouse (Site), James River and Kanawha Canal	N/A	Gamble's Hill	Richmond	N/A		
127-0192	Saint John's Church Historic District	1800s	22 <sup>nd</sup> Street on west, Marshall Street on east	Richmond	District contains some of the oldest frame structures as well as some of the oldest brick houses in Richmond. Architecture is almost exclusively the side hall townhouse plan.		
127-0171	James River and Kanawha Canal Historic District	1800ca	Peach Street to intersection of Sleepy Hollow Road	Richmond/ Henrico	District extends from Ship Lock at the foot of Peach Street westward to an extension of Sleepy Hollow Road and the C&O Railroad tracks in Henrico. Linear feature that consists of earthen excavations, stone locks, bridges, culverts, basins and other related objects.	8/26/71	9/9/69
043-0439	Aviation General Supply Depot	1917	508 Bickerstaff Road	Henrico	Depot complex consists of large U-shaped warehouse, a model shop/records administration office and another warehouse.		
043-0306	The Cedar Works Warehouse	Circa 1885	Old Osborne Turnpike, Route 5	Henrico	Primary warehouse is a rectangular shaped, brick industrial building with a flat roof. It has surviving painted signage Richmond Cedar Works manufactured cedar ice-cream freezers, barrels and other wooden products.		
063-0218	Little Roxbury	1920	Route 615	New Kent	Single dwelling, Colonial Revival architectural style.	9/15/70 Expansion Accepted: 1/17/91	6/2/70 Expanded: 4/17/90
047-0034	Norge Historic District	Post 1840	Richmond Road, Peninsula Street, Peach Street	James City	14 acres located in the northwest portion of James City County between the towns of Lightfoot and Toano.		
121-0009	Hilton Village Historic District	1918	Adjacent to east bank of James River, approximately two	Newport News	Hilton was designed to resemble the villages of Tudor England; it has mostly Jacobethan style structures with numerous examples of Dutch and	6/23/69	11/5/68

DHR ID #	Property Name	Date	Location	County/City	Property Description	Date Listed on NRHP (if known)	Date Listed on VA Landmarks Registry (if known)
			miles north of Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock		Georgian Colonial.		
121-0050	Lee's Mill Earthworks	1862	280 Rivers Ridge Circle	Newport News	Site contains remnants of the Confederate Warwick-Yorktown defensive line from the 1862 Peninsula Campaign. Area is bound by Ft. Eustis, Warwick River and Mill's Ridge Housing Development.	6/23/03	3/19/03
121-0016	Lee Hall	1859	163 Yorktown Road	Newport News	Property is associated with the village of Lee Hall Historic District. Italianate mansion constructed c. 1859 was home to Richard Decatur Lee. The only large, mid-nineteenth century plantation house remaining on VA's lower peninsula, served as HQ for Confederate Generals John Bankhead Magruder and Joseph E. Johnston House. Is the only large mid-nineteenth century plantation house remaining on Virginia's lower peninsula. House served as headquarters for Confederate Generals in Spring of 1862.	12/5/72	8/15/72
121-5068	Village of Lee Hall Historic District	1881	Near Intersections of Warwick Blvd. (Rt. 60) and Ripley St.	Newport News	No generalized architectural summary exists. The areas of significance include architecture, commerce and transportation.		

Source: DHR DSS September 2005

**Table 3-51: Archaeological Resources Identified Along the Peninsula/CSXT Route**

DHR Site #	City/County	Site Class	Cultural Designation	Temporal Designation	Description
44HE0082	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> century	Single dwelling
44HE0057	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Middle Archaic	Camp, temporary
44HE0058	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Native American/Indeterminate	Woodland, 20 <sup>th</sup> /19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Camp, temporary
44HE0981	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	African American, Euro-American	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Part of the Confederate Richmond Intermediate Defensive Line
44HE0764	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric/Unknown	200 sq. ft. containing fragments of earthenware, colored and colorless glass, bullets, and one machine-made brick fragment.
44HE0328	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A	Single dwelling
44HE0890	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> century: 1 <sup>st</sup> half	Cemetery ¼-mi. off Charles City Road on Monahan Road
44HE0929	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric/Unknown	Temporary camp used for industry, processing, extraction
44HE0930	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric/Unknown	Temporary camp used for industry, processing, extraction
44HE0702	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A	Temporary domestic camp
44HE0681	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> century: 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	Trenches and batteries used for military/defense purposes
44HE0873	Henrico	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	Single dwelling
44CC0021	Charles City	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Woodland	N/A
44NK0031	New Kent	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	17 <sup>th</sup> Century: 1 <sup>st</sup> Half	Military/Defense in general area of Fort James, one of three forts in operation during War against Indians (1645), and near site of Moysonec Indian Village.
44NK0021	New Kent	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Single dwelling
44JC0018	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric	Indeterminate
44JC0006	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric	Indeterminate
44JC0003	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Woodland	Indeterminate



DHR Site #	City/County	Site Class	Cultural Designation	Temporal Designation	Description
44JC0272	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	Roughly 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Historic, domestic farmstead
44JC1124	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Farmstead containing stoneware, plate shards and fragments of an American clay tobacco pipe bowl and English pipe stem.
44YO0313	York	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	N/A
44YO0753	York	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A	Unknown domestic land, containing fragments of brick, wine bottles, cut nails, wrought nails, and possible dressed sandstone fragments.
44YO0751	York	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	Single dwelling
44YO0754	York	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	20 <sup>th</sup> Century	Single dwelling
44YO0378	York	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Single dwelling
44YO0377	York	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Domestic
44YO0379	York	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A	Domestic temporary camp
44WB0014	Williamsburg	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	17 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	Indeterminate
44WB0015	Williamsburg	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	17 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	Indeterminate
44JC0300	James City	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A	Indeterminate
44JC0059	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	Military/defense site containing significant earthen works
44JC1041	James City	Terrestrial, open air	N/A	N/A	
44JC1044	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 2 <sup>nd</sup> half	Domestic camp
44JC0063	James City	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	20 <sup>th</sup> Century	Domestic, with a scatter of domestic artifacts
44NN0327	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	Single dwelling
44NN0326	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Possible shed or outbuilding for agricultural operation
44NN0062	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric/Unknown	Indeterminate. Field survey discovered a broad spear point made of coarse

DHR Site #	City/County	Site Class	Cultural Designation	Temporal Designation	Description
					yellow quartzite and one quartzite ovoid blade.
44NN0037	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Euro-American	N/A	Indeterminate. Soil survey produced Chinese porcelain, glaze ware and misc. earthen ware.
44NN0081	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Indeterminate. Site projected from historic map.
44NN0309	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Late Woodland 17 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	Domestic camp. Quartzite debitage and incised Native American pipe stem fragment found on site.
44NN0308	Newport News	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Middle Woodland 17 <sup>th</sup> Century: 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	Domestic camp. Late 17 <sup>th</sup> and early 18 <sup>th</sup> century domestic and structural artifacts recovered from a subsurface pit.

Source: DHR DSS, September 2005

Table 3-52: Architectural Resources Eligible or Listed in the National Register of Historic Places along the Southside/NS Route

DHR ID #	Property Name	Date	Location	County/City	Property Description	Date Listed on the NRHP (if known)	Date Listed on the VA Landmarks Registry (if known)
091-5098	Norfolk & Petersburg Railroad	Circa 1858	Parallel to Route 460 as it extends southeast to northwest across Isle of Wight, Southampton, Sussex, and Prince George Counties.	Isle of Wight Southampton Sussex Prince George	The rail line served as the principal transportation link between southeastern Virginia south-central and the City of Petersburg in south-central Virginia. The rail line passes through a number of small towns and villages that developed around railroad stations during the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.		
046-5101	Hobbs Property/6635 Windsor Boulevard	1933	6635 Windsor Boulevard	Isle of Wight Zuni	2-story Craftsman style building featuring a wooden frame structural system that rests on a solid concrete foundation. In addition to the store/dwelling, there are several agricultural buildings on the property including three tourist cabins, a chicken house, equipment shed, barn, shed, log structure, and garage.		
328-0001	Windsor Railroad Station/Windsor Depot/Norfolk and Western Railroad	1866	15 West Railroad Street	Isle of Wight Windsor	Station is fairly typical of stations put up not only by the Norfolk and Western Railway, but by other railroads as well. Is one floor and appears to have been built in three stages. Roof of station is rolled and crimped metal. Exterior is board-on batten pine.		
133-5138	Joel E. Harrell and Sons/Smithfield Packing Company Plant No. 5	ca 1941	110 Virginia Ham Drive	Suffolk Magnolia	The processing facility was constructed in the early 1940s. The original complex consisted of three main structures. The main building (housing the slaughterhouse, curing room, and coolers), the office, and the stock pens were positioned in separate structures to provide the desired separation between function and uses.		
133-0072	Suffolk Historic District and Expansions	Post 1742	Bank Street Market Street Clay Street Poplar Street N&W Railroad Tracks County Street Central Avenue Grayson Court Liberty Street Hill Street	Suffolk	This Property is associated with the Suffolk Historic District. The Suffolk Historic District, listed in 1987, is comprised of the area south of Old Town and contains buildings from the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. In 1999 a boundary amendment to the Suffolk Historic District continued the district north along Main Street to encompass Old Town's Federal-era properties. A second amendment was added in 2002 with the addition of the East Washington Street corridor to the district's southern boundary. This third boundary expansion to the		

DHR ID #	Property Name	Date	Location	County/City	Property Description	Date Listed on the NRHP (if known)	Date Listed on the VA Landmarks Registry (if known)
			Pinner Street Chestnut Street North Street Pine Street W. Washington Street		Suffolk Historic District is comprised of two areas. The first area is residential and centered around Pinner Street and Central Avenue. It is contiguous with the northeast corner of the district. The second extends westward from the East Washington Street Expansion area to encompass both commercial and residential buildings on West Washington, Pine, Chestnut, and North Streets. These expansion areas will be referred to as the Pinner/Central and the West Washington Street areas.		
133-5040	West End Historic District and Boundary Expansion	1865	The West End neighborhood is roughly bounded by the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad to the north, the Norfolk and Western Railroad (N & W) to the south, Linden Avenue, Wellons Street and Pender Street to the east, and Brewer Street and Causey Avenue on the west.	Suffolk	The West End Historic Boundary Expansion is adjacent to the eastern boundary of the West End Historic District. The original district and proposed boundary expansion are located approximately four blocks from Washington Square, the heart of historic Suffolk's commercial district. The boundary expansion contains ten primary resources located along the east side of Wellons Street between West Washington and Smith Streets. Properties within the expanded boundary are similar in design, architecture, and appearance to those on the west side of Wellons Street included in the West End Historic District. With the addition of the Boundary Expansion, the visual continuity of the district is extended to encompass all of the buildings within the Wellons Street streetscape.	1/16/04  Expansion Accepted: 11/27/04	

DHR ID #	Property Name	Date	Location	County/City	Property Description	Date Listed on the NRHP (if known)	Date Listed on the VA Landmarks Registry (if known)
131-0055	South Norfolk Historic District	Post 1890	Northern end of the City of Chesapeake in the area generally known as South Norfolk	Chesapeake	This Property covers about one-half of a sq. mile. Begun as a street car suburb and retaining its suburban residential character, the district contains 795 buildings, 127 of which are non-contributing. The streets within the district are laid out in a grid pattern. Fully detached houses, most of them single family, line the majority of the blocks. The district also includes several churches, a school, a park, and a small local business district. The Norfolk and Western Railroad forms one boundary of the district. Development within the district took place in the few decades between 1890 and 1930s, and the buildings exhibit the styles and construction methods that were popular at the time. Houses in modified Classical Revival and Queen Anne styles, as well as houses with Stick and Eastlake elements, are interspersed with early twentieth century houses in Bungalow, Cottage, Four Square, and Colonial Revival styles.	1/27/89	12/2/87
131-5325	Sunray Agricultural (Rural) Historic District	1908	Biernot Rd/Interstate 64/Carlise Rd./Compaz Rd./Danberry St./East Rd/Hertz Rd./Homestead Rd./Old State Rd/ Peach Ave./Seldon Rd./Sondej Ave./Sunray Ave./Truitt Rd.	Sunray Chesapeake	This Property is defined by agrarian fields divided by brackish-water ditches and early 20 <sup>th</sup> century farmhouses with associated outbuildings in a rural setting. A single asphalt roadway flanked by brackish-water ditches accesses district area. Tree stands, roadways and ditched divide the rectangular agrarian fields. Early 20 <sup>th</sup> century vernacular farmhouses are located throughout the district and are simple in form and treatment. Numerous agricultural builds are clustered around the farmhouses and are found in the agricultural fields. Near the main entrance road to the farming community and the intersecting railroad tracks at the now defunct VA Railway there are clustered institutional buildings, such as the Catholic Church with parish house and school, and the 1920-era public school, which eventually became the Bowers Hill Post Office. The district retains its integrity and reflects an early 20 <sup>th</sup> century immigrant farming community.	Listed	3/19/03
131-	House/604	1923	604 Homestead Rd	Sunray	This property is associated with the Sunray		

<b>DHR ID #</b>	<b>Property Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>County/City</b>	<b>Property Description</b>	<b>Date Listed on the NRHP (if known)</b>	<b>Date Listed on the VA Landmarks Registry (if known)</b>
0389	Homestead			Chesapeake	Agricultural Historic District. Includes 2 front gables with lunettes; porte-cochere on one end; 1-room wing on other end. 2-½ story, 3-bay wide symmetrical frame house with stretcher-bond brick veneer on first floor, wood shingle siding on second. Two gablettes set into eave with semicircular window with spoke-like muntins.		
122-0590	Colonna's Shipyard	1920	400 Indian River Road	Norfolk	The inside machine shop at Colonna's Shipyard is a large, two-story concrete building. The building is industrial in nature and generally utilitarian in appearance with some commercial craftsman/classical detailing.		

Source: DHR Data Sharing System, September 2005

**Table 3-61: Archaeological Resources Previously Identified along the Southside/NS Route**

DHR ID #	City/County	Site Class	Cultural Designation	Temporal Designation	Description
44PG0218	Prince George	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Late Woodland	The artifact was found at an elevation of approximately 140 feet, on the surface of an open area serving as the shoulder of a dirt and gravel access road. The artifact was found in a badly eroded area that exposed stream worn rocks. Erosion gullies in the area revealed clay subsoil underlying thin topsoil.
44PG0142	Prince George	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> Century 20 <sup>th</sup> Century	Brown sandy loam soil. Controlled transect probably from 19 <sup>th</sup> century house to the east, and Civil War material probably from battlefield east of fort. Maybe Fort Bross.
44PG0309	Prince George	Terrestrial, open air	Indeterminate	19 <sup>th</sup> Century: 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	Approx. 1100-foot long breastwork beginning at Norfolk & Western RR and terminating in fort approximately 150 feet x 150 feet. The breastwork and fort are in excellent condition, although there is some evidence that Civil War relic hunters visit the site periodically. The woods north west and up to the site were shovel tested at 20-foot intervals.
44PG0143	Prince George	Terrestrial, open air	Native American Indeterminate Indeterminate	Late Archaic 20 <sup>th</sup> Century 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Brown sandy loam soil. Controlled transect survey, visibility good, milk glass. Whiteware is probably 19 <sup>th</sup> century surface scatter, farmhouse to west.
44SX0223	Sussex	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Prehistoric/Unknown	Site was located by shovel testing at 50-foot intervals. The site is unplowed with the prehistoric cultural material shallowly buried.
44SX0320	Sussex	Terrestrial, open air			Shovel testing at 30-foot intervals, ¼-inch screen, no above ground remains, subsurface remains less than 12 inches deep.
44PM0050	Portsmouth	Terrestrial, open air	Native American	Woodland	Located during a Phase I survey, the area was systematically shovel tested at close intervals and yielded a light subsurface scatter of historic material. The site has been cross-cut by roads, ditches, and fences making exact site boundaries and integrity difficult to ascertain at Phase I.

Source: DHR Data Sharing System, September 2005

### 3.18.4 Potential Use of Section 4(f)/6(f) Resources

#### 3.18.4.1 Status Quo Alternative

Under the Status Quo Alternative, there would be no additional passenger rail service on the Peninsula/CSXT route. The existing passenger service of two round-trip trains per day would remain. The Southside/NS route would be continued for use by freight operations only as planned by NS.

Because no physical or operational improvements would occur under the Status Quo Alternative to either route, no impacts to Section 4(f)/6(f) resources identified within the study area would occur.

#### 3.18.4.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, one additional passenger train would be added to the existing Peninsula service and would operate at a maximum speed of 79 mph. In total, there would be three daily round-trip trains operating between Richmond and Newport News. There would be no infrastructure improvements related to higher speed passenger rail and, therefore, no impacts expected under the No Action Alternative.

However, section 4(f)/6(f) resources can be considered as potentially sensitive land use categories, depending on the designated use and purpose of the property, in determining potential noise and vibration impacts. For the Tier I Draft EIS, a screening level assessment for noise and vibration was conducted and specific noise and vibration impacts were not identified. It is unlikely that significant noise or vibration impacts would occur as a result of the additional round-trip train. Because the No Action Alternative does not include any new visual elements to be added along either the Peninsula/CSXT route or the Southside/NS route, there would be no potential for visual impacts to these resources. There would be no improvements for passenger service on the Southside/NS route. Section 4(f)/6(f) properties would not be adversely impacted by the No Action Alternative.

#### 3.18.4.3 Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 Peninsula Conventional/Southside Higher Speed)

**Parks** - Based on the preliminary analysis conducted for the Tier I Draft EIS, it is unlikely that any of the recreational resources identified for the Peninsula/CSXT route would experience a permanent use of property. For the Tier I Draft EIS, a screening level assessment for noise and vibration was conducted and specific noise and vibration impacts were not identified. It is unlikely that significant noise or vibration impacts would occur as a result of the additional round-trip train. Because the additional round-trip does not include any new visual elements to be added along either the Peninsula/CSXT route or the Southside/NS route, there would be no potential for visual impacts to these resources.

Based on the preliminary analysis conducted for the Tier I Draft EIS, it is unlikely that any of the recreational resources identified for the Southside/NS route would experience a permanent use of 4(f)/6(f) resources. Proximity effects from increased train frequencies and speeds are possible. More detailed analysis is needed and will be done in the Tier II environmental documentation to determine if proximity effects would occur and what the severity of those effects on the resources identified would be.

The USDOJ commented on the Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) analysis during the public comment period of the Tier I Draft EIS. The USDOJ raised concerns about the project's potential effects on the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge and that "construction outside the existing right-of-way, on Refuge property. Is not compatible with the purpose for which the Refuge was established and does not support the mission of FWS." The USDOJ recommended consideration of developing an alternative that avoids the use of Section 4(f) lands within the Refuge and other Section 4(f) lands and if that was not feasible, a detailed analysis demonstrating that there is no prudent and feasible alternative to the use of Section 4(f) lands is needed, as well as appropriate measures to minimize harm to Section (f) lands is required.

Although the proposed route passes through both Lake Kilby Park and Town Point Park, the route proposes to use existing tracks. Based on the engineering feasibility analysis conducted, DRPT does not expect that any additional right-of-way would be required. However, if during more detailed engineering during subsequent phases of project planning identifies that additional right-of-way is needed, then a permanent use of these properties could result. Town Point Park may also be affected temporarily due to construction of the proposed station and related facilities in Downtown Norfolk. A determination of park boundaries is needed to determine if a permanent or temporary use would occur and to identify alternatives or mitigation measures. Table 3-53 summarizes the potential effects to each resource identified.



**Table 3-53: Potential Effects to Recreational Resources Identified for Alternative 1**

Resource	Relation to Rail Route	Potential Effects
Lake Kilby Park	Tracks pass through resource.	Proximity effects such as noise/vibration from increased train frequencies and speeds. Adverse effects unlikely.
Great Dismal Swamp	Tracks are adjacent to resource.	Proximity effects such as noise/vibration from increased train frequencies and speeds. Adverse effects unlikely.
Town Point Park/Harbor Park Civic Facility	Tracks pass through resource.	Proximity effects such as noise/vibration from increased train frequencies and speeds, minor visual impacts from proposed station/parking, temporary construction impacts possible. Adverse effects unlikely.

Source: DMJM Harris, October 2005

**Cultural Resources** - Based on preliminary coordination with VDHR, there is a low probability that historic resources could be affected by the addition of one additional round trip passenger train on the Peninsula/CSXT route but a higher probability that historic resources could be affected by new higher speed service on the Southside/NS route. It is unlikely that direct impacts to cultural resources would occur, however proximity effects could occur. Section 3.14 describes the known resources identified within the study area and potential proximity effects.

The CSXT rail line has not been fully evaluated to determine if the rail line itself is potentially eligible for listing on either the Virginia Landmarks Registry or the NRHP. Based on literature research, it appears that the CSXT merits further investigation as a potentially eligible resource.

Based on preliminary coordination with VDHR, there is a high probability that historic resources could be affected by implementation of higher speed passenger rail along the Southside/NS route. It is unlikely that direct impacts to cultural resources beyond the rail line itself would occur, however proximity effects could occur. Section 3.14 describes the known resources identified within the study area and potential proximity effects. Previous studies within the general study area indicate that the NS rail line has been determined to be potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP. Direct effects to the rail line itself could occur. Improvements to the rail line would be required to maintain acceptable freight and passenger rail service. More detailed study is required to determine effects on these resources and any other potential resources within the route. Once an alternative is selected, more detailed study will then be conducted and impacts can be assessed.

#### 3.18.4.4 Comparative Evaluation of Alternatives

Table 3-54 summarizes the findings of the Tier I Draft EIS assessment of the potential effects of each alternative on Section 4(f)/6(f) resources. The findings indicate that direct impacts on Section 4(f)/6(f) resources are unlikely under any of the alternatives; additional right-of-way requirements are unlikely to impact parks or historic properties. However, implementing more frequent and/or higher speed passenger rail service may have proximity effects on Section 4(f)/6(f) resources, such as changes in noise or visual characteristics.

**Table 3-54: Summary of Tier I Draft EIS Section 4(f)/6(f) Assessment Findings**

Condition/Alternative	Peninsula/CSXT Route	Southside/NS Route
Number of Existing Parks	15	3
Number of Known NRHP Listed or Eligible Resources	12	10
Number of Known Archaeological Sites	41	7
Status Quo Alternative	No use; no proximity effect.	N/A
No Action Alternative	Potential uses and proximity effects are unlikely.	N/A
Preferred Alternative	Potential uses and proximity effects are unlikely.	Potential uses are unlikely; proximity effects are likely.

### 3.18.5 Avoidance Options and Measures to Minimize Harm

At this stage in the study it would be premature to identify avoidance options and measures to minimize harm for unavoidable impacts. As planning for the project progresses during subsequent analysis and specific impacts are identified, then avoidance options, if needed, and measures to minimize harm would be explored.

### 3.18.6 Subsequent Analysis

In the Tier II analysis, the Section 4(f) and 6(f) evaluation process will be more focused on the Preferred Alternative. The primary goal for Tier II analysis will be to identify Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources and potential impacts in greater detail and to identify and analyze potential mitigation measures. The following items would be included in the Section 4(f) and 6(f) evaluations for the Tier II analysis:

- Detailed physical descriptions of the selected alternative (including plans and profiles).
- Updated list of all Section 4(f) and 6(f) recreation resources in proximity to the proposed route centerlines and proposed station areas, using the most recent mapping available.
- Formally determine the NRHP eligibility for the rail lines of the selected alternative. The railroad would need to be surveyed and evaluated according to National Register criteria. This would include a determination of contributing and noncontributing resources, a period of significance, and the development of a boundary for the resource.
- Further evaluations and coordination with VDHR to determine actual impacts to resources identified along the selected alternative route.
- Two Native American tribes were identified within vicinity of the study area. Additional outreach to these tribes will be conducted.
- Descriptions of uses and functions of each Section 4(f) and 6(f) resource located within the selected alternative study area. The descriptions should include location map; size; services and facilities; annual patronage; unique qualities; relationship to other lands in the project vicinity; owner/operator; other relevant information regarding the resource; and an explanation of the significance of the property as determined by federal, state, regional or local officials with jurisdiction over the resource.
- Develop appropriate mitigation measures for any unavoidable uses of Section 4(f) and 6(f) properties.

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# CHAPTER 4 COSTS AND FUNDING

## 4.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a brief description of the cost to build, operate and maintain the selected Preferred Alternative in comparison to the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives based on the analysis conducted as part of the Tier I Draft EIS. This chapter also discusses the financial sources by which DRPT may construct and operate the Preferred Alternative. This chapter also describes the federal, state and local funding options that could help fund the Preferred Alternative.

### 4.1 Financial Planning Methodology

Financial planning estimates the capital costs and the annual operating expenses and revenues from the base year to the design year. These estimates establish the level of financial resources that may be required for each year of the planning horizon.

The goal of financial planning is to develop an understanding of the financial aspects of the proposed action through an examination of funding sources and the allocation of those funds. Preparing a cash flow projection of the proposed action clarifies this understanding. The cash flow projection compares the income and expense potential of the following elements:

- Capital cost estimates;
- Operating and maintenance cost estimates;
- Fare revenue estimates; and
- Other sources of funds.

This analysis uses constant dollars (deflated dollars) to interpret the funding requirements. The financial analysis discusses and explores funding options that address capital and operating fund shortfalls discovered during an evaluation of the cash flow projections. More detailed financial analysis and cash flow projections will be required in the later stages of project development.

During the public comment period for the Draft EIS, numerous individuals expressed concern over the financial estimates fearing that the data is too old to reflect actual impacts. It is important to note that all of the data in the document will be updated as part of the Tier II analysis.

### 4.2 Estimated Costs and Revenues

During the Tier I Draft EIS, an analysis of the estimated costs and revenues associated with the proposed action was conducted to determine whether there are funding shortfalls in either capital or operating budgets for the alternatives under consideration for the project. This section describes the analysis of funding sources and the allocation of funds.

#### 4.2.1 Capital Costs

The first component of the financial analysis is the capital plan, which documents the estimate of probable cost for railroad infrastructure investment for the studied alternatives. This element of the analysis describes the cost to design and construct the proposed rail system improvements. The capital cost estimates reflect the findings of the *Engineering Feasibility Analysis* of November 2005, as revised in April 2008 to adjust the costs to 2008 dollars.

The preliminary estimate of probable costs emphasized train operations and related facilities needed to support increased frequencies and higher speed service. In addition to the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives, which consist of the existing passenger rail service and planned improvements to the rail infrastructure, the array of possible configurations for the Build alternative was narrowed to a general set of improvements required for the Peninsula/CSXT route and Southside/NS route for the cost analysis. These alternatives are described in more detail in Chapter 2 *Alternatives Considered* of the Tier I Draft EIS.

#### 4.3.1.1 Peninsula/CSXT Route Rail Infrastructure Improvements

Planning the concept level design and operations for conventional and high-speed passenger rail infrastructure improvements along the Peninsula/CSXT route required the consideration of several operating scenarios and associated capital improvements. The goal of each scenario was to minimize the probability of passenger and freight train schedule conflicts in the Peninsula/CSXT route. The operating scenarios considered the following:

- Add additional segments of double track, modify interlockings, make additional operational improvements that would minimize freight and passenger train conflicts, and provide sufficient lengths of double track where a passenger train could overtake and pass a slower train without either train being required to stop;
- Design passenger schedules so that trains traveling in opposite directions pass at locations where freight operations would not be disrupted; and
- Recommend operating strategies that would minimize conflicts in congested yard and terminal areas.
- Grade-crossing improvements and elimination are included in the higher speed cost estimates as well as other track and signal improvements.

#### 4.3.1.2 Southside/NS Route Rail Infrastructure Improvements

Planning the concept level design and operations for conventional and high-speed passenger rail infrastructure improvements along the Southside/NS route required the consideration of several operating scenarios and associated capital improvements. The operating scenarios considered the following:

- Create track connections, modify interlockings, and make additional operational improvements that would result in segments of track where freight and passenger train conflicts would be minimized in Petersburg (west end) and at Suffolk (east end);
- Provide a passing siding of sufficient length in the most effective location—a third track to be used by freight trains—where a passenger train could overtake and pass a slower freight train without either train being required to stop;
- Design passenger schedules so that trains traveling in opposite directions meet in terminals or pass at locations where freight operations would not be disrupted.

Included in the capital cost estimates is a 13-mile third track generally between Waverly and Ivor, VA (interlockings at “Waverly” (N59.5) and “47 Crossover” (N46.5)). The third track would be long enough to permit a freight train to enter it at 45 mph and proceed at speed through the siding while a passenger train would overtake and pass it. Constructing a new passenger route using the abandoned Virginian Railway right-of-way and the CSXT Portsmouth Subdivision avoids conflicts with NS freight trains at Norfolk. The cost to connect the NS line to the CSXT Portsmouth Subdivision at Kilby and reinstall the former Virginian Railway main line is included in the Southside/NS route estimates.

In addition, the cost of infrastructure improvements between Richmond and Petersburg and the connections at Petersburg were included in the estimated cost of the Southside/NS route improvements. The costs associated with those improvements range from \$54.9 million to \$148.9 million, depending on the selected connection option.<sup>54</sup>

DRPT and the North Carolina Department of Transportation have identified the route alternatives through the Petersburg area in the SEHSR Project. The project level subsequent analysis for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project will select the preferred route alignment through the Petersburg area. For purposes of the Tier I Draft EIS and this Tier I Final EIS, the higher cost of the Richmond–Petersburg segment of the Southside/NS route was used for evaluation.

#### 4.2.1.3 Estimates of Probable Costs

Cost estimates include a 40 percent contingency to account for uncertainties at the program level of analysis. Cost estimates for the alternatives examined exclude rolling stock or proposed storage and maintenance

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<sup>54</sup> Parsons, *Richmond to Hampton Roads High-Speed Rail Feasibility Study*; Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation; Richmond, VA, April 2002. Cost estimates were updated to 2008 \$.

facilities in Norfolk and Newport News. For the purposes of alternative evaluation, the excluded capital expenditures are common to all alternatives and would therefore have a marginal effect on the evaluation of alternatives. Consequently, more detailed cost estimates that include these other elements of infrastructure and capital items, such as rolling stock, will be required during subsequent Tier II analysis.

The preliminary estimates of probable capital costs for the Preferred Alternative are presented in Table 4-1. Costs were estimated for year 2008 and are in constant dollars. These costs reflect only those elements associated with planning, design and construction of the alternative and reflect the physical features associated with each alignment including stations, track and bridge improvements and other infrastructure.

**Table 4-1: Preliminary Estimate of Probable Capital Cost (Millions \$ 2008) of the Preferred Alternative**

Capital Cost Category	Preferred Alternative 90 mph
Peninsula/CSXT Route Subtotal	No Action
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>	
Richmond – Petersburg <sup>a</sup>	\$148.9
Petersburg – Norfolk	326.5
<b>Southside/NS Subtotal</b>	<b>475.4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$475.4</b>

Source: *Engineering Feasibility Analysis*; November 2005 revised March 2008

NOTES

<sup>a</sup> Richmond - Petersburg costs use the high estimate from the Richmond to Hampton Roads High-Speed Rail Feasibility Study; April 2002. All cost estimates were updated to 2008 \$.

#### 4.2.2 Estimates of Probable Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs

Amtrak and its host freight railroads are responsible for operating the existing passenger rail system and for maintaining the track, respectively. Projections of annual operating costs for the proposed passenger rail system improvements and maintenance costs for the existing system are estimated based on historic costs. Annual operating expenses for the Preferred Alternative, the No Action Alternative and the Status Quo Alternative were developed based on the forecast of passengers, passenger miles and revenue developed by the *Travel Demand Methodology and Results Report* (March 2008) for each alternative.

In developing the annual operating costs, the assumed train consists of two diesel locomotives and six cars based on the train requirements to serve anticipated connections to the SEHSR and NEC/Acela services. The Preferred Alternative assumed an operating schedule developed specifically for this project. The schedules for this project were coordinated with schedules previously established in reports for the SEHSR project and the prior *Richmond to Hampton Roads High-Speed Rail Feasibility Study*<sup>55</sup>. Those reports identified that a maximum of nine round-trip trains per day could be operated between Hampton Roads and points north of Richmond.

The annual operating costs represent the cost to operate trains between Hampton Roads and Richmond. The assumptions used in the development of these costs are based on existing Amtrak operating procedures in which train crews are assigned to operate trains between Washington, DC and points south, such as Richmond<sup>56</sup>.

Table 4-2 indicates the total annual operating cost for the Preferred Alternative as compared to the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives. The Status Quo Alternative includes the existing two daily round-trip trains on the Peninsula/CSX route, while the No Action Alternative includes the addition of one round-trip train on the same route, for a total of three daily round-trip trains operating at a maximum speed of 79 mph between the Newport News Amtrak Station and Washington, DC. The Preferred Alternative maintains the No Action service on the Peninsula/CSXT route and provides six higher speed trains on the Southside/NS route.

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/studies/files/SHRExecutiveSummary.pdf>

<sup>56</sup> Crews based in Staples Mill Road Station operate Newport News trains between Richmond and Newport News.

**Table 4-2: Estimate of Probable Annual Operating & Maintenance Costs (Millions \$ 2008)**

Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs	Status Quo 79 mph	No Action 79 mph	Preferred Alternative 90 mph
Peninsula/ CSXT Route	\$16.9	\$21.3	\$21.3
Southside/NS Route	No train	No train	\$58.7
<b>Annual Costs</b>	<b>\$16.9</b>	<b>\$21.3</b>	<b>\$80.0</b>
Difference from Status Quo		\$4.4	\$63.1
Difference from No Action			\$58.7

Source: Parsons, *Operations and Maintenance Cost Estimates*; April 2005 as revised March 2008.

### 4.2.3 Projected Annual Operating Revenue

Annual operating revenue forecasts were based on the travel demand model and the 2007 Amtrak fare structure in which the average fare for a specific station pair equals the 2007 revenue divided by the ridership for the station pair. A more detailed discussion of the derivation of average fares for station pairs is in the *Ridership Methodology and Results Report* (May 2009).<sup>57</sup>

The range of revenue forecasts highlights the sensitivity to key assumptions in the travel demand forecasting model. As discussed in Chapter 3.1, the on-time performance of the proposed service and the future highway speeds outside the Richmond/Hampton Roads study area affect ridership and therefore revenue forecasts. The same forecasting assumptions outlined in Chapter 3.1 were used to derive conservative and optimistic annual revenue estimates.

Table 4-3 outlines the estimated range of probable annual revenue for the 2025 forecast year using 2008 constant dollars as a unit of measure for the Preferred Alternative as compared to the Status Quo and No Action alternatives. The Status Quo and No Action alternatives are the same as described under annual operating costs.

**Table 4-3: Estimated Range of Probable Annual Operating Revenue in 2025 (Millions \$ 2008)**

Annual 2025 Revenue Range by Route and Total	Status Quo 79 mph	No Action 79 mph	Preferred Alternative 90 mph
Peninsula/CSXT high	\$15.95	\$28.07	\$11.31
Peninsula/CSXT low	\$14.49	\$24.95	\$10.52
NS/Southside high	No train	No train	\$57.81
NS/Southside low	No train	No train	\$45.98
<b>Total High</b>	<b>\$15.95</b>	<b>\$28.07</b>	<b>\$69.12</b>
<b>Total Low</b>	<b>\$14.49</b>	<b>\$24.95</b>	<b>\$56.50</b>
<b>Difference from Status Quo Alternative</b>			
High		\$12.12	\$53.17
Low		\$10.46	\$42.02
<b>Difference from No Action Alternative</b>			
High			\$41.05
Low			\$31.56

Source: *Ridership Methodology and Results Report*; May 2009.

Fares, which are distance based, are higher in the Southside/NS route resulting in slightly higher annual operating revenue for the Preferred Alternative.

### 4.3 Other Potential Funding Sources

DRPT has determined that funding and revenue for the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of the Preferred Alternative need to be generated through a variety of sources including federal, state and local funding programs and mechanisms. With the passage of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA), Virginia must begin subsidizing operations and capital equipment charges of current and future intercity passenger rail service. In anticipation of these operating and capital needs, during its 2010 Session, the General Assembly passed Senate Joint Resolution 63, which directed DRPT to

<sup>57</sup> Ridership and revenue forecasts use 2025 as a planning horizon year based on data available from MPO long range plans.

study funding of high-speed and intercity passenger rail operations in the Commonwealth. An Intercity Passenger Rail Capital and Operating Fund was passed by the General Assembly in 2011. While no money has been appropriated to the fund yet, the legislation gave the Commonwealth Transportation Board and General Assembly the flexibility to allocate existing transportation revenues into the fund. . A list and description of the major federal, state and local possible funding programs is provided in Section 4.3 of the Tier I Draft EIS.

#### 4.4 Preliminary Funding Assumptions and Requirements

The funding share assumptions for the capital and operating costs for this project are presented in this section, including the amounts of each resource required to construct, operate and maintain the project under the assumed funding sources.

##### 4.4.1 Total Capital Funding Assumptions and Requirements

Several assumptions were made with regard to funding the estimated infrastructure requirements. At the federal level, DRPT assumes that the federal government will provide states with capital grants that account for up to 80 percent of the total project cost of an intercity passenger rail improvement project. This assumption is based on recently enacted legislation by Congress that would fund passenger rail projects similar to other federal grants programs, such as programs that fund highway and public transportation investment projects at up to 80 percent or greater of the total project cost. Several federal grant programs currently exist that could fund the passenger rail capital improvements contemplated for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. However, no federal funding is dedicated to the project at this time.

At the state level, the Rail Enhancement Fund has the ability to provide up to \$23 million in annual, dedicated funding for passenger or freight rail capital improvements in Virginia. Use of these funds will require a minimum matching contribution of at least 30 percent, which must come from non-state sources such as railroads, local governments or regional authorities. Rail capital bonds may also be used and administered similarly to Rail Enhancement Fund revenues.

Table 4-4 illustrates the estimated total capital funding requirements for the Preferred Alternative, assuming a federal grant program will be created to fund 80 percent of the cost. With no federal grant program in place today, the non-federal share is 100 percent of total project cost.

**Table 4-4: Estimate of Total Capital Funding Requirements (Millions \$ 2008)**

Funding Category	Preferred Alternative
	90 mph
Infrastructure	\$475.40
Federal	\$380.32
Non-federal	\$95.08
<b>Shortfall</b>	0

Annual allocations of Rail Enhancement Fund resources may partially fund the non-federal share of total project capital costs. With the Rail Enhancement Fund providing a maximum of \$23 million per year for all rail capital projects in the Commonwealth, the financial capacity of DRPT to accommodate this project is dependent on the total amount of grant requests for other projects and the timing of construction for other projects. A growing number of projects applying for Rail Enhancement funding will require either additional state or local funding appropriations for capital infrastructure or deferral of the projects until funding is available.

##### 4.4.2 Annual Operating Surplus and Deficits

Table 4-5 summarizes the annual operating surplus and deficits for the alternatives examined, based upon the assumptions indicated in the *Travel Demand Methodology and Results Report* (March 2008)<sup>58</sup> and the operating cost assumptions and estimates contained in the *Engineering Feasibility Analysis Report* as revised (April 2008)<sup>59</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/projects/files/Appendix%20G.pdf>

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/projects>



**Table 4-5: Estimate of Probable Annual Operating Surplus and (Deficits) (Millions \$ 2008)**

Annual Revenue Range by Route and Total	Status Quo 79 mph	No Action 79 mph	Preferred Alternative 90 mph
Peninsula/CSXT Route high	\$15.95	\$28.07	\$11.31*
Peninsula/CSXT Route low	\$14.49	\$24.95	\$10.52*
Southside/NS Route high	No train	No train	\$57.81
Southside/NS Route low	No train	No train	\$45.98
<b>Total Annual High</b>	\$15.95	\$28.07	\$69.12
<b>Total Annual Low</b>	\$14.49	\$24.95	\$56.50
Annual Operating Costs by Route and Total			
Peninsula/CSXT Route	\$16.9	\$21.3	\$21.3*
Southside/NS Route	No train	No train	\$58.7
<b>Total Annual O&amp;M Costs</b>	\$16.9	\$21.3	\$80.0
Annual Operating Surplus (Deficits) by Route and Total			
Peninsula/CSXT Route high	(\$0.95)	\$6.77	(\$9.99)*
Peninsula/CSXT Route low	(\$2.41)	\$3.65	(\$10.78)*
Southside/NS Route high	No train	No train	(\$0.89)
Southside/NS Route low	No train	No train	(\$12.72)
<b>Total Annual Surplus (Deficit) High</b>	(\$0.95)	\$6.77	(\$10.88)
<b>Total Annual Surplus (Deficit) Low</b>	(\$2.41)	\$3.65	(\$23.50)

\* denotes 79-mph MAS train service

Source: Ridership Results Report; May 2009 and Engineering Feasibility Analysis Technical Memorandum November 2005, revised March 2008.

Annual revenue exceeds operating costs for the No Action Alternative under all travel demand assumptions. Likewise, under all travel demand assumptions, the Preferred Alternative would operate with an annual deficit. All Peninsula/CSX trains generate operating deficits ranging from \$9.99 million to \$10.78 million annually. All Southside/NS trains generate deficits ranging from \$0.89 million to \$12.72 million annually. In response to the Tier I Draft EIS and other passenger rail initiatives DRPT is implementing the Virginia General Assembly passed Senate Joint Resolution 63, requesting DRPT to study potential funding mechanisms for of high-speed and intercity passenger rail. The Intercity Passenger Rail Capital and Operating Fund was presented and approved by the General Assembly in 2011; however, no specific funding was allocated to it but the legislation allows the flexibility for transportation revenues to be allocated into the fund.

During the public comment period for the Draft EIS, many individuals referenced this likely operations deficit. Some did not have concerns, believing that it would cost more to build roads to accommodate this travel than to subsidize operations on this rail service. Others asked whether the northeast Amtrak service could serve as a model for this corridor, since it is able to operate without a deficit.

#### 4.5 Financial Capacity Analysis

DRPT's financial capacity to undertake major passenger rail improvement projects throughout the state is constrained by limited resources and competing needs to address numerous priorities. Other major passenger rail improvement initiatives underway today include the Commonwealth's investment in new intercity passenger rail service between Lynchburg, Richmond and Washington, DC, significant capital investments to improve service in the Washington, DC to Richmond corridor and potential commitments to fund track and right-of-way improvements in support of the SEHSR project. In freight rail, major initiatives include freight rail shipping improvements at the Port of Virginia and along two major freight corridors: the Route 460/Heartland Corridor and the National Gateway.

Capital costs for the Preferred Alternative for this project exceed the available funding in the Rail Enhancement Fund. If the Commonwealth were to pursue construction of this project using the Rail Enhancement Fund as the primary funding source, it would require the deferment of other critical capital infrastructure needs, particularly if there are no federal funds available to support the project.

Moreover, Virginia's budget for new transportation construction and expansion projects is shrinking while the demands on the state's transportation system are increasing. The Rail Enhancement Fund, similar to other state funding sources, is supported by revenue generated through state tax receipts and has experienced some declines in available revenue during the recent economic downturn. In addition, the last significant

increase in new transportation funds for Virginia was enacted in January 1987, when the Commonwealth raised the gas tax to its current 17.5-cent level, added one-half percent to the state sales tax, and increased the motor vehicle sales and use tax by 1 percent. Considering inflation since 1987, the motor fuels tax revenue's purchasing power has decreased by nearly 40 percent. With no significant increases in transportation funding, more and more of the available funds must be used for maintenance, which means less can be utilized for new project development.

Most transportation projects in the U.S. require some level of state and federal funding participation in order to be successfully implemented. Regarding the availability of operating funds for this project, there is no dedicated source of intercity passenger rail operating funds in Virginia and there is no federal program for new intercity passenger rail operations today. Since the Preferred Alternative will likely operate with an annual deficit and the federal government requires state participation in funding the operations of new Amtrak service, a dedicated source of funding will need to be identified at the state level to contribute to the costs of operating this project. The establishment of the aforementioned Intercity Passenger Rail Capital and Operating Fund may be a source for state funding. Similarly, the introduction of a federal source of operating funds would be beneficial to this project.

## 4.6 Risk and Uncertainty

Due to the limitations of current funding sources and the significant needs for rail investment at the state level, the financial analysis reveals that DRPT has limited capacity to undertake major long-term investments in high-speed passenger rail projects today. The financial analysis assumes substantial federal participation in the construction of the Preferred Alternative. The federal programs outlined in the Tier I EIS are primarily discretionary grants for capital improvements and related environmental and engineering studies.

Although the financial analysis has defined a likely future based on historic and potential funding trends, there are several operating and capital risks associated with the project that could affect a financial plan. Some additional fiscal capacity-related risks to DRPT are present. These risks are noted and described in the following paragraphs.

### 4.6.1 Operating Risks

In addition to the risk previously discussed, changes in fares, fare policy, and fare structure affect ridership. Ridership is discussed in detail in the Tier I Draft EIS (Chapter 3.1). Ridership affects fare revenue and cost recovery. Ridership also affects service levels, which in turn affect maintenance and operating costs. Ridership and revenue are highly sensitive to on-time performance, which would affect the revenue forecasts and the operating ratio, which is the ratio of operating costs covered by fare revenue. Therefore, if the overall quality, reliability, and availability of the new service is not sustained enough to meet customer demand, ridership could decline and operating costs could increase.

### 4.6.2 Capital Cost Risks

There remain considerable uncertainties in the capital cost estimates for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project due to the limitations noted in the *Engineering Feasibility Analysis Technical Memorandum*. This is not unusual at the conceptual level of planning. A more refined cost estimate will be required during the project level analysis of the Preferred Alternative when the project advances to the 30 percent design stage. To account for these uncertainties, a 40 percent contingency was added to the capital cost estimates. Some of the uncertainties noted include the following:

- No provision is included for costs arising from negotiations with operating railroads regarding crossings or use of right-of-way.
- Only a flat percentage of direct costs has been used to budget for needed right-of-way acquisitions.
- Broad unit costs have been applied for key elements rather than estimates based upon specific designs.
- No detailed allowances have been provided for utilities, wetlands mitigation, and preservation of historic structures, potential hazardous materials or other special site conditions. Many of these costs were accounted for in broad contingency categories. As the design becomes more refined, these costs may be either more or less than the overall 40 percent contingency.

- The rate of inflation may increase as this project advances to the construction phase, causing all material and labor costs to increase.
- Financial risks and credit interest rates may increase as capital markets respond to changes in the financial market and global economy.
- The level of federal participation may be lower than estimated.
- The level of local funding commitment may be lower than estimated.

#### **4.7 Summary of Funding Options**

Ultimately, a proper mix of ownership and management structures combined with adequate funding and financing sources is required for the Preferred Alternative. A final financial analysis will be prepared in later stages of project level planning for the Preferred Alternative, as cost and revenue estimates are refined and as more detailed engineering and cash flow modeling is undertaken.

# CHAPTER 5 SECONDARY AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

## 5.0 Introduction

This chapter identifies the potential secondary (indirect) impacts and cumulative (incremental) impacts of the project at a broad level. Specific secondary and cumulative effects will be addressed in the Tier II analyses and documentation of the Preferred Alternative.

## 5.1 Methodology

No new analysis for secondary and cumulative effects was conducted as part of the Tier I Final EIS. The methodology used to assess the potential secondary and cumulative effects of providing higher speed passenger rail service is provided in greater detail in the Tier I Draft EIS Chapter 5.

### 5.1.1 Secondary Effects

Secondary effects typically include impacts to human and natural systems from changes in land use patterns and growth induced by proposed public and private development plans. Assessing the potential secondary effects involves defining the scope and geographical boundaries for the analysis. For the purposes of the Tier I Draft EIS analysis, potential secondary effects were estimated for the Peninsula/CSXT route and Southside/NS route study areas for the project design year of 2025. The potential secondary impacts were analyzed on a broad scale due to the general nature of the project description. Consideration of local area secondary effects will be undertaken as part of the Tier II analysis and documentation of the Preferred Alternative when the station areas, construction footprints, and the amount of right-of-way needed are further defined.

### 5.1.2 Cumulative Effects

The Tier I Draft EIS generally analyzed the potential environmental effects of the proposed passenger rail service on a broad scale at a conceptual level. The purpose of cumulative effects analysis is to identify the potential environmental effects of each alternative in combination with other major improvements in the corridor. The results presented are qualitative. Consideration of the specific cumulative effects of the Preferred Alternative at a more quantitative level, including site-specific development effects, would be undertaken as part of the subsequent analysis.

Improvement projects included in the cumulative effects analysis are relevant transportation improvement projects approved for implementation under the Status Quo and No Action Alternatives. The cumulative project list focuses on those that, when combined with the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project, could contribute to cumulative impacts. The following criteria were used to narrow the list of projects considered in the analysis:

- Projects that are under active consideration.
- Projects that have recently been completed or are in some active stage of completing project-level environmental documentation.
- Projects that would be completed or operational within the timeframe being considered for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project.
- Projects in proximity to and of a size/scale that, in combination with the Preferred Alternative, have the potential to affect the same resources.

Note that only transportation improvement projects are considered in this analysis. Additional types of projects, depending on their relevancy, could be included in the subsequent analysis of secondary and cumulative effects. Projections for population, employment and urbanization were used to describe the probable cumulative effects on land use and development.

## 5.2 Legal and Regulatory Context

### 5.2.1 Secondary Effects

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)/NEPA regulations require that potential secondary effects be analyzed for federally funded projects. The CEQ implementing regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508) require that an EIS include a discussion of environmental consequences including “indirect effects and their significance” (40 CFR 1502.16). In addressing potential uncertainties in this type of analysis, the CEQ regulations require the EIS to make a “good faith effort” to identify and disclose indirect or secondary effects (CEQ, 1981).

### 5.2.2 Cumulative Effects

The CEQ/NEPA regulations also require that potential cumulative effects be analyzed for federally funded projects. Cumulative impacts result when the effects of an action are added to, or interact with, other effects in a particular place and within a particular time. The combination of these effects and any resulting environmental degradation is the focus of this cumulative impact analysis. The CEQ/NEPA implementing regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508) require that an EIS include a discussion of environmental consequences including “...the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions” (40 CFR 1508.7). In addressing potential uncertainties in this type of analysis, CEQ requires the EIS to make a “good faith effort” to identify and disclose cumulative effects (CEQ, 1981).

## 5.3 Potential for Secondary and Cumulative Effects

### 5.3.1 Secondary Effects

Secondary effects are those effects that would be caused by a proposed Build alternative and would happen sometime *after* or some distance from where the proposed project is built. Secondary effects attributable to the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project would be mainly due to the construction of the proposed stations. This is due to residential and commercial development potentially induced by the project that could occur on undeveloped land within a three-to-five-mile radius of access points to the proposed rail service. The proposed stations would serve as those access points. Implementing higher speed rail within a corridor does not, in and of itself, cause secondary development to occur. Typically, local jurisdictions have plans in place that may allow greater development to occur around such transportation improvements; however, development may occur regardless of whether or not stations are built. The potential positive and negative secondary effects of the Preferred Alternative are shown in Table 5-1. The table reflects those areas where impacts are most likely to occur.

It is important to note that the potential secondary effects presented here are overviews of likely impacts expected along the two routes that comprise the Preferred Alternative. Actual secondary impacts may be greater or lesser once the configuration of the Preferred Alternative is more specifically determined during subsequent analysis.

**Table 5-1: Potential Secondary Effects**

Issue/Concern	Potential Secondary Effect
Transportation Effects	▪ Increased traffic from potential induced development
Air Quality	▪ Localized air quality impacts from increased traffic due to potential induced development
Noise	▪ Noise impacts from increased traffic due to potential induced development
Land Use Patterns	▪ Change in development and property value around stations ▪ Local economic effects from change in development and property value around stations
Economic Development Potential	▪ Economic development around rail stations, with increased employment opportunities and increased tax revenues
Communities and Environmental Justice	▪ Effects on communities due to change in development and property values, and associated traffic impacts due to induced development
Wetlands	▪ Potential wetland impacts from induced development
Prime Farmland	▪ Potential loss of prime farmland soils as a result of induced development
Wildlife Habitat	▪ Potential wildlife habitat impacts from induced development

### 5.3.2 Cumulative Effects

Table 5-2 lists each project considered as part of the cumulative effects analysis. The table also provides the geographic location of each project and project status. During Tier II analysis of the Preferred Alternative, this list will be updated to include any new projects that should be assessed as part of this analysis.

**Table 5-2: Summary of Other Transportation Projects for Cumulative Effects Assessment**

Other Transportation Projects	Location	Relationship to Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project	Implementation Status
<b>DRPT Projects</b>			
Southeast High Speed Rail Project (SEHSR)	Washington, DC to Charlotte, NC - Connections in Richmond and Petersburg	This project would connect to the SEHSR project and the Northeast Corridor	To be completed by 2020
CSX Acca Bypass	Peninsula/CSXT route - Richmond, Newport News	Includes adding a bypass track for passenger trains around Acca Yard and building a second track on the Peninsula/CSXT route to improve on-time performance and service frequencies of existing Amtrak trains.	Alternative Considered but Dismissed, May 2009; PE and design underway.
Route 460/Heartland Corridor Initiative	Crewe to Suffolk	Will increase freight rail traffic on the Southside/NS route; includes new turnouts and crossovers for the proposed in Suffolk and Petersburg.	Complete September 2010
Norfolk Portsmouth Belt Line Improvements	Norfolk	Includes the acquisition of 33.5 acres of land and the repair and upgrading of track and rail infrastructure of the Norfolk & Portsmouth Belt Line railroad. The project is proximate to the proposed Norfolk Station on the Southside/NS route.	To be completed in 2011
<b>VDOT Projects</b>			
I-64 Widening	Newport News to New Kent	I-64 runs parallel to the Peninsula/CSXT route	PE and right-of-way acquisition under way
Route 60 Relocation and Upgrade	James City County	Route 60 runs parallel to Peninsula/CSXT route	PE complete, 2005. right-of-way acquisition underway
I-64 Bridge over Acca Railroad	Henrico County	Rehabilitation and widening of bridge that runs over the Acca Railroad near the Peninsula/CSXT route	Completed 2007
Route 460 Location Study	Suffolk	Route 460 runs parallel to the Southside/NS route	FEIS/ROD complete. PPTA proposal solicitation for construction underway.
I-295 Widening	Henrico	Project is just south of the Southside/NS route	Under construction
<b>Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) Projects</b>			
Ferry Expansion	Downtown Newport News to Naval Station	Proposed downtown Newport News rail station on the Peninsula/CSXT route may provide a connection to the ferry	To be completed by 2013
Norfolk Light Rail (The Tide)	Norfolk, VA - Park-and-ride lot shared with Harbor Park Stadium	Proposed station location on the Southside/NS route	To be completed by 2011

Notes: PE: Preliminary Engineering; Draft EIS: Draft Environmental Impact Statement; FEIS: Final Environmental Impact Statement; BRT: Bus Rapid Transit.

Source: Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Virginia Department of Transportation, and Hampton Roads Transit websites, accessed August 2010.

A general description of the potential types of cumulative effects on resources is included in the cumulative effect analysis in Table 5-3. A summary of all potential effects of the project is provided in Chapter 6, Evaluation of Alternatives.

**Table 5-3: Summary of Potential Cumulative Effects**

Issue/Concern	Status Quo Alternative	No Action Alternative	Preferred Alternative
Freight rail operations	Potential cumulative effect in conjunction with other projects due to increased freight rail shipping proposed under other projects and proposed passenger rail operations.		Potential cumulative effect in conjunction with other projects due to increased freight rail shipping proposed under other projects and proposed passenger rail operations.
Traffic	There would be increased congestion and adverse impacts on passenger travel and goods movement along the existing roadways.		Implementation of the passenger rail service would not lead to a considerable contribution to the cumulative impact related to highway use but could contribute to the cumulative impact related to surface streets leading to and from proposed stations.  <b>Southside/NS Route:</b> Cumulative traffic impacts could be pronounced at the proposed rail station in downtown Norfolk as part of this project and the Norfolk Light Rail Project. Potential cumulative effects could also result at the proposed Petersburg and Richmond station areas, which would be shared with the SEHSR project. The proposed Bower's Hill station traffic impacts could also be pronounced.
Air Quality	Cumulative effects expected.		Regional benefit by attracting riders away from long-distance auto travel; local emissions impacts from automobile travel to access stations in conjunction with other projects within the study area.
Noise and Vibration	Potential cumulative impacts due to freight rail and additional roadway capacity improvements in the study area.		Potential adverse local effects on both routes from the cumulative increase in passenger and freight train operations, particularly at grade crossings.
Land Use	Land use changes within the Richmond/Hampton Roads study area would continue to occur as a result of planned transportation improvements. Major improvement projects would influence the location, density and type of development that would occur. Planned residential and commercial development would also continue.		<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route:</b> Freight rail improvements would primarily occur within the existing right-of-way. Therefore, no cumulative land use effects would occur. Roadway improvement projects within the study area would have an additional effect, particularly at major intersections/interchanges where potentially both planned developments and less desirable land uses could occur.  <b>Southside/NS Route:</b> Freight rail improvements would primarily occur within the existing right-of-way, with the exception of the Norfolk Portsmouth Belt Line Improvements. As such, it is expected that cumulative land uses would occur. Roadway improvement projects within the study area would have an additional effect particularly at major intersections/interchanges, where potentially both planned developments and less desirable land uses could occur. The proposed Downtown Norfolk station location is in the same location as one proposed for the Norfolk Light Rail project. Cumulative effects on land uses and parking would occur at this location. Potential cumulative land use effects could also result at the proposed Petersburg and Richmond station locations that would be shared with the SEHSR project, in addition to the proposed Bower's Hill station.

Issue/Concern	Status Quo Alternative	No Action Alternative	Preferred Alternative
Population and Employment, Environmental Justice, and Community Resources	Population and employment growth would continue as projected. Other major projects would affect employment density, type, and timing of commercial development, especially at planned interchanges, rail stations, or designated commercial growth areas. No cumulative environmental justice effects are expected.		<p><b>Peninsula/CSXT Route:</b> No cumulative effects expected; same as No Action Alternative.</p> <p><b>Southside/NS Route:</b> <u>Population and Employment:</u> Population and employment in the area may increase above the current projections in conjunction with other projects within the study area, especially around station locations in the vicinity of proposed rail station areas. This would influence the density, employment mix, design and timing of commercial development. The potential also exists for housing needs to increase to accommodate the likely increases in population and employment.</p> <p><u>Environmental Justice:</u> Benefit from improved mobility options provided by all transportation projects under construction or planned within the study area. Potential cumulative effects would be related to quality of life, which could include noise and vibration impacts, barrier effects, aesthetics, and safety, particularly at grade crossings.</p> <p><u>Communities and Community Facilities:</u> Potential cumulative effects would be related to quality of life, which could include noise and vibration impacts, barrier effects, aesthetics, and safety, particularly at grade crossings.</p>
Parklands	No cumulative effects expected.		Potential cumulative impacts could include proximity effects, such as noise impacts, on the resource.
Hazardous and Contaminated Materials	No cumulative effects expected.		No cumulative effects are expected as each project must assess and meet applicable requirements regarding potential effects from sites of concern or the use of hazardous and contaminated materials.
Cultural and Archaeological Resources	Proximity effects due to increased freight train frequencies on historic architectural resources.		Potential cumulative effects would be primarily due to increased noise and vibration as a result of increased passenger and freight train frequencies on both routes.
Hydrologic and Water Resources	No cumulative effects expected.		Possible cumulative effects due to increased impervious ground surfaces, stormwater run-off and water quality.
Biological Resources	No cumulative effects expected.		Possible cumulative effects due to land use conversion resulting in habitat loss.

### 5.3.3 Conclusions

The potential for secondary and cumulative effects exists for the Preferred Alternative. The effects, however, are not expected to substantially alter development patterns within the corridor outside the vicinity of the proposed station locations. Effects would primarily be attributable to projects considered part of the Status Quo and No Action Alternative and secondary development that may occur at the proposed station areas with the Preferred Alternative. More in-depth evaluations of potential secondary and cumulative effects would be conducted during subsequent analysis once an alternative is selected and proposed locations for facilities are determined.

### 5.4 Subsequent Analysis

During subsequent analysis, secondary effects of the Preferred Alternative as they relate to traffic, development, land use and pollution would be evaluated in greater detail. Additionally, to determine the cumulative effects of the selected alternative, all development projects expected to occur within the study area will be reviewed in conjunction with the social, environmental, economic and transportation effects that would result from implementation of the project.



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# CHAPTER 6 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

## 6.0 Introduction

During the preparation of the Tier I Draft EIS, five alternatives were evaluated. After the public comment period, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) made a recommendation to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) on a Preferred Alternative. After evaluating each alternative and comparing the benefits and impacts and considering the public comments received, FRA and DRPT have identified Build Alternative 1: Southside Higher Speed/Peninsula Conventional as the Preferred Alternative. This chapter provides a comparative evaluation of the Preferred Alternative to both the Status Quo and No Action alternatives. Table 6-1 provides a summary comparative matrix of the alternatives discussed and highlights which alternative performs the best in terms of supporting the project's purpose and need.

## 6.1 Methodology

In the Tier I Draft EIS, each of the alternatives was rated on its ability to meet the established purpose of and need and supporting goals and objectives of the project based on the analysis conducted during the Tier I Draft EIS. However for purposes of the Tier I Final EIS, the Preferred Alternative is compared to the Status Quo and No Action alternatives in terms of how it specifically meets the purpose and need and established goals and objectives of the project.

## 6.2 Summary of Project Goals and Objectives

The project goals and objectives were developed based on the established purpose of the project and transportation needs described in Chapter 1. As stated, the purpose of the project is to provide a competitive transportation choice between Richmond and the Hampton Roads region that would effectively and efficiently expand the region's transportation system capacity and provide residents, tourists and visitors with a broader array of reliable transportation choices. The project represents a response to identified transportation needs in the corridor arising from growth. As part of project development, DRPT worked with stakeholders to develop the project's goals and objectives and to show each alternative's ability to meet the established purpose and need. Table 6-1 Project Goals and Objectives lists the goals and objectives used for this comparison of alternatives.

## 6.3 Comparison of Alternatives

The matrix below lists the goals and objectives of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project and provides a comparison of the Preferred Alternative to both the Status Quo and No Action alternatives. The goals and objectives were developed based on the purpose and need for the project and provide a means in which to measure how well an alternative meets the purpose and need. In general, the Preferred Alternative meets the project's purpose and need better than the Status Quo or No Action alternatives as presented in the information below. The Preferred Alternative will require infrastructure improvements along the Southside/NS route, therefore, there is a greater potential for this alternative to affect natural resources. However, as planning for the project progresses, it is expected that potential impacts can be avoided or minimized through context sensitive design of needed infrastructure improvements. Shaded boxes indicate the best performing alternative in each topic area. For detailed analysis related to each of these topic areas, see Chapter 3.0 of this document

As shown in Table 6-2, the Preferred Alternative better supports the project goals and objectives related to regional linkage, and ability to limit growth of highway congestion. It also provides greater benefits over the Status Quo and No Action alternatives in terms of providing for hurricane evacuation and improving regional air quality. Overwhelmingly, the public came out in support for selecting the Preferred Alternative (see Chapter 7.0 of this Tier I Final EIS) due to the mobility options provided by this alternative and its ability to serve the greater population of the Hampton Roads region by providing service to both Newport News and Norfolk.

**Table 6-1: Project Goals and Objectives**

Goals		Objectives
1	Regional Linkage	Improve trip reliability
		Reduce trip time
		Compatibility with Southeast High-Speed Rail
		Compatibility with Northeast Corridor
2	Limit Growth of Highway Congestion	Total rail passengers
		ADT volumes
		Congestion relief
3	Safety	Grade crossing protection
		Right-of-way
		Hurricane evacuation
4	Cost Effectiveness	Maximize system value by balancing costs and benefits
		Cost per passenger
5	Minimize Environmental Impacts	Meet air quality standards
		Avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wetlands</li> <li>• Floodplains</li> <li>• Wildlife habitats</li> </ul>
		Minimize operating noise
		Avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive land uses</li> <li>• Historic properties</li> <li>• Open spaces</li> </ul>

The Preferred Alternative, however, does not serve the project goals and objectives as well as the Status Quo or No Action alternative in terms of cost effectiveness or the ability to minimize environmental impacts. Analysis shows that when compared to the Status Quo and No Action alternatives, the Preferred Alternative costs more per rider, reflecting the higher level of infrastructure investment and annual operating costs. However, unlike the Status Quo and No Action alternatives, the Preferred Alternative is projected to achieve expected results by providing passenger rail service to both routes, and hence serving more people.

The Hampton Roads area, located in Virginia's coastal plain, is rich with natural resources. As such, a review of the study corridor identified numerous wetlands, floodplains and wildlife habitats along and crossed by both rail routes. During the public comment period, numerous comments were received on protecting sensitive resources, such as wetlands. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers specifically commented on the number of potential wetland impacts and that mitigation would be required for all unavoidable impacts. The Corps reiterated the importance of avoiding and minimizing impacts to these sensitive resources.

For purposes of this document, potential impacts to these resources are closely linked to construction activities that may alter existing rail infrastructure and right-of-way width, such as construction of sidings to allow for passing, potential alterations to existing structures along the rail lines, and potential facilities, such as passenger stations. Detailed engineering was not conducted as part of this study; therefore, site specific impacts along either rail route could not be identified during this phase of study. Site specific impacts would be documented as part of the Tier II analysis and documentation. Given that rail infrastructure improvements would be needed on the Southside/NS route, the Preferred Alternative has a greater potential to affect resources. It is expected that through proper planning and context sensitive design impacts can be avoided and minimized where possible. Continued coordination with overseeing agencies, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, will continue throughout the next phases of project development to ensure unavoidable impacts are mitigated appropriately.

Sensitive land uses, historic properties, and open spaces were identified along both routes. Impacts to these resources can occur either by a direct impact, such as a property take, or direct physical impact; proximity effects, such as introducing a new element adjacent to sensitive land uses that would alter or impair the intended use of the sensitive land use; or by a temporary adverse effect during construction. Given that the Preferred Alternative will require alternations to the existing rail infrastructure along the Southside/NS route, there is a greater potential for impacts to sensitive land uses, historic properties, and open spaces than with

either the Status Quo or No Action alternatives. While it is likely that direct impacts to these resources could be avoided or minimized through proper planning, any unavoidable impacts would be mitigated, as appropriate and coordinated with overseeing agencies. Appropriate measures would be undertaken during construction to avoid or minimize any temporary adverse effects to identified sensitive land uses, historic properties, and open spaces.

**Table 6-2: Comparative Matrix of Alternatives**

Goals/Objectives	Status Quo	No Action	Preferred Alternative
<b>1. Regional Linkage</b>			
Improve Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little change in mobility options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little change in mobility options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobility options improved</li> </ul>
Reduce Trip Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No rail capacity improvements</li> <li>70% on-time performance</li> <li>Rail provides travel time savings between Newport News/Richmond over automobile travel (0:37 min)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No rail capacity improvements.</li> <li>72% on-time performance</li> <li>Rail provides travel time savings between Newport News/Richmond over automobile travel (0:52)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rail capacity improvements</li> <li>84% on-time performance</li> <li>No travel time savings between Newport/News Richmond compared to No Action (rail/vehicle)</li> <li>Rail provides travel time savings between Newport News/Richmond over automobile travel (0:53)</li> </ul>
Compatibility with SEHSR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports SEHSR services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports SEHSR services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports SEHSR services to a greater degree given increased speed and frequencies of service</li> </ul>
Compatibility with NEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports NEC services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports NEC services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports NEC services to a greater degree given increased speed and frequencies of service</li> </ul>
<b>2. Limit Growth of Highway Congestion</b>			
Total rail passengers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High ridership estimate: 262,300</li> <li>Low ridership estimate: 245,500</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High ridership estimate: 464,800</li> <li>Low ridership estimate: 425,700</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High ridership estimate: 1,110,100</li> <li>Low ridership estimate: 939,600</li> </ul>
ADT volumes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely continued to increase, without benefit of improved rail within study area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely continued to increase, without benefit of improved rail within study area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely reduction in future volumes due to benefit of improved rail within study area</li> </ul>
Congestion relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improves ability to limit growth of highway congestion, particularly along Southside/NS route</li> </ul>
<b>3. Safety</b>			
Grade crossing protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No expected change in grade crossing protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No expected change in grade crossing protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvements to current grade crossing protection along the NS/Southside route</li> <li>Increased speeds require consolidation and closure of some public and private crossings along Southside/NS route</li> </ul>
Right-of-way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No expected change in current right-of-way protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No expected change in current right-of-way protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely changes in current right-of-way protection along the Southside/NS route</li> </ul>

Goals/Objectives	Status Quo	No Action	Preferred Alternative
Hurricane evacuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No expected change in ability for rail to provide for hurricane evacuation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No expected change in ability for rail to provide for hurricane evacuation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater ability for rail to provide for hurricane evacuation</li> </ul>
<b>4. Cost Effectiveness</b>			
Maximize system value by balancing costs & benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operating deficit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operating surplus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operating deficit</li> </ul>
Cost per passenger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High rider estimate: \$64.43</li> <li>Low rider estimate: \$68.84</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High rider estimate: \$45.83</li> <li>Low rider estimate: \$50.04</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High rider estimate: \$106.03</li> <li>Low rider estimate: \$125.46</li> </ul>
<b>5. Minimize Environmental Impacts</b>			
Meet air quality standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in regional automobile emissions likely to impact regional air quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some beneficial effect on regional air quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater beneficial effect on regional air quality</li> </ul>
Avoid, minimize & mitigate impacts to Wetlands Floodplains Wildlife habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current conditions remain the same for both routes</li> <li>No mitigation required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional trip on Peninsula/CSXT route may have a marginal impact on wetlands, floodplains, wildlife habitats that may exist within the rail right-of-way</li> <li>Impacts minimized, may require mitigation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater potential to impact wetlands, floodplains, wildlife habitats, particularly along Southside/NS route</li> <li>Potential impacts limited to areas to accommodate sidings, track work, station areas to upgrade existing freight rail to accommodate passenger trains operating at 90 mph MAS</li> <li>Impacts likely to require mitigation</li> </ul>
Minimize operating noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current conditions expected to continue</li> <li>Operating noise minimized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional roundtrip along Peninsula/CSXT route likely to increase frequency of noise exposure</li> <li>Operating noise marginally greater than Status Quo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional roundtrip along Peninsula/CSXT route likely to increase frequency of noise exposure</li> <li>New passenger service along Southside/NS route results in new noise source/exposure</li> <li>Operating noise greater than both the Status Quo and No Action</li> </ul>
Avoid, minimize & mitigate impacts to: Sensitive land uses Historic properties Open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current conditions expected to continue</li> <li>Impacts avoided, no mitigation necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current conditions marginally effected</li> <li>Impacts minimized, mitigation unlikely</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current conditions affected to a greater extent, particularly on the Southside/NS route</li> <li>Impacts likely require mitigation</li> </ul>

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# CHAPTER 7 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

## 7.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of public outreach and public involvement opportunities to date and documents the distribution of the Tier I Draft EIS and the public hearings held. An updated Appendix F is included with this document and provides copies of the public involvement materials referenced throughout this chapter as well as the public hearing transcripts, a summary of comments received, and responses to comments. Public information materials pertaining to the development of the Tier I Draft EIS are included in Appendix F of that document.

## 7.1 Public Outreach Activities and Information Exchange

The project's public participation program was designed to be proactive and responsive to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended. From the beginning of this project, DRPT has provided various avenues for public and agency participation and information exchange to include:

- Public and agency scoping meetings
- Establishment of a Technical Working Group (TWG)
- Public Workshops and Information meetings
- Targeted Stakeholder meetings
- Printed and electronic information materials updated during each phase of the project
- Project website ([www.rich2hrrail.com](http://www.rich2hrrail.com)) and [www.drpt.virginia.gov](http://www.drpt.virginia.gov)
- Project Information Phone Line
- Project Newsletters
- Project Press Releases to various media outlets

More specific information on each of these items is provided in the Tier I Draft EIS, Chapter 7 and Appendix F.

### 7.1.1 Distribution of Tier I Draft EIS

Upon completion of the Tier I Draft EIS, a Notice of Availability (NOA) was published in the Federal Register by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on December 18, 2009 and advertised through local media, the project website, and email alerts. A copy of this NOA is provided in Appendix F of this document.

The Tier I Draft EIS was widely distributed to various elected officials; federal, state, and local agencies; and provided to libraries and municipalities along the corridor. In total, 32 hard copy and 271 CD versions of the report were distributed. Table 7-1 lists persons and entities that received copies of the Tier I Draft EIS. The table also indicates the libraries and agency locations where citizens could view hard copies and digital versions of the report. In addition, the document was also available for review on the project web site.



**Table 7-1: Tier I Draft EIS Distribution**

<b>Federal Agencies</b>		
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	Natural Resources Conservation Service	
Federal Emergency Management Agency	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	
Federal Highway Administration, Region III	U.S. Department of Interior	
Federal Transit Administration, Region III	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	
National Marine Fisheries, Northeast Region	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	U.S. Department of Homeland Security	
National Park Service		
<b>Commonwealth of Virginia Agencies</b>		
Virginia Department of Transportation	Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Impact Review	
<b>Regional Agencies (hard copies for citizen viewing)</b>		
Richmond Regional Planning District Commission	Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRPTO)	
Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization	Hampton Roads Metropolitan Planning District Commission (HRPDC)	
Tri-Cities Metropolitan Planning Organization	Crater Planning District Commission	
<b>Local Government (City Managers)</b>		
City of Richmond	York County	Southampton County
Henrico County	City of Newport News	Isle of Wight County
New Kent County	City of Petersburg	City of Chesapeake
Charles City County	Prince George County	City of Portsmouth
James City County	City of Sussex	City of Norfolk
City of Williamsburg	Surry County	
<b>Libraries (hard copies and CDs for citizen viewing)</b>		
Caroline Library	Maude Langhorne Nelson Library	Richmond Public Library
Chesapeake Public Library	Newport News Public Library System	Suffolk Public Library System
Chesterfield County Public Library	Norfolk Main Library	Virginia Beach Central Library
Colonial Heights Public Library	Petersburg Public Library	Williamsburg Regional Library
Blackwater Regional Library	Portsmouth Public Library	York County Public Library
Hampton Public Library	County of Henrico Public Library	Gloucester Public Library
Pamunkey Regional Library		

<b>Elected Officials</b> (CD for each elected official from these jurisdictions)	
<b>Charles City County</b> (Cotman, Bowman, Smith,)	<b>City of Suffolk</b> (Bennett, Brown, Dawley, Barlow, Johnson, Barclay, Gardy, Milteer, Parr)
<b>Chesterfield County (Blakely</b>	
<b>City of Chesapeake</b> (West, deTriquet, Ritter, Hayes, Krasnoff, Mitchell, Moore, Collins, Parker, Ward, Willis)	<b>City of Virginia Beach</b> (Diezel, Dyer, Jones, Uhrin, Davis, Sessoms, Henley, DeSteph, Sinnen, Villanueva, Wilson, Wood)
<b>City of Emporia</b> (Adams, Harris, Whiting, Lankford, Carey, Temple, White, White, Saunders)	<b>City of Williamsburg</b> (Knudsen, Crist, Freiling, Haulman, Braxton, Zeidler)
<b>City of Franklin</b> (Council, Fetherolf, Hilliard, Johnson, Lawrence, Cheatham, Burgess)	<b>Dinwiddie County</b> (Talmage, Edwards Moody, Haraway, Moody, Stone)
<b>City of Hampton</b> (Batchelor Smith, Ward, Leary, Wallace, Spencer, Gilliland, Washington, Kearney)	<b>Hanover County</b> (Via, Stanley, Setliff, Wade, McGhee, Coats, Gordon, Donati, Glover, Kaechele, O'Bannon, Thornton,
<b>City of Hopewell</b> (Harris, Luman-Bailey, Emerson, Pelham, Stokes, Cuffey, Walton)	<b>Isle of Wight County</b> (Clark, Brown, Bradshaw, Casteen, Wright)
<b>City of Newport News</b> (Vick, Bateman, Davis, Frank, Woodbury, McMillan, Scott, Whitaker)	<b>James City County</b> (Kennedy, Goodson, Jones, Icenhour, McGlennon, Wanner)
<b>City of Norfolk</b> (Burfoot, Fraim, Hester, Whibley, Riddick, Shaefer, Williams, Winn, Wright)	<b>New Kent County</b> (Burrell, Davis, Evelyn, Sparks, Trout, Budesky, Nails)
<b>City of Petersburg</b> (Coleman, Edison, Mickens, Moore, Pritchett, Rice, Ross, Webb)	<b>Prince George County</b> (Charmichael, Foster, Parker, Robertson, Skalsky, Garton)
<b>City of Poquoson</b> (Meree, Freeman, Dale-Crawford, Helsel, Holloway, Hunt, Kreiger)	<b>Southampton County</b> (Brown, Faison, Felts, Jones, West, Wyche, Young)
<b>City of Portsmouth</b> (Heretick, Holley, Moody, Psimas, Randall, Whitehurst, Smith, White)	<b>Surry County</b> (Harrison, Holmes, Blount, Lyttle, Seward, Clayton)
<b>City of Richmond</b> (Graziano, Hilbert, Trammel, Jewell, Tyler, Connor, Squire, Samuels, Robertson, Jones)	<b>Sussex County</b> (Cagle, Birdsong, Fly, Harrell, Parker, Tyler)
Town of Windsor (Crocker)	Town of Dendron (Muncy)
Town of Boykins (Edwards)	Town of Jarratt (Nye)
Town of Newsoms (Porter)	Town of Stony Creek (Baicy)
Town of Branchville (Harris)	Town of Wakefield (Birdsong)
Town of Capron (Braham)	Town of Waverly (Irving)
Town of Courtland (Davis)	Town of McKenney (Mansfield)
Town of Ivor (Joyner)	Town of Smithfield (Hare)
Town of Claremont (Seward)	Town of Surry (Holt)

Source: AECOM 2010

### 7.1.2 Public Hearings

Three public hearings were held between January 26 and January 28, 2010 at three separate locations along the project corridor. The hearings were advertised in the Federal Register NOA, local and regional newspapers, on the project website, via email notifications to special interest groups and to those for whom the project team had contact information, and a press release distributed by DRPT to state, local and regional media outlets. Two e-mail notifications were sent to individuals for whom the project team had contact information as a reminder of the public hearing dates and locations. The first was sent on January 12, 2010 with the follow up reminder sent on January 21, 2010. Copies of the e-mail notices are included in the updated Appendix F of this Tier I Final EIS. These notices included locations of Tier I Draft EIS for public review and details of the public hearing schedule. Table 7-2 lists the newspapers and placement dates of the advertisement.

**Table 7-2: Newspaper Placement**

Newspaper	Placement Dates
<b>Main Papers</b>	
Richmond Times Dispatch	1/12/10, 1/23/10
Daily Press	1/13/10, 1/24/10
Virginian Pilot	1/14/10, 1/23/10
Petersburg Progress Index	1/12/10, 1/17/10
<b>Smaller Papers</b>	
Suffolk News Herald	1/17/10
Virginia Gazette	1/20/10
Hopewell News	1/22/10
<b>Ethnic/Urban Papers</b>	
Richmond Free Press	1/21/10
New Journal & Guide (Norfolk)	1/21/10

Source: Cordell &amp; Crumley 2010

The public hearings were well attended with over 700 people attending the three meetings. Table 7-3 presents the date, location, and attendance for each public hearing.

**Table 7-3: Public Hearings- Date, Location and Attendance**

Date	Public Hearing Location	# Attend
1/26/10	Public Hearing Meeting 1: Department of Motor Vehicles 2300 W. Broad Street, 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, Richmond, VA 23269	45
1/27/10	Public Hearing Meeting 2: City Center Conference Facilities 700 Town Center Drive, Newport News, VA 23606	90
1/28/10	Public Hearing Meeting 3: Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center One Waterside Drive, Norfolk, VA 23510	594
TOTAL:		729

Source: Cordell &amp; Crumley 2010

Each meeting was scheduled from 5:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. and consisted of a formal presentation offered at 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Project display boards and members of the project team were available at each meeting to assist the public and answer any questions. Various handouts were also provided at each meeting, to include project information, comment forms, and directions on how to access the project website and online survey. Following the presentation, public testimony was recorded by a court recorder. In addition, comment forms were provided at the hearings for attendees. People were also given the opportunity to fill out online comment forms and an online survey via *Survey Monkey*([www.surveymonkey.com/s/RHRProjecthearingFeb09](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RHRProjecthearingFeb09)). The presentation, display boards, meeting handouts, public hearing transcripts, comment form, and online survey questions are provided in Appendix F.

### 7.1.3 Project Web Site ([www.rich2hrrail.info](http://www.rich2hrrail.info))

The project web site maintained up to date information on project status, availability of the Tier I Draft EIS for review, previous publications, and schedule and locations for the public hearings. The web site also contained the Tier I Draft EIS, comment forms, and a link to the on-line project survey.

### 7.1.4 E-mail Information Distribution

Two e-mail notifications were sent to individuals for whom the project team had contact information as a reminder of the public hearing dates and locations. The first was sent on January 12, 2010 with the follow up reminder sent on January 21, 2010. Copies of the e-mail notices are included in Appendix F. These notices included locations of Tier I Draft EIS for public review and details of the public hearing schedule.

### 7.2.5 Special Interest Group Outreach

E-mails were sent to City/County Public Information Offices within the study area. In addition, the PDC's were asked to forward meeting information to their mailing lists.

## 7.2.6 Media Relations

A press release was also developed and distributed by DRPT to state, local and regional media outlets. Additionally, the news release information was included in DRPT's RSS Feed. Numerous news articles appeared in the local newspapers and the public hearing in Norfolk received television coverage. Table 7-4 shows the newspaper, reporter name, report title and date for each media documentation of the project following Tier I Draft EIS distribution.

**Table 7-4: Media Attendance at Public Hearings**

<b>Newspaper and Reporter Name</b>	<b>Resulting Media Documentation</b>
<b>Richmond Meeting on 1/26/10</b>	
Richmond Times Dispatch (Peter Bacque)	1/27: Routes pitched for high-speed rail in Virginia
<b>Newport News Meeting on 1/27/10</b>	
Virginia Pilot (Debbie Messina)	1/28: Top high-speed rail option emerges. Leaders find common ground with a plan to build south of river.
Daily Press (Austin Bogues)	1/28: Public addresses high-speed rail at meeting in Newport News
WTKR TV 3 (CBS) Photographer	N/A
Newport News City Cable Channel Photographer	N/A
<b>Norfolk Meeting on 1/28/10</b>	
WAVY TV 10 (NBC) (Melanie Woodrow)	N/A
Virginia Pilot (Harry Minimum)	1/29: Supporters of high-speed rail pack Norfolk hearing
The Hampton Roads Business Journal, Inside Business (by Philip Newswanger)	2/12: Rail advocates spurred to action
Veer Magazine (Jeff Maisey)	2/12: All Aboard? Time for Decision On High-Speed Rail to Hampton Roads
City of Norfolk Cable Channel 48, Photographer	N/A

Source: Cordell & Crumley 2010

## 7.2.7 Public Hearings

In January 2010, three identical public hearings were held from 5:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. with formal presentation offered at 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Public testimony was recorded following each presentation. Throughout the evening, project display boards were available for public review and members of the project team were present to answer questions.

The following display boards and handouts were used, in addition to a PowerPoint presentation, to communicate project information. Copies of the PowerPoint presentation and the following documents may be found in the updated Appendix F of this Tier I Final EIS.

Display boards were set up around the room and included:

- Study process and outcome
- NEPA study process
- Project need
- Study schedule
- Alternatives under consideration
- Traffic, socioeconomic, and land use factors
- Natural resources, parklands, cultural resources, air quality, noise, energy
- Public participation process

Handouts included:

- Comment Forms
- Evaluation of Alternatives matrix
- Information Package/brochure

- Web site/Electronic Comment Form
- Promotional Business Card
- Civil Rights Survey

### 7.3 Public and Agency Comments

Public Hearing participants and project stakeholders were encouraged to offer their input and comments for the project team. The official Tier I Draft EIS comment period for agencies and members of the public extended from December 18, 2009 to February 12, 2010.

Printed comment forms were available at each public hearing, a PDF comment form was made available on the project web site, and an electronic comment form was circulated by e-mail and promoted during the hearings. Additionally, an official transcript was prepared for each public hearing and all comments were collected from these transcripts.

Finally, a *Survey Monkey* ([www.surveymonkey.com/s/RHRProjecthearingFeb09](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RHRProjecthearingFeb09)). survey was available on-line, offering multiple choice questions and space for written comment. A link from the project web site provided access to the project's *Survey Monkey* site. The *Survey Monkey* questions are located in Appendix F.

All comments from the above described sources were organized into categories and responses were prepared for each individual comment. This comment and response document is located in Appendix F. Comments have been considered and incorporated into this Tier I Final EIS as appropriate.

In addition to the materials relating to public outreach, Appendix F also includes a list of commenters and identification numbers and all comments received, with responses. The contents of Appendix F are organized as follows:

1. Section 1: Commenter Identification Numbers
2. Section 2: Elected Officials Comment/Response Matrix
3. Section 3: Agency Comment/Response Matrix
4. Section 4: Public and Stakeholder Comment/Response Matrix
5. Section 5: Survey Monkey Comment/Response Matrix
6. Public Hearing Transcripts (3)
7. Notice of Availability 12/24/09
8. Media outreach
9. Sign-In sheets
10. Explanation of Survey Monkey
11. E-mail sent out to advertise the public hearing
12. Newspaper ads for public hearing
13. Display boards and handouts from public meetings, and PowerPoint presentation.
14. US Department of Interior Correspondence Received 4/15/10

In total, 1256 public and agency comments were received during the comment period. Table 7-5 summarizes the number of comments received by commenter type.

**Table 7-5: Number of Comments Received by Commenter Type**

Type of Commenter	Number of Comments	Percent of Total
Elected Official	50	4.0
Federal Agency	21	1.7
State Agency	32	2.5
Local Agency	175	13.9
Advocacy Group	116	9.2
Freight Railroad Owner/Operator	38	3.0
Trade Association	3	0.2
Public	411	32.7
Survey Monkey	410	32.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,256</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AECOM 2010

### 7.3.1 Comment Themes

Approximately, 630 agencies, individuals, interest groups, and stakeholders provided comments on the Tier I Draft EIS, resulting in over 1,200 individual comments (846 written comments and 410 comments received via *Survey Monkey*). Each commenter was designated with a unique identification number to track and compile comments into comment response matrices. The identification numbers for each commenter are provided in Section 1 of Appendix F. Following Section 1 are the comment/matrices grouped by commenter type. The project team provided a response for each written comment.

In general, the majority of the comments received from the public were in support of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's (HRTPO) resolution that adopted an Enhanced Alternative 1 as the Preferred Alternative. The resolution endorsed the designation of a "High-Speed Rail" corridor along the Norfolk Southern/US Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph; and in conjunction with the high-speed rail corridor, the enhancement of the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/Amtrak/I-64 corridor. While many of the comments received were in support of the alternative presented by the HRTPO, Enhanced Alternative 1, this is not the Preferred Alternative presented and documented in this Tier I Final EIS.

The following summarizes the primary comment categories and opinions expressed during the comment period from all comment sources:

#### Support for Alternative 1 and Enhanced Alternative 1:

- Support for an Enhanced Alternative 1, specifically the HRTPO October 2009 resolution supporting and outlining the specific elements of an Enhanced Alternative 1.
- The majority of the Hampton Roads population is located on the Southside.
- Provides connectivity to the Tide light rail system at Harbor Park. Also connections to bus, ferry, and cruise ship facilities at Harbor Park.
- The Southside has been ignored in the past with regard to rail service.
- Will offer the best return on investment of any corridor in the country.
- Bower's Hill station would offer easy access to I-264.
- Enhanced Alternative 1 is the most cost effective option due to the modest investment over a short period of time offering significant improvement to rail service.
- The long straight section between Petersburg and Suffolk is an asset for the Southside HSR service.

#### Purpose and Need:

- Severe current and expected future traffic congestion.
- Need for improved emergency exit options for hurricanes or other disasters.
- The region houses operations for 16 departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government including all five military services. Also home to the nation's largest naval

facility. Provides primary air defense to our nation's capital and homeland security to our port and seacoast. Therefore, dependable, efficient, and cost effective travel to and from D.C. is vital to civilian and military operations and to the economy of the region.

- This is a critical piece of a strong east coast rail system.
- Economic benefits of improved transportation connections along the east coast, especially to Richmond and Washington D.C. facilitating job growth in Hampton Roads.
- The region's ports, among other Virginia assets will prosper from well planned transportation improvements.
- Port of Virginia is the third largest port on the east coast.
- The cost of travel to the area discourages investment.
- The interstate highway system passed by Hampton Roads in the 1960s. Do not want this to happen to the area again with HSR.
- Reduce dependence on building highways, bridges, and tunnels.
- The HSR project will create or sustain 30,000 jobs and create \$3 billion in economic development for the area.
- Access for more than 5 million tourists annually. Rail service will supplement the increasingly congested interstate corridor.
- Business efficiency of working on a train verses driving and sitting in traffic.
- Businesses are more likely to locate in Hampton Roads if there are inexpensive reliable transportation options. Congestion is becoming a deterrent to locating businesses and doing business in the region.
- Support multi-modal, sustainable cities. Improve quality of life.

#### **Cost and Funding:**

- Concerns over economic viability of the project since figures in the report show that the build alternatives would generally operate at a deficit. The northeast corridor Amtrak service has shown us that it's possible to operate reliable, frequent, fast Amtrak service at a surplus.
- The state already needs to find a way to pay for the intercity rail service we have today. We need to save what we already have as we move toward the future.
- The data used in calculating financial estimates should be updated. Much of the data dates from 2004, excludes defense department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not likely to be built. Revised cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates are needed for the final document in order to compete with submittals for other metro areas.
- The crescent formed by rail from DC to Richmond, Petersburg, and Norfolk should be the highest priority for funding, ahead of the application for Tier II SEHSR funding from Richmond to Raleigh.
- Norfolk Southern presumes it will not be required to conduct or fund any mitigation required by a final EIS, or maintenance costs associated with the new service.

#### **Ridership Analysis:**

- Concern that the ridership numbers are understated because they are based on FY2007 figures.

#### **Railroad Operations:**

- The Commonwealth should be mindful of the adverse impacts of future passenger rail on current and future freight operations.
- High speed passenger rail trains will require substantially higher maintenance costs and enhanced track infrastructure.

#### **Hydrologic and Water Resources:**

- Wetland impact concerns, particularly secondary and cumulative impacts.
- Concern over potential wetlands impacts, particularly with regard to the Bowers Hill station area.

- Running the service on the Norfolk Southern line would have less impact on the swamplands.

**Land Use Technical Analysis:**

- Question about the indirect land use impacts of the project.
- Would be valuable for stations to be walkable for some people.

**Alternatives Considered:**

- Suggestion to run the corridor down the Peninsula, and across the water to Norfolk, continuing south. This could avoid making Hampton Roads a spur from the main SEHSR line.

**Other:**

- Need for a service that does not include a train transfer in Washington D.C.
- Concerns over data sources, in particular the need to use the latest available population figures.
- Make the improvements on the corridors incrementally, with the first step being improvement to on-time performance.
- Rail transportation is eco-friendly, less energy intensive compared with cars.
- There is a great showing of unity within the region in support of an Enhanced Alternative 1 and HSR in general for the region.

## 7.4 Written Comments

This section provides a brief overview of the themes that emerged in the written comments further detailed by commenter type, organized by elected official, public agency, and public and stakeholder comments. Elected officials include federal, state, and local representatives. Public agencies include federal, state and local agencies. Public and stakeholder comments include the general public, railroads, advocacy groups, and professional trade associations. The project team responded to each written comment in this document. Comment/response matrices grouped by commenter type, are provided in Appendix F. Each commenter was assigned a numerical identifier which can be used to more quickly reference individual comments in the comment/response matrices. The updated Appendix F of this document provides a table listing commenter identification numbers. (The commenter identification numbers index provides only those that had a name and/or organization provided. Anonymous comments are not included in this index; however, those comments are included in the comment/response matrix with a unique identification number.)

### 7.4.1 Elected Officials

Comments from elected officials were primarily from local and state representatives as well as U.S. Congress members. These comments accounted for 5.9 percent of the comments received during the public comment period. Table 7-6 quantifies and summarizes the themes expressed by elected officials, which were wider ranging but nearly 50 percent of the comments were technical corrections or clarifications. The updated Appendix F included with this document provides a complete record of comments received from elected officials as well as project team responses.



**Table 7-6: Summary of Elected Official Comments**

Type of Comment	Number of Comments	Percent of Total
Support for Enhanced Alternative 1	6	12.0
Economic Development	6	12.0
Funding	5	10.0
Highway Congestion Relief	4	8.0
Enhanced Travel Options	4	8.0
Better service for DOD	3	6.0
Process/Analysis	3	6.0
Technical-outdated base data	2	4.0
Agency coordination	2	4.0
Support for Alternative 1	2	4.0
Emergency Evacuation	2	4.0
General Support for HSR	1	2.0
Benefits to the Built Environment	1	2.0
EIS process	1	2.0
Economic Development	1	2.0
General Support	1	2.0
Technical-Speed	1	2.0
Other	1	2.0
Ridership	1	2.0
Speed	1	2.0
Support for Alternative 1; Economic development/ tourism benefit of the project	1	2.0
General Comments	1	2.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AECOM 2010

## 7.4.2 Public Agencies

### 7.4.2.1 Federal Agencies

Federal agency comments accounted for 2.5 percent of the comments during the public comment period. Table 7-7 quantifies and summarizes the themes expressed by federal agencies which were primarily NEPA technical and process orientated. The updated Appendix F included with this document provides a complete record of the federal agency comments received as well as project team responses.

**Table 7-7: Summary of Federal Agency Comments**

Type of Comment	Number of Comments	Percent of Total
Analysis	3	14.3
Editorial	2	9.5
Process	2	9.5
Mitigation	2	9.5
Alternatives	1	4.8
Analysis - Aquatic Resources	1	4.8
Cost Analysis	1	4.8
Cultural/Historic Resources	1	4.8
Agency coordination	1	4.8
Methodology	1	4.8
Technical: Visual and Noise Impacts	1	4.8
Permitting	1	4.8
Purpose and Need	1	4.8
Support Alternative 2b	1	4.8
Technical: Mitigation	1	4.8
General Support	1	4.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AECOM 2010

### 7.4.2.2 State Agencies

State agency comments accounted for 3.8 percent of the comments received during the public comment period. Table 7-8 quantifies and summarizes the themes expressed by state agencies which were primarily NEPA technical and resource orientated. The updated Appendix F included with this document provides a complete record of the state agency comments received as well as project team responses.

**Table 7-8: Summary of State Agency Comments**

Type of Comment	Number of Comments	Percent of Total
Natural Heritage Resources	7	21.9
Fisheries and Wildlife Management	3	9.4
Open Space and Recreational Resources	3	9.4
Wetlands	3	9.4
Technical- Wetland Impacts	2	6.3
Erosion and Sediment and Stormwater Management Controls	2	6.3
Surface waters	1	3.1
Solid and Hazardous Waste Management	1	3.1
Public Water Supply and Sanitary Sewage Systems	1	3.1
Pollution Prevention	1	3.1
Technical- Federal Consistency	1	3.1
Air Pollution Control	1	3.1
Geologic Resources	1	3.1
Forestry Resources	1	3.1
Transportation Impacts	1	3.1
Editorial	1	3.1
Chesapeake Bay Act	1	3.1
Historical and Archaeological Resources	1	3.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AECOM 2010

### 7.4.2.3 Local Agencies

Local agency comments accounted for 20.7 percent of the comments received during the public comment period. Table 7-9 quantifies and summarizes the themes expressed by local agencies which were wider ranging but nearly 50 percent of the comments were made for technical corrections or clarifications. The updated Appendix F included in this document provides a complete record of the local agency comments received as well as project team responses.

**Table 7-9: Summary of Local Agency Comments**

Type of Comment	Number Of Comments	Percent of Total
Editorial	20	11.4
Factual Error(s)/Non-agreement	12	6.9
Support for Enhanced Alternative 1	6	3.4
Economic Development	6	3.4
Process/Analysis	5	2.9
Support for Alternative 1	4	2.3
Funding	3	1.7
Technical	84	48.0
Enhanced Travel Options	3	1.7
Better service for DOD	2	1.1
General Support	2	1.1
Emergency Evacuation	2	1.1
Technical- Station location	2	1.1
All Other	24	13.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AECOM 2010

## 7.4.3 Public and Stakeholders

### 7.4.3.1 Freight Railroads

Comments from the railroads accounted for 4.5 percent of the comments received during the public comment period. Table 7-10 quantifies and summarizes the themes expressed by the railroads which were primarily focused on rail operations, design, and costs. The updated Appendix F included with this document provides a complete record of railroad comments received as well as project team responses.

**Table 7-10: Summary of Railroad Comments**

Type of Comment	Number of Comments	Percent of Total
Rail Infrastructure	10	26.3
Funding and Costs	6	15.8
Freight Rail Operations	5	13.2
Operating Speeds	3	7.9
Grade Crossing Safety	2	5.3
Editorial	2	5.3
Agency coordination	2	5.3
Station Location	1	2.6
Right of Entry Agreement	1	2.6
Quiet Zones	1	2.6
Process/Analysis	1	2.6
Permitting	1	2.6
On-time performance	1	2.6
Mitigation	1	2.6
Freight Rail Maintenance	1	2.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AECOM 2010

### 7.4.3.2 Advocacy Groups

Written comments were received from 27 different advocacy groups. Table 7-11 quantifies and summarizes the broad themes expressed by various advocacy groups in written comments. The updated Appendix F included with this document provides a complete record of the advocacy group comments received as well as project team responses.

**Table 7-11: Summary of Advocacy Group Comments**

Type of Comment	Number of Comments	Percent of Total
Support for an Enhanced Alternative 1	17	14.9
Economic Development	12	10.5
Enhanced Travel Options	9	7.9
Better service for DOD	6	5.3
General Support	5	4.4
Highway Congestion Relief	5	4.4
Ridership	5	4.4
Resolution	4	3.5
Other	4	3.5
Funding	4	3.5
Reliable Service	4	3.5
Station Location	3	2.6
Emergency Evacuation	3	2.6
Technical	3	2.6
Environmental Benefits	3	2.6
Cost-effective	2	1.8
Environmental Impacts	2	1.8
Return on Investment	2	1.8
All Other	21	18.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AECOM 2010

### 7.4.3.3 Public

Nearly 50 percent of the comments received during the comment period were public comments. Table 7-12 quantifies and summarizes the broad themes expressed in the public comments. The updated Appendix F of this Tier I Final EIS provides a complete record of the public comments received as well as project team responses. Note the summary table excludes *Survey Monkey* comments discussed in the next section.

### 7.4.3.4 Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com)

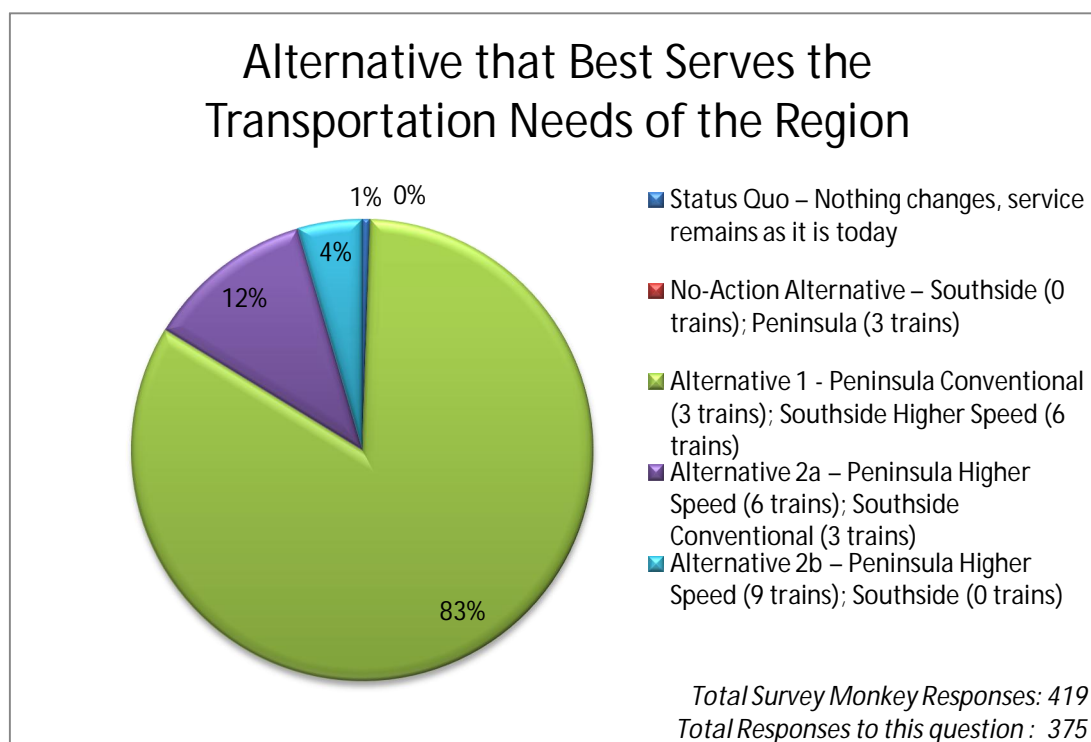
Figure 7-1 is a summary of the 375 multiple choice responses to the *Survey Monkey* project site. 83 percent of *Survey Monkey* respondents expressed support for Alternative 1. *Survey Monkey* also allowed for public comments, and 410 comments were received through the site during the comment period. The comment/response matrix for *Survey Monkey* comments is provided in the updated Appendix F of this Tier I Final EIS.

**Table 7-12: Summary of Written Public Comments**

Type of Comment	Number of Comments	Percent of Total
Support for Enhanced Alternative 1	54	13.7
General Support	49	12.4
Economic Development	47	11.9
Enhanced Travel Options	41	10.4
Better service for Department of Defense Facilities	26	6.6
Highway Congestion Relief	23	5.8
Support for Alternative 1	21	5.3
Emergency Evacuation	20	5.1
Ridership	14	3.5
Environmental Benefits	10	2.5
Other	9	2.3
Reliable Service	8	2.0
Funding	7	1.8
Speed	6	1.5
Return on Investment	5	1.3
General Support for HSR	5	1.3
Cost-effective	4	1.0
Rail Infrastructure	4	1.0
Economic Development	3	0.8
All Other	39	10.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AECOM 2010

Figure 7-1: Survey Monkey Findings



Source: AECOM 2010

#### 7.4.4 Comments Received After Comment Period

Following the closing of the comment period, DRPT received a written letter from the United States Department of Interior on April 15, 2010. A copy of the letter is found in Appendix F. The Department of Interior provided comments on a variety of topics relating to the DEIS:

- Need for a Tier II EIS to evaluate project impacts and make a determination of Section 4(f) and 6(f) compliance.
- Identification of all public parks, recreation areas, wildlife refuges, historical and archeological resources in the project study area, as well as impacts to those resources.
- Concerns about impacts to the Colonial National Historical Park and the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.
- Development of an "avoidance alternative" that avoids potential impacts to the Colonial National Historical Park and the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.
- Request to initiate consultation with the Department of Interior pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act if impacts to federally-listed endangered species are determined.

#### 7.5 Project Briefings

Before and after the public hearings, DRPT staff responded to numerous requests for project briefings from elected bodies, advisory boards, and a local community association. Table 7-13 lists the organizations briefed by DRPT, and the topic and date for each briefing.

**Table 7-13: Project Briefings: Organization, Topic, and Date**

<b>Project Briefing Topic</b>	<b>Briefing Date</b>
<b>Commonwealth Transportation Board</b>	
Information Session	1/20/10
Action on Preferred Alternative	2/17/10
<b>HRTPO Policy Board</b>	
Project Update	10/30/09
DEIS Presentation	1/20/10
DEIS Resolution	2/10/10
<b>HRTPO Transportation Technical Advisory Committee</b>	
Project Update	7/1/09
Project Update	4/7/10
<b>Sunray Community Association</b>	
Project Update	4/5/10
<b>Richmond MPO Policy Board and Executive Committee</b>	
DEIS Presentation/Resolution	2/10/10
<b>Tri-Cities MPO Policy Board</b>	
DEIS Presentation/Resolution	1/14/10
Project update	4/29/10
<b>Tri-Cities MPO Technical Advisory Committee</b>	
DEIS Presentation	1/4/10

Source: DRPT 2010

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## **Appendix F – Public Involvement (updated)**

- Notice of Availability
- Public Hearing Materials
- Public Hearing Transcripts
- Comments/Responses

accordingly. One way this might happen is by advising the motorist earlier of the impending signal change. Driver interviews performed under this study area can provide information on many key issues including behavioral adaptation, decision making, and reaction times to signal phases and changes. This kind of information could lead to improvements to signal controllers that increase mobility and improve safety. Speed management is another area that could benefit from interview data. For example, lower speed limits in construction zones are difficult to enforce, and interview data with drivers can provide information on better methods of restraining driver speeds in these hazardous situations.

*Category C (Older and Younger Drivers).* The driving behaviors of these two high risk groups are of interest for almost all FHWA safety related studies. For example, older driver's performance as they negotiate new designs informs the engineer of those aspects of the design that present potential safety problems, and may be in need of modification. In contrast, young drivers present a separate set of challenges for highway engineers. Their ability to negotiate a new design may be less of a concern, however; it is necessary to understand how these drivers perform as they drive through these new designs. This is important as some younger drivers may be willing to take extra risks in situations where ambiguity exists. Such information from younger drivers will help engineers determine areas of potential ambiguity in design and modify these areas as necessary to ensure they are not introducing safety hazards.

*Category D (Pedestrians and Bicyclists).* Research related to pedestrians and bicyclists arises from the need to determine the most effective ways to accommodate these infrastructure users. While overt pedestrian and bicyclist behavior needs to be directly observed to enable engineers to determine potential safety hazards to these user groups. For example, when a new intersection design is being introduced (e.g., a triple lane roundabout) it is especially advantageous to acquire data that shows how pedestrians and bicyclists negotiate such a new design. The needs of disabled pedestrians are also considered when researching new intersection treatments, and in these efforts FHWA works closely with the U.S. Access Board to ensure that novel intersection treatments accommodate their needs. Another example of research in this area is determining bicyclists' reactions to such treatments as separately marked

bicycle lanes, signage, and overall roadway configuration.

#### **Description of How Field and Laboratory Study Participants Will Be Acquired**

Participants for research studies will be acquired by advertisement in local papers, by the distribution of flyers, or by postings to the internet. Typically, interested parties contact FHWA and they are asked a few questions to determine whether they qualify for the study. These questions involve such issues as age, driver familiarity with the location or scenario being used, number of miles driven per year, and gender.

#### **Estimate of the Total Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping Burden Resulting From These Information Collections and Requests for Comments**

*Experimental Participants:* Approximately 6,000 roadway users drawn from the general driving population.

*Frequency:* This approval request is for 30 studies over a 3 year period.

*Estimated Average Burden per respondent:* FHWA estimates data acquisition from persons participating in research will require on average about 1 hour per person.

*Estimated Total and Annual Burden Hours:* Assuming 20 studies will be Laboratory based (Simulator), and 10 will be Field based (Field Research Vehicle), the burden is calculated as follows:

Laboratory Experiments: 20 Simulator \* 210 participants \* 1 hour = 4200  
Field Experiments: 10 studies \* 180 participants \* 1 hour = 1800 hours

*Estimated Total Burden Hours:* = 6000 hours

*Estimated Annual Burden Hours (over 3 years) = 2000 hours*

*Public Comments Invited:* You are asked to comment on any aspect of these information collections, including: (1) Whether the proposed collections are necessary for FHWA's performance; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (3) ways for FHWA to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the collected information; and (4) ways that the burden could be minimized, including the use of electronic technology, without reducing the quality of the collected information. FHWA will respond to your comments and summarize or include them when requesting clearance from OMB for these information data collections.

**Authority:** The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995; 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended; and 49 CFR 1.48.

Issued on December 18, 2009.

**Tina Campbell,**

*Acting Chief, Management Programs and Analysis Division.*

[FR Doc. E9-30568 Filed 12-28-09; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE P**

## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Federal Railroad Administration**

**RIN 2130-AB74**

#### **Richmond-Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project**

**AGENCY:** Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of the Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement and public hearings for the Richmond-Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project (Project).

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Railroad Administration announces the availability of the Richmond-Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Draft Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for public review and comment. The DEIS was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*, the Council on Environmental Quality NEPA implementing regulations, 40 CFR parts 1500-1508, and the FRA NEPA procedures, 64 FR 28545 (May 26, 1999). FRA is the lead Federal agency and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is the lead State agency. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) included the DEIS in the Notice of Availability (NOA) published on December 11, 2009.

**DATES:** FRA invites interested Members of Congress, state and local governments, other Federal agencies, Native American tribal governments, organizations, and members of the public to provide comments on the DEIS. The public comment period began with EPA's publication of the NOA on December 11, 2009. Because of the anticipated interest in the Project, the comment period will continue until February 11, 2010. Written and oral comments will be given equal weight, and FRA and DRPT will consider all comments received or postmarked by that date in preparing the Final EIS. Comments received or postmarked after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

Dates and locations for the public hearings are:

1. Richmond: January 26, 2010 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, 2300 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23269.

2. Newport News: January 27, 2010 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. City Center Conference Facilities, James and Warwick Rooms, 700 Town Center Drive, Newport News, VA 23606.

3. Norfolk: January 28, 2010 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Half Moore Cruise and Celebration Center, One Waterside Drive, Norfolk, VA 23510.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be submitted at the public hearings both verbally and in writing. Written comments may be submitted via the project Web site at <http://www.rich2hrrail.info> or mailed to VDRPT at the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Rail & Public Transportation, 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219, Attention: Public Information Office.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information regarding the DEIS or the Project, please contact: Ms. Christine Fix, Department of Rail & Public Transportation, 600 East Main

Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219 (telephone 804 786-1052); or by e-mail at [christine.fix@drpt.virginia.gov](mailto:christine.fix@drpt.virginia.gov) with "Richmond-Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project" in the subject heading, or Mr. John Winkle, Transportation Industry Analyst, Office of Passenger Programs, Federal Railroad Administration, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE., Room W38-311, Washington, DC 20590 (telephone 202 493-6067), or by e-mail at [John.Winkle@DOT.Gov](mailto:John.Winkle@DOT.Gov) with "Richmond-Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project" in the subject heading.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The DEIS evaluates the environmental impacts of the Richmond-Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project, which proposes passenger rail service improvements between the City of Richmond, VA and the Hampton Roads region. As a Tier I document, the DEIS focuses on program level decisions affecting potential passenger rail service in the Richmond-Hampton Roads corridor. The DEIS analyzes a Status Quo Alternative, the No Action Alternative and three Build Alternatives. The Build Alternatives focus on two rail routes to implement passenger rail service improvements:

the Peninsula/CSX Route and the Southside/NS Route. The Build Alternatives examine a combination of conventional (79-mph) and higher speed (90 and 110-mph) passenger rail services with varying service frequencies over the two routes. This rail service would serve as an extension of the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor, providing rail connections to the Southeast, Northeast, and Mid-Atlantic Regions. Potential environmental impacts of the Build Alternatives include increased noise and vibration, local traffic impacts associated with stations, impacts on historic properties and archeological sites, impacts on parks and recreation resources, impacts on sensitive biological resources and wetlands, and use of energy. Mitigation strategies are described to avoid or minimize potential impacts. Such strategies would be further refined in subsequent environmental review.

#### Availability of the DEIS

DRPT has placed copies of the Draft EIS and appendices at the following libraries:

Blackwater Regional Library  
Chesterfield County Public Library  
Gloucester Public Library  
Maude Langhorne Nelson Library  
York County Public Library/Tabb Library  
Pamunkey Regional Library  
Portsmouth Main Public Library  
Suffolk Morgan Memorial Public Library  
Williamsburg Regional Library/Williamsburg Library  
Henrico County Municipal Government and Law Library

Chesapeake Public Library  
Colonial Heights Public Library  
Hampton Main Public Library  
Newport News Main Public Library  
Norfolk Main Library  
Petersburg Central Public Library  
Richmond Main Public Library  
Virginia Beach Central Library

Commenters are advised to check the project website for a complete list of library locations and addresses.

The document is also available at the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation Office in Richmond, 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA; the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization Office in Chesapeake, The Regional Building, 723 Woodlake Drive, Chesapeake, VA; the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, located at the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, 9211 Forest Hill Avenue, Suite 200, Richmond, VA; and the Tri-Cities Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, located at the Crater District Planning Commission, 1964 Wakefield Street, Petersburg, VA. In addition, electronic versions of the Draft EIS and appendices are available through FRA's Web site at <http://www.fra.dot.gov/us/content/2316>, on the VDRPT Web site at <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/projects/>

[hamptonpassenger.aspx](http://www.rich2hrrail.info), and the project Web site at <http://www.rich2hrrail.info>.

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 18, 2009.

**Mark E. Yachmetz,**

*Associate Administrator for Railroad Development.*

[FR Doc. E9-30724 Filed 12-28-09; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-06-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### Second Meeting, Special Committee 223: Airport Surface Wireless Communications

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of RTCA Special Committee 223: Airport Surface Wireless Communications meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The FAA is issuing this notice to advise the public of a meeting of RTCA Special Committee 223: Airport Surface Wireless Communications.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held January 26-27, 2010 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at RTCA, Inc., 1828 L Street, NW., Suite 805, Washington, DC 20036.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** RTCA Secretariat, 1828 L Street, NW, Suite 805, Washington, DC 20036; telephone (202) 833-9339; fax (202) 833-9434; Web site <http://www.rtca.org>.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2), notice is hereby given for a RTCA Special Committee 223: Airport Surface Wireless Communications meeting. The agenda will include:





# Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier I Draft EIS

**Kevin Page**  
**Chief of Rail Transportation**

# Project Overview

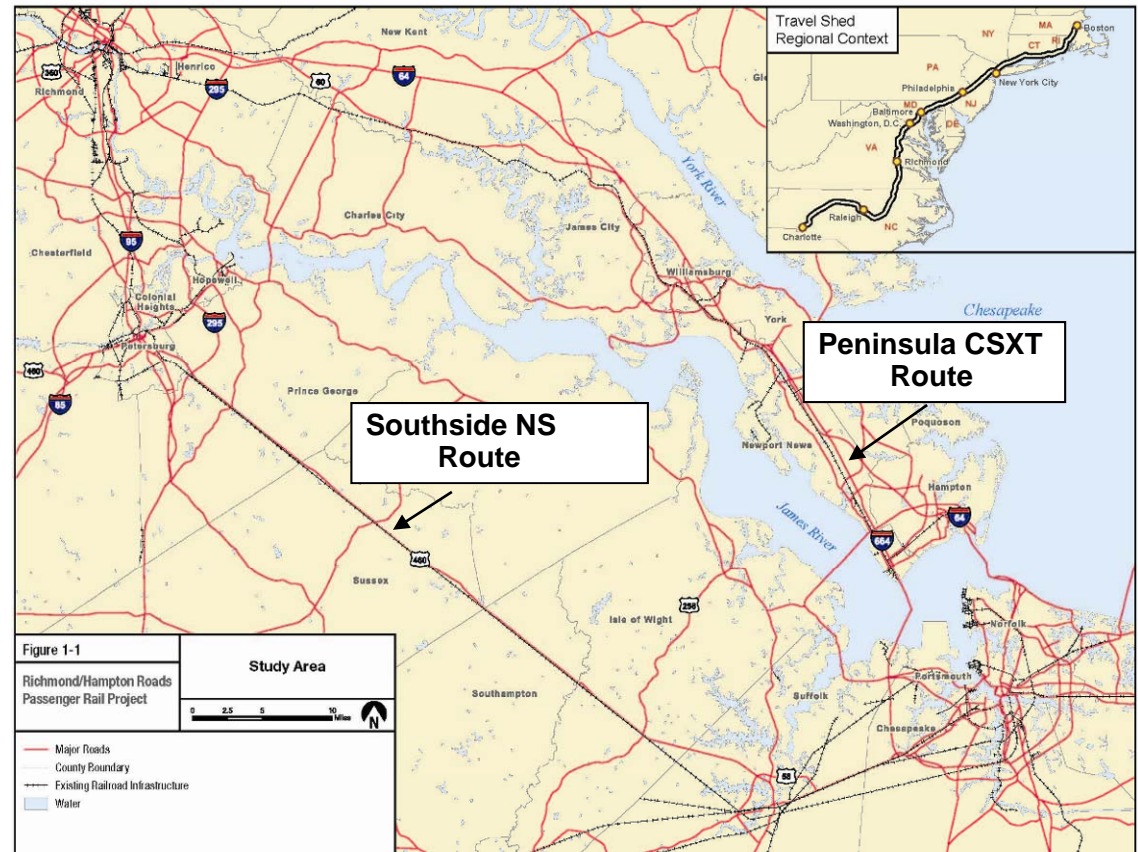
- ❑ Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to determine the best option to improve passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads.
- ❑ The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the lead federal agency and DRPT is the lead state agency.
- ❑ The Draft EIS document is now available for agency and public comment.
- ❑ Several alternatives were evaluated and rated in key categories such as environmental impact, capital and operating cost, ridership, revenue and travel time.
- ❑ Once public comments have been received and considered, the Commonwealth Transportation Board will select the Preferred Alternative.

# Federal Funding

- ❑ Federal funding is a critical component of project financial plan.
- ❑ The Commonwealth will apply for federal funds to support project costs.
- ❑ The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project must have “independent utility”, which means that it does not depend on the completion of any other projects.
  - Can be developed as a complete and independent project.
  - Each alternative has logical termini.
  - No alternative depends on completion of any other project.

# Two Routes and Five Alternatives

- Two routes:
  - Peninsula/CSXT
  - Southside/NS
  
- Five alternatives with varied characteristics:
  - Routes
  - Frequencies
  - Speeds





# Alternatives Under Consideration

Alternative	Route	Route Miles	Trains	Maximum Speeds
Status Quo	Peninsula/CSXT Southside/NS	73.9 0	2 n/a	79 mph No train
No Action (Baseline)	Peninsula/CSXT Southside/NS	73.9 0	3 n/a	79 mph No train
Alternative 1	Peninsula/CSXT Southside/NS	75.9 101.0	3 6	79 mph 90-110 mph
Alternative 2a	Peninsula/CSXT Southside/NS	75.9 101.0	6 3	90-110 mph 79 mph
Alternative 2b	Peninsula/CSXT Southside/NS	75.9 0	9 0	90-110 mph No service

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# Status Quo and No Action Alternatives

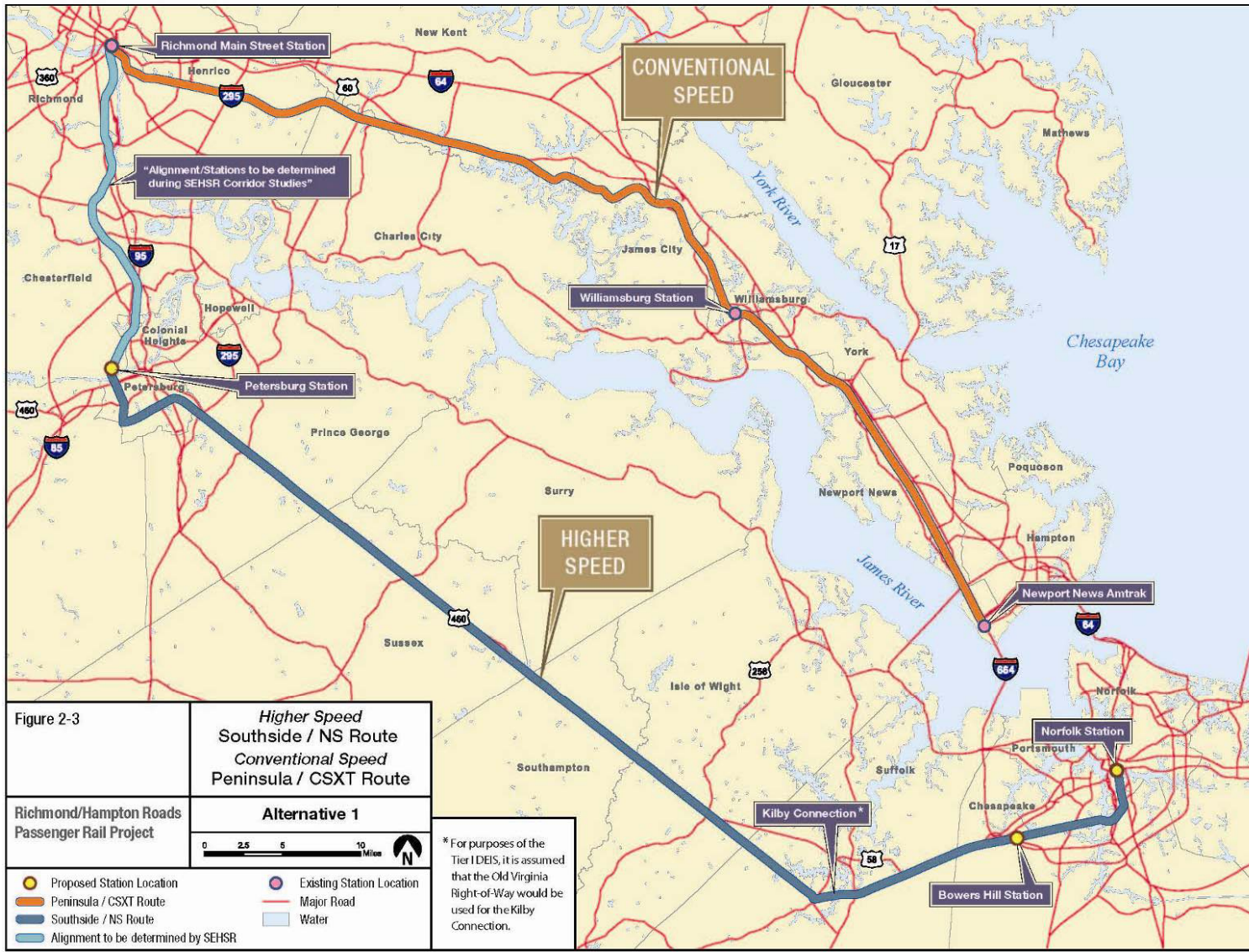
## □ Status Quo Alternative

- Existing Amtrak service (2 trains) on the Peninsula route
- Existing highways
- Existing local transit service
- Existing air travel
- Projects in financially constrained regional long range plans

## □ No Action Alternative (Baseline for Comparison)

- Improved Amtrak service (3 trains) on the Peninsula route
- Existing highways
- Existing local transit service
- Existing air travel
- Projects in financially constrained regional long range plans

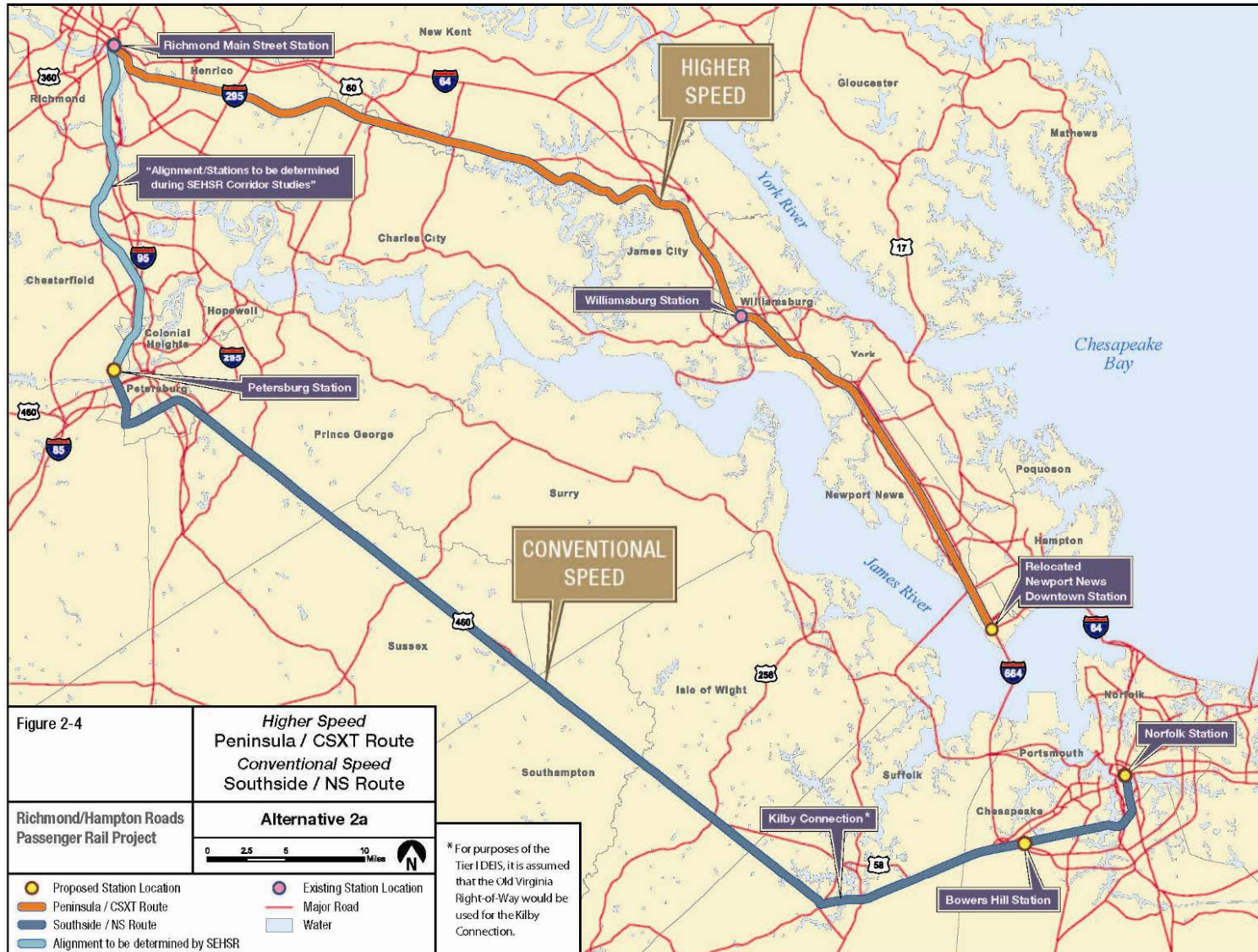
# Alternative 1



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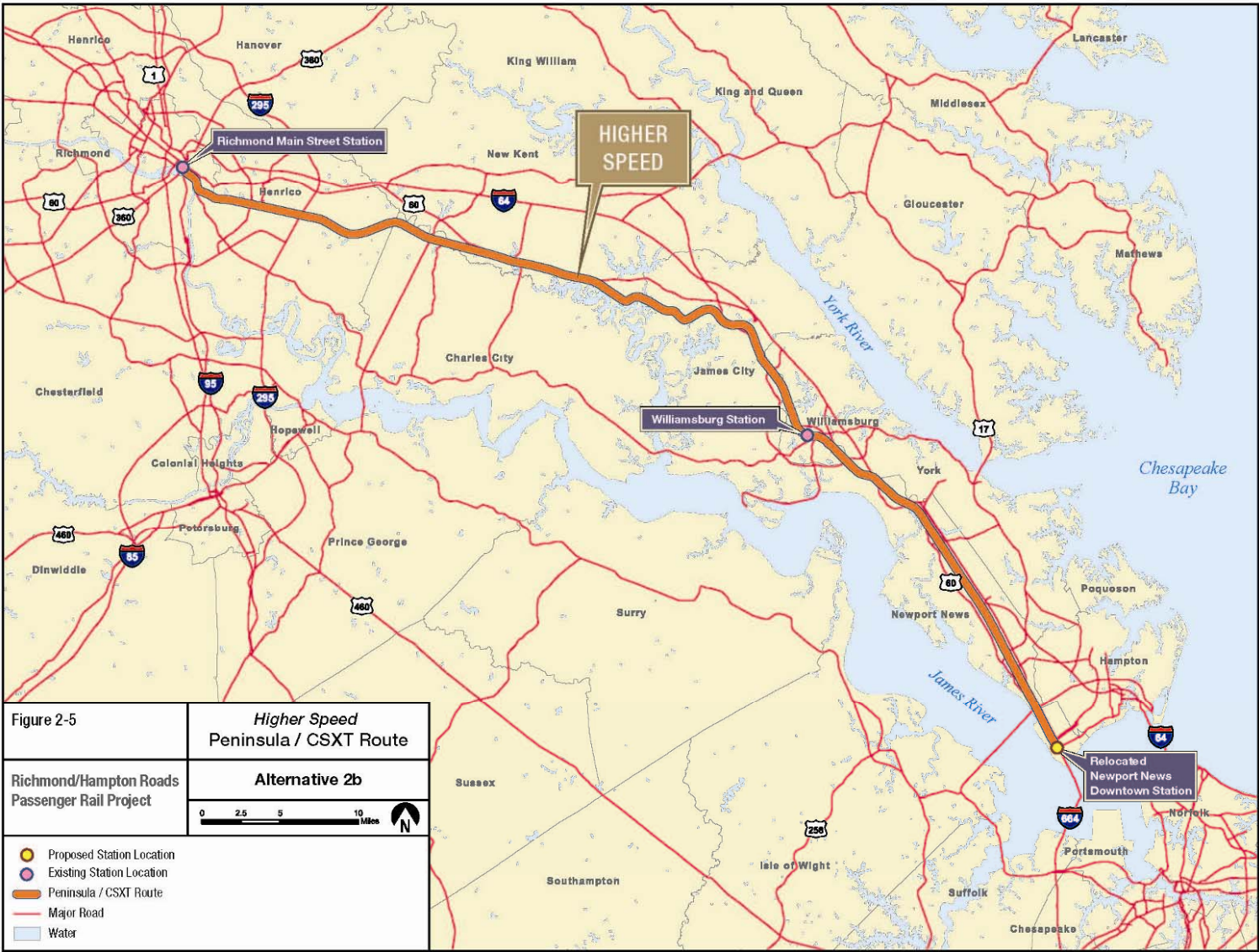


# Alternative 2a



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# Alternative 2b

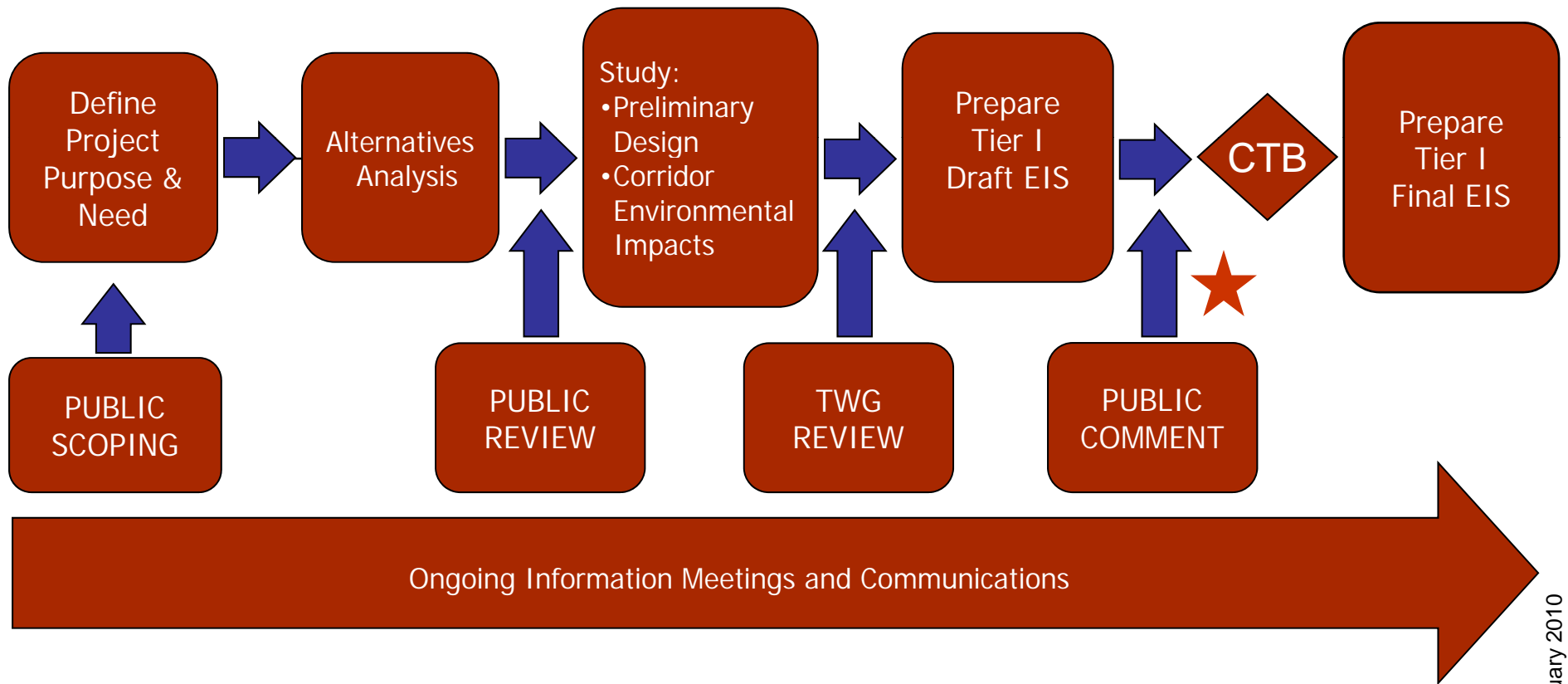


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# Evaluating Alternatives

## Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement



# Travel Time between Terminal City and Richmond, VA

Alternatives	Terminal City	Travel Time	Miles
Status Quo 79 mph Peninsula	Existing Newport News Station	1:25	73.9
No Action 79 mph Peninsula	Existing Newport News Station	1:11	73.9
90 mph Peninsula 110 mph Peninsula	Downtown Newport News	1:03 0:57	75.9
79 mph Southside 90 mph Southside 110 mph Southside	Downtown Norfolk	1:38 1:35 1:27	101.0

1 hour 25 minutes = 1:25

- ❑ Travel time savings range between 6-8 minutes by increasing the operating speed from 90 mph to 110 mph.
- ❑ Capital cost for 110 mph is significantly higher than 90 mph and ranges between \$68 and \$101 million depending on route selected.

# Projected 2025 Ridership

Alternative	Estimate Range	Total Ridership 90 mph MAS	Total Ridership 110 mph MAS
Status Quo (79 mph MAS)	High	262,300	262,300
	Low	245,500	245,000
No Action (79 mph MAS)	High	464,800	464,800
	Low	425,700	425,700
Alternative 1	High	1,110,100	1,162,200
	Low	939,600	984,200
Alternative 2a	High	1,124,300	1,161,400
	Low	924,700	955,000
Alternative 2b	High	1,101,100	1,147,000
	Low	897,800	937,000

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# Estimated Capital Cost

Alternative	Route	90 MPH MAS	110 MPH MAS
<b>Alternative 1</b>	Peninsula CSXT (79 mph)	0.0	0.0
	Southside NS (HSR)	475.4	543.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$475.4</b>	<b>\$543.0</b>
<b>Alternative 2a</b>	Peninsula CSXT (HSR)	330.0	431.9
	Southside NS (79 mph)	412.3	412.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$742.3</b>	<b>\$844.2</b>
<b>Alternative 2b</b>	Peninsula CSXT (HSR)	330.0	431.9
	Southside NS (No train)	0.0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$330.0</b>	<b>\$431.9</b>

Year of Expenditure Estimated in 2008 Dollars (In Millions)

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# Estimated Operating Cost

Alternative	Route	90 MPH MAS	110 MPH MAS
<b>Alternative 1</b>	Peninsula CSXT (79 mph)	21.3	21.3
	Southside NS (HSR)	58.7	60.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$80.0</b>	<b>\$81.4</b>
<b>Alternative 2a</b>	Peninsula CSXT (HSR)	53.4	54.9
	Southside NS (79 mph)	24.5	24.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$77.9</b>	<b>\$79.4</b>
<b>Alternative 2b</b>	Peninsula CSXT (HSR)	71.7	72.4
	Southside NS (No Train)	0.0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$71.7</b>	<b>\$72.4</b>

Year of Expenditure Estimated in 2008 Dollars (In Millions)

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# Cost Effectiveness

## Annualized Cost per Rider

Alternative	Route	90 MPH MAS	110 MPH MAS
<b>Alternative 1</b>	Peninsula CSXT (79 mph)	95.34	95.82
	Southside NS (HSR)	108.72	109.76
	<b>Average</b>	<b>\$106.03</b>	<b>\$107.09</b>
<b>Alternative 2a</b>	Peninsula CSXT (HSR)	87.00	92.06
	Southside NS (79 mph)	272.75	296.35
	<b>Average</b>	<b>\$121.64</b>	<b>\$126.01</b>
<b>Alternative 2b</b>	Peninsula CSXT (HSR)	88.88	92.98
	Southside NS (no trains)	n/a	n/a
	<b>Average</b>	<b>\$88.88</b>	<b>\$92.98</b>

Cost effectiveness is calculated by annualizing capital costs, adding annual operating and maintenance costs and dividing the total by the high ridership estimate.

# Environmental Considerations

- ❑ Potential physical impacts primarily limited to areas where additional right of way may be required, such as:
  - Sidings for passing trains
  - New or improved rail connections
  - Parking expansions
  - New stations
  
- ❑ Proximity impacts may result from:
  - New passenger rail service
  - Increased frequencies of passenger rail service
  - Increased speeds of passenger rail service
  - Train horn noise at grade crossings

# Potential Effects: Status Quo and No Action Alternatives

Alternative	Limit Highway Congestion	Probable Air Quality Impacts	Probable Wetland, Floodplain and Wildlife Habitat Impacts	Probable Noise Impacts	Probable Vibration Impacts	Sensitive Land Uses, Historic Properties and Open Space Impacts
<b><u>Status Quo</u></b> Peninsula	Does not support purpose and need	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts
Southside	No train	No train	No train	No train	No train	No train
<b><u>No Action</u></b> Peninsula	Does not support purpose and need	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Southside	No train	No train	No train	No train	No train	No train

Potential effects stated relative to project goal or objective when compared to No Action

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# Potential Effects: Alternative 1

Route	Limit Highway Congestion	Probable Air Quality Impacts	Probable Wetland, Floodplain and Wildlife Habitat Impacts	Probable Noise Impacts	Probable Vibration Impacts	Sensitive Land Uses, Historic Properties and Open Space Impacts
Peninsula (79 mph)	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts
Southside (90 or 110 mph)	Supports	Supports	Potentially severe impacts	Impacts	Impacts	Supports economic development, impacts open space
<b>Overall rating</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>+</b>

Potential effects stated relative to project goal or objective and No Action baseline alternative.

**Legend:**

**++** strongly supports, **+** supports; **0** no impacts; **-** Minor negative impacts; **- -** Severe impacts

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# Potential Effects: Alternative 2a

Route	Limit Highway Congestion	Probable Air Quality Impacts	Probable Wetland, Floodplain and Wildlife Habitat Impacts	Probable Noise Impacts	Probable Vibration Impacts	Sensitive Land Uses, Historic Properties and Open Space Impacts
Peninsula (90 – 110 mph)	No impacts	No impacts	Probable impacts	Probable impacts	Probable impacts	Supports station area and economic development
Southside (79 mph)	Supports	Supports	Potentially severe impacts	Severe impacts	Severe impacts	Supports economic development, impacts open space
<b>Overall rating</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>+</b>

Potential effects stated relative to project goal or objective and No Action baseline alternative.

**Legend:**

**++** strongly supports, **+** supports; **0** no impacts; **-** Minor negative impacts; **- -** Severe impacts

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# Potential Effects: Alternative 2b

Route	Limit Highway Congestion	Probable Air Quality Impacts	Probable Wetland, Floodplain and Wildlife Habitat Impacts	Probable Noise Impacts	Probable Vibration Impacts	Sensitive Land Uses, Historic Properties and Open Space Impacts
Peninsula (90 -110 mph)	Supports purpose and need	Supports goals, positive impact	Probable impacts	Probable impacts	Probable impacts	Supports station area and economic development
Southside (no train)	No train	No train	No train	No train	No train	No train
<b>Overall rating</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>++</b>

Potential effects stated relative to project goal or objective and No Action baseline alternative.

**Legend:**

**++** strongly supports, **+** supports; **0** no impacts; **-** Minor negative impacts; **- -** Severe impacts

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# Public Involvement and Agency Outreach

- ❑ Technical Working Group meetings
- ❑ Speakers Bureau meetings
- ❑ Newsletters and fact sheets
- ❑ Public information meetings
- ❑ Project Web site
- ❑ Postcards
- ❑ Display ads in newspapers
- ❑ Media contacts

**Higher-Speed Rail Service Could Be In Your Future!**

Please join us for an in-person meeting that could greatly impact your future. If you travel or live in or between a Hampton Roads, Richmond or other area, you may have a role to play in this exciting, new project. We are looking for your input on the potential for a new passenger rail service. These routes could help connect you to the Southeast, Northeast and Mid-Atlantic United States as part of the Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor being planned.

**THE LINE: WHAT YOU THINK**  
The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation wants to know what you think about possible rail transportation in your area. Four meetings will be held in coordination with us to gather your input about passenger rail service options. Two studies are being studied:

- Richmond to Petersburg to South Hampton Roads, Inverness, Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk and Chesapeake
- The existing Atlantic route from Richmond to Williamsburg to Newport News

**YOUR OPINION MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE**  
During these meetings, or "scoping" sessions, your input is essential in helping identify the preferred potential rail routes and alternatives. This information will guide the next steps that will be taken for the lines of connectivity.

**Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Study**  
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation  
Open Information Line available at 877-740-4527 (877-RID-1313)

Share your comments at meetings or online at [www.richaznrrail.info](http://www.richaznrrail.info)



# Key Findings

- ❑ Status Quo and No Action Alternatives do not meet Purpose and Need.
- ❑ 90 mph is the optimum higher speed. Marginal ridership increases and minimal travel time savings at 110 mph require substantially more capital investment than 90 mph.
- ❑ Of the Build Alternatives:
  - Alternatives 1 and 2a serve the greatest population base with trains on both routes.
  - Alternatives 1 and 2a provide new passenger rail service to the Southside.
  - Alternatives 1 and 2a have the highest ridership.
  - Alternative 2b has the lowest capital and operating costs.
  - Alternative 2b is the most cost effective at \$88.88 per rider at 90 mph.
  - Alternative 2b has the least potential for negative environmental effects of the Build alternatives because improvements would only occur along one route and primarily within that route's existing right of way.

# Overview of Next Steps

- ❑ DRPT will present a summary of public comments received at the February Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) workshop.
- ❑ The CTB will be asked to select the Preferred Alternative at the February action meeting.
- ❑ DRPT will apply for Round 2 Track 2 ARRA funds to advance the Preferred Alternative.
- ❑ DRPT will prepare and submit the Final Tier I EIS to the FRA.
- ❑ The FRA will issue a Record of Decision on the alternative that is eligible for federal funding.

Thank You!





# WELCOME



## **Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project**

*Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation*

# **Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

## **Open House and Public Hearing January 2010**



# Purpose and Need

## Purpose of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project

- Determine the best option to improve passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads
- Provide additional capacity to meet increased travel demand in a manner that is sensitive to and protective of Virginia's unique natural resources

## Current and Projected Need: Key Factors

- Need to prepare for population growth
- Need to prepare for the increase in intercity travel demand
- Need to help mitigate the increase in travel delays due to growing congestion on Virginia's highways and at airports
- Need to help mitigate the negative effects on the economy, quality of life, and air quality in the Hampton Roads region from highway and airport congestion
- Need to support economic development
- Need to support emergency transportation plans



# What is Higher Speed Rail?

- Intercity passenger trains that operate at speeds up to 110 miles per hour
- Tracks may be separated from roads and highways
- Proven technology
  - Incremental approach to high speed rail
  - Can operate on freight railroad tracks
  - Safe and reliable
  - Diesel-electric or turbine locomotives

## *Current intercity passenger trains in the US and internationally:*



**Pacific Northwest Cascades (Talgo)**



**Amtrak train 110 mph capability**

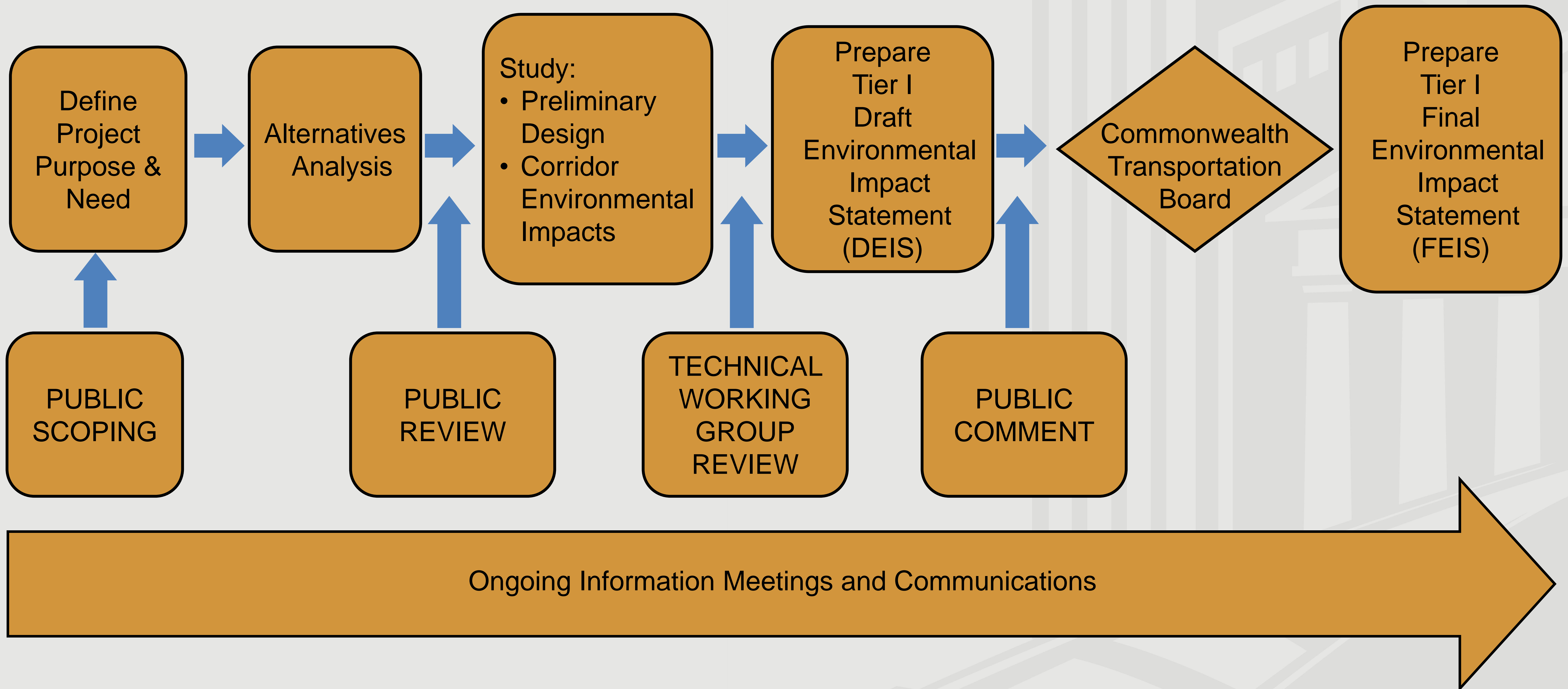


**Talgo higher speed train**



# Project Study Process

## Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement





# Evaluation Measures

- Ridership
- Capital and operating costs
- Travel time
- Natural environment impacts
- Cultural resource impacts
- Community impacts
- Agency and community support
- Feasibility

# Alternatives Under Consideration

Alternative	Route	Route Miles	Trains	Maximum Authorized Speeds (MAS)
Status Quo	Peninsula/CSXT	73.9	2	79 mph
	Southside/NS	0	n/a	No train
No Action (Baseline)	Peninsula/CSXT	73.9	3	79 mph
	Southside/NS	0	n/a	No train
Alternative 1	Peninsula/CSXT	75.9	3	79 mph
	Southside/NS	101.0	6	90-110 mph
Alternative 2a	Peninsula/CSXT	75.9	6	90-110 mph
	Southside/NS	101.0	3	79 mph
Alternative 2b	Peninsula/CSXT	75.9	9	90-110 mph
	Southside/NS	0	n/a	No train



# Grade Separations



*Before*  
**Typical Grade Separation**  
*After*



- Grade separations are underpasses or overpasses where highways cross railroad tracks.
- Grade separations improve safety and traffic congestion and noise.
- Higher speed passenger rail tracks are typically grade-separated from adjacent highways in some locations.



# Environmental Review Process

The Environmental Review Process and planning activities associated with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) include the following:



- **Identify** all environmental impacts
- **Evaluate** reasonable alternatives that could avoid or minimize environmental impacts
- **Develop** detailed mitigation plans (ways to reduce or avoid environmental impacts)
- **Provide** information for public review and comment
- **Disclose** to decision makers the impacts, mitigation strategies and public comments



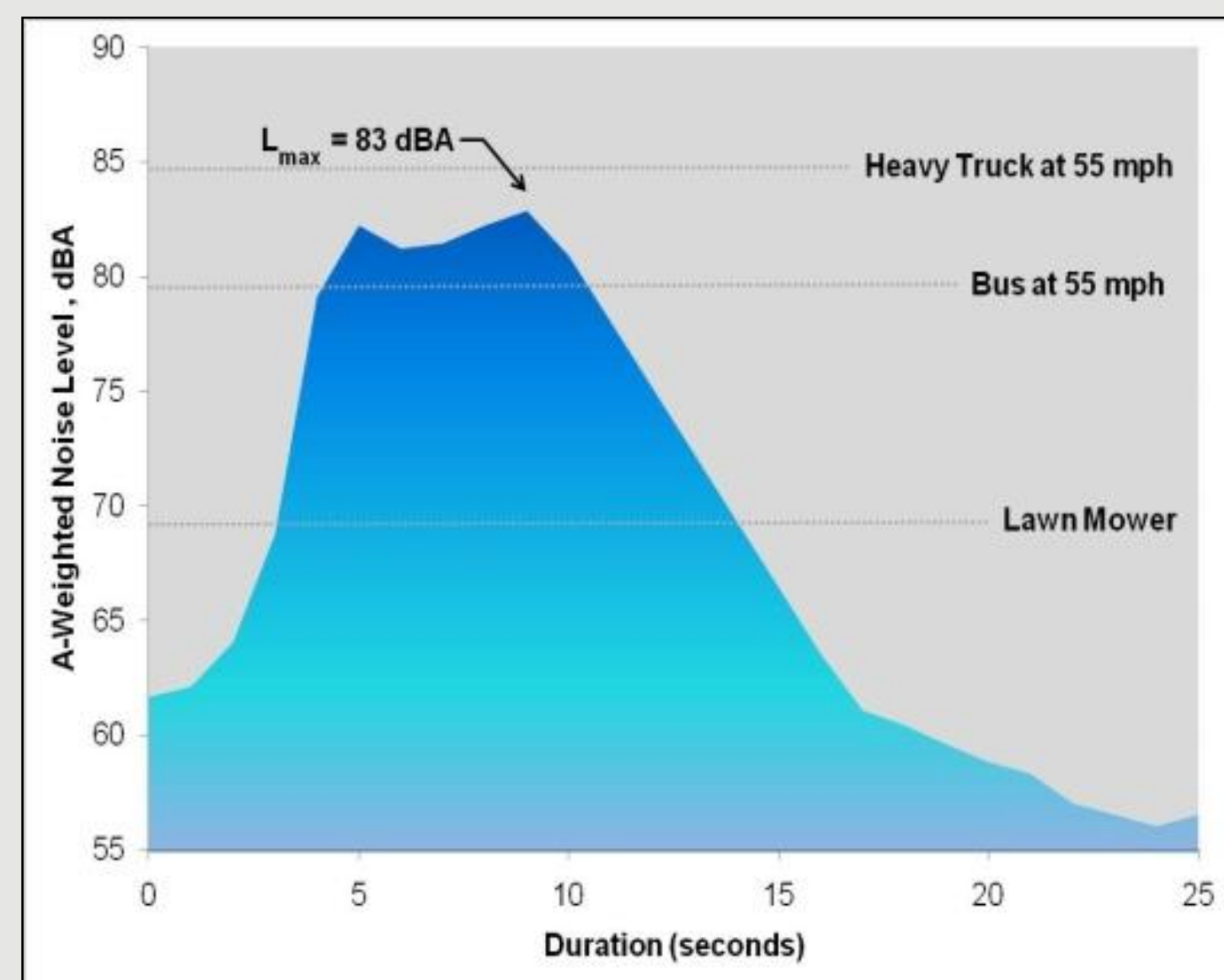


# Higher Speed Train Noise

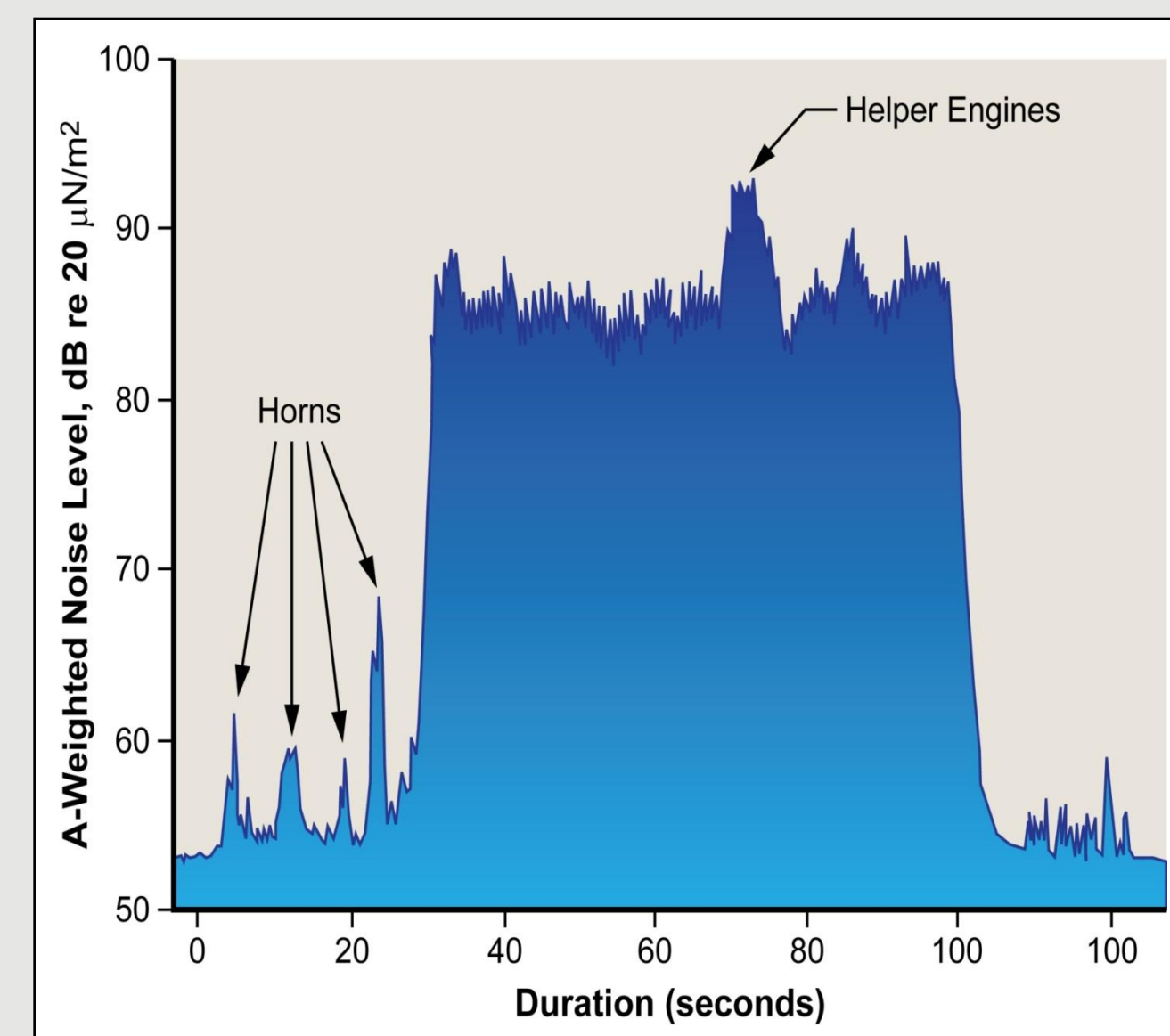
## Higher speed train noise

Noise generated by a higher speed train pass-by consists of:

- Diesel-electric propulsion system
- Wheel/rail interactions, and
- Horn blowing at grade-crossings



Typical Amtrak train noise passing by at 60 mph, 82 feet from track (TGV in France)

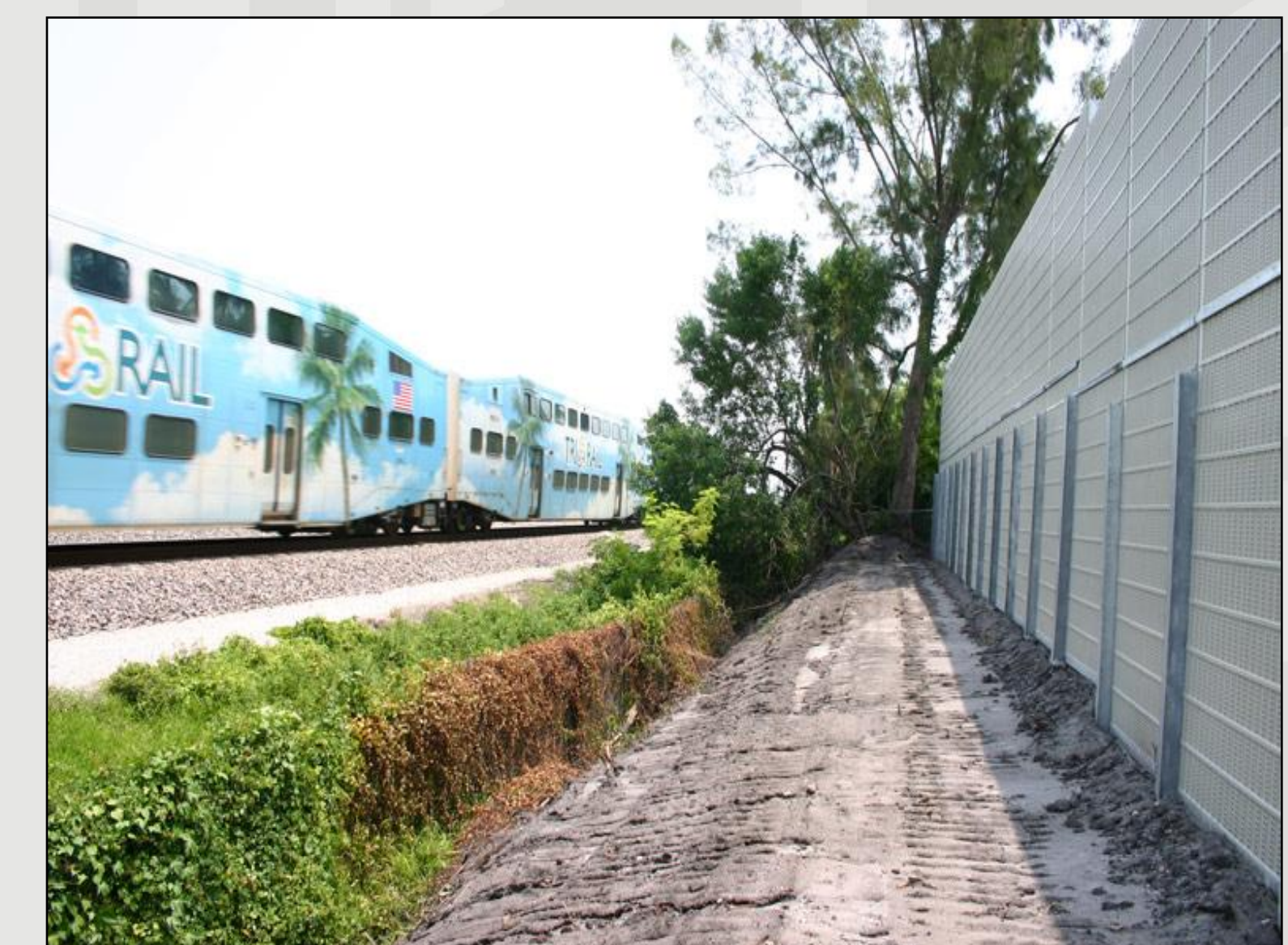


Typical freight train noise passing by at 67 mph, 100 feet from track (Lancaster to Rosamond, CA)

## Mitigation Measures for higher speed passenger and freight train noise

Effective noise control measures for steel-wheeled rail passenger systems include:

- Installation of noise barriers such as wayside sound walls or earthen berms
- Federal approval of “quiet zones” at railroad grade crossings to eliminate warning horns
- Continuous-welded rail (CWR) track and low-vibration switches that eliminate rail gaps

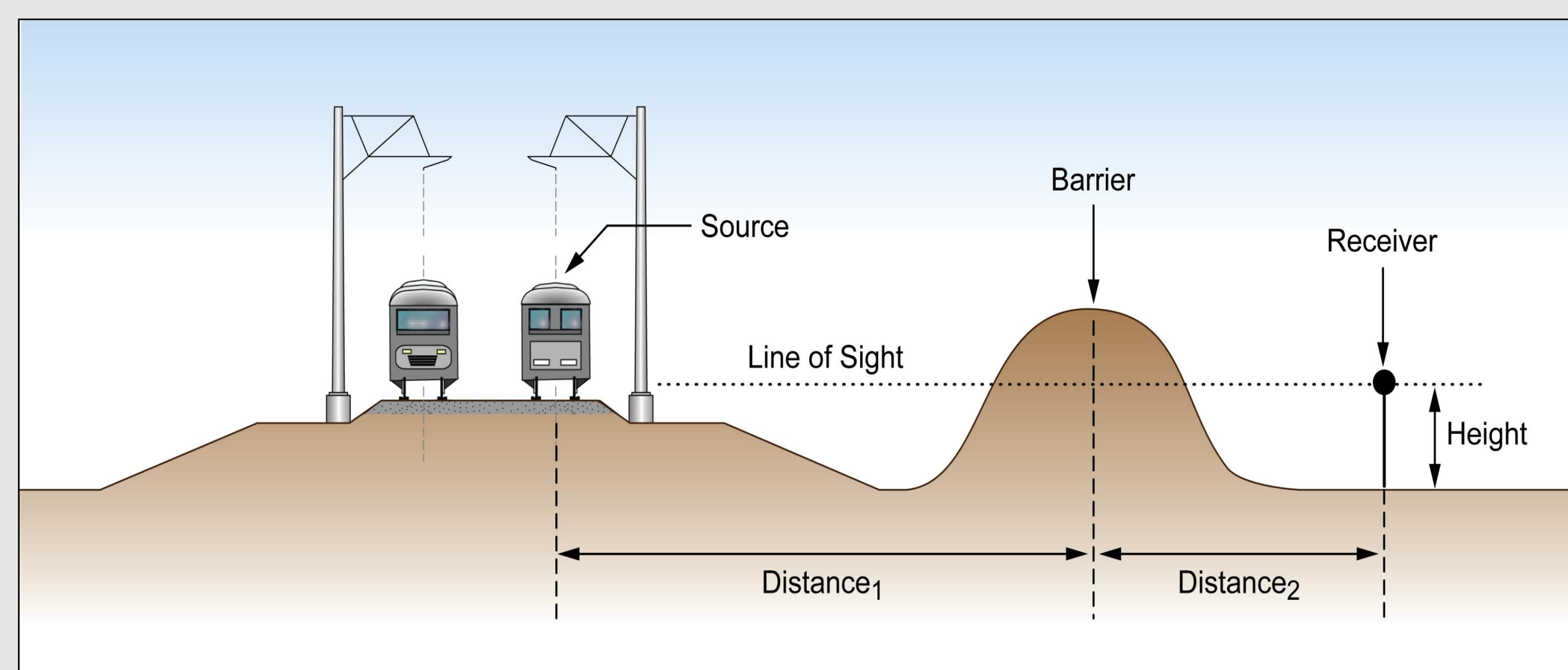


Noise Barriers along Railways

## Benefits of higher speed passenger rail operations

Although unique noise control measures are applied differently among systems and rail corridors, the following benefits are proposed as part of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project:

- “Quiet Zones” will be established at road grade crossings where warranted
- Nighttime train horns will be eliminated as a result of the quiet zones
- Noise barriers will block train noise and provide a visual screen for increased privacy
- New CWT track and switches eliminates joints in rail reducing wheel-rail noise
- Reduced sleep disturbance from warning horns.



Higher Speed Passenger Rail Noise Barrier Model



# Population and Employment in Station Areas

Population by Station	Year 2000		Year 2025		Percent Change	
	5 Mile	15 Mile	5 Mile	15 Mile	5 Mile	15 Mile
Richmond Main Street	249,115	740,651	275,553	974,650	10.6%	31.6%
Williamsburg	52,473	203,299	77,455	280,790	47.6%	38.1%
Newport News Amtrak	177,891	640,898	197,714	736,410	11.1%	14.9%
Newport News Downtown	118,528	755,955	116,408	858,511	-1.8%	13.6%
Petersburg	68,946	218,666	88,672	346,742	28.6%	58.6%
Bowers Hill	132,935	679,426	160,058	779,368	20.4%	14.7%
Norfolk Downtown	299,466	908,961	312,405	1,025,522	4.3%	12.8%

Employment by Station	Year 2000		Year 2025		Percent Change	
	5 Mile	15 Mile	5 Mile	15 Mile	5 Mile	15 Mile
Richmond Main Street	261,964	594,161	265,447	766,975	1.3%	29.1%
Williamsburg	55,336	117,174	68,618	158,658	24.0%	35.4%
Newport News Amtrak	121,849	414,469	145,317	467,571	19.2%	12.8%
Newport News Downtown	79,456	515,817	90,056	579,904	13.3%	12.4%
Petersburg	30,901	129,840	50,290	200,831	62.7%	54.7%
Bowers Hill	45,327	478,012	66,717	544,965	47.2%	14.0%
Norfolk Downtown	250,358	639,316	287,121	713,807	14.7%	11.7%



# Key Comparisons Among Alternatives

Alternative	Total # Trains	Speed	Time to Richmond (hours)	Annual Ridership (high)	Capital Costs	Annual Operating Costs	Annualized Cost per Rider (high)
<b>Status Quo:</b> maintains existing service on the Peninsula	2 Peninsula	79 mph	1:25	262,300	\$0	\$16,900,000	\$64.43
<b>No Action:</b> adds one Amtrak train on the Peninsula	3 Peninsula	79 mph	1:11	464,800	\$0	\$21,300,000	\$45.83
<b>Alternative 1:</b> High speed rail on the Southside, conventional speed rail on the Peninsula	6 Southside (HSR), 3 Peninsula (79 mph)	90 mph	1:35	1,110,100	\$475,400,000	\$80,000,000	\$106.03
		110 mph	1:27	1,162,200	\$543,000,000	\$81,400,000	\$107.09
<b>Alternative 2a:</b> High speed rail on the Peninsula, conventional speed rail on the Southside	3 Southside (79 mph), 6 Peninsula (HSR)	90 mph	1:03	1,124,300	\$742,300,000	\$77,900,000	\$121.64
		110 mph	0:57	1,161,400	\$844,200,000	\$79,400,000	\$126.01
<b>Alternative 2b:</b> High speed rail on the Peninsula, no rail service on the Southside	9 Peninsula (HSR)	90 mph	1:03	1,101,100	\$330,000,000	\$71,700,000	\$88.88
		110 mph	:57	1,147,000	\$431,900,000	\$72,400,000	\$92.98

**Notes:**

Southside conventional train at 79 mph would take 1:38 to Richmond

HSR = High Speed Rail



# Key Findings

- Status Quo and No Action Alternatives do not meet Purpose and Need.
- 90 mph is the optimum higher speed. Marginal ridership increases and minimal travel time savings at 110 mph require substantially more capital investment.
- Of the Build Alternatives:
  - Alternatives 1 and 2a serve the greatest population base with trains on both routes.
  - Alternatives 1 and 2a provide new passenger rail service to the Southside.
  - Alternatives 1 and 2a have the highest ridership.
  - Alternative 2b has the lowest capital and operating costs.
  - Alternative 2b is the most cost effective at \$88.88 per rider at 90 mph.
  - Alternative 2b has the least potential for negative environmental effects of the Build alternatives because improvements would only occur along one route and primarily within that route's existing right of way.



# Tell Us What You Think!

## Public comment period closes February 11, 2010

### Written Comments

- Fill out the online comment form at [www.rich2hrrail.info](http://www.rich2hrrail.info)
- Fill out a comment form at a public hearing
- Write to:  
Public Information Office  
Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation  
600 East Main Street, Suite 2102  
Richmond, VA 23219

### Verbal Comments at Public Hearings

#### **Tuesday, January 26, 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.**

Department of Motor Vehicles  
2300 W. Broad Street, First Floor  
Richmond, VA 23269

#### **Wednesday, January 27, 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.**

Newport News City Center Conference Facilities  
James and Warwick Rooms  
700 Town Center Drive  
Newport News, VA 23606

#### **Thursday, January 28, 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.**

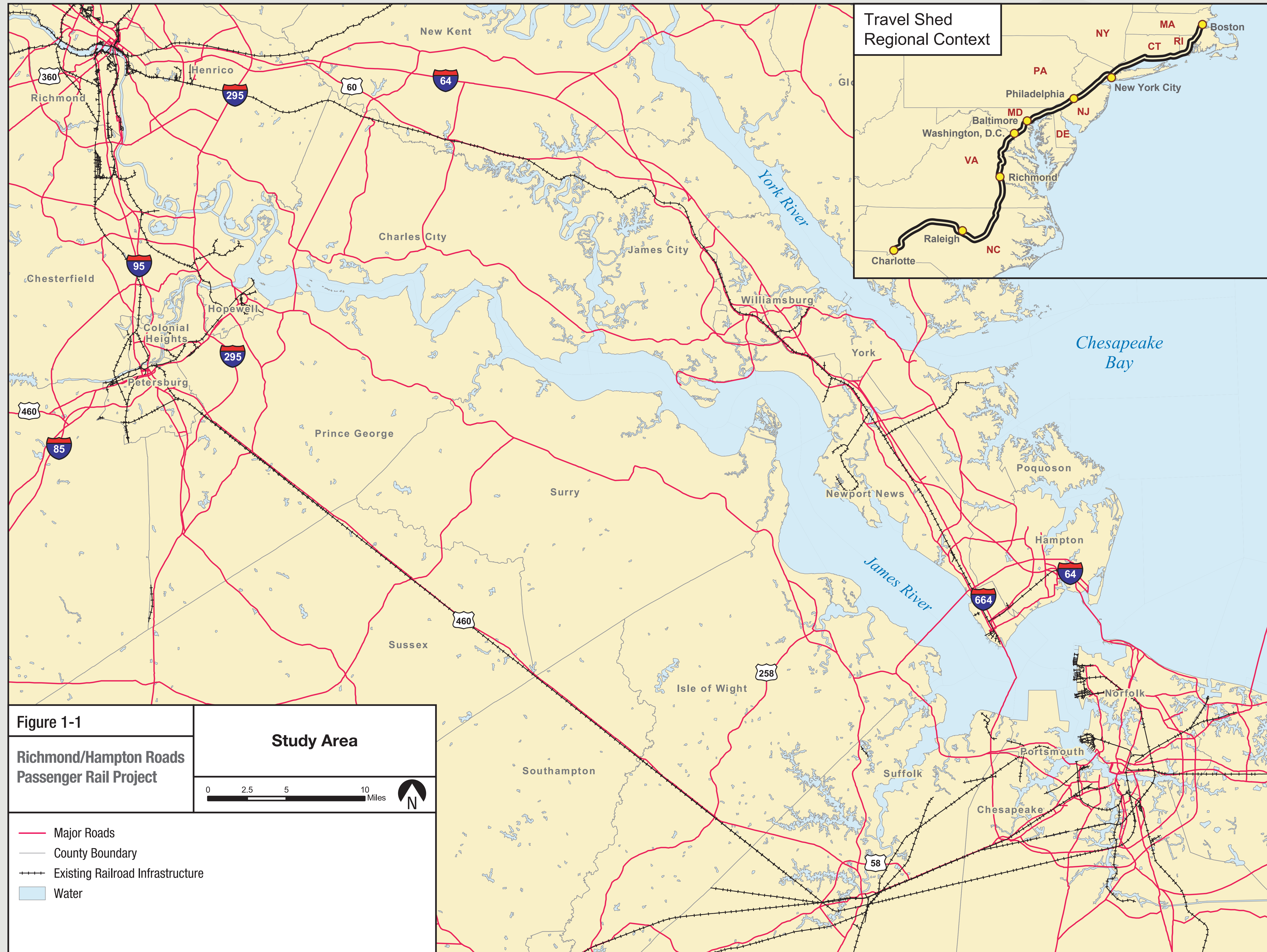
Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center  
One Waterside Drive  
Norfolk, VA 23510

For more information visit the project website:

<http://www.rich2hrrail.info>

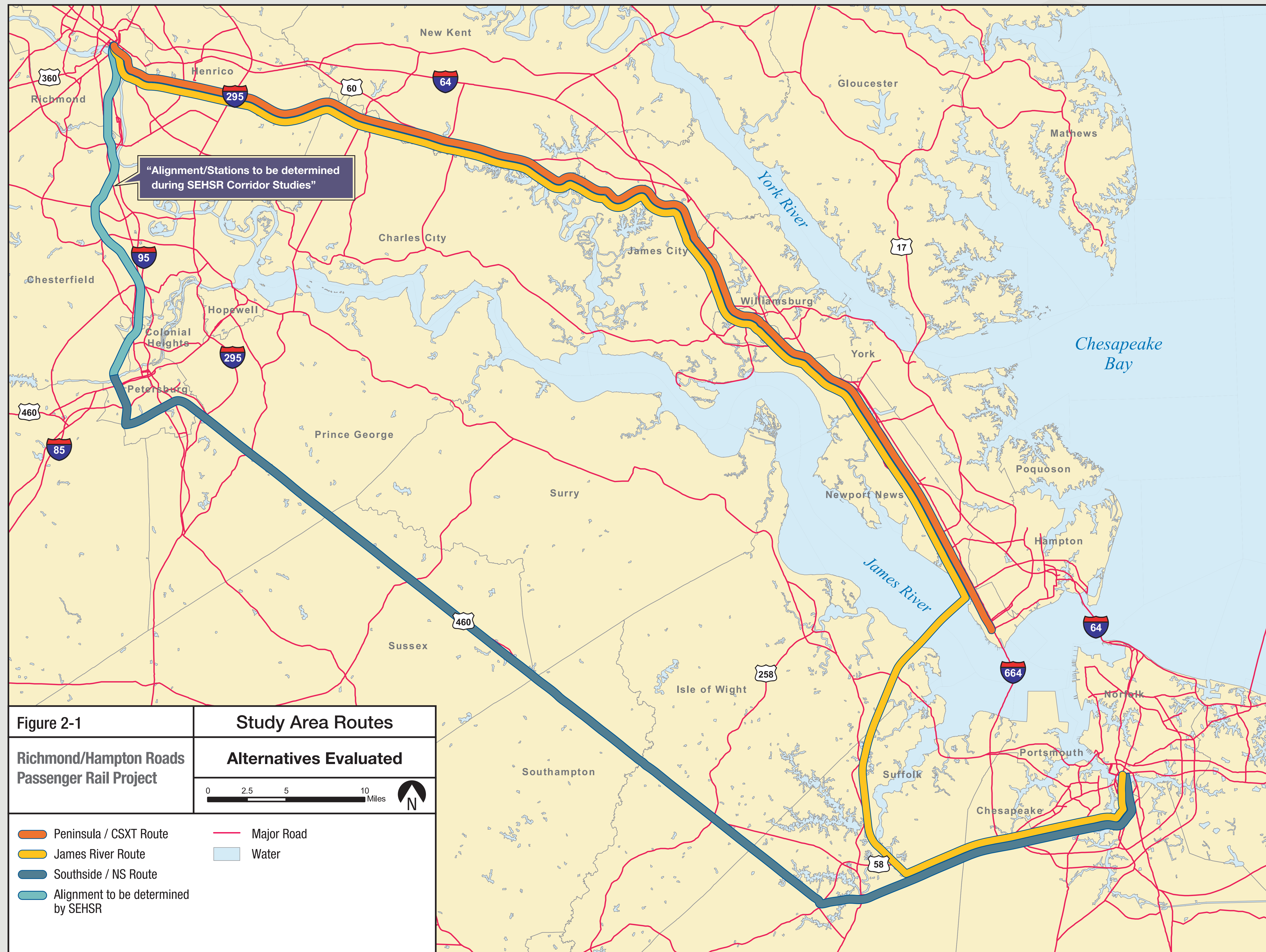


# Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Study Area



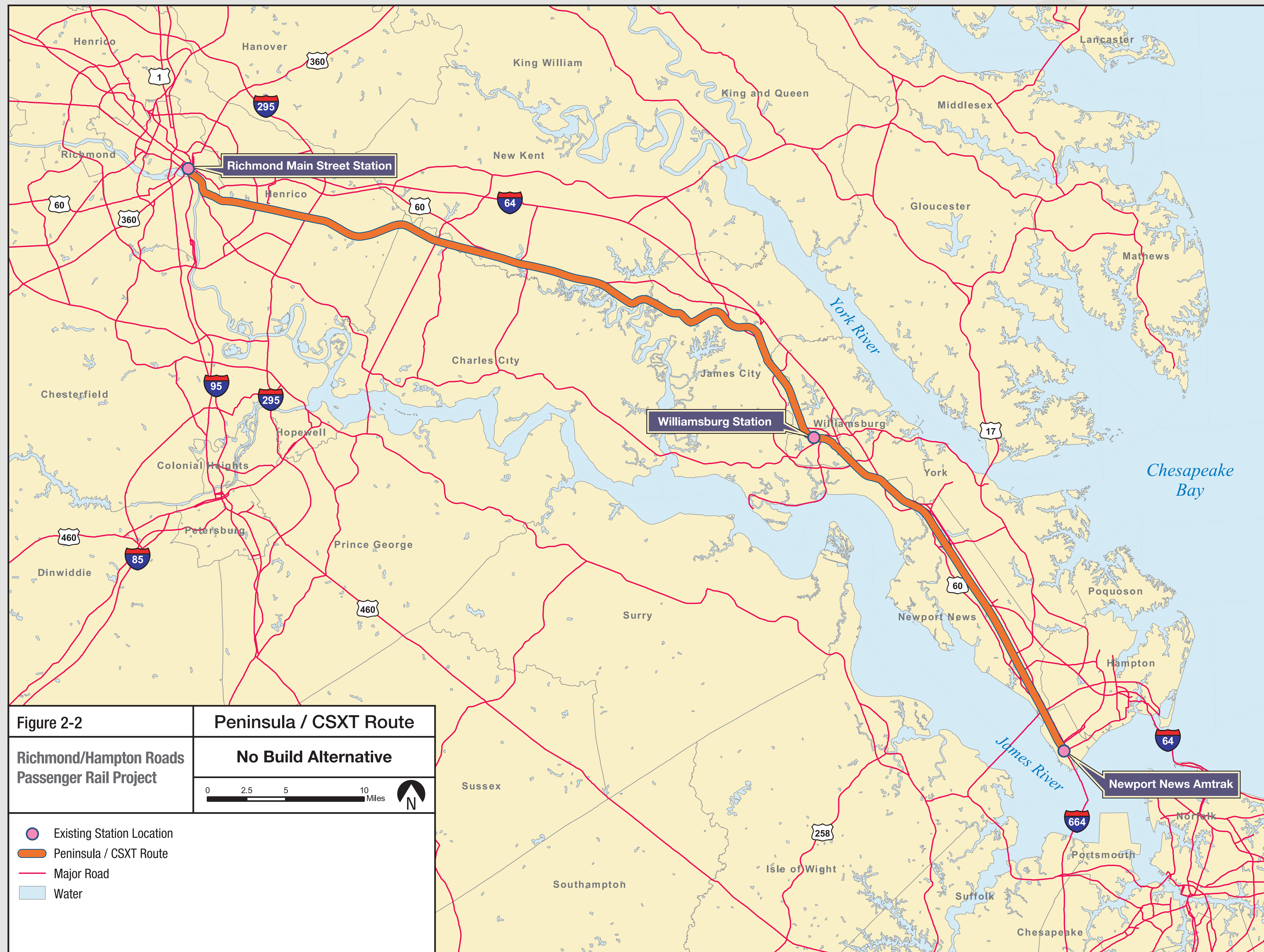


# History of Routes Considered



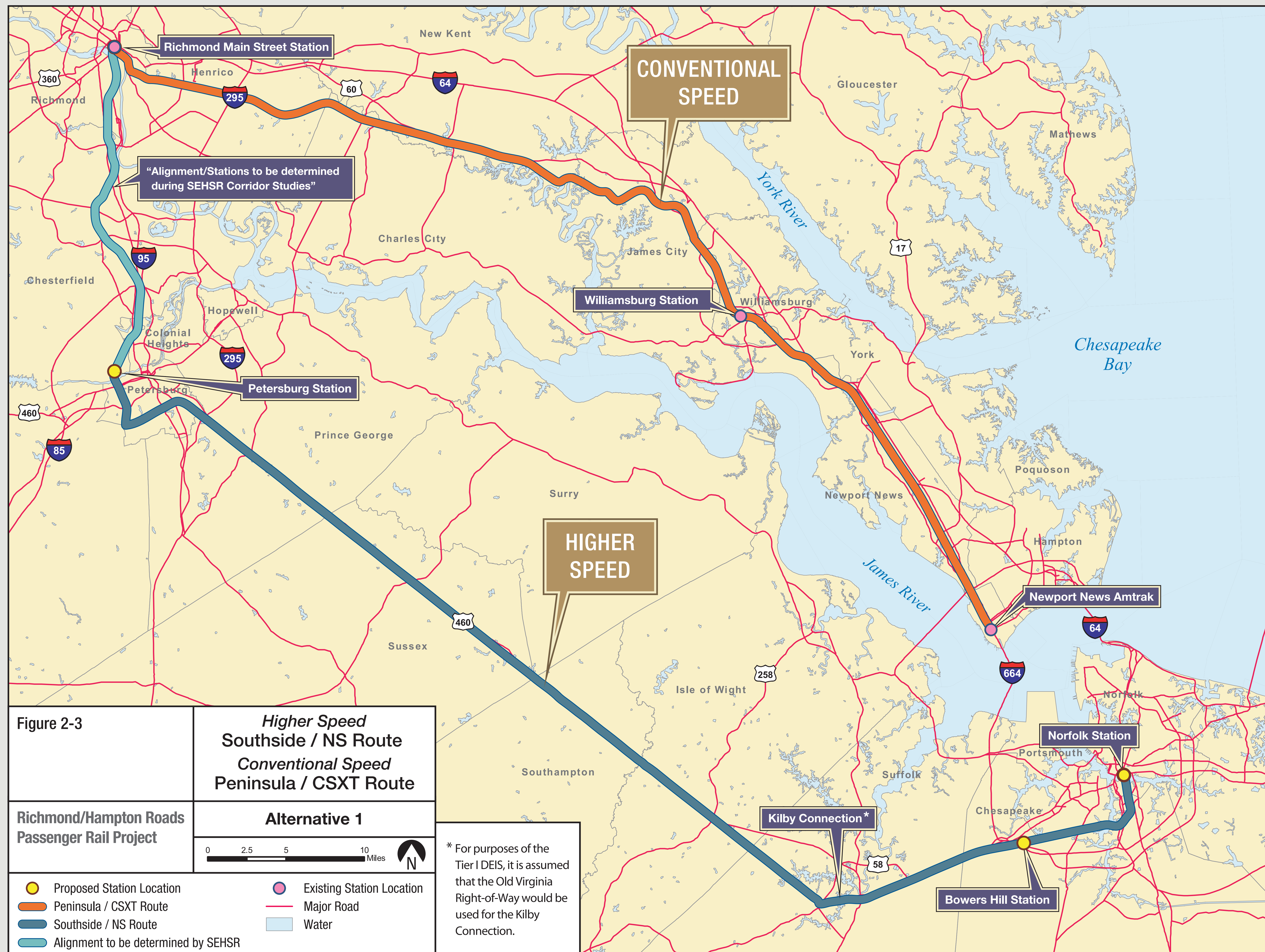


# Status Quo and No Action Alternatives



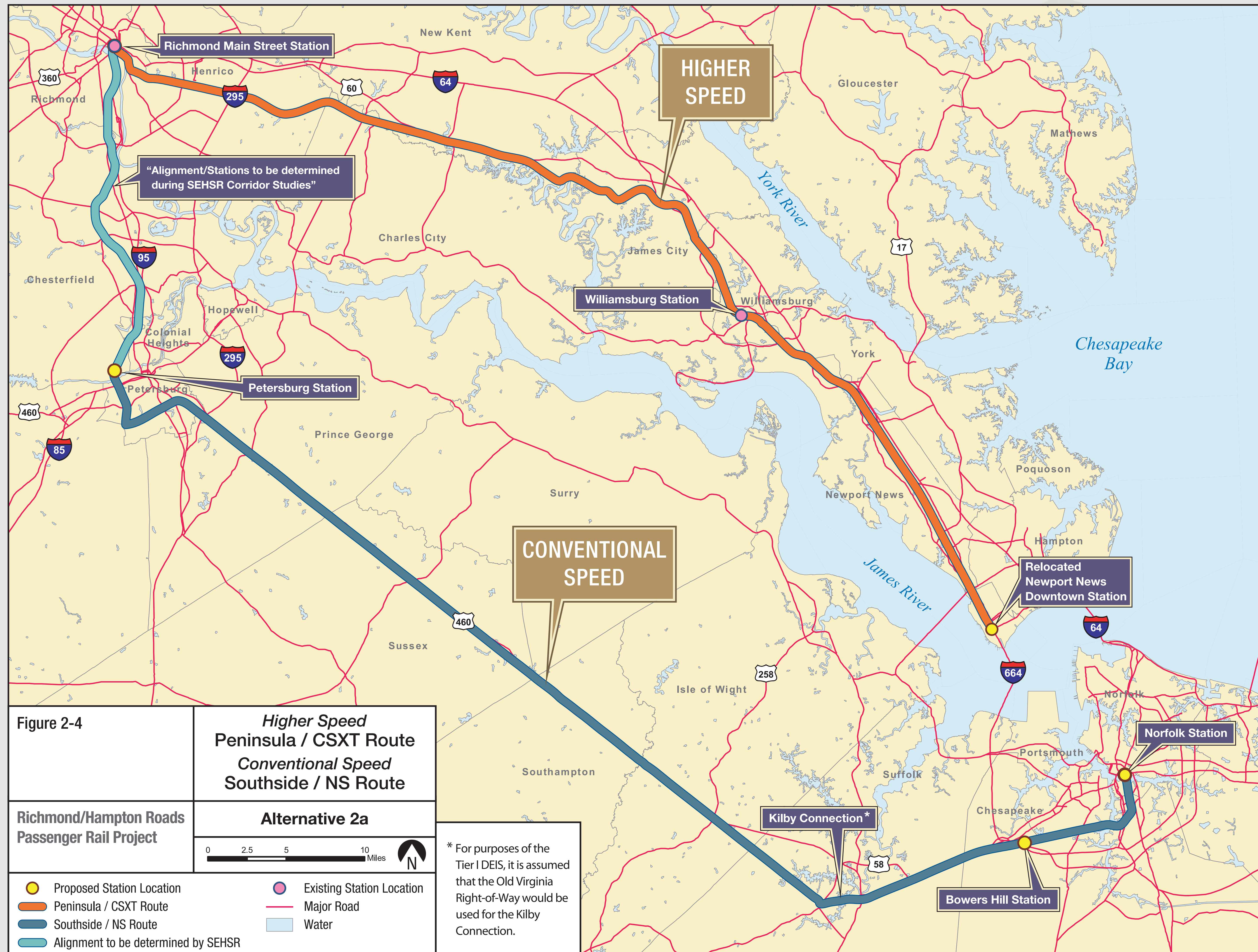


# Alternative 1



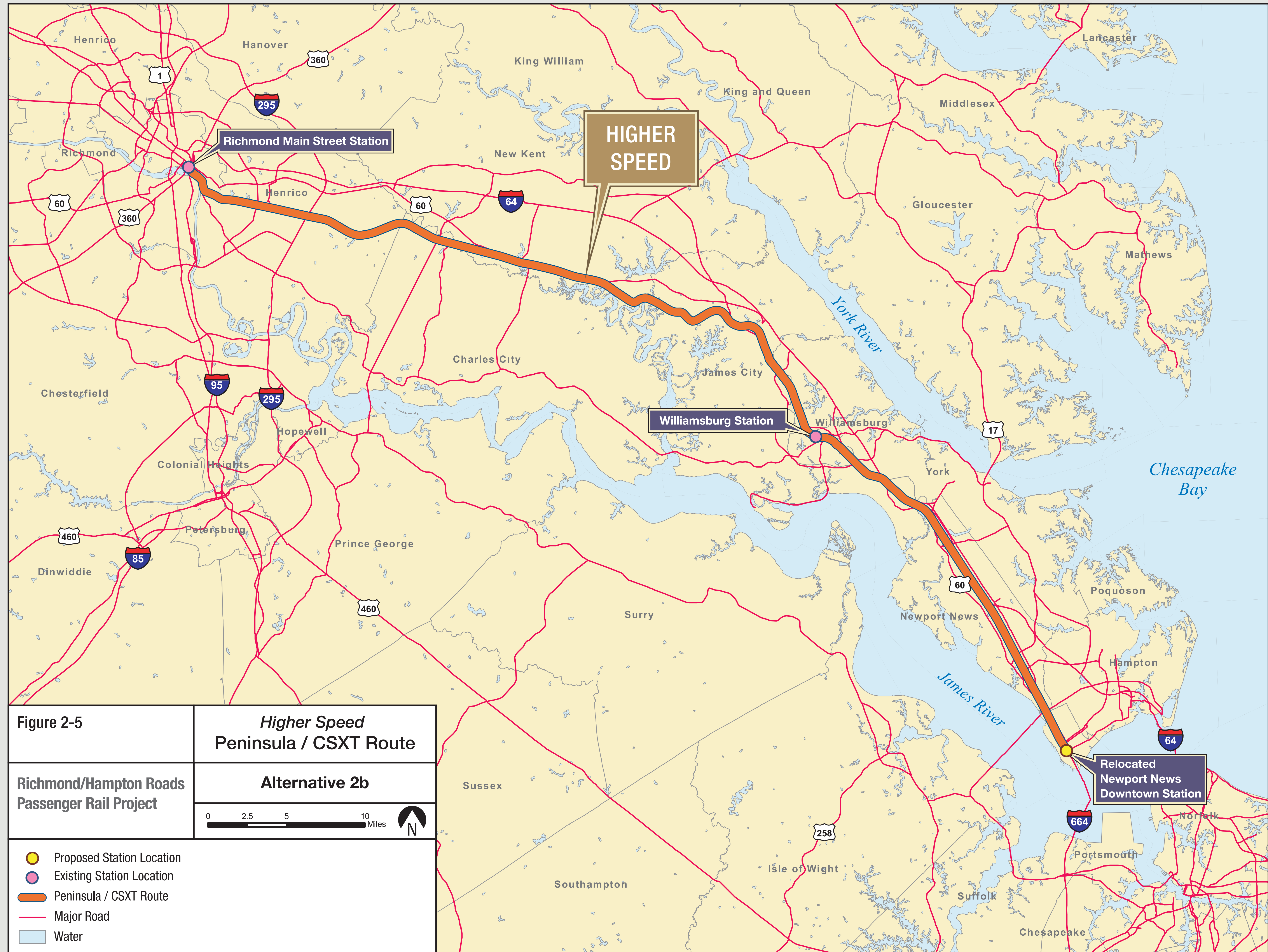


# Alternative 2a





# Alternative 2b





# Comparative Analysis of Alternatives

## Performance Measures Planning Year 2025 Assuming Southeast High-speed Rail Project 15-Aug-08

Evaluation Criteria	79-mph MAS Option		90-mph MAS Option			110-mph MAS Option		
	Status Quo	No Action	Alt 1	Alt 2a	Alt 2b	Alt 1	Alt 2a	Alt 2b
<b>System Features (Assumes SEHSR Project)</b>								
<b>Route Miles (Hampton Roads to Richmond)</b>								
Peninsula/CSXT Route	73.9	73.9	73.9	73.9	73.9	73.9	73.9	73.9
Southside/NS Route	0.0	0.0	101.0	101.0	0.0	101.0	101.0	0.0
Total Route Miles	73.9	73.9	174.9	174.9	73.9	174.9	174.9	73.9
<b>Frequency of Service - Daily Roundtrips</b>								
Peninsula/CSXT Route	2	3	3	6	9	3	6	9
Southside/NS Route	0	0	6	3	0	6	3	0
Total Daily Roundtrips	2	3	9	9	9	9	9	9
<b>Average Annual Ridership (Planning Year 2025 with SEHSR)</b>								
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>								
High estimate	262,300	464,800	223,400	914,600	1,101,100	222,300	968,400	1,147,000
Low estimate	245,500	425,700	212,500	732,200	897,800	211,200	768,000	937,000
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>								
High estimate	0	0	886,700	209,700	0	939,900	193,000	0
Low estimate	0	0	727,100	192,500	0	773,000	187,000	0
Total High estimate	262,300	464,800	1,110,100	1,124,300	1,101,100	1,162,200	1,161,400	1,147,000
Total Low estimate	245,500	425,700	939,600	924,700	897,800	984,200	955,000	937,000
Difference from Status Quo - high estimate		202,500	847,800	862,000	838,800	899,900	899,100	884,700
Difference from Status Quo - low estimate		180,200	694,100	679,200	652,300	738,700	709,500	691,500
Difference from No Action - high estimate			645,300	659,500	636,300	697,400	696,600	682,200
Difference from No Action - low estimate			513,900	499,000	472,100	558,500	529,300	511,300
<b>Capital Costs (2008\$)</b>								
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route Subtotal</b>								
	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$330,000,000	\$330,000,000	\$0	\$431,900,000	\$431,900,000
Richmond - Petersburg	\$0	\$0	\$148,900,000	\$148,900,000	\$0	\$148,900,000	\$148,900,000	\$0
Petersburg - Norfolk	\$0	\$0	\$326,500,000	\$263,400,000	\$0	\$394,100,000	\$263,400,000	\$0
<b>Southside/NS Subtotal</b>								
	\$0	\$0	\$475,400,000	\$412,300,000	\$0	\$543,000,000	\$412,300,000	\$0
Total Capital Costs (2008\$)	\$0	\$0	\$475,400,000	\$742,300,000	\$330,000,000	\$543,000,000	\$844,200,000	\$431,900,000
<b>Annualized Capital Costs (2008\$)</b>								
Annualized Capital Costs (Peninsula/CSXT)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$26,169,000	\$26,169,000	\$0	\$34,249,670	\$34,249,670
Annualized Capital Costs (Southside/NS)	\$0	\$0	\$37,699,220	\$32,695,390	\$0	\$43,059,900	\$32,695,390	\$0
Total Annualized Capital Costs (Approximated)	\$0	\$0	\$37,699,220	\$58,864,390	\$26,169,000	\$43,059,900	\$66,945,060	\$34,249,670
<b>Operating &amp; Maintenance (O&amp;M) Costs (2008\$)</b>								
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>								
Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs (2008\$)	\$16,900,000	\$21,300,000	\$21,300,000	\$53,400,000	\$71,700,000	\$21,300,000	\$54,900,000	\$72,400,000
Change in Annual O&M Costs from Status Quo		\$4,400,000	\$63,100,000	\$61,000,000	\$54,800,000	\$64,500,000	\$62,500,000	\$55,500,000
Change in Annual O&M Costs from No Action			\$58,700,000	\$56,600,000	\$50,400,000	\$60,100,000	\$58,100,000	\$51,100,000
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>								
Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs (2008\$)	\$0	\$0	\$80,000,000	\$77,900,000	\$71,700,000	\$81,400,000	\$79,400,000	\$72,400,000
Change in Annual O&M Costs from Status Quo			\$80,000,000	\$77,900,000	\$71,700,000	\$81,400,000	\$79,400,000	\$72,400,000
Change in Annual O&M Costs from No Action			\$80,000,000	\$77,900,000	\$71,700,000	\$81,400,000	\$79,400,000	\$72,400,000
<b>Average Annual Revenue (2008\$ assuming SEHSR)</b>								
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>								
High estimate	\$15,950,000	\$28,070,000	\$11,310,000	\$59,270,000	\$68,010,000	\$11,230,000	\$62,170,000	\$70,510,000
Low estimate	\$14,490,000	\$24,950,000	\$10,520,000	\$46,600,000	\$54,020,000	\$10,410,000	\$48,550,000	\$56,080,000
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>								
High estimate	\$0	\$0	\$57,810,000	\$9,890,000	\$0	\$60,890,000	\$9,050,000	\$0
Low estimate	\$0	\$0	\$45,980,000	\$8,840,000	\$0	\$48,570,000	\$8,590,000	\$0
Total High estimate	\$15,950,000	\$28,070,000	\$69,120,000	\$69,160,000	\$68,010,000	\$72,120,000	\$71,220,000	\$70,510,000
Total Low estimate	\$14,490,000	\$24,950,000	\$56,500,000	\$55,440,000	\$54,020,000	\$58,980,000	\$57,140,000	\$56,080,000
Difference from Status Quo - high estimate		\$12,120,000	\$53,170,000	\$53,210,000	\$52,060,000	\$56,170,000	\$55,270,000	\$54,560,000
Difference from Status Quo - low estimate		\$10,460,000	\$42,010,000	\$40,950,000	\$39,530,000	\$44,490,000	\$42,650,000	\$41,590,000
Difference from No Action - high estimate			\$41,050,000	\$41,090,000	\$39,940,000	\$44,050,000	\$43,150,000	\$42,440,000
Difference from No Action - low estimate			\$31,550,000	\$30,490,000	\$29,070,000	\$34,030,000	\$32,190,000	\$31,130,000
<b>Operating Ratio (percent O&amp;M costs covered by revenue)</b>								
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>								
Operating ratio - high revenue estimate	94.4%	131.8%	53.1%	111.0%	94.9%	52.7%	113.2%	97.4%
Operating ratio - low revenue estimate	85.7%	117.1%	49.4%	87.3%	75.3%	48.9%	88.4%	77.5%
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>								
Operating ratio - high revenue estimate	n/a	n/a	98.5%	40.4%	n/a	101.3%	36.9%	n/a
Operating ratio - low revenue estimate	n/a	n/a	78.3%	36.1%	n/a	80.8%	35.1%	n/a
Operating ratio - high revenue estimate	94.4%	131.8%	86.4%	88.8%	94.9%	88.6%	89.7%	97.4%
Operating ratio - low revenue estimate	85.7%	117.1%	70.6%	71.2%	75.3%	72.5%	72.0%	77.5%
<b>Cost Effectiveness (Annualized Cost per Rider)</b>								
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>								
Annualized Costs Peninsula/CSXT	\$16,900,000	\$21,300,000	\$21,300,000	\$79,569,000	\$97,869,000	\$21,300,000	\$89,149,670	\$106,649,670
Annualized Costs Southside/NS	\$0	\$0	\$96,399,220	\$57,195,390	\$0	\$103,159,900	\$57,195,390	\$0
Total Annualized Costs	\$16,900,000	\$21,300,000	\$117,699,220	\$136,764,390	\$97,869,000	\$124,459,900	\$146,345,060	\$106,649,670
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>								
Annualized Cost per rider - high ridership estimate	\$64.43	\$45.83	\$95.34	\$87.00	\$88.88	\$95.82	\$92.06	\$92.98
Annualized Cost per rider - low ridership estimate	\$68.84	\$50.04	\$100.24	\$108.67	\$109.01	\$100.85	\$116.08	\$113.82
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>								
Annualized Cost per rider - high ridership estimate	n/a	n/a	\$108.72	\$272.75	n/a	\$109.76	\$296.35	n/a
Annualized Cost per rider - low ridership estimate	n/a	n/a	\$132.58	\$297.12	n/a	\$133.45	\$305.86	n/a
Annualized Cost per rider - high ridership estimate	\$64.43	\$45.83	\$106.03	\$121.64	\$88.88	\$107.09	\$126.01	\$92.98
Annualized Cost per rider - low ridership estimate	\$68.84	\$50.04	\$125.27	\$147.90	\$109.01	\$126.46	\$153.24	\$113.82
<b>Subsidy / Surplus per Rider</b>								
<b>Peninsula/CSXT Route</b>								
(Subsidy) Surplus per rider - high revenue estimate	(\$3.62)	\$14.57	(\$44.72)	\$6.42	(\$3.35)	(\$45.30)	\$7.51	(\$1.65)
(Subsidy) Surplus per rider - low estimate	(\$9.82)	\$8.57	(\$50.73)	(\$9.29)	(\$19.69)	(\$51.56)	(\$8.27)	(\$17.42)
<b>Southside/NS Route</b>								
(Subsidy) Surplus per rider - high revenue estimate	n/a	n/a	(1.00)	(69.67)	n/a	0.84	(80.05)	n/a
(Subsidy) Surplus per rider - low estimate	n/a	n/a	(17.49)	(81.35)	n/a	(14.92)	(85.08)	n/a
(Subsidy) Surplus per rider - high revenue estimate	(\$3.62)	\$14.57	(\$9.80)	(\$7.77)	(\$3.35)	(\$7.98)	(\$7.04)	(\$1.65)
(Subsidy) Surplus per rider - low estimate	(\$9.82)	\$8.57	(\$25.01)	(\$24.29)	(\$19.69)	(\$22.78)	(\$23.31)	(\$17.42)
<b>Financial Capacity</b>								
Total Capital Costs (2008\$)			\$475,400,000	\$742,300,000	\$330,000,000	\$543,000,000	\$844,200,000	\$431,900,000
Federal Share at 80% of Build Alternative*			380,320,000	593,840,000	264,000,000	434,400,000	675,360,000	345,520,000
Non-federal share			95,080,000	148,460,000	66,000,000	108,600,000	168,840,000	86,380,000
Non-federal share as percent of total cost			20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%





**Richmond/Hampton Roads  
Passenger Rail Project**  
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation



# Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Public Hearing Information Packet

## Contents:

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**Project Fact Sheet**

**Public Comment Sheet**

## Welcome, and thank you for your participation in this important regional transportation initiative.

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is holding public hearings in Richmond, Newport News and Norfolk to seek your feedback on the best potential option to improve passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads. Information stations are available all evening for participants to collect information and ask questions of project staff before offering formal testimony and comments.

### During the hearing, you will receive information about:

- Potential passenger rail options
- Environmental impacts of each option
- Ridership forecasts
- Capital and operating cost estimates
- Necessary infrastructure improvements
- How to provide public comments

We encourage you to review the Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) document and the information provided at tonight's meeting before letting us know which option will, in your opinion, best meet the region's needs for improved passenger rail service. We've included tables on pages 3 and 4 that compare the options evaluated in the Draft EIS. A reference copy of the complete Draft EIS document is available for review at this meeting, at area libraries and online at the project Web site. Please refer to the project Web site ([www.rich2hrrail.info](http://www.rich2hrrail.info)), or contact us at **804-786-4440** or **TDD 711**, for a list of library locations.

## About the Project

DRPT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are analyzing ways to improve passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads. This improved service will ultimately connect the Northeast Corridor and the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor to provide access to the entire East Coast rail network.

The Tier I Draft EIS defines each potential option for improving passenger rail service, and evaluates each option based on the following key criteria:

- Routes served (Southside, Peninsula, or both routes)
- Number of trains
- Operating speed for each train
- Capital and operating costs
- Ridership projections
- Environmental impacts
- Necessary infrastructure improvements

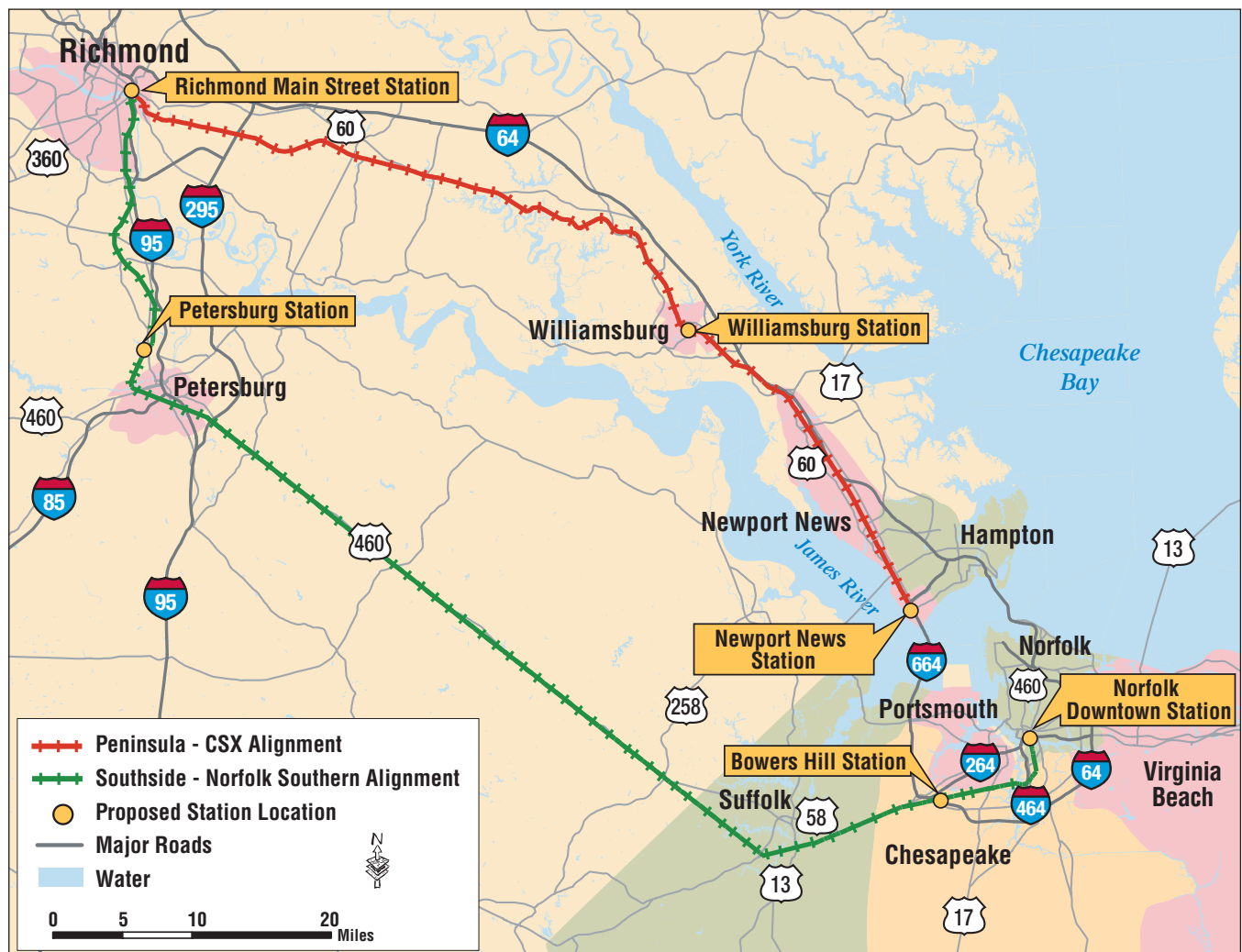
Your opinion regarding which option should be advanced for additional evaluation is important in order to conclude the Tier I EIS.

After public comments have been received, a preferred alternative will be identified and recommended as part of the Tier I Final EIS document. This final document will be submitted to the FRA for review. The FRA will then issue a Record of Decision on the alternative that will be eligible to receive federal funding. This decision will guide the next steps in the project development process.

## Project Schedule

Tier I Draft EIS Available for Public Comment	Dec. 18, 2009
Public Hearings	Jan. 26, 27 & 28, 2010
End of Comment Period	Feb. 11, 2010
Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) makes decision on Preferred Alternative	Feb. 2010
Federal Funding Application Submitted	Mar. 2010
Tier I Final EIS Submitted to FRA	Summer/Fall 2010
Record of Decision from FRA	Winter 2010/2011

This schedule is subject to federal approval.





## Key Alternative Comparisons

Alternative	Total # Trains	Speed	Time to Richmond (hours)	Annual Ridership (high)	Capital Costs	Annual Operating Costs	Annualized Cost per Rider (high)
<b>Status Quo:</b> maintains existing service on the Peninsula	2 Peninsula	79 mph	1:25	262,300	\$0	\$16,900,000	\$64.43
<b>No Action:</b> adds one Amtrak train on the Peninsula	3 Peninsula	79 mph	1:11	464,800	\$0	\$21,300,000	\$45.83
<b>Alternative 1:</b> High speed rail on the Southside, conventional speed rail on the Peninsula	6 Southside (HSR), 3 Peninsula (79 mph)	90 mph	1:35	1,110,100	\$475,400,000	\$80,000,000	\$106.03
		110 mph	1:27	1,162,200	\$543,000,000	\$81,400,000	\$107.09
<b>Alternative 2a:</b> High speed rail on the Peninsula, conventional speed rail on the Southside	3 Southside (79 mph), 6 Peninsula (HSR)	90 mph	1:03	1,124,300	\$742,300,000	\$77,900,000	\$121.64
		110 mph	0:57	1,161,400	\$844,200,000	\$79,400,000	\$126.01
<b>Alternative 2b:</b> High speed rail on the Peninsula, no rail service on the Southside	9 Peninsula (HSR)	90 mph	1:03	1,101,100	\$330,000,000	\$71,700,000	\$88.88
		110 mph	:57	1,147,000	\$431,900,000	\$72,400,000	\$92.98

Notes:  
Southside conventional train at 79 mph would take 1:38 to Richmond.  
HSR = High Speed Rail

### Benefits of Improved Transportation Choices

Enhanced passenger rail service will improve the connectivity of Hampton Roads, Richmond, and ultimately the entire East Coast, by achieving the following goals:

- Save travel time between Hampton Roads, Richmond and other destinations
- Connect Hampton Roads communities to the Northeast Corridor, the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor and the entire East Coast rail network
- Provide highway congestion relief
  - Provide a new transportation choice for people traveling within and through the corridor

**In the Northeast Corridor, rail carries more passengers than all airlines combined. Passenger rail is a competitive transportation choice for the traveling public.**

- Support economic development through improved access to businesses and tourist attractions
- Reduce fuel consumption and improve air quality
- Provide an additional evacuation route during emergency situations, such as hurricanes

### Public Comments & Testimony

All public comments are due to DRPT by **February 11, 2010**, in order to be considered and to become part of the public record for this project. For your convenience, you may comment in several ways:

**At the hearing:** You may complete and turn in a comment form, give public testimony during the hearing portion of the meeting or dictate your comments to the stenographer at any point during the evening.

**Online:** Visit [www.rich2hrrail.info](http://www.rich2hrrail.info). We have provided an electronic comment form that you can submit online or download, print and mail the hardcopy form.

**By mail:** Written comments may be sent to:  
Public Information Office  
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation  
600 E. Main St., Suite 2102  
Richmond, VA 23219

## Environmental Screening and Ratings

The alternatives under consideration are measured in terms of their ability to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the project. These measures address the goals of regional mobility and linkages,

highway congestion, safety, cost-effectiveness and environmental impacts. The following table provides a summary rating for each alternative's ability to meet the project goals and objectives. The evaluation uses both quantitative and qualitative criteria and is based on the findings of the Tier I Draft EIS.

### Planning Year 2025

Limit Highway Congestion	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	–	–	0*	0*	+	+	+	+
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	+	+	0*	0*	No train	No train
<b>Overall rating</b>	–	–	+	+	+	+	+	+
Probable Air Quality Impacts	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	0	0	0*	0*	+	+	+	+
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	+	+	+*	+*	No train	No train
<b>Overall rating</b>	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+
Probable Wetland, Floodplain and Wildlife Habitat Impacts	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	0	0	0*	0*	–	–	–	–
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	--	--	--	--	No train	No train
<b>Overall rating</b>	0	0	--	--	--*	--*	–	–
Probable Noise Impacts	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	0	0	0*	0*	–	–	–	–
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	--	--	--	--	No train	No train
<b>Overall rating</b>	0	0	--	--	--*	--*	–	–
Probable Vibration Impacts	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	0	0	0*	0*	--	--	--	--
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	--	--	–	–	No train	No train
<b>Overall rating</b>	0	0	--	--	--*	--*	--	--
Sensitive Land Uses, Historic Properties and Open Space Impacts	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	–	–	0*	0*	+	+	++	++
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	+	+	+*	+*	No train	No train
<b>Overall rating</b>	–	–	+	+	+	+	++	++

- ++ Strongly supports project goal or objective.
- + Supports project goal or objective.
- 0 No impacts relative to project goal or objective.
- Does not support project goal or objective due to minor negative impacts.
- Does not support project goal or objective due to severe impacts.
- \* Conventional speed trains with a maximum authorized speed (MAS) of 79 mph.

## **E-MAIL – JANUARY 12, 2010**

### **Draft Environmental Impact Statement Available for Review Mark Your Calendar - Public Hearings Scheduled for January 26, 27 & 28**

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) will hold public hearings January 26, 27 and 28, 2010 for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). DRPT and FRA are evaluating options to improve passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads. The draft document provides an overview and comparison of the alternatives under consideration, with information on the cost, ridership, environmental impacts and infrastructure improvements associated with each option.

Public comments will help determine the best alternative to advance into the next phase of federal review. The draft document is available online at [www.rich2hrrail.info](http://www.rich2hrrail.info) and in paper copy at local libraries, planning district commissions and the DRPT Richmond office. Comments may be made using an [electronic comment form](#) or in the ways listed below. Public comments will be accepted until February 11, 2010. In addition, three public hearings will be conducted as follows:

#### **Tuesday, January 26, 2010**

5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Department of Motor Vehicles  
2300 W. Broad Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Richmond, VA 23269

[For directions click here](#)

GRTC Transit Routes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 19 and 24

#### **Wednesday, January 27, 2010**

5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

City Center Conference Facilities, James and Warwick Rooms  
700 Town Center Drive  
Newport News, VA 23606

[For directions click here](#)

Parking available at Merchants Walk Parking Garage (free parking for meeting attendees on levels 3 and above)

Hampton Roads Transit Routes: 111, 112, and 119

#### **Thursday, January 28, 2010**

5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center  
(Adjacent to Nauticus)  
One Waterside Drive  
Norfolk, VA 23510

[For directions click here](#)

Parking available at Town Point Garage (free parking for meeting attendees)

Hampton Roads Transit Routes: 310, 961, and 962

Each public hearing will be conducted in an open house format, with an overview presentation provided at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.

There are several options for providing public comments:

- Provide written comments at any time during the public comment period using the electronic comment form [direct link to comment form here](#).
- Sign up at a public hearing to publicly deliver verbal comments. Verbal comments are limited to three minutes per person and groups are requested to provide comments through one spokesperson whenever possible.
- Provide verbal comments privately to the court reporter at a public hearing.
- Provide written public comments at a public hearing.
- Mail written comments at any time during the public comment period to: Public Information Office, DRPT, 600 E. Main St, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219.

For more information on the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project visit [www.rich2hrrail.info](http://www.rich2hrrail.info).

### **About DRPT**

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is the state agency for rail, public transportation and commuter services in Virginia. DRPT has three business areas: rail, transit, and congestion management that help improve the mobility of people and goods while providing more transportation choices. Visit us at [www.drpt.virginia.gov](http://www.drpt.virginia.gov).

## **E-MAIL – JANUARY 21, 2010**

### **Public Hearings Scheduled for Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project**

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) will hold public hearings **next week** January 26, 27 and 28, 2010 for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). DRPT and FRA are evaluating options to improve passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads. The draft document provides an overview and comparison of the alternatives under consideration, with information on the cost, ridership, environmental impacts and infrastructure improvements associated with each option. The draft document is available online at [www.rich2hrrail.info](http://www.rich2hrrail.info) and in paper copy at local libraries, planning district commissions and the DRPT Richmond office.

Public comments may be submitted on the [Online Comment Form](#) or at the hearings and will be accepted until February 11, 2010. Public hearings will be conducted as follows:

#### **Tuesday, January 26, 2010**

5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Department of Motor Vehicles  
2300 W. Broad Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Richmond, VA 23269

[For directions click here](#)

GRTC Transit Routes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 19 and 24

#### **Wednesday, January 27, 2010**

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VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL  
AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

RICHMOND/HAMPTON ROADS PASSENGER RAIL PROJECT  
TIER I  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

PUBLIC HEARING  
Richmond, Virginia  
January 26, 2010  
5:30 p.m.

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Norfolk, Virginia

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1 MR. PAGE: As everyone is coming to take

2 a seat, I would like, first off, to give you an  
3 overview of our agenda and how the program is going to  
4 work together.

5 First of all, my name is Kevin Page. I  
6 am Chief of Rail Transportation for the Department of  
7 Rail and Public Transportation. And tonight, starting  
8 this evening, our agenda will include opening remarks  
9 beginning with Ms. Thelma Drake, our director of the  
10 Department of Rail and Public Transportation, who will  
11 then introduce the next speakers. Following that, I  
12 will come back to the podium and provide a  
13 presentation that you can see the lead slide behind  
14 our table panelists here tonight. Upon completion of  
15 that presentation, we will take the first ten speakers  
16 that have signed up tonight to speak. We will take  
17 those in the order based on political affiliations  
18 first.

19 We do have a delegate here tonight as  
20 well as some other representatives of the elected  
21 officials in here.

22 Following those public comments, I will  
23 again give the presentation one more time for those  
24 who have come and joined us later this evening at  
25 seven o'clock. And then, at seven-thirty, we will

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1 complete the public comment process as we will run  
2 through the rest of the list of the speakers.

3 We do ask you tonight to limit your  
4 comments to three minutes per commenter. And if you

5 represent a group of people, we would prefer that you  
6 have one representative speak for the three-minute  
7 period to represent your group in interest.

8 One more housekeeping item before I turn  
9 this over to Ms. Drake tonight. Please take into  
10 account that there is an emergency exit over here to  
11 my right, your left, the far left-hand side. There is  
12 another one behind the posters here. But since that  
13 is blocked, we would prefer you use the one on the  
14 left side or come out and go out the main entrance of  
15 the Department of Motor Vehicles building here  
16 tonight. Bathroom facilities are through the exit  
17 sign. Make your immediate first right and on the  
18 left. And also this: I am certified in CPR so if  
19 anyone has an emergency situation, please feel free to  
20 contact me. And, Courtney Ware -- where are you,  
21 Courtney? In the back, Courtney. Please raise your  
22 hand, Courtney. Courtney will dial 911 for us, as  
23 well.

24 So that concludes the safety briefing  
25 tonight. And thank you very much for your attention.

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1 And on with the presentation beginning with opening  
2 remarks by Ms. Drake. Thank you.

3 MS. DRAKE: Thank you. Let me get over  
4 here so that I can see you.

5 First of all, I would like to thank each  
6 and every one of you for coming out here tonight to  
7 participate in our public hearing about the Passenger

8 Rail Project from Richmond to Hampton Roads. I would  
9 like to introduce a few people who have joined us this  
10 evening. First, we have Delegate Paula Miller  
11 representing Norfolk in the House of Delegates.  
12 Paula, thank you for coming. We have Mayor Annie  
13 Mickens, the mayor of Petersburg. Thank you for being  
14 here. And Mayor Paul Fraim who joins us from Norfolk,  
15 who is also my mayor, by the way. We have Jerry  
16 McCarthy from the Commonwealth Transportation Board,  
17 James Keen from the Commonwealth Transportation Board  
18 and Dick Beadles from the Rail Advisory Board. So we  
19 want to thank them, each of you, for being here with  
20 us this evening.

21 But I really do appreciate, as the new  
22 director of the Department of Rail and Public  
23 Transportation, that you would take your time to join  
24 with us and help participate in Virginia determining  
25 the best route into Hampton Roads, the best option to

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1 get people from Richmond and then to open up for the  
2 region to be able to go onto D.C. and then into even  
3 places beyond, into the northeast corridor. The  
4 mission of the Department of Rail and Public  
5 Transportation is increased mobility and additional  
6 transportation choices for people. And I think you  
7 will see tonight that this is a huge component of  
8 them.

9 The purpose of this Tier I EIS that you  
10 are going to hear about tonight is to help the Federal



11 Railroad Administration, the Department of Rail and  
12 Public Transportation and the Commonwealth  
13 Transportation Board identify the preferred route to  
14 provide this rail service into Hampton Roads. The CTB  
15 will select the alternative in their February 17th  
16 meeting. The public comment period, if you know  
17 someone who isn't here tonight, would like to continue  
18 to offer comments, goes through February the 11th.  
19 When this alternative is selected, a more detailed and  
20 site-specific analysis will occur during the Tier II  
21 process.

22 Please remember that cost is not the only  
23 factor to consider in this selection, that the  
24 Commonwealth's goal is to provide the maximum benefit  
25 into the region. DRPT will apply for federal funding

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1 to advance the preferred alternative. This is a very  
2 important step and a lengthy process. I know many of  
3 you are like me, we have watched this for a number of  
4 years. For me living in Norfolk, it is very exciting  
5 to be at this point. But we all know that this is  
6 just one step along the way and that we will continue  
7 along this path and hopefully we will all be together  
8 celebrating when that rail goes into Hampton Roads.

9 So I certainly would like to turn the  
10 mike over and introduce Gerald McCarthy, a  
11 Commonwealth Transportation Board member from  
12 Richmond.

13 MR. MCCARTHY: Thank you very much.

14 Ms. Drake. Good evening, Ladies and gentlemen.

15 It is so nice to see a good crowd here in  
16 Richmond, especially you out-of-town visitors. We  
17 welcome you. We are glad you are here. At this time  
18 of year, you are probably here a lot more often than  
19 you want to be. But I am glad you are here tonight.  
20 This is more people than we had at our most recent  
21 six-year planning public hearing just a little bit  
22 ago. So it is nice to see such great interest in  
23 rail.

24 We are facing a really important decision  
25 here, and it is really not a question of whether but

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1 it is a question of how. So we are very interested in  
2 hearing not so much that you think this is a great  
3 idea, because I think most of us agree this is a great  
4 idea of getting the rail extended from Richmond down  
5 to the southside of Hampton Roads, the question is how  
6 to do it and how to do it in the optimum way that  
7 provides maximum benefits and minimum negative  
8 consequences.

9 And that is what the environmental impact  
10 statement process is all about, it is to help decision  
11 makers inform their decisions with factual information  
12 about how to provide with any particular decision in  
13 light of its potential for negatively affecting the  
14 environment. So that will be an important part of our  
15 decision going forward but, again, it is going to be a  
16 question more of how rather than whether. So those of

17 you who intend to speak to that aspect of it I am sure  
18 will be very helpful to informing our decision.

19 But we welcome and are open ears  
20 listening for anything you have to say about this  
21 because it is a very exciting project. And I know we  
22 want to get on with it and make the connection here in  
23 Richmond. While I wouldn't presume to speak for the  
24 local officials, Richmond is very, very excited to be  
25 at the locus point from the northeast corridor down to

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1 Hampton Roads and it is very important not just for  
2 Hampton Roads but it is very important for Richmond  
3 that we make this connection. So I think we are all  
4 on the same page.

5 And we look forward to hearing what you  
6 have to say tonight. Thank you all very much for  
7 being here.

8 (Mr. Page gave his presentation.)

9 MR. PAGE: I am going to call the first  
10 speaker and cue the speaker following. First we have  
11 Delegate Paula Miller as the first speaker and then  
12 Dwight Farmer will be the second speaker.

13 MS. MILLER: Thank you very much.  
14 Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Keen, Ms. Drake and, Mr. Page,  
15 thanks so much for this opportunity to address you on  
16 the prospects of high speed rail service for our  
17 region. My name is Delegate Paula Miller, and I do  
18 represent part of the City of Norfolk in the Virginia  
19 General Assembly.

20 I view this project, including the high  
21 speed rail service along the Route 460 corridor and  
22 enhanced inner city passenger rail service along the  
23 CSX/Amtrak I64 corridor, as a critical link between  
24 Hampton Roads, Richmond and Washington, D. C. Among  
25 other things, the project would position us to better

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1 serve our large military and defense-related  
2 populations, which require unencumbered access to  
3 Northern Virginia and the nation's capital. We can  
4 also improve the lives of our 200,000 uniformed and  
5 federal civilian defense workers. DOD invests  
6 \$50 billion in Virginia, and we need to enhance our  
7 transportation system to bring even more DOD jobs to  
8 the Commonwealth. The tourism industry will reap the  
9 profits of well-planned transportation improvements.  
10 Congestion relief for daily commuters is a given if  
11 people are using Virginia's highway system -- if fewer  
12 people are using Virginia's highway system. And other  
13 important Virginia assets, like our courts, will  
14 prosper through such an initiative.

15 I am also always very mindful of ways to  
16 evacuate residents quickly especially if a hurricane  
17 or other imminent emergency demands it. This is a  
18 rare opportunity to address our transportation  
19 challenges as well as to one day hopefully link up  
20 with our neighbors to the south for future  
21 connectivity as part of the national inner city and  
22 high speed passenger rail network.

23 Richmond\_hearings.txt  
I wholeheartedly support the Hampton  
24 Roads Transportation Planning Organization's  
25 endorsement of the high speed rail corridor along the

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1 Norfolk Southern 460 route as well as the enhancements  
2 to passenger rail service on the peninsula and a  
3 regional high speed rail task force. Transportation  
4 planning and solutions take serious vision and serious  
5 commitment. I encourage each of you to remember that  
6 the future is now. Thank you.

7 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Delegate Miller.  
8 Our next speaker is Dwight Farmer from the Hampton  
9 Roads Transportation Planning Organization who will be  
10 followed by Annie Mickens, mayor and chair of the  
11 Tri-Cities MPO.

12 MR. FARMER: Thank you, Mr. Page, Ms.  
13 Drake, and, Mr. Keen, and, Mr. McCarthy.

14 I have been given an incredible  
15 opportunity to come here and speak. My name is Dwight  
16 Farmer. I am with the Virginia Rail Advisory Board.  
17 But I am here tonight representing the Transportation  
18 Planning Organization comprised of thirteen of our  
19 urban localities, four General Assembly members, two  
20 transit operators, VDOT and DRPT are members of our  
21 board as well as the Virginia Port Authority.

22 These folks comprising the HRTPO have  
23 overwhelmingly passed a resolution that Delegate  
24 Miller has just referred to. The resolution was  
25 approved overwhelmingly by the board at a special



1 meeting dedicated just to the high speed rail inner  
2 city passenger rail on October 30th.

3 I have presented, Mr. Page, your staff  
4 with a package prior to coming here. So all of my  
5 materials referenced are in that package.

6 The resolution that is in that package  
7 has two critical components to the Richmond to Hampton  
8 Roads rail project. One is the designation of a high  
9 speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern 460  
10 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of 110 miles  
11 per hour plus. And the second component of that  
12 resolution is to have enhanced inner city passenger  
13 rail service along the CSX/Amtrak I64 corridor. The  
14 Hampton Roads region wants to be clear, very clear,  
15 that it would like to aggressively implement steps to  
16 achieve the ultimate goals of having high speed rail  
17 along the Norfolk Southern U.S. 460 corridor and  
18 enhanced and strengthened inner city passenger service  
19 along the CSX 64 corridor. So these definitely  
20 include a partnership between the community of Hampton  
21 Roads in its 1.7 million people, the Federal Railroad  
22 Administration, the Virginia Department of Rail and  
23 Public Transportation, Norfolk Southern, CSX and  
24 Amtrak.

25 The establishment of new passenger rail

1 service is critically important to the region of  
2 Hampton Roads particularly given the large  
3 concentration of military. And the Port of Virginia  
4 is the third largest port on the east coast of the  
5 U. S.

6 The Hampton Roads region respectfully  
7 requests that the Federal Railroad Administration and  
8 the Virginia Department of Rail Public Transportation  
9 aggressively expedite and update completion of the  
10 Tier I draft EIS and obtain a record of decision as  
11 soon as possible. In addition, we recommend and urge  
12 that the Commonwealth prepare for the Tier II EIS in  
13 the spring of this year.

14 In coordination with the HRTPO technical  
15 advisory committee, that package, Mr. Page, also  
16 includes our techno comments, which I am not going to  
17 go into tonight but they are a part of the record, if  
18 you will.

19 The TPO stands ready to work with and  
20 assist the Federal Railroad Administration, the DRPT  
21 and all of its partners that I previously mentioned.  
22 We encourage the Commonwealth to aggressively pursue  
23 competitive high speed rail and inner city passenger  
24 rail service stimulus funds. We think that getting  
25 those funds will be critical to making this project

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1 happen. Further, we should seize the opportunity to  
2 partner, as I said earlier, with CSX Rail and Norfolk  
3 Southern on these endeavors.

4 We thank you for this opportunity. We  
5 look forward to working with all of the agencies we  
6 have outlined before and we stand ready at any time,  
7 please do not hesitate to call us at any time. Thank  
8 you.

9 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Farmer, for  
10 your comments and also your written submission, a  
11 resolution from the TPO.

12 Our next speaker is Annie Mickens. She  
13 is mayor of the City of Petersburg and also chairman  
14 of the Tri-Cities MPO. Ms. Mickens, you will be  
15 followed by Dick Beadles. Thank you.

16 MAYOR MICKENS: Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Keen,  
17 Ms. Drake, Mr. Page, good evening. I am Annie  
18 Mickens, mayor for the City of Petersburg and chair of  
19 the Tri-Cities Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.  
20 In addition, I serve as chair of the Greater Planning  
21 District Commission. On behalf of the Tri-Cities MPO,  
22 I want to express our appreciation for the invitation  
23 to participate in this public meeting and to offer our  
24 comments on the Richmond to Hampton Roads passenger  
25 rail project draft environmental impact statement.

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1 On January 14th of this year, the  
2 Tri-Cities MPO received a presentation from a  
3 representative of the Virginia Department of Rail and  
4 Public Transportation on the potential costs and  
5 benefits of several alternatives for provision of this  
6 potential future transportation service. Following

7 this -- following this presentation, MPO members asked  
8 several questions and received responses relating to  
9 rail and highway crossing safety, connecting passenger  
10 rail services in Richmond, train noise and vibration,  
11 project financing, connection with the southeast high  
12 speed rail corridor and the potential for a new  
13 passenger rail station that will serve the Tri-Cities  
14 Area.

15 After consideration of these items and  
16 other information contained in the project draft  
17 environmental impact statement, the clear consensus of  
18 the Tri-Cities MPO membership was preference for  
19 Alternative 1 as described in the Table ES1 of the  
20 document. The MPO adopted a resolution to this  
21 effect. This resolution is attached to my comments,  
22 which have been provided to you for public record.  
23 Alternative 1 would provide high speed service along  
24 the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor and would also  
25 offer expanded conventional passenger rail service

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1 along the CSX 64 interstate corridor. Alternative 1  
2 would restore passenger rail service along the Norfolk  
3 Southern Route 460 corridor that was discontinued  
4 during the early 1970s.

5 The largest cities in the Hampton Roads  
6 area would have access to high speed service with  
7 connectivity to the southeast high speed rail corridor  
8 in the Petersburg area. Fort Lee's doubling in size  
9 as a major training installation marks the Norfolk

10 Southern Route 460 corridor even more advantageous.  
11 Therefore, the Tri-Cities MPO supports Alternative 1  
12 as the most logical and consistent alternative with  
13 the project purpose and the need of providing a  
14 competitive and more reliable transportation choice  
15 for people travelling to and from the Hampton Roads  
16 region from our perspective.

17 We thank you for this opportunity to  
18 bring these brief comments to your attention and for  
19 the record. Please have a good evening.

20 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Ms. Mickens, and  
21 also thank you for the MPO resolution you are dropping  
22 off tonight.

23 The next speaker is Mr. Dick Beadles.  
24 Mr. Beadles will be followed by Danny Playhu.

25 MR. BEADLES: Thank you. I am telling

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1 you I am so happy to be here tonight because I have  
2 been involved in a peripheral way in this thing for a  
3 quarter century. The first thing I can remember --  
4 and, Mayor Mickens, I would like you to hear this just  
5 one line. Excuse me. In 1986, we lost an important  
6 rail link between Dunlop and Downtown Petersburg. I  
7 tried unsuccessfully to do something about that. It  
8 is regrettable, I doubt that we can ever restore it.  
9 But after many disappointments and setbacks, I have  
10 seen this thing develop to the point where I think we  
11 are on the cusp of coming together with a commonsense  
12 plan that will move this eastern third of the



13 Commonwealth of Virginia probably for the next  
14 century. Obviously, I won't be standing here in  
15 24 years hence but I expect great things to happen.

16 And I think the course of action is  
17 embodied in the Hampton Roads TPO resolution that you  
18 have -- you are familiar with. So I support that. I  
19 think it is the way to go.

20 I would like to just make a couple of  
21 observations. Number 1, it takes a lot of people, a  
22 lot of passengers, a lot of tickets sold, a lot of  
23 money in the fare box to make this kind of operation a  
24 success. So we need every rider that we can get. And  
25 clearly, without any disrespect to the peninsula,

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1 Southside Hampton Roads is where the population is  
2 today and increasingly it will be in the future.

3 Moreover, Norfolk, despite all of the  
4 trials and tribulations associated with the light rail  
5 project now, ten years from now you will be reading  
6 raving reviews about that project and the likely  
7 extension of it. And I think Norfolk is going to be  
8 better prepared to handle people, whether it be urban  
9 transit or inner city rail, than any component portion  
10 of the Commonwealth south of Northern Virginia. So  
11 that is just such an obvious terminal. And you have  
12 already indicated that that would be the termini of  
13 the southside route.

14 Relative to the peninsula, there is a lot  
15 that can be done and should be done to improve that

16 service, to augment that service. The first and  
17 foremost thing is to avoid losing what we have got.  
18 The way the congressional mandate is now as related to  
19 inner city rail service states are going to have to  
20 come up with funding to perpetuate some of the  
21 regional service we now enjoy by 2013. Now, that may  
22 be delayed a bit but ultimately we are going to have  
23 to find a way to save what we have got as we move  
24 forward to build for the future.

25 And finally I have a continuing worry

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1 about the Main Street station. I am absolutely  
2 committed to the concept of the Main Street station as  
3 a Downtown Richmond transit center but if this  
4 proposition works out to be as successful as I believe  
5 it will over the next two and three and four decades,  
6 Main Street station and the rail infrastructure  
7 surrounding Main Street station is going to be taxed  
8 to the point that it could inhibit some of the  
9 benefits associated with serving Southside Hampton  
10 Roads and the peninsula and the southeast high speed  
11 rail.

12 So I would -- it seems to me we are -- we  
13 have all but crossed the finish line on this  
14 documentation and process but keep Main Street station  
15 in mind as something that needs to be looked at for  
16 the long term so that when we achieve what we are  
17 dreaming of now several decades hence we will not  
18 compromise it by inadequate long-range planning.

19 Thank you very much.

20 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Beadles.

21 Our next speaker is Danny Playhu from the  
22 Virginians for High Speed Rail who will be followed by  
23 Trip Pollard from the Southern Environmental Law  
24 Center.

25 MR. PLAYHU: Thank you members of the

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1 Commonwealth Transportation Board, Director Drake,  
2 Kevin Page.

3 I want to begin by first commending Kevin  
4 Page and the staff at the Department of Rail and  
5 Public Transportation for helping finally getting a  
6 study out. It has been a long time coming.

7 Virginians for High Speed Rail represents  
8 thousands of citizens across this Commonwealth, dozens  
9 of businesses, nine localities and four economic  
10 development agencies. We strongly believe that this  
11 study needs to proceed. When high speed rail connects  
12 Washington to Richmond to Hampton Roads over three out  
13 of every five Virginians will be connected with fast,  
14 frequent and reliable passenger rail service. Our  
15 position is to support Alternative 1 with enhanced  
16 service down to the peninsula.

17 Let's get up to a 90 percent reliability  
18 there. Let's get a high speed rail on the southside  
19 with a 90 percent reliability because high speed rail  
20 is about more than just speed. It is making sure that  
21 you have a large amount of service and that that

22 service is reliable and running when it is supposed  
23 to.

24 I have a few concerns about the Richmond  
25 and the Hampton Roads passenger rail study. The main

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1 one is a potential for a layover in Washington. This  
2 concerns me greatly because of the potential decrease  
3 in ridership of up to 50 percent. This decrease can  
4 affect economic viability of connecting high speed  
5 rail down to Hampton Roads. It can affect how many  
6 passengers ride the trains. And it can affect how  
7 many tourism and businesses we can bring down to the  
8 Commonwealth of Virginia.

9 But, nonetheless, we strongly support the  
10 study proceeding forward. We support Alternative 1  
11 with enhanced service on the peninsula. And we ask  
12 that the study move forward. Thank you.

13 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Playhu.

14 And, Mr. Pollard, you are our last  
15 speaker for this session. Thank you.

16 MR. POLLARD: Good evening. Trip Pollard  
17 with the Southern Environmental Law Center. I am the  
18 planning and community program director there. We  
19 work directly with the road force to promote more  
20 sustainable transportation, and we will be providing  
21 more detailed written comments later. I just wanted  
22 to say thank you for having this forum and for  
23 bringing this to this point. Thanks to you, Kevin,  
24 and all of the staff at DRPT for working on this.

1 strongly supports expanded passenger rail service  
2 throughout the Commonwealth. We believe that  
3 extending and expanding inner city rail from Richmond  
4 to both the north and south side of Hampton Roads will  
5 provide better connectivity and additional  
6 transportation choices. We also believe it has the  
7 potential to offer a number of financial as well as  
8 environmental benefits. And we are very glad to see  
9 the study reach this point.

10 We support, based on what we have seen so  
11 far, in concept the Alternative 1. We believe that  
12 offers the best combination based on the evidence  
13 currently in the draft document because it does both  
14 enhance the inner city passenger rail service and I64  
15 corridor along the Northside and it extends service on  
16 on the existing corridor on the Southside. And, as  
17 stated previously, given Norfolk's population size,  
18 given the presence of military on the Southside are  
19 some of the many reasons we think that Southside  
20 service and adding that is so important with the  
21 caveat and that is we are very concerned about the  
22 potential wetlands impact of the Southside as well as  
23 the Northside service.

24 You mentioned in your initial  
25 presentation, Mr. Page, that the wetlands and wildlife



1 impacts were potentially very severe. We understand  
2 that the southern proposal would run along the  
3 existing, although, inactive route, which hopefully  
4 will greatly minimize the impacts. At this point, in  
5 Tier 1, we understand we need to look broadly. We are  
6 well aware, in Tier 2, you have the opportunity to  
7 refine things and look much more carefully and we urge  
8 you to do so and minimize that disturbance and issue.  
9 It could negate any of the otherwise environmental and  
10 official aspects of this project.

11 We also would urge you to look at  
12 possibilities in, as you go along, not in finalizing  
13 the Tier 1, at the very least, in Tier 2, to not only  
14 tweak that route of the southern alignment but  
15 possibly the stations. It is our understanding that a  
16 number of the potential wetlands impacts are tied to  
17 the Bowers Hill station, and we would urge you to look  
18 at that knowing that there is more than one  
19 alternative and alternative route along that southside  
20 of Virginia. Look much more thoroughly. We did not  
21 see much under that alternative actually in the DIS  
22 itself.

23 The second concern we would like to flag  
24 and urge you to look at more thoroughly in the DIS is  
25 potential land-use impacts of this project. You

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1 mentioned some of the direct land-use impacts of the

2 I and that would be affected but you didn't say much  
3 about the indirect impacts and I didn't see anything  
4 that I -- I haven't read every page of the DIS yet but  
5 I didn't see anything that looked at both the positive  
6 and the negative potential impacts of development of  
7 adding particularly the additional service to the  
8 degree that Alternative 1 proposes for the southside.

9 We would be very concerned about areas  
10 around Norfolk and Bowers Hill. We think, again, it  
11 could be very positive net growth impacts by  
12 channelling more development into these  
13 already-developed areas, especially in Norfolk, but we  
14 do think that is something that is missing and urge  
15 you to add that to the analysis. We think it has both  
16 positive and negative elements that need to be  
17 examined.

18 So those are a couple of areas of concern  
19 we would urge you to look at further in finalizing  
20 this draft. But overall we strongly favor going ahead  
21 with this project. We are very glad, again, to see it  
22 reach this point, and are looking forward to this and  
23 other additional in service throughout the  
24 Commonwealth.

25 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Pollard. That

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1 concludes the speakers that have signed up tonight for  
2 this public information comment period. At  
3 seven o'clock, I will poll those who are here to make  
4 sure that everyone has seen the presentation. If

5 everyone has seen it, we might end up with the -- a  
6 lot like Bill Murray did in the movie Groundhog Day.  
7 I might be in front of the green screen again even if  
8 I have seen it before.

9 MS. DRAKE: We have one man who came in  
10 who would like to hear it but I thought maybe you  
11 could talk to him individually since it is just one.

12 MR. PAGE: Why don't we break, if we can,  
13 and have everyone from the study team join the public  
14 over at the posters and we will have a one-on-one Q&A  
15 session at this time. Thank you all that came for  
16 participating and we will look forward to having  
17 one-on-one dialogue with you.

18 I would like to call to everyone's  
19 attention, as well, that we have a court reporter  
20 taking verbal comments. If you would prefer not to do  
21 a written comment card, we can have you come over to  
22 our court reporter and give verbal comments. On the  
23 other side of the room is the burgundy wall where  
24 there is the comment area for the written comments.  
25 Thank you.

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1 (The proceedings were concluded at 8:00  
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COURT REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, REBECCA L. BANKS, RMR, a court reporter and Notary Public, certify that I recorded verbatim by Stenotype the proceedings in the captioned cause, Richmond, Virginia, on January 26th, 2010.

I further certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the foregoing transcript constitutes a true and correct transcript of the said proceedings.

Given under my hand the \_\_\_\_\_ day of

11 \_\_\_\_\_, Richmond\_hearings.txt  
2010, at Norfolk, Virginia.

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Rebecca L. Banks, RMR

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VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL  
AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

RICHMOND/HAMPTON ROADS PASSENGER RAIL PROJECT  
TIER I  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

PUBLIC HEARING  
Newport News, Virginia  
January 27, 2010  
5:30 p.m.

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1 (Opening comments of Kevin Page.)

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3 MAYOR FRANK: Good evening, Ladies and gentlemen.  
4 Delighted to have all of you here tonight. I want to thank  
5 the Department of Rail and Public Transportation for  
6 bringing this to the community and communicating with the  
7 citizens with regard to these proposals and the  
8 alternatives.

9 Obviously, rail is incredibly important to us here  
10 in Hampton Roads, both on the Peninsula and the Southside.  
11 Before I begin, I'd like to recognize a few people that are  
12 here that I believe should be recognized. Sheila Noll of  
13 the Board of Supervisors of York County. Sheila is back  
14 there, and Dwight Farmer, who's the Executive Secretary of  
15 the Transportation Planning Organization; Danny Crowder  
16 who's the Executive Director for Virginians for High Speed  
17 Rail; Sharon Fox who's the Chairman of the Newport News  
18 Planning Commission; and Clyde Hoey who's here with Future  
19 of Hampton Roads.

20 I know there's many others of you who are  
21 associated with something or another that I should  
22 recognize, and forgive me, but the dummy sheet only has  
23 those names on it. For those I apologize, but if you're  
24 here to speak, you can certainly introduce yourselves as you  
25 do that.

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1           As mayor of Newport News, I'd certainly like to  
2 welcome all of you here this evening to this very special  
3 presentation by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public  
4 Transportation.

5           Tonight as you can see we're dealing with the  
6 Richmond/Hampton Roads press and passenger rail project.  
7 There are two critical pieces to it; one is a high speed  
8 rail component south of the James River between Suffolk and  
9 Petersburg connecting to Richmond and ultimately to D.C. and  
10 the railroad corridor in northeast part of the United  
11 States. There's plans for a segment that will go from  
12 Richmond and Petersburg down to Raleigh in North Carolina.

13           So, the nation is finally getting the idea that  
14 having a cogent, coherent and practical public rail system  
15 makes some sense. If you traveled to Japan, as I have,  
16 France or Germany, as I have, rail is a major component of  
17 their transportation system, and in America we haven't  
18 gotten there yet, and my view is, of course, we need to.

19           There's a component that I think is important to  
20 discuss beyond the rail piece itself, and that is that  
21 mobility in Hampton Roads is challenged. If we had all of  
22 the money necessary to build all of the road projects that  
23 have been planned and vented with the public and understood  
24 by an overwhelming majority of people to be necessary to  
25 enhance mobility in the region, and we had all of that money

1 in the bank today, it would be 15 years between now and the  
2 time you could engineer it, design it, buy the right of way,  
3 put it out for bid, construct it and thrive on it, 15 years.  
4 There's no money in the bank today.

5           So, you can figure how many years it's going to be  
6 before you can see money to start counting those 15 years,  
7 and I was 67 years old in November. So, it's pretty clear  
8 to me it's not going to be in my lifetime. I hope it will  
9 be in yours.

10           Having said those things, communities survive,  
11 thrive and prosper with a viable, efficient, effective  
12 transportation system. It's not just roads, but it's public  
13 transportation, it's pedestrians, bicycles, it's a variety  
14 of means of transportation, but if we can't get people and  
15 goods to where they need to be, then it will become  
16 increasingly difficult to maintain the job base we have, to  
17 maintain the business base that we have, to keep the tourism  
18 industry thriving, to keep folks who just live here and work  
19 here and call this home a place where they want to live.

20           If you are in your car an extra hour in the  
21 morning and an extra hour in the evening going to and from  
22 work because congestion won't let you get there any quicker,  
23 you have a long day and a frustrating day, you have time  
24 away from your family and things that you want to do.

25           If five percent of the work force doesn't, for

1 example, the SHIPYARD and Fort Eustis or the other large  
2 employers, it's not just them being late from the loss of  
3 their productivity, it's the work that they're not doing in  
4 that time period that informs the work of all the other  
5 employees. So, the loss is broader than just that of the  
6 people who can't get to work on time.

7           If a business can't move its product from one part  
8 of the region to another, if shippers can't get their cargo  
9 into the port and out of the port in a timely way, then  
10 competing interests like Jacksonville, Florida, which is  
11 spending huge amounts of money in their ports, and Savanna  
12 and Baltimore and Philadelphia, Newark and New York are  
13 going to say to the shippers, "Don't go to Hampton Roads,  
14 come to where we are. We don't have transportation  
15 problems."

16           So, I don't want to be the prophet of gloom and  
17 doom. For those of you that know me, I'm not, but there are  
18 real issues that require that we address transportation here  
19 in the region in a meaningful way. To be effective, we have  
20 got to work effectively and collaboratively with our  
21 colleagues on the south side of Hampton Roads.

22           We are part of a global economy. We're part of a  
23 world that we don't compete with each other, we compete with  
24 other regions in the country and around the world. To be  
25 competitive, we have to have a work force that prospers, we



1 have to have work product that is desirable in the  
2 marketplace, and all that depends on mobility.

3 So, the criticality of this, I think, is apparent  
4 to all of us who have looked at these issues and have some  
5 responsibility for sharing and planning and doing what's  
6 necessary for our future.

7 The Tier I DEIS, the Draft Environment Impact  
8 Statement that's part of this discussion today, is  
9 critically important. Its analysis is important to our  
10 future, and the opportunity to make real improvements to our  
11 transportation infrastructure is more critical now than I  
12 think it ever has been.

13 Beyond our individual citizens there are factors  
14 of success that include a growing population in the region,  
15 an expanding port industry, tourism that makes our area a  
16 great place to come from other parts of the country if  
17 people can get here and if people can get around while they  
18 are here.

19 There are two projects that are basically the  
20 fundamental basis for the EIS and its outcome. One is high  
21 speed rail on the south of the James River connecting  
22 Suffolk to Petersburg, as I said earlier, and the other is  
23 enhanced rail here on the Peninsula. What that means is  
24 more trains, more trips, more frequency, more reliability so  
25 that we have good access to the Richmond and D.C. area and

1 areas beyond.

2 Today normal rail, Amtrak, operates at 79 miles an  
3 hour when it can get to 79 miles an hour and when it shows  
4 up on time, all those things that many of you know about.  
5 High speed rail in this country is not intended at this  
6 point to be the 300-miles-an-hour stuff they have in France,  
7 Germany, Japan and other developed countries. It's intended  
8 to be about 110 or 115 miles an hour.

9 So, on the Southside, from Suffolk to Petersburg,  
10 you can build up some of that speed. Trains on our side of  
11 the water will go from Newport News, have to slow down, stop  
12 in Williamsburg, pick up speed, slow down, get to the rail  
13 yards in Richmond, go through Richmond and then speed up and  
14 get to Alexandria and slow down. So, 79 miles an hour, if  
15 we can accomplish it and we can get three round trips a day  
16 as opposed to the two we now have is a substantial  
17 enhancement of rail service in our community.

18 If the Southside can get a train that can go 110  
19 miles an hour, it will give the million or so people that  
20 live over there a means of transportation they do not now  
21 have. There's no rail service on Southside, and people have  
22 to come over here.

23 When there was a hope by most of us or some of us  
24 to have a third crossing in Hampton Roads which would have  
25 been multi-mode, meaning we could have rail through it, we

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1 could have had mass transit modalities through it, it would  
2 have been easier to just bring folks over here to the Amtrak  
3 line and take them without building new and enhancing what's  
4 on the Southside but without that connectivity, the high  
5 speed rail on the Southside becomes even more important than  
6 it has been historically.

7           So, for those reasons, one, I want to encourage  
8 the Department of Rail, Commonwealth Transportation Board,  
9 to do all that's necessary to assure that we get both  
10 projects; the Southside high speed rail and the Peninsula  
11 enhanced rail systems.

12           Competition is incredible. The stimulus fund has  
13 eight-billion dollars in it for high speed rail. Last I  
14 knew there were over 80 billion dollars worth of  
15 applications for that eight billion dollars, maybe more by  
16 now, I'm not sure, but I'm sure Kevin will tell us. So, the  
17 competition is tremendous.

18           What that article is for is those of us on the  
19 Peninsula and those of us on the Southside to come together,  
20 work collectively and collaboratively as a region to  
21 advocate both, to engage in our people in congress and the  
22 legislature, those people who make these decisions to assure  
23 that we're not left behind, and that's our goal of bringing  
24 people here tonight, to hear what you've got to say, to see  
25 whether you think this is the right plan or not, what you

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1 would suggest that we do to improve the plan, but given the  
2 alternative it seems to me that moving this forward and  
3 doing all we can to assure its success, working  
4 collaboratively with our colleagues on the Southside is good  
5 policy. It's an appropriate way to enhance public  
6 transportation in an environment where alternatives are fast  
7 fading.

8           So, I took more time than I should have as I  
9 always do, but in any event I'm delighted to see so many of  
10 you here, and we look forward to hearing from you and  
11 hearing your thoughts and comments and observations. Again,  
12 thank you so very much for being here.

13           MR. LANE: I should have known when I was asked to  
14 speak after Mayor Frank that there wouldn't be a whole lot  
15 left to say, so I'll keep my comments very brief. Thank you  
16 very much for those remarks.

17           First of all, I'm Aubrey Lane. I am the Hampton  
18 Roads representative from the Commonwealth Transportation  
19 Board. For those of you who are not familiar with that  
20 board, it's a 17-member board appointed by the governor, and  
21 we among other things besides direct policy allocate  
22 transportation, safe transportation rather, in the  
23 Commonwealth of Virginia. We'll be tasked with coming up  
24 with the ultimate recommendation and decision from these

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1           A little bit about myself; I'm a native of Hampton  
2 Roads. I grew up in Hampton, lived here for half my life  
3 and now reside in Virginia Beach. I've lived there for the  
4 past 25 or so years. In addition, I'm in the real estate  
5 business, so I have properties on both sides of the water.  
6 I have properties on the Peninsula and Southside and deal  
7 with every locality here. So, I truly understand, I think,  
8 a lot of our transportation problems here in Hampton Roads.

9           As evidenced by you being here tonight, I  
10 obviously know you understand what those transportation  
11 problems are. As Mayor Frank alluded to, we have increasing  
12 demand, we have problems with congestion, we have problems  
13 with getting our repairs done on the highways, and yet we  
14 have limited funds to do that.

15           So, as you go through this presentation tonight,  
16 you'll hear a lot of specific data, a lot of technical data,  
17 but I'll ask you to keep in mind two things; first of all,  
18 that if we're going to accomplish and make our  
19 transportation problems better, we're going to make  
20 everything better here in Hampton Roads transportation, it's  
21 going to take a regional effort. Our transportation  
22 problems cannot be solved city-by-city.

23           We all may reside in a particular locality, but we  
24 live in Hampton Roads; you eat in different localities, you



25 recreate in different localities, you work in different

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1 localities. So, mobility in our area will be extremely  
2 important. So, having alternative methods of transportation  
3 such as rail has got to be part of the mix.

4 The other thing that I would ask you to keep in  
5 mind is that we are all in this together, and that we're not  
6 going to accomplish this if we are looking for the  
7 betterment of one locality versus another.

8 The Federal Rail Administration has said they will  
9 not get into matters of regional dispute. So, we need to  
10 come together as a region and pull together in this  
11 particular endeavor. With that, I'll turn it over to Kevin.  
12 I'm sure we'll be around to answer your questions after the  
13 presentation. Thank you.

14 (Presentation by Mr. Kevin Page.)

15 MR. PAGE: Dwight Farmer, would you please come to  
16 the podium, and you will be followed by Mr. Wiley Mitchell  
17 who's no stranger to this area.

18 MR. FARMER: Thank you, Mr. Page, again for  
19 allowing me the opportunity. As you mentioned, I'm on the  
20 Virginia Rail Advisory Board, but I'm really here again  
21 representing the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning  
22 Organization as Executive Director, and, again, I'm here  
23 really not as much tonight for you folks as it is for the

24 audience here so they'll understand where the H. R. T. P. O.  
25 is coming from.

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1 The T. P. O. , the Transportation Planning  
2 Organization, comprises of 13 localities, four General  
3 Assembly members, two transit operators, VDOT, DRPT, and the  
4 Virginia Port Authority are also members of that, has  
5 overwhelmingly passed a resolution supporting two critical  
6 elements, and we have provided those in writing to Kevin and  
7 his folks.

8 One -- the first is the designation of high speed  
9 rail along the Norfolk Southern US Route 460 corridor to be  
10 designed at speeds ultimately at 110 miles per hour plus,  
11 and second the T. P. O. has endorsed in its resolution in  
12 conjunction with the high speed rail on the Southside what  
13 we're calling enhanced inner city passenger rail service  
14 along the CSX corridor and the I-64 Amtrak corridor.

15 The reason it wants to be clear that they would  
16 like to aggressively implement steps to achieve the ultimate  
17 goals of having this high speed rail at 110 miles-per-hour  
18 plus along the Norfolk Southern 460 corridor and the  
19 enhanced service, enhanced meaning a higher frequency, I  
20 think, as you mentioned, Kevin, and higher reliability, I  
21 think those things are very important.

22 These interim steps to achieve that include a  
23 partnership between the entire region, Federal Railroad

24 Administration, Department of Rail and Public  
25 Transportation, Norfolk Southern CSX and Amtrak. The

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1 establishment of this new passenger rail service is  
2 critically important for Hampton Roads given the large  
3 concentration of military folks here as we're all aware and  
4 the Port of Virginia in Hampton Roads being the third  
5 largest port on the East Coast.

6 We respectfully request that Federal Railroad  
7 Administration and Kevin and DRPT aggressively expedite and  
8 update the completion of the Tier I draft of EIS, which I  
9 have faith you folks will do that, and obtain a record of  
10 decision as soon as possible.

11 In addition, the Commonwealth should prepare for  
12 the Tier II EIS in the spring of this year, I believe,  
13 Kevin, and move forward on that expeditiously.

14 In coordination with T. P. O. Technical Advisory  
15 Committee, the staff has provided DRPT with a substantial  
16 set of technical kinds that we're not going to cover  
17 tonight, and we'd like to again have those entered into the  
18 record.

19 The T. P. O. stands ready to assist the Federal  
20 Railroad Administration DRPT and all of the folks to put  
21 these projects together to encourage the Commonwealth to  
22 aggressively pursue competitive, and as Mayor Frank

23 mentioned earlier, it's a very competitive game, so we'd  
24 like to be aggressive in trying to be as competitive as we  
25 seek the economic stimulus fund and any future rail funds

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1 that come to us.

2 Thank you, again, for this opportunity, and as I  
3 mentioned last night, we stand ready to work with you folks  
4 at any time. Thank you, Kevin.

5 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Farmer, and also thank  
6 you for your package and delivery of the resolution that the  
7 Hampton Roads T.P.O. passed concerning this alternative. I  
8 want to also -- at this point I would like to welcome Thelma  
9 Drake.

10 Ms. Drake is our new agency director under the Bob  
11 McDonald administration. She'll come and join us at the  
12 front table. If Ms. Drake would like to make a few hello  
13 comments, introductory comments, certainly feel free to come  
14 join us at this time. Following Ms. Drake's comments, Wiley  
15 Mitchell will be following.

16 MS. DRAKE: Good evening, everyone. I certainly  
17 apologize for being late, but when the Senate Appropriation  
18 Committee wants to talk to you about public transportation  
19 that's exactly where you're going.

20 We have good news from both of the appropriations  
21 committees. They both have been very supportive of public  
22 transportation and rail and have said it publicly in their

23 meetings that it is the future of transportation.  
24 We can't continue to afford the cost of roadways.  
25 We don't have the land mass, and what a key component rail

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1 and public transportation is. So, that was music to my  
2 ears. I really had not heard it there years ago as a  
3 delegate, and so I think it makes it that much more critical  
4 than where we are today, and I want to thank each and every  
5 one of you for coming out to be part of this process  
6 tonight, and I know that in our Hampton Roads region, we've  
7 been engaged in this discussion with this issue for a very  
8 long time and have been very supportive having rail into the  
9 Hampton Roads region, and then we went through the period  
10 where we probably thought we were going to get side tracked  
11 when high speed rail went from Virginia into North Carolina.

12 I know for all of us it's very exciting, and I  
13 thank you, and I hope you have had the time to look at the  
14 charts and will do that and give us comments. Thank you.

15 I know Kevin told you February 17 is when the vote  
16 will be made. February 11 is the cut-off. Kevin, thank  
17 you. I know you have done a wonderful job for them. Thank  
18 you.

19 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Ms. Drake. Now, our next  
20 speaker is Wiley Mitchell who will be followed by Danny  
21 Plangher.



22 MR. MITCHELL: It's a genuine pleasure, as I've  
23 done for many years, to follow Thelma Drake. Mr. Chairman,  
24 I am Wiley Mitchell. For four decades, senior general  
25 counsel for Norfolk Southern, now retired as a lawyer in

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1 Norfolk. I'm a Fellow of the Virginia Rail Policy Institute  
2 and Vice Chair of the Institute. I'm immediate Past Chair  
3 of the Rail Advisory Board, and I'm a member of the Board of  
4 Virginians for High Speed Rail.

5 I speak not for any of those organizations but as  
6 someone who has learned a bit about rail in the last five  
7 decades and who has spent most of the last 20 years in  
8 advocating the expansion and use of rail as a viable  
9 alternative which is cheaper, safer and far more  
10 environmentally friendly than the highway alternative.

11 You, as the Department of Rail and Public  
12 Transportation, at the Commonwealth Transportation Board on  
13 February 17, as the Transportation Planning Agency for the  
14 Commonwealth of Virginia, will be asked to endorse one of  
15 the five alternatives that you have pursued.

16 All but two of those alternatives would preclude,  
17 for all practical purposes, rail services to one of the  
18 largest metropolitan areas in the south and in the United  
19 States currently without rail service. It would preclude  
20 service to the area of the Commonwealth that contains two of  
21 Virginia's largest cities. In fact, the two largest cities

22 in Virginia, one of the largest, and arguably the largest  
23 naval base in the world, and one of the largest and  
24 fastest-growing populations in the Commonwealth.  
25 Despite what might be perceived to be competition

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1 between the Peninsula and the Southside route,  
2 representatives of those two regions in the Hampton Roads  
3 Transportation Planning Organization have voted without  
4 dissent to endorse Alternative 1.

5 I stand before you tonight urging you, the  
6 Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the  
7 Commonwealth Transportation Board, to affirm what this  
8 region has accomplished in bringing together for one of the  
9 few times in the years that I have lived here and years with  
10 which I have been familiar with the organization that the  
11 region has come together as a region and as a planning  
12 organization, both politically and technically, to endorse  
13 the solution that it as the region and as the regional  
14 planners and as the regional politicians endorsed.

15 That is indeed a salutary endorsement. One thing  
16 my friend Kevin said in his presentation I would like to  
17 dissent from, not that Kevin is inaccurate but that Kevin  
18 has done what I think the analysis required him to do, but  
19 in so doing has not articulated one of the strongest  
20 arguments for endorsing Alternative Number 1. The first,

21 Kevin, is that you were required by law, and as you are  
22 required to do, you analyzed service between Hampton Roads  
23 and Richmond, but this proposal, if it's endorsed, and  
24 particularly if the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor is  
25 also endorsed, and it has already been selected by Virginia

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1 as its Number 1 rail project, you're talking about not  
2 service between Hampton Roads and Richmond, but you're  
3 talking about service between Hampton Roads and Richmond and  
4 Baltimore and Philadelphia and Washington, to jump it out of  
5 order, and New York and Boston. You're also talking about  
6 service between Hampton Roads and Richmond and Charlotte and  
7 Atlanta and Miami and New Orleans.

8 So, this is not just a link between Hampton Roads  
9 and Richmond, it is a link between Hampton Roads and the  
10 rest of the United States, and it is critical, in my opinion  
11 and in the opinion of many of those who have analyzed this  
12 project, that we endorse Alternative 1 because it is the  
13 only viable alternative for providing the kinds of high  
14 speed rail service to Hampton Roads and to the rest of the  
15 area to and from Hampton Roads of which it is inevitably a  
16 part.

17 I know, Kevin, why it is important to include the  
18 link between Richmond and Petersburg as a cost to extending  
19 service to Southside Hampton Roads, analytically that sticks  
20 as a factual matter. However, it should not be the case,

21 because if you do not build a link between Richmond and  
22 Petersburg, there is no Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor,  
23 and the idea of being bound by an analytical constraint  
24 which refuses to recognize the clear fact that the  
25 Commonwealth of Virginia is likely to receive no money from

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1 the federal government on the high speed rail application  
2 you have filed, if it decides to exclude the link between  
3 Richmond and Petersburg, that way there would be no high  
4 speed rail service anywhere south of Richmond.

5 So, the point where your analytical point of view  
6 and for the Commonwealth of Transportation Board is that it  
7 is patently unfair from a factual point of view although  
8 understandable from an analytical point of view that you  
9 include the cost of providing service between Richmond and  
10 Petersburg in the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor and not  
11 adding to the cost of providing service to Hampton Roads.

12 The final comment that I would make is that in  
13 determining passenger ridership, it should be equally  
14 appropriate to look at ridership potentially from Hampton  
15 Roads south as it is from Hampton Roads north. Thank you  
16 for permitting me to talk, and good luck.

17 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Mitchell. Danny  
18 Plangher is our next speaker followed by, if we have time,  
19 Brad Face. Again, we'll stop and take a break at seven,

20 poll the group here to see if anyone has come in that needs  
21 to have us run you through the presentation one more time.  
22 Thank you, Mr. Plangher.

23 MR. PLANGHER: Thank you, Mr. Lane, Director  
24 Drake, and Mr. Page for allowing me to speak today. My name  
25 is Daniel Plangher, Executive Director for Virginians for

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1 High Speed Rail. We represent thousands of citizens here in  
2 the Commonwealth of Virginia, dozens of businesses, nine  
3 localities and 14 newly developed agencies that promote the  
4 investment and expansion of passenger rail.

5 Our group strongly supports the advancement of the  
6 Tier I EIS. When high speed rail fully connects Washington  
7 to Richmond down to Hampton Roads, well over three out of  
8 every five Virginians will have had access to fast, frequent  
9 and reliable passenger rail service. The key is no longer  
10 competing against other states or other regions in the  
11 United States. We're competing against other regions across  
12 the world.

13 Virginians for High Speed Rail supports  
14 Alternative 1 with enhanced service to the Peninsula with  
15 90 percent on-time performance and up to 89 miles an hour.  
16 We believe Hampton Roads has the ability to be the  
17 initiation and termination point, the southern-most  
18 initiation and termination point of the northeast corridor.  
19 Direct, single-seat, reliable and frequent service

20 connecting Hampton Roads up to Boston and back.  
21 One of our major conservative studies is the  
22 potential layover in D.C. A layover in Washington can  
23 account for a 50 percent decline in potential ridership.  
24 This decline in ridership hurts the economic viability of  
25 the service, it hurts the ridership numbers on both sides,

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1 and it hurts our ability to extend more trains down to the  
2 Hampton Roads region to serve some of the northeast  
3 corridor.

4 With that said, this study must advance, and  
5 Virginians for High Speed Rail strongly supports Alternative  
6 1 with enhanced service on the Peninsula of 89 miles an hour  
7 and a 90 percent on-time performance. Thank you very much.

8 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Plangher. We have three  
9 minutes before seven. So, I will call now Brad Face.

10 MR. FACE: Thank you for letting me speak. My  
11 name is Brad Face. I'm a resident of Smithfield and member  
12 of numerous civic organizations in Hampton Roads. I'm here  
13 as a citizen to endorse Alternative 1 and to stress that it  
14 does mean enhanced service and frequency to the Peninsula  
15 since that's where I'd be taking my trains from.

16 I have a bias for driving across the bridge. I  
17 want to congratulate our elected civic leaders in Hampton  
18 Roads for coming together in a difficult circumstance under



19 time constraints and meeting the demand that we come  
20 together as a region in one voice and pick an alternative  
21 which we have done.

22 I hope we can continue to work as a region on  
23 future issues of this kind. It's of great importance. As  
24 we look at the East Coast rail service, I think it's also  
25 important to look at the whole system the United States is

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1 going to have and Hampton Roads' unique position to add to  
2 that service and to be served by that system.

3 We have the opportunity by geographic location, by  
4 population and by the focus of our region on Washington and  
5 points north uniquely with our federal assets here to be  
6 incorporated in that system, to add a lot of ridership, and  
7 just because we're a typical train ride, about 300 miles  
8 south of Washington, to add a huge population of 1.6 million  
9 people with riders that are going to use the northeast  
10 corridor.

11 I think we have more to offer the national system  
12 than any other region I can think of, and the impact of the  
13 system on our quality of life is also going to be very, very  
14 high. Thank you.

15 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Face. I'd like to poll  
16 the people who are here in the audience tonight. We have as  
17 part of our agenda an opportunity to show this presentation  
18 another time this evening at 7:00, or if no one requests, we

19 will continue with the rest of our speakers who have signed  
20 up tonight.

21 Is there anyone who's requesting that we show the  
22 presentation again and walk through it yet another time this  
23 evening? Anyone? Okay. I'd like to then call our next  
24 speaker. Is it Michael -- excuse me -- is it Shushan?

25 MR. SHUSHAN: Yes.

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1 MR. PAGE: Thank you for clarifying that. You'll  
2 be followed by Tom Tingle.

3 MR. SHUSHAN: Hi, I'm Mike Shushan. I'm a member  
4 of the Green Party of Virginia as well as other  
5 organizations in the area, but mainly I want to talk about,  
6 I guess, some of my personal issues that I've had as a rail  
7 passenger in the area.

8 I live in Williamsburg, and I work for a company  
9 in Philadelphia. So I'm often going out of town for  
10 meetings and mainly taking Amtrak to get there. So, one  
11 thing I definitely think that we do need much more of on the  
12 Peninsula route is more trains as well as more reliable  
13 service.

14 It's very rare for me to, on the southbound route,  
15 not to be two hours late which certainly keeps a lot of  
16 riders off of the trains. Having much more reliable service  
17 on the system will definitely mean more riders.

18 Also, just wanted to say that more trains on the  
19 system is definitely going to take more cars off the road.  
20 Plenty of people that I have talked to enjoy not having to  
21 deal with traffic, being able to read or do work or other  
22 things, and as someone who's commuting I often need to do  
23 work before I'm arriving.  
24 So, the train is definitely a much better system.  
25 It's going to mean more jobs for the region because

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1 people will be -- there'll be less congestion, more  
2 companies will be able to locate here without fear of the  
3 livability situation for their employees as well as people  
4 being able to either commute here from areas, like people  
5 were saying we're going to be connected nationally, not just  
6 regionally. So, people will be able to come to and live in  
7 D.C., work in the area.

8 Living in Williamsburg, I know plenty of people  
9 who are professors at the College of William and Mary who  
10 either live in D.C. or their spouse lives in D.C., and they  
11 have a difficult living situation from that. So, it would  
12 definitely make that area more accessible. It will make the  
13 area more accessible economically also for tourists coming  
14 to Williamsburg and hopefully to Virginia Beach.

15 It's noticeable that this system leaves off the  
16 largest city in the Commonwealth, and that's something that  
17 should be looked at in the future because it means more

18 opportunity and accessibility for the largest city in this  
19 state as well as opportunities for people from Richmond,  
20 people from D.C., points in between to be able to spend a  
21 weekend there as well or even an afternoon.

22           The other issue that is out of scope is that we  
23 still need the last mile for a lot of these trips. These  
24 stations aren't necessarily near where people are going to  
25 be accessing them or needing to get to their final

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1 destination. So, we need, with the infrastructure that's  
2 going to come from the high speed rail, access to the ERE  
3 for the whole system so that people can -- for jobs, for  
4 tourism, for shopping, for whatever reason, be able to  
5 travel around.

6           One thing I do want to mention is I personally --  
7 I don't own a car and had to rent a car to come here  
8 tonight. That's a choice that I have, but a lot of people  
9 whether from age or disability or from poverty are not able  
10 to own a vehicle. Having a rail system means accessibility  
11 to jobs, accessibility to shopping, accessibility to the  
12 entire region as well as being able to come participate in  
13 the democratic process at things like this tonight, or in  
14 Richmond or in our nations' capitol, and I want to thank you  
15 for the opportunity to speak, and thank you for holding this  
16 hearing.

17 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Shushan. I think Mr.  
18 Aubrey would like to speak. We have three more to go. Our  
19 next speaker is Tom Tingle followed by Royden Goodson.

20 MR. TINGLE: Good evening. I'm Tom Tingle,  
21 President of Guernsey-Tingle Architects in Williamsburg, a  
22 former president of the greater Williamsburg Chamber of  
23 Tourism Alliance, current chairman of the James City County  
24 Economic Development Authority.

25 However, I'm not speaking on behalf of an EDA

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1 tonight. I'm speaking as a 30-year resident of Hampton  
2 Roads and as a board member and former president of  
3 Virginians for High Speed Rail. Supporters of approved  
4 passenger rail in Virginia are excited to see potential  
5 results for years of studies of the Commonwealth Rail  
6 Advisory Board, the DRPT and rail advocacy groups.

7 We're also pleased that the region is generally  
8 speaking with one voice as indicated by the Hampton Roads  
9 T.P.O.'s position statement last fall and the one that  
10 Dwight Farmer shared with you a few minutes ago. I agree  
11 with this regional position and support strengthened  
12 Alternative 1 of the study with a change recognizing speeds  
13 of 89 miles per hour on the Peninsula.

14 I also support simultaneous and incremental  
15 improvements to extend passenger rail to Norfolk while  
16 improving performance, frequency and reliability of service

17 to Williamsburg and Newport News.

18 As a Peninsula resident, I cannot ignore the fact  
19 that two-thirds of our regions' 1.6 million population in  
20 Southside Hampton Roads is underserved by passenger rail.  
21 However, we need to maintain and improve the existing rail  
22 service as well.

23 The Peninsula cannot wait for decades for these  
24 improvements while rail projects are moving forward south of  
25 the James. A simultaneous and incremental plan will work

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1 for the region. It is critical to the success of passenger  
2 rail in the region, and it will keep Hampton Roads speaking  
3 with one voice.

4 Kevin, I'd like to thank you for all your work and  
5 efforts so far. Mrs. Drake, welcome to your new job. We  
6 expect you're going to hit the ground running, and we stand  
7 ready to assist in bringing a faster, more reliable and more  
8 frequent passenger rail service to Hampton Roads and to the  
9 Commonwealth. Thank you.

10 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Tingle, for your  
11 comments. Our next speaker is Mr. Goodson followed by  
12 Phillip Zaprzalka.

13 MR. GOODSON: Thank you. I'm Royden Goodson. I'm  
14 a lifelong resident Virginia Peninsula here in Newport News.  
15 I own a construction company in Newport News and one in



16 Chesapeake. I think that Option 1 makes the most sense for  
17 this whole region. We need to think as a region, and I  
18 think if we come at this as two different parties, Southside  
19 and the Peninsula, the lack of unity will hurt us.

20 It makes sense to add high speed rail service to  
21 Southside. I like the Norfolk Southern Corridor. I do  
22 agree that in the final presentation, if you could leave out  
23 that extra 148 million dollars in costs for the link, I  
24 understand for the analysis it needs to be there, but if it  
25 helps our case in trying to get this money, that's what we

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1 should do.

2 As a Peninsula resident, I really think  
3 Alternative 1 is the best for this whole region.  
4 Thank you.

5 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Goodson. Phillip is  
6 next followed by Kevin Burke.

7 MR. ZAPRZALKA: First, thank you all for allowing  
8 me to come here. You did a pretty good job on the last  
9 name. I'm actually just here as a concerned citizen of  
10 Hampton Roads, moved here recently in the past two years.

11 I've lived in New England, up in Connecticut, for  
12 about eight years in the past and regularly utilized the  
13 Metro North Rail for both accessibility to Boston as well as  
14 New York City, and recently my family has also come to visit  
15 me by rail down here to Hampton Roads.

16                   Due to scheduling, that was definitely difficult  
17 with the limitations here on the Peninsula for being able to  
18 schedule their arrival. I also have lived and traveled in  
19 the past 20 years to around the world and in Europe  
20 significantly. So, I have a lot of experience with mass  
21 transit and how efficient it has the ability to be if we  
22 invest in that.

23                   Finally, I'm also -- I'm employed in government  
24 contracting, and the companies I've worked for for the past  
25 15 years have all had major headquarters in the D.C. area,

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1 of course, and also have regional offices in the Hampton  
2 Roads region, and I have many of my co-workers actually  
3 drive the corridor back and forth just to go between the two  
4 offices, and I see a significant amount of reduction of  
5 productivity by sitting in a car by myself for six hours in  
6 a three-hour there and three-hour back round trip to attend  
7 a one-hour very important face-to-face meeting, but again as  
8 a previous speaker had commented, I have the ability to  
9 actually work for that six hours that I'm able to bill to  
10 the government.

11                   So, while I do honestly enjoy my radio, whether  
12 public radio or, you know, pop music, I do also enjoy the  
13 ability to be productive and utilize the government's  
14 dollars most effectively rather than be paid for driving.

15 I would -- I do preferentially chose Alternative 1  
16 or 2-A. As a resident of the Peninsula, I do recognize that  
17 the traffic across all of the bridges and tunnels is  
18 significant in both directions, and I would look at the  
19 introduction of a new rail, both of them include a new rail,  
20 and with that said I can see there will be a significant  
21 reduction across the bridges and tunnels and potentially  
22 hopefully saving lives and losing traffic load, but I would  
23 say preferentially we're against cost savings as well the  
24 caveat that there is one single additional train added to  
25 the Peninsula, I would endorse Alternative 1 as it does

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1 extend the high speed rail at the furthest point south and  
2 on the mainland, if you will, so that there is potential if  
3 there was a terminus at Petersburg.

4 The extension may not go directly from Petersburg  
5 but potentially through Hampton Roads onto points south, if  
6 this was to be funded first, and then we could potentially  
7 be the connectivity down to further points south, and that  
8 would be another boon to the economics of the region for  
9 traveling through.

10 Again, thank you very much for the time and  
11 opportunity to speak in front of you-all.

12 MR. PAGE: Thank you again for the comments.  
13 Kevin Burke is the next speaker followed by Ray Taylor. Mr.  
14 Burke?

15 MR. BURKE: Okay. Thank you. I too have been a  
16 resident for over 50 years here. I, too, as a previous  
17 speaker, traveled extensively in Europe and just open got  
18 back about 13 days ago. I've traveled the rail system in  
19 Germany. Believe me, they lost money with me. So, it's  
20 nice to see the State of Virginia finally getting into the  
21 20th century, although this is the 21st century.

22 Couple of questions; I noticed the rail bed or  
23 using that previous track corridor. I know commercial rail  
24 is notorious about not maintaining those rail beds, and if  
25 we don't we're going to have some serious problems and

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1 accidents. So, I'm wondering and hoping that they're going  
2 to maintain or who is going to maintain keeping those rail  
3 beds up. If they don't, we're going to have problems.

4 Also, obviously, I'd like to have a train coming  
5 into Newport News. We have tax dollars, too. So, let's try  
6 to keep some of the money here. I'm tired of going over to  
7 Norfolk to catch planes. Thankfully Patrick Henry or  
8 Newport News/Williamsburg is a now pretty viable airport.  
9 I'd love to see a train coming into Newport News and even  
10 into the airports, either Norfolk or Newport News. Again,  
11 Europe does this. We're finally catching up.

12 Another question, also. I know you mentioned the  
13 rail speeds. I'm assuming this is under diesel. I came in

14 late, so I don't know why we can't go to electric and what  
15 the problem is. Again, we're behind the times. Let's go  
16 electric. Okay. One of the reasons is we're trying to  
17 reduce traffic and reduce our dependence on foreign oil.  
18 This is one of the ways of doing it. So, yeah, it might  
19 cost a little extra money, but it might reduce the fuel  
20 dependence which would certainly be a big help.

21 MR. PAGE: Thank you for your comment. Ray Taylor  
22 is our last and final speaker, and we will follow up with  
23 Mr. Aubrey Lane and comments before we close the public  
24 speaking.

25 MR. TAYLOR: I wasn't going to speak tonight, but

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1 I thought I'd stand up because I think I can offer a comment  
2 that's worth additional reflection, but first I  
3 congratulated Director Thelma Drake many times, but I want  
4 to do that in public. I think she's going to be an  
5 extraordinary addition of vitality to what is emerging as a  
6 dramatic transit.

7 I also want to acknowledge Aubrey Lane who has  
8 brought a firebrand new sense of urgency and involvement  
9 representing Hampton Roads. He's only been there six  
10 months, and he's just been spectacular. Kevin, you're a  
11 tough act to follow in almost every regard.

12 It's been commented here many times tonight, and,  
13 by the way, I'm the President of the Future of Hampton Roads

14 organization. We're a volunteer think tank, actually we're  
15 a bunch of sweat hogs that kind of read stuff and write  
16 papers. We do a lot of that.

17 The people before me, Wiley, really dramatized the  
18 need and representing the T.P.O. in that historic  
19 resolution. Not only is Dwight here tonight, but he's got a  
20 lot of staff members and so forth.

21 It is astonishing how much progress has been made  
22 and where we are. The fact that it's almost inevitable now  
23 that Alternative 1, if I read the tea leaves at public  
24 hearing in Richmond last night and what I forecast is going  
25 to happen tomorrow, it will be a single achievement

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1 accomplishing literally hundreds of decisions that have been  
2 held up for several years.

3 In your presentation tonight, I'd like to offer a  
4 comment on one item that I think we could change the  
5 language of or reconceptualize it or something like that. I  
6 mean this to be constructive. It's in no way debilitating,  
7 but the whole presentation is terrific, but at some point in  
8 there you talk about 90 miles per hour is optimum speed, and  
9 I'd like to ask that that phrase be analyzed from another  
10 perspective.

11 Let's put a prism to it, let's put another mirror  
12 to it. I kind of think you're probably right, 90 miles per



13 hour is the optimum speed, but I don't think it's the  
14 optimum design. At the end of the day, the federal  
15 government has postulated four design levels, and it's  
16 simply a matter of human shorthand that we talk to them as  
17 speed.

18 There's the express high-speed rail, 150. There's  
19 a regional high-speed rail with 110, there's emerging high  
20 speed at 90, and then this conventional rail at 79, and so  
21 all the public is locked onto these are speed levels. They  
22 are not speed levels. They are not speed levels at all.  
23 They are design levels, and so when you thrust forward 90 is  
24 optimum, I think we're painting ourselves possible in the  
25 lower picture.

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1 I don't think Tampa Bay is doing that, Duluth is  
2 not doing that, Mobile is not doing that, Las Vegas is not  
3 doing that. We need to recognize when we talk about these  
4 speeds, we're really talking about designs, and I think the  
5 very nature of Alternative 1 is high-speed rail.

6 That's 110 or above, and that's what the T. P. O.  
7 resolution was, and so the language that 90 is the optimum  
8 speed is maybe unwittingly misleading. We are really  
9 talking about design levels, and I think Hampton Roads -- I  
10 cannot imagine another region in the United States that can  
11 produce the ridership that this region can produce  
12 point-to-point from here to D. C. or NATO or Washington, and

13 I think that it would be very, very important for this  
14 region to comprehend this and to ensure that the EIS going  
15 forward clearly establishes an alternate design level and  
16 that our briefings point to that design level.

17 As a matter of fact, that was the key point made  
18 by the Amtrak reapers at the very day that the T.P.O. made  
19 that resolution, and he made that point twice. If you don't  
20 establish the end game where you're going and you  
21 incrementally try to go forward, you might not get there,  
22 but if you establish where you are going, and then you know  
23 where you're going, and so I think it very important  
24 that -- because the risk right now is that there's all sorts  
25 of solutions popping up because we haven't nailed down the

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1 top end, that will force us to spend money, that could be  
2 spending money twice, or if it's not spent twice, then it  
3 will lock us into 90, and we won't be eligible for certain  
4 funds later.

5 So, it's a design-level question, or a speed-level  
6 question that I think you're referring to that slide, but it  
7 didn't come through that way. I think it could improve the  
8 state; actually the state makes us more competitive. Thank  
9 you.

10 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Taylor. Now, I'd like  
11 to turn the floor over to Mr. Aubrey Lane.

12 MR. LANE: I just wanted to briefly respond to a  
13 couple of the comments made by the speakers in regards to  
14 maybe us understanding some of the nuances in the  
15 application process.

16 There's three points I want to point out. We  
17 certainly do get the fact of the cost of the Norfolk to --  
18 excuse me -- the Petersburg to Richmond cost and how that  
19 impacts the numbers. So, while we understand  
20 administratively why it's in there, we do understand the  
21 impact on the numbers.

22 Number 2, Mayor Frank, in his opening remarks,  
23 mentioned the third crossing, and even though there is no  
24 money for that and will not probably be in our lifetime,  
25 Kevin again had to include that in the analysis when he

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1 developed ridership.

2 So, we understand, again, that those numbers may  
3 be impacted because there's a third crossing that assumes  
4 mobility between the two sides that aren't there. So, when  
5 you look at the alternatives, you have to take into account  
6 that the cost of building that facility is not in here. So,  
7 we certainly understand that also and how it impacts the  
8 presentation and the numbers.

9 Finally, a speaker talked about other types of  
10 public transportation and connectivity. We certainly  
11 understand that, whether it's light rail or other -- bus

12 transportation. So, I wanted to let the attendees know that  
13 we -- the presentation, we do understand what goes in behind  
14 it.

15 Finally, I'd like to just recognize one thing  
16 else, a couple of people, because it is I think historic,  
17 I've lived here all my life, the region coming together  
18 under the leadership -- certainly the leadership of Mayor  
19 Frank, Mayor Fraim in Norfolk, but under the current  
20 leadership of Molly Ward from Hampton and Mayor Will Sessoms  
21 from Virginia Beach, how we pulled together working with  
22 Executive Director Dwight Farmer and coming together as a  
23 region.

24 That was certainly noticed in Richmond, and I  
25 wanted to congratulate and let you know that we certainly

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1 heard you. Thank you.

2 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Lane. Thank everyone  
3 else who has come out tonight to spend time with us so we  
4 could share with you the project, how this process is moving  
5 forward and also receive your public input.

6 This concludes our public comment session for  
7 speakers tonight. We will be here for a little while longer  
8 as well, and we encourage you to spend some time this  
9 evening with the study team and walk around the boards and  
10 have an opportunity to speak one-on-one with us to either

11 hear what you have to say or answer any technical questions  
12 you may have with our study team.

13 Thank you again for coming out this evening.  
14 Please have a safe trip home and, again, we appreciate your  
15 involvement in this process.

16 (Private comments.)

17 MR. TAYLOR: Ray Taylor, President of the Future  
18 of Hampton Roads Organization. Brief comment on the method  
19 of deconflicting passenger rail and freight rail. The EIS  
20 rightfully calls for the use of passing sightings which is,  
21 I think, been an established policy of the state and which  
22 were used in the Lynchburg line just recently.

23 However, there's other thoughts around town that  
24 are contemplating the use of simple crossovers instead of  
25 passing sightings, and I believe that the people at DRPT

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1 that created the EIS and the studies that led to the EIS  
2 were right and that passing sightings is the best solution.

3 It costs a little bit more, but it is a solution  
4 that one can build on in the long term incrementally, and if  
5 we go the other way without passing sightings we will limit  
6 ourselves to 90 miles an hour and yet have spent money to  
7 cap ourselves. It's like cutting off your own legs.

8 MR. BENT: Bill Bent. I want to reiterate and  
9 re-enforce what the gentleman said about design speed. That  
10 is, he kind of mixed words. Let's not half-step with this.

11 We need to design the system for the highest speeds  
12 possible. That is 300 kilometers per hour, eventually we  
13 will run that fast, okay.

14 The other thing is that we need to learn how to  
15 leap frog with existing technologies, learn from Europe and  
16 Asia and what they've done, their technology and knowledge,  
17 to get the system. We don't re-invent the wheel.

18 Keep in mind also that South Korea just finished  
19 building in the last five years their high speed train  
20 system which cut travel time from Seoul to the south in  
21 half. They used existing French technology and trains,  
22 modified it slightly, built the system in four or five  
23 years, I think, and they turned the profit in five years.  
24 Thank you.

25 MS. BOLDING: Martha Bolding, and my comment is

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1 pretty much this; there's an infrastructure that's on this  
2 side already. I think they should expand out with the first  
3 phase of it, of this project, making the railroads better on  
4 this side, and perhaps at a later time when more money is  
5 available, when the economy is better, we can go on the  
6 other side.

7 I know that the other side is doing infrastructure  
8 because of the freight lines going up in Portsmouth in  
9 there, and I know that they're doing light rail over there,



10 but to me they should have done -- when the Chesapeake Bay  
11 went up, I think it's privately owned, I'm not sure they  
12 should have done something with that railway going over  
13 there, with the light rail going over that way, because that  
14 goes up to Maryland and to other places.

15 So, I just fear that again, like I've seen other  
16 things in terms of transportation in this region, it's  
17 really not thought through clearly. I've lived in other  
18 places like Germany, up in northern New York and Boston,  
19 traveled up to many places, and they do it better, they do  
20 it better.

21 So, I just would hope instead of making hasty  
22 moves that they'd really think about what would be better  
23 and what is the best time in terms of time and money being  
24 spent to get the project off the road. Thank you.

25 MR. NEALY: Hello, my name is Hubert Nealy, and I

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1 live in Williamsburg, and I frequently ride the Amtrak  
2 existing service out of Williamsburg up to Pen Station, New  
3 York. I thought what was conspicuously absent is for the  
4 service improvements on the Peninsula, CSX line, I think  
5 there needs to be an addition of a stop at Richmond Airport.

6 The alignment of the train goes along the back  
7 side of the airport. It would be very easy to add a stop at  
8 Richmond Airport. By not doing so, or by omitting it or not  
9 considering it, I think we are short-changing ourselves a

10 tremendous source of boardings and alightings for the  
11 Peninsula -- the Peninsula alignment.

12 If anybody has ridden the Northeast Corridor  
13 trains through Baltimore or through Newark, New Jersey,  
14 there's a lot of boardings and alightings surrounding  
15 airport traffic, people coming on and off, taking a train to  
16 and from the airport. I suggest that the planners take a  
17 good look at Baltimore Airport. It's a very good model.

18 Second -- first, really, increase train speeds on  
19 the Peninsula alignment. Amtrak has to work more closely  
20 with CSX railroad in getting the speeds increased through  
21 Acca Yard, and that is a problem that I think really needs  
22 to be looked at, and that is a tremendous source of delay.  
23 Sometimes it will take 45 to 50 minutes to travel to Main  
24 Street Station and clear Acca Yard on your way up to  
25 Ashland.

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1 I suggest that as part of the overall service  
2 improvements there must be increased emphasis on getting  
3 Amtrak to improve its relationship with its host railroad,  
4 CSX. Thank you.

5 My mailing address is Post Office Box 2581,  
6 Williamsburg, Virginia, 23187-2581. My phone number is  
7 757-258-9094. Thank you.

8 MR. COATES: Rhett Coates. I'm from West Point,

9 Virginia. I'm actually enamored by Alternative 1. It  
10 provides the most mobility for a larger region, for the  
11 largest amount of populous that we have in the entire  
12 region, and as one of the speakers noted, it's not just  
13 Northeast Corridor access but also the Southeast and the  
14 Midwest and everywhere else in the nation, and since with  
15 Richmond and Petersburg being the focus of the center of  
16 Hampton Roads on both sides, it's just -- what's the word --  
17 more mobility for more people, more access. Despite the  
18 costs, it seems that Alternative 1 is absolutely what we  
19 need to focus on.

20 Another speaker mentioned that the four-speed  
21 categories are too restrictive in what we're looking at. We  
22 need to do exactly what he said in making people realize  
23 that it's not just speed factors but overall, the overall --  
24 what's the word -- I'll reword the whole sentence.

25 A regional mobility would depend on everyone

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1 having access to the best ability including feeder lines for  
2 buses, taxis, light rail, air and maritime services and  
3 everything combined so that the region retains -- regains  
4 more mobility than loses it.

5 We can go on highways, it's not going to work.  
6 It's obviously not. I just support Alternative 1 for those  
7 reasons. We have a massive military operations across the  
8 entire region, both sides, and many of them are

9 interdependent.

10 I've noticed the station they're talking about  
11 placing downtown Newport News is located pretty close to the  
12 SHIPYARD, and I can imagine how many hundreds, if not  
13 thousands, of SHIPYARD employees might elect to ride into or  
14 from work on a train a way on the Peninsula from Lee Hall,  
15 Williamsburg, Richmond or coming into areas closer to those  
16 areas from the Middle Peninsula and beyond who can take the  
17 train in instead of having to ride cars, car pools,  
18 individual cars or buses, that if the cost is effective and  
19 the service is reliable I think that would explode in  
20 ridership.

21 For that reason, the tourism, SHIPYARD, military  
22 operations and various uses for like other modes, Greyhound  
23 and the airports, to the airports on the Peninsula line are  
24 located right by the tracks. Patrick Henry Airport is about  
25 one-half to three-quarters of a mile off Bland Avenue.

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1 Let's talk of a station going in there.

2 The Richmond International Airport is right beside  
3 Peninsula Railroad, CSX, literally beside the track. I've  
4 ridden the Ringling Brother's train very often and watched  
5 airplanes taking off as we're passing thinking they need an  
6 Amtrak station here that expands to Richmond and beyond,  
7 stations placed there.

8 That's for extreme long-range planning, but this  
9 today presented by Kevin Page and the others is for now, and  
10 that's what we're looking at tomorrow, next year, next  
11 decade. Again, Alternative 1 seems the best of all the  
12 options for everyone everywhere in the state, especially  
13 this region. I like the idea of connecting to the Southeast  
14 Corridor.

15 It would be interesting to see how they operate  
16 the train service to interconnect with all the others that  
17 are going to be added in that corridor as well. If they  
18 combine trains northbound, separate them to two sides of the  
19 James southbound and/or swap cars to trains from Florida or  
20 New Orleans or whatever or Atlanta would be interesting to  
21 watch how that develops in coming years, as they used to do  
22 before the interstate system was build. It's already been  
23 done.

24 We had the world class system of rail during the  
25 World War II era, and I believe we can do it again. It's

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1 obvious we've done it. We can do it again, and perhaps in  
2 light of costs these days we should. Obviously, rail  
3 combined with highway, maritime, air and everything else.  
4 Thanks.

5 (Whereupon, the hearing was concluded  
6 at 8:00 p.m.)

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1 COURT REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE  
2  
3 I, Susan A. Ronan, Court Reporter, certify that I  
4 recorded verbatim by stenotype the proceedings in the  
5 captioned cause, Newport News, Virginia, on January 27,  
6 2010.



Newport News\_hearings.txt

7 I further certify that to the best of my knowledge  
8 and belief, the foregoing transcript constitutes a true and  
9 correct transcript of the said proceedings.

10 Given under my hand this 3rd day of February,  
11 2010, Norfolk, Virginia.

12

13

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Susan A. Ronan, Court Reporter

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Notary Registration Number 209630

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VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL  
AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION  
  
RICHMOND/HAMPTON ROADS PASSENGER RAIL PROJECT  
TIER I  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

PUBLIC HEARING  
Norfolk, Virginia  
January 28, 2010  
5:30 p.m.

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1 MR. FONT: My first name is Carlos, and

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2 my last name is Font, F-o-n-t, like a computer font.  
3 P. O. Box 6677, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 23456.  
4 My first question: Is this a dedicated  
5 high speed rail system? Are the railcars and  
6 locomotives special for high speed service? Who will  
7 manufacture the railcars and locomotives? Will they  
8 be built -- will they be foreign or domestic built?  
9 Are locomotives diesel-electric driven or  
10 electric-motor driven with an overhead catenary?  
11 Where will the maintenance facility be located? Will  
12 the Norfolk terminal or terminals be close to the  
13 Norfolk Newtown Road station? Is there a potential to  
14 establish connection services between the Norfolk  
15 Airport and Downtown Norfolk? Why do you have to  
16 incorporate high speed passenger rail system with  
17 freight system as reflected in your  
18 question-and-answer bullet? Is there a potential to  
19 establish service directly to Virginia Beach or a spur  
20 line between Norfolk and Virginia Beach? How many  
21 street and road crossings on each corridor and how  
22 will they be negotiated? Has privatization of this  
23 product been considered? Where will the Norfolk  
24 station or terminals be located? And the next to the  
25 last one: Will there be any speed restrictions at

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1 crossings or through towns?  
2 Question Number 2 - Alternative 1, 2A.  
3 Question Number 3 - status quo.  
4 Question Number 4 - 110 miles an hour.

5 My name is David White, and I am with the  
6 Virginia Maritime Association. And the Virginia  
7 Maritime Association is the trade association  
8 representing the port interest. We have a membership  
9 of 400 member companies that are directly or  
10 indirectly involved in the flow of international trade  
11 and domestic trade to the port of Hampton Roads. Our  
12 member companies employ approximately 70,000  
13 Virginians.

14 As a -- we are supportive of the Hampton  
15 Roads transportation organization's position with  
16 regards to high speed rail between Richmond and  
17 Hampton Roads, and we endorse alternatives -- an  
18 enhanced Alternative Number 1.

19 Question Number 3 - status quo is the  
20 least desirable.

21 Question Number 4 - answer to question  
22 Number 4, 110 miles per hour.

23 MR. PAGE: Good evening everyone. I  
24 would like to please ask you to move over into the  
25 seating area and please join us. Welcome to the

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1 Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project public hearing  
2 agenda.

3 Could I have everyone's attention,  
4 please. Thank you. Those in the rear, feel free to  
5 come forward. We still have some seats up in the  
6 front of the room.

7 Good evening. My name is Kevin Page. I

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8 am chief of rail transportation for the Department of  
9 Rail and Public Transportation of Virginia. We are  
10 here tonight to host our third in a series of three --  
11 can you hear me? Okay. I will get closer. Thank  
12 you.

13 We are here tonight to host the third of  
14 three of a series of public hearings that we are  
15 conducting to receive public input on the Richmond to  
16 Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. This project  
17 involves tonight opening remarks, a presentation that  
18 will be given by me. We will follow that with some  
19 public comments for 30 minutes. And then I will  
20 afford the opportunity of the audience for those of  
21 you who have joined us late that have not yet seen the  
22 presentation to offer that viewing again. If the  
23 audience would care to prefer to continue with the  
24 remarks of the public speakers that have signed up to  
25 speak, we will, at that point, not show the

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1 presentation the second time and move forward with  
2 public comments.

3 We will conclude the public comment  
4 period at eight o'clock. And for those of you who  
5 have signed who have not yet had the opportunity to  
6 speak, we will have our court reporter available for  
7 verbal comments, our written comments desk in the back  
8 and also you can submit comments through February the  
9 11th at our Web site on the Internet. Make sure, if  
10 you want to go to our Web site, to check with anyone

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11 that is wearing one of these nametags to make sure  
12 that you have the Web site address.

13 One other housekeeping item, please  
14 understand we are in a public assembly. This is a  
15 federal hearing. We will be recorded not only with  
16 the closed-circuit television for public viewing but  
17 we will also be recording for public comments that  
18 will be entered into the final environmental impact  
19 statement that will be submitted to the Federal  
20 Railroad Administration for a final record of  
21 decision.

22 Before that time, on February the 17th,  
23 all of the comments that are received, all of the  
24 public input will be developed into a recommendation  
25 to the Commonwealth's Transportation Board of Virginia

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1 for a consideration of the preferred alternative of  
2 the five alternatives that I will go through tonight.

3 Before we get started into the program, I  
4 would first like to welcome Mayor Fraim, mayor of  
5 Norfolk, to come and welcome us to this great city and  
6 also give opening remarks. Mayor Fraim, thank you.

7 (Audience applause.)

8 MAYOR FRAIM: Thank you. Thank you.  
9 Good evening. My name is Paul Fraim. And, as mayor,  
10 I am pleased to welcome you to Norfolk and to thank  
11 the Virginia Department of Rail and Public  
12 Transportation for facilitating this hearing and this  
13 meeting and thanks to all of you for coming out. This



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14 is absolutely wonderful.

15                   Gentlemen, as you can tell by the size of  
16 the turnout, we have all been eagerly anticipating  
17 this evening in order that we might express our  
18 near-unanimous support for bringing high speed rail to  
19 South Hampton Roads as described in Alternative 1 of  
20 the draft EIS. Tonight we stand at the threshold of a  
21 new transportation era in Norfolk, Hampton Roads and,  
22 indeed, the Commonwealth and nation.

23                   Just this day, President Obama announced  
24 \$8 billion in stimulus funding for 13 projects in 31  
25 states. \$75 million has been awarded to Virginia to

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1     be spent outside of Manassas and another 25 million  
2     for congestion mitigation between Richmond and  
3     Raleigh. Not as much as requested but real money and  
4     a fair start. This should well position us for the  
5     next round of funding this spring of approximately  
6     \$2-and-a-half billion.

7                   High speed rail is no longer a dream.  
8     For the east coast and the country, it will soon be a  
9     reality with projects and funding in place. In order  
10    to connect completely to the national economy, we  
11    must, in the future, be a part of that rail system.  
12    Nothing could be more clearer. Nothing could be more  
13    important.

14                  Anyone who has ever spent just one day in  
15    South Hampton Roads understands the situation with  
16    which we are confronted. If you are not stuck in a

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17 tunnel, you are backed up in traffic awaiting entrance  
18 into a tunnel. If you are not stacked up in the  
19 four p.m. traffic leaving the naval base, you are on  
20 the I64 parking lot at the HRBT. We have a  
21 transportation problem and it will not go away. Now  
22 is the time to address it.

23 Given the region's transportation meets  
24 an unprecedented funding shortage, I think we all  
25 understand how important this public hearing is. The

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1 comments derived from this public hearing will be  
2 recorded in the public register and will be considered  
3 when making the decision to designate a high speed  
4 rail corridor from Downtown Richmond to Hampton Roads.

5 Based on the evidence that you will hear  
6 tonight and the comments, I am convinced, and the  
7 region stands united, that an alternative means of  
8 passenger rail transportation is vitally important and  
9 connection to the high speed rail corridor is  
10 essential to the future of South Hampton Roads and,  
11 indeed, the Commonwealth. In fact, that is the only  
12 message you have received from the public hearings you  
13 have held the past two nights in Richmond and on the  
14 Peninsula and that, I believe, is the only message you  
15 will hear tonight. Rarely have the people of the  
16 Commonwealth spoken so clearly and with one voice.

17 It is my hope that the Commonwealth  
18 Transportation Board and the Federal Railroad  
19 Administration recognize that both logic and the

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20 public are overwhelmingly in favor of a high speed  
21 rail corridor on the Norfolk Southern line from  
22 Petersburg to Norfolk.

23 Before I sit down, I would just like to  
24 express my gratitude and the gratitude of everyone on  
25 the south side of Hampton Roads through our friends

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1 and colleagues on the Peninsula who have correctly and  
2 courageously supported the designation of the high  
3 speed rail corridor from Richmond to Petersburg to the  
4 Southside of the region. Thank you very much.

5 (Audience applause.)

6 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mayor Fraim, for  
7 your opening comments. I would like to call the next  
8 welcoming speaker, Mr. Will Sessoms, who is the  
9 Virginia Beach mayor, to the podium. Thank you.

10 (Audience applause.)

11 MAYOR SESSOMS: Good evening. It is an  
12 honor for me to be here representing the great City of  
13 Virginia Beach and also serving as chairman of the  
14 Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization.

15 I am keenly aware of the major  
16 transportation needs, challenges and opportunities in  
17 Hampton Roads. So I am going to make some very brief  
18 comments on behalf of the TPO regarding the high speed  
19 rail environmental impact statement. The TPO thanks  
20 you for advancing the current study for high speed  
21 rail connecting the region. A number of factors have  
22 changed at regional, state and federal levels since

23 this study process was first initiated about a decade  
24 ago. As a result, the initial scenarios or  
25 alternatives as defined for the study do not reflect

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1 today's realities and, therefore, need to be  
2 revisited.

3           The most critical of these elements are,  
4 first, it is now clear that the region will have  
5 significant difficulty in developing the proposed  
6 third crossing of Hampton Roads. The official  
7 regional transportation plan is presently in the  
8 process of being formally amended to reflect this  
9 fact. As such, it is clear that the new third  
10 crossing project will not be available over the first  
11 lifecycle of the new passenger rail program to our  
12 region as currently proposed in the draft document.

13           Second, the new initiative of the Obama  
14 Administration has been to highlight the importance of  
15 building a national passenger rail network and to  
16 provide serious funding for these projects. As such,  
17 the alternatives' analysis needs to be refined to  
18 consider not just higher speed passenger rail service  
19 but true high speed passenger rail options  
20 particularly for the Southside. As a result, a true  
21 high speed rail option should be included in the  
22 alternative analysis. In order to address these  
23 points, I believe that the inclusion of Alternative 1  
24 would best reflect the intent expressed by the Hampton  
25 Roads Transportation Planning Organization in its

1 recent resolution and, therefore, should be  
2 incorporated in the final EIS.

3           The region supports the improvement to  
4 rail service on the Peninsula down to Newport News  
5 including the construction of a new station in Newport  
6 News. We also support, as a region, the designation  
7 of the Route 460 corridor as the high speed corridor  
8 and the construction of that corridor as soon as  
9 possible.

10           Ensuring that Hampton Roads is connected  
11 both early and well to the emerging national high  
12 speed rail network has to be one of the top priorities  
13 for the Commonwealth. This is critical since such  
14 linkages are necessary to ensure the continued  
15 economic growth and competitiveness of the state's  
16 urban centers. I think it is clear that high speed  
17 rail will be a very much needed improvement to the  
18 transportation system for the region and the  
19 Commonwealth.

20           This is a very exciting time for Hampton  
21 Roads. The fact that the communities on both sides of  
22 Hampton Roads can come together for one alternative I  
23 think speaks volumes to the thought that has gone into  
24 this process, to the importance of this process and to  
25 how this region can work together. I hope you will do

1 everything possible to allow the EIS process to move  
2 forward and bring this much-needed project to  
3 fruition. Thank you very much.

4 (Audience applause.)

5 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Our next speaker  
6 will be Councilman Randy Wright.

7 (Audience applause.)

8 COUNCILMAN WRIGHT: I don't have any  
9 prepared remarks but you need to only look back a half  
10 a century ago. The other most single defining moment  
11 that took place was when the United States interstate  
12 highway system was built it passed a spot. This high  
13 speed rail will be the defining factor as we move into  
14 the next century. It is absolutely critical. We can  
15 ill afford for us to be the cul-de-sac that we were  
16 with the interstate highway system.

17 We have an opportunity here to create a  
18 multimodal system that is second to none in the United  
19 States of America. There are few places that can  
20 bring a ferry, can bring buses, can bring light rail  
21 and can bring high speed rail to one terminal  
22 location. It is a significant happenstance that can  
23 happen right here.

24 The most incredible thing that is taking  
25 place, and you have heard it before, is that this area

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1 has spoken as one voice. And, to that end, the two  
2 speakers that have spoken before me deserve another  
3 round of applause. Let's give it to them.



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(Audience applause.)

COUNCILMAN WRIGHT: I just can't stress hard enough and strong enough -- having had the opportunity to travel the country as a national transit chair myself, I have seen the opportunities and I have seen what has happened in other areas of this country when they have been able to blend the Acela line with the metro line with other lines. It is a wave of the future and we need to be part of that wave.

So we appreciate you being here tonight. We have spoken as one voice. We need to do this. Thank you.

(Audience applause.)

MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Wright.

I would next call to the podium Mr. Aubrey Layne. Mr. Layne is our Commonwealth Transportation Board member of the Hampton Roads District.

MR. LAYNE: Good evening. What a great night to be in Norfolk.

I first would like to start by thanking

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Mayor Fraim and the citizens of Norfolk for their hospitality. It is a great venue we have here and very much appreciative for us as to use it.

As I mentioned -- Kevin mentioned, I am the Hampton Roads representative on the Commonwealth Transportation Board. I am joined this evening also

7 with Dana Dickens, another fellow member of the board,  
8 an at-large member who is actually the senior member  
9 from the Hampton Roads delegation, senior in terms of  
10 service, not age. But he has delegated to me, being  
11 the junior member, to make a few comments on behalf of  
12 the CTB.

13 I am proud to call myself a native of  
14 Hampton Roads. I was born in Hampton. Raised over  
15 there. Spent the last 25 years here on the Southside.  
16 Currently reside in Virginia Beach. Although, I  
17 reside in Virginia Beach, I live in Hampton Roads. I  
18 am in the real estate business. I have properties at  
19 every locality in Hampton Roads. Like many of you, I  
20 dine, I worship and I visit friends all through these  
21 localities. So I am very familiar with the road  
22 situations that we have here.

23 And I think we all recognize that it is  
24 going to take regional solutions because we have  
25 regional problems. They're not local. We have got to

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1 come together as a region.

2 So tonight when you go -- when Kevin goes  
3 through this presentation, you are going to hear a lot  
4 of facts, technical items, cost numbers, different  
5 things that seem to be maybe the most important. But  
6 what I would really ask you to concentrate on is what  
7 the quality of life would be, that is really what this  
8 is all about, alternatives and what we want Hampton  
9 Roads to look like in the next 15 to 20 years.

10           We understand, fully understand, our  
11 transportation issues. The needs far outnumber the  
12 number of dollars that we have available. But this is  
13 something that we can get behind as a region, and when  
14 we come together we can make a difference.

15           Now, Mayor Sessoms mentioned in his  
16 opening remarks a few things about the study. I want  
17 him and the rest of you to understand in here that the  
18 Commonwealth Transportation Board certainly  
19 understands it is a lot more than about numbers. But  
20 we do understand the cost from Richmond to Petersburg  
21 and how that may be in other applications. We  
22 certainly do understand how the ridership numbers have  
23 been impacted because of the study includes a third  
24 crossing with no moneys to build. And we certainly  
25 understand the last-mile issues, whether this high

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1 speed rail will be connecting to light rail here in  
2 Norfolk and hopefully Virginia Beach or other  
3 mass-transit opportunities throughout the region.

4           So I want to impress upon you that we do  
5 understand the needs of the area and take those in  
6 consideration in our vote.

7           Now, I am also here to say for the first  
8 time in many years I have lived here, I actually am  
9 excited about transportation and some of the  
10 opportunities. And I will give you a couple of  
11 reasons why.

12           First of all, with the new

13 administration, I mean, how cool is it to have  
14 Director Thelma Drake from Hampton Roads now in charge  
15 of rail and transit? So she has hit the ground  
16 running.

17 (Audience applause.)

18 MR. LAYNE: She is up to speed. And we  
19 desperately look forward to having her new ideas and  
20 leadership. But I also want to mention one other  
21 thing that I did mention before but I think it is  
22 fairly historic and that is the efforts of the Hampton  
23 Roads Transportation Planning Organization through the  
24 leadership of Mayor Will Sessoms of Virginia Beach,  
25 Mayor -- Vice-Chairman Mayor Molly Ward of Hampton,

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1 the executive director Dwight Farmer, the support of  
2 Mayor Fraim. I also mention Mayor Frank on the  
3 Peninsula.

4 Just a couple of months ago, a little  
5 over a couple of months ago, this board came together  
6 and made a unanimous decision to support high speed  
7 rail here in Hampton Roads. And I believe that is  
8 truly historic and something that we ought to rally  
9 around. So I know, as a region, we can do this  
10 because I think we all know we do not want to miss  
11 this train. So thank you.

12 (Audience applause.)

13 MR. PAGE: Okay. Thank you very much,  
14 all of the welcoming speakers, for these very  
15 encouraging comments. And I will say, I just echo the

16 comments, as well, is that it is amazing the amount of  
17 unified support we have had especially tonight in this  
18 turnout all the way to Richmond where it makes sense  
19 to bring high speed rail to this region as we move  
20 forward.

21 What I am going to do now is move into  
22 the presentation portion of our agenda tonight.

23 (Mr. Page gave his presentation.)

24 MR. PAGE: We are happy to move on to the  
25 public comment period. I will call the name of the

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1 person first that will speak and then I will call a  
2 second name, which is the speaker following that  
3 speaker, and so on. Please, if you are the speaker  
4 following, we have so many people here tonight, let's  
5 exercise efficiency and cue yourself up and make  
6 movement over to the podium to take it as quickly as  
7 possible after the speaker that spoke before you.  
8 Thank you.

9 (Audience applause.)

10 MR. PAGE: Okay. Our first speaker  
11 tonight is Mayor Linda Johnson of the City of Suffolk,  
12 Virginia, who will be followed by John Uhrin of  
13 Virginia Beach City Council.

14 MAYOR JOHNSON: Good evening. I wanted  
15 to be here this evening first to thank you for  
16 holding -- first I will start -- now we can hear. I  
17 wanted to be here this evening on behalf of the City  
18 of Suffolk and on behalf of the Hampton Roads region.

19                   As a member of the board of TPO and as  
20 mayor, I can tell you that we highly, in the City of  
21 Suffolk, endorse the extension of high speed rail  
22 service from Washington, D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg  
23 and the Hampton Roads region designating a high speed  
24 rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern Route 460  
25 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than

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1   110 miles per hour and enhance the inner city  
2 passenger rail service along the CSX 164 corridor.

3                   There are many reasons why this is so  
4 important for us and we believe it will be a  
5 significant return on investment. The Hampton Roads  
6 region is home to 1.6 million citizens and growing.  
7 Rail service already exists along both the CSX 164  
8 corridor and the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor.  
9 The Hampton Roads connections to the southeast high  
10 speed rail corridor can be realized in an extremely  
11 competitive price along existing right of ways and  
12 will open service to Virginia's largest population  
13 base outside of the D.C. area.

14                  We believe there are some unique national  
15 considerations here. The region houses operations of  
16 sixteen departments and agencies of the executive  
17 branch of the federal government including all five  
18 military services. It is home to the nation's largest  
19 naval facility, provides primary air defense to our  
20 nation's capital and homeland security to our port and  
21 our seacoast. Dependable, efficient and cost



22 effective travel to and from the D.C. area is vital  
23 for all of these operations.

24 We know that it will enhance our economic  
25 competitiveness and only cause our Virginia port to be

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1 Number 1. It will sustain and grow tourism. We all  
2 know that as people come here --

3 A SPEAKER: We can't hear you.

4 MR. PAGE: We are going to choose a  
5 preferred alternative and we are going to be at this  
6 podium over here.

7 MAYOR JOHNSON: We moved south.

8 As I spoke earlier, we know the  
9 importance of the significant return on investment we  
10 have here. All of the people we have here are unique  
11 national considerations. Our military. Our enhanced  
12 economic competitiveness that will come with our port  
13 growing and becoming Number 1. And our manufacturing  
14 and distributing industries will grow along the  
15 corridor.

16 Tourism, extremely important to our area.  
17 And we all know how it is to come to Virginia Beach on  
18 a Friday evening. We need to mitigate the peak-season  
19 escalation in roadway congestion. We need to support  
20 inner-connected livable communities and this will do  
21 that.

22 And, finally, one of the most important  
23 pieces that I want to talk about is public safety and  
24 emergency evacuation. We all know that Hampton Roads

25 needs more evacuation. Our former governors have

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1 spoken of it, our now governor has spoken of it and we  
2 need to make sure that we can move our people out of  
3 here if need be.

4 I just want to say that Suffolk looks  
5 forward, the city staff stands on record, we will work  
6 with all localities. We look forward to working with  
7 the Department of Rail and Public Transportation.  
8 This is something as a region we need to do and we  
9 need to do it quickly. Thank you so much for hearing  
10 it.

11 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Our next speaker  
12 is John Uhrin of Virginia Beach City Council.  
13 Following will be Roderick S. Wollard, assistant city  
14 manager, City of Norfolk. Thank you.

15 MR. UHRIN: Good evening. And thank you  
16 for allowing me to speak.

17 In addition to being the beach district  
18 councilman for the City of Virginia Beach, I also  
19 operate -- can you not hear me? I will hold it like  
20 this. Is that better? Thank you.

21 In addition to being the Beach district  
22 city councilman for the City of Virginia Beach, I also  
23 operate hotels, restaurants and retail on Atlantic  
24 Avenue. And I am sure that there is going to be a lot  
25 of great things that are going to be discussed about

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1 the importance of high speed rail and the improvement  
2 that it is going to bring to the different cities in  
3 the entire region. But tonight I am going to limit my  
4 remarks to the tourism industry because I am sure  
5 there are other people that will hit some of these  
6 other high marks that are equally as important.

7 But it is important to recognize that  
8 tourism is big business for South Hampton Roads. It  
9 is over \$2.2 billion worth of annual expenditures from  
10 folks that come out from outside of the area and spend  
11 money in our -- in our entire region. Over  
12 \$1.1 billion of that is spent in the City of Virginia  
13 Beach. It provides \$460 million in payroll, which  
14 could not be more critical at this time where people  
15 are having a hard time finding jobs. And it is almost  
16 24,000 jobs in the southside Hampton Road. It creates  
17 \$91 million in direct taxes to the state and over  
18 \$85 million in local taxes. I mean, it is a very  
19 critical industry to help to close these -- the  
20 incredible gaps that we have in all of our budgets  
21 right now.

22 And the ability for tourists to reach  
23 South Hampton Roads has a large impact on our ability  
24 to attract these folks to our area. Over 69 percent  
25 of the over 3-and-a-half million people that come to

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1 the City of Virginia Beach and stay overnight,

2 69 percent of them use the Hampton Roads  
3 Bridge-Tunnel. And it is critical to understand there  
4 are over nine studies, survey studies, that it is  
5 listed as one of the top negative of their vacation  
6 experience. So this affects our ability to attract  
7 people to our area. And I would ask that the  
8 commission and the committee to keep this in mind when  
9 we are moving forward for this critical project. It  
10 is really the only project that can maintain the  
11 long-term viability of this very important industry to  
12 our region. So thank you very much.

13 (Audience applause.)

14 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Following  
15 Mr. Woolard is going to be Henry Harris.

16 MR. WOOLARD: Yes. My name is -- my name  
17 is Ron Woolard. It is my honor to serve as acting  
18 assistant city manager for the City of Norfolk.

19 Our city is truly excited about the  
20 opportunity. Our city is truly excited about the  
21 opportunity to bring high speed rail service to the  
22 Hampton Roads region. And towards that end, we are  
23 actively working to develop a world-class  
24 transportation center at the proposed Downtown Norfolk  
25 rail terminal station site. The ability to directly

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1 link city centers is a hallmark of passenger rail  
2 systems. And the Norfolk terminal, serving more than  
3 4.2 million square feet of office space in Downtown  
4 Norfolk, will have connections not only to our new

5 Tide Light Rail system but also local and inner city  
6 bus services as well as taxi and ferry connections  
7 making it a true multimodal facility effectively  
8 linking the regional center to all parts of Hampton  
9 Roads.

10                   However, we have concerns with the  
11 current draft of the environmental document. These  
12 concerns center on the train operations planning that  
13 was completed. Specifically, our concerns include,  
14 first, the train sets used in planning purposes in the  
15 draft document are good for higher speed, that is, 79  
16 to 90 mile an hour passenger train operations, but  
17 they are inadequate for a true high speed alternative,  
18 which would operate at speeds of 110 miles an hour or  
19 more. The conventional trains currently proposed in  
20 the document are very poor performers over 90 miles  
21 per hour and, therefore, more appropriate true high  
22 speed train technology should be evaluated along with  
23 their better performance abilities.

24                   It is estimated that in a medium  
25 distance, 150-mile corridor, a proper high speed train

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1 set will operate at 30 to 40 minutes faster than a  
2 conventional train. The high speed trains that have  
3 been used to test 110 mile per hour and higher  
4 alternatives across the country should be employed in  
5 the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project DIS  
6 for our high speed rail alternatives. We believe that  
7 Hampton Roads deserves and that the study should

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8 reflect a true high speed service level.

9           Second, the operating costs used for  
10 110 miles per hour options were based only on  
11 incrementally higher speed rail. It did not include  
12 the economies of sale that would be associated with  
13 operating eight to ten true high speed trains per day.  
14 This type of scenario would reduce operating costs by  
15 40 percent for a high speed rail option that performs  
16 400 to 600 train miles per year. This would obviously  
17 reduce the total cost significantly for the 110 mile  
18 per hour options and make them far more competitive.

19           Third, the major -- a major concern is  
20 getting our project funded. In the environmental  
21 document, in several places, Federal Trans  
22 Administration typed evaluation criteria instead of  
23 Federal Railroad Administration inner city planning  
24 criteria were used, which Federal Railroad  
25 Administration criteria would be more appropriate for

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1 this type of service. The FRA criteria requires both  
2 a positive cost-benefit ratio and operating ratio,  
3 which ensures franchise capability together with an  
4 ability to show positive benefits for the region.

5           These criteria are best and most  
6 competitive for ensuring FRA funding support for any  
7 proposed system. If we are to compete with projects  
8 in the Midwest, Ohio, Florida and California for  
9 funding, we need to ensure we make our arguments as  
10 strongly as possible. Accordingly, the more



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11 appropriate FRA evaluation criteria should be used in  
12 applying for FRA funding.

13 It is consistent -- it is also consistent  
14 with the recent Hampton Roads Transportation Planning  
15 Organization resolution that endorsed the designation  
16 and development of a high speed rail corridor and  
17 service via Southside Norfolk Southern corridor while  
18 pursuing the enhancement of the conventional inner  
19 city passenger service for the Peninsula via the I64  
20 CSX corridor.

21 Thank you for your attention to these  
22 issues. The development of a more robust Alternative  
23 1 reflecting true high speed rail service for the  
24 Southside, including a faster schedule, more  
25 frequency, better reliability and newer trains, needs

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1 to be completed. This work must be undertaken in  
2 close cooperation with both the regional  
3 Transportation Planning Organization as well as the  
4 freight railroads to ensure there is full agreement  
5 and buy-in of all for the enhanced Alternative 1 that  
6 is requested.

7 Let us know if you have any questions or  
8 if we can be of further assistance. Thank you.

9 (Audience applause.)

10 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Our next speaker  
11 is Sandy Harris to be followed by John Friedman. Mr.  
12 Harris, if you could pause a moment. Our court  
13 reporter needs to adjust her position, we changed

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14 podiums, so she can see the speaker.

15 (There was a pause in the proceedings.)

16 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Sorry for the  
17 delay, Mr. Harris.

18 MR. HARRIS: No problem. Thank you.  
19 Good evening. I am Sandy Harris, service chair of the  
20 Norfolk Economic Development Authority.

21 The NEDA is a political subdivision of  
22 the Commonwealth with a mission to create jobs,  
23 maximize the utilization of Norfolk real estate,  
24 foster business capital investment, increase revenue  
25 by growing the tax base and support minority and small

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1 businesses. High speed rail connecting to Downtown  
2 Norfolk, as outlined in the regional consensus at the  
3 Transportation Planning Organization, will be a major  
4 real asset to regional economic by providing new and  
5 effective opportunities for business travel.

6 Reviewing the current study from a market  
7 perspective, I believe there are a number of issues  
8 raised in the ridership and revenue forecast that  
9 require re-examination. As mentioned by others, the  
10 ridership forecast, as currently contained in the  
11 study, is skewed due to the inclusion of the third  
12 crossing project in the forecast model.

13 Other related key concerns include the  
14 following: One, the demand analysis was not  
15 behaviorally based and failed to include differences  
16 between business, commuter and tourist travel. As is

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17 often said in business, time is money and, therefore,  
18 a value of time element should be included in any  
19 ridership-forecasting methodology. This is important.  
20 There is a different willingness to pay. I am talking  
21 about the differences of service.

22 A SPEAKER: Hold the microphone closer.

23 MR. HARRIS: I will start with -- I will  
24 start with Item 1. The demand analysis, in terms of  
25 business forecast, okay, the demand analysis was not

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1 behaviorally based and failed to include differences  
2 between business, commuter and tourist travel. As is  
3 often said in business, time is money, and, therefore,  
4 a value of time element should be included in any  
5 ridership-forecasting methodology. This is important  
6 since there is a different willingness to pay between  
7 different groups. This is the case of air service.  
8 Business travellers are willing to pay a premium for a  
9 higher level of service. Most high speed rail systems  
10 offer between two to three levels of service that both  
11 attract more business riders and an opportunity to  
12 charge higher fares for those willing to pay. The  
13 impact of not carrying out this type of analysis is to  
14 reduce Southside ridership and revenue from 110 mile  
15 per hour and higher speed options.

16 Two, there is a concern about how the  
17 forecast reflects short- and medium-distance travel.  
18 The average trip length in the model is reported at  
19 275 miles, which far exceeds the length of the two

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20 corridors studied. Typically, average trip length is  
21 60 to 70 percent of a corridor trip length. This  
22 suggests many shorter within-corridor trips that have  
23 been included in the forecast. One factor of these  
24 trips is ridership between Petersburg and Richmond.

25 The draft of the environmental impact

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1 study has allocated these trips to the south, you have  
2 heard this, the southeast high speed rail corridor,  
3 known as SEHSR, rather than the Southside route. Yet,  
4 if the Southside high speed rail service offers 8 to  
5 12 passenger trains per day in the corridor versus the  
6 12 per day contemplated by the SEHSR, the Southside  
7 trains are likely to capture 40 to 50 percent more  
8 traffic.

9 Three, one important feature of the high  
10 speed trains is the nose-cone effect that is  
11 associated with the improved quality service, the  
12 so-called wow factor of high speed trains. Whenever  
13 high speed trains are implemented in Europe or Asia,  
14 the comfort and convenience of these trains produce  
15 higher ridership than expected. Even in the United  
16 States this is true as shown by the introduction of  
17 the Spanish Talgo trains of the Pacific northwest  
18 corridor, which increased ridership by more than  
19 50 percent without any increase in service frequency.  
20 People like trains and they ride them.

21 This impact was not included with the  
22 110 mile per hour service, which would be less of a

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23 problem if only existing trains are used. But on the  
24 Southside, high speed -- a high speed service would  
25 use new modern-connect trains that would produce a

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1 significant positive impact on ridership.

2 What was surprising in the DIS study was  
3 that not only did the 110 mile per hour option perform  
4 poorly but at some options they produced lower  
5 ridership than the 90 mile per hour service. This is  
6 unrealistic, which is recognized -- when it is  
7 recognized that high speed rail offers an attractive  
8 travel alternative to people -- to people for short-  
9 and medium-distance trips.

10 Thank you for your attention to the  
11 business components of the proposed high speed rail  
12 service program. Clearly, to appropriately reflect  
13 the HRTPO's position, the Southside corridor should be  
14 a true high speed rail corridor through Enhanced  
15 Alternative 1 incorporating a demand forecast as it  
16 relates to the Southside option.

17 To conclude, the Norfolk Economic  
18 Development Authority vigorously supports Southside  
19 passenger rail.

20 (Audience applause.)

21 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Our next speaker  
22 is John Friedmann followed by Paul Fraim, mayor of the  
23 City of Norfolk.

24 If I could remind the speakers to try to  
25 hold the three minutes. We have a yellow card for

1 your one-minute warning and then a red card just to  
2 remind you that you are out of time. Thank you. We  
3 have about 40 speakers ahead of us so we want to make  
4 sure everyone has an opportunity.

5 Thank you, Mr. Friedman. Welcome.

6 MR. FRIEDMANN: Good evening. My name is  
7 John Friedman. I am vice-president of strategic  
8 planning for Norfolk Southern and am responsible, in  
9 this roll, for coordinating all requests for new  
10 passenger service over Norfolk Southern's lines. I  
11 appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Richmond  
12 to Hampton Roads passenger rail study.

13 Last year Mayor Fraim asked Norfolk  
14 Southern what it would take to inaugurate the  
15 passenger rail service between Norfolk and Petersburg  
16 with the assumption that the trains would continue to  
17 Richmond. What he meant was: How much would it cost  
18 to add some passenger trains to our existing route and  
19 how quickly could the work be done?

20 The Norfolk to Petersburg portion of this  
21 route is part of Norfolk Southern's heartland  
22 corridor, which is being improved through a major  
23 public/private partnership to handle the surge of  
24 international freight expected to develop through the  
25 port of Hampton Roads. It is also the route taken by



1 numerous coal trains to Lambert's Point in Norfolk  
2 where coal is loaded into ships that go all over the  
3 world. In other words, Norfolk to Petersburg line is  
4 already critical to the economy of South Hampton Roads  
5 and to the wellbeing of Norfolk Southern.

6 Norfolk Southern performed a capacity  
7 study that assumed three passenger round trips per  
8 day, which would use conventional passenger equipment  
9 and operate at a maximum speed of 79 miles per hour.  
10 We also assumed that these trains would operate over  
11 the same tracks as our freight trains. We did not  
12 look at speeds higher than 79 miles an hour because  
13 high speed trains will conflict with freight trains  
14 and mixing high speed passenger trains and freight  
15 trains on the same track raises numerous issues.

16 To accommodate 79 mile an hour service,  
17 Norfolk Southern will require some additions to our  
18 infrastructure such as a station track at Harbor Park,  
19 signal improvements, crossovers between tracks and a  
20 new connection track between Norfolk Southern and CSX  
21 Transportation to Petersburg. The approximate cost of  
22 this infrastructure is about \$75 million, and the work  
23 can be done within two years of funding.

24 Our estimate did not include the cost of  
25 improvement to the Petersburg to Richmond CSX line.

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1 It did not include passenger rail equipment, station  
2 facilities, staging tracks or train servicing  
3 facilities.

4           Throughout the process, we were careful  
5 to design improvements that would keep freight and  
6 passenger trains from interfering with one another.  
7 We also assumed that passenger service provider would  
8 also provide sufficient indemnity to Norfolk Southern  
9 and the cost of all passenger improvements and  
10 operations would be borne by someone other than  
11 Norfolk Southern.

12           Norfolk Southern looks forward to working  
13 with both the Commonwealth and the region to both host  
14 the incremental starter service and examine other  
15 alternatives for the 90 mile an hour or faster high  
16 speed trains that the public will demand. The  
17 Richmond to Hampton Roads passenger rail study appears  
18 to be based on data and assumptions developed nearly  
19 ten years ago. Enough has changed since that data and  
20 assumptions and should be revisited. Norfolk Southern  
21 will continue to support the City of Norfolk and will  
22 cooperate with the Commonwealth in future plans to  
23 return rail passenger service to South Hampton Roads.

24           Thank you for your time.

25           (Audience applause.)

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1           MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Friedmann. I  
2 will now call Mayor Fraim and Dwight Farmer will  
3 follow.

4           MAYOR FRAIM: Again, my name is Paul  
5 Fraim. And I have the privilege of serving the  
6 residents of the City of Norfolk as their mayor.

7 (Audience applause.)

8 MAYOR FRAIM: Thank you. I speak not  
9 only for the citizens of Norfolk but also for my  
10 colleagues on the city council, several of whom are  
11 here tonight. That would include the vice-mayor  
12 Anthony Burfoot, Councilman Barclay Winn and  
13 Councilwoman Terry Whibley. And you have also heard,  
14 as well, I think, I know from Randy Wright.

15 I want to take a moment and thank the  
16 many organizations and speakers that have come forward  
17 in support of the agreed-upon regional vision of high  
18 speed rail connecting to Hampton Roads. I understand  
19 that there are at least 500 people here tonight. That  
20 is an amazing turnout.

21 (Audience applause.)

22 MAYOR FRAIM: The importance of high  
23 speed rail to the future growth and development of the  
24 region cannot be overstated. Some believe we are  
25 currently behind other regions in making our vision a

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1 reality. However, I am convinced that through a  
2 united partnership of all levels of government, the  
3 region's railroads and our business community we can  
4 advance the Hampton Roads rail program forward and  
5 successfully compete at the national level both in the  
6 immediate and longer term.

7 Given the amount of time that has  
8 transpired in order for us to get to the point of  
9 having a draft environmental impact statement -- and

10 that is what we are examining tonight -- it is  
11 understandable to find the number of modifications  
12 needed before the draft document is finalized. We are  
13 here tonight to comment on the draft EIS and try to  
14 improve it so that we are more competitive in the  
15 national search for scant funds.

16 In this regard, I am submitting for the  
17 record a detailed technical memorandum setting forth  
18 issues and concerns that should be addressed in both  
19 finalizing the current draft document and also in  
20 moving forward to the next levels of analysis of the  
21 federal process. For every major comment area in the  
22 technical memorandum, we have also recommended  
23 corrective actions we believe are appropriate -- are  
24 appropriate to address our concerns.

25 I want to stress that we have undertaken

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1 this analysis and offer these proposed corrections in  
2 the spirit of wanting to be a supportive and  
3 participative partner. We believe that through this  
4 kind of collaboration we can best ensure that those --  
5 that these required steps are completed as quickly as  
6 possible. Proper attention to these issues -- to  
7 these issues will assure that the final environmental  
8 document addresses both our concerns as well as the  
9 regional consensus on the future of high speed and  
10 inner city passenger rail service to our region as  
11 expressed by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning  
12 Organization in October of 2009.

13 I am not going to attempt to list all of  
14 the items from the technical memorandum here; however,  
15 there are some significant points, many of which and  
16 some of which have been addressed by other speakers in  
17 greater detail, which I would like to mention.  
18 Remember, now, we are part of a, as Kevin has told us,  
19 a federal process here. Someone is going to be  
20 reviewing this. So it is our opportunity now -- and  
21 some of this sounds technical -- to address the drag  
22 draft EIS so we hope we can improve it and be  
23 collaborative with you.

24 First of all, we need a true high speed  
25 alternative for South Hampton Roads reflective of the

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1 region's resolution of the HRTPO Resolution  
2 Number 200905 incorporated in the analysis. This can  
3 best be accomplished through an enhancement of  
4 Alternative 1. Those are not the only alternatives.  
5 We can actually enhance what is in the draft EIS, and  
6 that is what we want to try to do.

7 The assumption that a third crossing will  
8 exist should be excluded from all base alternatives.  
9 A true high speed train set should be used for the  
10 modeling of all high speed rail alternatives -- high  
11 speed alternatives, economies of scale associated with  
12 higher service frequency, which we expect to be  
13 justified based upon a revised ridership forecast  
14 associated with true high speed rail train service to  
15 the region. More people will ride a true -- a high

16 speed rail train than will ride a 79 mile an hour  
17 train, for instance.

18 An updated capacity analysis for each  
19 corridor should be carried out in conjunction with the  
20 freight railroads. Norfolk Southern needs to be at  
21 the table. We must ensure that there is an  
22 appropriate allocation of costs and revenues, which  
23 the EIS does not do, in the Petersburg to Richmond  
24 segment of the shared southeast high speed rail and  
25 Southside Hampton Roads high speed rail corridor.

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1 Finally, we must make sure that the  
2 Federal Railroad Administration financial and economic  
3 criteria are consistently used to evaluate all  
4 options. The overall effect of these changes will  
5 show that an Enhanced Alternative 1 consistent with  
6 the -- consistent with the HRTPO Resolution 200905  
7 will provide the most effective option for high speed  
8 rail service to Southside Hampton Roads and enhanced  
9 inner city passenger rail service to the Peninsula.

10 As I mentioned before, I firmly believe  
11 that the completion of this work can best be advanced  
12 as a cooperative partnership between the state and the  
13 region as represented by the Hampton Roads  
14 Transportation Planning Organization and the region's  
15 freight railroads. All key stakeholders must be  
16 included in the development of a comprehensive rail  
17 plan for the Hampton Roads region in order to  
18 guarantee our best possible result.



19                   We look forward to working with you in  
20 partnership so that together we can make high speed  
21 and enhanced inner city passenger rail service a  
22 reality for the Hampton Roads region.

23                   And, finally, will everyone who is here  
24 who has come to support Alternative 1 of the draft  
25 EIS, and that is the 460 corridor, please stand.

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1                   (Audience applause.)

2                   MAYOR FRAIM: Thank you. Mr. Page, thank  
3 you for bringing us to this point, and we look forward  
4 to your favorable consideration.

5                   MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mayor Fraim. And,  
6 again, thank you for the warm welcome we have had here  
7 at this location tonight.

8                   It is now seven o'clock. Hang on just a  
9 second, Dwight. Dwight Farmer is our next speaker but  
10 as part of our agenda, as I mentioned earlier, I am  
11 offering to go now at this point back through the  
12 presentation another time if people in the audience  
13 have not seen the presentation tonight. We have a lot  
14 of speakers here this evening so I would like to keep  
15 the program moving but would like to also offer this  
16 opportunity at this time. Okay. I don't see any  
17 interest to see the presentation again, which is good  
18 for me because I don't have to give it again. And it  
19 also is good for you because we have about 30 more  
20 minutes that we can entertain public comments.

21                   The next speaker is Dwight Farmer of the

22 Hampton Roads TPO followed by Frank Roberts. Thank  
23 you, Mr. Farmer.

24 MR. FARMER: Thank you, Mayor Fraim, for  
25 the venue and thank you, Mr. Page, for giving this

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1 incredible opportunity.

2 MAYOR FRAIM: Thank you.

3 MR. FARMER: I am Dwight Farmer with the  
4 Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization.  
5 For you folks out there in the audience, Mayor Will  
6 Sessoms is currently our chair, Mayor Molly Ward is  
7 our vice-chair and Mayor Fraim is past chairman of the  
8 Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization.  
9 They have played very strong key roles in bringing  
10 forth that resolution that has been referenced earlier  
11 in the evening.

12 The TPO is comprised of thirteen local  
13 jurisdictions, four General Assembly members,  
14 representation from two transit operators, VDOT sits  
15 on our board, the Department of Rail and Public  
16 Transportation sits on our board and the Virginia Port  
17 Authority sits on our board. The TPO has  
18 overwhelmingly passed a resolution -- you have heard  
19 many references to that -- on October 30th. We have,  
20 as you know, Mr. Page, attached a copy to our hardcopy  
21 submitted to you. And it has endorsed two critical  
22 components.

23 As Mayor Fraim said, designation of a  
24 true high speed rail corridor along the Norfolk

25 Southern border along 460 at speeds of 110-plus miles

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1 per hour and, too, in conjunction with the high speed  
2 rail corridor, the enhanced inner city passenger rail  
3 service along the CSX corridor on I64 on the  
4 Peninsula. In other words, we overwhelmingly, as you  
5 just saw, endorsed a strengthened Alternative 1.

6 The Hampton Roads region wants to be  
7 clear that it would like to aggressively implement  
8 steps to achieve its ultimate goal of having high  
9 speed rail along the Norfolk Southern corridor and  
10 enhanced inner city passenger rail service along the  
11 I64 CSX and Amtrak corridor. These steps would  
12 include -- and we think this is very important -- a  
13 partnership between the community of Hampton Roads,  
14 the Federal Railroad Administration, the Department of  
15 Rail and Public Transportation, Norfolk Southern, CSX  
16 and Amtrak.

17 The establishment of new passenger rail  
18 service is critically important to Hampton Roads  
19 particularly given the large concentration of the  
20 military and the third largest port on the east coast  
21 of the United States. Hampton Roads respectfully  
22 requests that the FRA and the Virginia Department of  
23 Rail and Public Transportation aggressively expedite  
24 the update and completion of the Tier I draft EIS that  
25 we are talking about tonight and obtain a record of

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1 decision just as soon as possible. In addition, the  
2 Commonwealth should prepare, we think, for the next  
3 step known as a Tier II EIS and hopefully as soon as  
4 possible and if at all possible in the spring of 2010.

5 In coordination with this TPO process, we  
6 have a very strong and active technical advisory  
7 committee. I want the audience to understand we have  
8 a 20-page document we have submitted to the DRPT for  
9 the official record.

10 The TPO stands ready to assist FRA and  
11 the Virginia Department of Rail and Public  
12 Transportation. We encourage the Commonwealth to  
13 aggressively pursue competitive, competitive at the  
14 national scene, high speed and inner city passenger  
15 rail stimulus funds for this region. Further, we  
16 should seize this opportunity to partner with CSX and  
17 Norfolk Southern.

18 Kevin, I want to say on the record we  
19 appreciate all of your hard work. I have known you  
20 for a long time. And you have been at this for quite  
21 sometime. This man puts in 24/7 for years. And we  
22 want to thank you for that and for your dedication in  
23 particular not only for the state but for Hampton  
24 Roads. You have been a real critical component in  
25 that.

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1 I think, Kevin, you would agree, this

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2 group represents the flavor of this region. It is a  
3 strong showing. I think there is a lot of energy  
4 here. And I think you clearly understand this region  
5 is ready to ride the rails. Thank you very much.

6 (Audience applause.)

7 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Farmer.

8 Next speaker is Frank Roberts followed by  
9 Ray Taylor.

10 MR. ROBERTS: Good evening. My name is  
11 Francis Roberts. I am a resident of Virginia Beach;  
12 however, I come before you tonight in my capacity as  
13 the executive director of the Hampton Roads Military  
14 and Federal Facilities Alliance. The Alliance is a  
15 four-year-old, not-for-profit corporation created to  
16 represent the collective interests of the Cities of  
17 Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk,  
18 Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach and  
19 Williamsburg and the Counties of Isle of Wight, James  
20 City and York in matters affecting military and  
21 federal capabilities in Hampton Roads.

22 In that regard, I want to present the  
23 results of analysis that the Alliance has conducted to  
24 examine the financial aspects of high speed rail in  
25 relationship to the military and federal activities.

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1 There is this graphic. As this graphic shows, Hampton  
2 Roads is home to the largest concentration of military  
3 and federal activities outside of Washington, D. C.  
4 That means that on any given day there is significant

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5 numbers of military, government civilian and support  
6 contractors travelling at federal expense between the  
7 D.C. area and Hampton Roads. You must also recognize  
8 that Fort Lee in Petersburg is tripling in size and  
9 that provides an additional federal ridership base.

10 The two most-used methods of  
11 accomplishing travel are automobile and commercial  
12 aircraft. What our analysis examines is a cost  
13 comparison between all three methods, air, automobile  
14 and high speed rail at 110 miles per hour, in an  
15 apples-to-apples comparison that looked at cost of the  
16 core travel method and time commitment of that method  
17 plus ancillary costs and time factors associated with  
18 the particular method and then nonproductive hours  
19 associated with the core and the ancillary time  
20 factors.

21 What the analysis reveals is that for  
22 every 100 travellers the use of high speed rail would  
23 save the federal government \$22,500 over the next  
24 lowest-cost travel method. Thus, for a thousand  
25 travellers, the savings for the taxpayers is nearly a

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1 quarter of a million dollars and about \$2 million for  
2 every 10,000 trips. The establishment of high speed  
3 rail between Hampton Roads and the D.C. area provides  
4 significant savings to the federal government with the  
5 added environmental benefit of removing a significant  
6 number of vehicles from the highways between the two  
7 locations. The analysis supporting my comments is



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being formally submitted in response to the EIS.

9 In summary, Hampton Roads is a unique  
10 national asset with a significant market for military-  
11 and federal-related travel between Hampton Roads and  
12 the D.C. areas. Hampton Roads and the D.C. markets  
13 are an ideal distance to be interconnected by rail  
14 service, i.e., less than 300 miles. The Hampton Roads  
15 Military and Federal Facilities Alliance stands ready  
16 to assist the government of the United States, the  
17 Commonwealth of Virginia and all Hampton Roads  
18 communities to aggressively pursue high speed rail  
19 service between D.C. and Hampton Roads. Thank you.

20 (Audience applause.)

21 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Roberts.

22 Our next speaker is Ray Taylor followed  
23 by Thelma Drake.

24 MR. TAYLOR: Good evening. My name is  
25 Ray Taylor, and I am the head of the Future of Hampton

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1 Roads Organization, which is a 35-year-old little  
2 think tank here in Hampton Roads. Sometimes we  
3 consider ourselves sweat hogs as we try to read and  
4 research on things like this, which we have done a lot  
5 of.

6 I see Thelma has arrived, and this will  
7 be the second time I have a chance to congratulate her  
8 for going into a truly and incredibly important job.  
9 And I am not sure but I don't think there is another  
10 state in the country that has a former General

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11 Assembly member and former congressperson heading this  
12 important organization. And I can see nothing but  
13 open field in front of us.

14 (Audience applause.)

15 MR. TAYLOR: I also want to thank Kevin  
16 Page for the labor, obviously, that he goes through  
17 and relaying to kick this thing off tonight with some  
18 incisive comments. Of course, Mayor Fraim is our host  
19 and I much appreciate that.

20 I also want to echo what has been said  
21 many times and congratulate the Transportation  
22 Planning Organization. That is Will Sessoms and Molly  
23 Ward, as has been mentioned, but also it is Dwight  
24 Farmer, over here, and his staff, many of whom are  
25 here.

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1 I was preceded by Frank Roberts, who  
2 talked about the military. I have a background in the  
3 military, countless years, it seems. And I know his  
4 data talked about all of DOD, and it talked about the  
5 Department of Homeland Security. I need to catch up  
6 with him because it is also a Department of Energy  
7 component when you consider all of the nuclear  
8 reactives over there on the Peninsula and here in our  
9 shipyards, submarines and carriers.

10 Well, I am here to bring up but one point  
11 tonight out of many that could be addressed. I think  
12 my point is going to be synonymous, a little bit, with  
13 what Sandy Harris and Rod Wollard talked about, I

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14 think, both very, very well. That TPO resolution,  
15 again, was very historic. And the point that I want  
16 to talk about is I want to turn to Kevin Page, who is  
17 the rail chief and the guy we are counting on to guide  
18 this thing down the path, and my comments are, yes,  
19 for the whole audience here because I think we can  
20 help our leaders but also for the state's staff.

21 In the slides, Kevin, and for the  
22 audience, there was allusion to the idea that 90 miles  
23 per hour is the optimum speed. That may be the case.  
24 But I don't think that that is what we are really  
25 trying to define here in the EIS at the federal level.

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1 There is a lot of engineering involved.

2 90 miles an hour may well be the optimum  
3 speed but it is not the optimum design. The federal  
4 government has four classifications, categories, of  
5 rail in this country: Express high speed, 150;  
6 regional high speed, 110, which is where we are  
7 supposed to go; emerging at 90; and conventional  
8 Amtrak at 79.

9 These are not speed categories. We refer  
10 to them by speeds as simply a matter of human  
11 shorthand. What they really are, they are design  
12 levels. They are performance levels. They are  
13 standards of performance. And so these categories are  
14 really design levels. They really have little to do  
15 with speed, although, their shorthand reference is  
16 speed. What they have to do with is a whole lot more

17 important to everyone in this room. And we would like  
18 to ask Kevin to just take his presentation and on this  
19 point guide it five degrees to pick up this important  
20 and indelible long-term engineering and actually  
21 reality situation.

22 The categories have nothing to do with  
23 speed or hardly anything to do with speed, they have  
24 everything to do with reliability, with safety, with  
25 quality of service, which Sandy talked about, with

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1 quality of life, which Aubrey Layne talked about, with  
2 maintenance standards, with the numbers of trains you  
3 can handle per day and, most important, and maybe  
4 highly important is the degree and the level of  
5 de-confliction, safety confliction and you don't have  
6 to slow down one train or the other, the level of  
7 de-confliction between passenger rail and freight  
8 rail. That is really what we are -- it is not the  
9 only thing.

10 And at the end of the day what we have  
11 got going to Petersburg just has to be compatible and  
12 equivalent service to the southeast line going down to  
13 Raleigh. And from Raleigh south we know that is 110  
14 and over. We want that same quality of service put  
15 into the EIS. The EIS right now is amorphous, is  
16 about the end game. We need a clear statement of the  
17 end game so that when we incrementally pursue it and  
18 we know where we are going we will get there. But if  
19 we don't establish that end game and we incrementally

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20 move, who knows where we will go.

21 MR. PAGE: Mr. Taylor, thank you.

22 MR. TAYLOR: So I think we can shade that  
23 comment favorably for both the state and the region.

24 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Taylor.

25 (Audience applause.)

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1 MS. DRAKE: Well, good evening, everyone.  
2 First, let me apologize for being late. First,  
3 between a late-afternoon appointment I had to be in,  
4 in Richmond, and I know you will all be surprised to  
5 hear a disabled vehicle in the Hampton Roads  
6 Bridge-Tunnel. So I am glad to join you here.

7 And I have to tell you this is, by far,  
8 the largest crowd that we have had this week in our  
9 Richmond, Newport News.

10 (Audience applause.)

11 MS. DRAKE: Yes. Which shows you the  
12 compilation rates and it shows you how critically  
13 important for the Southside that this project is. And  
14 it is critically important to the process to have your  
15 input, to have this submitted into the record, as  
16 well, so that the federal government sees how much the  
17 people in this region care about this project.

18 Now, the mission of the Department of  
19 Rail and Public Transportation -- and we are very  
20 grateful to have the great staff you have heard about.  
21 Ray, thank you for the comment about Kevin and all of  
22 our staff. Thank you for the very kind things that

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23 you have said about me. But the mission of this  
24 department is to expand transportation choices and to  
25 increase mobility in Virginia.

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1 Now, we are not only going to talk about  
2 cost. We are going to talk about maximum benefit.  
3 And we are going to talk about increasing mobility and  
4 increasing transportation choices.

5 So thank you for being here. I know we  
6 have a lot of speakers so I am not going to take your  
7 time. And I look forward to talking with you  
8 afterwards.

9 (Audience applause.)

10 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Ms. Drake.

11 Bill Foster is our next speaker followed  
12 by Danny Plaugher. And to try to keep things moving  
13 along, I will give you a one-minute warning as we try  
14 to get as many speakers in tonight as possible. Thank  
15 you. Mr. Foster, thank you.

16 MR. FOSTER: Thank you very much, Ladies  
17 and gentlemen. Good evening. I am Bill Foster. I am  
18 president of TowneBank, Norfolk. I am a lifelong  
19 resident of this area. In fact, my family has been  
20 here for generations. Tonight, however, I am here in  
21 my capacity as president of the Greater Norfolk  
22 Corporation or the GNC.

23 By way of a brief introduction, the GNC  
24 board is composed of more than 120 business leaders,  
25 mostly CEOs, whose mission is to enhance Norfolk's and



1 the region's competitiveness and quality of life. Our  
2 members range from small businesses to corporate  
3 giants like Maersk and Norfolk Southern.

4 It goes without saying that the ability  
5 to rapidly move people and goods and connect to the  
6 marketplace is fundamental to any region's  
7 competitiveness. That is why we support the position  
8 of HRTPO, which is best reflected in a strengthened  
9 Alternative 1, which we strongly endorse. We believe  
10 that Alternative 1 will provide the maximum benefit  
11 for the region and the Commonwealth by serving a  
12 fertile, untapped market on the Southside where the  
13 majority of the region's population and jobs reside  
14 and where there is a significant and growing demand  
15 for another travel option to Washington, D.C. while  
16 improving the existing Amtrak passenger rail service  
17 on the Peninsula.

18 To get a sense of the potential demand  
19 for a passenger rail service from the Southside to  
20 Washington, D.C., we, along with several of our  
21 private-sector counterpart organizations, recently  
22 sent an e-mail survey to our members asking them how  
23 many round trips, on average, they and their employees  
24 make from Hampton Roads to Washington on a monthly  
25 basis and if offered at a competitive rate in a

1 Norfolk to Union Station travel time under four hours  
2 would they consider travelling to D.C. by passenger  
3 rail. From that one e-mail to our respective members  
4 and with no follow-up we received more than 180  
5 responses totalling 1224 round trips on average per  
6 month, almost 15,000 per year, and almost without  
7 exception the responses were positive.

8                   The overwhelming positive response our  
9 survey received is further supported by the fact that  
10 despite walk-up fares of more than \$1,000 per round  
11 trip, D.C. is one of our Norfolk International  
12 Airport's top ten travel designations. We have no  
13 doubt that we have uncovered but the tip of the  
14 proverbial iceberg demonstrating demand for a more  
15 convenient, reliable and affordable travel option from  
16 South Hampton Roads to Washington, D.C.

17                   A recent study determined that investment  
18 in high speed rail can immediately achieve high  
19 readership (sic) levels if a large market exists  
20 between points such as the case with the Hampton  
21 Roads/Richmond/D.C. corridor. Given Hampton Roads'  
22 unique market characteristic, their largest  
23 concentration of federal activities anywhere in the  
24 country outside of D.C. and the associated number of  
25 contractors who have travelled on a frequent basis to

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1 D.C., the region's proximity to our nation's capital,  
2 the suitability of the Norfolk Southern Route 460  
3 corridor to high speed rail and the fact that rail

4 service can be implemented on the corridor with a  
5 modest initial investment and a relatively short  
6 period of time, Hampton Roads arguably offers the  
7 single best return on investment of any rail corridor  
8 in the country. Thank you.

9 (Audience applause.)

10 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Foster.

11 Dan Plaugher is the next speaker followed  
12 by George Crawley.

13 MR. PLAUGHER: Good afternoon. My name  
14 is Daniel Plaugher. I am executive director of  
15 Virginians for High Speed Rail. So I will attempt to  
16 keep this train on track.

17 First, let me thank the Commonwealth  
18 board members, Mr. Layne and Mr. Dickens, Director  
19 Drake and Mr. Page for putting this together.

20 Today we got historic news that the  
21 southeast high speed rail corridor got \$620 million to  
22 begin advancing high speed rail between Washington and  
23 Charlotte. It is imperative that we move this study  
24 forward so that we can connect Washington, Richmond  
25 and Hampton Roads with fast, frequent and reliable

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1 passenger rail service. When we do this, three out of  
2 five Virginians will have a direct connection to high  
3 speed rail.

4 I have many board members in the room  
5 from Hampton Roads and they have taught me one thing:  
6 Hampton Roads was the first region and it should not

7 be the last with high speed rail. Virginians for high  
8 speed rail --

9 (Audience applause.)

10 MR. PLAUGHER: Thank you. Virginians for  
11 High Speed Rail supports Alternative 1 with enhanced  
12 service on the Peninsula, 89 miles per hour and 90  
13 percent on-time performance on the Peninsula, 110  
14 miles per hour and 90 percent on-time performance to  
15 the Southside. It is in the most importance that  
16 Hampton Roads, that both Norfolk and Newport News,  
17 serve as the southern-most termini for the northeast  
18 corridor as Boston serves as the northern-most  
19 termini. The goal one day is to have a single seat  
20 direct, reliable, frequent service connecting Hampton  
21 Roads and Boston and it is within reach.

22 However, this brings me to my major  
23 concern, the potential layover in Washington. This  
24 layover could impact potential ridership by up to  
25 50 percent and this hurts the economic viability of

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1 all service out of Hampton Roads. It is important  
2 that this study moves forward and that this layover is  
3 corrected in future EISs.

4 But as I had mentioned before, Virginians  
5 for High Speed Rail strongly supports Alternative 1  
6 with enhanced service on the Peninsula. Thank you.

7 (Audience applause.)

8 MR. PAGE: Our next speaker is George  
9 Crawley followed by Bob Fennig.

10 MR. CRAWLEY: Good evening. My name is  
11 George Crawley. I am a native of Newport News and a  
12 long-term citizen of Norfolk, though, I like to think  
13 of myself as a regional guy. Madam Director,  
14 Mr. Page, and other members, we are glad to see you  
15 tonight and know that you are impressed by what you  
16 are seeing and hearing.

17 I thank you for the opportunity to speak  
18 on this topic for it is most critical to the future  
19 development of the Hampton Roads region. In that  
20 regard, I, too, must salute the Hampton Roads  
21 Transportation Planning Organization for its pivotal  
22 role in the unified approach on the crucial matter of  
23 Hampton Roads connecting with the southeastern high  
24 speed rail corridor. Having the Peninsula and  
25 Southside Leadership reach consensus on supporting

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1 Alternative 1 is testament to the leadership of Mayor  
2 Sessoms with assistance from Dwight Farmer and the  
3 selfless and farsighted thinking and actions of the  
4 other members of the board, the mayors and other  
5 members.

6 Many of us have taken Amtrak from Newport  
7 News to Washington and perhaps points beyond D.C. and  
8 back to our home area. Given the hectic pace of  
9 travel on the interstate system, we welcome the  
10 opportunity for another option in planning our  
11 travels. Alternative 1 presents a viable option. The  
12 three daily round trips between Newport News and

13 Richmond, as outlined in Alternative 1, with  
14 connections to high speed rail from Richmond to other  
15 points is a true bonus for travellers from the  
16 Peninsula. The proposed six daily round trips at  
17 speeds up to 110 miles per hour -- and we want to  
18 emphasize that what we have is a draft and we do want  
19 to focus on the enhanced alternative of 110 miles per  
20 hour -- is most -- is a positive bottom-line issue for  
21 the entire Hampton Roads region.

22 The plan includes many other benefits for  
23 the region, among them the proposed intermodal  
24 transfer facility in Downtown Norfolk, not too far  
25 from where we are and it will link with high speed

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1 rails, and the city's light rail system, which we hope  
2 will soon move into -- we are here, will be moving  
3 into Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, through the tunnel to  
4 Portsmouth and thereabout. It also will serve and  
5 connect, rather, with the inner city and regional bus  
6 services, the ferry service, cruise ship service from  
7 this impressive facility and direct assets to the  
8 interstate, all of which enhances the quality of life  
9 for our citizens and visitors.

10 Alternative 1 also sharpens the  
11 competitive edge of the Hampton Roads region. High  
12 speed rail would lift our region to a level of  
13 passenger service comparable to some of the nation's  
14 more thriving communities.

15 While improvement to the Norfolk Southern

16 tracks that parallel Route 460 will permit six daily  
17 round trips and, again, at speeds up to 110 miles an  
18 hour, it also will benefit other Hampton Roads  
19 ventures to include, as you have heard, the large  
20 number of federal installations in our region -- and  
21 we are pleased to have all five of the military  
22 services here -- and the many other units of public  
23 and private -- within the public and private sector.

24 Finally, Alternative 1 will warmly --  
25 will be greeted warmly by the large number of tourists

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1 who travel to Historic Williamsburg, will travel to  
2 the proposed activity at Fort Monroe, Virginia Beach  
3 Waterfront and the dozens of other highlighted tourist  
4 attractions within our region.

5 I could go on singing the praises of  
6 Alternative 1, and I emphasize the enhanced  
7 Alternative 1; however, I believe that we are all on  
8 the same page. The train must roll from Norfolk to  
9 Petersburg through Chesapeake, Petersburg, Richmond  
10 and beyond.

11 Accordingly, I close with the hope that  
12 members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board and  
13 the federal decision makers will sense excitement of  
14 our community for the endorsement of the enhanced plan  
15 and will vote accordingly. Thank you very much.

16 (Audience applause.)

17 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Crawley.

18 Next speaker will be Bob Fennig followed



19 by Mike Barrett.

20 MR. FENNING: Well, good evening. My  
21 name is Robert Fenning. I am the vice-president for  
22 administration and finance at Old Dominion University,  
23 and I am, in fact, representing Old Dominion  
24 University Hampton Roads Public Research Extensive  
25 Doctoral Institution, a growing institution of 24,000

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1 students and over 2200 faculty and staff.

2 At this point, I would really like to  
3 acknowledge that Old Dominion emphatically endorses  
4 the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning  
5 Organization's recommendations, a strengthened  
6 Alternative 1, which we believe is the best regional  
7 solution, obviously, designating the high speed rail  
8 corridor along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor  
9 at speeds of up to 110 miles an hour, in conjunction  
10 with this high speed corridor, enhancement of inner  
11 city rail travel, service along the CSX 164 corridor.

12 Our endorsement for a strengthened  
13 Alternative 1 really recognizes a number of compelling  
14 significant factors, many of which have been spoken  
15 already about tonight and will be reiterated  
16 frequently by other speakers. A highly visible  
17 concentration of federal and military activities,  
18 clearly the need for effective, cost effective, and  
19 efficient travel to and from the Washington, D.C.  
20 area. The importance such a high speed rail corridor  
21 also has in addressing our needs for improved

22 emergency evacuation, our growing -- our vibrant  
23 tourism industry and certainly enhancing our economic  
24 competitiveness.

25 I know many of us would like making inner

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1 modal travel and interconnecting our cities a true  
2 reality. And, of course, when you look at the numbers  
3 in investment, a capital cost with significant,  
4 significant benefits.

5 Let me talk a little bit about ODU's  
6 particular perspective in this. If you look at our  
7 student body, we have 4,500 students, in-state  
8 students, that reside in the Richmond or the Northern  
9 Virginia, Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. I can  
10 assure you with frequent conversations with our  
11 students their desire to make their trips to and from  
12 Old Dominion University a much easier and cheaper  
13 alternative.

14 If you look at our total faculty and  
15 staff travel, the vast majority of that, in terms of  
16 trips, are to Richmond, for obvious reasons by the  
17 nature of the coordinating board and a number of other  
18 reasons to be there, but also to the Washington, D.C.  
19 area. And that is directly attributable to the  
20 significant amount of sponsored research that we do  
21 with federal agencies.

22 Finally, our growing out-of-state student  
23 enrollment. Right now currently 500 and growing. The  
24 predominant number of them live in Maryland, New

25 Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania areas. And these

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1 current and I am sure future and growing numbers of  
2 students would benefit greatly by a high speed rail  
3 that ran to Norfolk.

4 From ODU we're saying: Let's get a  
5 strengthened Alternative 1 going. Thank you.

6 (Audience applause.)

7 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Fennig.

8 Next speaker is Mike Barrett followed by  
9 Mark Yatrofsky.

10 MR. BARRETT: Thank you. Director Drake,  
11 Mr. Page, Dana, and, Aubrey, thank you for this  
12 opportunity. My name is Mike Barrett. I represent  
13 the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance. We  
14 are the ten cities and five counties of Hampton Roads  
15 that do our absolute best to bring new businesses to  
16 Hampton Roads.

17 We join with the leadership of our  
18 participating jurisdictions in endorsing the  
19 recommendation of the Hampton Roads Transportation  
20 Planning Organization in supporting Enhanced  
21 Alternative 1.

22 Now, I am not going to repeat what many  
23 have said tonight, and you are going to hear from many  
24 others, as well. But the economic impact in Hampton  
25 Roads is estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$3

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1 billion and 30,000 jobs. Certainly, those figures  
2 cannot be ignored.

3           We know we are America's first region.  
4 When Captain John Smith got here in 1607, head CEO of  
5 the Virginia Company, there was no rail. Mayor, we  
6 are going to get it here soon.

7           You have heard about the influence on the  
8 military and federal facilities. You have heard about  
9 the influence on our colleges and universities. You  
10 have heard about the influence on our economy. Yet,  
11 for all of these factors to come together to create  
12 prosperity, we need connectivity in transportation.  
13 Perhaps we all need to remind ourselves, we are the  
14 36th largest region in the country and we deserve to  
15 be connected to light -- to fast rail. Light rail,  
16 too, as a matter of fact.

17           If it is true that proximity equates to  
18 prosperity, then we need the proximity to the business  
19 relationships that will come with the connection to  
20 the nation afforded by high speed rail. We are  
21 60 percent -- we are within 60 percent of the  
22 population of the United States is 750 miles from  
23 Hampton Roads. High speed rail will immediately  
24 provide a return on investment from Day 1.

25           With these many factors in mind, we urge

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1 you to accept the recommendation of the Hampton Roads

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2 TPO for Enhanced Alternative 1. Thank you very much.

3 (Audience applause.)

4 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Barrett.

5 Next speaker is Mark Yatrofsky followed  
6 by Karen Scherberger. Excuse me.

7 MR. YATROFSKY: Good evening, fellow  
8 citizens, and, public servants. I am Mark  
9 Geduldig-Yatrofsky.

10 And I demur from the comments of folks  
11 who said that Alternative 1 is the preferred --  
12 Enhanced Alternative 1 is the preferred alternative.  
13 I believe that the preferred alternative has not been  
14 placed among our choices. The preferred alternative  
15 would have high speed rail arc through Hampton Roads  
16 and continue south. So it would come down the  
17 Peninsula, cross the James River into Southside and  
18 proceed on in the direction that high speed rail has  
19 been laid out. It would take us through the Carolinas  
20 down to Florida.

21 We are not a cul-de-sac. We are a  
22 destination. To borrow from Mr. Gates, Hampton Roads,  
23 start here, go everywhere.

24 Those ships that come into this port  
25 touch everywhere in the world. And Hampton Roads

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1 looks not only west to Richmond but east across the  
2 Atlantic, west to coal country and south to where the  
3 growth has been in this country in the last several  
4 decades. So a high speed rail option should certainly

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5 embrace us and proceed southward from here.

6 We are not a spur. We are a destination.

7 (Audience applause.)

8 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Our next speaker  
9 is Karen Scherberger followed by Victoria Raine.

10 MS. SCHERBERGER: Good evening. Thank  
11 you. My name is Karen Scherberger. I am the director  
12 of Norfolk Festevents here in the City of Norfolk.

13 In addition to the many reasons presented  
14 tonight as to why the high speed and inner city  
15 passenger rail services are critical to the success of  
16 our region, I particularly support the benefits to the  
17 tourism industry here in Hampton Roads.

18 Norfolk Festevents, one of the largest  
19 special events organizations in the country, is  
20 responsible for attracting hundreds and thousands of  
21 visitors into Hampton Roads for major festivals,  
22 concerts and world-class maritime events that take  
23 place here in the City of Norfolk. Similar events  
24 also occur throughout our region and are produced by  
25 my counterparts in our other cities giving Hampton

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1 Roads the distinction of having the largest  
2 concentration of festivals and special events in the  
3 country as reported by the International Festivals and  
4 Events Association.

5 Collectively, all of our regional events  
6 attract millions and millions of visitors into our  
7 region with the potential for millions more with the

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8 addition of high speed rail. Just using our Norfolk  
9 statistics collected and analyzed over the last five  
10 years, it shows that more than 80 percent of our event  
11 attendees reside in localities outside the City of  
12 Norfolk with 30 percent, and in some cases more, of  
13 these attendees residing outside Hampton Roads and  
14 with the majority of these visitors travelling from  
15 the Richmond and D.C. markets.

16 Special events is one of the  
17 fastest-growing and most lucrative industries in the  
18 United States and around the world today; likewise,  
19 tourism is one of the fastest-growing industries here  
20 in Hampton Roads, Virginia and across the country.  
21 Joining these two fast-tracking industries with high  
22 speed and inner city passenger rail services, thus,  
23 creating improved access to new visitor markets in the  
24 Richmond and D.C. area, will have a dramatic and  
25 positive social and economic impact on Hampton Roads

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1 that will be both immediate and measurable. There is  
2 no question that visitation will increase and  
3 subsequent economic growth will result in hotels,  
4 dining, shopping, admission to the attractions and  
5 other visitor-related spending.

6 Statistics show that per-capita spending  
7 by out-of-market visitors is at least five times that  
8 of a local visitor, and I am sure I am on the very low  
9 end. Additionally, the continued growth in attendance  
10 and visitation will sustain thousands of jobs that are



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11 created each year to support our local special events  
12 industry.

13 High speed rail service and enhanced  
14 inner city passenger rail service as alternative  
15 transportation for our visitors are important tools to  
16 grow our tourism industry here in Hampton Roads. This  
17 new alternative transportation option will stimulate  
18 new interest in travel to and within Hampton Roads  
19 particularly during those times when peak tourism  
20 seasons and events create highway congestion resulting  
21 in both negative social and economic impact.

22 So on behalf of Norfolk Festevents and my  
23 associates in the Hampton Roads special events  
24 industry, I offer our support for the extension of  
25 high speed rail service from Washington, D.C. to

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1 Richmond, Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region  
2 designating a high speed rail corridor along the  
3 Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor and enhancing the  
4 inner city passenger rail service along the CSX 164  
5 corridor, which is best reflected in Alternative 1 and  
6 its enhancements. Thank you.

7 (Audience applause.)

8 MR. PAGE: Thank you very much.

9 Our next speaker is Victoria Raine  
10 followed by James Hinchshaw.

11 MS. RAINE: Hello. My name is Victoria  
12 Raine. My business partner, Heather Paige, and I own  
13 Goddess Greetings, a new greeting card company in

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14 Virginia Beach. Our goal is to rival Hallmark and  
15 American Greetings in the near future.

16 This high speed rail is a way to help not  
17 only us in our endeavor but also to bring jobs to our  
18 local community, which is in direct line with what we  
19 are doing with our firm. Our cards are manufactured  
20 and distributed locally in Virginia Beach. For us  
21 personally as local entrepreneurs, this will help us  
22 stay connected with the entire east coast for critical  
23 business meetings and partnerships for growing our  
24 business.

25 I look forward to climbing aboard our

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1 high speed rail. Thank you.

2 (Audience applause.)

3 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Next speaker is  
4 James Hinshaw followed by Cathy Dale. Mr. Hinshaw.  
5 Okay. Our next speaker is Cathy Dale. Following  
6 Ms. Dale will be Steve Fuschetti.

7 MS. DALE: I am going to tell you how I  
8 think high speed can benefit us. My husband was on  
9 his way to the UVA/Tech game tonight and he called me  
10 about four-thirty and said, "I am not going to make  
11 it. There is an accident in the tunnel. Too bad  
12 there is not high speed rail because I would have  
13 taken it to the game." So he turned around and came  
14 home very disappointed.

15 Another way I think it could really  
16 benefit us is say someone is sick and they don't drive

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17 and they want to go north to get treatment in another  
18 city. They could take a cab, get to the train, get on  
19 high speed rail, go to where they need treatment, stay  
20 however long they want, get on high speed rail, come  
21 home and no one would have known they were even gone.  
22 What it does, it takes -- it allows them to get there  
23 easily because they don't drive. Thank you.

24 (Audience applause.)

25 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Ms. Dale.

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1 Steve Fuschetti is our next speaker  
2 followed by Shurl Montgomery.

3 MR. FUSCHETTI: Hello. My name is Steve  
4 Fuschetti. I am president and CEO of GMTI, which is a  
5 small Internet and Web services company located here  
6 in Downtown Norfolk servicing the meeting industry  
7 throughout the United States. I am also a member of  
8 the Board of Opportunity, Inc. It is a  
9 business-driven, workforce-development board that  
10 provides workforce services for our emerging workforce  
11 here in the region as well as for the 520,000  
12 incumbent workers that go to work every day here in  
13 South Hampton Roads. But I am actually here to speak  
14 on behalf of the Downtown Norfolk Council.

15 Our council is comprised of over 300  
16 business and individual members, all stakeholders in  
17 the ongoing development and prosperity of Downtown  
18 Norfolk. The council also manages the downtown  
19 improvement district, which is a special task district

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20 in the heart of downtown whose members are committed  
21 to the enhancement of the business, cultural and  
22 residential communities that thrive together here in  
23 Downtown Norfolk.

24 The members of the Downtown Norfolk  
25 Council strongly support and endorse the resolution of

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1 the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization  
2 and we encourage the Department of Rail and Public  
3 Transportation to adopt Enhanced Alternative 1, the  
4 extension of the high speed rail service down to the  
5 Hampton Roads region along the Norfolk Southern Route  
6 460 corridor.

7 I am really going to cut my comments  
8 pretty short. I think you have heard an awful lot of  
9 what I planned to say. But one thing that I do want  
10 to mention is the fact that we are especially excited  
11 by the opportunities that we think will grow from an  
12 intermodal transfer facility that Norfolk is  
13 envisioning here in downtown at the Hampton Roads -- I  
14 am sorry -- at the Harbor Park light rail station, a  
15 high speed rail line delivering passengers to this  
16 point where they can transfer to the light rail  
17 system, which will service Downtown Norfolk, which is  
18 being examined by Virginia Beach, as well, as well as  
19 ferry service, interstate highways, this facility and  
20 the cruise ships that come in here, we think that  
21 there is just tremendous economic opportunity there.

22 So I appreciate the opportunity to share

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23 the downtown business communities' excitement and  
24 support for this initiative with you and I do urge you  
25 to adopt the position laid out by the Hampton Roads

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1 Transportation Planning Organization resolution.

2 The president and the vice-president  
3 today were in Tampa. They were awarding the first  
4 grants for high speed rail. And I think the Downtown  
5 Norfolk Council and just about everybody in this room  
6 thinks that this venue will be the perfect place for  
7 their next visit when they go to award those next  
8 grants for high speed rail. Thank you.

9 (Audience applause.)

10 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Next speaker is  
11 Shurl Montgomery followed by Syble Stone.

12 MR. MONTGOMERY: Good evening. I am  
13 Shurl Montgomery. I am the CEO of the Norfolk  
14 Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the largest  
15 public housing authority and redevelopment authority  
16 in Virginia. We serve over 25,000 residents in this  
17 city with building community revitalization and  
18 building mixed-income neighborhoods. These residents  
19 that we serve as a \$100 million agency support the  
20 high speed rail and the enhanced service in Hampton  
21 Roads and also to the intercities of the region.

22 We see this service as being very  
23 valuable as a link to our residents. We see it as a  
24 possible emergency evacuation route for our  
25 individuals that do not have another means of

1 self-transportation. With this, we know there has  
2 been a lot of hard work in the region by a lot of our  
3 leaders, and this is appreciated very much.

4 The Housing Authority itself, we depend  
5 on dependable and efficient transportation to go to  
6 Richmond and Washington. And let me tell you, it is  
7 not dependable and it is not efficient at the present  
8 time. We feel that the high speed rail will give us  
9 that ability to do business, over \$100 million worth  
10 of business, with the state and federal government.  
11 For these reasons, NRHA strongly supports high speed  
12 rail. And as evidence to tonight, the mayor mentioned  
13 there were 500 people onboard. What we want to hear  
14 is, All aboard. Let's go.

15 (Audience applause.)

16 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Our next speaker  
17 is Syble Stone followed by Nancy Perry.

18 MS. STONE: Good evening. I am here this  
19 evening as the vice-chair of the Norfolk City Planning  
20 Commission.

21 And our mayor has very brilliantly and  
22 very aptly spoken regarding this issue. And I am here  
23 only to say -- express our resolve that the selection  
24 of the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor as a  
25 recommended high speed rail corridor to the Hampton

1 Roads region is endorsed by our city. The Department  
2 of Rail and Public Transportation is urged to advance  
3 the completion of the needed studies and plans for  
4 future high speed intercity passenger rail service to  
5 the Hampton Roads region on the fastest possible time  
6 schedule. Thank you, gentlemen and ladies.

7 (Audience applause.)

8 MR. PAGE: Nancy Perry is our next  
9 speaker followed by Kathy Nelson.

10 MS. PERRY: Thank you for the opportunity  
11 to speak. My name is Nancy Perry Marchiter, and I am  
12 the executive director of the Virginia Beach  
13 Hotel-Motel Association. We represent more than 90  
14 hotels in the City of Virginia Beach and also nearly  
15 100 vendor partners throughout the region, both  
16 Southside and Peninsula.

17 I would like to echo what our beach  
18 district councilman John Uhrin said earlier about  
19 tourism. Our biggest challenge is definitely -- the  
20 biggest challenge that we face as an industry is  
21 definitely the congested traffic that our visitors  
22 face when trying to come to our city.

23 So with that said, and in an effort to be  
24 brief, the Virginia Beach Hotel-Motel Association  
25 board of directors officially supports the HRTPO's

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1 resolution supporting high speed regional rail and  
2 inner city passenger rail. VBHMA supports Alternative  
3 1, the designation of the Norfolk Southern 460



4 corridor, as the high speed rail corridor, and in  
5 conjunction the enhancement of inner city passenger  
6 rail service along the CX (sic) I64 corridor on the  
7 Peninsula. Thank you.

8 (Audience applause.)

9 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Ms. Perry.

10 Next speaker is Kathy Nelson followed by  
11 Bobby Wright.

12 MS. NELSON: Good evening everyone. I am  
13 Kathy Nelson, a proud citizen of Hampton Roads who  
14 just happens to live in Norfolk. And it is my honor  
15 tonight to speak on behalf of my Leadership Hampton  
16 Roads class of 2010 and the 1200-plus graduates who  
17 have participated in this important Hampton Roads  
18 Chamber of Commerce program, many of whom were here  
19 tonight.

20 Can we have a show of hands of how many  
21 Leadership Hampton Roads graduates we have? I just  
22 want you to know 2010 is the best class. And the  
23 55 -- okay. I know everyone else is the best class,  
24 too.

25 But the 55 members of my LHR class

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1 represent nearly every municipality in the region,  
2 every area of business, education, law enforcement,  
3 health care and the military. And we spend a year  
4 meeting to build and strengthen regional leadership  
5 through education and partnerships to improve the  
6 quality of life of our region.

7                   During a day focussed on transportation,  
8 we discovered that we were not well informed on the  
9 high speed rail proposals being discussed here tonight  
10 and neither were our friends, neighbors and  
11 colleagues. As a group, we see no more important  
12 transportation proposal affecting this region, and we  
13 felt compelled to undertake a class project to  
14 increase awareness in support of the enhancement --  
15 the Enhanced Proposal Number 1 to bring high speed  
16 rail at 110 miles an hour here to South Hampton Roads.

17                   In our class trip to the General Assembly  
18 yesterday, we met with several members of the Hampton  
19 Roads caucus. Delegate Cosgrove asked me to send his  
20 personal message of support and assured me that, as a  
21 caucus, our Hampton Roads delegates and senators  
22 support bringing high speed rail to the region. He  
23 regrets that he can't be here in person because of the  
24 Assembly schedule, and it did not allow him to be here  
25 tonight.

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1                   Now, each of my classmates have a  
2 personal and professional reason for supporting high  
3 speed rail. In my case, I spent 27 years in the Navy,  
4 8 years here in Hampton Roads, and I now run the  
5 Norfolk office of Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.  
6 My two sons spent longer in Hampton Roads than in any  
7 other area in the country. This is now my home, and  
8 they consider it their home, too. Like many sailors,  
9 we came here and stayed here because we fell in love

10 with this region. I want this region to be one that  
11 continues to attract talented young people, and it  
12 keeps our native sons and daughters here in the  
13 region.

14 My Leadership Hampton Roads class has  
15 been heartened by the incredible regional leadership  
16 and cooperation that has resulted in the singular  
17 position as expressed in the Hampton Roads  
18 Transportation Planning Organization resolution. We  
19 who live here understand the incredible diversity and  
20 opportunity of this region. We have no option but to  
21 remain competitive by planning and acting now for our  
22 future.

23 Hampton Roads is the second-largest  
24 population center in the Commonwealth. We are the  
25 most infrastructure-dependent region in the nation.

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1 We can no longer be satisfied with being a cul-de-sac.  
2 We need to stay on the main line.

3 The ribbons we wear here tonight say it  
4 all. We need highspeed. Thank you very much.

5 (Audience applause.)

6 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Ms. Nelson. Next  
7 speaker is Bobby Wright followed by Nelson Adcock.

8 MR. WRIGHT: Hello. I am Bobby Wright.  
9 I am a resident of Virginia Beach as well as Norfolk.  
10 I am a volunteer for the Future of Hampton Roads and  
11 owner of numerous businesses in downtown.

12 Before I begin, I had a laundry list of

13 things to say but everyone else has said it so I won't  
14 repeat. But I am so happy to see Director Drake  
15 again. And, gentlemen, I saw you in Newport News. I  
16 hope, Director Drake, you are as excited as I am about  
17 the turnout. I know you were here late but we had a  
18 full house, all the way out, all the press. And the  
19 hats, my friend Thondos Palesos bought these to show  
20 the excitement and the engagement of citizens who are  
21 just learning about this opportunity.

22 Most people in Hampton Roads have no idea  
23 we are here tonight. They have no idea there is money  
24 on the table. So they are just learning. This  
25 turnout was amazing. I applaud you. And I thank you

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1 for your effort, as well.

2 Now, my point, one that maybe other folks  
3 have not made because I want to give you something  
4 different. The three companies that I am involved  
5 with -- one is an entertainment company, one is  
6 fitness and one is real estate -- employ many young  
7 people. There is a problem in Hampton Roads that is a  
8 problem in parts of the country called brain drain.  
9 We were the Number 2 worst area, we may be the worst  
10 now. That means we lose more talented, educated,  
11 young people and trained military from our area than  
12 most any other region.

13 They are looking for a quality of life  
14 they have in the beaches and such but the other  
15 amenities, such as, connectivity, transportation and

16 jobs, are missing from our area. High speed rail will  
17 create short-term jobs and long-term jobs. It will  
18 also give us connectivity. Bob Fennig from Old  
19 Dominion mentioned folks coming in.

20 We need the rail. We need affordable,  
21 dependable, reliable transportation so that our  
22 students, our young people, can go to D.C. for the  
23 weekend. And more importantly for us business folks,  
24 people in the northeast can come down to our beaches,  
25 our tourist attractions downtown and the colonial

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1 capital of the country. It is all about jobs. Obama  
2 said it last night. It is jobs. It is jobs. It is  
3 connectivity. We must remain competitive and we will  
4 do it through high speed rail. I applaud you. I  
5 thank you for your efforts.

6 Unofficially, Facebook picks Alternative  
7 1. One of my friends put out an invite just  
8 yesterday. Had a thousand hits. A thousand. They  
9 knew nothing about high speed rail and they all want  
10 it. I'll bet if we had a month on Facebook we would  
11 probably have a million. So unofficially Facebook  
12 takes it, too. Thank you.

13 (Audience applause.)

14 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Wright. Next  
15 speaker is Nelson Adcock followed by Robbyn Gayer.

16 MR. ADCOCK: Good evening. Members of  
17 the Virginia Department of Rail and Public  
18 Transportation, my name is Nelson Adcock. It is my

19 privilege to serve as the 2010 chairman of the Hampton  
20 Roads Chamber of Commerce. I am here this evening  
21 representing nearly 2,000 member businesses, which  
22 employ 225- -- more than 225,000 working men and women  
23 in 17 cities and counties in Southeastern Virginia.

24 I am here to proclaim my unanimous  
25 support for the proposed high speed rail line from

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1 Petersburg via the existing Norfolk Southern line  
2 along Route 460 and ending in Downtown Norfolk. The  
3 Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce strongly supports  
4 the resolution adopted by the Hampton Roads  
5 Transportation Planning Organization on October 30,  
6 2009, and we endorse Alternative 1 as laid out in DRPT  
7 survey items. Additionally, we also support enhanced  
8 inner city rail improvements along the CSX and I64  
9 corridor on the Peninsula.

10 When we surveyed members of the Chamber,  
11 the overwhelming response was that they wanted  
12 alternate, quick, reliable and economical  
13 transportation alternative from our region through  
14 Richmond and on to Washington, D.C. This is a pivotal  
15 time in the economic health of not only the nation but  
16 the Commonwealth of Virginia. Strategic decisions  
17 that bring progressive and innovative transportation  
18 solutions will influence where businesses locate and  
19 prosper for decades to come. High speed rail will  
20 make the region even more attractive to tourists. Our  
21 military service members and defense-related

22 industries will be able to travel more efficiently.  
23 Our region will have another option for emergency  
24 evacuation.

25 We feel strongly that the proposed rail

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1 improvement down the Norfolk Southern line from  
2 Petersburg is the most efficient proposal that will be  
3 presented nationwide. Members of the Hampton Roads  
4 Chamber of Commerce will present more detailed  
5 comments in support of this project in the following  
6 weeks.

7 We look forward to working with you to  
8 achieve the objective of providing high speed rail  
9 service to Hampton Roads. And I appreciate the  
10 opportunity to speak with you this evening. Thank  
11 you.

12 (Audience applause.)

13 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Our next speaker  
14 is Robbyn Gayer followed by Dan Montague.

15 MR. GAYER: Good evening, ladies and  
16 gentlemen. How are we doing tonight? Are we still  
17 hanging in there? We have been sitting down for quite  
18 sometime. Anybody want to stand up and just take a  
19 little stretch like a seven-inning stretch here and  
20 get a good stretch out of it?

21 Okay. I want to thank everyone who has  
22 come out tonight especially our leaders in the TPO for  
23 getting together and uniting around a solution to  
24 bring high speed rail to Hampton Roads. The real



25 story here is how many folks showed up in this room

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1 tonight because it shows the demand, it shows that  
2 there is a passion for it and it shows we can actually  
3 go somewhere with this.

4 I would like to very briefly touch on a  
5 couple of points that I feel have been overlooked  
6 tonight as well as underscore one point that was  
7 already made, heard a couple of folks comment on. The  
8 first point I would like to underscore is the  
9 importance in DIS document in incorporating designated  
10 line high speed rail. We have talked about different  
11 speeds. I have heard 90 miles an hour. I have heard  
12 110 miles an hour. I think it clearly needs to be  
13 defined that we want high speed rail and we want  
14 top-of-the-line service. I think there needs to be no  
15 question about that.

16 Another point that I think was just  
17 briefly touched on is through service both north and  
18 south line. One seat takes you either south or north.  
19 They could incorporate a means of coordinating the  
20 trains so the trains would continue down past our  
21 region for some of the trains. Some trains could come  
22 into Hampton Roads and those trains could be either A  
23 or B trains and head north or south for single-seat  
24 ridership either direction.

25 The last thing that I would like to say

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1 is very passionately I believe this and I think most  
2 folks in this room do that this is probably the most  
3 important decision facing Hampton Roads in the next  
4 50 years. Let's work on it. Let's get it right. And  
5 let's continue to build and continue to ask for  
6 everything that we can out of this project. Thank  
7 you.

8 (Audience applause.)

9 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Our next speaker  
10 is Dan Montague. And as we approach eight o'clock, we  
11 have just a small handful of speakers that have -- you  
12 have stuck it out with us. We want to at least give  
13 you an opportunity to speak, as well. So Ms. Drake  
14 has asked that we continue on after eight. So, Dan  
15 Montague, you are next.

16 MR. MONTAGUE: Thank you. I am Dan  
17 Montague. I am a citizen of Norfolk but I was born  
18 and raised in Portsmouth.

19 I never thought I would see this day  
20 happen in my lifetime, that is, high speed rail  
21 happening in the United States. We are light years  
22 behind Europe and Japan but we can overtake them  
23 because we always have. I want true high speed rail  
24 to come to this region. What I mean by that is I want  
25 it to have its own set of tracks. I don't want any

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1 grade crossings on the tracks. And we have got to do

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2 this because if we don't it will be a matter of  
3 safety. People will be killed. I don't think that we  
4 can put high speed rail using the same set of tracks  
5 that freight trains do because they do not work.

6 Everything I have seen on the Internet  
7 has borne out what I am saying right now. I did a lot  
8 of research on this. And -- but the main thing is,  
9 though, we have got to have this because we have got  
10 the largest concentration of military other than  
11 Washington, D.C. This area is vital to the whole  
12 world, and we have got to be able to put people around  
13 this country like they should be.

14 I want high speed rail, and I do not want  
15 mediocre rail. What I mean by high speed rail, it has  
16 got to go over 125 miles an hour not 80 or 79 or  
17 whatever. To me anything less than high speed is like  
18 putting a Clydesdale in the Kentucky Derby and  
19 thinking he can win it. We need high speed rail. We  
20 need to -- we need to get right off out of the  
21 starting gate with high speed rail and anyway not  
22 Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3. We need high speed rail  
23 right off the bat. Thank you.

24 (Audience applause.)

25 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Montague. Next

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1 speaker will be Dr. Bouttwell. Following  
2 Dr. Bouttwell will be Louis Guy. I am sorry. Louis  
3 Guy. Ms. Drake, you know everybody. I am sorry.

4 DR. BOUTTWELL: Thank you, Mr. Fraim,

5 Paul Fraim, for this site. Kevin Page, thank you,  
6 Drake, and thank you so much, Director Drake for  
7 allowing me to speak. My name is Richard Buttwell,  
8 and I understand the cost and the business impact of  
9 training -- of transportation in our Commonwealth,  
10 especially as it relates to this terminus at Norfolk.

11 But I want to speak from a different  
12 perspective tonight. I am a cognitive psychologist by  
13 training, and I study human behavior. And while we  
14 talk about transportation and we talk about cost, we  
15 must ask ourselves: What is it that drives human  
16 behavior? The things that drive the people in this  
17 room, I believe, are the fact that Americans are  
18 practical people where impracticality means that we do  
19 not want to waste our time. I suspect today time is  
20 as important as cost. Time is as important as cost.

21 So what are those factors that impact us  
22 as far as time goes? Shall I name them? Time with  
23 your family. Time with your and opportunities for  
24 your family and children. The community life that we  
25 have that we enjoy in the City of Norfolk. The

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1 practical solutions that we have. The fact is that,  
2 Representative Drake, you got here late tonight and  
3 the anxiety and the frustration and the -- and the  
4 pain that you must have felt trying to get here is  
5 shared by everyone in this room.

6 I understand cost is a factor. Certainly  
7 we are all smart enough to know that. But there is a

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8 quality of life issue that goes and rises above those  
9 things that we all share. We are a community here.  
10 And I understand the frustration that we have of being  
11 a cul-de-sac. Certainly, no one wants to be outside  
12 the loop. Imagine living outside the loop, how  
13 degrading that must make people feel.

14 It is these things, it is these  
15 interfeelings that we have, these values that we have  
16 that are being threatened. And I think that the work  
17 that you are trying to do to bring the high speed  
18 Enhanced Alternative 1 to this community is a  
19 wonderful thing and thank you very much.

20 (Audience applause.)

21 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Dr. Bouttwell.

22 Our next speaker is Louis Guy followed by  
23 Henry Ryto.

24 MR. GUY: Good evening. My name is Louis  
25 Guy, and I am a retired civil engineer. I represent

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1 myself as a citizen.

2 A SPEAKER: Can't hear you.

3 MR. GUY: Thank you. My name is Louis  
4 Guy. I am a retired civil engineer. I represent  
5 myself as a citizen of Norfolk and a citizen of the  
6 Hampton Roads region. Thanks for this public hearing.

7 I think the past two hours have been a  
8 doctorate-level course in public participation and in  
9 coming together. I support Alternative 1 as defined  
10 in the HRTPO magnificent resolution. I also think

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11 that accomplishment just a couple of months ago has  
12 been matched by this turnout tonight and by the  
13 wonderful breadth of comments that we have received.

14 I regret that we didn't have this kind of  
15 public hearing 15 years ago. I regret that the  
16 Commonwealth went off on studying straight line from  
17 Petersburg to Raleigh and ignored us.

18 And I want to mention that today the  
19 president announced the distribution of \$8 billion of  
20 which a little over 1.8 billion went to the  
21 Southeastern United States. But while we are happy  
22 about what we are coming together on tonight, please  
23 note that in that first \$8 billion, 1.25 billion went  
24 to Florida, 525 million went to Charlotte, to Raleigh,  
25 and 100 billion has been designated from Raleigh up to

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1 Washington. We are behind, as has been pointed out.  
2 And this isn't going to be good enough for two months  
3 of us coming together on this. This is going to take  
4 20 or 30 years. The interstate highway program did  
5 not happen overnight. And we are going to need our  
6 fair share of funding all that time.

7 We also are going to need the wisdom and  
8 the vision to not just come to the simple answers and  
9 the simple conclusions. As was pointed out, we don't  
10 just need to go north, we also need to go south. We  
11 don't want to be just on a spur with a dead end to the  
12 east. And although it hasn't been studied, and shame  
13 on us for not getting it studied, there is an existing

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14 rail corridor to the southwest to Weldon, North  
15 Carolina, on the way to Raleigh. And we don't have to  
16 live perpetually to have to go up to Petersburg and  
17 turn around and go back south. We need as part of our  
18 next stage of studies to look at other alternatives  
19 including that corridor to Weldon and Raleigh, which  
20 happens to be 170 years old because it is the first  
21 rail corridor that ever came to Hampton Roads.

22 MR. PAGE: Could you wrap up, please,  
23 Mr. Guy.

24 MR. GUY: I thank you for this  
25 opportunity. I think this has been wonderful. And

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1 Let's keep going until we get all the way to the end.

2 (Audience applause.)

3 MR. PAGE: Henry Ryto is our next speaker  
4 followed by James Owens.

5 MR. RYTO: Good evening. Good evening,  
6 ladies and gentlemen. And, yes, thank you, Director  
7 Drake, for allowing this hearing to continue so that  
8 those of us who were still waiting to speak could  
9 speak.

10 My name is Henry Ryto, and I am a  
11 resident of Virginia Beach. However, when most of you  
12 from elsewhere in the region think of Virginia Beach  
13 the first thing you think of is our oceanfront and  
14 tourism. To tail off of Councilman Uhrin's comments  
15 from early this evening, when -- the most recent  
16 survey numbers I have seen of our visitors, the single



17 biggest problem they've cited and why they do not like  
18 their trip to Virginia Beach isn't anything at the  
19 oceanfront, isn't anything within the City of Virginia  
20 Beach itself, it is congestion at the Hampton Roads  
21 Bridge-Tunnel. It registers up in double digits in  
22 our visitor surveys.

23 Now, bringing them on high speed rail,  
24 such as Enhanced Alternative 1, is a way to bring them  
25 around it. Get them out of their cars so they are not

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1 sitting there inhaling fumes over there on 64.

2 Air travel, another alternative other  
3 than driving out of this area. I went to trade school  
4 trying to get into the airline business. If those of  
5 you are familiar with commercial airline jet engines,  
6 the cost effectiveness of operating them markedly goes  
7 down when operating them on segments of under  
8 500 miles.

9 When you look at the number of  
10 metropolitan -- major metropolitan areas in this part  
11 of the east coast, which fall within that 500-mile  
12 radius, yes, rail travel, were authentic, high speed,  
13 110 mile per hour travel available as far as -- it  
14 could be a major boon for us. And in this post-9/11  
15 world, simply the process of having to go through an  
16 airport, go through airport security even to get to  
17 the plane, et cetera, is more -- authentic, high speed  
18 rail could be much more time effective than flying  
19 those segments.

20 As for the I64 corridor, yeah,  
21 effectively there is no new roads construction money  
22 and it is going to be years before we can -- before we  
23 can really start to build our way through that  
24 problem. So the only real alternative -- well,  
25 money -- there is rail money to build a rail. Simply

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1 take the train and go around it. We need a --

2 MR. PAGE: Mr. Ryto.

3 MR. RYTO: One minute. Okay. And we do  
4 need 110 mile per hour rail not 90 or 79. For  
5 people -- to actually get people out of their cars and  
6 pay the money for the fare it is going to have to be  
7 appreciably better than as far as what they get from  
8 driving.

9 I mean, other metropolitan areas have  
10 been mentioned. As a Baltimore Ravens fan, I would --  
11 I would take high speed rail to Baltimore. If it was  
12 there tomorrow, I could take our light rail to high  
13 speed rail to their light rail system to the stadium,  
14 never have to take a car. With that, I close for this  
15 evening. Thank you.

16 (Audience applause.)

17 MR. PAGE: Thank you very much. Next  
18 speaker is James Owens followed by Chris Malendoski.  
19 James Owens is next. Owens, James Owens, O-w-e-n-s.  
20 And then followed by Chris Malendoski.

21 MR. OWENS: Good evening. I am Jim  
22 Owens, a resident of Norfolk. I speak tonight on

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23 behalf of myself and the nearly 800 members of the  
24 Hampton Roads Association for Commercial Real Estate.  
25 The board of directors of HRACRE has

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1 passed a resolution endorsing Alternative 1 with the  
2 high speed rail service on the Norfolk Southern 460  
3 corridor and enhanced service on the CSX 64. Allow me  
4 to say that the status quo and no action are really  
5 not viable alternatives. With the increasing  
6 importance of rail in the 21st century, Hampton Roads  
7 cannot prosper without high speed rail. Efficient  
8 rail is analogous to the interstate and national  
9 defense highway system. It started in 1956. Can you  
10 imagine where our Hampton Roads would be today  
11 economically if we did not have an interstate  
12 connection?

13 Two-thirds of the Hampton Roads  
14 population live and work in the areas served by  
15 Alternative 1. It should be pointed out that the  
16 comparative analysis of distance, time and operating  
17 cost are not apples to apples between Option --  
18 Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. Two-thirds of the  
19 population must spend additional time and money to  
20 reach the Newport News station adding further  
21 congestion to the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel and to  
22 the Monitor-Merriac Bridge-Tunnel.

23 In conclusion, the station in Norfolk  
24 will connect with the light rail system now under  
25 construction and increase ridership ensuring financial

1 success. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

2 (Audience applause.)

3 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Owens.

4 Our next speaker is Chris Malendoski

5 followed by Al Wallace.

6 MR. MALENDOSKI: I promise to make this

7 quick. Thank you for staying around tonight.

8 My name is Chris Malendoski. I am a  
9 commercial real estate professional, and I reside in  
10 Norfolk.

11 Here is one statistic that you will  
12 almost never hear but one that needs to be shouted  
13 from the housetops. Hampton Roads is the largest,  
14 most densely populated metropolitan statistical area  
15 directly on the Atlantic Ocean on a thousand mile span  
16 of coastline between greater New York and South  
17 Florida. That is an astounding statistic and one that  
18 needs to echo across the country for, you see, Hampton  
19 Roads also has the largest military presence in the  
20 United States. This sprawling area of 1.7 million  
21 people strong in terms of national homeland and  
22 international security and defense readiness is one of  
23 the most, if not the most, vital regions in our  
24 country not to mention, as the logic follows, the  
25 whole free world.

1 I am not sure why this area was left off  
2 the initial map by the Obama high speed rail plan, and  
3 I certainly don't know why Virginia got the short end  
4 of the stick today in national funding but I do know  
5 this: Use this adversity as a wake-up call that we  
6 Virginians can no longer afford to be on auto pilot,  
7 succeeding in spite of ourselves between a  
8 progressive, futuristic neighbor to the south, North  
9 Carolina, and the nerve center of the world to the  
10 north. The time has come for Virginia to begin to  
11 flex its muscles because the Pentagon and the Pentagon  
12 South, Hampton Roads, are both within its borders.

13 Speaking of Virginia -- Virginia's  
14 pentagons, can you think of a greater person trip  
15 couplet between two areas -- any two areas in the  
16 country for high speed rail? I cannot.

17 In terms of national security, providing  
18 a quick, reliable rail conduit for the best -- for the  
19 world's best and finest military is truly a  
20 no-brainer. Speaking of the military and in  
21 conclusion, it has been great to see so much patriotic  
22 support and appreciation across our country for the  
23 men and women in our Armed Services. Well, I say that  
24 if America truly cares for and appreciates its  
25 military that America needs to step up to the plate

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1 and show some appreciation in the form of priority  
2 transportation funding for the area the military calls  
3 home, Hampton Roads.

4           The time has come to build high speed  
5 rail. Let's shoot for the dedicated high speed line  
6 along the 460 corridor and actually also one southwest  
7 for the future. Thank you.

8           (Audience applause.)

9           MR. PAGE: Thank you. Our next speaker  
10 is Al Wallace followed by Sheila Johnson.

11           MR. WALLACE: Good evening. Good  
12 evening, members and director. And I am Al Wallace  
13 from Virginia Beach. I thank you for the opportunity  
14 for citizens to come before this group.

15           I support the enhanced high speed rail to  
16 Hampton Roads for a variety of reasons. First, we are  
17 sitting on a gold mine in Hampton Roads. We have the  
18 port facilities that should be the port of choice on  
19 the East Coast. We have the oceanfront that should be  
20 the choice destination for tourism. All of this is  
21 hindered by a good transportation system.

22           Secondly, we are on a business  
23 cul-de-sac, so they say. I say that we are at the  
24 point of entry for international commerce for the  
25 Hampton Roads area and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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1    Again, this is hindered by a good transportation  
2    system for this area.

3           Thirdly, the Hampton Roads serves as a  
4    hometown for the military. The Navy has the largest  
5    presence. And I remember having to travel regularly  
6    to Washington, D.C. for conferences. Tomorrow I would

7 be more than willing to pay a few dollars to save on  
8 the anxieties and traffic congestion and take the high  
9 speed rail.

10 The high speed rail would be the ideal  
11 icebreaker for this area leadership and bring unity of  
12 visions for Hampton Roads. It will bring the right  
13 kind of businesses to spur economic growth for this  
14 area and make Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth of  
15 Virginia more competitive in business and tourism.

16 There is only one correct action and that  
17 is to bring the 110 mile per hour high speed rail, the  
18 optimum design, into Hampton Roads. And when it comes  
19 to getting out of dodge in a hurry because of an  
20 impending hurricane, high speed rail would be the  
21 ideal means of transportation as many would be stuck  
22 in traffic in the interstates or there may be a  
23 stalled vehicle in the tunnel.

24 Thank you for your opportunity.  
25 (Audience applause.)

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1 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Wallace.  
2 Our next speaker is Sheila Johnson  
3 followed by Phillip Hawkins.

4 MS. JOHNSON: Good evening, everyone. My  
5 name is Shelia Johnson. Can you hear me okay in the  
6 back? My name is Shelia Johnson. I am here on behalf  
7 of COMTO Hampton Roads.

8 I just want to share a little bit in  
9 reference to the mission of COMTO. It is the mission



10 of our organization to level the playing field and  
11 maximum participation in the transportation industry  
12 for minority individuals, businesses and communities  
13 of color through advocacy, education and professional  
14 development. There is a statement that we'd like to  
15 make on this evening, it is that COMTO Hampton Roads  
16 supports the HRTPO and the future of Hampton Roads  
17 resolution in support of designating the Southside 460  
18 route for high speed rail to Hampton Roads.

19 Thank you. Have a great evening.

20 (Audience applause.)

21 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Ms. Johnson, for  
22 your comments.

23 Phillip Hawkins is the next speaker  
24 followed by Ellis James.

25 MR. HAWKINS: Good evening. My name is

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1 Phillip Hawkins. I am a Norfolk resident. And I  
2 would like to thank the organizers of this event for  
3 inviting the public out for this public hearing where  
4 we can learn more about high speed rail.

5 Tonight I am here to speak in support as  
6 our city has rallied around this project so that we  
7 can secure high speed rail for our region.

8 We know that it will affect industry and  
9 economic development and growth for all of our cities  
10 in the Commonwealth. So we need to get on the high  
11 track and the high speed rail.

12 I would like to still caution, as we move

13 forward, that we will continue to have open dialogue  
14 with all stakeholders. And I did hear our mayor of  
15 the city emphasize it. We can -- we need to look at  
16 the end now and see where we are going so that we do  
17 not have missteps along the way and that would include  
18 how we fiscally manage the project and also ensuring  
19 that all of our stakeholders in the region are  
20 completely committed to seeing this to the end. I  
21 would also like to ask that any environmental impacts  
22 that would affect our residents or businesses or  
23 landowners that are near the high speed rail sites  
24 would also be engaged along the way so that input  
25 would be considered for any concerns that they may

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1 have.

2 But we do stand in support. My  
3 neighborhood is on the alignment for the light rail,  
4 and we are excited that now we see a bigger light at  
5 the end of the tunnel with if we can connect to this  
6 then it will change the whole equation for many people  
7 in our area.

8 So I would like to thank the group's  
9 work. And I look forward to working with you all in  
10 the future so that we can make sure that everyone is  
11 successful in this process. Thank you.

12 (Audience applause.)

13 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins.

14 Ellis James is our next speaker followed  
15 by Greg French.

16 MR. JAMES: Thank you very much. Good  
17 evening for those of you who have hung in there. My  
18 name is Ellis W. James. I am a lifelong resident of  
19 Norfolk, Virginia. I would like to endorse the  
20 remarks made by Mayor Fraim and George Crawley. There  
21 were others of the speakers who made salient points  
22 and by this time of the evening you all know what it  
23 is about.

24 We are in a situation where we can move  
25 forward or we can just stop dead in our tracks. I

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1 don't think that is a smart thing to do. And it  
2 doesn't matter whether you are a lifetime resident or  
3 a newbie that has come to Hampton Roads. We love you  
4 all. And it is high time that we got down to the  
5 business of solving this transportation nightmare.

6 Now, I need to tell you -- my blue shirt  
7 probably lets you know -- but I am a proud member of  
8 the Sierra Club. And there are those in this audience  
9 earlier tonight who probably think that the Sierra  
10 Club would not want high speed rail. Well, I am here  
11 to tell you that this proud member very much wishes to  
12 have what the Hampton Roads TPO has put forward. The  
13 Enhanced Number 1 selection is the way to go at this  
14 stage.

15 We will be concerned about some of the  
16 environmental impacts but think about this part of the  
17 equation: If we have high speed rail and we take tens  
18 of thousands of vehicles off of our interstates and we

19 take many more trucks off of our interstates, where  
20 will that put us? It will put us in a situation and a  
21 position to be able to deal with our air quality and  
22 it will help the environment.

23 Thank you very much.

24 (Audience applause.)

25 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. James, for your

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1 comments.

2 Our next speaker is to be followed by  
3 Allan Carpenter. Mr. French is not here. Allan  
4 Carpenter followed by Mr. Bill Horton.

5 MR. CARPENTER: I am Al Carpenter. I am  
6 another retired civil engineer and land surveyor.  
7 Worked for three different railroads and spent time in  
8 all other modes of surface transportation. A total of  
9 about 45 years. So I am a has been.

10 Looking back, before the early '50s, the  
11 Southside had high speed rail and that J class ran  
12 over a hundred miles an hour. So what we are doing is  
13 trying to bring it back. That is before the  
14 government told the railroads how fast they can run  
15 the trains.

16 And so I endorse the Enhanced Alternative  
17 1. And I would suggest that before you can get all of  
18 the high speed line ready that if you can get a  
19 conventional train running on that line, get people  
20 used to riding them. And we need something -- we need  
21 alternatives now to what we have. And you -- and a

22 dollar spent on rail goes a whole lot further than a  
23 dollar spent any place else.

24 And I was raised up with the idea of do  
25 it for as little as you possibly could. Because when

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1 I had my engineering, that is what an engineer did is  
2 do for one dollar what anybody else could do for five.  
3 And that is the way I had to approach it. I never had  
4 time to make studies. I had to make a quick judgment  
5 and then go with it. And then I used the studies to  
6 back me up later.

7 A couple of things there. At the  
8 Petersburg station, there is a lot of territory west  
9 of Petersburg and Richmond that has been ignored ever  
10 since Amtrak came into being. You know what the  
11 western destination of Route 460 and Interstate 64,  
12 same city, Saint Louis, Missouri. It goes through a  
13 lot of -- of course, I was born in West Virginia,  
14 raised up in Kentucky. So I have travelled all that  
15 whole area there.

16 So we need to be ready to go on west. So  
17 let's locate the Petersburg station close to the  
18 junction between the north/south line and the  
19 east/west so we can get back to having east/west. I  
20 remember, I've ridden the trains many times on both  
21 sides and I have gone a long, long way west. Now you  
22 have to go through Washington and Chicago and then go  
23 back south to get here today. So let's do that.

24 And also the -- you ought to think about

25 instead of putting that Western Tidewater station at

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1 Bowers Hill, put it there at George Washington  
2 Highway. Then you can call it Portsmouth/Chesapeake.  
3 It is right on the line. And then they will have a  
4 part in it and you have more greater population. Also  
5 you can interface with your local transportation. We  
6 need to coordinate all of our transportation where we  
7 can work together. And that new Newport News station,  
8 put it there where it can get on the ferry and come  
9 across here like they did years ago.

10 I thank you for your time, and I think  
11 you have done well. And, Thelma, I think you --  
12 congratulate you on your appointment, and I am glad  
13 you are and I know that I have got somebody there to  
14 listen to me because I bit her ear a few times when  
15 she was in Congress. And thank you all for the hard  
16 work you have done.

17 (Audience applause.)

18 MR. PAGE: Than you, Mr. Carpenter.

19 Bill Horton is next. We have Dan  
20 McLaughlin is the last speaker of the evening. Did  
21 Bill come up? I am sorry. I didn't see you.

22 MR. HORTON: Yes. My name is Bill  
23 Horton. I am a practicing professional civil  
24 engineer. I didn't arrange being behind him. I work  
25 for Hurt & Proffitt in Norfolk, Virginia. I live in

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1 Virginia Beach. I am a citizen of Hampton Roads.  
2 I support the Hampton Roads  
3 Transportation Planning Organization resolution to  
4 endorse the Route 460 corridor included in Alternative  
5 1. I support the planning of 110 miles per hour or  
6 faster trains along Alternative 1 route. And I ask  
7 for a higher level of analysis that will provide  
8 service compatible and equivalent to the southeastern  
9 high speed rail line.

10 The final EIS should include long-term  
11 design alternatives that include true high speed  
12 trains and not traditional passenger trains. The  
13 final EIS should address a commitment to assess a  
14 through service to the southwest to the Charlotte,  
15 North Carolina region. The final EIS should also  
16 include an update to the draft EIS database. With the  
17 national census being conducted in 2010, more accurate  
18 and current data will be available on which to base  
19 ridership projections and economic impacts.

20 I know past and present military members  
21 and DOD contractors that frequently travel to  
22 Washington, D.C. for meetings or duty assignments and  
23 they would prefer an alternative to plane or  
24 automobile travel. High speed rail will probably be  
25 more affordable than flying and definitely less

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1 stressful than driving, as many other people have



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2 said, especially to those that live on the Southside  
3 and have to deal with the HRBT.

4 I urge the DRPT to be thorough in  
5 continuing the Tier I document to Tier II completion  
6 and hope that my teenage boys will be able to ride  
7 true high speed rail from Hampton Roads to Washington,  
8 D.C. or New York by the time they are my age, and I am  
9 almost 50. Please include, at a minimum, enhanced  
10 service in Alternative 1, and I ask that even higher  
11 speeds are entertained in the long-term planning for  
12 all high speed rail routes.

13 Thank you.

14 (Audience applause.)

15 MR. PAGE: Thank you, Mr. Horton.

16 Again, Mr. McLaughlin will be our last  
17 speaker this evening that signed up.

18 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Hello. I am Dan  
19 McLaughlin. I am originally from Chicago, and I have  
20 been out here the last seven-and-a-half years. My job  
21 transferred me out here. I want to thank you very  
22 much for coming out here.

23 And this area really needs Alternative 1,  
24 and the Hampton Roads area needs the transportation  
25 here. One of the things, though, that we have to

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1 take -- really take a step back and say, high speed  
2 rail is a baby step. And keep in mind that we have  
3 the technology and the resources and it has been  
4 proven in Japan of Maglev trains that we don't rely

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5 on -- that wouldn't rely on fossil fuels. I mean, it  
6 surpasses trains, automobiles. The one in Japan goes  
7 361 miles an hour. And there are studies that MIT has  
8 done where you can actually have a vacuum of a Maglev  
9 train that goes 2,000, 4,000 miles an hour. And that  
10 is what we really need to concentrate on is the future  
11 not just say, here is a little baby step, but really  
12 concentrate on what the future holds for us all.

13 Thank you.

14 (Audience applause.)

15 MR. PAGE: Thank you. Well, seeing no  
16 other persons signed up to speak tonight, I would like  
17 to thank all of you for the great support that we have  
18 had and showing of the public at this public hearing.

19 I hereby pronounce that this hearing  
20 closed and we will be around for just a little while  
21 for some face time for you all if you would like.  
22 Thank you very much.

23 MR. WILLIAMS: Bruce Williams. 1068  
24 Meadow Grove Trail, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 23455.

25 I am a member of COMTO, the council --

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1 the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials.  
2 I am a business owner in Virginia Beach. I have been  
3 involved in transportation.

4 I fully support the Enhanced Alternative  
5 1 for high speed rail connection to Hampton Roads  
6 through Petersburg 460 Southside corridor. I also  
7 fully endorse immediate upgrade of service on the

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8 existing route on the Peninsula with recovery funds.  
9 I fully support the fact that we have 110 --  
10 engineered to 110 specifications comparable to --  
11 equal to the southeast and northeast corridor  
12 specifications, that we would have throughput single  
13 seat service, that the SCIS extends itself to study  
14 the southwest route through Weldon, North Carolina and  
15 that we have the Virginia crescent get funded first.  
16 We also want to make sure that all of these processes  
17 respect Title VI requirements in terms of inclusion on  
18 contracting and environmental justice and hiring  
19 practices.

20 MR. SHERROD: Prescott Sherrod. I am the  
21 president of the Hampton Roads Chapter of the  
22 Conference of Minority Transportation Officials,  
23 COMTO.

24 And we stand -- we definitely stand in  
25 support of the high speed rail, the route that comes

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1 to the Southside from Richmond. We really feel like  
2 there is a lot of benefit to the region. If we can  
3 get that route put in place, it will go a lot towards  
4 regionalism for this area. And we think that it will  
5 definitely help with the congestion. And as a couple  
6 of gentlemen said about getting cars off the roads,  
7 getting trucks off the roads, so forth and so on, and  
8 especially when you consider we have a very challenged  
9 transportation infrastructure right now. So we have  
10 to all -- in our opinion, we have to band together and

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11 try to come up with ways and solutions to make sure  
12 that we are doing the right thing for  
13 transportation -- mass transportation for the future  
14 and for the future of Hampton Roads.

15 (The proceedings were concluded at  
16 8:41 p.m.)  
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TAYLOE ASSOCIATES, INC.

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1 COURT REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2 I, REBECCA L. BANKS, RMR, a court  
3 reporter and Notary Public, certify that I recorded  
4 verbatim by Stenotype the proceedings in the captioned  
5 cause, Norfolk, Virginia, on January 28th, 2010.

6 I further certify that to the best of my  
7 knowledge and belief, the foregoing transcript  
8 constitutes a true and correct transcript of the said  
9 proceedings.

10 Given under my hand the \_\_\_\_\_ day of  
11 \_\_\_\_\_, 2010, at Norfolk, Virginia.  
12  
13

Norfolk Public hearing transcript.txt

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Rebecca L. Banks, RMR

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TAYLOE ASSOCIATES, INC.

Tier I Final EIS Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project  
Appendix F: Public Involvement  
Commenter Identification Numbers

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Achor	Lee	121	Citizen
Adams	Dana	493	Westhaven
Adams	david	511	
Adams	Susanna	515	North End Virginia Beach
Adcock	Nelson	192	Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce
Affeldt	James	271	Lafayette Residence Park
Agricola	Ira	450	Hampton Roads Chamber
Agricola	Cameron	369	Riverbend
Allard	Jay	440	
Allen	LaDonna	604	Warwick Travel Service
Anthony	Tyler	38	Citizen
Araujo	Lennie	412	Resident downtown Norfolk/Board of DNCL
Araujo	Lennie	373	Downtown Norfolk Civic League
Archer	Fred	317	Norfolk/Meadowbrooke
Armstrong	Claudia	388	
Arnold	Gary F.	45	Citizen
Arnold, AIA, LEED AP	Gary F.	532	Parsons Brinckerhoff
Aument	David	72	Citizen
Austin	Lorraine	410	NN Planning Comm.
Babcock	Mark	528	
Babcock	James F.	133	Citizen
Bailey	Joseph	27	Citizen
Bailey	Joseph	235	
Barackman	Chuck	74	Citizen
Barrett	Mike	592	HRCC, V.B. Vision
Barrett	Mike	109	Virginia Beach Vision, Inc.
Barrett	Michael J.	136	Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Barrett	Mike	364	HREDA/Va. Beach Vision
Barsness	Sonya	518	
Barton	Tammy	552	
Baum	Gary	284	
Bayley	Jim	266	Virginia Assoc. of Railway Patrons
Beadles	Dick	6	Citizen
Beall	John	297	Citizen
Beasley	Robert	382	
Becksted	Brian	487	
benedetto	michael	580	tfc recycling
Benner	Gary	456	Red Mill Farm
Bent	Bill	168	Citizen
Bent	Bill	439	
Berkley	Thomas	516	Vandeventer Black/Larchmont
Bernd	David L.	21	Hampton Roads Partnership, Board Chair
Bersch	Winston	419	
Betz	Randy	98	citizen
Bicanic	Josipa	319	Great Neck/Va. Beach
Blackstone	Gayle	316	West Ghent
Blassingham	James	467	VMA/Ghent
Bockheim	Greg	593	
Boe	Eric	298	
Bolding	Martha	169	Citizen
Booden	Andrea	338	Freemason neighborhood
Booth	John R.	99	Citizen
Boothe	Terri	343	Shadowlawn
Boring	Alan	229	City of Norfolk
Boutwell	Richard	195	Citizen
Boyce	Jason	248	



<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Boyce	Jason	245	
Boyd	Henry A	543	Regional Corporate Banker, BB&T
Boyd	Hank	11	Citizen
Brady	Becky	413	
Brandt	Gary	107	Citizen
Breeden	Lucius	566	Larchmont
Brookman	Michael E.	64	Citizen
Brown	Townsend	333	Larchmont Norfolk
Brown	Judith	281	Brown Consultants for Africa, Inc.
Brown	Kathy	226	
Burger	Scott	488	Richmond Greens
Burke	Kevin	166	Citizen
Burke	Kevin	212	
Burnley	Champe	146	VA Bicycle Federation
Burroughs	Richard C.	132	Citizen
Bushe'y	D. Richard	347	Commercial Real Estate
Butland	Rick	63	Citizen
Campbell	Katherine	596	
Campo, Ph.D	Carlos	115	Regent University, President-Eelct
Cannon	Betty M.	581	Hilton Hotel Complex
Capps	James H.	14	Citizen
Caramore	Megan	320	Vandeveter Black
Carpenter	Allan	203	Citizen
Carpenter	Allan L	223	River Forest/Wayside Manor/Easton Place Civic
Carr	James	574	
Carr	James	376	Lead Hampton Roads
Carswell	William	299	Norfolk-Edgewater
Cassell	Kimberly	438	Kiln Creek
Cayton	Chuck	330	

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Chandler	Kenneth L.	151	City of Portsmouth
Chandler	Lisa F.	108	Citizen
Chapin	Steve	411	
Chavez	Dan	497	Larchmont
Ciccolella	BA	225	
Clarke	Dave	448	
Clayton	S	385	Norfolk/Freemason Assoc
Clement	Audrey	269	Green Party of Virginia
Coates	Rhett	171	Citizen
Coldren	Meredith	378	Norview
Coldren	Meredith	377	Pinewell
Coleman	Wayne	227	C V International, Inc.
Collins	Carroll	366	Chadswich
Collins	Jennifer	491	Old Dominion University
Colston	Evadney	358	
Comer	Don	104	Citizen
Conner	Michael	510	
Cooper	Erik	112	Citizen
Cope	Craig	114	Citizen
Cope	Craig	575	Liberty Property Trust
Cosgrove	Kevin	602	
Costa	Krista	47	Citizen
Cote	Ann	460	
Cothran	Grant	228	
Cowles	Virginia	454	Richmond Metro Area LOWV
Cox	Gerald A.	12	Citizen
Cox	James L.	92	Citizen
Coyle	Tim	386	W Ghent
Coyle	Betty Wade	365	West Ghent

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Cramer	Scott	221	
Crawley	George	181	Citizen
Creech	Nancy	362	
Creedon	Daniel	125	Citizen
Creedonj	Anne M.	124	Citizen
Crigger	Don	29	Citizen
Cronin	Daniel	371	VB Vision
Cronin	Daniel T.	87	Citizen
Cross, AICP	Timothy	1	York County, VA
Crowe	William	295	West End, Richmond
Crumley	Scott	100	Citizen
Dale	Cathy	186	Citizen
Dannell	Doris	340	Calvert Square
Darden	Jeff	612	Chesterfield Heights
Daughtrey	R. Breckenridge	436	Riverview
David	Kathie	514	
Davis	Gail	241	
Davis	Stephen R.	536	Willcox & Savage, P.C.
Davis	Stephen R.	39	Citizen
Davis	Marc	361	Suffolk
Davis	Constance G.	120	Citizen
Davis	S.	344	
Day	Robin D.	20	Atlantic Dominion Distributors
Decknick	John	457	
Denny	Stephen	214	Newport News Resident
DeStefano	Tony	459	
Diamonstein	Richard G.	26	Citizen
Diedrich	Roger	150	Smart Growth & Transportation, Virginia Chapter, Sier
Diedrich	Roger	244	Sierra Club, Virginia Chapter

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
DiStefano	Mike and Sue	103	Citizen
Dixon	Beth	521	Harbour View
Donnal	Anne	88	Citizen
Drees	Bruce	404	Tidewater Bicycle Association
Duckett	Tom	390	HRRA/WEW
Dudley	Michael M.	560	Sentara/Optima Health Plan
Dukes	John	401	
Earley	Franklin	53	Citizen
Edwards	David	501	WRSystems
Ellis	Hollis D.	611	Great Bridge
Embree, Esquire	H. David	110	Citizen
Emmermann	Alex	504	DNCL / Freemason
Everett	Butch	111	Citizen
Face	Brad	161	Citizen
Fannin	Amy	594	
Farmer	Dwight	4	Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organizatio
Fedell	Ryan	582	Greenbrier
Feltner	Irene	479	Westover
Fenning	Robert	182	Old Dominion University
Ferraro	Randi B.	102	Citizen
Fields	Lynne	352	
Finch	Herb	403	
Finn	Marlielena	326	League of Women Voters
Finn	Thomas	327	Freemason
Fisher	Christy	246	
Fisher	Donald	415	Don Fisher Associates
Fisher	Richard	384	
Flynn	Rachel O.	19	City of Richmond, Department of Community Develo
Foley	Sarah	396	Freemason

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Font	Carlos	157	Citizen
Forrest	Steven	427	
Foster	Hayley	469	
Foster	Bill	180	Citizen
Foster	Bill	139	Greater Norfolk Corporation
Fox	Joseph	357	Hilton Village Newport News
Fraim	Paul	172	Mayor of Norfolk
Fraim/Sessoms		154	City of Virginia Beach/City of Norfolk
Franklin	Jennette M.	79	Citizen
Franklin, Jr	Joseph E.	80	Citizen
Fraser	Lasleen	353	cobblestonechase@lee's Mill
Frazier	Steven	492	Ghent
Frelin	Lucien	481	Ghent
French	Greg	275	Lead Hampton Roads
French	Gregory	283	Lead Hampton Roads
Friedman	Leslie	232	Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce & Downtown
Friedman	John	179	Norfolk Southern Corporation
Frost	Roger	296	Norfolk
Fuller	Sarah	279	Willoughby
Furlough	Stephen	498	Furlough Marine Management, LLC
Fuschetti	Steve	187	Citizen
Gallagher Jr	Terry	478	
Gawne	John	601	
Gayer	Robbyn	193	Citizen
Gayer	Robbyn	525	Norview
Geduldig-Yatrofsky	Mark	183	Citizen
Gelpi	Barbara	426	Great Neck Point
Gere	Anne-Lise	349	
Giles	Mickey	328	Bayview

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Gonzalez	Carlos A.	474	Hampton Road Transportation Planning Organization
Gonzalez	Carlos	350	HRTPO
Goodman Jr.	Robert C.	9	Citizen
Goodman Jr.	Robert C.	272	
Goodman Jr.	Robert C.	544	Kaufman & Canoles, P.C.
Goodson	Royden	164	Citizen
Goodson	Royden	407	
Gordon	Elizabeth	429	Ghent
Graham, Jr.	Judge	569	Resident-Suffolk County
Grandfield	Phil	89	Citizen
Grasty	Garnette	430	River Forest Shores
Gray	Steven	260	GreatNeck Meadows
Green, Jr.	(Rev) Joseph	335	Ingleside
Greenmun	Reid	359	Va Beach Taxpayer Alliance
Gresham, AIA LEED AP	Richard Wells	52	Citizen
Grimmer	Stephen	576	
Guerrier	Amma	583	
Gulisano	Salvatore	313	Chesapeake
Gullickson	Barbara	406	Norfolk Convention and Visitors Bureau
Gurnee	Robert	508	
Gustavson	Greta	393	Freemason/Downtown Norfolk
Guy	Louis	196	Citizen
Gwaltney	Betty Jo	78	Citizen
H. Pope	Jackson	288	
Haga	Barbara	278	Norfolk
Hamilton	Mindy	363	Castleton
Hampton Roads Chambe	John W Wilson Jr	584	444 Goodspeed Road
Hanson	Russ	579	Hampton Roads Chamber
Hardin	E.L.	128	Citizen

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Hare Winslow	Judy	494	Smithfield & Isle of Wight Tourism
Harnik	Peter	65	Citizen
Harris	Edward	402	Railroad Museum of Virginia and National Railway His
Harris	Michael	268	Pembroke
Harris	Sandy	178	Norfolk Economic Development Authority
Hartig	Chris	598	
Harton	Clarisse T.	25	Citizen
Harvey, III	James R.	118	Citizen
Harvey, Jr	J.C.	473	Department of the Navy, US Fleet Forces Command
Harvey, Jr.	J.C.	82	Department of the Navy
Hawkins	Phillip	201	Citizen
Henn	Rick	547	Norfolk Development
Henry, RHU	Lesli W.	97	Citizen
Herbert	Thomas	351	
Hershberger	Bob	31	The Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Allianc
Higgins	Ralph B.	33	Citizen
Hills	Joel	428	Ghent
Hines	Daniel	546	York
Hitt	John M.	91	Citizen
Hoard	Sheryl	274	Newport News (Hidenwood)
Hoey	Clyde	222	
Hogan	John	400	Baycliff Civic League - President
Hogg	Thomas M.	577	Westmoreland Place Association
Hollands III	Vollie J	624	
Hood	Cynthia	597	Spring Arbor Assisted Living
Horan	Bob	472	Cape Henry Shores
Horton	Bill	204	Citizen
Houssam	Rabi	391	
Hudgins	Donna	233	Virginia Symphony Orchestra



<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Hudgins Jr	Lester L	570	Hudgins Contracting Corp
Huhn	Greg	312	
Hume III	J. Robert	141	Department of the Army, Norfolk District Corps of En
Hunter	Blouont	282	
Hutton	Joseph	486	Larchmont
Irizavry Ponce	Daniel	367	Shea Terrace
Irons	Ellie	155	Office of Env Impact Review, Dept. of Environmental
Iwans	Dave	46	Citizen
Jackson	John	210	
Jackson	Andrew	240	Virginia Beach African American Leadership Forum
James	Ellis W.	397	Sierra Club/Observer
James	Ellis	202	Citizen
Johnsen	Stephen A.	54	Citizen
Johnson	Gale	444	Dauids Mills
Johnson	Linda	175	Mayor City of Suffolk
Johnson	Sheila	200	Citizen
Johnston	Thomas M.	43	Citizen
Johnston	Thomas M.	534	Senior Vice President, S. L. Nusbaum Realty Company
Judy	Miner	468	
Kania	Sharon	286	East Beach
kanter	steve	485	
Kassel	Jackie	348	City of Newport News
Kearney	R Kevin	314	Ghent Square
Keefe	Lawrence	513	
Keeter	Ellen	408	
Kendall	Quintin	143	CSX Transportation
Kerr	Timothy H.	147	Citizen
Key	Mike	253	MK3Y, LLC
King & Queen Appartme		44	Citizen

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Kingan	Barbara	58	Citizen
Kirby	Bob	153	US Department of the Interior, National Park Service
Kirsch	Bernie	571	North End, Virginia Beach
Kirsch, Jr.	Frank B.	129	Citizen
Kish	John	322	Chesapeake Planning Comm.
Knack	Kathy	416	Kathy Knack Interior Designs, Inc.
Knack	Doug	28	Citizen
Krebs, jr	Robert	17	Citizen
Kreshin, P.E.	Lawrence B.	81	Citizen
Kulakowski	Patrick	443	Ethridge Lakes
Kuller	Lacy	220	
Kumar	Aneil	526	ASIS
Landman	Drew	555	Old Dominion Univ/Norfolk/Riverfront
Lane	Aubrey	159	Hampton Roads Rep Commonwealth Transportation
Langley	Tom	13	Citizen
Langley, PE, LS	Tom B.	542	President, Langley & McDonald
Lankford	Anne H.	101	Citizen
Lavier	Jim	211	Chesopeian Colony
lee	will	585	war hill inn
Leeman	Tommy	558	Ghent
Lego	Jane	73	Citizen
Levick, P.E.	James C.	553	Riverhaven
Lewis	Troi	423	Buckroe
LI	Noah	527	
Lilly	Edward	325	Larchmont
Lindblad	Karl	277	
Lipton	Robert	346	Freemason
Lipton, OD	Mark A.	22	Citizen
Lorimer	Jim	85	Citizen

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Lougee	Duane	342	
Louthan	Charles M.	76	Richmond Friends of Rail
Louthan	Charles M.	475	Chairman, Richmond Friends of Rail
Luce	R. J.	329	Denby Park
Lysy	Daniel	627	Richmond Regional PDC/RAMPO
MacGregor	Robert	356	Smithfield
Mackey	Scott	106	Citizen
Madigan	RaeAnn	420	Southgate
mahoney	robert	455	summer park
Malbon	John	300	Virginia Beach Vision
Malendoski	Chris	262	The Wright Company
Malendoski	Christopher	148	Citizen
Mandelman	Joel	291	
Martin	Rosi	334	Riverwalk Great Bridge area
Martin	Eric	66	Citizen
Masek	Edward	441	Williamsburg
Mattis	J.N.	138	Department of Defense
Mayor Frank		158	Newport News
Mazzarella	Margie	280	Virginia Beach
McCartney	Michael	95	citizen
McClees	Martha S.	567	Camden Village
McFadden	Patricia	559	Great Neck/Shorehaven
McFall	Jeff	122	Citizen
McGee	Heather	230	Estabrook/5 Points
McKinnon	Colin	259	Norfolk, VA resident/citizen
McLaughlin	Dan	205	Citizen
McLaughlin	Daniel	247	Virginia Beach
MEADOWS	DAVID	589	Pleasant Point
Meeink	Mike	69	Citizen

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Mensink	Jonathan	290	
Merlo	Alfonso	539	
Merritt	Kevin	608	Virginia Beach/Alanton
Mersel	Rick	519	
Mertig	Evlyn	483	Collins Machine Works
Mickens	Annie	5	City of Petersburg, Mayor
Mike	Barrett	18	Citizen
Miller	Robert S.	67	Citizen
Miller	Delegate Paula	3	Virginia General Assembly
Miner	Judy and Bill	2	Citizen
Mitchell	Wiley	160	Virginia Rail Policy Institute
Montague	Dan	194	Citizen
Montgomery	Shurl	188	Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority
Moody	James	615	
Moran	Grace	263	Ocean Park
Morgan	Neil	135	City of Newport News
Mostofsky	Tehilla	562	Ghent
Mullin	Sarah	379	Chesterfield Heights
Murphy	Kevin R.	307	Downtown norfolk Civil League
NANCE	FRANCIS	572	THALHIMER
Nance	Francis R.	41	Citizen
Nash	C	603	
Nealy	Hurbert	170	Citizen
Nelson	Kathy	191	Citizen
Nichols	Thomas	324	Baylake Pines
Nicholson	Doug	484	Ghent
Nobile	Joseph	257	
Noe	Randal S.	144	Norfolk Southern Corporation
Norman	Richard	370	Va Beach/Thoroughgood

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Nusbaum	William L.	588	Williams Mullen Norfolk office
O'Hearn	Mike	304	Larchmont
Old	Travis	489	
Oliver	James B.	137	Citizen
OToole	Shaun	437	Shadowlawn
Owen	Denise	578	Fox Hill
Owens	Jim	198	Hampton Roads Association for Commercial Real Esta
Pace	Nick	37	Citizen
Pagan	Mike	51	Citizen
Palmer	Alexander	372	Ocean View
Pappas	Sheila	500	Ghent
Pasquinelli	Lawrence	270	Lafayette Residence Park
Patrick	Bower	564	
Pearson Nicastro	Kelley	336	North End, Va. Beach
Peck	Nancy	119	Citizen
Pelausa	Edilberto	75	Citizen
Pendergast	Jim	123	Citizen
Perrault	Mark	303	Larchmont
Perry	Nancy	68	Citizen
Perry Marchiter	Nancy	190	Virginia Beach Hotel-Motel Association
Perry Marscheider	Nancy	520	Virginia Beach Hotel Motel Association
Petty	William	86	Citizen
Peycelon	Mary Alicia	405	Lake Smith Terrace
Phillips	Marina Liacouras	531	Kaufman & Canoles, P.C
Phillips	Marina L.	50	Citizen
Phillips	Curtis	84	Citizen
Plaughner	Daniel	7	Virginians for Highspeed Rail, Executive Diretor
Pohl	Donna	463	Fox Hill
Pollara	Barry	56	Citizen

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Pollard	Trip	8	Southern Environmental Law Center
Pope	Jackson H. and B	117	Citizen
Poppen	Craig	289	
Poppen	Craig	116	Citizen
Poutasse	Marc	59	Citizen
Poynter	William	434	
Prichard	Bruce	36	Citizen
Prichard, AIA, IIDA	Bruce	538	President & Managing Principal-HBA Architecture & I
Prioreschi	Jeff	530	
Rachels	Wm.	310	
Raine	Victoria	185	Citizen
Ram	Alan	105	Citizen
Rawls	Patricia	398	Norfolk (Larchmont/Edgewater/ODU)
Reisch	Dave	61	Citizen
Reynolds, Jr.	Allan S.	568	West Ghent
Rhamstine	John	311	Lafayette Shores
Rhamstine	John	417	Lafayette Shores
ribadeneira	nicole	234	ghent
Rigney	Charles	215	Freemason
Roach	Michael	321	
Robbins	Mary	613	Thoroughgood
Roberts	Frank	134	Hampton Roads Military and Federal facilities Allianc
Robertson	John	32	Citizen
Romulus	Sherry	94	Citizen
Rowe	Donald	447	Freemason Area
Rudd	Karen	418	City of Norfolk / Winona
Rudd	Mel	421	Winona
Rudnick	Barbara	140	US EPA Region III
Rueger	Thomas	285	SunTrust Bank

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Russell	Peggy	332	Pres. South Bayview CL
Russell	Garland	331	South Bayview CL
Ryan	John M	301	
Ryto	Henry	197	Citizen
Saburn	Mary Beth	565	Ghent
Saetta	Michael John	425	Lafayette Winona Civic League President (Norfolk)
Sanderson	Katherine	209	
Santarelli	Marino	40	Hampton Rds Chamber, Executive Committee
Savage	Grayson	622	2208 Clarendon Circle
Scherberger	Karen	184	Norfolk Festvents
Schlossberg	Nancy	315	Freemason
Schmidt	Missy	617	Hampton Roads - Downtown Norfolk
Schmidt	Melissa	394	Freemason/Downtown
Schuhr	Katherine	62	Citizen
Schule	Bonnie	249	Ocean Lakes
Schulman	Peter	445	Dept of Foreign Languages and Literatures
Schulman	Peter	93	Citizen (ODU)
Schultz	Darren B.	49	Citizen
Schwartz	Stewart	217	Coalition for Smarter Growth
Schwartz	Stewart	142	Coalition for Smarter Growth
Scott	Jennifer L.	130	Citizen
Scott, Forbes, Wittman,		126	Hampton Roads Congressional District
Seedorf	Rebecca	462	Downtown Norfolk
Sekeet	Sandy	554	
Seliavski	Liubov	476	Willcox & Savage, P.C.
Seplak	Gregory	461	
Serrano	Hannah	258	
Sessoms	Will	173	Mayor City of Virginia Beach
Seyller	Pat	71	Citizen



<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Sherrod	Prescott	156	Citizen
Shriver	Henry	250	Chair of Greater Norfolk Corporation Transportation
Shriver	Henry	255	Chair of Greater Norfolk Corporation Transportation Co
Shropshire	Helen Pope	239	L & J Gardens - Virginia Beach
Shucet	Phillip A.	149	Hampton Roads Transit
Shushan	Michael	162	Green Party of Virginia
Sigfred	Sture V.	152	Downtown Norfolk
Siik	Robert	375	
Simmons	Bruce	556	ASCE
Simmons	Lena	495	Vision
Slaughter	Tom	337	Citizen
Sly	Madeline	305	Freemason Historic Area
Smith	PJ	452	
Smith	Wayne	30	Citizen
Smith	Jennifer Boynton	60	Citizen
Spencer	Stephen	265	Jackson Ward
Stearns	Deborah	496	West Belvedere, Norfolk
Stefanko	Kelly	273	
Stefanko	Kelly	70	Citizen
Stefanko	Kelly	477	
stein	melanie	505	william e wood and Associates / West Ghent
Stephens	Venetta	83	Citizen
Stephens	Venetta	470	
Stephens	Gary	442	
Stephens	John	218	Freemason Neighborhood
Stern	Robert	414	
Stone	Syble	189	Norfolk City Planning Commission
Stroud	Roger G.	10	Citizen
Swindell	Ashley	254	Nancy Chandler Associates -Realtor

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Taddeo	Salvatore	465	Virginia Beach
Taylor	Ray	167	Future of Hampton Roads, Inc
Taylor	Raynor	276	Haygood Point, Virginia Beach
Taylor	Raynor	614	Haygood Point, Virginia Beach
Taylor	Joanne A.	446	
Taylor, Jr M.D.	Harry B and Joan	90	Citizen
Tebault	James	345	
Tetalman	Matthew	294	
Theuer	Jim	606	
Thomas	Vincent J.	145	Future of Hampton Roads, Inc
Tice	James M. & Kaye	238	Chadswyck
Timmins	Robert	302	
Tingle	Tom	163	Citizen
Toboz	MaryAnn	561	
Toscano	James and Diane	23	Citizen
Tower	Jane	517	Chesapeake Beach
Tubic	Marica	77	Citizen
Turkiewicz	Witold	96	Citizen
Turner	Chandler	607	HR Chamber of Commerce/ Business Owner
Tynch	David	55	Citizen
Uhrin	John	176	Virginia Beach Cit Council
Uhrin	John	389	Shadowlawn
Van Benschoten	Thomas A.	131	American Rover/Tall Ship Cruises
Van Benschoten	Thomas A.	127	Downtown 100
VanAalten	Carole	323	Freemason
Vance	Steven	292	
Victor	Gladys	213	
Vigan, Jr.	Charles	207	Norfolk Rotary/Winona
Waddell	William	42	Citizen

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Wagner	Michael	16	Citizen
Wallace	Al	199	Citizen
WALLACE	ALFRED	242	HAYGOOD POINT
Warmbier	Andrea	433	
Waterfield	Suzanne	595	Virginia Beach
Waters	Rob	431	
Wells	Kristen	380	Hampton Roads Citizen Transportation Advisory Com
Wetsel	Lawrence	208	
White	Jennifer	523	Norfolk
White	Kelly	591	Hilton Garden Inn Suffolk Riverfront
White	David	626	Citizen
White	Thomas	231	RE:Vision Norfolk / Port Norfolk, Portsmouth
White	Mary Beth	381	Port Norfolk/Portsmouth
Whitley	John	48	Citizen
Whitus	James	360	Trant Berkshire
Wilbanks	Wayne	35	Citizen
Wilcox	Wayne	383	Virginia Beach
Wilkins	Elisabeth	466	Burnett's Mill, Suffolk
Williams	Bruce	206	Citizen
Williams	Jesse A.	587	Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce
Williams	Scott	522	Ghent
Williams	Bruce	287	COMTO
Williams	Bruce	395	COMTO
Williams, P.E.	David E.	541	Preliminary Engineering Manager, Ashland Residency
Williams, P.E.	David	15	VDOT
Willis	Katherine C	548	Brighton on the Bay
Wilson	Kate	499	
Witt	Evelyn	293	Ghent
Woolard	Roderick	550	Ghent

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Commenter ID</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Woolard	Ron	177	City of Norfolk, Acting Assistant City Manager
Workman	Maria	482	
Wright	Robert F.	113	Citizen
Wright	Randy	174	Councilman
Wright	Robert	524	The Wright Company
Yacks	Michael R	586	
Young	Valerie	24	Citizen
Young	Jason	256	
Youngs	Cheryl	57	Citizen
Zadan	Walter and June	34	Citizen
Zaprzalka	Phillip	165	Citizen
Zeller	Jeff	354	
Zeugner	John	219	Planning Consultant
Zirkle	John	261	Hilton Norfolk Airport
Zobel	William	341	Va. Beach Birdneck Point
Zolad	Robert	599	This Century Art Gallery

# Tier I Final EIS Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project

## Mailings and Public Hearings Comment-Response Matrix

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
1	1-1	A number of factual errors in the draft EIS are due the document's failure to recognize that there are actually three segments of the CSXT rail corridor that run through York County.	Comment noted.
1	1-2	Several of the attached comments were also included in our January 25, 2006 comments on the previous draft EIS but for some reason were not incorporated into the current document, making it necessary to make the same comments again four years later.	No prior versions of the Draft EIS were circulated for public comment.
1	1-3	Page ES-30, Section 4.4: The footnotes at the bottom of and throughout Table ES-7 should be in black, not red, since they do not specifically relate to deficits.	Correction made to footnote; however numbers in parenthesis indicate deficits and remain red.
1	1-4	Page 3-16, 17 Section 3.2.4.1: Boundary Street and Henry Street in the City of Williamsburg should be identified as N. Boundary Street and N. Henry Street respectively.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS in Section 3.2.
1	1-5	Page 3-17, Section 3.2.4.1: The EIS states that "The lack of pedestrian facilities on Henry Street north of the railroad crossing suggests that the pedestrian access to the station from the north would be of limited value." In fact, there are pedestrian facilities, including sidewalks with pedestrian crossing gates, on N. Henry Street north of the railroad crossing.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS.
1	1-6	Page 3-21, Section 3.2.5.2: The parking fee at Harbor Park is \$5.00, not \$4.00.	The \$4.00 parking fee was relevant during the timeframe in which the Tier I DEIS was prepared. All information will updated during the the preparation of the Tier II documentation.
1	1-7	Page 3-25, 29, 30 Sections 3.3.3.1 & 3.3.4.3: The information in Tables 3-13, 3-14 and 3-15 is incorrect. There is, in fact, one public crossing in York County, where the CSX track crosses Lightfoot Road (Route 646). Apparently this crossing has been incorrectly attributed to either James City County or Williamsburg (since there are not two at-grade crossings in the city, as Tables 3-13, 3-14 and 3-15 state).	Corrections, as appropriate, have been made in Tier I Final EIS.

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
1	1-8	Page 3-25; Section 3.3.3.1: Also in Table 3-13, the total mileage of the CSXT tracks running through York County, which consists of three separate segments, is at least 3.4 miles. (York County and City of Williamsburg land records differ with respect to the municipal boundary line, which, according to our records, lies along the centerline of the railroad tracks for a distance of approximately 2,350 feet (0.45 mile). If correct, this would increase the County's track mileage to approximately 3.9 miles.	For purposes of the analysis conducted as part of the Tier I EIS, only track for which improvements would likely occur was tabulated.
1	1-9	Page 3-59; Section 3.7.3.1: The limits of York County's portion of the CSXT corridor as depicted on Figure 3-1 are not correct. There are actually three segments of the corridor that lie within York County. Partly as a result of this, the land use descriptions indicated on the map are not correct. There is, in fact, almost no agricultural land within 300 feet of the rail corridor.	For purposes of the analysis conducted as part of the Tier I EIS, only track segments for which improvements would likely occur was tabulated. Land use information was calculated using readily available information from local, state and federal sources.
1	1-10	Page 3-61; Section 3.7.3.1: The description of York County's land use along the CSXT corridor is not correct. There is very little agricultural land use along the corridor.	For purposes of the analysis conducted as part of the Tier I EIS, only track segments for which improvements would likely occur was tabulated. Land use information was calculated using readily available information from local, state and federal sources.
1	1-11	Page 3-66, Section 3.7.3.2: The updated York County Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on Dec 6, 2005; therefore, the word "draft" in Table 3-27 should be removed. (No changes were made to any of the information relating to rail transportation, so the description of the plan text remains accurate.)	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Table 3-27.
1	1-12	Page 3-67, Section 3.7.4.1: There are no towns in the study area. The first sentence in the second paragraph should say "cities and counties" rather than "towns and cities".	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Section 3.7
1	1-13	Page 3-93, Section 3.9.3.1: Waller Mill Park, though owned by the City of Williamsburg, is actually located in York County. The text needs to be corrected.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Table 3-30.
1	1-14	Page 3-94, Section 3.9.3.1: Waller Mill Park, though owned by the City of Williamsburg, is actually located in York County. Table 3-36 needs to be corrected.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Table 3-30.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
1	1-15	Pages 3-94, 103 & 104 Sections 3.9.3.1, 3.9.4.4 & 3.9.4.5: Colonial National Historic Park is incorrectly identified in Table 3-39 and 3-40 as Colonial Williamsburg National Historic Park. These 4.75 acres appear to constitute a 600-ft segment of the Colonial Parkway that lies within the study area. While the Parkway is part of the park, for the sake of clarity, it would be helpful to identify it as “Colonial National Historic Park (Colonial Parkway)”. Moreover, although the park itself is located in York, James City County, and Williamsburg, the only portion within 300 feet of the CSXT corridor is in the City of Williamsburg.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Table 3-30.
1	1-16	Page 3-95; Section 3.9.3.1: There are two “Quarterpath Park” labels on the map in Figure 3-7. Is the second one meant to refer to “New Quarter Park” which is located in York County and shown in green on the map but is not within 300 feet of the corridor?	Yes, you are correct.
1	1-17	Page 3-95, Section 3.9.4.4: Waller Mill Park, although owned by the City of Williamsburg, is actually located in York County. Tables 3-39 and 3-40 need to be corrected.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Section 3.9
1	1-18	Page 3-106 & 107; Section 3.10.3.1: The text on Page 3-106 states that “According to the Soil Survey of James City and York Counties, most soil types in the portion of the route within these areas are considered prime farmland soils,” yet the map in Figure 3-9 indicates no prime farmland in either county. The text and the map do not appear to match.	Farmland soil data not available for James City, York County and the City of Williamsburg.
1	1-19	Pages 3-131 & 133; Section 3.14.3.1: There are two affected archaeological sites in the VDHR database in York County that are not included in the list in Table 3-47 or on the map in Figure 3-12.	More detailed analysis and coordination with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources will occur during Tier II and will refine the list of potentially affected archaeological resources.
1	1-20	Page 3-135, Section 3.14.3.1: The property located at 609 Penniman Road is in James City County, not the City of Williamsburg. Table 3-48 needs to be corrected.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Table 3-40
1	1-21	Page 3-135, Section 3.14.3.1: Monument Drive is located in James City County, not the City of Williamsburg. Table 3-48 needs to be corrected.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Table 3-40



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
1	1-22	Page 3-135, Section 3.14.3.1: The four houses near the intersection of Penniman Road and Route 199 mentioned in Table 3-48 are most likely in York County, not Williamsburg, since the intersection itself is located within the County. This intersection is much more than 500 feet from the CSXT corridor.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Table 3-40
1	1-23	Page 3-135, Section 3.14.3.1: Since there is no property in the City of Williamsburg along Route 199 that is within 500 feet of the CSX rail corridor, the five houses along Route 199 mentioned in table 3-48 are most likely in York County.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Table 3-40
1	1-24	Page 3-153; Section 3.16.3.1: York County does indeed participate in the National Flood Insurance Program, and FEMA floodplain mapping is indeed available.	Thank you for this information. Updated information pertaining to York County floodplain mapping will be provided during the Tier II documentation and analysis of the Preferred Alternative.
1	1-25	Page 3-157 & 165, Section 3.16.3.1: Based on the map and descriptions on the VDEQ website, it appears that the Virginia coastal resource management area encompasses the entire study area (including York County). Also, the bullet list at the top of page 3-157 needs to be reformatted.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS Section 3.16
1	1-26	Page 4-14, Section 4.5.2: The footnotes at the bottom of and throughout Table 4-6 should be in black, not red, since they do not specifically relate to deficits.	The numbers in parenthesis indicate deficits and red in Table 4-5 of Tier I Final EIS
1	1-27	Page 7-4, Section 7.2.1: In Table 7-2, the Virginia Gazette is inaccurately identified as the Williamsburg Virginia Gazette. Since it serves the greater Williamsburg area, it would be more accurate to identify it as the Virginia Gazette (Williamsburg). Similarly, the Daily Press, which is the Peninsula's daily newspaper, is inaccurately identified as the Newport News Daily Press. It should be identified as the Daily Press (Peninsula).	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS.
1	1-28	Page 7-7, Section 7.3.1: In Table 7-6, there should be a comma after "noon" in the last row.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS.
1	1-29	Page 7-8, Section 7.5.1: In the last paragraph, principle should be principal.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
2	2-1	We endorse the regional position statement, strengthened alternative #1, designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor for high speed rail and enhancing the CSX/I-64 corridor for intercity I passenger rail service. We would use such service to Richmond and Washington, and probably on to the Northeast, when it becomes available.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
3	3-1	I view this project, including the high speed rail service along the Route 460 corridor and enhanced inner city passenger rail service along the CSX/Amtrak I64 corridor, as a critical link between Hampton Roads, Richmond and Washington, D.C. This is a rare opportunity to address our transportation challenges as well as to one day hopefully link up with our neighbors to the south for future connectivity as part of the national inner city and high speed passenger rail network.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
3	3-2	Among other things, the project would position us to better serve our large military and defense-related populations, which require unencumbered access to Northern Virginia and the nation's capital. We can also improve the lives of our 200,000 uniformed and federal civilian defense workers. DOD invests \$50 billion in Virginia, and we need to enhance our transportation system to bring even more DOD jobs to the Commonwealth.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
3	3-3	The tourism industry will reap the profits of well-planned transportation improvements. And other important Virginia assets, like our courts, will prosper through such an initiative.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
3	3-4	Congestion relief for daily commuters is a given if people are using Virginia's highway system -- if fewer people are using Virginia's highway system.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
3	3-5	I am also always very mindful of ways to evacuate residents quickly especially if a hurricane or other imminent emergency demands it.	Comment noted.
3	3-6	I wholeheartedly support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's endorsement of the high speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern 460 route as well as the enhancements to passenger rail service on the peninsula and a regional high speed rail task force.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
4	4-1	I am here tonight representing the Transportation Planning Organization comprised of thirteen of our urban localities, four General Assembly members, two transit operators, VDOT and DRPT are members of our board as well as the Virginia Port Authority.	Thank you for sharing comments.
4	4-2	The HRTPO board has overwhelmingly passed a resolution at a special meeting on October 30th. The resolution has two critical components. 1. The designation of a high speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of 110 miles per hour plus. 2. To have enhanced inter city passenger rail service along the CSX/Amtrak I-64 corridor. The Hampton Roads region wants to aggressively implement steps to achieve the ultimate goals of having high speed rail along the Norfolk Southern U.S. 460 corridor and enhanced and strengthened inter city passenger service along the CSX 64 corridor. So these definitely include a partnership between the community of Hampton Roads in its 1.7 million people, the Federal Railroad Administration, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Norfolk Southern, CSX and Amtrak.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
4	4-3	The establishment of new passenger rail service is critically important to the region of Hampton Roads particularly given the large concentration of military.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
4	4-4	And the Port of Virginia is the third largest port on the east coast of the U.S.	Comment noted.
4	4-5	The Hampton Roads region requests that the FRA and DRPT aggressively expedite and update completion of the Tier I draft EIS and obtain a record of decision as soon as possible; recommend and urge that the Commonwealth prepare for the Tier II EIS in the spring of this year. Technical comments included in the package in coordination with the HRTPO technical advisory committee.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
4	4-6	<p>RESOLUTION 2009-05A RESOLUTION OF THE HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION SUPPORTING REGIONAL HIGH-SPEED AND INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL. WHEREAS, the Obama Administration "proposes to help address the Nation's transportation challenges by investing in an efficient, high-speed passenger rail network of 100-600 mile intercity corridors that connect communities across America;"WHEREAS, significant new Federal funding has been made available in support of implementing the proposed national high-speed rail vision;WHEREAS, the Federal Railroad Administration has initiated a national High-Speed Rail program and a vision for developing a cohesive national intercity and high-speed passenger rail network;WHEREAS, any use of private rail infrastructure requires an agreement between the railroad, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the rail service provider;WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia and State of North Carolina are positioned to extend the Northeast corridor to Charlotte via Richmond/Petersburg; and WHEREAS, the Hampton Roads region is currently included on the U.S. Intercity Passenger Rail Network.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
4	4-7	<p>NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:1. That the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) endorses the designation of a "High-Speed Rail" corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 MPH;2. That the HRTPO, in conjunction with the high-speed rail corridor, endorses the enhancement of the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor; and 3. That the HRTPO establishes a Regional High-Speed Task Force.BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization strongly pursues hiring a long term High-Speed Rail/Intercity Passenger Rail consultant to guide the HRTPO Board through the development of a strategic high speed and intercity passenger rail plan; and APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization Board at its meeting on the 30th day of October, 2009.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.</p>

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
5	5-1	<p>Following a presentation from the DRPT on the potential costs and benefits of several alternatives, MPO members asked several questions and received responses relating to rail and highway crossing safety, connecting passenger rail services in Richmond, train noise and vibration, project financing, connection with the southeast high speed rail corridor and the potential for a new passenger rail station that will serve the Tri-Cities Area. The clear consensus of the Tri-Cities MPO membership was preference for Alternative 1 as described in the Table ES1 of the document. The MPO adopted a resolution to this effect.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
5	5-2	<p>Alternative 1 would provide high speed service along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor and would also offer expanded conventional passenger rail service along the CSX 64 interstate corridor. Alternative 1 would restore passenger rail service along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor that was discontinued during the early 1970s. The largest cities in the Hampton Roads area would have access to high speed service with connectivity to the southeast high speed rail corridor in the Petersburg area. Fort Lee's doubling in size as a major training installation marks the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor even more advantageous. Therefore, the Tri-Cities MPO supports Alternative 1 as the most logical and consistent alternative with the project purpose and the need of providing a competitive and more reliable transportation choice for people travelling to and from the Hampton Roads region from our perspective.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
5	5-3	<p>RESOLUTION OF THE TRI-CITIES AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION REGARDING THE RICHMOND TO HAMPTON ROADS PASSENGER RAIL PROJECT TIER I DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation provides financial assistance to public agencies for transportation technical studies; and WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation requires approval of regional transportation plans and programs by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in accordance with 23 U.S.C. Part 450; and WHEREAS, the Tri-Cities Area Transportation Policy Committee is the duly designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Tri-Cities Area; and WHEREAS, on January 14, 2010 the Transportation Policy Committee was presented with summary information on alternatives evaluated in the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) dated November 2009. NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Transportation Policy Committee endorses Alternative 1 (along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 Corridor) for designation as the Richmond to Hampton Roads high speed passenger rail corridor. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Transportation Policy Committee supports the ultimate development of passenger rail service along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 Corridor at speeds more than 110 mph.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
6	6-1	<p>The course of action is embodied in the Hampton Roads TPO resolution.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
6	6-2	<p>It takes a lot of people, a lot of passengers, a lot of tickets sold, a lot of money in the fare box to make this kind of operation a success. So we need every rider that we can get. And clearly, Southside Hampton Roads is where the population is today and increasingly it will be in the future. With the light rail Norfolk is going to be better prepared to handle people, whether it be urban transit or intercity rail, than any component portion of the Commonwealth south of Northern Virginia. So that is just such an obvious terminal.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
6	6-3	Avoid losing what we have got. The way the congressional mandate is now as related to intercity rail service, States are going to have to come up with funding to perpetuate some of the regional service (we now enjoy) by 2013. Now, that may be delayed a bit but ultimately we are going to have to find a way to save what we have got as we move forward to build for the future.	Comment noted.
6	6-4	Continuing worry about the Main Street station-committed to the concept of the Main Street station as a Downtown Richmond transit center but if this proposition works out to be as successful, Main Street station and the rail infrastructure surrounding Main Street station is going to be taxed to the point that it could inhibit some of the benefits associated with serving Southside Hampton Roads and the peninsula and the southeast high speed rail.	Main Street Station is the preferred station location in Richmond for all higher speed trains.
7	7-1	I want to begin by first commending Kevin Page and the staff at DRPT for helping finally getting a study out. Virginians for High Speed Rail represents thousands of citizens across this Commonwealth, dozens of businesses, nine localities and four economic development agencies. We strongly believe that this study needs to proceed.	Comment noted.
7	7-2	When high speed rail connects Washington to Richmond to Hampton Roads over three out of every five Virginians will be connected with fast, frequent and reliable passenger rail service. Our position is to support Alternative 1 with enhanced service down to the peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
7	7-3	Get a high speed rail on the Southside with 90 percent reliability because high speed rail is about more than just speed. It is making sure that you have a large amount of service and that that service is reliable and running when it is supposed to.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
7	7-4	Concerned about a potential for a layover in Washington, because of the potential decrease in ridership of up to 50 percent. This decrease can affect economic viability of connecting high speed rail down to Hampton Roads. It can affect how many passengers ride the trains. And it can affect how many tourism and businesses we can bring down to the Commonwealth of Virginia.	Layover in Washington Union Station is dependent on Amtrak scheduling future trains as either terminating in Washington, DC or running through to the Northeast Corridor. More detailed planning will be required for the Tier II Environmental Documentation now that a Preferred Alternative has been selected by the FRA and DRPT in this Tier I EIS.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
7	7-5	Virginians for High Speed Rail officially supports extending enhanced intercity passenger rail (89 mph) with a 90 percent on-time performance between Richmond and Newport News, also serving Williamsburg; and regional high-speed rail (110 mph) with a 90 percent on-time performance between Richmond and Norfolk, also serving Petersburg and Chesapeake. It is our opinion that both of these corridors can be upgraded simultaneously and incrementally, with the first steps being to improve the on-time performance of the Richmond-Newport News passenger service, and extending passenger rail service to Norfolk via Norfolk Southern's route 460 corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
7	7-6	Our first concern regards the ridership projections for 2025, which are based on 2007 ridership numbers of 151,171 passengers. The ridership between 2007 and 2009 grew 20.72 percent or 31,319 passengers on the Newport News to Richmond corridor to 182,490 from a FY 2008 peak of 186,199. The FY 2009 ridership numbers reveal that each round-trip train equals 91,245 passengers annually, and the study's best case scenario estimates only a 41.52 percent per train average increase over the next 15 years with the addition of seven new round-trip trains serving the Hampton Roads region. We believe that because the ridership numbers are based on FY 2007 figures that the ridership estimates for improved intercity and high-speed passenger rail service are understated, and should be reviewed in the context of FY 2009 ridership numbers.	Ridership forecasts prepared for the Tier I EIS are intended only to allow discernment of the preferred alternative, route and speed option. Additional ridership studies and estimates will be prepared for the Preferred Alternative in the Tier II Environmental Documentation.
7	7-7	Our second concern deals with the operating projections. We applaud the Virginia DRPT's effort to keep the operating revenue projections low, however we have concern that the operating projections ranging from a surplus of \$14.56 per passenger (No Action) to a deficit of \$25.01 per passenger (Alternative 1) creates a case where because of the high operating deficit, the project is not deemed economically viable. In context, the current 18 Amtrak Northeast Regional Services, which primarily serve America's only high-speed rail corridor between Washington, D.C. to Boston, MA, have an operating surplus of \$19.56 per passenger. Five of those Amtrak Northeast Regional Services serve Virginia today. While we agree that the likelihood that all future service to Hampton Roads will not have a surplus, the Northeast Corridor has shown that with fast, frequent, and reliable rail service comes the higher potential for an operating surplus.	Additional revenue forecasts will be prepared as the project moves forward in the next cycle of planning.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
7	7-8	Our last concern regards the statement in section 4.3 Estimates of Annual Operating Revenue of the study's executive summary that states "Travelers going north to Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston would transfer at [Washington's] Union Station for trips on the Northeast Corridor." One of the greatest benefits for Virginia passengers is the direct, single seat connections between Richmond and Hampton Roads to destinations on the Northeast Corridor. Today, Virginia is served by five train-sets that connect the Newport News, Richmond, and Lynchburg corridors to the Northeast Corridor, with a sixth service beginning in June of 2010. The difference between a direct connection and a layover in Washington can account for as much as a 50 percent difference in ridership. That layover's impact is so great that it could make the difference between all the alternatives breaking even or having a surplus, and the current estimates where seven of the eight alternatives have an operating deficit. We suggest that DRPT review the impact on ridership and operating revenue in the context of direct connections between Hampton Roads and the Northeast Corridor.	Additional operational planning must be conducted along with the freight railroads and Amtrak to determine actual schedules and equipment assignments. The possibility exists that not all trains will be through routed to the New York requiring transfers at Union Station in Washington, DC.
8	8-1	We work directly with the road force to promote more sustainable transportation, and we will be providing more detailed written comments later. I just wanted to say thank you for having this forum and for bringing this to this point. Thanks to you, Kevin, and all of the staff at DRPT for working on this.	Comment noted.
8	8-2	The Southern Environmental Law Center strongly supports expanded passenger rail service throughout the Commonwealth. We believe that extending and expanding inner city rail from Richmond to both the north and south side of Hampton Roads will provide better connectivity and additional transportation choices.	Comment noted.
8	8-3	We also believe it has the potential to offer a number of financial as well as environmental benefits.	Comment noted.
8	8-4	We also believe it has the potential to offer a number of financial as well as environmental benefits.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
8	8-5	We support, based on what we have seen so far, in concept the Alternative 1. We believe that offers the best combination based on the evidence currently in the draft document because it does both enhance the inner city passenger rail service and I64 corridor along the Northside and it extends service on the existing corridor on the Southside. And, as stated previously, given Norfolk's population size, given the presence of military on the Southside are some of the many reasons we think that Southside service and adding that is so important	The Tier II Environmental Documentation will examine adverse environmental impacts of the Preferred Alternative in greater detail, and will re-examine station location and specific route alignments.
8	8-5	We also would urge you to look at possibilities in, as you go along, not in finalizing the Tier 1, at the very least, in Tier 2, to not only tweak that route of the southern alignment but possibly the stations. It is our understanding that a number of the potential wetlands impacts are tied to the Bowers Hill station, and we would urge you to look at that knowing that there is more than one alternative and alternative route along that Southside of Virginia. Look much more thoroughly. We did not see much under that alternative actually in the DIS itself. The second concern we would like to flag and urge you to look at more thoroughly in the DIS is potential land-use impacts of this project. You mentioned some of the direct land-use impacts of the land that would be affected but you didn't say much about the indirect impacts.	The Tier II Environmental Documentation will examine in greater detail the potential adverse environmental impacts including re-examining station locations and specific route alignments.
8	8-6	We are very concerned about the potential wetlands impact of the Southside as well as the Northside service. You mentioned in your initial presentation, Mr. Page, that the wetlands and wildlife impacts were potentially very severe. We understand that the southern proposal would run along the existing, although, inactive route, which hopefully will greatly minimize the impacts. At this point, in Tier 1, we understand we need to look broadly. We are well aware, in Tier 2, you have the opportunity to refine things and look much more carefully and we urge you to do so and minimize that disturbance and issue. It could negate any of the otherwise environmental and official aspects of this project.	As you have correctly noted, more detailed analysis will occur during Tier II documentation. Potential impacts to wetlands will be minimized to the extent feasible. Any unavoidable impact to wetlands will be coordinated with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as appropriate.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
8	8-6	Look at both the positive and the negative potential impacts of development of adding particularly the additional service to the degree that Alternative 1 proposes for the Southside. We would be very concerned about areas around Norfolk and Bowers Hill. We think, again, it could be very positive net growth impacts by channeling more development into these already-developed areas, especially in Norfolk, but we do think that is something that is missing and urge you to add that to the analysis. We think it has both positive and negative elements that need to be examined. So those are a couple of areas of concern we would urge you to look at further in finalizing this draft. But overall we strongly favor going ahead with this project. We are very glad, again, to see it reach this point, and are looking forward to this and other additional in service throughout the Commonwealth.	As you have correctly noted, more detailed analysis will occur during Tier II documentation. Potential impacts to wetlands will be minimized to the extent feasible. Any unavoidable impact to wetlands will be coordinated with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as appropriate.
9	9-1	I strongly support a high speed rail connection to the Southside of Hampton Roads. Hampton Roads is a unique national asset, containing a huge concentration of federal activities and a critical port.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
9	9-2	The region houses operations of 16 departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government including all five military services. It is home to the nation's largest naval facility, provides primary air defense to our nation's Capitol, and homeland security to our port and seacoast.	Comment noted.
9	9-3	Dependable, efficient and cost effective travel to and from the D.C. area is vital to both civilian and military operations and to the economy of this area and the rest of the region served by our port.	Comment noted.
10	10-1	I am writing in support of a high speed rail connection to the South Hampton Roads area.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
10	10-2	Hampton Roads is the home of the world's largest navy base, and houses operations of 16 departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
10	10-3	We are also a major tourist destination and rank as one of the best places to live and retire in the country. The fact that we lie at the end of a cul-de-sac, and our transportation infrastructure is totally obsolete, greatly hampers our ability to continue to thrive and compete in these markets. My company currently has pertinent example, in a case where we are competing for a large development project in Baltimore. It will be necessary for us to travel to that area many times during the project, and the \$1,000+ cost of airline ticket will probably make us so non-competitive we will not get the project, or it will destroy our profit potential if we do.	Comment noted.
10	10-4	Possibly even more important than the above are the safety considerations. The lack of sufficient evacuation routes in the case of a major emergency could lead to human losses of devastating proportions.	Comment noted.
10	10-5	The Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor offers an exceptional opportunity for providing high speed rail to Hampton Roads at the least cost and in the least amount of time. We must not let this opportunity go untapped.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
11	11-1	I am very concerned that Hampton Roads will once again be passed by. In the 60's, the Interstate Road system was designed and left this area at the end of cul-de-sac. I am now seeing that we stand the chance for this to happen once again with High Speed Rail. Hampton Roads needs High Speed Rail. We need it for a lot of very good reasons. For once, this Region has a plan that has been agreed on by all of the cities and counties in the Region. We have a common vision of what should be done. Please support High Speed Rail for Hampton Roads.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
11	11-2	We need it to reduce our dependence on building highways and tunnels.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
11	11-3	We need it for commerce. We need it for tourism.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
12	12-1	Please add my name to the long list of those supporting High Speed Rail to Hampton Roads. Our area has lacked this crucial connection for far too long.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
13	13-1	Please accept this email indicating my very strong support of high speed rail access along the Route 460 corridor to Hampton Roads.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
13	13-2	With the largest population concentrated in Southside Hampton Roads, and light rail already under construction, and the Norfolk Southern line location, it is the obvious best solution to serve Hampton Roads with high speed rail.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
14	14-1	Please accept this letter of endorsement for the extension of high speed rail service from Washington D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk and Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph, and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/164 corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
14	14-2	The concentration of federal assets in the region with 16 departments and agencies of federal government including 5 military services. It houses the nation's largest naval facility, provide major air defense to the nation's capital and homeland security to our port and seacoast. Dependable, efficient and cost effective travel to and from Washington is vital to operation.	Comment noted.
14	14-3	High-speed rail, coupled with connection to an intercity light rail system whose first phase in under construction, will provide a much needed transportation alternative to visitors	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
14	14-4	and will help mitigate growing congestion during the peak tourism season.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
14	14-5	The Hampton Roads region is a major tourism destination attracting nearly 5 million tourists annually. The Norfolk Southern/ Route 460 corridor will be an added benefit to the ports of Hampton Roads and assist the growth of manufacturing and distribution centers along the corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
14	14-6	The Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor can be implemented with a modest investment and in a short amount of time. Hampton roads offer the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country. The Bowers Hill station will provide easy access to the I-264 corridor and Hampton Roads beltways {I-64/I-664}. Community plans envision an intermodal transfer facility at the harbor park station in downtown Norfolk will link high-speed rail to the light rail systems serving the region.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
14	14-7	The high speed rail line will be available for emergency evacuation during storms. All major access routes serving the Hampton Roads region are hindered by bridges and tunnels.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
15	15-1	I've seen bits and pieces of this plan and even participated to a small degree in a few parts of the corridor during the last 6 years. I am really optimistic over what it can and will deliver to deliver to the Commonwealth in the next 30 years and beyond. If you have a website that carries current progress and issues to be considered I would like to be placed on the mailing list.	Please view the project website at: <a href="http://www.rich2hrrail.info">www.rich2hrrail.info</a>
16	16-1	I wholeheartedly support High Speed Rail in Hampton Roads.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
16	16-2	The addition of High Speed Rail in Hampton Roads will help bridge the gap between Hampton Roads cities, Richmond and Northern Virginia, and assist with economic development of the area.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
16	16-3	It is time for Hampton Roads to have a long term vision for the area and High Speed Rail will be key to further connecting the area and to putting us more on the map from a regional standpoint.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
17	17-1	I am enthusiastically supportive of the development of a high speed rail link into the Hampton Roads area. I view it as an essential component of our strategic development for this century.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
18	18-1	This is to indicate my full support for the recommendation of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization for rail service to our region. For your reference, I post the basic position below:"Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor."Hampton Roads is America's First Region. As such, we have historical, economic, social, and cultural connections to Virginia and the nation.For all these reasons, I heartily endorse the position taken by our metropolitan transportation planning agency and urge your full commitment.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
18	18-2	The Port of Virginia, the military establishments in the area, our tourism and visitor industry, manufacturing and trade, all require better connectivity than now exists.	Comment noted.
19	19-1	The City of Richmond applauds VDRPT for their efforts in developing the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier 1 Study. Connecting the two major urbanized areas with improved passenger rail service and eventual high speed passenger rail infrastructure will provide competitive travel alternatives, enhance the environment, attract jobs, encourage economic development and promote tourism in Central Virginia and Hampton Roads.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
19	19-2	One of the vision statements for the implementation of the City of Richmond's Downtown Master Plan is that Main Street Station should be restored as an intermodal transportation center (page 4.61). the plan recognizes that "Main Street Station remains underutilized" and continues to saystates that "the City should take advantage of this great asset by restoring its role as the center of the community".The Plan states that utilizing Main Street Station as an inter-modal transportation center "would provide a tremendous benefit to Downtown". "Main Street Station", the plan continues, "is an excellent choice for such a transportation center, as the station is a grand entrance to the city, and its location provides direct access to the City Center and Downtown neighborhoods". Lastly, the plan states that, if it were to happen, "increased rail service could serve the station, making Main Street Station a local and regional transportation destination." - Lory Markham, Planner III, Land Use Administration Division	Main Street Station is the preferred station location in Richmond for all higher speed trains.
19	19-3	The Land Use Administration division is supportive of the use of Main Street Station as a hub in the proposed high speed rail network, but respectfully declines to comment at this time. When an alternative is chosen and more information is provided regarding the impact of the alternative on Main Street Station, Land Use Administration will provide additional comments. - Lory Markham, Planner III, Land Use Administration Division	Main Street Station is the preferred station location in Richmond for all higher speed trains.
19	19-4	There is no impact. The train station is a permitted use in the zoning district in which it is located and already exists. -William Davidson, Zoning Administrator (Zoning Administration)	Main Street Station is the preferred station location in Richmond for all higher speed trains.
19	19-5	Richmond's downtown Main Street Station multimodal transportation center will serve as the termini or origination point for all of the rail alternatives. Currently the station is served by only four trains along the Newport News to Boston corridor. The City is delighted and positioned to have Main Street Station, at full build out, to serve as the hub for Virginia's passenger rail network with 32 trains per day from the north, south, east and west. The proposed nine trains per day with the Richmond to Hampton Roads service are a component of the state rail network and vital to the connectivity within the Commonwealth. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works	Main Street Station is the preferred station location in Richmond for all higher speed trains.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
19	19-6	In reviewing the proposed corridor options, Alternative 1 –extending enhanced intercity passenger rail (79 mph) between Richmond and Williamsburg/Newport News and regional high speed rail (90-110 mph) between Richmond and Norfolk is the most attractive alternative to best serve the City of Richmond and Main Street Station. Both rail corridors would operate with 90 percent on-time performance. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
19	19-7	This alternative serves the greatest population base, provides new passenger rail to Norfolk, contains one of the highest ridership forecasts and provides the high speed rail capital infrastructure to the South which is a component of the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
19	19-8	The estimated cost effectiveness of the alternative falls in the mid range of the options. With the continued increase in the existing Amtrak ridership and the proposed increase in service, the projected ridership figures in the study might be understated which would positively impact the cost effectiveness of the alternative. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
19	19-9	Amtrak’s on-time performance for their Northeast Regional service for the past 12 months was at an 80% level. The on-time performance for the Northeast Regional Train 95 providing service between Boston, Richmond’s Main Street Station and Newport News for the past 12 months was at a 55% level and negatively impacted the quality of rail service in Richmond. It is encouraged that the two rail corridors in Alternative 1 be upgraded incrementally with the first steps directed at improving the on-time performance of the Richmond-Newport News passenger service and extending passenger rail service to Norfolk via Norfolk Southern’s route 460 corridor. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
19	19-10	The City's position in support of Alternative 1 is shared by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization, (Tri-Cities Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is expected to take action on 1/14/10 in favor of Alternative 1), Virginians for High Speed Rail and the Virginia Association of Railway Patrons. The City of Richmond is very encouraged by the findings of the study and wholeheartedly supports the development of higher and high speed rail from the Hampton Roads area to Richmond and throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
19	19-11	Our records indicate no evidence of chemical spills or complaints of potential contamination of surface or subsurface environments resulting from pollution incidents on the City of Richmond portion of this study. This response does not constitute a representation of the property's condition and is not binding as such on the Department or the City. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the City assume no liability for hazardous material releases that might have occurred or for any adverse environmental conditions that might exist. - Captain R.S. Baumgardner, Jr., Hazardous Materials Coordinator, Fire Department	Comment noted.
20	20-1	The Hampton Roads Partnership's 115-plus members, including the chief elected official of all seventeen regional communities, leaders from private businesses, higher and secondary education, military and labor from both South Hampton Roads and the Virginia Peninsula, represent approximately 25% of the region's workforce and all of its more than 1.6 million citizens. We endorse the resolution of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) made October 30, 2009 and encourage DRPT to adopt an enhanced alternative #1. The Regional Position: Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor as the Regional High-Speed Rail corridor (110mph and 90% reliability) designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph. And enhance the intercity passenger rail service (89mph and 90% reliability) along the CSX/I64 corridor. The HRTPO position is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative #1, which we strongly endorse.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
20	20-2	Both can be done simultaneously and incrementally with the first steps being the extension of passenger rail to Norfolk and improving the on-time performance and reliability of the current passenger rail service to Williamsburg and Newport News.	Comment noted.
20	20-3	This study is the first step in the federal process and we express these concerns about it:Single seat service is needed from Hampton Roads /Richmond to destinations on the Northeast Corridor, andRichmond/Hampton Roads needs to be the southern-most terminus for the Northeast Corridor.	Comment noted.
21	21-1	The Hampton Roads Partnership's 115-plus members, including the chief elected official of all seventeen regional communities, leaders from private businesses, higher and secondary education, military and labor from both South Hampton Roads and the Virginia Peninsula, represent approximately 25% of the region's workforce and all of its more than 1.6 million citizens. We endorse the resolution of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) made October 30, 2009 and encourage DRPT to adopt an enhanced alternative #1.The Regional Position: Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor as the Regional High-Speed Rail corridor (110mph and 90% reliability) designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph. And enhance the intercity passenger rail service (89mph and 90% reliability along the CSX/I64 corridor. The HRTPO position is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative #1, which we strongly endorse.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
21	21-2	Both can be done simultaneously and incrementally with the first steps being the extension of passenger rail to Norfolk and improving the on-time performance and reliability of the current passenger rail service to Williamsburg and Newport News.	Comment noted.
21	21-3	This study is the first step in the federal process and we express these concerns about it:Single seat service is needed from Hampton Roads /Richmond to destinations on the Northeast Corridor, andRichmond/Hampton Roads needs to be the southern-most terminus for the Northeast Corridor.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
22	22-1	I support an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
22	22-2	Given Hampton Roads unique market characteristics; the regions proximity to Washington, D.C.; the suitability of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor to high-speed rail; and the fact that passenger rail service can be implemented in the corridor with a modest investment and in a relatively short period of time, Hampton Roads arguably offers the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
22	22-3	It is estimated that connecting Hampton Roads to the high-speed rail corridor will create or sustain 30,000 jobs and create \$3 billion in economic development. Connecting Hampton Roads is very important for the continued economic success of the Commonwealth and the Hampton Roads.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
23	23-1	Logic demands that high(er) speed rail must serve the south side of Hampton Roads where all the people are. Please don't let this economic opportunity pass us by.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
24	24-1	I am writing to submit my support for this rail project.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
24	24-2	Rail travel is incredibly eco-friendly, not to mention easy for the public to use and saves wear and tear on our roadways.	Comment noted.
24	24-3	Residents of both cities would make use of this rail line for business and personal travel and tourism in both areas would increase. My family and I look forward to seeing a Richmond to Norfolk rail line.	Comment noted.
25	25-1	I am very supportive of a high speed railway system in Virginia. There is a great need for this kind of transportation and we need to be innovative and be one of the first to step up to the plate.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
26	26-1	As a manufacturing business owner and Planning Commissioner in the City of Norfolk, I want to express my support for a high speed rail connection to Hampton Roads, specifically an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
26	26-2	Our business manufactures and distributes our products throughout the Mid-Atlantic region and have experienced frustration with increasingly congested highways year round.	Comment noted.
26	26-3	I drive up to Washington on those congested highways on a regular basis and the former three hour drive now routinely takes up to five hours each way.	Comment noted.
26	26-4	Air transportation is a far too expensive option into DCA. As a result, I make fewer trips to Washington even though it would enhance my business opportunities. High speed rail would not only be my preferred mode of transportation out of the Norfolk area. It would also allow me the opportunity to be productive while I am travelling.	Comment noted.
26	26-5	From a community planning standpoint, a light rail tie-in at Harbor Park to high speed rail is a natural boost to our area's public transportation initiatives. With light rail, other cities in the region will have the incentive to support and enhance Norfolk's initiative. Our community desperately needs high speed rail!!	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
27	27-1	I saw the proposed location for the Petersburg, Va station which is not really IN Petersburg. Has there been any consideration of building a new station in town? There has been a lot of revitalization going on and it would be great to have it walking distance for some people.	The general station location proposed for the Petersburg area has been the subject of the SEHSR environmental documentation. However, selection of an exact station location will be the subject of subsequent environmental documentation prepared by the project proponent. Norfolk trains would stop at the existing Petersburg station.
28	28-1	I am contacting you today to express my interest in assuring that every serious consideration is given to insuring that Hampton Roads has High Speed Rail access in the near future. Hampton Roads is a unique treasure along the East Coast. We have abundant natural resources; our port, our beaches and climate, economic resources: our port, our military installations, our tourism industry, and cultural resources in the arts and history. These resources will only be enhanced by your decision to bring High Speed Rail to South Hampton Roads, by way of Bowers Hill, along the Rt 460 corridor, and to improve rail travel along the Peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
28	28-2	To ensure the continued vibrancy and growth of the region we must not end up segregated from the rest of the Mid-Atlantic region, as happened during the development of the Interstate Highway System years ago.	Comment noted.
28	28-3	Given Hampton Roads unique market characteristics; the regions proximity to Washington, D.C.; the suitability of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor to high-speed rail; and the fact that passenger rail service can be implemented in the corridor with a modest investment and in a relatively short period of time, Hampton Roads arguably offers the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
29	29-1	I am writing to ask for your support of Alternative #1 for the Washington DC to Norfolk, VA High Speed Rail Corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
29	29-2	The Hampton Roads Region is unique in the United States (outside of Washington, DC) for its concentration of military and national security installations. Having High Speed Rail service to our region is imperative to ensure dependable, efficient and cost effective travel to and from the D.C. area from an operational standpoint.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
29	29-3	Tourism is vital to the regional economy and many of the nation's most historic areas are found within the Hampton Roads region. Our region's economic competitiveness also depends on the completion of this High Speed Rail corridor. In addition to facilitating the movement of people, improvements in the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor will have the added benefit of enhancing the competitiveness of the Port of Virginia, while fostering the growth of manufacturing and distribution centers along the corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
29	29-4	Access for more than 5 million tourists annually requires rail service to supplement the increasingly congested interstate corridor.	Comment noted.
29	29-6	Public Safety and Emergency Evacuation requires alternative means of egress to handle the population. The bridges and tunnels are insufficient to move citizens out of the region in the case of an emergency and rail service is one of the only alternatives to improve this very dangerous situation.	Comment noted.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
30	30-1	I am in support of high-speed rail service from Richmond/Petersburg to the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. I also support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's position that includes high-speed rail along NS/Route 460 to Norfolk, and the enhancement of the existing rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor to the Peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
30	30-2	To link our area to the high-speed rail service that is planned along the I-95 corridor from Richmond/Petersburg to Washington, D.C.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
30	30-3	Our region has the largest military (primarily the naval facilities) and other government operations in the country. High-speed rail that would link to the light rail system in Norfolk will provide fast and cost effective transportation for many people who are connected with the military and government in Washington, D.C.	Comment noted.
30	30-4	High-speed rail to the Peninsula and South Hampton Roads is very important to the future of tourism in all of Hampton Roads. This area is a major tourist destination (Virginia Beach, Norfolk and Williamsburg to name a few) and with high-speed rail that will connect with our light rail system, a much needed transportation alternative would be provided for visitors to our region. It will also help to reduce traffic congestion, especially during the tourist seasons. Additionally, a high-speed rail station located at the Bowers Hill area will provide convenient access to the interstate highways in Hampton Roads – I-64, I-664, I-464 and I-264. And, a link to the Harbor Park light rail station in Norfolk (now under construction) would provide access to light rail, bus and ferry services as well as cruise ship facilities.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
30	30-5	An important need for high-speed rail in the Hampton Roads area is for emergency evacuation. The existing major evacuation routes in Southampton Roads have bridges and tunnels that cause significant problems for emergency evacuation from our area. High-speed rail will provide for quickly moving more people out of the area, and help to reduce congestion at our bridges and tunnels during an emergency evacuation.	The Purpose and Need section of the Draft EIS refers to emergency evacuation.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
31	31-1	The Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance, representing nearly 1,000 businesses supports the Virginians for High Speed Rail position for enhanced intercity passenger rail service (89 mph and 90 percent reliability) along the existing Peninsula route and classifying the Petersburg to Norfolk corridor as a Regional High Speed Rail corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
31	31-2	Enhancing the existing Peninsula link would greatly aid our tourism industry making our area more easily accessible to visitors from the Washington, D.C. area and points along the Northeast corridor.	Comment noted.
31	31-3	It would also serve as a relief to the often congesting I-95/I-64 highways.	Comment noted.
32	32-1	I am writing to voice my strong support for high speed rail service to Norfolk. The Richmond-Norfolk corridor should be the primary high-speed corridor. The Richmond to Newport News corridor for enhanced service should be adequate if schedules can maintained, which they are not currently.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
32	32-2	My son rides the Newport News train very often to Washington, DC where he works for the Washington Post. He boards the train in Richmond and finds it is rarely on time, especially going north. We often wonder how a train that originates in Newport News can be late when it gets to Richmond??	The interference with freight trains often delays Amtrak trains. All alternatives being considered assumed the improvement of on time performance of existing Amtrak trains by making incremental investments in the infrastructure allowing freight and passenger trains to operate efficiently.
33	33-1	I am a Land Planner/Landscape Architect who has practiced for 38 years in the Commonwealth. My practice has been with both private developers and governments, including many public/private partnership efforts. "Smart Growth" and "Sustainability" are relatively new terms for the focus of my practice over its entire history. Being a second generation Landscape Architect, I grew up with these concepts.	Comment noted.
33	33-2	I was previously a member of the Board of VHSRDC. It is my professional opinion that High Speed Rail and Transit Oriented Development are critical to proper community development patterns, and to Conservation oriented practices in rural areas. Although not well versed in the specifics of the issues such as "on time" and speed in the present discussion, I can say without qualification that the Commonwealth of Virginia must have high speed rail, and ultimately mag lev service for the promotion of proper development patterns.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
34	34-1	My wife and I take AMTRAK three or four times a year to New York. We are very pleased with the service we receive and the cost is very fair. My wife and I would like to spend more time in Richmond enjoying and learning more about our state capital.	Comment noted.
34	34-2	We are not comfortable driving on I 64, we find it stressing accompanied by a danger of collision from heavy traffic. We often wonder why it is that Europe has superb rail traffic and ours is clearly not comparable.	The FRA and DRPT are evaluating improvements to the existing rail passenger service and supporting infrastructure to help alleviate congestion on I-64 and other regional highways.
34	34-3	We believe that improved rail traffic between Hampton Roads and Richmond would be better for the environment and would satisfy a need that exists but is not served by our current transportation. We support the proposed plan for rail service from Richmond to Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
35	35-1	I am writing this e-mail to strongly endorse Alternative One of the high speed rail extension to Hampton Roads. It is imperative that this project be funded as Hampton Roads is one of the two most economically important regions in Virginia and is perhaps the most important military installation on the East Coast. We are currently "off the grid" when it comes to rail transportation and	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
35	35-2	Alternative One is the key element to link our region and help us grow over the next several decades. Hampton Roads is one of the bright spots nationally with job creation and we can't afford to be left behind. I am the CEO of a business with 30 employees and am involved in a number of civic organizations including Eastern Virginia Medical School, the Chrysler Museum, and Norfolk Academy. Each of these organizations would benefit greatly from Alternative One as well.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
36	36-1	As the owner of a Hampton Roads based business that does projects throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region and a long time resident of the area, I strongly support the extension of high speed rail to Hampton Roads through the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor. I specifically support the enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
36	36-2	With dwindling resources available for highway construction and with an increased understanding of the environmental consequences of our over-dependence on the automobile, rail is the best option for increasing access to our region.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
36	36-4	It will also provide another means of evacuation in the event of a natural disaster.	Comment noted.
37	37-1	I am a member of Virginia Beach Vision and support the efforts to establish a connection for Hampton Roads to the high speed rail. Specifically, I support an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRPTO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
37	37-2	I believe that this alternative will help promote additional tourism, attract more businesses and greatly improve the overall transportation and business climate in the area. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the public hearing on this matter on the 28th due to a previously planned trip. However, I wanted to make sure I submitted my support for this initiative.	Comment noted.
38	38-1	Regarding high speed rail to Hampton Roads, I would like you to know that I support an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRPTO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
38	38-2	The Hampton Roads area is home to the largest federal footprint in the nation except Washington D.C. The region houses operations of sixteen departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government. This includes all five military services. The nation's largest naval facility, here in the region, provides primary air defense to our nation's Capitol, and homeland security to our port and seacoast. This is why it is imperative, that we have dependable, efficient and cost effective travel to and from Washington, DC. As we move into the future, it will be vital for federal operations and by extension our national security.	Comment noted.
39	39-1	I am writing to voice my support for high speed rail service to Hampton Roads. Specifically, I support the position endorsed by the HRTPO (an enhanced Alternative 1 designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhancing the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor).	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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40	40-1	As a member of the Executive Committee of the Hampton Roads Chamber and the Business Banking Manager in Eastern VA for Wachovia, I would like to emphasize my support for High Speed rail in the Hamptons Road area due to the very positive impact it would have on the State and the Region.	Comment noted.
41	41-1	Please register me as a supporter of light rail	Comment noted.
42	42-1	This is an incredibly important subject to this area.	Comment noted.
43	43-1	I am writing regarding the proposed link of high speed rail to Hampton Roads. I strongly support of an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO. This Alternative best reflects the long term transportation needs for the Hampton Roads region.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
44	44-1	I am supporting the high speed rail corridor to Hampton Roads and the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service to the region.	Comment noted.
45	45-1	I am writing to express my strong support for an enhanced Alternative 1 high speed rail connection to Hampton Roads that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
45	45-2	As the Director of Federal Building Programs with an international Architecture, Engineering and Construction company, I travel frequently to Washington, DC. Like many of my counterparts in my company, other private industry and our government clients, I currently find driving to be the most convenient and viable mode of transportation, in absence of an efficient rail option and affordable airfares. Having said that, the driving option requires an unacceptable amount of unproductive time, the additional cost of an overnight hotel stay, and adds to costly congestion on the highways of Hampton Roads, Richmond and Washington, DC.	Comment noted.
45	45-3	I am always amazed at the number of cars that travel the same route on a regular basis. I am advised that there is a similar continuous influx of traffic into Hampton Roads by government and industry to conduct business, and families coming to our tourist destination. Adding high-speed rail to Hampton Roads, combined with Light Rail, would provide me and others with the option of using an integrated mass transit system without ever getting on a highway.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
45	45-4	The payback would be quick, as Hampton Roads' competitiveness in business and tourism increases, required investments in road construction and maintenance decrease, new businesses and government offices feel confident in locating here,	Comment noted.
45	45-5	and residents are provided another evacuation in the event of an emergency.	Comment noted.
46	46-1	South Hampton Roads desperately needs and deserves High Speed Rail.	Comment noted.
46	46-2	We are dependent on this for economic development and for tourism in our region!	Comment noted.
47	47-1	I write to support the extension of high speed rail service in Virginia from DC to Richmond and further to Hampton Roads. I support following the NS/Route 460 corridor for high speed rail. I further promote the enhancement of the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
48	48-1	I support the development and construction of the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail system. This is a project by which all parties WIN. The timing could not be better.	Comment noted.
48	48-2	The environmental impact appears minimized while the economic impact appears maximized.	Comment noted.
48	48-3	If managed properly, this passenger rail system can become a point of destination within itself. It can have the power to influence tourists to 'take the train' as their vacation experience. Of course, the rail can carry folk to their geographical destinations but just think of the unlimited number of creative ventures aboard the train.	Comment noted.
49	49-1	I will be out of town for the public hearings so I would like express my support for both high speed rail and commuter rail lines. Let me first say that when I was moved to the area by the Navy in '92 I was surprised to not see any viable type of public transportation.	Comment noted.
49	49-2	The buses at the time only seemed to service neighborhoods that where unsafe. Outside of that there are many reasons or rail service. It is efficient; hundreds and thousands of people for a fraction of the cost compared to both automobiles and buses.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
49	49-3	It is fast, commuters do not have to deal with traffic. It reliably links major employers and businesses with their employees and clients.	Comment noted.
49	49-4	It is safe, easy to use and reasonably priced compared to operating vehicle. With a high speed rail system the time to travel to Washington D.C. and Richmond would be cut in half.	Comment noted.
49	49-5	It was also help to evacuate people if needed since the current transportation system cannot handle an evacuation.	Comment noted.
50	50-1	I am 100% in support of a high-speed rail corridor to Hampton Roads and enhanced intercity passenger rail service to the region.	Comment noted.
50	50-2	Not only would it facilitate my son's travel to and from college in Philadelphia (he does not have a car on campus and comes home by train-we have to pick him up either in Newport News or Richmond)	Comment noted.
50	50-3	but it furthers my interest in replacing cars with trains, a more environmentally friendly and less energy intensive form of transportation. I would be thrilled to take the train to and from Richmond instead of driving.	Comment noted.
51	51-1	This area needs the light and fast speed trains to help this area attract businesses. The company I represent has 2500 employees and our main office is in DC and New York.	Comment noted.
52	52-1	Let me add my strongest endorsement for extending High Speed rail from Petersburg, Virginia to Downtown Norfolk. As a life-long resident and student of the growth of our region I offer critical considerations in favor of High Speed Rail to south Hampton Roads.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
52	52-2	The necessity of a non-automotive emergency transportation system that doesn't rely on our regions bridge tunnel system or the Peninsula's massively congested corridor is clear. A major hurricane hitting Hampton Roads would make New Orleans' human suffering pale in comparison. Our transportation system is failing under average day usage. Highways and automobiles are very inefficient means of moving massive numbers of people- especially under emergency conditions.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
52	52-3	The logical-ness of connecting into the existing local transportation system – Light Rail- from the existing Norfolk Southern existing rail corridor is an extremely cost effective approach.	Comment noted.
52	52-4	Our nation’s reliance on quick efficient access to south Hampton Roads’ national defense facilities. Substantial numbers of both military and private personnel routinely commute to Washington DC and beyond from Hampton Roads. High Speed rail could significantly improve productivity by providing an environment where meeting preparation and business interactions could be undertaken while commuting.	Comment noted.
52	52-5	The illogic of the alternative: Building more and more lanes of interstate highway to transport people in and out of the region. Removing automobiles that are coming in or going out will significantly improve regional traffic congestion. Because of our bottle-necks ( the region is surrounded by the Great Dismal Swamp, James River, Hampton Roads harbor, Chesapeake Bay, Atlantic Ocean) at bridges and tunnels our highway costs and complications are uniquely and significantly different from most other regions (except perhaps Manhattan/ Long Island.)	Comment noted.
52	52-6	Our region’s major industry: Tourism could greatly benefit and expand from rail service especially as light rail system extends to Virginia Beach oceanfront resort area.	Comment noted.
53	53-1	Please accept this letter of support for high-speed rail to Hampton Roads. VA as proposed under the “enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO”. Our company would use this service extensively in business travels. High-speed rail on the alternative route coming down the peninsular in Newport News would not be used by our employees due to the traffic congestion of accessing that location. We would continue to fly or drive.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
54	54-1	I strongly urge you to move forward to adopt an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
54	54-2	There are a number of specific focus areas that this new rail system will enhance and they are as follows: Public Safety and Emergency Evacuation;	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
54	54-3	Significant return on investment;	Comment noted.
54	54-4	Enhancement for our Economic Competitiveness; Support an interconnected livable community; Ability to sustain and grow tourism;	Comment noted.
54	54-5	The recognition of the Hampton Roads community and its unique national impact servicing the military and the major port for the central mid-Atlantic area.	Comment noted.
55	55-1	I support this project 100%. We need this for our region.	Comment noted.
56	56-1	I believe that we should proceed with the resolution of the HRPTO regarding the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor. This is a service that is sorely needed and will connect Hampton Roads to rest of the East Coast in a very positive manner.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
56	56-2	Furthermore, it is difficult to get to DC from here in a reasonable time and at a reasonable cost.	Comment noted.
56	56-3	Furthermore, it is difficult to get to DC from here in a reasonable time and at a reasonable cost.	Comment noted.
56	56-4	I believe that this connection will improve commerce between Hampton Roads and DC and even spur recreational trips to and from both. Hampton Roads is currently a detour when traveling the East Coast. This connection will make it part of the mainstream and improve future economic development and the quality of life.	Comment noted.
57	57-1	I am 100% in favor of any and all railway transportation. It is long over due.	Comment noted.
58	58-1	I support high speed passenger rail down the 460 corridor and enhanced service from Newport News to Richmond.	Comment noted.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
59	59-1	I have a business located in downtown Norfolk (25 years) and live about 4 miles from downtown. I also have property in Maine and make frequent trips – usually drive and sometimes fly to Boston and rent a car from there. I strongly favor high speed rail to Southside. I have tried the train from the peninsula to Boston and it simply takes too long. I would use high speed service – I am a ground lover and not having to drive 750 miles would be very attractive.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
59	59-2	I think Norfolk has a bright future in the trend to density, and quality and effective public transportation is important to this progress. I know it is political suicide but raising the gas tax and other costs of driving is, to me, the single most important piece to developing public transportation that does not need deal killing heavy public subsidy. And, yes, it would benefit my business (and the value of my residence) to have more people that want to live close-in.	Comment noted.
60	60-1	I am writing to add my support for high speed passenger rail down the 460 corridor and for enhanced service from Newport News to Richmond.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
60	60-2	Hampton Roads is a unique national asset, containing the largest concentration of federal activities anywhere in the country outside of D.C. The region houses operations of 16 departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government including all five military services. It is home to the nation's largest naval facility, provides primary air defense to our nation's Capitol, and homeland security to our port and seacoast. Dependable, efficient, and cost effective travel to and from the D.C. area is vital to operations.	Comment noted.
60	60-3	Hampton Roads is home to major tourist destinations, including the Virginia Beach oceanfront and historic Williamsburg area, attracting nearly 5 million tourists annually.	Comment noted.
60	60-4	High-speed rail, coupled with a connection to an intercity light rail system whose first phase is already under construction, will provide a much needed transportation alternative to visitors and will help mitigate growing congestion during the peak tourist season.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
60	60-5	Hampton Roads has insufficient emergency evacuation routes to handle its population, hindered to a great extent by bridge and tunnel crossings on every major corridor. High-speed rail will provide a high volume transportation option for moving people more quickly from the area without future congesting limited highway evacuation routes.	Comment noted.
61	61-1	I would like to see Alternative 1 implemented - three daily, conventional speed round trip trains on the peninsula route, and six daily, high speed round trip trains on the Southside route.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
62	62-1	I support high speed passenger rail down the 460 corridor and enhanced service from Newport News to Richmond.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
63	63-1	Rail Service through Richmond is currently bottlenecked - the scheduled nearly 4 hours from Williamsburg to DC is simply too long (and it's frequently delayed for more than that). Reducing this bottleneck should be a high-priority item well in advance of any other improvements.	FRA and DRPT are working with the host freight railroad to remove bottlenecks in this segment of railroad.
63	63-2	Access to North East Corridor traffic along the Peninsula could be an economic boon to Virginia, if convenient access to tourist destinations were provided, such as Kings Dominion (Doswell), Colonial Williamsburg, and Norfolk/Virginia Beach. However, without substantial subsidies, it's unlikely to be realized. Regional rail traffic takes too long, and is too expensive for most families (who'd tend to have multiple passengers.) High-speed rail service could solve the duration problem, but would only exacerbate the cost issue. Nevertheless, the economics of providing subsidized access to these destinations from the entire NE corridor should be considered - imagine what, say, 200,000 additional visits by out-of-state visitors to our tourist destinations might mean economically?	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
63	63-3	Access to rail stations in Northern Virginia is extremely limited from a practical perspective. Having to travel to Washington, D.C., especially in the morning rush to catch a train to Richmond is absurd; in the time it would take for me to travel to Union Station in the morning, I'd already have reached Fredericksburg. Without fast, convenient access to an embarking station, high-speed rail will be pointless. As it stands, rail service is slower, less convenient, more expensive, and less flexible than driving a car. This is something of a hard sell, to put it mildly. In my ideal world, a rail terminal linking Dulles airport to the NE Corridor (somehow) would be ideal (not counting Metro, as an hour+ trip just to reach WAS doesn't help.)	Comment noted.
63	63-4	Service between WDC and Norfolk is currently only twice a day; this is far too infrequent for most passengers, and arrivals are too late in the day for most business travelers. The first arrival in Norfolk is at 11:50 am, well into the business day. The closer to a 9:00 am first arrival, the better.	Comment noted.
63	63-5	If I had my choice, a high-speed "backbone" line between Washington, DC and Richmond would be installed - in effect, an extension of the current NorthEast regional Acela service, terminating in Richmond, with hourly, or bi-hourly arrivals/departures. From there, frequent and fast connections to the Peninsula stations, Petersburg, Charlottesville, etc, including RIC airport using different carriages, with arrivals and departures coordinated to avoid long layovers. Basically, a hub-and-spoke system.	The SEHSR and Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project are planned as a diesel-electric technology.
63	63-6	It is regrettable that the Peninsula stations apparently can't be connected to Norfolk/Chesapeake. It would seem easier to connect Petersburg to Norfolk via Richmond, using a short-haul rail service.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
64	64-1	<p>I am a supporting member of Virginians for High-Speed Rail. I frequently travel by rail from Newport News to Richmond, Baltimore and Boston. Portions of my travel have been made on Amtrak's Acela. And I have recently returned from travel to the West Coast and back exclusively on Amtrak. I find rail travel very comfortable and convenient. As much as I would like to see an upgrade to high-speed rail on the peninsula I don't see track speeds getting much over 90 mph. What does make sense is the Southside High-Speed Corridor from Richmond through Petersburg that parallels route 460 to Norfolk. The population and tourist industry would support it. However, southerly expansion directly from Norfolk probably would not be feasible due to population centers being further inland as outlined the Federal Railroad Administration's Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor plan. High-speed rail. It's the future of transportation.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
65	65-1	<p>I strongly support improved Amtrak service from Washington, D.C. to Newport News. The current situation is quite ridiculous, with times much slower than driving, plus a very spotty schedule (not to mention the train frequently having to stop to let freight trains go past). These are the two power centers of Virginia and they should be powerfully linked by fast and frequent and reliable rail -- the way New York is linked to Albany, or Sacramento is linked to Oakland.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
66	66-1	<p>I fully support the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
66	66-2	<p>This route will connect nearly 1 million people to Richmond and points beyond with reliable high speed transportation options</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
66	66-3	<p>and reduce congestion on regional highways.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
67	67-1	<p>I support a high speed rail connection which will extend high speed rail service from Washington D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, particularly an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO!</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
68	68-1	In the January 2010 meeting of the Virginia Beach Hotel Association Board of Directors, a motion was carried to support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's resolution supporting regional high speed and intercity passenger rail. The VBHMA supports the designation of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 Corridor as the "High-Speed Rail Corridor" to Hampton Roads, and in conjunction with the high-speed corridor, the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor on the Peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
69	69-1	This High speed rail is a fantastic idea. My family looks at this as opportunity to expand our choices of employment. We could work in the Richmond, or DC area and commute back and forth each day.	Comment noted.
70	70-1	Unfortunately I can not attend the hearing but I want to thank you all what you are doing and add my voice to the chorus saying that we need high speed rail to come through Norfolk. I live in the city of Norfolk and just a couple of months ago, was fortunate to get a federal government position which is based in Arlington. Thanks to modern day technology, it looks like I'll be able to accomplish enough of my work via the computer that I won't have to move but I will need to be in Arlington at least once a month. I checked the Amtrak schedule and its abymssmal with only one early morning departure in that direction on Sundays and one morning/one evening departure on the week days. Since neither is convenient to my schedule, I am unlike to be able to use rail as it currently exists for Southeastern Virginia as a way to commute to my new job. I was very dissapointed about that, but remain hopeful that high speed rail will soon be an option.	Comment noted.
71	71-1	I would like to endorse and publicly support the action of bringing high speed rail to the Hampton Roads area. - it's time we take initiative and demand that our elected representatives vote YES for high speed rail.	Comment noted.
71	71-2	It would help to unclog our highways in and out of the metropolitan area, ease our tunnel congestion	Comment noted.
71	71-3	and increase our air quality all up and down the eastern border of the state of VA. As flying puts a huge carbon footprint on our planet,	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
71	71-4	and there are less and less direct flights, I would relish the idea of train travel. VA and the Hampton Roads area is so far behind in the mass transit revolution - there are a scarce amount of buses and we are just starting our light rail system	Comment noted.
72	72-1	PLEASE support & Fund\$\$ high-speed rail especially between Hampton Roads ( Norfolk Southern/US 460) corridor, as outlined by Norfolk Mayor Paul Fraim. Also, please improve passenger service along the Va. peninsula (CSX/I64) corridor. High-Speed rail service connecting Hampton Roads to Petersburg, Richmond, & Washington is Essential for the USA.	Comment noted.
73	73-1	Please!! Please get rail connections between South Hampton Roads and Richmond/Washington!!	Comment noted.
73	73-2	As I age, I am aware that getting to the Smithsonian and other places in the capital as well as Richmond (my other capital) will become impossible to drive and the bus just can't compete with the trains for comfort. As the population ages, and as we still wish to be active, but understand that driving is not a very safe activity for many of us (and those other folks who are also on the road) will unnecessarily keep us at home. We may walk slowly, not "do steps" well, but we do want/need to get around and still want to be a part of the cultural activities and the governmental activities that could still be within our reach.	Comment noted.
74	74-1	I have lived in Norfolk for 16 years, and have become increasingly frustrated over the inability of our leaders to act in concert and leverage their pooled strength into action. Take another transportation issue, roads, as an example. I make frequent trips to the Northern Virginia area, where virtually every mile of the Beltway, together with its major connecting roads, is being rebuilt, widened or lengthened. It's painfully obvious that we in Hampton Roads are subsidizing major road construction in NV, while our own road, bridge and tunnel needs go unaddressed.I have to attribute a lack of political unity and clout as the primary reasons for this sad situation. The HRTPO is a major culprit here, by failing for years to event simply prioritize our project needs. And there seems to be little in the way of teamwork by our local, state and federal representatives when it comes to addressing our transportation needs.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
75	75-1	I am an Ear/Nose/Throat surgeon and a partner of Lakeview Medical Center in Suffolk, VA. I believe that high speed rail service will enhance the quality of life for our communities especially those living in the outlying areas bringing all of us together as a more cohesive region. It will give our citizens a broader viewpoint to the world promoting education and tolerance. This is even more important than the obvious benefits of increased tourism and commerce. High speed rail will not only open our businesses, it will open up our minds! I hope that high speed rail service along with light rail will be part of the bright future for Hampton Roads - to the benefit of us all!	Comment noted.
76	76-1	We officially support extending enhanced intercity passenger rail (89 mph) with a 90 percent on-time performance between Richmond and Newport News, also serving Williamsburg; and regional high-speed rail (110 mph) with a 90 percent on-time performance between Richmond and Norfolk, also serving Petersburg and Chesapeake.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
76	76-2	It is our opinion that both of these corridors can be upgraded simultaneously and incrementally, with the first steps being to improve the on-time performance of the Richmond-Newport News passenger service, and extending passenger rail service to Norfolk via Norfolk Southern's route 460 corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
76	76-3	We envision Richmond serving as the passenger rail hub, linking the Northeast Corridor from Boston to Hampton Roads and the Southeast Corridor from Washington to Atlanta. However to accomplish this, we need increased frequency and direct connections between major destination points. The potential for a layover in Washington, DC is our main concern with the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Study Tier 1 EIS. A layover in Washington can account for a 50 percent (or more) decrease in ridership, which will substantially impact the economic viability of extending high-speed rail from Washington to Richmond and Hampton Roads. The extension of high-speed and enhanced passenger rail between Richmond and Hampton Roads is vital to the sustainability of the passenger rail service in greater Richmond. Thus, we endorse Alternative 1 with increased improvements to the Richmond-Newport News rail corridor as mentioned above. Furthermore, we request that the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Study progress, and, that ridership statistics and figures without a layover are included in future tiers of the study.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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77	77-1	What a great development! This area needs this so bad. You've listed great reasons to why we should change the way things are done right now. I drive from Newport News to Virginia Beach for work every day; half of my paycheck is spent on gas. Big cities, Boston, Washington D.C. have done it already; it is time for us to step up.	Comment noted.
77	77-2	Congestion, safety, environmental protection, helps in conducting business and making, and attracting businesses from the other parts of Virginia to this busy region, who needs more?!	Comment noted.
77	77-3	Congestion, safety, environmental protection, helps in conducting business and making, and attracting businesses from the other parts of Virginia to this busy region, who needs more?!	Comment noted.
77	77-4	Congestion, safety, environmental protection, helps in conducting business and making, and attracting businesses from the other parts of Virginia to this busy region, who needs more?!	Comment noted.
78	78-1	As a resident of Southside Hampton Roads, I would like to voice my support for high speed rail down the Norfolk Southern Rail line along the 460 Highway corridor, as well as enhancements to the Newport News to Richmond CSX rail line. The 2010 census estimates 2 million people living in Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
78	78-2	With our highly congested road system, an alternative transportation means is needed.	Comment noted.
78	78-3	High Speed rail could offer greater capacity for economic growth and opportunity to stay competitive with the rest of the world. As an individual wanting to reach Washington D.C. or New York City, a dependable and efficient rail system would be most appealing. I respectfully request that you give serious consideration to the endorsement of those who live in Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
79	79-1	I am in support of the Petersburg to Norfolk High Speed Rail link. I am a senior citizen and really appreciate public transit. I no longer want to drive long distances. I have been a loyal user of Amtrak. I look forward to more efficient and speedier service. I have traveled by rail in Europe, Egypt and South America. The high speed train from Paris to Lyon is superb. I look forward to South Hampton Roads joining the 21st century.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
80	80-1	I support the high speed rail to South Hampton Roads. The Petersburg to Norfolk extension is vital. I want to be able to travel to DC and points west without having to take a bus to the Peninsula. I want to be able to travel south without going through Richmond. I wish a speedy ride to Richmond without getting into a car. We need and deserve a high speed link.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
81	81-1	As a licensed professional engineer, I participated in the preparation of many feasibility studies and environmental impact statements in my career, and the manner in which VDOT and FRA deliberately deleted Hampton Roads from the final ROD for SEHSR struck me as incompetent and outrageous. The bypassing of Hampton Roads, the largest SMSA in Virginia and indeed in the entire Southeast between Washington DC and Atlanta, and the largest port and industrial complex in Virginia, is an irrational political decision that does not serve the travelling public. The cost of an additional bridge-tunnel across Hampton Roads to connect existing Peninsula rail ROW to rail corridor south to Raleigh will be insignificant in the overall development cost of SEHSR, and the proposed Richmond-Hampton Roads "spur" is an insulting sop, not a solution. It is long overdue for some of the 18 Hearings on the SEHSR to be held in our region, to let the people express themselves on what should be spent with their money. It is long overdue for VDRPT and the Commonwealth Transportation Board to recognize where the majority of Virginians live and deserve to be served by HSR, rather than simply bow to Richmond political power.	Hampton Roads is outside the SEHSR Tier II EIS study area. No public meetings for the SEHSR project were or are planned outside the study area.
82	82-1	The Navy supports the efforts of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Federal Railroad Administration to analyze the potential impacts of enhanced passenger rail service and its impact on regional traffic.	DRPT appreciates the support of the Norfolk Naval Command.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
82	82-2	Because of the Navy's significant presence in Hampton Roads, transportation initiatives that improve traffic flow and offer options to Navy families are very important to us. To that end, we have worked closely for many years with local and state leaders and agencies, such as the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization and the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, to identify solutions to regional transportation issues. A significant challenge that we face is our ongoing concern with Hampton Roads regional traffic. Current traffic congestion and the lack of regional solutions will continue to affect the safety and quality of life of our Sailors and civilian employees, and directly impact Navy operational readiness.	Comment noted.
82	82-3	The regional passenger rail initiative is consistent with our view that transportation is a military readiness issue, and we support efforts that contribute to the overall strategy to expand the region's transportation system capacity, reduce congestion, and increase access to Hampton Roads. Accordingly, the Navy will continue to work in partnership with state and local leaders and agencies in support of regional solutions like high speed rail that, in total, resolve traffic congestion, promote Fleet readiness, and offer Navy families options that make living in Hampton Roads even more attractive than it already is.	Comment noted.
83	83-1	High speed rail service must come all the way to Norfolk, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Suffolk and Virginia Beach. This area is too populous to be left out of high speed rail service.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
83	83-2	We cannot continue to clog our highways and tunnels to the Peninsula.	Comment noted.
83	83-3	This area is an economic engine that could produce even more if we had better transportation.	Comment noted.
84	84-1	Let me begin by saying that I believe High Speed Rail is possibly the most promising and important transportation initiative for Hampton Roads. It is quite simply money we cannot afford to NOT spend.	Comment noted.
84	84-2	Far more important for the commercial development possibilities and local business growth than a mere easing of congestion, high speed rail is poised to become a future method of travel for all Americans.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
84	84-3	It has thrived in Europe and Japan for decades and rising energy costs, pressure on the environment and the slow pace with which road capacity can be built, are but a few of the reasons why Hampton Roads can ill afford to be left off of the line from Richmond to Raleigh-Durham.	Comment noted.
85	85-1	I am writing to share my support for making needed improvements to the Virginia rail transportation system; in particular, to the Richmond - DC route, and the Richmond - Hampton Roads route.	Comment noted.
85	85-2	As much as I would like to see "high-speed" service in an effort to reduce the transit time, I am actually more concerned about frequency of trains, and schedule reliability. If I could have more options with respect to departure/arrival times, AND be confident that the train would arrive as scheduled, I would highly consider taking the train instead of driving, every time possible. This is especially true for the DC connection, since there are numerous mass-transit options available once the train arrives at the NOVA/DC stations. Please focus the dollars invested on more schedule options and high-reliability. Again, as much as I would like to minimize my travel time, the time spent on a train can be relatively productive. So saving 30 or 40 minutes doesn't mean much if I have to arrive too early, or wait too long for a return train. If "high speed" service can increase schedule frequency AND help assure schedule reliability, then I am all for it. However those two goals should be the primary focus of any expenditures or efforts.	The number of trains that can operate between Richmond and Washington, DC is restricted by the track capacity in this segment of the line. The number of passenger trains coming from Florida and North Carolina will co-mingle with Hampton Roads passenger trains and existing and future freight train traffic. All trains must operate safely requiring assured clear distances for safe stopping in case of emergencies.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
86	86-1	I am writing regarding the improvement of Amtrak service to this area and more specifically to Southside Hampton Roads. I have ridden trains to and from this area and Richmond many times since the 1960's, both with Amtrak and on the predecessor lines, Norfolk Southern (NS) and CSX. The line that CSX / Amtrak currently uses on the peninsula is a slow, predominately single track line through a lot of swampland that is shared with a lot of freight traffic. Once you approach Richmond, it goes VERY slowly through a large freight yard before it gets onto the old RF&P line and eventually to the Staples Mill station in Richmond. The corridor line that Norfolk Southern has is far superior and runs through rolling farmland. It is very straight and smooth and is mostly double track. Back when they were running steam excursion trains, I clocked the 611 at over 70 mph coming east from Petersburg with a passenger train of coaches dating back to the '30's and '40's. While their track is used by a lot of freight, it has a lot more capacity for train traffic. The track into Petersburg was onto a branchline to get to the old station downtown the last time we went there from Norfolk. However, Amtrak's north/south trains such as the Florida trains from Richmond currently serve Petersburg / Ft. Lee, I believe at another location.	The existing tracks and other infrastructure will be significantly improved and upgraded permitting safe, reliable operations of both freight and passenger trains on the same tracks along the NS/Southern route. DRPT will work cooperatively with the freight railroad partners and Amtrak to make sure that needed infrastructure will be in place to assure safe operation.
86	86-2	It would seem that running service on the NS would have far less impact on the environment given the fact that it is not through so much swampland and is largely already double track.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
86	86-3	On this end, to attract usage, it would be critical that the station is easily accessible and has adequate and secure parking similar to the airport. A parking lot by Harbor Park would not work, I certainly would not leave my car there overnight nor would many other people. Currently, there is an Amcoach that picks up at the Oceanfront but the lot there on 19th St. does not allow overnight parking and is not secure nor is it marked. Their other pickup locations have similar problems and this does not encourage its usage. Driving to the current station in Newport News is a nightmare from the Oceanfront.	Detailed examination of station location and design characteristics will be examined in the Tier II Environmental Documentation now that a preferred alternative has been determined.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
87	87-1	I am writing to advise that as a resident of Hampton Roads and an active member of the business community, I strongly endorse the extension of high-speed rail service between DC, Richmond/Petersburg and Hampton Roads, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk-Southern/US Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and the enhancement of inter-city passenger rail along the CSX/I-64 corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
87	87-2	With one of the largest concentrations of federal activities in the country, affordable efficient access to DC is essential.	Comment noted.
87	87-3	The transportation issue in Hampton Roads, particularly South Hampton Roads, is one of the key components to not only our economic vitality but that of the entire state as well. I believe strongly that such rail service will have positive, long-term implications relative to the health of our tourism industry, the operations of the port, and provide for more cohesive cooperation among the seven cities and surrounding counties.	Comment noted.
87	87-4	Furthermore, while the region has been spared the catastrophic effects of a major hurricane, that risk is still real and high-speed rail will provide a high volume transportation option for moving our citizens more quickly from the area in case of such an emergency. In summary, I strongly support this project.	Comment noted.
88	88-1	Spurred by the writing of Jack Hornbeck in Monday's Virginian Pilot. I am writing to support this important step forward for our region & our commonwealth!	Comment noted.
89	89-1	Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia are two key hubs of industry and government that should be much better connected with mass transit. The distance is perfect for high speed rail and would go a long way to relief highway traffic. It makes perfect sense.	Comment noted.
90	90-1	May we add our voice to the many that have endorsed the Hampton Roads TPO Resolution 2009-05 and in particular the "enhanced Alternative #1". Please Approve the Resolution 2009-05 with the enhanced Alternative #1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
90	90-2	It is critical that High Speed rail service be afforded to the Hampton Roads area through the Route 460 corridor. It provides the bulk of the population of HR and north-eastern North Carolina with this vital service without a water crossing.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
90	90-3	We are the largest concentration of Federal Installations outside of Washington DC.	Comment noted.
90	90-4	We are in the unique position of being the entrance to the largest deepwater access to the USA.	Comment noted.
90	90-5	Norfolk is in the construction stage of light rail to which High Speed will be connected to improve public transportation.	Comment noted.
90	90-6	High Speed Rail would tremendously enhance the evacuation of HR and NE North Carolina in the event of a natural disaster.	Comment noted.
91	91-1	As a resident of Norfolk, I must express my deepest support for High Speed Rail Service from Richmond to the Hampton Roads Corridor. Of the five alternatives proposed the one that is the most logical is alternative 1 (which is why I am so strongly supportive). Certainly the Status Quo and the No Action alternatives are not even options and must not be considered.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
91	91-2	The future economic health of South Hampton Roads and our State is dependant on the adoption of alternative 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
92	92-1	I strongly support the installation of high-speed rail service to the south Hampton Roads area.	Comment noted.
92	92-2	The economy of Virginia would be greatly enhanced by this service, both for reasons related to commercial and individual travel.	Comment noted.
92	92-3	At present, rail service is available to south Hampton Roads only if one travels to the Peninsula, and that service is not high-speed.	Comment noted.
92	92-4	As a result, the most (or second most) populated region of the state (and one that is of foremost importance to the state and nation, if only for military reasons) has been bypassed with respect to rail service of any kind, much less high-speed rail service.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
92	92-5	Personally, I would regularly use this mode of transportation between Norfolk and Richmond and between Norfolk and Washington, at the very least. It would greatly relieve congestion on the highways and would avoid the inconvenience of short-hop air service.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
93	93-1	I'm extremely excited about the prospects for High Speed Rail in Hampton Rds, especially in Norfolk where I have heard so many people (including myself) old and young wish there were better service from Norfolk even to Williamsburg or Newport News, but especially to the Northeast Corridor. As a professor at a university, I know that there are so many universities here that would really benefit from such service as I hear many students and colleagues verbalize this need and wish. With the development of light rail here, I hope that there will be a link from the Harbor Park station, for example, to greater Hampton Rds, to the Peninsula, and the Northeast Corridor. Thanks so much for working on this, and I look forward to the meeting tomorrow night at the Half Moone center. Let me know how I can help, and I applaud your vision of our area and your working on this.	Comment noted.
93	93-2	As someone who was born in New York City, I really long for the day when we can just hop on a train and go places rather than clog the highways with gas guzzlers, or the airports with needless and arduous (and expensive) plane travel. We can and should be a transportation hub in Norfolk, and we have existing lines to prove it (seeing pictures of the how Norfolk was in the 30's and 40's is truly inspiring), so I hope we can achieve this!	Comment noted.
93	93-3	With so many tourists and companies to attract here, the better the mass transport we have, the more people we will be able to attract.	Comment noted.
94	94-1	We must have a high speed rail system connecting us to Richmond and Washington, DC.	Comment noted.
94	94-2	It is paramount for business and cultural development as well as financial sustainability for all of the areas. Business development for this corridor will stagnate otherwise. Please do this for the health of Virginia.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
95	95-1	I am very supportive of the High Speed Rail initiative enhanced Alt. 1 for high speed rail into downtown Norfolk. With the majority of the Hampton Roads population on the Southside of Hampton Roads, it makes good sense to have enhanced service into downtown Norfolk. This rail service would tie into the new Light Rail service currently being constructed and eventually branch to neighboring cities and the naval base.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
95	95-2	In addition to serving the general populace, I believe the military would use the service to travel between Hampton Roads and Washington DC as a cost effective method of transportation for military-related travel. It certainly would beat driving! As a retired Navy officer, I flew up to DC many times as well as drove and I would have preferred to ride the train.	Comment noted.
95	95-3	Last year I rode the Amtrak train from the Peninsula to Washington DC to attend a Realtor meeting. It was a good trip but I had to ride a bus from downtown Norfolk to Newport News and the train was limited in speed in several areas due to the poor condition of the track. Also, the top speed was limited due to the "freight" standard tracks vice better rails for high speed service.	<p>The Preferred Alternative will provide for passenger rail service from Norfolk, eliminating the need to take a bus from Norfolk to catch a train in Newport News. As part of the development of the NS/Southern route to include passenger rail service, coordination with the host freight railroad will occur to make investments that would minimize bottle necks and rail traffic congestion.</p> <p>It is assumed that improvements to the existing CSX/Peninsula route would occur as part of improvements planned by Amtrak that include adding an additional round-trip to that route. As part of those improvements, it is assumed that Amtrak and the host freight railroad will coordinate and make investments that would work to eliminate bottlenecks and other causes of rail traffic congestion</p>
95	95-4	All in all, we in Southside Hampton Roads have been neglected for many years! We greatly appreciate this initiative and sincerely hope that the new high speed rail service can service both sides of the James River. To not service the Southside population with high speed rail would be a waste of taxpayer's dollars - with the congested tunnels and bridges between Southside and the Peninsula, very few would venture to Newport News to catch the train.	Comment noted.
96	96-1	I wish to endorse the plan for high-speed rail into the Hampton Roads area. It only makes sense to move ahead with this connection. I vote in favor of this plan.	Comment noted.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
96	96-2	As a citizen of Chesapeake, I've seen many times over the significant delays that come about as a result of traffic congestion at our bridge-tunnel systems.	Comment noted.
97	97-1	High Speed Rail connecting Richmond to the Hampton Roads Region would be a positive step for all localities.	Comment noted.
97	97-2	For businesses - already here - and for attracting new business opportunities and developing additional workforce opportunities - we need to offer alternative, efficient transportation. We have the population base to support a High Speed Rail - it is the next logical necessary step to move forward. Tourism - one of our greatest assets in the region - high speed rail would allow further expansion for tourism visiting to travel to multiple attractions with ease of doing so	Comment noted.
97	97-3	The large concentration of military installations in the area - this is unique to any other location in the US - having a High Speed Rail connection to Washington DC would create a very efficient mode of transportation for officials to travel between Hampton Roads and Washington DC.	Comment noted.
97	97-4	Infrastructure already in place - with tracks already in place along the 460 corridor - the infrastructure is already in place to build upon.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
97	97-5	Lastly - the High Speed Rail would be a vital link for evacuation in cases of emergencies.	Comment noted.
98	98-1	I support High Speed Rail for the Hampton Roads area. This is our chance to build a high speed, affordable means of transportation that will help Hampton Roads attract future businesses and industry, increase our quality of life, and, as a country, help us keep up with the rest of the industrialized world.	Comment noted.
99	99-1	My wife and I are all for this project!	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
100	100-1	I would like to express my support of High Speed Rail access to Hampton Roads and the need for a dedicated funding source for it. Our area is a growing metropolitan area, second in population to Washington DC. We have abundant resources including beaches, port, military and tourism. Our location on the middle Eastern United States is also an asset. These resources will be enhanced by your decision to bring High Speed Rail to South Hampton Roads. The best route is thru Bowers Hill, along the Route 460 corridor connecting to Norfolk. Please include Alternative #1 as my choice for the study effort.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
100	100-2	Please help our large region remain connected to the rest of the Mid-Atlantic region and help provide more than one alternative as an evacuation route for our citizens.	Comment noted.
101	101-1	This message is in support of the high-speed rail project which would connect Hampton Roads with the rest of the world. My boss, who lived his entire life in North Carolina until moving to Hampton Roads in 2002, often refers to this region as Virginia's "hidden jewel" of which he had never heard until moving to Elizabeth City with a former employer back in 1995 -- he is credited with introducing this region to the hierarchy of a major banking institution still active in Hampton Roads. He is correct and, despite all our efforts in promoting this region, we are still enjoying limited success.	Comment noted.
101	101-2	We are truly a cul-de-sac and in some ways will always be so -- we can't change geography. However, adding a high-speed rail connector would enhance our connectivity and provide more economical access to the centers of commerce, tourism and culture on the East Coast, not to forget the remainder of the country.	Comment noted.
101	101-3	This, in turn, will improve our ability to expand interaction internationally, reduce pressure on the overstressed highway infrastructure and create synergies with the Port -- another "hidden jewel".	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
102	102-1	I strongly encourage DRPT to adopt an Enhanced Alternative #1: The extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor. All local governments of Hampton Roads have unanimously support the Southside /Norfolk Southern Route, as is evidenced in a unanimously-passed Transportation Planning Organization resolution.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
102	102-2	South Hampton Roads has nearly 70% of the region's population, the highest concentration of the region's employment centers - nearly 700,000 jobs including the military which comprises 67% of all jobs in the region.	Comment noted.
102	102-3	Southside /Norfolk Southern Route better integrates with local transportation plans bringing together HRT bus and light rail services across Hampton Roads; Southside /Norfolk Southern Route directly connects at Harbor Park to the Tide Light Rail System.	Comment noted.
102	102-4	Southside /Norfolk Southern Route offers an additional viable emergency evacuation route to South Hampton Roads residents.	Comment noted.
102	102-5	Economic growth in South Hampton Roads is projected to lead the region for at least the next 30 years: Over 75% of region's office space is located on the Southside; Over 79% of active duty military and federal civil service workers based in the Hampton Roads region are located on the Southside; Visitors spend over twice the dollars in Virginia Beach compared to spending in Williamsburg. Travel-related employment is also higher in Virginia Beach, with almost 12,000 travel-related jobs in Virginia Beach.	Comment noted.
103	103-1	We live in Norfolk, VA. We strongly support high speed rail to Norfolk, VA.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
103	103-2	Our Southside area is vital to the economic growth of Virginia and high speed rail is vital to the economic growth of the Southside. Let's use the stimulus money to get our people employed and our people moving.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
103	103-3	Now, I know this is idealistic, and very futuristic, but the high speed rail also needs to be extended to and through the Eastern Shore to provide direct connections to Maryland, Delaware and the Philadelphia area. Eventually a connection via a combination light rail and high speed rail could connect Virginia to other major metropolitan areas through the use of these two loops. Norfolk is positioned to serve as both the beginning destination and end destination for both loops. Light rail and high speed rail go hand in hand to improve transportation. If we limit our access to the Peninsula /Richmond/Washington areas and the Eastern Shore / Maryland, Delaware and Philadelphia, PA area to access by automobile only, we limit the opportunities for all Virginia that safe, solid, dependable, affordable, non automotive transport can offer. Of course we need to expand further to the Carolinas and entire eastern seaboard.	Comment noted.
103	103-4	There is a move in Richmond to increase the speed along the interstate to 70mph. Increased auto speed with its increased risks is not the answer to move people quickly. High speed rail is what is needed.	Comment noted.
104	104-1	I am writing in support of high-speed rail service between Washington, DC and the Richmond-Petersburg areas of Virginia, and the further connection of Richmond-Petersburg with the Hampton Roads region through a high-speed, 110 MPH corridor along the existing Norfolk southern/Route 460 path south of the James River, and the enhancement of intercity rail service along the CSX/Interstate 64 corridor on the Peninsula. Thank you for your consideration this proposal, which has garnered well-deserved, significant and wide-ranging support.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
104	104-2	These connections will unlock Hampton Roads' economic potential by enhancing the competitiveness of the Port of Virginia;	Comment noted.
104	104-3	Easing traffic congestion for travelers along the Hampton Roads - Richmond - Washington DC route; and	Comment noted.
104	104-4	Providing effective, high-volume evacuation routes in the event of natural disasters.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
105	105-1	I am a Northern VA defense contractor and I travel weekly (sometimes more than weekly) between Northern VA and south Hampton Roads. At a bare minimum, I would eagerly use a faster and more frequent train service to Newport News. Ideally, though, I would even more eagerly welcome a service to southern Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
105	105-2	I presently drive most of the time and fly occasionally. Though I drive a diesel car, driving is still costly and does not allow me to work while traveling.	Comment noted.
105	105-3	At present, it takes me four hours to drive to NJ (with the headache of traffic), where I occasionally go on business. However, on the train, it's a mere less-than-three work-friendly hours. On the other hand, I can drive to my destination in south Hampton Roads in three hours, where taking the train takes four hours - and only gets me to Newport News!	Comment noted.
105	105-4	If the southern NE Corridor were as efficient, I, and I assume many other defense contractors, would use the service weekly.	Comment noted.
106	106-1	I would like to highly endorse Enhanced Alternative #1 regarding the proposal to connect South Hampton Roads to Washington, D.C. via the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
106	106-2	My wife and I run a small business in Norfolk. We work with clients in Hampton Roads, as well as Richmond and the D.C. area. A high-speed rail plan linking South Hampton Roads with those regions would make our travel more convenient, efficient and would lessen travel on the highly-congested I-64 corridor (also known as The Parking Lot).	Comment noted.
106	106-3	We also travel in that direction for pleasure. Many people we know in this area travel this route for both business and pleasure; we also know of the growing disenchantment we share as this journey becomes more and more difficult, crowded, time-consuming, even dangerous. We travel in Europe and we are amazed by the fast, efficient and enjoyable high-speed rail options in those countries. For Americans in this dynamic reason to spend so many wasted hours in traffic, in tunnels and in frustration seems highly unnecessary.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
106	106-4	This link would also provide a partial solution to the impending disaster we face down here, just waiting for the storm that cuts us off from the rest of the country. It will happen, it's just a matter of when.	Comment noted.
106	106-5	There are about 1.5 million Virginians in South Hampton Roads, and we are served (or dis-served) by the current, inept highway and rail system. But by bringing light rail to Norfolk, we've taken the first step in reducing waste, connecting our citizens, saving fuel and moving forward in a positive way. Please help us join the rest of Virginia and the mid-Atlantic.	Comment noted.
107	107-1	I write to express my views concerning the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) regarding the proposed High Speed Rail plan as it concerns the Hampton Roads' region. American Maritime Holdings ("AMH") is the parent company of Marine Hydraulics International, Inc. and Técnico Corporation, two of the Hampton Roads area's largest ship repair contractors. My comments support the resolution adopted by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization on October 20, 2009. Specifically, I support the recommendation to designate the Petersburg-Norfolk route as the High Speed Rail (HSR) corridor to Hampton Roads at regular speeds of 110 mph or higher.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
107	107-2	However, my strongest recommendation is that the EIS be re-written in order to designate the establishment of a Virginia High Speed Crescent that would link Washington-Richmond-Petersburg-Suffolk and Norfolk.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
107	107-3	As DOD Contractors, members of the AMH frequently travel to the Washington DC Metro area for business related events. The establishment of this crescent would recognize the geo-strategic importance of Hampton Roads to the Commonwealth and national security. Virginia's premier port area that is recognized as the "world's finest natural harbor" and the region's concentration of federal assets ("Pentagon South") are compelling reasons for including Hampton Roads in the national and state mainline strategies. This would be similar to what has been planned for North Carolina's regions of lesser importance.	Comment noted.
107	107-4	The use of High Speed Rail for business travel could prove a beneficial given the rising gas costs	Comment noted.

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
107	107-5	and congested traffic associated with vehicular travel from Hampton Roads	Comment noted.
107	107-6	as well as frequent delays and the inconveniences associated with air travel.	Comment noted.
107	107-7	The Virginia High Speed Crescent should be the state's highest funding priority, certainly before any consideration of SEHSR routes south of Petersburg.	Comment noted.
107	107-8	That the long-term plan for the Southside HSR system should specify a level of engineering, quality of service, on-time-performance and reliability equivalent to that of the SEHSR main line.	Comment noted.
107	107-9	The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly document a federal commitment to assess options for eventual through service both north and south at junctions with the SEHSR main line at Petersburg, and the selection of the connecting train station in Petersburg should be made with this criterion in mind.	Currently the operations plan only has Richmond/Hampton Roads trains traveling north to Washington, DC and travelers wishing to travel south to Raleigh, NC must transfer at Petersburg for southbound SEHSR trains.
107	107-10	The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly include a federal commitment to conduct an Alternatives Analysis and Tier I EIS (AA/EIS) for potential HSR passenger service to the southwest from Suffolk via Weldon NC to Raleigh in order to serve the population of Northeast North Carolina who are an integral component of the Hampton Roads metro area and to reestablish more direct contact with the NC Piedmont area. As a future concept, this additional track would provide a long desired travel method to the southwest and it would create an HSR loop off the SEHSR main line similar to the loop already approved for Winston-Salem in NC.	Currently the operations plan only has Richmond/Hampton Roads trains traveling north to Washington, DC and travelers wishing to travel south to Raleigh, NC must transfer at Petersburg for southbound SEHSR trains.
107	107-11	The data used in calculating financial estimates for the various EIS alternatives should be updated. Much of the data in the EIS dates from 2004, excludes defense department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not likely to be built. Revised cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates must be used in documents submitted to federal authorities and properly archived if our region is to compete effectively with other metro areas for limited federal funds.	The Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative will revise cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
108	108-1	I support the position of the HRTPO, which is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative One, which I strongly endorse.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
108	108-2	Alternative 1 will provide the maximum benefit for the region and the Commonwealth by serving a fertile untapped market on the Southside, where the majority of the region's population and jobs reside.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
108	108-3	And where there is significant and growing demand for another travel option to Washington, D.C., while improving the existing Amtrak passenger rail service on the Peninsula.	Comment noted.
108	108-4	It goes without saying that the ability to rapidly move people and goods and connect to the marketplace is fundamental to any region's competitiveness.	Comment noted.
109	109-1	On behalf of Virginia Beach Vision, Inc. and its Board of Directors, I write to express our strong support for the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region. The Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor should be designated a high-speed rail corridor with speeds of more than 110 mph ultimately. Concurrently, an enhanced intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor must be included. This position is best reflected in a strengthened alternative one as detailed in the Tier 1 Draft EIS.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
109	109-2	Hampton Roads is a unique national asset, containing the largest concentration of federal activities anywhere in the country outside of D.C. The region houses operations of 16 departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government including all five military services. It is home to the nation's largest naval facility, provides primary air defense to our nation's Capitol, and homeland security to our port and seacoast. Dependable, efficient and cost effective travel to and from the D.C. area is vital to safety and military operations.	Comment noted.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
109	109-3	The Hampton Roads region is also home to major tourist designations, including the Virginia Beach oceanfront and the historic Williamsburg area, attracting nearly 5 million tourists annually. Tourist related expenditures exceed \$2.2 billion with the industry providing over 23,500 jobs and a payroll of \$460 million.	Comment noted.
109	109-4	Estimates show that 69% of the over 3 million visitors to Virginia Beach use I-64 and overnight visitor surveys show that related tunnel traffic is always listed among the top 4 negative response items. High-speed rail, coupled with a connection to an intercity light rail system will provide a much needed transportation alternative to visitors and will help mitigate growing congestion particularly during the peak tourist season.	Comment noted.
109	109-5	The ability to rapidly move both people and freight to and from the region and connect with the marketplace is fundamental to Hampton Roads' future competitiveness. In addition to facilitating the movement of people, improvements in the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor will have the added benefit of enhancing the competitiveness of the Port of Virginia, while fostering the growth of manufacturing and distribution centers along the corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
109	109-6	Given Hampton Roads unique market characteristics; the regions proximity to Washington, D.C.; the suitability of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor to high-speed rail; and the fact that passenger rail service can be implemented in the corridor with a modest investment and in a relatively short period of time, Hampton Roads arguably offers the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country. It is estimated that connecting Hampton Roads to the high-speed rail corridor will create or sustain 30,000 jobs and create \$3 billion in economic development.	Comment noted.
109	109-7	The proposed Bowers Hill station will provide easy access via I-264 and the Hampton Roads beltway (I-64/I-664). Community plans envision an intermodal transfer facility at the Harbor Park station in downtown Norfolk that will link high-speed rail to the light rail system, intercity and regional bus systems, ferry service, cruise ship facilities and direct interstate access. Along the multi-modal corridors that will be served, business and residential development will be concentrated. When high-speed rail connects Washington-Richmond-Hampton Roads, 3 in 5 Virginians will have access to fast, frequent, and reliable passenger rail service.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
109	109-8	Finally, high-speed rail will provide a high volume transportation option for moving citizens more quickly from the area at times when an emergency evacuation is necessary. Hampton Roads has insufficient emergency evacuation routes to handle its population, hindered to a great extent by bridge and tunnel crossings on every major corridor.	Comment noted.
110	110-1	Just a note to let you know how important it is to provide high speed rail transport to South Hampton Roads. I favor the Enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HPTPO.	Comment noted.
111	111-1	I support an enhanced alternative1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
112	112-1	I am writing to express my support for a high-speed rail connection to Hampton Roads, specifically the enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
112	112-2	As a businessman engaged in commercial real estate in the mid-Atlantic area, I am keenly aware of the needs for better roads and infrastructure. We here in Hampton Roads are in dire need of better transportation options to transact business on a daily basis. It is nearly impossible to schedule a trip to Richmond or Washington DC. Depending on the backups at the local tunnels, the trip can be delayed regularly by 1-2 hours, especially during the summer.	Comment noted.
112	112-3	To have a legitimate alternative such as high-speed rail to Norfolk and more frequent service to the Peninsula, this will help open up business opportunities for the community and help keep this area vibrant.	Comment noted.
112	112-4	I believe that there is enough interest here locally that it will also lessen the impact on our local highways and tunnels.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
113	113-1	During the public hearing, Kevin Page of VDRT and Aubrey Lane of CTB did an excellent job outlining the Alternatives, and Director Drake added much needed local focus on the subject. I believe our tremendous turnout and show of unity, in a region that is usually fragmented on regional issues, speaks volumes for our concerns about connectivity and our support for Hampton Roads TPO historic vote for Alternative ONE.	Comment noted.
113	113-2	First, we need HSR due to life safety reasons. Auto and air are not sufficient forms of transportation to evacuate the region in case storm or other issues. Case in point, recently, a pump failed in the Mid-Town tunnel leading to a closure of the tunnel resulting in chaos and literally making us immobile.	Comment noted.
113	113-3	Second, our large concentration of military and supporting government contractors need and deserve an on-time, reliable, and affordable HSR to connect “Pentagon South” to DC. The government spends countless dollars for contractors’ unproductive time while traveling on clogged inter-state highways.	Comment noted.
113	113-4	HSR could reduce the government’s cost for travel and lead to greater economic development and JOBS. Third, our tourism is choked by transportation issues. Most of our tourist are from the Northeast, and HSR linked to our light rail would bolster tourism.	Comment noted.
113	113-5	As the southeast corridor is designed and built, it is important that TRUE High Speed Rail be constructed first from Richmond to Norfolk, and the existing Amtrak line to Newport News be upgraded immediately. In addition to building a rail line that is truly capable of High Speed trains, it is important that we consider the future and have plans for a line south to Raleigh.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
113	113-6	And to take from a letter I read about HSR, “The data used in calculating financial estimates for the various EIS alternatives should be updated. Much of the data in the EIS dates from 2004, excludes defense department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not likely to be built. Revised cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates must be used in documents submitted to federal authorities and properly archived if our region is to compete effectively with other metro areas for limited federal funds”	The Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative will revise cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
113	113-7	I believe in the end, our line will provide more ridership and be less expensive than other lines in the country and thus a great return on the taxpayers investment.	Comment noted.
114	114-1	I am in support of a High Speed Rail connection to Hampton Roads, specifically an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
115	115-1	I am writing today to add my support to the many in Hampton Roads who see a clear benefit of a high speed rail connection for our community. The higher education community has long understood the benefits of rail travel, and this high-speed proposal has distinct advantages for commuter students, parents, faculty and staff that make it clear that this is a proposal whose time has come. We agree that an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization is the best option for today and tomorrow.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
116	116-1	As a concerned citizen of Hampton Roads I am writing to encourage the extension of high-speed rail service to Hampton Roads along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
116	116-2	As compared to the other alternatives being considered this route has to have one of the best returns on investment given the existing infrastructure that only needs to be enhanced to accommodate the 110 MPH target speed.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
116	116-3	To not consider connecting this region to the north/south rail system that will ultimately service the east coast would be a travesty in preparing for efficient, cost effective transportation alternatives for the future. The cost and maintenance requirements to provide a highway system to serve the needs of this important region of Virginia and the country will become unattainable in the future.	Comment noted.
116	116-4	National security given the importance of the area to all branches of the military;	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
116	116-5	Economic issues (revenue and jobs) given the importance of the port, historic Williamsburg and tourism with the beauty of the oceanfront (5 million tourists annually) are just a couple of reasons this investment would reap large continuous meaningful returns far into the future.	Comment noted.
117	117-1	My entire family of five supports an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
117	117-2	I have lived in Hampton Roads for 37 years. I used to make frequent automobile visits to D.C. and through Richmond to Charlottesville. By automobile I could make D.C. easily in three hours and Richmond in one and 1/2. I now have to leave myself at least five hours to D.C. and two and 1/2 to Richmond. Needless to say, I make less frequent business and personal visits.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is intended to provide travelers with travel time savings and viable choices.
117	117-3	Multiply me by the entire population of Hampton Roads and all of the military, port, tourism and technology related travelers from outside the area, and you get lost income, lost jobs, and dangerous congestion in emergency situations.	Comment noted.
118	118-1	I support high speed rail using the Southside Hampton Roads corridor. It is an important project for the maintenance and growth of our region's economy.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
119	119-1	Not only would I use it, but I think it would make our area a much safer area...we are one of the highest in traffic accidents due to the road conditions...High speed would take lots of cars off our inadequate roads.	Comment noted.
120	120-1	As a resident of Norfolk, Virginia and a user of Amtrak for trips to New York City and Washington D.C., I am vitally interested in the routes for higher speed rail.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
120	120-2	As you know, currently residents of the Southside of Hampton Roads must get to Newport News on the peninsula in order to board an Amtrak train, This is unacceptable. The bulk of the population of Hampton Roads lives on the Southside. It is vital to Virginia that this area, which already contributes to the economy of the state an amount second only to northern Virginia, be directly connected to Richmond, D.C. and points north.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
120	120-3	When this connection is completed, 3 of every 5 Virginians will have access to fast, frequent and reliable service. It is estimated that this will either create or sustain, 30,000 jobs and \$3B in economic development. Hardly to be sneezed at!	Comment noted.
120	120-4	Ridership projections, which grew more than 20% between 2007 and 2009, are based on 2007 figures. I know from personal experience, that when gas prices approached \$4 a gallon, the number of cars on the train leaving Newport News doubled. It has not gone down with the recent (and presumably temporary) small falloff in gas prices.	Ridership estimates will be revisited in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
121	121-1	I strongly agree and support the Enhanced Alternative #1 would encourage the DRPT to adopt this resolution.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
121	121-2	There has been a need for quite some time for high speed rail in the Hampton Roads region. It would reduce road traffic, fuel consumption and offer a viable alternative to traveling I-95, which is a win in my book.	Comment noted.
121	121-3	This rail line should also help increase commerce and boost commercial revenues in the area.	Comment noted.
122	122-1	I am in full support of High Speed Rail coming to this area. Great way to open up our area and get some cars off of major highways.	Comment noted.
123	123-1	I am writing in support selection of an enhanced Alternative 1 of the Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Study Tier 1 EIS for higher speed (ultimately 110 mph high speed rail service to South Hampton Roads a via the Norfolk Southern Right of Way from Richmond to South Hampton Roads, specifically Norfolk.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
123	123-2	There are more than a million sound reasons (South Hampton Roads population) why such a route is the superior option and doubly effective as the competing alternative (Hampton Roads Peninsula, with approximately one half the population. For example, there is the vast superiority of likely riders (those whose business-oriented trips from the region to Washington and back emanate from one side of the water or the other). When the number of other civilian businesses and business trips (to both Richmond and Washington) is included, the numbers are even more compelling.	Comment noted.
123	123-3	The active duty military population and other federal agency employees located in HSR alone would be front and center in this category. Who would more likely and frequently require business travel to Washington than military and other federal agency employees?	Comment noted.
123	123-4	In discussing the ultimate 110 mph and higher service, there is no more suitable corridor than the arrow-straight stretch of N/S corridor—an unparalleled asset available nowhere else in the Commonwealth. In fact, it offers the longest arrow-straight span of existing track (between Petersburg and Suffolk) on any existing proposed HSR route. So why not take advantage of this speed enhancer we've been blessed with?	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
123	123-5	These are just some powerful arguments that point directly to Alternative 1 as the premier route over which to move the largest number of likely passengers in the shortest amount of time.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
124	124-1	I strongly support a high speed rail system for Hampton Roads. The proposal made by Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization should be accepted and acted upon. It is most important to build a high speed rail line from Hampton Road to Richmond and on to Northern Virginia before making out of state connections.	Comment noted.
124	124-2	Lack of rapid transportation between Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia hampers large companies from moving into this area. It would also make our tourist attractions far more accessible without having to use the archaic Amtrak line now in use which ends in a very inappropriate location.	Comment noted.
124	124-3	Route 64 is over crowded and dangerous.	Comment noted.

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
125	125-1	I support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization for a high speed rail service from Richmond to South Side Hampton Roads.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
125	125-2	A high speed rail line from NVA to Richmond to Hampton Roads area would make a very significant contribution to the improvement of Hampton Roads economy. It is the critical key to recruit new business and improve our tourist appeal . Without major improvement in the transportation to and from Hampton Roads we will never reach our potential and that of our ports.	Comment noted.
126	126-1	As members of the Hampton Roads Congressional Delegation, we are writing in support of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) resolution endorsing two critical components of the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. These components are: - the designation of a "High Speed Rail" corridor along the Norfolk Southern/US Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph; and - in conjunction with the high-speed rail corridor, the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/Amtrak/Interstate 64 corridors.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
126	126-2	The Hampton Roads region is comprised of several cities and counties so it was certainly difficult to reach a consensus on how the region should move forward together on bringing high speed rail to Hampton Roads. The resolution, which was overwhelmingly passed by the HRTPO, presents the best way forward to achieve two important goals for our region -returning passenger rail service to Norfolk while also improving passenger rail service on the Virginia Peninsula between Richmond and Newport News.	Comment noted.
126	126-3	As you are aware, Hampton Roads is home to one of the largest concentrations of military personnel in the world and home to one of the busiest ports on the eastern seaboard.	Comment noted.
126	126-4	It is critical to our region's future economic prosperity that Hampton Roads is connected to the Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor.	Comment noted.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
126	126-5	Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the recently enacted Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2010, the Congress has appropriated \$10.5 billion for high speed rail projects in the last year. The Hampton Roads Congressional Delegation stands ready to support and assist the Commonwealth in securing these federal funds which have already been designated for high speed rail.	DRPT appreciates the support of the Virginia Congressional delegation.
126	126-6	We urge you to act swiftly to expedite the update and completion of the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project - Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement process and obtain a Record of Decision. The Commonwealth must also diligently prepare for the Tier II EIS(s) in the Spring of 2010. We appreciate your consideration for our comments as the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation finalizes the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project - Tier I Draft EIS.	Comment noted.
127	127-1	The Downtown 1000 is a highly motivated group of volunteers who work to support the vision and mission of the Downtown Norfolk Council. We are a diverse and influential group of young and young-thinking professionals who are actively engaged in helping Downtown Norfolk reach its full potential as a dynamic and vital urban center. As an organization we strongly support the HRPTO's regional position statement: Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I64 corridor. The HRTPO position is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative #1, which we strongly endorse.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
127	127-2	We recognize that transportation is one the key challenges facing our region currently and in the foreseeable future. Many of our members travel frequently to Richmond and the DC area for their jobs. An alternative to driving would be enthusiastically embraced.	Comment noted.
127	127-3	In addition, our region's future competitiveness will be greatly enhanced with improved transportation infrastructure.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
128	128-1	I have seen announcements of the Public Hearing scheduled in Norfolk for Jan 28, 2010 on the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project and am unable to attend because of prior commitments, however, I reviewed the Tier I Draft EIS available in the local library and would like to submit comments in favor of Alternative 1- Newer Higher Speed Passenger service on Southside/NS route, in addition to existing and currently planned upgrades to conventional rail on the Peninsula/CSXT route.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
128	128-2	The Southside Hampton Roads has long needed passenger rail service directly to the Norfolk area. With congestion on the Interstates through the tunnels to Newport News and the Peninsula making it very difficult to connect with passenger rail service, there is an even more critical need for High Speed rail service directly to this area.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
128	128-3	With the high concentration of military and defense industries the need for fast passenger service between this area and Richmond, and particularly Northern Virginia and Washington, DC, the need for High Speed Rail service is most urgent.	Comment noted.
128	128-4	Also the high frequency of tourist travel between this area and the Northeast and also travel to the Southeast, High Speed Rail is badly needed and should be incorporated into Virginia's Statewide Rail Plan for the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor (SEHSR).I would hope that the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration would adopt this route for High Speed Rail to the Hampton Roads Area.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
129	129-1	As a private citizen of this region of Virginia for ninety-four years, I support the resolution of HRTPO made October 30, 2009. I do not purport to represent anyone other than myself. I will not be alive to see any high speed rail arrive or depart this area to and from Richmond because I will probably have a normal life expectancy and be dead in the next few years. I will never get to ride the rails that I endorse having available for our citizens, but I believe that they are necessary for our region to be competitive economically with other like areas of the country. Passenger rail service for persons living south of the James River has not been available since I was a much younger man, and the area has suffered because of it. I hope that the first thing you do is extend passenger service to Norfolk/ Virginia Beach. Several times in the past few years, I have used the train from Newport News to Washington, and wondered how was this part of the country left out of Amtrak service when that system was first established. The idea of not providing it to the Southside of Hampton Roads is simply another in the backward thinking of the authorities in charge of our destiny. Some of that can be corrected by looking at a future with high speed rail in our future. Designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor as the Regional High Speed Rail Corridor is a good idea. People in our neighborhoods would use a convenient high-speed service into the northern transportation corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
130	130-1	I want to let my thoughts to be known, regarding Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project: High Speed Rail on the Southside, conventional rail on the Peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
130	130-2	I would take into account the population of the Hampton Roads. With that type of population, the ridership should/could be well worth it.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
131	131-1	Rover Marine has been offering harbor and sightseeing cruises in downtown Norfolk since 1986. Over the years, one of our biggest challenges has been the increased difficulty our customers have reaching our place of business. Our visitation from The Peninsula and Williamsburg have declined steadily as backups and delays on I-64 have become more common. Even meeting planners as close as Richmond hesitate to bring groups to our area because of the transportation challenges they will face. As an organization we strongly support the HRPTO's regional position statement:Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I64 corridor. The HRTPO position is best reflected in a strengthen Alternative #1, which we strongly endorse.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
131	131-2	Improved rail transportation into our area will be an economic boon for the tourism industry -creating jobs and generating tax revenues for the state. The time is now to make high speed rail into Norfolk a reality.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
132	132-1	This letter is to serve as support for the development of a high speed passenger rail project between the Hampton Roads area and Richmond, Virginia and on to the major lines servicing the east coast. I believe that passenger service in the future is going to be one of the key elements to efficiently linking parts of the country, both in terms of tourism and in commerce. I have wholly support the development of this project.	Comment noted.
133	133-1	I am retired so I no longer travel on business, but as I have relatives in the Washington, DC area, I would expect to use the proposed high-speed rail two or three times a year. Of the alternatives offered in the DEIS, I prefer Alternative 1 as the designated high-speed rail route for Hampton Roads. This will serve two-thirds of the population of this large metro area.To serve the other third of the Hampton Roads population, the Peninsula Amtrak should be upgraded to at least 79 mph with 90% on-time performance. This project should be an early priority for funding of conventional rail systems.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
133	133-2	Several aspects of the DEIS should be clarified:-The document contains outdated data and several inconsistencies that should be corrected before the final EIS is issued. I understand that HRTPO has provided a detailed critique for this purpose.- The final EIS should explicitly require that the designated high-speed route for Hampton Roads be equivalent in all respects to the long-term design for the main line of the Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor. Any interim construction should conform to and build toward the long-term design.- The long-term design in the final EIS should indicate clearly a plan for connecting the designated high-speed route to the SEHSR main line at Petersburg to provide through service, both north and south, without the need to change trains.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The EIS clearly states that connections to the SEHSR can be made at Petersburg.
133	133-3	I also recommend that VDRPT view the "crescent" formed by high-speed rail from DC via Richmond and Petersburg to Norfolk as an integral system that should have priority for funding ahead of any extension ahead of any extension further south. This decision would apparently require suggesting a lower priority for the pending application for Tier II funding of the SEHSR Corridor from Richmond to Raleigh.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
134	134-1	The Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance (HRMFFA) submits the comments herein along with the attachments in response to the request for public comment on the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. HRMFFA is a four year old not-for-profit corporation created to represent the collective interests of the Cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg, and the Counties of Isle of Wight, James City, and York in matters affecting military and federal capabilities in Hampton Roads. In that regard, HRMFFA conducted analysis to examine the financial aspects of high speed rail in relationship to the military and federal activities. As the attached graphic shows, Hampton Roads is home to the largest concentration of military and federal activities outside of Washington, DC. That means that on any given day there are significant numbers of military, government civilian and support contractors traveling at federal expense between the DC area and Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
134	134-2	It is also important to recognize that Fort Lee is tripling in size due to the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) action and that provides an additional federal ridership base to and from Hampton Roads and DC.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
134	134-3	Currently, the two most used method of accomplishing travel between DC and Hampton Roads are automobile and commercial aircraft. HRMFFA analysis examined a cost comparison between all three methods (air, auto mobile and high speed rail at 110 mph per hour) in an 'apples to apples' comparison that looked at cost of the core travel method and time commitment of that method, plus ancilliary costs and time factors associated with the particular method, and then non-productive hours associated with the core and ancilliary time factors.What the analysis reveals is that for every 100 travelers the use of high speed rail would save the federal government \$22,500 - or 43% - over the next lowest cost travel method (use of a rental car). This, for every thousand travelers the savings is nearly a quarter of a million dollars, and over \$2 million for every 10,000 trips. Savings as compared to more costly methods are even greater.	Comment noted.
134	134-4	The establishment of high speed rail between Hampton Roads and the DC area provides significant savings to the federal government and the American taxpayers and the added environmental benefit of removing a significant number of vehicles from the highways between the two locations. The comparison analysis supporting these comments is attached.	Comment noted.
134	134-5	In summary, Hampton Roads is a unique national asset with a significant asset with a significant market for military and federal-related travel between Hampton Roads and the DC areas. Hampton Roads and the DC markets are an ideal distance to be interconnected by rail service...i.e. less than 300 miles. HRMFFA stands ready to assist and support the federal government, the Commonwealth of Virginia and all Hampton Roads communities to aggressively pursue high speed rail service between DC and Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
135	135-1	We support the DRPT efforts to improve passenger rail service to Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
135	135-2	ES-10 Section 2.2.3.1 Please clarify how the Build Alternatives are affected by the goals listed in the Statewide Rail Plan which states that Newport News will receive 5.5 daily trains by 2015 and four additional trains by 2020. Alternative 1 of the DEIS assumes the operation of only three daily trains versus nine trains indicated in the Rail Plan.	The Rail Plan states that tracks north of Richmond can support seven additional trains compared to the planned SEHSR rail and existing two trains today. That allows nine trains daily in addition to the SEHSR and existing Amtrak Florida trains. The trains were balanced between enhancing service on the Peninsula by adding one train and then adding six trains to the Southside.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
135	135-3	ES-22 Section 3.5 Please provide a map showing the location of the acreage affected by noise and train vibrations along the Peninsula and Southside routes.	Acreage calculated is based the FRA screening distances of 900 feet and 100 feet for noise and vibration, respectively, along the identified rail lines. Information presented in the Tier I EIS did not identify specific areas of potential impacts for noise and vibration, but rather focused on regulatory screening distances from the rail. Identification and location of site specific sensitive noise and vibration receptors will be part of the Tier II analysis of the Preferred Alternative.
135	135-4	Ch 1, 1-22 Table (1-3) The official population of Newport News is 193,212 from the US Census Bureau's adjusted 2008 Estimate. Please adjust your corridor population and employment data accordingly.	For purposes of the Tier I EIS, the data presented was obtained from the U.S. Census 2000 data. During Tier II analysis and documentation population and employment data will be updated as appropriate.
135	135-5	Ch 3, 3-9 & 3-10 (Table 3-5 & 3-6) Please replace "Hampton" in the table with "Newport News"	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS.
135	135-6	Ch 3, 3-20 (Table 3-12) Please include the parking demand for the existing Newport News Station.	Parking demand at the existing Newport News Station was not calculated for the Tier I DEIS. More detailed analysis for parking demand will be conducted, as appropriate, for the Tier II documentation and analysis of the Preferred Alternative.
135	135-7	Ch 3, 3-59 (Figure 3-1) Please adjust map label, Newport News is a City not County.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS.
135	135-8	Ch 3, 3-145 (Section 3.15.3): Please change Newport News County to Newport News	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS.
135	135-9	Ch 4, 4-5 (Section 4.3.1.1) Please ensure that the Peninsula/CSXT Route Rail improvements listed here occur regardless of which alternative is chosen.	As planning for the project progresses, more detailed engineering will occur. DRPT cannot guarantee any improvements to the existing freight and passenger operations along the Peninsula without coordination and agreement from both the operating freight and passenger services.
135	135-10	Ch 5, 5-5 (Table 5-5) please provide more details concerning the "cumulative traffic impacts" of this project to the proposed downtown Newport News station.	The proposed downtown Newport News Station was discussed as part of Alternatives 2a and 2b. The relocation of the existing Newport News station is not considered as part of this Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
135	135-11	Ch 6, 6-22 (Section 6.4.1) The City supports a conclusion that brings high speed rail to Hampton Roads, increased passenger rail service to the Peninsula, creates the least environmental impact, and is the most cost-effective alternative.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
136	136-1	We join with the political leadership of each of our participating jurisdictions in endorsing the position of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization, which endorsed the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and to enhance intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor from Newport News to Richmond.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
136	136-2	<p>The Alliance cannot overemphasize the economic impact of high-speed passenger rail service to Hampton Roads. It has been estimated that this connection will create or sustain 30,000 jobs in our region and create an estimated \$3 billion in economic impact. Conversely, the effect of being left out of this national initiative would be devastating to our economy. We need passenger rail service that rivals the outstanding railway system we have in place to service the Port of Virginia, the finest natural deepwater harbor on the east coast with its unobstructed ice-free waterway and 50-foot deep channels.</p> <p>Hampton Roads possesses a uniquely skilled and talented workforce seldom matched by other regions of the country. Among our largest employees is the U.S. Military, which not only strengthens our economy but provides our region with highly educated, disciplined, and hard-working candidates for hire. Hampton Roads is also home to eight colleges and universities, four exceptional community colleges, and proprietary schools providing courses in modeling and simulation, aeronautics, and aerospace.</p>	Comment noted.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
136	136-3	Yet for all of these resources to be effective in creating prosperity, we need connectivity; that is, communication and transportation to connect us to national and international business relationships. As the 36th largest region in the nation, we must be included in the rail network that connects communities across America. If it is true that proximity equates to prosperity, then we need the proximity to these business relationships that will come with connection to the nation as afforded by high-speed rail.	Comment noted.
136	136-4	With 60 percent of the population of the United States within 750 miles of Hampton Roads, high-speed rail provides an investment guaranteed to promote prosperity from Day 1. With these factors in mind, we urge you to accept the recommendation of the HRTPO and include high-speed passenger rail service to Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
137	137-1	My comments support the resolution adopted by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization on October 20, 2009. Specifically I support the recommendation to designate the Petersburg/Norfolk route as the high-speed rail (HSR) corridor at regular speeds of 110 mph or higher. However, my strongest recommendation is that the EIS be re-written in order to designate the establishment of a Virginia High Speed Crescent that would link Washington, Richmond, Petersburg, Suffolk, and Norfolk.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
137	137-2	The establishment of this crescent would recognize the geo-strategic importance of Hampton Roads to the Commonwealth and national security. Virginia's premier port area is recognized as the "world's finest natural harbor" and the region's concentration of federal assets ("Pentagon South") are compelling reasons for including Hampton Roads in the national and state mainline strategies. This would be similar to what has been planned for North Carolina's regions of lesser importance.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
137	137-3	I also endorse that the Virginia High Speed Crescent should be the state's highest funding priority, certainly before any consideration of SEHSR routes south of Petersburg. The long-term plan for the Southside HSR system should specify a level of engineering, quality of service, on-time performance and reliability equivalent to that of the SEHSR main line. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly document a federal commitment to assess options for eventual through service both north and south at junctions with the SEHSR main line at Petersburg, and the selection of the connecting train station in Petersburg should be made with this criterion in mind.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
137	137-4	The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly include a federal commitment to conduct an Alternatives Analysis and Tier I EIS (AA/EIS) for potential HSR passenger service to the southwest from Suffolk via Weldon NC to Raleigh in order to serve the population of Northeast North Carolina who are an integral component of the Hampton Roads Metro Area and to reestablish more direct contact with the NC Piedmont area. As a future concept, this additional track would provide a long-desired travel method to the southwest and would create an HSR loop off the SEHSR main line similar to the loop already approved for Winston-Salem NC.	This service is currently not included in the Virginia Rail Plan. The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project provides frequent connections to SEHSR trains at Petersburg for trips southbound to Raleigh, NC.
137	137-5	The data used in calculating financial estimates for the various EIS alternatives should be updated. Much of the data in the EIS dates from 2004, excludes Defense Department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not likely to be built. Revised cost, cost-benefit analysis, and ridership estimates must be used in documents submitted to federal authorities and properly archived if our region is to compete effectively with other metro areas for limited federal funds.	There is considerable misunderstanding of the so-called "third crossing". The "third crossing" is in fact not a crossing at all but a series of roadway improvements leading to the existing crossing in anticipation of a future third crossing. Moreover, the travel demand model took into account the difficulty and unreliability of the existing crossings to Newport News from Norfolk and added access time to the trips from Norfolk to Newport News train stations to account for the unreliability of travel times. Ridership estimates, costs and benefits will be reexamined in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
138	138-1	The Hampton roads region faces many long-term challenges in solving its myriad transportation system issues. Due to its large military presence, this region is a strategic geographical area in our country. I am in favor of continuous improvement to the transportation infrastructure throughout southeastern Virginia. Joint Forces Command is committed to supporting this effort in terms of defining our requirements to move men and material ensuring sustainment of our forces.	DRPT appreciates the support of the U.S. Marine Command.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
139	139-1	The ability to rapidly move people and goods and connect to the marketplace is fundamental to any region's competitiveness. That's why we support the position HRTPO, which is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative 1, which we strongly endorse.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
139	139-2	We believe that Alternative 1 will provide the maximum benefit for the region and the Commonwealth by serving a fertile untapped market on the Southside, where the majority of the region's population and jobs reside and where there is growing demand for another travel option to Washington DC while improving the existing Amtrak passenger rail service on the Peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
139	139-3	To get a sense of the potential demand for passenger rail service from the Southside to Washington DC, we, along with several of our private sector counterpart organizations, recently sent an email survey to our members asking them how many round-trips on average do they and their employees make from Hampton Roads to DC on a monthly basis and, if offered at a competitive cost and a Norfolk-to-Union Station travel time under four hours, would they consider traveling to DC by passenger rail. From that one email to our members and with no follow-up, we received more than 180 responses totaling 1,224 round trips on average per month. Almost without exception, the responses were positive.	Ridership estimates will be revisited in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
139	139-4	The overwhelmingly positive response our ad hoc survey received is further borne out by the fact that, despite walk-up fares of over \$1,000 round trip, DC is one of Norfolk International Airport's top 10 travel destinations. We demonstrated was demand for a more convenient, reliable, and affordable travel option from Southside Hampton Roads to Washington DC. The Brookings Institution recently opined that investment in high-speed rail can immediately achieve high ridership levels if a large market exists between points, citing the success of the recently opened Madrid-Barcelona high-speed rail corridor in Spain.	Ridership estimates will be revisited in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
139	139-5	Such is the case with the Hampton Roads/ Richmond/Washington DC corridor. Given Hampton Roads' unique market characteristics; the largest concentration of federal activities anywhere in the country outside DC and the associated number of contractors who travel to DC on a frequent basis; the region's proximity to the nation's capital; the suitability of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor to high-speed rail;	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
139	139-6	and the fact that passenger rail service can be implemented in the corridor with a modest initial investment and in a relatively short period of time, Hampton Roads arguably offers the best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country.	Comment noted.
140	140-1	The DEIS does not explain how environmental resources will be evaluated and factored into the decision on the preferred alignment. This information should be included in the Final EIS.	The process by which the Preferred Alternative was chosen is documented in the Tier I Final EIS. Based on FRA and DRPT recommendations, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) reviews the environmental document prepared and takes into consideration public input to make a selection of a Preferred Alternative.
140	140-2	It would be useful if the Final EIS would clarify environmental documentation planned to follow the ROD (such as additional EISs or Environmental Assessments).	The current EIS is a program level Tier I document. The next step in the environmental impact investigations is to prepare a project level Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative.
140	140-3	The DEIS should clearly explain how the build alternatives will meet the needs especially if the preferred alternative only has one route;	The Preferred Alternative is enhanced conventional service on the Peninsula and higher speed 90 mph service on the Southside route.
140	140-4	The DEIS states (page 3-153) that the breakdown of wetland types is provided in Appendix D. Appendix D has consistency information for the Department of Environmental Quality.	Reference deleted.
140	140-5	While the DIES gives an overview of potential impacts it does not give the level of detail to provide an analysis of impacts. The project team should continue to avoid and minimize impacts from this project.	This is a Tier I program level EIS and the more detailed environmental impact analysis will be conducted as part of the follow-on project level Tier II Environmental Documentation for the preferred Alternative which includes higher speed passenger rail service on the Southside and one additional conventional train on the Peninsula. There will likely be no impacts on the Peninsula due the addition of one more train at conventional speeds.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
140	140-6	The DEIS should provide details of mitigation for all impacts.	The project level Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative will examine environmental impacts in more detail.
140	140-7	The DEIS should evaluate the impacts of all activities associated with this project including, access roads, storage areas, maintenance, parking, stations, etc.	The project level Tier II Environmental Documentation of the preferred Alternative 1 with higher speed passenger rail service on the Southside will examine environmental impacts in more detail.
140	140-8	The appropriate agencies should be contacted regarding threatened, endangered, and other species of concern annually at a minimum during the course of this project to account for changes in the lists.	Comment noted.
140	140-9	On page ES-27 in a discussion about Capital Costs the DEIS states that "Virginia applied for \$XXX million." This should be corrected.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS.
141	141-1	It is unclear why wetland impacts for Alternative 1 are shown to be 1,036 acres (435 acres on the Southside plus 601 acres on the Peninsula) when Alternative 1 appears to entail no construction on the Peninsula. Similarly all the other factors where impacts were estimated (recreational resources, protected species, historic and cultural resources, Federally-owned parks etc.) , the impacts from the higher-speed rail on the Peninsula have apparently been added to Alternative 1. Given that under Alternative 1 there appear to be no changes to rail service on the Peninsula other than what is already planned under the No Action Alternative, the method used to calculate total impacts for Alternative 1 seems inappropriate.	As described in the Tier I DEIS, Alternative 1 provides higher speed passenger rail on the Southside and assumes conditions of the No Action Alternative for the Peninsula. The No Action Alternative included one additional roundtrip of passenger service along the Peninsula that does not currently exist. It is likely that improvements would be necessary along the Peninsula alignment to accommodate the additional roundtrip. However, the Tier I DEIS did not identify specific improvements and potential ROW needs for the additional roundtrip on the Peninsula; therefore a conservative estimate of wetland acres within the potential impact area of 600 feet was used. The same reasoning was used for all other resource areas mentioned. The Tier II Environmental Documentation of the Preferred Alternative will provide a more detailed and specific look at potential impacts to all resources.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
141	141-2	the methodology used to determine total impacts negatively affects Alternative 1 in the comparison of alternatives in Chapter 6.	The methodology used does not negatively affect the comparison of Alternatives in Chapter 6. As described in the Tier I DEIS, Alternative 1 provides higher speed passenger rail on the Southside and assumes conditions of the No Action Alternative for the Peninsula. The No Action Alternative included one additional roundtrip of passenger service along the Peninsula that does not currently exist. It is likely that improvements would be necessary along the Peninsula alignment to accommodate the additional roundtrip. The Tier I DEIS did not identify specific improvements and potential ROW needs for the additional roundtrip on the Peninsula; therefore a conservative estimates of potential impacts was used.
141	141-3	The same estimate methodology, adding the impacts of higher speed rail on the Peninsula to those on the Southside for Alternative 1, was apparently not used for cost analysis.	The cost analysis did add the costs of each segment of the alternatives for both Peninsula and Southside alternatives.
141	141-4	The document does not similarly evaluate two build alternatives involving higher-speed rail on the Southside - one with improvements to the Peninsula and one without. The document does not explain why two alternatives were not also considered for Southside higher-speed rail.	At the onset of this project, an engineering feasibility study and alternatives analysis was conducted. Chapter 2 of the Tier I DEIS summarizes the outcome of the analysis. Both the engineering feasibility report and alternatives analysis can be found at <a href="http://www.rich2hrrail.info">www.rich2hrrail.info</a> .
141	141-5	...wetland impacts given in the document are not usable for us in comparing the alternatives or in identifying which alternative may have less impact to aquatic resources.	Information provided in the Tier I Draft EIS enabled FRA and DRPRT to select a Preferred Alternative. More detailed analysis and assessment of potential impacts will be developed in the Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative.
141	141-6	Finding suitable areas for restoration of wetlands to compensate for forested wetlands at a 2:1 ratio in the impacted watersheds will likely be required. It will be extremely difficult to compensate for impacts to bottomland hardwoods and cypress-dominated communities, which occur in the corridors on both the Peninsula and the Southside, and every effort should be made to avoid impacting these important aquatic communities.	Every effort will be made to avoid and/or minimize impacts to wetlands during planning and design.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
141	141-7	The document indicates in Section 3.15.5.2 that a Section 404 permit will be required from the Corps of Engineers, and we concur. Depending on the alternative selected, a permit may also be required from the Corps under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. Such authorization will be required for work in navigable waters, such as the Blackwater River, which is navigable from its mouth upstream to above the crossing of the NS rail line. In addition, a permit may be required from the U.S. Coast Guard.	As planning for the project progresses, identification of all applicable permits will occur. Prior to construction, all required permits will be obtained.
141	141-8	since FRA is the lead Federal agency for compliance with NEPA and would have a greater amount of Federal control and responsibility over the entire project than the Corps, we designate FRA as the lead federal agency to fulfill the collective Federal responsibilities under Section 106 for the proposed undertaking. The Norfolk District authorizes FRA to conduct Section 106 coordination on its behalf. Any memorandum of agreement prepared by FRA under 36 CFR 800.6 should include the following clause in the introductory text: "Whereas, pursuant to Section 10 and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, a Department of the Army permit will likely be required from the Corp of engineers for this project, and the Norfolk district has designated FRA as the lead federal agency to fulfill federal responsibilities under Section 106; and"	Comment noted.
142	142-1	The Tier I DEIS should have evaluated a bored tunnel between Newport News, Norfolk and Portsmouth.	Such an option was considered and dismissed early as being too expensive and not cost effective.
142	142-2	Population assumptions seem to be based on continued patterns of sprawl, and resulted in an emphasis on the entirely new Southside passenger route.	The Preferred Alternative advances higher speed rail passenger service on the Southside and enhances existing conventional services on the Peninsula.
142	142-3	The I-64 Peninsula Corridor has far higher levels of traffic both today and predicted for the future - far more than the Route 460 corridor. These congestion levels will create significant incentive to travel by rail in the corridor and make rail very competitive.	Comment noted.
142	142-4	Our evaluation of the discussion and the tables indicates that investing in Alternative 2b would offer the best overall package (without accounting for the unstudied tunnel)	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
142	142-5	The study acknowledges that there are more significant environmental effects on the Southside and higher costs because of the need to build more new infrastructure. The travel distance is longer and the study refers to more conflicts with Norfolk Southern freight.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
142	142-6	Some may assume that the Southside route is better for connecting military facilities, but honestly, as a veteran I have seen that most military facilities are so spread out as to require a car. So service members who may be traveling between Fort Lee and Hampton Roads may be more likely to drive than other types of travelers.	Comment noted.
142	142-7	The Norfolk Station at Harbor Park appears to be isolated from the core of downtown and not closely connected to the Light Rail Line.	High speed trains will connect directly to the Hampton Roads LRT.
142	142-8	The Newport News Station should be relocated under any scenario because the current site cannot be well integrated into the fabric of the city clocks or support the redevelopment and revitalization that the city deserves.	Comment noted.
142	142-9	We are unsure if the Bowers Hill Station makes sense. It is locate near an area of severe congestion and doesn't offer the same advantages of a station located within a more urban, mixed-use and walkable fabric. Growth would be limited by the highways and the need to protect the Great Dismal Swamp.	Station locations will be subjected to additional detailed technical analysis in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
143	143-1	...the Commonwealth should be extremely mindful going forward of the adverse impacts of future passenger on current and future freight rail operations.	DRPT will work cooperatively with the freight railroad hosts to assure that freight operations are not adversely affected and that all infrastructure necessary to maintain freight railroad operations will be constructed.
143	143-2	New infrastructure construction must fully preserve both the ability to operate freight trains on demand and the opportunity to expand freight service. Further, new infrastructure design must fully protect the host railroad's ability to serve existing customers, both freight and passenger, and locate future new freight customers on its line.	DRPT will work cooperatively with the freight railroad hosts to assure that freight operations are not adversely impacted and that all infrastructure necessary to maintain freight railroad operations will be constructed.
143	143-3	The DEIS contains only a brief reference (Section 3.3.5) to strategies necessary to mitigate impacts to freight operations. The three design strategies referenced to increase service efficiency along these routes seem optimistic, as significant segments of double, and in some cases triple track may be necessary to support the proposed passenger operations.	Comment noted.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
143	143-4	Finally, there is minimal reference to the issue of mixed slow heavy freight and high speed passenger operations causing deterioration in corridor operating capacity. Adding passenger trains to any freight network requires a robust simulation of the route using a CSXT compatible model such as RTC, with benchmarking against actual operational data to fully test the impacts of the proposal on existing and future CSXT traffic. It has been a longstanding CSXT requirement to use such models to provide validation of the findings.	More detailed technical analysis will be conducted during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation including capacity modeling and train operation simulations. This detailed work will be carried out in cooperation with the host freight railroad.
143	143-5	The policy of both CSXT and the Association of American Railroads is to separate the operation of high-speed passenger trains on different tracks from freight train operations. That policy requires high-speed passenger train operations to be confined to sealed corridors, entirely separated from freight operations and fully grade separated from roadways. Simulations have consistently demonstrated that either passenger or freight performance is seriously affected when the two are mixed at different speeds.	Train operation simulations will be conducted utilizing models approved by the host freight railroad.
143	143-6	CSXT has generally indicated conditional acceptance of 90 mph passenger train speeds in mixed service with freight trains with enhanced signaling technology such as Cab signals in a largely sealed corridor arrangement with only minimal grade crossings and appropriate supplemental safety measures.	DRPT appreciates the clarification of the CSXT position on higher speed passenger rail speeds.
143	143-7	...freight railroads should be compensated for the right-of-way and capacity consumed by passenger operations. In developing new service, the public sector should generally expect to bear the full cost associated with any new facilities required to exclusively accommodate passenger rail unless otherwise negotiated with CSXT.	There are instances and expectations that some passenger rail project improvement costs will be borne by the public sector. In 2009, CSX and DRPT executed a framework agreement where the parties agreed to identify projects or portions of projects where the freight operation and the intercity passenger rail operation could jointly benefit from the improvements made. Under this relationship and logic, DRPT and CSX have worked collaboratively on the construction of passenger and freight rail improvements on the CSX system primarily in the I-95 and U.S. 58/460 corridors. Many of the passenger project improvements made to date include a joint benefit to the freight carrier, for they will have the ability to use facilities during non-passenger train activities, and other projects provide a public benefit to the Commonwealth by removing freight from Virginia's highways. CSX and DRPT have a proven working relationship in this arena.

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
143	143-8	Chapter 4 of the DEIS references that Amtrak and its host freight railroads are responsible for operating the existing passenger rail system and for maintaining track for higher speed passenger rail. Operating passenger trains at higher speeds greater than existing freight operations requires substantially higher maintenance costs and enhanced track infrastructure, and the passenger agency should fully compensate the host railroad for these additional costs.	Comment noted.
143	143-9	The report fails to mention that higher passenger train speeds will require a track structure capable of handling both heavy and slow freight and high speed passenger trains. The track design must consider improved curvature, grades, and superelevation.	Comment noted.
143	143-10	There are several short segments of Class 3 track on the Peninsula subdivision and a pocket of Class 2 track near Main Street Station.	All tracks will be upgraded for higher speed passenger rail options at public expense.
143	143-11	The DEIS does not consider the impacts of the added passenger traffic on adjacent CSXT subdivisions and on CSXT's terminals, such as Richmond's Acca Yard, and on the route between Acca Yard and the proposed CSXT-NS connection to nS at Petersburg. Any passenger trains operating between the New York-Washington area and the Richmond Main Street Station or Petersburg areas flow through the CSXT Acca Yard. The proposed passenger operation will use that critical segment of the CSXT I-95 corridor, an already capacity constrained segment, to reach the NS route to the Southside. CSXT is deeply concerned that, without significant infrastructure improvements to offset the impacts, the additional passenger traffic will result in significant delays to existing passenger and freight operations.	All necessary infrastructure improvements needed to move passenger trains through highly congested segments of the freight railroad will be investigated as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation and future designs. The host freight railroad will be consulted early and continuously through this planning and design process and will be party to all investigations and decisions regarding infrastructure improvements.
143	143-12	...any scenario for improved or additional service on the Peninsula must carefully factor in the need to maintain and expand capacity to facilitate the coal business.	Comment noted.
143	143-13	...is it evident that some level of infrastructure improvements will be required to simply improve on-time performance of even the Status Quo Alternative...regardless of which alternative is selected, capacity improvements for passenger rail reliability on the Peninsula will be required.	Comment noted.
143	143-14	However, both the No Action Alternative and Alternative 1 contemplate adding a third round trip at 79 mph, yet neither include capital costs to facilitate the additional train.	The capital costs are assumed to be included and would not be a material differentiator when comparing competing alternatives since the costs are already assumed.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
143	143-15	The Newport News Downtown Rail Station proposed as part of Alternatives 2a and 2b should be planned on the north side of CSXT tracks to avoid significant passenger rail train delays caused by conflict with CSXT's coal operation.	More detailed investigations on station location will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
143	143-16	However, to provide sufficient capacity to introduce new passenger service from both the SEHSR corridor and Southside Hampton Roads, the single track James River bridge leading into Main Street Station must also be double tracked.	This will be examined in more detail in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
143	143-17	Necessary capacity enhancements from Petersburg to the S line connection at Centralia - a new third track with thirty foot lateral separation from the existing freight track- are similarly addressed in the SEHSR plan.	Under this EIS, the connection improvement is assumed to be part of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project (not SEHSR). The connection improvement would therefore be studied in the Tier II Environmental Documentation to be developed for the Preferred Alternative. If the SEHSR Richmond, VA to Raleigh, NC Tier II Environmental Documentation is developed for this segment prior to the Richmond to Hampton Roads Tier II Environmental Documentation and approved, the SEHSR Tier II Environmental Documentation and approvals will prevail.
143	143-18	The 2002 Richmond to South Hampton Roads High-Speed Rail Feasibility Study discussed several alternatives for this connection, but no schematic or drawing showing the proposed design for the "North Collier connection" has been generated to aid in developing a required arrangement.	The North Collier Connection will be analyzed as part of the SEHSR Tier II EIS.
143	143-19	Further, any capacity improvements in or around Collier Yard should be designed to accommodate future development by CSXT or other entities to allow for enhanced freight operations and correspond with advancement of the Southeast High Speed Rail corridor.	CSXT will be a party to all investigations and technical study in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
144	144-1	We trust that if the proposed project moves forward there will be a much more detailed analysis of matters of particular interest and concern to Norfolk Southern, including the interoperability of passenger and freight trains, shared facilities, capacity, operational safety and security, liability and insurance, access fees and compensation, equipment requirements, and capital improvements. We expect these issues and others will be addressed in close consultation with us.	

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
144	144-2	...(Alternative 1) the Draft EIS suggests that 90-110 mph passenger service may be made compatible with high tonnage freight service on the Norfolk Southern line between Petersburg and Norfolk by reactivating middle tracks and/or reactivating or extending passing sidings. Norfolk Southern does not believe these are viable solutions. Passenger train service above conventional speeds (i.e., in excess of 79 mph) requires special safety equipment, maintenance practices outside of Norfolk Southern's experience, and track geometry incompatible with heavy tonnage operations.	FRA and DRPT will work with NS to resolve issues regarding interoperability, track geometry and related safety issues as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation. 90 mph will be the maximum operating speed.
144	144-3	...(Alternative 2a) the Draft EIS suggests reactivating middle tracks or reinstalling or extending passing sidings to create more passing capacity. Norfolk Southern believes the former center tracks and sidings are largely obsolete and could not be easily integrated into its current operations.	FRA and DRPT will work with NS to resolve issues regarding interoperability, track geometry and related safety issues as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation process.
144	144-4	...the agencies noted in Section 3.3.2 of the Draft EIS - state and local roadway authorities also have responsibility for highway-rail grade crossing safety at public crossings along the proposed passenger routes.	Comment noted.
144	144-5	Norfolk Southern encourages the closure of as many grade crossings as possible in support of passenger operations on the Norfolk line. As noted in the Draft EIS, grade crossing closures may be achieved by construction of grade separations and/or the consolidation of redundant crossings. While a "sealed corridor" would create some safety enhancements, the best way to reduce grade crossing risk exposure is to close crossings. Norfolk Southern looks forward to the detailed analysis of this issue in the project level EIS, and we welcome the chance to have input in that analysis.	Comment noted.
144	144-6	Section 3.5.5, the Draft EIS mentions the possibility of creating "quiet zones" where train horns cannot be sounded absent exceptional circumstances. Norfolk Southern notes that the process for creating quiet zones is dictated by federal regulation, and we reserve the right to comment on any specific quiet zone proposal. In general, while quiet zones may mitigate noise impacts, they do not always facilitate safer rail operations. Each application for a quiet zone must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and must comply with federal safety requirements.	DRPT will work cooperatively with NS, FRA and other regulatory agencies to mitigate the noise of more frequent train horn soundings either through the use of quiet zones or grade crossing elimination.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
144	144-7	Norfolk Southern is unaware of any environmental conditions on its Norfolk line that are the result of "current and historic rail operations, as indicated in Section 3.13.3. We suggest that this item be reordered in the list of influences in Section 3.13.3 as its current placement at the top of the list is inappropriate.	It is important to note that current and historic railroad operations may be later identified as a potential source of on and off-site contamination.
144	144-8	If access to Norfolk Southern's property is needed for this work (or any other work required in the preparation of the project level EIS), a fully executed right of entry agreement acceptable to Norfolk Southern will be required.	Comment noted.
144	144-9	Norfolk Southern presumes that any construction or operating permits required due to activities in or near waterways or wetlands or other sensitive will be obtained and held by the passenger operator.	All permits to cross waterways will be the responsibility of DRPT.
144	144-10	Norfolk Southern also presumes that it will not be required to conduct or fund any mitigation required by a final EIS.	The cost of implementing strategies to mitigate the environmental consequences of reintroducing passenger operations on the NS will be borne by DRPT.
144	144-11	The project level EIS should evaluate the impact to freight rail operations of the proposed passenger rail service, including operational conflicts during construction, in order to ensure the continued safety of operations and the protection of the public. In addition, effects on rail structures, such as support and erosion, should be evaluated.	Comment noted.
144	144-12	On Table 4-1, Norfolk Southern notes that the Nokesville to Calverton double track project is erroneously listed as a passenger project.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS.
144	144-13	The discussion in Section 4.3.2 could leave readers with the impression that the cost of maintaining tracks owned by a freight railroad and hosting passenger service are borne entirely by the freight railroad. While the freight rail would perform the actual maintenance of its tracks, the freight railroad would expect some portion of the cost of that maintenance to be borne by the passenger operator.	This will be the subject of any contract agreement between DRPT, the passenger service operator and the host railroads.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
144	144-14	According to Section 4.3.1, the estimated capital costs are derived from a 2005 report and adjusted to 2008 dollars. We believe the 2005 report was essentially an update of an earlier 2002 report. Norfolk Southern has previously questioned the basis for costs appearing in the 2002 and 2005 reports. The cost estimates in the Draft EIS may be based upon conditions and assumptions that were made eight years ago and were not even valid at the time.	The cost estimates used for the program level Tier I EIS were systematically developed using consistently defined units of measure, unit costs and costing techniques across all alternatives considered. Consequently, DRPT and FRA believe the cost estimates were sufficient to make comparative judgments regarding the various alternatives for purposes of route and speed selections. More detailed cost estimates will be prepared in conjunction with the host railroads based on more detailed capacity and engineering analysis during the project level Tier II documentation.
144	144-15	The discussion of estimated operating costs found at Section 4.3.2 appears not to take into account the cost of insurance, which would be required of a passenger operator by any host freight railroad (including Norfolk Southern).	The cost of insurance is assumed to be the same across all alternatives and would not therefore be a differentiator for the purposes of route selection. This cost will be considered as part of the project level Tier II cost estimates.
145	145-1	WHEREAS the DEIS lacks specificity with respect to the long-term design of the designated HSR route for Hampton Roads, including the nature of any interim construction projects, the location of a connecting station in Petersburg, and options for providing through service both north and south at Petersburg;	The general station location proposed for the Petersburg area has been the subject of the SEHSR environmental documentation. However, selection of an exact station location will be the subject of subsequent environmental documentation prepared by the project proponent. Norfolk trains would stop at the existing Petersburg station.
145	145-2	WHEREAS the designated HSR route for Hampton Roads would provide the federally-mandated HSR Extension off the SEHSR main line rather than inclusion in the main line itself; and as there exists a usable right of way from Suffolk through Weldon, NC to the main line that could eventually be provided with HSR rail service, thereby providing a convenient loop off the main line (similar to the loop already approved by USDOT and FRA for Winston-Salem), which would serve the northeast NC section of Hampton Roads and restore historic connectivity with the Piedmont region of NC;	The subject of the Tier I Draft EIS is limited to the Richmond/Hampton Roads route alternatives.
145	145-3	WHEREAS the Hampton Roads HSR corridor should be viewed as an essential part of the intrastate Virginia crescent of the SEHSR running from Washington DC thorough Alexandria, Richmond, Petersburg, and Suffolk to Norfolk, thus connecting Hampton Roads' nationally important defense installations ("Pentagon South") with those in Northern Virginia and Washington while providing a natural extension for travelers from the Northeast HSR Corridor;	Comment noted.

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
145	145-4	WHEREAS the supporting data in the DEIS is now outdated and lacks Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security input crucial to determining the priority of planning, funding, and construction of the project;	More detailed and current analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation to be conducted on the preferred Alternative 1, which includes higher speed 90 mph service in the Southside route and one additional conventional speed train on the Peninsula.
145	145-5	WHEREAS by the time, years hence, when the SEHSR Corridor is actually built, there is a reasonable expectation that light rail connections will be in place within Hampton Roads to connect to the region's designated HSR line, and that this attribute is recognized by federal authorities as a distinct advantage in the competition for federal funding;	Comment noted.
145	145-6	WHEREAS the current and projected levels of vehicular traffic congestion in Hampton Roads and the growing shortage of funds in Virginia for new highway construction make development of high quality passenger rail service essential for the day-to-day travelling needs of citizens, tourists, military, port personnel, ship builders, defense contractors, and other business travelers,	Comment noted.
145	145-7	NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Future of Hampton Roads, Inc. (FHR) urges the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) and the federal Railroad Administration to accede to the recommendations of the HRTPO expressed in its Resolution of October 30, 2009, and in its eventual response to the Richmond to Hampton Roads AA/DEIS document;	Comment noted.
145	145-8	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of FHR urges that state and federal planning be undertake to prepare a long-term design for the Hampton Roads HSR system that:(a) incorporates it into Virginia's Statewide Rail Plan for the SEHSR Corridor at the same level of engineering as the SEHSR main line;(b) provides for and ensures that interim stages of construction will be compatible with and will contribute to the long-term design;(c) locates a Petersburg station where it will allow the most rapid transit onto the SEHSR main line, going both north and south, without the need to change trains; and  (d) includes a commitment to study an eventual loop connector from Suffolk through Weldon to Raleigh;	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
145	145-9	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that FHR proposes that Virginia authorities concentrate on seeking approval and funding first for the Virginia HSR crescent from Washington through Alexandria, Richmond, Petersburg and Suffolk to Norfolk while considering funding of interstate connectors to points further south as a secondary priority, or in short, invest in Virginia first;	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
146	146-1	The VA Bicycle Federation supports Virginia's bold move to increase our passenger rail offerings for our citizens.	Comment noted.
146	146-2	...we are disappointed that there are no accommodations for human powered facilities i.e. rails with trails...Active transportation –biking and walking- will be an important and fundamental mode of transportation in Virginia’s future. Rail corridors provide excellent avenues for trails to accommodate walkers and bikers. These facilities also provide feeders to train stations avoiding the traffic and parking issues associated with passengers driving to train stations. Providing alternative transportation to stations works very well in European countries and we should use the examples of the Netherlands, France and Germany and learn from their best practices. The VA Biking Federation feels that as tax dollars are used to fund rail corridor expansions and enhancements, rails with trails should be incorporated in all projects unless extenuating circumstances prohibit this. Rails with trails are consistent with state policy and provide transportation alternatives as well as environmental, health and recreational to our taxpayers.	Trails and other pedestrian facilities can be examined as part of the alternatives definition and development during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation for the preferred Alternative 1.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
146	146-3	<p>Virginia transportation policy clearly supports the VBF’s position. As stated in VTRANS 2025:Improve connections.Projects that connect travel modes will receive increased consideration in modal plans and funding decisions.Think multimodally.Transit, pedestrian, bike and rail-friendly design features will be incorporated, as appropriate, whenever there is a major reconstruction or new construction.Multimodal accommodations are not addressed in the proposed project. According to numerous studies, including those by the Federal Highway Association, Rails to Trails Conservancy and even the recently completed House Document 404 (DRPT, DGIF, DCR) report, rails with trails, when properly designed, provide safe, viable transportation facilities. They benefit our citizens and communities and make sense in a world of increasing energy costs, CO2 emissions and health issues.Citizens across the Commonwealth as well as the United States support our position that rails with trails should be included in all major upgrade corridors. I would encourage DRPT to modify their proposal and recommend the feasibility of rails with trails along the corridor. I would also encourage DRPT to insure that the issue of human powered accommodations be addressed in similar studies moving forward.</p>	<p>Trails and other pedestrian facilities can be examined as part of the alternatives definition and development during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation for the preferred Alternative 1.</p>
146	146-4	<p>WHEREAS a network of statewide rails with trails could provide a connecting infrastructure for many of the statewide, long-distance trails including the James River Heritage, Beached to Bluegrass, Potomac Heritage Trail and Interstate Bike Route 1 and 76; and WHEREAS it is both timely and appropriate to encourage the planning and implementation of rails with trails projects across America to include such beneficial needs as the development of the East Coast Greenway as part of the proposed Southeastern High Speed Rail Project in Virginia and North Carolina; now, therefore, be it</p> <p>RESOLVED that as the Commonwealth funds rail expansion, enhancement and renovation projects, bike and pedestrian accommodations - rails with trails - shall be required as an integral and mandatory component of these projects and the Commonwealth shall embrace a true-multimodal design philosophy for current and future rails projects, including the Southeast High Speed, Crescent and Heartland Rail Corridors;</p>	<p>In 2009, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation worked extensively with representatives of the railroads, bicycle, trail, and paddler groups to develop a collaborative process for the evaluation of requests for rails with trails/pedestrian crossings. The result of this effort was the development of a process that could be followed in the evaluation of rails with trails/pedestrian facility requests and development. The written report is known as, "Rails With Trails/Pedestrian Crossing Project Initiation, Coordination, and Review - Report Document 404, 2009", and is available on the Virginia General Assembly and DRPT web sites.</p>

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
147	147-1	I support Alternative 1 of the “Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project” EIS. This option best addresses the unique nature of the Hampton roads region which is separated by water and 400 years of tradition. ...Alternative 1 is closest to the resolution adopted on Oct 30, 2009 by the HRTPO.	More detailed and current analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation to be conducted on the preferred Alternative 1, which includes higher speed 90 mph service in the Southside route and one additional conventional train on the Peninsula Route.
147	147-2	The bulk of the region's 1.6 million people live south of the James River. The region also hosts a tourist industry which accounts for approximately 2 billion dollars annually. Beginning on the west with the nation’s largest living museum, Colonial Williamsburg, and on the east the Atlantic Ocean and facilities in Va. Beach, thousands of visitors are attracted annually to the region each year. These factors provide for a ready potential ridership as evidenced by the large turnout at the recent public hearing held in Norfolk.	Comment noted.
147	147-3	The largest concentration of military and related activities in the country, also located south of James. Along with other activities of the federal government, Hampton Roads encompasses the largest concentration of federal employment outside the greater Washington, DC area. Rapid access from these installations to the national capital area is certainly in the national interest.	Comment noted.
147	147-4	Alternative 1 makes connections at Norfolk’s Harbor Park with the Region’s light rail system (under construction), ferries, buses, and highways which make for easy inter-regional access.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
148	148-1	The CRTB and the VDRPT need to endorse the Resolution adopted by the HRTPO which unanimously voted for Alternative 1, and unanimously asked for TRUE HIGH SPEED RAIL.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
148	148-2	This EIS needs to be UPDATED of all its errors and antiquated information, such as the double accounting of cost for Alternative 1 on Petersburg to Richmond, the factoring in of the third crossing, and so on.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
148	148-3	Hampton Roads is the largest metropolitan area directly on the Atlantic Ocean between greater NY and south Florida, and the majority of its population, 1.1 million people, live on the Southside, hence the obvious correct choice is Alternative 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
148	148-4	Hampton Roads is the second most important MSA in the nation in terms of national security and defense readiness, so THIS vital statistic alone should place Hampton Roads on the top of the list when it comes to future High Speed Rail funding.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
148	148-5	Now that LIGHT RAIL is a reality (in the city of Norfolk), such a light rail system could conceivably network throughout Hampton Roads (including over to the Peninsula via a new multimodal bridge replacement for the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel). With such a light rail system, the founding line being in Norfolk and opening in 2011, it makes perfect logical sense to terminate the High Speed Rail in downtown Norfolk.	Comment noted.
148	148-6	For the HSR line, it is important that it be TRUE HSR design and not "higher". It needs to be 110mph, or more, from the get-go.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
148	148-7	Also, Hampton Roads should get NO LESS THAN SAME-SEAT service to its destinations, such as Washington DC or NYC. With this HSR funding, the Peninsula should immediately get its passenger rail service upgraded to where it performs efficiently and on time for the 600,000 people over there.	Comment noted.
148	148-8	Eventually, if a new interstate is built to Raleigh from Virginia Beach/Norfolk, then either use the right of way thereto OR the Weldon existing RR right of way, for a future HSR system to points south and southwest to Raleigh, Atlanta and Miami.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
149	149-1	HRT's comments on the Tier 1 report reflect the HRTPO's Resolution 2009-05 that endorsed the following:• Designation of a "High-Speed Rail" corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph; and• In conjunction with high-speed rail corridor, the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/Amtrak/I-64 corridor. In addition, HRT offers the following specific comments for the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project- Tier 1 DEIS:	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
149	149-2	ES-10: Please specify which year of the HRTPO Long Range Plan was utilized. The year used has implications on the population and employment used in the ridership forecast that is developed in this DEIS. Page 2-11: Please specify which year of the HRTPO Long Range Plan was utilized as it has implications on the population and employment used in the ridership forecasts. Page 3-3: Section 3.1.4.1 discusses that "the estimated range of probable 2025 ridership to/from Hampton Roads." The year of the HRTPO Long Range Plan used in this forecast should be included.	The demographic data provided from the MPO's was updated in 2008.
149	149-3	ES-11: Please provide additional information regarding potential land use impacts for the proposed station at Bowers Hill. Consideration should be given to place this station in a larger employment and population center.	Station locations will be revisited during the next phase of project development, which is the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
149	149-4	ES-11: Section 2.2.3.1 states that in Norfolk, "existing downtown parking facilities could be used." Where is this parking anticipated to be available? Parking availability within the downtown core is limited. Page 3-21: Please clarify the parking availability in Section 3.2.5.2. While the number of parking spaces available in the downtown area was mentioned, there was no discussion of availability of these spaces. The introduction of Light Rail Service and the subsequent demand on parking was not discussed.	Existing downtown parking spaces in Norfolk are assumed to be near the baseball stadium. More detailed analysis regarding specific parking facilities will be conducted during the next phase of project development, which is the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
149	149-5	ES-33: In the final bullet under the Comparative Evaluation of Impacts, the "cost effectiveness index" is discussed. Please specify the methodology that was used to determine the cost effectiveness. This subject has a specific definition within the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts process, so it should be clarified what methodology was used in the cost-effectiveness calculations.	The "cost-effectiveness index" for the Draft EIS was specifically developed for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project and is NOT defined the same as the FTA New Starts process. The CEI is the annualized capital costs plus annual operating costs.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
149	149-6	Page 1-19: In section 1.4.3 Multimodal System development, it is stated that “local transit services and better taxi and rental car facilities must accompany any planned improvements in rail passenger service”. There is no mention or description of current transit services currently available and the Norfolk Tide, the starter line for light rail transit for the Hampton Roads region. The multimodal connection this project will provide will be vital toward a multimodal connection for high speed rail to the rest of the region.	The Draft EIS does make reference to the Norfolk LRT and Southside rail service which will terminate in Norfolk near the LRT station at Harbor Park baseball stadium.
149	149-7	Page 2-4: More specific analysis is needed to determine if all grade crossings either need to be eliminated or be grade separated.	This more detailed technical analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
149	149-8	Page 3-14 and 3-15: When discussing the impact of the potential ridership in the section 3.2.3, the following is stated, “If travel time savings did occur on the I-64 or I-95 routes, the savings likely would be immediately offset by the induced demand of additional vehicles that would divert to the affected routes”. This statement underestimates the potential impact that an alternative travel method beyond the existing tunnels would have for the Hampton Roads area. Discussion should be included regarding limited funding available for major highway/bridge construction which increases the attractiveness of other travel options. In contrast to Section 3.3.2, Page 3-43, in Section 3.4.4.6, states that “the Build Alternatives of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project would benefit regional air quality by reducing regional vehicle travel by automobile”. If the Build Alternatives will benefit the region’s air quality by reducing VMT, this can only be a benefit to helping manage traffic congestion as well.	Comment noted.
149	149-9	Page 3-26: Section 3.3.3.2 states that for a Southside/NS route between Richmond and Norfolk, costs for the improvements that would be needed between Richmond and Petersburg are included in the SEHSR Tier II analysis. Please clarify if ridership and revenues forecasted for the Richmond-Petersburg segment are also applied to the Southside/NS route. Page 4-3: As stated previously, the inclusion of the Richmond to Petersburg link appears to be part of the implementation of service between Washington DC to NC. If these costs are included in the Southside/NS route, then ridership and revenue forecasts should be applied as well.	Ridership forecasts include station boardings and transfers to SEHSR trains at Petersburg Station. The inclusion of the Richmond - Petersburg segment of the route is required by NEPA to evaluate projects with independent utility and logical termini. The project is Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail and is defined as such. It is not two separate projects: Richmond - Newport News and Petersburg - Norfolk. Consequently, all costs (and ridership) for the segment between Richmond and Petersburg must be included in the analysis.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
149	149-10	Page 3-17: The Tide Light Rail System is currently under construction in Norfolk and is set to open in 2011. Section 3.2.4.2 describes this as “proposed”. The description of the rail station in downtown Norfolk should include information from the City of Norfolk plans for this area. Page 3-59: Newport News and Williamsburg are cities, not counties. Page 3-63: Portsmouth, Norfolk, Chesapeake and Suffolk are cities, not counties. Page 3-65: A moderate portion of the Norfolk land use is listed as “undefined”. Page 5-6: the Light Rail System in Norfolk is under construction and scheduled to open in 2011.	Corrections made to the Tier I Final EIS as appropriate to Chapter 3.
149	149-11	Page 4-12: The capital reserve fund is utilized by HRT and should not be viewed as a potential funding source for high speed rail. Passenger fares do not need to be included in Section 4.4.3 as “possible sources of funding.” The Motor fuels sales tax is only available in Northern Virginia.	The Draft EIS does not purport to use the capital reserve fund of HRT to fund high speed rail. This section of the Draft EIS simply enumerates local sources of funding that could be considered as part of the local match for any potential future federal funding of the local improvements needed to implement high speed rail.
149	149-12	Page 5-4: The Peninsula Rapid Transit Project is listed to be implemented by 2015. After thorough analysis, the Light Rail Transit Alternative did not meet the cost effectiveness requirements under the FTA New Starts program, so it is not active at this time. Therefore, the completion date should be revised to 2018. Please clarify what kinds of projects can be included in the cumulative effects categories. Can proposed projects or those under study but not approved be characterized under this category? Please revise the Tide in Norfolk scheduled opening to 2011.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations require that potential cumulative and indirect effects of other related projects be taken into account.
149	149-13	Page 6-6 states that mode choice was not evaluated as part of the Tier I Draft EIS. Page 3-1, however states that the second stage of the travel demand forecasting “predicted the market share of each available travel mode in each market.” The difference in these statements should be clarified.	"Mode Choice" is different than "available travel modes." The Tier I DEIS looked at what modes were available but did not do specific analysis of actual mode choice.
150	150-1	The Virginia Chapter (of the Sierra Club) does not believe the list of alternatives considered is adequate and the process by which they were selected was inadequate at best, and possibly improper. We are not aware that there was ever a scoping phase for this project as is required by NEPA. The public needs to be able to put forth their ideas openly and with as much information as possible so they can contribute to the planning process.	The scoping meetings were properly advertised in the Federal Register, local newspapers of general circulation and were conducted in 2004. Chapter 7 of the Tier I Final EIS outlines the extensive public outreach program conducted as part of the preparation of the Draft EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
150	150-2	<p>The Virginia Chapter is pleased that studies are being advanced on the expansion of passenger rail to cities in Virginia. Congestion in our urban area is suffocating, in terms of the impact on our economy, air quality, and the contribution of the automobile to climate change. The time to expand rail service is long overdue.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
150	150-3	<p>The alternatives are built around 2 routes, a northern route down the peninsula in CSXT right-of-way ending at Newport News and a second route through Petersburg and southeast to Norfolk on the south side of the James River using Norfolk Southern right-of-way. The northern route is shorter and both routes apparently use existing tracks. Alternatives offer varying distributions of nine trains on these two routes. We are not told to what extent these routes are competing with freight trains. The northern route would relieve the busiest automobile route and serve the growing development all along the corridor, especially Williamsburg, but it would not connect to a large population at Norfolk and other points across the James River. The southern route would serve Norfolk and other cities connected by a planned light rail system. We understand that the southern route will be expanded as the Heartland Corridor Freight line, but there is no information about the degree to which it will co-exist with the passenger trains. The area along the southern corridor is relatively sparsely populated. The alternative offered involve addressing the dual needs by improving both lines, but there is no option offered that would serve most of the interests with a single improved line. To do so would require a rail crossing of the James from Newport News to Norfolk. The DEIS describes a consideration of a bridge crossing that was eliminated because of cost and environmental impacts. No other crossing considerations are discussed.</p>	<p>The Draft EIS describes the freight railroad operations in Section 3.3</p>



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
150	150-4	<p>One option that should be on the table is to construct a modern wide-bore tunnel under the James and passing under Norfolk and possibly points beyond, such as Portsmouth. Such a tunnel would permit the northern route to serve the considerable population at and around Norfolk. As there has been serious consideration given to a third crossing for vehicular traffic, it is possible that a rail tunnel could be constructed in conjunction with this third crossing for vehicles. Such a tunnel would have many advantages that are not available with any of the options given. It would undoubtedly have a much greater ridership, because it would serve at least 4 and up to 6 stations, while other options each serve 3 stations in addition to Richmond. A route connecting Newport News to Norfolk could be extended to reach Portsmouth and Bowers Hill if that were desired. This would connect all of the Hampton Roads area and would leave the southern route for freight. Such a rail facility would enable the operation of a local rail line between the southern cities and Newport News, operating between the intervals of the HSR. IR would have minimal environmental impact, because no land would be disturbed except the portal, presumably at the rail yard in Newport News. Because there would be minimal surface disruption in Norfolk, it would maximize the development potential (and land values) at the station. If the tunnel was extended the 2-3 miles to Portsmouth, the same economic benefits would occur there, and the ferry system across the Elizabeth River could be focused even more on tourism. There would be minimal traffic disturbance or requirements to move utilities at Norfolk (unlike for the southern line).The technology to construct such a tunnel is mature and popular in most parts of the world except the US. The costs cover a wide range and making a blind estimate would not be reliable. The cost issues should only be considered in light of the broader picture of long-term benefits and economic opportunity that such an option provides.</p>	<p>Tunnels and bridges were examined as part of the scoping process and were quickly dismissed as being too expensive and not cost effective for passenger rail services.</p>
150	150-5	<p>Such a new option would go much further in addressing the FTA's revised funding guidelines for new starts. In addition to cost and time saved which the DEIS discusses, future funding decisions will also be based on livability issues such as economic development and environmental benefits. Interconnecting more cities with transit to maximize ridership and permitting quality urban development at critical stations is a plus under the new guidelines.</p>	<p>The lead federal agency for the project is the FRA and not FTA. The FTA New Starts guidance does not apply. The FRA uses a benefit/cost methodology to determine the viability of a project. The benefit/cost calculations will be prepared during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.</p>



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
150	150-6	While we wish to advance an option for a tunnel transit crossing, our main concern is for the process that should have permitted this proposal, and possibly other ideas, to come forward at an earlier time according to the procedures outlined in NEPA. We ask that the department establish a scoping phase or at a minimum, that the tunnel option be included among the others for evaluation and public discussion.	The scoping meetings were properly advertised in the Federal Register, local newspapers of general circulation and were conducted in 2004. Chapter 7 of the Tier I Final EIS outlines the extensive public outreach program conducted as part of the preparation of the EIS.
151	151-1	The City of Portsmouth endorses (1) extension of high-speed rail service from Washington DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, (2) designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and (3) enhancing the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
151	151-2	Hampton Roads is a unique national asset, containing the largest concentration of federal activities anywhere in the country outside of DC. The region houses operations of 16 departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government including all five military services. It is home to the nation's largest naval facility, provides primary air defense to our nation's Capitol, and homeland security to our ports and seacoast. Dependable, efficient and cost-effective travel to and from the DC area is vital to operations.	Comment noted.
151	151-3	Our ability to rapidly move both people and freight to and from the region and connect with the marketplace is fundamental to Hampton Roads' future competitiveness. In addition to facilitating the movement of people, improvements in the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor will have the added benefit of enhancing the competitiveness of the Port of Virginia, while fostering the growth of manufacturing and distribution centers along the corridor.	Comment noted.
151	151-4	The Bowers Hill station will provide easy access via I-264 and the Hampton Roads beltway (I-64/I-664). Community plans envision an intermodal transfer facility at the Harbor Park station in downtown Norfolk that will link high-speed rail to the light rail system, intercity and regional bus systems, ferry service, cruise ship facilities and direct interstate access. Along the multimodal corridors that will be served, business and residential development will be concentrated.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
151	151-5	Moreover, the City of Portsmouth is home to many of these military facilities, the Ports and is geographically located in the heart of Hampton Roads. Therefore, while the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor will serve downtown Norfolk, a connection between Suffolk and Portsmouth using the CSX corridor would provide an ideal route for passenger rail and would help to ensure and promote connectivity to "Downtown Hampton Roads" on both sides of the Elizabeth River. Limiting the downtown connectivity to just the Norfolk Southern corridor would skirt the southern border of Portsmouth, thus bypassing the very Port (e.g. PIT and APM/Maersk) and Military (e.g. Coast Guard Command, Naval Hospital, Naval Shipyard) facilities the route is intended to serve. In addition, the City of Portsmouth has both the existing population and density to promote ridership on this transit service.	A river crossing was evaluated and dismissed as not being cost effective and for having too many severe environmental impacts.
152	152-1	I am writing in my capacity as Chairman of the Downtown Norfolk Council to voice our strong support for the high speed rail link to the Southside as envisioned in Alternative #1 of the DEIS. Downtown's corporations, businesses and property owners have expressed overwhelming support for this alternative and the enhancements outlined in the resolution of the HRTPO. It is essential for Norfolk and South Hampton Roads to have the High Speed Rail connection outlined in Alternative #1 and we urge your approval of an enhanced Alternative #1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
152	152-2	There is a strong recognition of the enormous benefits that would accrue to the entire region as a result of this high speed rail link to the high speed rail corridor that will stretch from Maine to Florida. We are also keenly aware of the unique advantages of the proposed multimodal transportation center envisioned for Harbor Park. Where else could High Speed Rail be linked directly to a Light Rail System and also a ferry system, a bus system and in close proximity to the confluence of the region's major interstate highways?	Comment noted.
152	152-3	This connection to the Southside of Hampton Roads will open up numerous opportunities for economic development and job growth; promote travel and tourism opportunities for the whole region...	Comment noted.
152	152-4	it will enhance quality of life for Hampton Roads citizens by offering fast, environmentally-friendly and efficient transportation;	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
152	152-5	...and more importantly, provide an alternative evacuation route in the event of a hurricane or other major event.	Comment noted.
153	153-1	Alternative 2b would have the least impact on resources at Petersburg National Battlefield;	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
153	153-2	The Southside/NS route would have the greatest impact on the resources of Petersburg National Battlefield. The historic battlefields would see a visual, as well as, audible noise impact to our visitors due to the connection from the CSXT "A" line to the Southside/NS route occurring at the northeast quadrant of the off grade railroad crossing between CSXT and Norfolk Southern just north of Collier Yard in South Petersburg.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
153	153-3	however, if another alternative was adopted as the preferred, mitigation could be possible with screening and/or enhanced study of the affected area for historical research and interpretation for the public.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
154	154-1	Issuance of the DEIS is one of many critical steps in a federally prescribed process for determining the Commonwealth and the Hampton Roads Region's Preferred Alternative and issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD).It is critically important that the Hampton Roads Region be directly connected to the emerging national high-speed rail network to ensure our region's continued economic competitiveness. To that end of October 30, 2009 the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) unanimously adopted a resolution endorsing the designation of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 Corridor as the "High Speed Rail Corridor" serving the Hampton Roads Region.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
154	154-2	High speed rail will have significant economic and quality of life benefits for our region by offering a viable, environmentally friendly, and energy efficient transportation alternative. New investments in improved intercity passenger rail will also promote economic development, job creation, and enhanced travel and tourism opportunities.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-3	In addition, a modern high speed passenger rail system would also offer a viable emergency evacuation alternative for Southside Hampton Roads' citizens in the event of a hurricane or other major event necessitating mass evacuation.	Comment noted.
154	154-4	For all of these reasons and more, it is critically important that the DEIS, the foundation for moving forward in our pursuit, be accurate. To that extent, we offer a through technical review conducted by the Transportation Economics & Management Systems, Inc. Technical Memorandum (review) of the DEIS, which specifically outlines a number of modifications, corrections, and clarifications that should be undertaken, along with suggested specific corrective actions needed.	See comment responses to specific issues raised in the Technical Memorandum.
154	154-5	Competition for these federal high speed rail dollars is fierce and by many high speed rail professionals we have consulted on this matter, the Commonwealth, and by extension Hampton Roads, is significantly behind other states and regions competing for these precious dollars.	Comment noted.
154	154-6	The DEIS did not evaluate high speed rail option for the Southside	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
154	154-7	No 9 train frequency for the Southside was evaluated	The track capacity between Richmond and Washington, DC restricts the number of trains in this segment of the line and consequently limits the number of trains that can be added to the SEHSR and Richmond/Hampton Roads services. The number of long distance
154	154-8	Frequency and speed for high speed rail was not evaluated	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
154	154-9	Alternatives were defined arbitrarily	The EIS process commences with agency and public scoping meetings, which are documented in Chapter 7 of the Tier I Draft EIS. Project alternatives were carefully defined and vetted by public agencies including HRTPO and the City of Norfolk.

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-10	No Southside high speed rail option	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 90 mph.
154	154-11	3rd crossing should not have been included in assumptions	Future highway network assumptions are based on data provided by the PDCs in the 2004 phase of the study, and reflect the cost-feasible transportation plans in 2004. In 2004/2005, the assumptions regarding the First Phase of the Third Crossing were agreed to with representatives from the HRTPO. The study assumed that the First Phase would include a toll of \$5.38. The Travel Demand Methodology and Results Report includes a sensitivity analysis estimating the ridership impact of removing the First Phase.
154	154-12	Corrective action: requires a new travel demand forecast	Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
154	154-13	Train capacity is mismatched to demand	Trains operate in consists that are built at terminals based on the estimated peak load. Typically cars in trains are not added and subtracted as the train moves from terminals to intermediate stations. The switching costs add an enormous incremental costs that is avoided by operating a train with a defined length.
154	154-14	Operating costs are too high and do not reflect economies of scale	With the addition of seven trains to the Amtrak system all the costs considered are incremental in nature. There are no economies of scale for such a small scale operation.
154	154-15	Amtrak benchmarking study by TEMS shows lower overall train mile costs than the DEIS	Amtrak experiences differences in train operating costs system wide. The costs estimated for the Richmond/Hampton Passenger Rail Project were estimated using Amtrak cost allocation methods and models.
154	154-16	Costs overstated	Comment noted.
154	154-17	DEIS overstates costs for higher levels of service because it ignores economies of scale	See prior response. There are no economies of scale for small scale operation.
154	154-18	Wrong type of train was used in the analysis	The technology assessment is in agreement with the SEHSR project.
154	154-19	Diesel trains operate only up to 125 mph	Comment noted.
154	154-20	Electric high speed trains accelerate faster	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-21	High speed trains can operate faster than the equipment specified	Comment noted.
154	154-22	Southside requires true high speed rail technology	Comment noted.
154	154-23	Corrective action: a new option for the Southside should consider high speed train equipment	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
154	154-24	Ridership forecasts have serious weaknesses	The ridership forecasts utilized are sufficient to discern differences in ridership based on differing route characteristics and station locations. The methods applied were systematic and consistent over all alternatives and therefore, the different ridership patters allow informed choices between competing routes.
154	154-25	Ridership forecast shows a preponderance of NEC ridership	Trip Length Distribution Exceeds the Length of the Corridor -In both the current and proposed future alternatives, trains originating in Hampton Roads (either Norfolk or Newport News) provide a one-seat ride to New York, with some trains continuing to Boston. The proposed service is similar to current service to/from Newport News and Richmond with trains switching from diesel to electric locomotives in Washington, but not requiring Northeast Corridor bound passengers to switch trains. The average trip length reflects the fact that most trips continue beyond Washington, DC.
154	154-26	Revenue forecast does not equitably allocate revenues and costs	Revenues from Petersburg to Richmond and Washington would indeed be shared among SEHSR and Hampton Roads trains, but they are not that significant. North of Richmond, there is no change in service among the alternatives, no incremental revenue, and no incremental cost differences among the alternatives.
154	154-27	Petersburg - Richmond revenue not counted for Southside trips	Revenues from Petersburg to Richmond and Washington would indeed be shared among SEHSR and Hampton Roads trains, but they are not that significant. North of Richmond, there is no change in service among the alternatives, no incremental revenue, and no incremental cost differences among the alternatives.

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-28	Use of a behavioral model would substantially increase Southside ridership and revenue	Revenues from Petersburg to Richmond and Washington would indeed be shared among SEHSR and Hampton Roads trains, but they are not that significant. North of Richmond, there is no change in service among the alternatives, no incremental revenue, and no incremental cost differences among the alternatives.
154	154-29	fares not optimized and understate revenue for Southside	While fare optimization holds the potential to improve financial performance, it is unlikely to significantly impact the comparison among alternatives. Furthermore, fare optimization for service to/from Hampton Roads cannot be conducted independently - markets within the Richmond-Washington segment, to/from NEC north of Washington, and along the SEHSR south of Richmond/Petersburg most also be considered. This is beyond the scope of a Tier 1 analysis. The financial performance of the proposed options is quite strong requiring only a small subsidy which, we agree, could be further minimized and perhaps eliminated through pricing and/or service optimization. This is an appropriate issue to be addressed in the next phase.
154	154-30	No discussion of fare differentiation for trip purpose	While fare optimization holds the potential to improve financial performance, it is unlikely to significantly impact the comparison among alternatives. Furthermore, fare optimization for service to/from Hampton Roads cannot be conducted independently - markets within the Richmond-Washington segment, to/from NEC north of Washington, and along the SEHSR south of Richmond/Petersburg most also be considered. This is beyond the scope of a Tier 1 analysis. The financial performance of the proposed options is quite strong requiring only a small subsidy which, we agree, could be further minimized and perhaps eliminated through pricing and/or service optimization. This is an appropriate issue to be addressed in the next phase.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-31	Need for subsidies could be eliminated if fares were optimized	While fare optimization holds the potential to improve financial performance, it is unlikely to significantly impact the comparison among alternatives. Furthermore, fare optimization for service to/from Hampton Roads cannot be conducted independently - markets within the Richmond-Washington segment, to/from NEC north of Washington, and along the SEHSR south of Richmond/Petersburg most also be considered. This is beyond the scope of a Tier 1 analysis. The financial performance of the proposed options is quite strong requiring only a small subsidy which, we agree, could be further minimized and perhaps eliminated through pricing and/or service optimization. This is an appropriate issue to be addressed in the next phase.
154	154-32	Eight or more roundtrips to the Southside required for Southside to eliminate subsidies and generate operating surpluses	The number of trains that can operate on the Southside is restricted by the capacity limitations between Richmond and Washington, DC. The Southside was allocated 6 daily trains.
154	154-33	Conventional trains were assumed	Conventional trains are the preferred technology for emergent high speed rail.
154	154-34	No modal appeal was included in the forecasts	The DEIS assumes that the Hampton Roads service would operate as an extension of the NEC-Washington-Richmond service and, thus, it must provide compatible equipment and an operating plan that fits within the overall NEC-SEHSR operating plan. While this may appear to limit some flexibility with respect to technology and service, there are significant market benefits of offering a one-seat ride to/from the NEC as well as operating efficiencies. The Hampton Roads service is credited with all of the incremental revenue, including 100% of ticket revenue from through passengers travelling beyond Richmond, in comparison to incremental costs that only occur between Richmond and Hampton Roads. This ability of Hampton Roads service extension to leverage the baseline NEC service at no cost, offers a huge financial advantage over an independently operated HSR service.
154	154-35	New trains with improved amenities are required to maximize benefits	This is an emergent high speed rail project utilizing conventional equipment.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-36	Transfers to the NEC and SEHSR. Sensitivity with and without SEHSR should have been modeled.	Transfers to NEC and SEHSR - Hampton Roads passengers are NOT required to transfer in Washington for travel to/from the NEC and the Hampton Roads trains are credited with 100% of this through revenue. As noted, SEHSR transfers occur at Richmond or Petersburg, depending upon the alternative. However, the travel time difference between a Newport News - Richmond (SEHSR transfer) - Charlotte and Norfolk - Petersburg (SEHSR transfer) - Charlotte trip is 36 minutes, not "several hours". According to the Travel Demand Methodology and Results Report: 90 mph Alternative 1: Norfolk – Charlotte - 6:29 via Petersburg SEHSR connection 90 mph Alternative 2a: Newport News – Charlotte - 7:05 via Richmond SEHSR connection
154	154-37	No value of time or trip purpose in the ridership model	Value of Time or Trip Purpose Forecasts - The forecasts do consider travel for different trip purposes with different sensitivities to time and cost. These values of time and other behavioral, demographic, and trip specific sensitivities in the model are based on stated preference market research conducted for SEHSR for North Carolina, Virginia, and other states in the southeast. Consistency with these other studies is important and a comprehensive update of this information is beyond the scope of a Tier 1 analysis.
154	154-38	Current Amtrak travel patterns were projected and is inadequate to forecast high speed rail demand.	Value of Time or Trip Purpose Forecasts - The forecasts do consider travel for different trip purposes with different sensitivities to time and cost. These values of time and other behavioral, demographic, and trip specific sensitivities in the model are based on stated preference market research conducted for SEHSR for North Carolina, Virginia, and other states in the southeast. Consistency with these other studies is important and a comprehensive update of this information is beyond the scope of a Tier 1 analysis.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-39	The lack of proper behavioral, travel data significantly limits the quality of the Southside forecasts	Value of Time or Trip Purpose Forecasts - The forecasts do consider travel for different trip purposes with different sensitivities to time and cost. These values of time and other behavioral, demographic, and trip specific sensitivities in the model are based on stated preference market research conducted for SEHSR for North Carolina, Virginia, and other states in the southeast. Consistency with these other studies is important and a comprehensive update of this information is beyond the scope of a Tier 1 analysis.
154	154-40	Corrective action: the demand forecasts needs to be redone for the Tier I Draft EIS mainly to develop a high speed option.	No changes are needed for the Tier I Final EIS for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. New travel demand estimates will be conducted for the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
154	154-41	No capacity mitigation means understated capital costs	The DRPT, Amtrak and CSXT prepared extensive capacity simulations north of Richmond and allocated 7 additional train operating slots to the Richmond/Hampton Roads project. The track capacity between Richmond and Washington, DC restricts the number of trains in this segment of the line and consequently limits the number of trains that can be added to the SEHSR and Richmond/Hampton Roads services. The number of long distance and SEHSR passenger trains coming from Florida and North Carolina will co-mingle with Richmond/Hampton Roads passenger trains and existing and projected freight train traffic north of Richmond. Utilizing stringline diagrams (appropriate for a Tier I level analysis), track and other infrastructure investments were developed to assure freight railroad fluidity. More detailed capacity analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
154	154-42	No capacity analysis was done	The capacity analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS was sufficient to ascertain infrastructure improvements.
154	154-43	8-12 trains daily to the Southside should be on dedicated track Peninsula trains with higher frequencies would require additional passing tracks	The emergent higher speed rail Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project was allocated seven additional trains to the existing two for a total of nine daily roundtrips trains for Hampton Roads service distributed over two potential routes.

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-44	It is essential to assess capacity to ensure adequate infrastructure is provided and that measures of efficiency and cost effectiveness are properly measured.	More detailed capacity analysis will be conducted in cooperation with the affected freight railroads as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
154	154-45	Grade crossing treatments exceeds FRA requirements	The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph, however the rail service will not exceed 90 mph with the Preferred Alternative.
154	154-46	Grade crossing treatments exceeds FRA requirements and unreasonably increases Southside capital costs.	The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph, however the rail service will not exceed 90 mph with the Preferred Alternative.
154	154-47	At \$5-6 million per mile, the capital costs look overstated due to unnecessary grade separations.	The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph, however speeds would not exceed 90 mph with the Preferred Alternative.
154	154-48	The DEIS does not treat environmental impacts appropriately.	The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph, however the rail service will not exceed 90 mph with the Preferred Alternative.
154	154-49	Overly conservative treatment of grade crossings increases Southside grade crossing more than the Peninsula.	The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph, however the rail service will not exceed 90 mph with the Preferred Alternative.
154	154-50	DEIS does not reflect freight railroad requirement for dedicated track.	A determination for dedicated freight railroad tracks would be discussed and decided by both the host freight railroad and the US Secretary of Transportation. Dedicated freight railroad tracks were not part of the analysis for this Tier I EIS.
154	154-51	DEIS uses confrontational language	Comment noted.
154	154-52	Remove confrontational language and that a public/private partnership approach be adopted.	DRPT will work cooperatively with the freight railroads as they have on other recent passenger rail service enhancements.
154	154-53	Environmental considerations should be evaluated for the dedicated track solution.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS. No dedicated track solutions will be studied.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-54	Electrification discussion is probably wrong	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project utilizing conventional technology at speeds up to 90 mph.
154	154-55	Ambiguous references to A Line, should also include references to S line for the Petersburg to Richmond line segment.	
154	154-56	Corrective action: minor revisions to the Draft EIS are required as noted in previous comments.	No revisions are required for the Tier I Final EIS.
154	154-57	Wrong evaluation criteria were used for financial and economic analysis.	The financial and economic analysis was appropriate for a program level Tier I EIS. FRA reviewed the Draft EIS and circulated it for public comment. Therefore, the financial and economic analysis conducted for this level of analysis was "approved" by FRA and found to be appropriate.
154	154-58	FTA cost effectiveness index is inappropriate for the FRA analysis.	The FTA cost effectiveness index was not used.
154	154-59	Revenues and ridership were miscalculated.	The ridership and revenue forecasts prepared for the program level Tier I EIS were appropriate for this level of analysis and were assessed adequately to discern comparative differences among alternatives being considered.
154	154-60	User and non-user benefits were not adequately assessed.	The ridership and revenue forecasts prepared for the program level Tier I EIS were appropriate for this level of analysis and were assessed adequately to discern comparative differences among alternatives being considered.
154	154-61	Consumer surplus was not calculated.	The ridership and revenue forecasts prepared for the program level Tier I EIS were appropriate for this level of analysis and were assessed adequately to discern comparative differences among alternatives being considered.
154	154-62	Environmental benefits were not adequately assessed.	The program level Tier I EIS assessed the vehicle trip reduction potential, air quality, land use and economic benefits that could result from the different alternatives.
154	154-63	Capital costs were miscalculated.	Capital costs were systematically developing using consistent definitions of units of measures, unit costs and were calculated in accordance with standardized methods.
154	154-64	Operating costs were miscalculated.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-65	Corrective action: Financial and economic analysis needs to be completely redone.	No corrective action is required for the Tier I Final EIS.
154	154-66	Lack of public outreach	See Chapter 7 of the Tier I Final EIS for a complete discussion on public outreach for the project.
154	154-67	Corrective action: The Draft EIS needs to be rewritten to address changing community concerns.	Disagree. No corrective action is required for the Tier I Final EIS.
154	154-68	The Draft EIS should identify specific opportunities to obtain CEs and FONSI in an effort to simplify or avoid the requirement for a Tier II EIS.	The FRA is the lead federal agency. Current FRA guidance requires the completion of NEPA documentation, which could include Categorical Exclusions (CEs) for a program of projects that do not include dedicated track or go outside of existing rights-of-way. The strategies for environmental clearances will differ for the enhanced passenger rail service on the Peninsula and higher speed service on the Southside as defined by Alternative 1. A Tier II Environmental Documentation will be required for the Southside project elements.
154	154-69	A high speed rail scenario should be defined and evaluated for the Southside per the HRTPO Resolution.	High speed rail scenario is not the subject of the Tier I Draft EIS.
154	154-70	The proposed Third Crossing has no apparent funding source and should not be counted on to improve access to the Peninsula.	There is considerable confusion of the misnomer of the so-called "Third Crossing". Future highway network assumptions are based on data provided by the PDCs in the 2004 phase of the study, and reflect the cost-feasible transportation plans in 2004. In 2004/2005, the assumptions regarding the First Phase of the Third Crossing were agreed to with representatives from the HRTPO. The study assumed that the First Phase would include a toll of \$5.38. The Travel Demand Methodology and Results Report includes a sensitivity analysis estimating the ridership impact of removing the First Phase.
154	154-71	Operating costs need to be developed on a bottom up basis.	Operating cost estimates are sufficient for a program level Tier I EIS analysis.
154	154-72	The ridership forecast needs to be completely redone.	Comment noted.
154	154-73	Capacity mitigations options are too narrow.	More detailed capacity simulations and engineering analysis will be prepared during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation in cooperation with the affected freight railroads.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
154	154-74	All environmental benefits estimated in the Draft EIS need to be reviewed and revised inline with more appropriate demand forecasts.	More detailed benefit/cost analysis will be prepared during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
154	154-75	The Draft EIS needs to be amended to include new ridership forecasts and updated financial and economic analysis.	Comment noted.
155	155-1	The VMRC states that should construction activities result in impacts to State-owned submerged lands and/or tidal wetlands, permits from the VMRC and or the local wetlands boards may be required. In addition, mitigation measures for any unavoidable impacts should be considered as part of the future evaluation process. for additional information regarding impacts to subaqueous lands and/or tidal wetlands, contact the VMRC.	FRA and DRPT will coordinate future permitting requirements with appropriate local, state and federal agencies. Mitigation for unavoidable impacts will be provided as required.
155	155-2	DEQ's Tidewater Regional Office (TRO) and Piedmont Regional Office (PRO) state that several of the proposed alternatives will have the potential to impact significant acreage of surface waters and/or wetlands. If surface waters, including wetlands, are impacted, then a VWP may be required. The DEQ TRO recommends that the Tier II EIS incorporate more exact quantitative data regarding the quantity of wetlands within the travel corridors. More detailed quantitative assessments would be supportive of the qualitative assessments that have been documented in the Tier I Draft EIS.	The Tier II Environmental Documentation will provide a more detailed analysis of the Preferred Alternative. More specific quantities of potential wetland impacts will be provided.
155	155-3	...DEQ recommends that all efforts should be taken to ensure that surface waters, including wetlands, are not adversely impacted. DRPT must comply with Section 404(b)(1) guidelines of the Clean Water Act and with the Commonwealth's wetland mitigation policies.	DRPT will comply with all local, state and federal regulatory requirements pertaining to surface waters, including wetlands.
155	155-4	...DEQ recommends that impact to surface waters, including wetlands, be avoided to the maximum extent practicable...	As planning and design for the Preferred Alternative progresses, surface waters and wetland areas identified during the Tier I EIS will be used as a guide to avoid and minimize impacts to surface waters and wetlands.
155	155-5	localities within the study area are subject to requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. However, the proposed rail project would be considered exempt under Section 9 VAC 10-20-150 B 1 of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations, provided it is conducted in accordance with Erosion and Sediment Control Law and Stormwater Management Act; an erosion and sediment control plan and a storm water management plan approved by the Virginia DCR; or local water quality protection criteria at least as stringent as the above state requirements.	DRPT will comply with all local and state regulatory requirements pertaining to the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
155	155-6	...portions of the proposed alternatives may be located within ozone maintenance areas and emission control areas for the VOCs and Nox, which are contributors to ozone pollution. Future documents should address all applicable regulatory requirements for air emissions due to the construction and operation of any proposed facilities, including 9 VAC 5-50-60 et seq. for open burning. Also, permits may be required for any fuel burning equipment.	More detailed air quality analysis will be conducted, as appropriate, during the Tier II Environmental Documentation of the Preferred Alternative.
155	155-7	The DEQ-Waste Division states that the scope of the proposed project is extensive. For each area in Virginia where any work is to take place, the applicant should conduct an environmental investigation on or near the property to identify any solid or hazardous waste sites or issues before work can commence. The investigation should include a search of waste-related databases. In addition, the DEQ Tidewater Regional Office concurs that additional information on hazardous materials and contaminants in the proposed project areas must be developed to fully evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed rail corridor. The removal, relocation or closure of any regulated above ground or underground petroleum storage tank(s); installation of any aboveground petroleum storage tanks (>660 gallons) as part of the construction phase; and evidence of petroleum release must be reported to the appropriate DEQ Regional Office.	More detailed analysis of known and potential hazardous waste sites will be conducted as part of the Tier II Environmental Documentation of the Preferred Alternative.
155	155-8	DCR-DNH states that it cannot select a preferred alternative at this time, since the Tier I Draft EIS does not provide enough information to determine impacts to natural heritage resources for any of the build alternatives. Each alternative has the potential to impact natural heritage resources depending on the areas impacted outside of the existing right-of-way. However, once more information becomes available, DCR will be able to identify potential impacts and at that time select a preferred alternative.	As part of the Tier I DEIS process, FRA and DRPT selected a Preferred Alternative to carry into Tier II documentation and analysis. The Preferred Alternative for subsequent evaluation is Alternative 1 at 90 mph. DRPT will coordinate with DCR-DNH upon initiation of the Tier II documentation to minimize and/or avoid impacts to natural heritage resources.
155	155-9	DCR is concerned about construction impacts to aquatic species at bridge crossings, as well as in previously undisturbed areas, especially wetlands. The Peninsula/CSXT travel corridor intersects the Elko West Conservation Site (biodiversity significance ranking of B2- very high significance) and coastal plain depression ponds are located along the Southside/NS Route. Natural heritage resources at Elko West are: Cuthbert turtlehead, Swamp-pink; New Jersey rush; Piedmont meadow-rue; Short-beaked Baldrush. Possible rare plant and animal species in coastal plain depression ponds: Mabee's salamander and barking tree frog; tiger salamander; Harper's fimiristylis and pondspice.	As part of the Tier I Draft EIS process, FRA and DRPT selected a Preferred Alternative to carry into Tier II documentation and analysis. The Preferred Alternative for subsequent evaluation is Alternative 1 at 90 mph. DRPT will coordinate with DCR-DNH upon initiation of the Tier II documentation to minimize and/or avoid impacts to natural heritage resources, endangered/protected species, and water resources.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
155	155-10	DCR has the following recommendations: - Conduct species surveys in wetland impact areas.	As appropriate, DRPT will conduct species surveys as part of the Tier II Environmental Documentation and analysis of the Preferred Alternative.
155	155-11	- Implement and adhere to all applicable state and local erosion and sediment control/ storm water management laws and regulations at bridge crossings and where new timers will be installed.	DRPT will adhere to applicable state and local erosion and sediment control/storm water management laws and regulations as appropriate.
155	155-12	- Coordinate with the US FWS and VDACS to ensure compliance with protected species legislation, including the Swamp pink and the New Jersey rush.	DRPT will coordinate with appropriate local, state and federal agencies to ensure compliance with and protection of listed species.
155	155-13	- Coordinate with the DCR's Division of Natural Heritage if a significant amount of time passes before the project is implemented, since new and updated information is continually added to the Biotics Data System.	DRPT will coordinate with appropriate local, state and federal agencies to ensure compliance with and protection of listed species.
155	155-14	- Provide preliminary engineering and station locations to DCR as they become available, so that DCR may provide more detailed comments.	DRPT will provide preliminary engineering and station locations for review to applicable agencies.
155	155-15	Based on the maps provided in the Tier I Draft EIS, DGIF generally agrees with the information included in section 3.17 of the Tier I Draft EIS related to the listed species in the project area and impacts upon them.	Thank you for your input.
155	155-16	General recommendations- Address in the Tier II Draft EIS impacts upon listed species or the habitats upon which they depend that will result from the proposed work. - Coordinate with DGIF regarding possible impacts to wildlife.- Provide DGIF with a shapefile of the alternative corridors and/or maps of specific work sites along with a description of the proposed work so that DGIF can provide additional recommendations about ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts upon wildlife.	Thank you for your recommendations.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
155	155-17	Recommendations about development activities:- Avoid and minimize impacts to undisturbed forests, wetlands, and streams to the fullest extent practicable.- Maintain undisturbed wooded buffers of at least 100 feet in width around all onsite wetlands and on both sides of all perennial and intermittent streams.- Design storm water controls for this project to replicate and maintain the hydrographic condition of the site prior to the change in landscape. E.g., bioretention areas, grassed swales instead of curb and gutter, etc.- Adhere to a time-of-year restriction (March 15 to August 15) that is protective of resident and migratory songbird nesting.- Adhere to erosion and sediment controls during ground disturbance.	Thank you for your recommendations.
155	155-18	DCR's DPRR states that:- The Southside/NS route alternative crosses potential Scenic Byway Route 40, the potential Scenic Blackwater and Appomattox Rivers and the designated falls of the James River. - The Peninsula/CSXT alternative crosses a potential Scenic River, the Chickahominy, and the Colonial Parkway, a National Scenic Byway.  The route is also located along the proposed trail corridor for the East Coast Greenway and an extension of the Virginian Capital Trail, a regionally significant multi-use trail. Including a multi-modal trail within both corridor reviews is critical to meeting the future needs and demands of Virginia's citizens.	More detailed and specific evaluation of these recreational resources will be considered during the Tier II documentation and analysis for the Preferred Alternative.
155	155-19	DCR-DPRR states that since the proposed project has the potential to impact natural and recreational sites, the DRPT must identify all such resources along the travel corridors and all impacts and effects the proposed alternatives will have on the sites, especially visual and noise impacts.	More detailed and specific evaluation of recreational resources will be considered during the Tier II documentation and analysis for the Preferred Alternative.
155	155-20	No impacts to the (Virginia Outdoors Foundation) VOF easement located in New Kent County on the Peninsula/CSXT travel corridor.	Thank you for the clarification. The Tier I Final EIS reflects this comment.
155	155-21	The Department of Forestry (DOF) finds that the proposed project would have no significant impact to the forestry resources of the Commonwealth.Future environmental documents should demonstrate that existing groupings and/or clusters of trees and natural vegetation would remain on the site to provide aesthetic and environmental benefits, thereby reducing future open space maintenance costs.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
155	155-22	No comments received from the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME); DEQ recommends that coordination with the DMME may be appropriate.	During Tier II Environmental Documentation and analysis of the Preferred Alternative DRPT will coordinate with all potentially affected agencies.
155	155-23	Erosion and Sediment control Plan: ...must file general erosion and sediment control (ESC) specifications annually with DCR for review and approval. DRPT must comply with their annual ESC specifications approved by DCR.	DRPT will comply with all local and state regulatory requirements pertaining to erosion and sediment control.
155	155-24	VSMP General permit for Construction Activities: ...the land owner or its authorized agent is required to apply for registration coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater from Construction Activities and develop a project-specific storm water pollution prevention plan (SWPPP).	As planning and design for the Preferred Alternative progresses, a specific storm water pollution prevention plan will be prepared. All applicable local, state and federal permits will be obtained prior to project construction, as appropriate.
155	155-25	The project must be consistent with Section 106 of the National Historic and Preservation Act.	DRPT will ensure that the project complies with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Tier II documentation of the Preferred Alternative will entail more coordination with VDHR and provide more detailed analysis of known and potential historic resources.
155	155-26	Once the preferred alternative is selected, the VDH's Office of Drinking Water can provide more specific comments regarding impacts to surface water and groundwater sources. Potential Impacts to public drinking water sources: - The Southside/NS route runs through the watersheds of at least five surface water intakes, entering Zone 1 (within five miles up gradient of the intake) of two of these intakes, including Portsmouth's Lake Meade and Lake Kilby intakes. There are in excess of twenty groundwater sources within a 1-mile radius along the existing track and right-of-way. - The Peninsula/CSXT route runs through the watersheds of at least six surface water intakes, entering Zone 1 of all six of these, including the Newport News' Chickahominy River, Diascund Creek, Skiffe's Creek, and Lee hall intakes, and Williamsburg's Waller's Mill Reservoir and Raw Water (N-N) intakes. There are in excess of thirty ground water sources within a one-mile radius along the existing track and right-of-way.	The Tier II documentation and analysis of the Preferred Alternative will look more specifically at potential impacts to surface water and groundwater sources. DRPT will coordinate with all potentially affected agencies during the Tier II Environmental Documentation of the Preferred Alternative.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
155	155-27	VDOT's Richmond District Planning Office commented on the proposed project's potential to impact the existing or proposed transportation system (the following projects in the Richmond District may be impacted): - Prince George County: UPC 82849 - Route 630 and Route 460 intersection- extends through tracks; Relocated Route 460. - New Kent County: UPC 67939- widen shoulders on Route 155, Charles City Line to Old Forge Road - Chesterfield County: UPC 94858 - resurface various roads in the Tri-Cities Urban Area including locations near the project site.	During Tier II documentation and analysis of the Preferred Alternative, DRPT will coordinate specifically with VDOT to ensure impacts to or disruption of the listed projects are avoided or minimized.
155	155-28	Pollution prevention recommendations for construction and operation: - Consider development of an effective Environmental Management System (EMS). - Consider environmental attributes when purchasing materials. - Consider contractors' commitment to the environment when choosing contractors. - Choose sustainable materials and practices for building construction and design. - Integrate pollution prevention techniques into the facility maintenance and operation, to include inventory control for centralized storage of hazardous materials.	Thank you for your comments. DRPT will incorporate these recommendations to the extent practicable during final design and construction.
155	155-29	The DEQ-Tidewater Regional Office states that section 3.15.5.2 of the document contains several significant errors with respect to the regulatory authorities of DEQ, the VMRC and the Corps.	This section has been revised to better reflect the regulatory authorities of DEQ, the VMRC and the Corps.
155	155-30	DEQ's Tidewater Regional Office (TRO) states that the Tier I Draft EIS is confusing with respect to wetland impacts associated with the "Status Quo" and "No Action" alternatives. These two alternatives, as well as other alternatives presented in Table ES-3, indicate that 601 acres of wetlands are within the travel corridors. DEQ-TRO understands that this representation is meant to convey that 601 acres of wetlands exist within the study area rather than an impact to 601 acres of wetlands. However, without a better quantitative estimate of wetland impacts for each alternative, DEQ-TRO is unable to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives presented in the Tier I Draft EIS.	More detailed quantitative analysis of potential wetland impacts will be developed for the Tier II Environmental Documentation and analysis of the Preferred Alternative.
155	155-31	Appendix D of the document contains information concerning the VCP. However, the federal consistency information package included in the Tier I Draft EIS is outdated. Future documents related to high-speed passenger rail should include the updated version of the information package.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
155	155-32	- James City County states that the county should be included in the list of counties subject to the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management regulations (Tier I Draft EIS, Page 3-171) - Henrico County states that Section 3.10 of the Tier I Draft EIS which identifies large agricultural parcels is outdated. In its 2026 Comprehensive Plan, Henrico County identified additional areas of Prime Agricultural areas located between Charles City County and Interstate 295. Future documents should note this change. - Henrico County indicates that the County's Comprehensive Plan is identified as a draft plan (Tier I Draft EIS, Table 3-27). However, the plan was adopted in 2009.	Comments noted. The Tier I Final EIS has been updated as appropriate. Prime agricultural lands, as identified in Henrico County's 2026 Comprehensive Plan, will be updated in future Tier II documentation and analysis.
156	156-1	We definitely stand in support of the high speed rail, the route that comes to the Southside from Richmond. We really feel like there is a lot of benefit to the region. If we can get that route put in place, it will go a lot towards regionalism for this area.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
156	156-2	And we think that it will definitely help with the congestion. And as a couple of gentlemen said about getting cars off the roads, getting trucks off the roads, so forth and so on, and especially when you consider we have a very challenged transportation infrastructure right now. So we have to all -- in our opinion, we have to band together and try to come up with ways and solutions to make sure that we are doing the right thing for transportation -- mass transportation for the future and for the future of Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
157	157-1	<p>My first question: Is this a dedicated high speed rail system? Are the railcars and locomotives special for high speed service? Who will manufacture the railcars and locomotives? Will they be built -- will they be foreign or domestic built? Are locomotives diesel-electric driven or electric-motor driven with an overhead catenary? Where will the maintenance facility be located? Will the Norfolk terminal or terminals be close to the Norfolk Newtown Road station? Is there a potential to establish connection services between the Norfolk Airport and Downtown Norfolk? Why do you have to incorporate high speed passenger rail system with freight system as reflected in your question-and-answer bullet? Is there a potential to establish service directly to Virginia Beach or a spur line between Norfolk and Virginia Beach? How many street and road crossings on each corridor and how will they be negotiated? Has privatization of this product been considered? Where will the Norfolk station or terminals be located? And the next to the last one: Will there be any speed restrictions at crossings or through towns?</p>	<p>All these questions have been thoroughly answered in the Tier I Draft EIS. The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is a higher speed system utilizing the tracks of the general railroad system. The trains will be pulled by diesel-electric locomotives similar to existing Amtrak trains today. The train will terminate in Norfolk and no extension to Virginia Beach is contemplated as part of the defined project. The speed option selected is 90 mph. All the questions related to station locations and grade crossings will be addressed during the project level Tier II documentation and analysis.</p>
157	157-2	<p>Question Number 2 - Alternative 1, 2A.Question Number 3 - status quo.Question Number 4 - 110 miles an hour.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
158	158-1	<p>There are two critical pieces to it; one is a high speed rail component south of the James River between Suffolk and Petersburg connecting to Richmond and ultimately to D.C. and the railroad corridor in northeast part of the United States. There's plans for a segment that will go from Richmond and Petersburg down to Raleigh in North Carolina. So, the nation is finally getting the idea that having a cogent, coherent and practical public rail system makes some sense. ...those of us on the Peninsula and those of us on the Southside to come together, work collectively and collaboratively as a region to advocate both, to engage in our people in congress and the legislature, those people who make these decisions to assure that we're not left behind, and that's our goal of bringing people here tonight, to hear what you've got to say, to see whether you think this is the right plan or not, what you would suggest that we do to improve the plan, but given the alternative it seems to me that moving this forward and doing all we can to assure its success, working collaboratively with our colleagues on the Southside is good policy. It's an appropriate way to enhance public transportation in an environment where alternatives are fast fading.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
158	158-2	<p>There's a component that I think is important to discuss beyond the rail piece itself, and that is that mobility in Hampton Roads is challenged. If you are in your car an extra hour in the morning and an extra hour in the evening going to and from work because congestion won't let you get there any quicker, you have a long day and a frustrating day, you have time away from your family and things that you want to do. If five percent of the work force doesn't, for example, the SHIPYARD and Fort Eustis or the other large employers, it's not just them being late from the loss of their productivity, it's the work that they're not doing in that time period that informs the work of all the other employees. So, the loss is broader than just that of the people who can't get to work on time.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
158	158-3	If we had all of the money necessary to build all of the road projects that have been planned and vented with the public and understood by an overwhelming majority of people to be necessary to enhance mobility in the region, and we had all of that money in the bank today, it would be 15 years between now and the time you could engineer it, design it, buy the right of way, put it out for bid, construct it and thrive on it, 15 years. There's no money in the bank today. So, you can figure how many years it's going to be before you can see money to start counting those 15 years, and I was 67 years old in November. So, it's pretty clear to me it's not going to be in my lifetime. I hope it will be in yours.	Comment noted.
158	158-4	Having said those things, communities survive, thrive and prosper with a viable, efficient, effective transportation system. It's not just roads, but it's public transportation, it's pedestrians, bicycles, it's a variety of means of transportation, but if we can't get people and goods to where they need to be, then it will become increasingly difficult to maintain the job base we have, to maintain the business base that we have, to keep the tourism industry thriving, to keep folks who just live here and work here and call this home a place where they want to live.If a business can't move its product from one part of the region to another, if shippers can't get their cargo into the port and out of the port in a timely way, then competing interests like Jacksonville, Florida, which is spending huge amounts of money in their ports, and Savanna and Baltimore and Philadelphia, Newark and New York are going to say to the shippers, "Don't go to Hampton Roads come to where we are. We don't have transportation problems."	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
158	158-5	<p>The Tier I DEIS that's part of this discussion today, is critically important. Its analysis is important to our future, and the opportunity to make real improvements to our transportation infrastructure is more critical now than I think it ever has been. Beyond our individual citizens there are factors of success that include a growing population in the region, an expanding port industry, tourism that makes our area a great place to come from other parts of the country if people can get here and if people can get around while they are here. There are two projects that are basically the fundamental basis for the EIS and its outcome. One is high speed rail on the south of the James River connecting Suffolk to Petersburg, as I said earlier, and the other is enhanced rail here on the Peninsula. What that means is more trains, more trips, more frequency, more reliability so that we have good access to the Richmond and D.C. area and areas beyond.</p>	Comment noted.
158	158-6	<p>Today normal rail, Amtrak, operates at 79 miles an hour when it can get to 79 miles an hour and when it shows up on time, all those things that many of you know about. High speed rail in this country is not intended at this point to be the 300-miles-an-hour stuff they have in France, Germany, Japan and other developed countries. It's intended to be about 110 or 115 miles an hour. So, on the Southside, from Suffolk to Petersburg, you can build up some of that speed. Trains on our side of the water will go from Newport News, have to slow down, stop in Williamsburg, pick up speed, slow down, get to the rail yards in Richmond, go through Richmond and then speed up and get to Alexandria and slow down. So, 79 miles an hour, if we can accomplish it and we can get three round trips a day as opposed to the two we now have is a substantial enhancement of rail service in our community.</p>	Comment noted.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
158	158-7	If the Southside can get a train that can go 110 miles an hour, it will give the million or so people that live over there a means of transportation they do not now have. There's no rail service on Southside, and people have to come over here. When there was a hope by most of us or some of us to have a third crossing in Hampton Roads which would have been multi-mode, meaning we could have rail through it, we could have had mass transit modalities through it, it would have been easier to just bring folks over here to the Amtrak line and take them without building new and enhancing what's on the Southside but without that connectivity, the high speed rail on the Southside becomes even more important than it has been historically. So, for those reasons, one, I want to encourage the Department of Rail, Commonwealth Transportation Board, to do all that's necessary to assure that we get both projects; the Southside high speed rail and the Peninsula enhanced rail systems.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
158	158-8	Competition is incredible. The stimulus fund has eight-billion dollars in it for high speed rail. Last I knew there were over 80 billion dollars worth of applications for that eight billion dollars, maybe more by now, I'm not sure, but I'm sure Kevin will tell us. So, the competition is tremendous.	Comment noted.
160	160-1	Former senior general counsel for Norfolk Southern, now retired ; Fellow & Vice Chair, Virginia Rail Policy Institute; Immediate Past Chair, Rail Advisory Board; Member, Board of Virginians for High Speed Rail. I speak not for any of those organizations but as someone who has learned a bit about rail in the last five decades and who has spent most of the last 20 years in advocating the expansion and use of rail as a viable alternative to highway. All but two of those alternatives would preclude, for all practical purposes, rail services to one of the largest metropolitan areas in the south and in the United States currently without rail service. It would preclude service to the area of the Commonwealth that contains two of Virginia's largest cities. In fact, the two largest cities in Virginia, one of the largest, and arguably the largest naval base in the world, and one of the largest and fastest-growing populations in the Commonwealth.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Committer ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
160	160-2	I stand before you tonight urging you, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Commonwealth Transportation Board, to affirm what this region has accomplished in coming together both politically and technically, to endorse the solution also endorsed by the regional planners and the regional politicians. That is indeed a salutary endorsement.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
160	160-3	This proposal, if it's endorsed, and particularly if the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor is also endorsed, and it has already been selected by Virginia as its Number 1 rail project, you're talking about not service between Hampton Roads and Richmond, but you're talking about service between Hampton Roads and Richmond and Baltimore and Philadelphia and Washington, to jump it out of order, and New York and Boston. You're also talking about service between Hampton Roads and Richmond and Charlotte and Atlanta and Miami and New Orleans. So, this is not just a link between Hampton Roads and Richmond, it is a link between Hampton Roads and the rest of the United States, and it is critical, in my opinion and in the opinion of many of those who have analyzed this project, that we endorse Alternative 1 because it is the only viable alternative for providing the kinds of high speed rail service to Hampton Roads and to the rest of the area to and from Hampton Roads of which it is inevitably a part.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
160	160-4	if you do not build a link between Richmond and Petersburg, there is no Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor, and the idea of being bound by an analytical constraint which refuses to recognize the clear fact that the Commonwealth of Virginia is likely to receive no money from the federal government on the high speed rail application you have filed, if it decides to exclude the link between Richmond and Petersburg, that way there would be no high speed rail service anywhere south of Richmond. So, the point where your analytical point of view and for the Commonwealth of Transportation Board is that it is patently unfair from a factual point of view although understandable from an analytical point of view that you include the cost of providing service between Richmond and Petersburg in the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor and not adding to the cost of providing service to Hampton Roads.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
160	160-5	In determining passenger ridership, it should be equally appropriate to look at ridership potentially from Hampton Roads south as it is from Hampton Roads north.	The focus of this Tier I EIS is the Richmond to Hampton Roads corridor, hence the focus of the ridership was on this corridor. Ridership projections for points south of Hampton Roads was not part of this specific project.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
161	161-1	I'm here as a citizen to endorse Alternative 1 and to stress that it does mean enhanced service and frequency to the Peninsula since that's where I'd be taking my trains from. I have a bias for driving across the bridge.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
161	161-2	I want to congratulate our elected civic leaders in Hampton Roads for coming together in a difficult circumstance under time constraints and meeting the demand that we come together as a region in one voice and pick an alternative which we have done. I hope we can continue to work as a region on future issues of this kind. It's of great importance.	Comment noted.
161	161-3	As we look at the East Coast rail service, I think it's also important to look at the whole system the United States is going to have and Hampton Roads' unique position to add to that service and to be served by that system. We have the opportunity by geographic location, by population and by the focus of our region on Washington and points north uniquely with our federal assets here to be incorporated in that system, to add a lot of ridership, and just because we're a typical train ride, about 300 miles south of Washington, to add a huge population of 1.6 million people with riders that are going to use the northeast corridor. I think we have more to offer the national system than any other region I can think of.	Comment noted.
161	161-4	The impact of the system on our quality of life is also going to be very, very high.	Comment noted.
162	162-1	We do need much more of on the Peninsula route is more trains as well as more reliable service. It's very rare for me to, on the southbound route, not to be two hours late which certainly keeps a lot of riders off of the trains. Having much more reliable service on the system will definitely mean more riders. Also, just wanted to say that more trains on the system is definitely going to take more cars off the road. Plenty of people that I have talked to enjoy not having to deal with traffic, being able to read or do work or other things, and as someone who's commuting I often need to do work before I'm arriving. So, the train is definitely a much better system.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
162	162-2	It's going to mean more jobs for the region because people will be -- there'll be less congestion, more companies will be able to locate here without fear of the livability situation for their employees as well as people being able to either commute here from areas, like people were saying we're going to be connected nationally, not just regionally. So, people will be able to come to and live in D.C., work in the area. Living in Williamsburg, I know plenty of people who are professors at the College of William and Mary who either live in D.C. or their spouse lives in D.C., and they have a difficult living situation from that. So, it would definitely make that area more accessible. It will make the area more accessible economically also for tourists coming to Williamsburg and hopefully to Virginia Beach.	Comment noted.
162	162-3	It's noticeable that this system leaves off the largest city in the Commonwealth, and that's something that should be looked at in the future because it means more opportunity and accessibility for the largest city in this state as well as opportunities for people from Richmond, people from D.C., points in between to be able to spend a weekend there as well or even an afternoon.	Comment noted.
162	162-4	The other issue that is out of scope is that we still need the last mile for a lot of these trips. These stations aren't necessarily near where people are going to be accessing them or needing to get to their final destination. So, we need, with the infrastructure that's going to come from the high speed rail, access to the ERE for the whole system so that people can -- for jobs, for tourism, for shopping, for whatever reason, be able to travel around.	Comment noted.
162	162-5	One thing I do want to mention is I personally --I don't own a car and had to rent a car to come here tonight. That's a choice that I have, but a lot of people whether from age or disability or from poverty are not able to own a vehicle. Having a rail system means accessibility to jobs, accessibility to shopping, accessibility to the entire region as well as being able to come participate in the democratic process at things like this tonight, or in Richmond or in our nations' capitol, and I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak, and thank you for holding this hearing.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
163	163-1	Supporters of approved passenger rail in Virginia are excited to see potential results for years of studies of the Commonwealth Rail Advisory Board, the DRPT and rail advocacy groups. We're also pleased that the region is generally speaking with one voice as indicated by the Hampton Roads T.P.O.'s position statement last fall and the one that Dwight Farmer shared with you a few minutes ago. I agree with this regional position and support strengthened Alternative 1 of the study with a change recognizing speeds of 89 miles per hour on the Peninsula. I also support simultaneous and incremental improvements to extend passenger rail to Norfolk while improving performance, frequency and reliability of service to Williamsburg and Newport News.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
163	163-2	As a Peninsula resident, I cannot ignore the fact that two-thirds of our regions' 1.6 million population in Southside Hampton Roads is underserved by passenger rail. However, we need to maintain and improve the existing rail service as well. The Peninsula cannot wait for decades for these improvements while rail projects are moving forward south of the James. A simultaneous and incremental plan will work for the region. It is critical to the success of passenger rail in the region, and it will keep Hampton Roads speaking with one voice.	Comment noted.
164	164-1	I think that Option 1 makes the most sense for this whole region. We need to think as a region, and I think if we come at this as two different parties, Southside and the Peninsula, the lack of unity will hurt us. It makes sense to add high speed rail service to Southside. I like the Norfolk Southern Corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
164	164-2	I do agree that in the final presentation, if you could leave out that extra 148 million dollars in costs for the link, I understand for the analysis it needs to be there, but if it helps our case in trying to get this money, that's what we should do.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
165	165-1	I would -- I do preferentially choose Alternative 1 or 2-A. As a resident of the Peninsula, I do recognize that the traffic across all of the bridges and tunnels is significant in both directions, and I would look at the introduction of a new rail, both of them include a new rail, and with that said I can see there will be a significant reduction across the bridges and tunnels and potentially hopefully saving lives and losing traffic load, but I would say preferentially we're against cost savings as well the caveat that there is one single additional train added to the Peninsula, I would endorse Alternative 1 as it does extend the high speed rail at the furthest point south and on the mainland, if you will, so that there is potential if there was a terminus at Petersburg. The extension may not go directly from Petersburg but potentially through Hampton Roads onto points south, if this was to be funded first, and then we could potentially be the connectivity down to further points south, and that would be another boon to the economics of the region for traveling through.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
166	166-1	Couple of questions; I noticed the rail bed or using that previous track corridor. I know commercial rail is notorious about not maintaining those rail beds, and if we don't we're going to have some serious problems and accidents. So, I'm wondering and hoping that they're going to maintain or who is going to maintain keeping those rail beds up. If they don't, we're going to have problems.	The host freight railroads who own the rail beds will be responsible for maintaining the tracks with financial support from the passenger rail service operator and the Commonwealth of Virginia.
166	166-2	Also, obviously, I'd like to have a train coming into Newport News. We have tax dollars, too. So, let's try to keep some of the money here. I'm tired of going over to Norfolk to catch planes. Thankfully Patrick Henry or Newport News/Williamsburg is a now pretty viable airport. I'd love to see a train coming into Newport News and even into the airports, either Norfolk or Newport News. Again, Europe does this. We're finally catching up.	Comment noted.
166	166-3	Another question, also. I know you mentioned the rail speeds. I'm assuming this is under diesel. I came in late, so I don't know why we can't go to electric and what the problem is. Again, we're behind the times. Let's go electric. Okay. One of the reasons is we're trying to reduce traffic and reduce our dependence on foreign oil. This is one of the ways of doing it. So, yeah, it might cost a little extra money, but it might reduce the fuel dependence which would certainly be a big help.	Diesel-electric propulsion is the preferred technology for the higher speed 90 mph option selected in order to be compatible with the SEHSR project. Electrification is costly and was considered to be cost effective for the small number of trains operating between Richmond Hampton Roads.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
167	167-1	It is astonishing how much progress has been made and where we are. The fact that it's almost inevitable now that Alternative 1, if I read the tea leaves at public hearing in Richmond last night and what I forecast is going to happen tomorrow, it will be a single achievement accomplishing literally hundreds of decisions that have been held up for several years.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
167	167-2	<p>In your presentation tonight, I'd like to offer a comment on one item that I think we could change the language of or reconceptualize it or something like that. I mean this to be constructive. It's in no way debilitating, but the whole presentation is terrific, but at some point in there you talk about 90 miles per hour is optimum speed, and I'd like to ask that that phrase be analyzed from another perspective. Let's put a prism to it, let's put another mirror to it. I kind of think you're probably right, 90 miles per hour is the optimum speed, but I don't think it's the optimum design. At the end of the day, the federal government has postulated four design levels, and it's simply a matter of human shorthand that we talk to them as speed. There's the express high-speed rail, 150. There's a regional high-speed rail with 110, there's emerging high speed at 90, and then this conventional rail at 79, and so all the public is locked onto these are speed levels. They are not speed levels. They are not speed levels at all. They are design levels, and so when you thrust forward 90 is optimum, I think we're painting ourselves possible in the lower picture. I don't think Tampa Bay is doing that, Duluth is not doing that, Mobile is not doing that, Las Vegas is not doing that. We need to recognize when we talk about these speeds, we're really talking about designs, and I think the very nature of Alternative 1 is high-speed rail. That's 110 or above, and that's what the T.P.O. resolution was, and so the language that 90 is the optimum speed is maybe unwittingly misleading. We are really talking about design levels, and I think Hampton Roads – I cannot imagine another region in the United States that can produce the ridership that this region can produce point-to-point from here to D.C. or NATO or Washington, and I think that it would be very, very important for this region to comprehend this and to ensure that the EIS going forward clearly establishes an alternate design level and that our briefings point to that design level. As a matter of fact, that was the key point made by the Amtrak reapers at the very day that the T.P.O. made that resolution, and he made that point twice. If you don't establish the end game where you're going and you incrementally try to go forward, you might not get there, but if you establish where you are going, and then you know where you're going, and so I think it very important that -- because the risk right now is that there's all sorts of solutions popping up because we haven't nailed down the top end, that will force us to spend money, that could be spending money twice, or if it's not spent twice, then it will lock us into 90, and we won't be eligible for certain funds later. So, it's a design-level question, or a speed-level question that I think</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
167	167-2	you're referring to that slide, but it didn't come through that way. I think it could improve the state; actually the state makes us more competitive	
167	167-3	Brief comment on the method of deconflicting passenger rail and freight rail. The EIS rightfully calls for the use of passing sightings which is, I think, been an established policy of the state and which were used in the Lynchburg line just recently. However, there's other thoughts around town that are contemplating the use of simple crossovers instead of passing sightings, and I believe that the people at DRPT that created the EIS and the studies that led to the EIS were right and that passing sightings is the best solution. It costs a little bit more, but it is a solution that one can build on in the long term incrementally, and if we go the other way without passing sightings we will limit ourselves to 90 miles an hour and yet have spent money to cap ourselves. It's like cutting off your own legs.	Comment noted.
168	168-1	I want to reiterate and re-enforce what the gentleman said about design speed. That is, he kind of mixed words. Let's not half-step with this. We need to design the system for the highest speeds possible. That is 300 kilometers per hour, eventually we will run that fast, okay.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
168	168-2	The other thing is that we need to learn how to leap frog with existing technologies, learn from Europe and Asia and what they've done, their technology and knowledge, to get the system. We don't re-invent the wheel. Keep in mind also that South Korea just finished building in the last five years their high speed train system which cut travel time from Seoul to the south in half. They used existing French technology and trains, modified it slightly, built the system in four or five years, I think, and they turned the profit in five years.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
169	169-1	There's an infrastructure that's on this side already. I think they should expand out with the first phase of it, of this project, making the railroads better on this side, and perhaps at a later time when more money is available, when the economy is better, we can go on the other side. I know that the other side is doing infrastructure because of the freight lines going up in Portsmouth in there, and I know that they're doing light rail over there, but to me they should have done -- when the Chesapeake Bay went up, I think it's privately owned, I'm not sure they should have done something with that railway going over there, with the light rail going over that way, because that goes up to Maryland and to other places. So, I just fear that again, like I've seen other things in terms of transportation in this region, it's really not thought through clearly. So, I just would hope instead of making hasty moves that they'd really think about what would be better and what is the best time in terms of time and money being spent to get the project off the road.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
170	170-1	I thought what was conspicuously absent is for the service improvements on the Peninsula, CSX line, I think there needs to be an addition of a stop at Richmond Airport. The alignment of the train goes along the back side of the airport. It would be very easy to add a stop at Richmond Airport. By not doing so, or by omitting it or not considering it, I think we are short-changing ourselves a tremendous source of boardings and alightings for the Peninsula -- the Peninsula alignment. If anybody has ridden the Northeast Corridor trains through Baltimore or through Newark, New Jersey, there's a lot of boardings and alightings surrounding airport traffic, people coming on and off, taking a train to and from the airport. I suggest that the planners take a good look at Baltimore Airport. It's a very good model.	Comment noted.
170	170-2	Second -- first, really, increase train speeds on the Peninsula alignment. Amtrak has to work more closely with CSX railroad in getting the speeds increased through Acca Yard, and that is a problem that I think really needs to be looked at, and that is a tremendous source of delay. Sometimes it will take 45 to 50 minutes to travel to Main Street Station and clear Acca Yard on your way up to Ashland. I suggest that as part of the overall service improvements there must be increased emphasis on getting Amtrak to improve it's relationship with its host railroad, CSX.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
171	171-1	I'm actually enamored by Alternative 1. It provides the most mobility for a larger region, for the largest amount of populous that we have in the entire region, and as one of the speakers noted, it's not just Northeast Corridor access but also the Southeast and the Midwest and everywhere else in the nation, and since with Richmond and Petersburg being the focus of the center of Hampton Roads on both sides, it's just -- what's the word --more mobility for more people, more access. Despite the costs, it seems that Alternative 1 is absolutely what we need to focus on.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
171	171-2	Another speaker mentioned that the four-speed categories are too restrictive in what we're looking at. We need to do exactly what he said in making people realize that it's not just speed factors but overall, the overall -- what's the word -- I'll reword the whole sentence. A regional mobility would depend on everyone having access to the best ability including feeder lines for buses, taxis, light rail, air and maritime services and everything combined so that the region retains -- regains more mobility than loses it. We can go on highways, it's not going to work. It's obviously not. I just support Alternative 1 for those reasons. We have a massive military operations across the entire region, both sides, and many of them are interdependent.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
171	171-3	I've noticed the station they're talking about placing downtown Newport News is located pretty close to the SHIPYARD, and I can imagine how many hundreds, if not thousands, of SHIPYARD employees might elect to ride into or from work on a train a way on the Peninsula from Lee Hall, Williamsburg, Richmond or coming into areas closer to those areas from the Middle Peninsula and beyond who can take the train in instead of having to ride cars, car pools, individual cars or buses, that if the cost is effective and the service is reliable I think that would explode in ridership. For that reason, the tourism, SHIPYARD, military operations and various uses for like other modes, Greyhound and the airports, to the airports on the Peninsula line are located right by the tracks. Patrick Henry Airport is about one-half to three-quarters of a mile off Bland Avenue. Let's talk of a station going in there.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
171	171-4	The Richmond International Airport is right beside Peninsula Railroad, CSX, literally beside the track. I've ridden the Ringling Brother's train very often and watched airplanes taking off as we're passing thinking they need an Amtrak station here that expands to Richmond and beyond, stations placed there. That's for extreme long-range planning, but this today presented by Kevin Page and the others is for now, and that's what we're looking at tomorrow, next year, next decade. Again, Alternative 1 seems the best of all the options for everyone everywhere in the state, especially this region.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
171	171-5	I like the idea of connecting to the Southeast Corridor. It would be interesting to see how they operate the train service to interconnect with all the others that are going to be added in that corridor as well. If they combine trains northbound, separate them to two sides of the James southbound and/or swap cars to trains from Florida or New Orleans or whatever or Atlanta would be interesting to watch how that develops in coming years, as they used to do before the interstate system was build.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
171	171-6	It's already been done. We had the world class system of rail during the World War II era, and I believe we can do it again. It's obvious we've done it. We can do it again, and perhaps in light of costs these days we should. Obviously, rail combined with highway, maritime, air and everything else.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
172	172-1	Gentlemen, as you can tell by the size of the turnout, we have all been eagerly anticipating this evening in order that we might express our near-unanimous support for bringing high speed rail to South Hampton Roads as described in Alternative 1 of the draft EIS. Tonight we stand at the threshold of a new transportation era in Norfolk, Hampton Roads and, indeed, the Commonwealth and nation. Based on the evidence that you will hear tonight and the comments, I am convinced, and the region stands united, that an alternative means of passenger rail transportation is vitally important and connection to the high speed rail corridor is essential to the future of South Hampton Roads and, indeed, the Commonwealth. In fact, that is the only message you have received from the public hearings you have held the past two nights in Richmond and on the Peninsula and that, I believe, is the only message you will hear tonight. Rarely have the people of the Commonwealth spoken so clearly and with one voice. It is my hope that the Commonwealth Transportation Board and the Federal Railroad Administration recognize that both logic and the public are overwhelmingly in favor of a high speed rail corridor on the Norfolk Southern line from Petersburg to Norfolk.	Comment noted.
172	172-2	Just this day, President Obama announced \$8 billion in stimulus funding for 13 projects in 31 states. \$75 million has been awarded to Virginia to be spent outside of Manassas and another 25 million for congestion mitigation between Richmond and Raleigh. Not as much as requested but real money and a fair start. This should well position us for the next round of funding this spring of approximately \$2-and-a-half billion. Given the region's transportation meets an unprecedented funding shortage, I think we all understand how important this public hearing is. The comments derived from this public hearing will be recorded in the public register and will be considered when making the decision to designate a high speed rail corridor from Downtown Richmond to Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
172	172-3	Anyone who has ever spent just one day in South Hampton Roads understands the situation with which we are confronted. If you are not stuck in a tunnel, you are backed up in traffic awaiting entrance into a tunnel. If you are not stacked up in the four p.m. traffic leaving the naval base, you are on the I64 parking lot at the HRBT. We have a transportation problem and it will not go away. Now is the time to address it.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
172	172-4	High speed rail is no longer a dream. For the east coast and the country, it will soon be a reality with projects and funding in place. In order to connect completely to the national economy, we must, in the future, be a part of that rail system. The importance of high speed rail to the future growth and development of the region cannot be overstated. Some believe we are currently behind other regions in making our vision a reality. However, I am convinced that through a united partnership of all levels of government, the region's railroads and our business community we can advance the Hampton Roads rail program forward and successfully compete at the national level both in the immediate and longer term.	Comment noted.
172	172-5	I am submitting for the record a detailed technical memorandum setting forth issues and concerns that should be addressed in both finalizing the current draft document and also in moving forward to the next levels of analysis of the federal process. For every major comment area in the technical memorandum, we have also recommended corrective actions we believe are appropriate – are appropriate to address our concerns. I want to stress that we have undertaken this analysis and offer these proposed corrections in the spirit of wanting to be a supportive and participative partner. We believe that through this kind of collaboration we can best ensure that those -- that these required steps are completed as quickly as possible. Proper attention to these issues – to these issues will assure that the final environmental document addresses both our concerns as well as the regional consensus on the future of high speed and inner city passenger rail service to our region as expressed by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization in October of 2009.	Comment noted.
172	172-6	First of all, we need a true high speed alternative for South Hampton Roads reflective of the region's resolution of the HRTPO Resolution Number 200905 incorporated in the analysis. This can best be accomplished through an enhancement of Alternative 1. Those are not the only alternatives. We can actually enhance what is in the draft EIS, and that is what we want to try to do.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
172	172-7	The assumption that a third crossing will exist should be excluded from all base alternatives.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
172	172-8	A true high speed train set should be used for the modeling of all high speed rail alternatives – high speed alternatives, economies of scale associated with higher service frequency, which we expect to be justified based upon a revised ridership forecast associated with true high speed rail train service to the region. More people will ride a true -- a high speed rail train than will ride a 79 mile an hour train, for instance.	Comment noted.
172	172-9	An updated capacity analysis for each corridor should be carried out in conjunction with the freight railroads. Norfolk Southern needs to be at the table. We must ensure that there is an appropriate allocation of costs and revenues, which the EIS does not do, in the Petersburg to Richmond segment of the shared southeast high speed rail and Southside Hampton Roads high speed rail corridor.	Detailed analyses will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Document.
172	172-10	Finally, we must make sure that the Federal Railroad Administration financial and economic criteria are consistently used to evaluate all options. The overall effect of these changes will show that an Enhanced Alternative 1 consistent with the -- consistent with the HRTPO Resolution 200905 will provide the most effective option for high speed rail service to Southside Hampton Roads and enhanced inner city passenger rail service to the Peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
172	172-11	I firmly believe that the completion of this work can best be advanced as a cooperative partnership between the state and the region as represented by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization and the region's freight railroads. All key stakeholders must be included in the development of a comprehensive rail plan for the Hampton Roads region in order to guarantee our best possible result.	Comment noted.
173	173-1	I am keenly aware of the major transportation needs, challenges and opportunities in Hampton Roads. So I am going to make some very brief comments on behalf of the TPO regarding the high speed rail environmental impact statement. The TPO thanks you for advancing the current study for high speed rail connecting the region. A number of factors have changed at regional, state and federal levels since this study process was first initiated about a decade ago. As a result, the initial scenarios or alternatives as defined for the study do not reflect today's realities and, therefore, need to be revisited.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
173	173-2	The most critical of these elements are, first, it is now clear that the region will have significant difficulty in developing the proposed third crossing of Hampton Roads. The official regional transportation plan is presently in the process of being formally amended to reflect this fact. As such, it is clear that the new third crossing project will not be available over the first lifecycle of the new passenger rail program to our region as currently proposed in the draft document.	Comment noted.
173	173-3	Second, the new initiative of the Obama Administration has been to highlight the importance of building a national passenger rail network and to provide serious funding for these projects. As such, the alternatives' analysis needs to be refined to consider not just higher speed passenger rail service but true high speed passenger rail options particularly for the Southside. As a result, a true high speed rail option should be included in the alternative analysis.	Comment noted.
173	173-4	In order to address these points, I believe that the inclusion of Alternative 1 would best reflect the intent expressed by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization in its recent resolution and, therefore, should be incorporated in the final EIS. The region supports the improvement to rail service on the Peninsula down to Newport News including the construction of a new station in Newport News. We also support, as a region, the designation of the Route 460 corridor as the high speed corridor and the construction of that corridor as soon as possible.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
173	173-5	Ensuring that Hampton Roads is connected both early and well to the emerging national high speed rail network has to be one of the top priorities for the Commonwealth. This is critical since such linkages are necessary to ensure the continued economic growth and competitiveness of the state's urban centers. I think it is clear that high speed rail will be a very much needed improvement to the transportation system for the region and the Commonwealth.	Comment noted.
173	173-6	This is a very exciting time for Hampton Roads. The fact that the communities on both sides of Hampton Roads can come together for one alternative I think speaks volumes to the thought that has gone into this process, to the importance of this process and to how this region can work together. I hope you will do everything possible to allow the EIS process to move forward and bring this much-needed project to fruition.	Comment noted.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
174	174-1	I don't have any prepared remarks but you need to only look back a half a century ago. The other most single defining moment that took place was when the United States interstate highway system was built it passed a spot. This high speed rail will be the defining factor as we move into the next century. It is absolutely critical. We can ill afford for us to be the cul-de-sac that we were with the interstate highway system. We have an opportunity here to create a multimodal system that is second to none in the United States of America. There are few places that can bring a ferry, can bring buses, can bring light rail and can bring high speed rail to one terminal location. It is a significant happenstance that can happen right here. The most incredible thing that is taking place, and you have heard it before, is that this area has spoken as one voice. And, to that end, the two speakers that have spoken before me deserve another round of applause. Let's give it to them.I just can't stress hard enough and strong enough -- having had the opportunity to travel the country as a national transit chair myself, I have seen the opportunities and I have seen what has happened in other areas of this country when they have been able to blend the Acela line with the metro line with other lines. It is a wave of the future and we need to be part of that wave.So we appreciate you being here tonight. We have spoken as one voice. We need to do this.	Comment noted.
175	175-1	As a member of the board of TPO and as mayor, I can tell you that we highly, in the City of Suffolk, endorse the extension of high speed rail service from Washington, D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region designating a high speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 miles per hour and enhance the inner city passenger rail service along the CSX I64 corridor.	Comment noted.
175	175-2	There are many reasons why this is so important for us and we believe it will be a significant return on investment. The Hampton Roads region is home to 1.6 million citizens and growing. Rail service already exists along both the CSX I64 corridor and the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor.	Comment noted.
175	175-3	The Hampton Roads connections to the southeast high speed rail corridor can be realized in an extremely competitive price along existing right of ways and will open service to Virginia's largest population base outside of the D.C. area.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
175	175-4	We believe there are some unique national considerations here. The region houses operations of sixteen departments and agencies of the executive branch of the federal government including all five military services. It is home to the nation's largest naval facility, provides primary air defense to our nation's capital and homeland security to our port and our seacoast. Dependable, efficient and cost effective travel to and from the D.C. area is vital for all of these operations.	Comment noted.
175	175-5	Our enhanced economic competitiveness that will come with our port growing and becoming Number 1. And our manufacturing and distributing industries will grow along the corridor. Tourism, extremely important to our area. And we all know how it is to come to Virginia Beach on a Friday evening. We need to mitigate the peak-season escalation in roadway congestion. We need to support inner-connected livable communities and this will do that.	Comment noted.
175	175-6	And, finally, one of the most important pieces that I want to talk about is public safety and emergency evacuation. We all know that Hampton Roads needs more evacuation. Our former governors have spoken of it, our now governor has spoken of it and we need to make sure that we can move our people out of here if need be.	Comment noted.
176	176-1	It is important to recognize that tourism is big business for South Hampton Roads. . .it is a very critical industry to help to close these – the incredible gaps that we have in all of our budgets right now. And the ability for tourists to reach South Hampton Roads has a large impact on our ability to attract these folks to our area. Of the over 3-and-a-half million people that come to the City of Virginia Beach and stay overnight, 69 percent of them use the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel. And it is critical to understand there are over nine studies, survey studies, that it is listed as one of the top negative of their vacation experience. So this affects our ability to attract people to our area. It is really the only project that can maintain the long-term viability of this very important industry to our region.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
177	177-1	We have concerns with the current draft of the environmental document. These concerns center on the train operations planning that was completed. Specifically, our concerns include, first, the train sets used in planning purposes in the draft document are good for higher speed, that is, 79 to 90 mile an hour passenger train operations, but they are inadequate for a true high speed alternative, which would operate at speeds of 110 miles an hour or more. The conventional trains currently proposed in the document are very poor performers over 90 miles per hour and, therefore, more appropriate true high speed train technology should be evaluated along with their better performance abilities. It is estimated that in a medium distance, 150-mile corridor, a proper high speed train set will operate at 30 to 40 minutes faster than a conventional train. The high speed trains that have been used to test 110 mile per hour and higher alternatives across the country should be employed in the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project DIS for our high speed rail alternatives. We believe that Hampton Roads deserves and that the study should reflect a true high speed service level.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
177	177-2	Second, the operating costs used for 110 miles per hour options were based only on incrementally higher speed rail. It did not include the economies of sale that would be associated with operating eight to ten true high speed trains per day. This type of scenario would reduce operating costs by 40 percent for a high speed rail option that performs 400 to 600 train miles per year. This would obviously reduce the total cost significantly for the 110 mile per hour options and make them far more competitive.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
177	177-3	Third, the major -- a major concern is getting our project funded. In the environmental document, in several places, Federal Trans Administration typed evaluation criteria instead of Federal Railroad Administration inner city planning criteria were used, which Federal Railroad Administration criteria would be more appropriate for this type of service. The FRA criteria requires both a positive cost-benefit ratio and operating ratio, which ensures franchise capability together with an ability to show positive benefits for the region. These criteria are best and most competitive for ensuring FRA funding support for any proposed system. If we are to compete with projects in the Midwest, Ohio, Florida and California for funding, we need to ensure we make our arguments as strongly as possible. Accordingly, the more appropriate FRA evaluation criteria should be used in applying for FRA funding.	The FRA is the lead federal agency and signed the Draft EIS allowing it to be circulated for public comment. Therefore, the methodologies and analyses have been "approved" by FRA by definition. The cost effectiveness index utilized in the Draft EIS is not the same criterion defined by the Federal Transit Administration. More detailed benefit/cost analysis will be conducted in the Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
177	177-4	It is consistent -- it is also consistent with the recent Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization resolution that endorsed the designation and development of a high speed rail corridor and service via Southside Norfolk Southern corridor while pursuing the enhancement of the conventional inner city passenger service for the Peninsula via the I64 CSX corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
177	177-5	The development of a more robust Alternative 1 reflecting true high speed rail service for the Southside, including a faster schedule, more frequency, better reliability and newer trains, needs to be completed. This work must be undertaken in close cooperation with both the regional Transportation Planning Organization as well as the freight railroads to ensure there is full agreement and buy-in of all for the enhanced Alternative 1 that is requested.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
178	178-1	High speed rail connecting to Downtown Norfolk, as outlined in the regional consensus at the Transportation Planning Organization, will be a major real asset to regional economic by providing new and effective opportunities for business travel.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
178	178-2	Reviewing the current study from a market perspective, I believe there are a number of issues raised in the ridership and revenue forecast that require re-examination. As mentioned by others, the ridership forecast, as currently contained in the study, is skewed due to the inclusion of the third crossing project in the forecast model.	Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II Environmental Document.
178	178-3	Other related key concerns include the following: One, the demand analysis was not behaviorally based and failed to include differences between business, commuter and tourist travel. As is often said in business, time is money and, therefore, a value of time element should be included in any ridership-forecasting methodology. This is important. There is a different willingness to pay between different groups. I am talking about the differences of service. This is the case of air service. Business travelers are willing to pay a premium for a higher level of service. Most high speed rail systems offer between two to three levels of service that both attract more business riders and an opportunity to charge higher fares for those willing to pay. The impact of not carrying out this type of analysis is to reduce Southside ridership and revenue from 110 mile per hour and higher speed options.	Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
178	178-4	Two, there is a concern about how the forecast reflects short- and medium-distance travel. The average trip length in the model is reported at 275 miles, which far exceeds the length of the two corridors studied. Typically, average trip length is 60 to 70 percent of a corridor trip length. This suggests many shorter within-corridor trips that have been included in the forecast. One factor of these trips is ridership between Petersburg and Richmond. The draft of the environmental impact study has allocated these trips to the south, you have heard this, the southeast high speed rail corridor, known as SEHSR, rather than the Southside route. Yet, if the Southside high speed rail service offers 8 to 12 passenger trains per day in the corridor versus the 12 per day contemplated by the SEHSR, the Southside trains are likely to capture 40 to 50 percent more traffic.	Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project only examined the long-distance travel market and did not consider potential commuter rail services. Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
178	178-5	Three, one important feature of the high speed trains is the nose-cone effect that is associated with the improved quality service, the so-called wow factor of high speed trains. Whenever high speed trains are implemented in Europe or Asia, the comfort and convenience of these trains produce higher ridership than expected. Even in the United States this is true as shown by the introduction of the Spanish Talgo trains of the Pacific northwest corridor, which increased ridership by more than 50 percent without any increase in service frequency. People like trains and they ride them. This impact was not included with the 110 mile per hour service, which would be less of a problem if only existing trains are used. But on the Southside, high speed -- a high speed service would use new modern-connect trains that would produce a significant positive impact on ridership.	Comment noted.
178	178-6	What was surprising in the DEIS study was that not only did the 110 mile per hour option perform poorly but at some options they produced lower ridership than the 90 mile per hour service. This is unrealistic, which is recognized -- when it is recognized that high speed rail offers an attractive travel alternative to people -- to people for short- and medium-distance trips.	The 110 mph options carried more riders but at significantly higher costs for capital investment and operations. The 90 mph speed option was found to be the most cost effective and was selected by FRA and DRPT as the preferred speed option.
178	178-7	Clearly, to appropriately reflect the HRTPO's position, the Southside corridor should be a true high speed rail corridor through Enhanced Alternative 1 incorporating a demand forecast as it relates to the Southside option. To conclude, the Norfolk Economic Development Authority vigorously supports Southside passenger rail.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
179	179-1	The Norfolk to Petersburg portion of this route is part of Norfolk Southern's heartland corridor, which is being improved through a major public/private partnership to handle the surge of international freight expected to develop through the port of Hampton Roads. It is also the route taken by numerous coal trains to Lambert's Point in Norfolk where coal is loaded into ships that go all over the world. In other words, Norfolk to Petersburg line is already critical to the economy of South Hampton Roads and to the wellbeing of Norfolk Southern.	Comment noted.
179	179-2	Norfolk Southern performed a capacity study that assumed three passenger round trips per day, which would use conventional passenger equipment and operate at a maximum speed of 79 miles per hour. We also assumed that these trains would operate over the same tracks as our freight trains. We did not look at speeds higher than 79 miles an hour because high speed trains will conflict with freight trains and mixing high speed passenger trains and freight trains on the same track raises numerous issues. To accommodate 79 mile an hour service, Norfolk Southern will require some additions to our infrastructure such as a station track at Harbor Park, signal improvements, crossovers between tracks and a new connection track between Norfolk Southern and CSX Transportation to Petersburg. The approximate cost of this infrastructure is about \$75 million, and the work can be done within two years of funding. Our estimate did not include the cost of improvement to the Petersburg to Richmond CSX line. It did not include passenger rail equipment, station facilities, staging tracks or train servicing facilities.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. This includes six trains daily in each direction between Richmond and Norfolk.
179	179-3	Throughout the process, we were careful to design improvements that would keep freight and passenger trains from interfering with one another. We also assumed that passenger service provider would also provide sufficient indemnity to Norfolk Southern and the cost of all passenger improvements and operations would be borne by someone other than Norfolk Southern.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
179	179-4	Norfolk Southern looks forward to working with both the Commonwealth and the region to both host the incremental starter service and examine other alternatives for the 90 mile an hour or faster high speed trains that the public will demand. The Richmond to Hampton Roads passenger rail study appears to be based on data and assumptions developed nearly ten years ago. Enough has changed since that data and assumptions and should be revisited. Norfolk Southern will continue to support the City of Norfolk and will cooperate with the Commonwealth in future plans to return rail passenger service to South Hampton Roads.	More detailed railroad capacity modeling, engineering and operations planning will be conducted during the project level Tier II Environmental Document. DRPT will work cooperatively with NS to develop suitable plans to reintroduce passenger service on the Norfolk to Petersburg segment of the route to Richmond.
180	180-1	It goes without saying that the ability to rapidly move people and goods and connect to the marketplace is fundamental to any region's competitiveness. That is why we support the position of HRTPO, which is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative 1, which we strongly endorse. We believe that Alternative 1 will provide the maximum benefit for the region and the Commonwealth by serving a fertile, untapped market on the Southside where the majority of the region's population and jobs reside and where there is a significant and growing demand for another travel option to Washington, D.C. while improving the existing Amtrak passenger rail service on the Peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
180	180-2	To get a sense of the potential demand for a passenger rail service from the Southside to Washington, D.C., we, along with several of our private-sector counterpart organizations, recently sent an e-mail survey to our members asking them how many round trips, on average, they and their employees make from Hampton Roads to Washington on a monthly basis and if offered at a competitive rate in a Norfolk to Union Station travel time under four hours would they consider travelling to D.C. by passenger rail. From that one e-mail to our respective members and with no follow-up we received more than 180 responses totaling 1224 round trips on average per month, almost 15,000 per year, and almost without exception the responses were positive. The overwhelming positive response our survey received is further supported by the fact that despite walk-up fares of more than \$1,000 per round trip, D.C. is one of our Norfolk International Airport's top ten travel designations. We have no doubt that we have uncovered but the tip of the proverbial iceberg demonstrating demand for a more convenient, reliable and affordable travel option from South Hampton Roads to Washington, D.C.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
180	180-3	<p>A recent study determined that investment in high speed rail can immediately achieve high ridership levels if a large market exists between points such as the case with the Hampton Roads/Richmond/D.C. corridor. Given Hampton Roads' unique market characteristic, their largest concentration of federal activities anywhere in the country outside of D.C. and the associated number of contractors who have travelled on a frequent basis to D.C., the region's proximity to our nation's capital, the suitability of the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor to high speed rail and the fact that rail service can be implemented on the corridor with a modest initial investment and a relatively short period of time, Hampton Roads arguably offers the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
181	181-1	<p>I thank you for the opportunity to speak on this topic for it is most critical to the future development of the Hampton Roads region. In that regard, I, too, must salute the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization for its pivotal role in the unified approach on the crucial matter of Hampton Roads connecting with the southeastern high speed rail corridor. Having the Peninsula and Southside leadership reach consensus on supporting Alternative 1 is testament to the leadership of Mayor Sessoms with assistance from Dwight Farmer and the selfless and farsighted thinking and actions of the other members of the board, the mayors and other members.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
181	181-2	<p>Many of us have taken Amtrak from Newport News to Washington and perhaps points beyond D.C. and back to our home area. Given the hectic pace of travel on the interstate system, we welcome the opportunity for another option in planning our travels. Alternative 1 presents a viable option. The three daily round trips between Newport News and Richmond, as outlined in Alternative 1, with connections to high speed rail from Richmond to other points is a true bonus for travellers from the Peninsula. The proposed six daily round trips at speeds up to 110 miles per hour -- and we want to emphasize that what we have is a draft and we do want to focus on the enhanced alternative of 110 miles per hour -- is most -- is a positive bottom-line issue for the entire Hampton Roads region. The plan includes many other benefits for the region, among them the proposed intermodal transfer facility in Downtown Norfolk, not too far from where we are and it will link with high speed rails, and the city's light rail system, which we hope will soon move into -- we are here, will be moving into Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, through the tunnel to Portsmouth and thereabout. It also will serve and connect, rather, with the inner city and regional bus services, the ferry service, cruise ship service from this impressive facility and direct assets to the interstate, all of which enhances the quality of life for our citizens and visitors.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
181	181-3	<p>Alternative 1 also sharpens the competitive edge of the Hampton Roads region. High speed rail would lift our region to a level of passenger service comparable to some of the nation's more thriving communities. Finally, Alternative 1 will warmly -- will be greeted warmly by the large number of tourists who travel to Historic Williamsburg, will travel to the proposed activity at Fort Monroe, Virginia Beach Waterfront and the dozens of other highlighted tourist attractions within our region.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
181	181-4	<p>While improvement to the Norfolk Southern tracks that parallel Route 460 will permit six daily round trips and, again, at speeds up to 110 miles an hour, it also will benefit other Hampton Roads ventures to include, as you have heard, the large number of federal installations in our region -- and we are pleased to have all five of the military services here -- and the many other units of public and private -- within the public and private sector.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
182	182-1	I would really like to acknowledge that Old Dominion emphatically endorses the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's recommendations, a strengthened Alternative 1, which we believe is the best regional solution, obviously, designating the high speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor at speeds of up to 110 miles an hour, in conjunction with this high speed corridor, enhancement of inner city rail travel, service along the CSX I64 corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
182	182-2	Our endorsement for a strengthened Alternative 1 really recognizes a number of compelling significant factors, many of which have been spoken already about tonight and will be reiterated frequently by other speakers. A highly visible concentration of federal and military activities,	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
182	182-3	clearly the need for effective, cost effective, and efficient travel to and from the Washington, D.C. area. Let me talk a little bit about ODU's particular perspective in this. If you look at our student body, we have 4,500 students, in-state students, that reside in the Richmond or the Northern Virginia, Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. I can assure you with frequent conversations with our students their desire to make their trips to and from Old Dominion University a much easier and cheaper alternative.If you look at our total faculty and staff travel, the vast majority of that, in terms of trips, are to Richmond, for obvious reasons by the nature of the coordinating board and a number of other reasons to be there, but also to the Washington, D.C. area. And that is directly attributable to the significant amount of sponsored research that we do with federal agencies.Finally, our growing out-of-state student enrollment. Right now currently 500 and growing. The predominant number of them live in Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania areas. And these current and I am sure future and growing numbers of students would benefit greatly by a high speed rail that ran to Norfolk.	Comment noted.
182	182-4	The importance such a high speed rail corridor also has in addressing our needs for improved emergency evacuation,	Comment noted.
182	182-5	our growing -- our vibrant tourism industry and certainly enhancing our economic competitiveness.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
182	182-6	I know many of us would like making intermodal travel and interconnecting our cities a true reality. And, of course, when you look at the numbers in investment, a capital cost with significant, significant benefits.	Comment noted.
183	183-1	I demur from the comments of folks who said that Alternative 1 is the preferred -- Enhanced Alternative 1 is the preferred alternative. I believe that the preferred alternative has not been placed among our choices. The preferred alternative would have high speed rail arc through Hampton Roads and continue south. So it would come down the Peninsula, cross the James River into Southside and proceed on in the direction that high speed rail has been laid out. It would take us through the Carolinas down to Florida. We are not a cul-de-sac. We are a destination. To borrow from Mr. Gates, Hampton Roads, start here, go everywhere. Those ships that come into this port touch everywhere in the world. And Hampton Roads looks not only west to Richmond but east across the Atlantic, west to coal country and south to where the growth has been in this country in the last several decades. So a high speed rail option should certainly embrace us and proceed southward from here. We are not a spur. We are a destination.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
184	184-1	on behalf of Norfolk Festevents and my associates in the Hampton Roads special events industry, I offer our support for the extension of high speed rail service from Washington, D.C. to Richmond, Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region designating a high speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor and enhancing the inner city passenger rail service along the CSX I64 corridor, which is best reflected in Alternative 1 and its enhancements.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
184	184-2	<p>I particularly support the benefits to the tourism industry here in Hampton Roads. Norfolk Festevents, one of the largest special events organizations in the country, is responsible for attracting hundreds and thousands of visitors into Hampton Roads for major festivals, concerts and world-class maritime events that take place here in the City of Norfolk. Similar events also occur throughout our region and are produced by my counterparts in our other cities giving Hampton Roads the distinction of having the largest concentration of festivals and special events in the country as reported by the International Festivals and Events Association. Collectively, all of our regional events attract millions and millions of visitors into our region with the potential for millions more with the addition of high speed rail. Just using our Norfolk statistics collected and analyzed over the last five years, it shows that more than 80 percent of our event attendees reside in localities outside the City of Norfolk with 30 percent, and in some cases more, of these attendees residing outside Hampton Roads and with the majority of these visitors travelling from the Richmond and D.C. markets. Special events is one of the fastest-growing and most lucrative industries in the United States and around the world today; likewise, tourism is one of the fastest-growing industries here in Hampton Roads, Virginia and across the country.</p>	Comment noted.
184	184-3	<p>Joining these two fast-tracking industries with high speed and intercity passenger rail services, thus, creating improved access to new visitor markets in the Richmond and D.C. area, will have a dramatic and positive social and economic impact on Hampton Roads that will be both immediate and measurable. There is no question that visitation will increase and subsequent economic growth will result in hotels, dining, shopping, admission to the attractions and other visitor-related spending. Statistics show that per-capita spending by out-of-market visitors is at least five times that of a local visitor, and I am sure I am on the very low end. Additionally, the continued growth in attendance and visitation will sustain thousands of jobs that are created each year to support our local special events industry.</p>	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
184	184-4	High speed rail service and enhanced inner city passenger rail service as alternative transportation for our visitors are important tools to grow our tourism industry here in Hampton Roads. This new alternative transportation option will stimulate new interest in travel to and within Hampton Roads particularly during those times when peak tourism seasons and events create highway congestion resulting in both negative social and economic impact.	Comment noted.
185	185-1	My business partner, Heather Paige, and I own Goddess Greetings, a new greeting card company in Virginia Beach. Our goal is to rival Hallmark and American Greetings in the near future. This high speed rail is a way to help not only us in our endeavor but also to bring jobs to our local community, which is in direct line with what we are doing with our firm. Our cards are manufactured and distributed locally in Virginia Beach. For us personally as local entrepreneurs, this will help us stay connected with the entire east coast for critical business meetings and partnerships for growing our business. I look forward to climbing aboard our high speed rail. Thank you.	Comment noted.
186	186-1	I am going to tell you how I think high speed can benefit us. My husband was on his way to the UVA/Tech game tonight and he called me about four-thirty and said, "I am not going to make it. There is an accident in the tunnel. Too bad there is not high speed rail because I would have taken it to the game." So he turned around and came home very disappointed. Another way I think it could really benefit us is say someone is sick and they don't drive and they want to go north to get treatment in another city. They could take a cab, get to the train, get on high speed rail, go to where they need treatment, stay however long they want, get on high speed rail, come home and no one would have known they were even gone. What it does, it takes -- it allows them to get there easily because they don't drive. Thank you.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
187	187-1	I am actually here to speak on behalf of the Downtown Norfolk Council. Our council is comprised of over 300 business and individual members, all stakeholders in the ongoing development and prosperity of Downtown Norfolk. The council also manages the downtown improvement district, which is a special task district in the heart of downtown whose members are committed to the enhancement of the business, cultural and residential communities that thrive together here in Downtown Norfolk. The members of the Downtown Norfolk Council strongly support and endorse the resolution of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization and we encourage the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to adopt Enhanced Alternative 1, the extension of the high speed rail service down to the Hampton Roads region along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor.	Comment noted.
188	188-1	I am the CEO of the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the largest public housing authority and redevelopment authority in Virginia. We serve over 25,000 residents in this city with building community revitalization and building mixed-income neighborhoods. These residents that we serve as a \$100 million agency support the high speed rail and the enhanced service in Hampton Roads and also to the intercities of the region.	Comment noted.
188	188-2	We see this service as being very valuable as a link to our residents. We see it as a possible emergency evacuation route for our individuals that do not have another means of self-transportation. With this, we know there has been a lot of hard work in the region by a lot of our leaders, and this is appreciated very much.	Comment noted.
188	187-2	But one thing that I do want to mention is the fact that we are especially excited by the opportunities that we think will grow from an intermodal transfer facility that Norfolk is envisioning here in downtown at the Hampton Roads – I am sorry -- at the Harbor Park light rail station, a high speed rail line delivering passengers to this point where they can transfer to the light rail system, which will service Downtown Norfolk, which is being examined by Virginia Beach, as well, as well as ferry service, interstate highways, this facility and the cruise ships that come in here, we think that there is just tremendous economic opportunity there.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
188	188-3	The Housing Authority itself, we depend on dependable and efficient transportation to go to Richmond and Washington. And let me tell you, it is not dependable and it is not efficient at the present time.	Comment noted.
188	188-4	We feel that the high speed rail will give us that ability to do business, over \$100 million worth of business, with the state and federal government.	Comment noted.
189	189-1	I am here this evening as the vice-chair of the Norfolk City Planning Commission. And our mayor has very brilliantly and very aptly spoken regarding this issue. And I am here only to say -- express our resolve that the selection of the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor as a recommended high speed rail corridor to the Hampton Roads region is endorsed by our city. The Department of Rail and Public Transportation is urged to advance the completion of the needed studies and plans for future high speed intercity passenger rail service to the Hampton Roads region on the fastest possible time schedule.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
190	190-1	The Virginia Beach Hotel-Motel Association board of directors officially supports the HRTPO's resolution supporting high speed regional rail and inner city passenger rail. VBHMA supports Alternative 1, the designation of the Norfolk Southern corridor, as the high speed rail corridor, and in conjunction the enhancement of inner city passenger rail service along the CX (sic) I64 corridor on the Peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
191	191-1	I am Kathy Nelson, a proud citizen of Hampton Roads who just happens to live in Norfolk. And it is my honor tonight to speak on behalf of my Leadership Hampton Roads class of 2010 and the 1200-plus graduates who have participated in this important Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce program, many of whom were here tonight. As a group, we see no more important transportation proposal affecting this region, and we felt compelled to undertake a class project to increase awareness in support of the Enhanced Proposal # 1 to bring high speed rail at 110 miles an hour here to South Hampton Roads. My Leadership Hampton Roads class has been heartened by the incredible regional leadership and cooperation that has resulted in the singular position as expressed in the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization resolution. We who live here understand the incredible diversity and opportunity of this region. We have no option but to remain competitive by planning and acting now for our future. Hampton Roads is the second-largest population center in the Commonwealth. We are the most infrastructure-dependent region in the nation. We can no longer be satisfied with being a cul-de-sac. We need to stay on the main line. The ribbons we wear here tonight say it all. We need high speed.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
192	192-1	I am here to proclaim my unanimous support for the proposed high speed rail line from Petersburg via the existing Norfolk Southern line along Route 460 and ending in Downtown Norfolk. The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the resolution adopted by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization on October 30, 2009, and we endorse Alternative 1 as laid out in DRPT survey items. Additionally, we also support enhanced inner city rail improvements along the CSX and I64 corridor on the Peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
192	192-2	When we surveyed members of the Chamber, the overwhelming response was that they wanted alternate, quick, reliable and economical transportation alternative from our region through Richmond and on to Washington, D.C.	Comment noted.
192	192-3	This is a pivotal time in the economic health of not only the nation but the Commonwealth of Virginia. Strategic decisions that bring progressive and innovative transportation solutions will influence where businesses locate and prosper for decades to come. High speed rail will make the region even more attractive to tourists.	Comment noted.



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
192	192-4	Our military service members and defense-related industries will be able to travel more efficiently.	Comment noted.
192	192-5	Our region will have another option for emergency evacuation. We feel strongly that the proposed rail improvement down the Norfolk Southern line from Petersburg is the most efficient proposal that will be presented nationwide.	Comment noted.
193	193-1	I want to thank everyone who has come out tonight especially our leaders in the TPO for getting together and uniting around a solution to bring high speed rail to Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
193	193-2	The first point I would like to underscore is the importance in DEIS document in incorporating designated line high speed rail. We have talked about different speeds. I have heard 90 miles an hour. I have heard 110 miles an hour. I think it clearly needs to be defined that we want high speed rail and we want top-of-the-line service. I think there needs to be no question about that.	Comment noted.
193	193-3	Another point that I think was just briefly touched on is through service both north and south line. One seat takes you either south or north. They could incorporate a means of coordinating the trains so the trains would continue down past our region for some of the trains. Some trains could come into Hampton Roads and those trains could be either A or B trains and head north or south for single-seat ridership either direction.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project allows passengers to transfer to southbound trains at Petersburg. The issue of direct southbound train service can be examined as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Document.
194	194-1	I never thought I would see this day happen in my lifetime, that is, high speed rail happening in the United States. We are light years behind Europe and Japan but we can overtake them because we always have. I want true high speed rail to come to this region.	Comment noted.
194	194-2	I want true high speed rail to come to this region. What I mean by that is I want it to have its own set of tracks. I don't want any grade crossings on the tracks. And we have got to do this because if we don't it will be a matter of safety. People will be killed. I don't think that we can put high speed rail using the same set of tracks that freight trains do because they do not work.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
194	194-3	the main thing is, though, we have got to have this because we have got the largest concentration of military other than Washington, D.C. This area is vital to the whole world, and we have got to be able to put people around this country like they should be.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
194	194-4	I want high speed rail, and I do not want mediocre rail. What I mean by high speed rail, it has got to go over 125 miles an hour not 80 or 79 or whatever.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
195	195-1	I am a cognitive psychologist by training, and I study human behavior. And while we talk about transportation and we talk about cost, we must ask ourselves: What is it that drives human behavior? The things that drive the people in this room, I believe, are the fact that Americans are practical people where impracticality means that we do not want to waste our time. I suspect today time is as important as cost. So what are those factors that impact us as far as time goes? Time with your family. Time with your and opportunities for your family and children. The community life that we have that we enjoy in the City of Norfolk. The practical solutions that we have. I understand cost is a factor. Certainly we are all smart enough to know that. But there is a quality of life issue that goes and rises above those things that we all share. We are a community here. It is these things, it is these interfeelings that we have, these values that we have that are being threatened. And I think that the work that you are trying to do to bring the high speed Enhanced Alternative 1 to this community is a wonderful thing.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
196	196-1	I support Alternative 1 as defined in the HRTPO magnificent resolution.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
196	196-2	And I want to mention that today the president announced the distribution of \$8 billion of which a little over 1.8 billion went to the Southeastern United States. But while we are happy about what we are coming together on tonight, please note that in that first \$8 billion, 1.25 billion went to Florida, 525 million went to Charlotte, to Raleigh, and 100 billion has been designated from Raleigh up to Washington. We are behind, as has been pointed out. And this isn't going to be good enough for two months of us coming together on this. This is going to take 20 or 30 years. The interstate highway program did not happen overnight. And we are going to need our fair share of funding all that time.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
196	196-3	As was pointed out, we don't just need to go north, we also need to go south. We don't want to be just on a spur with a dead end to the east. And although it hasn't been studied, and shame on us for not getting it studied, there is an existing rail corridor to the southwest to Weldon, North Carolina, on the way to Raleigh. And we don't have to live perpetually to have to go up to Petersburg and turn around and go back south. We need as part of our next stage of studies to look at other alternatives including that corridor to Weldon and Raleigh, which happens to be 170 years old because it is the first rail corridor that ever came to Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
197	197-1	When most of you from elsewhere in the region think of Virginia Beach the first thing you think of is our oceanfront and tourism. To tail off of Councilman Uhrin's comments from early this evening, when -- the most recent survey numbers I have seen of our visitors, the single biggest problem they've cited and why they do not like their trip to Virginia Beach isn't anything at the oceanfront, isn't anything within the City of Virginia Beach itself, it is congestion at the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel. It registers up in double digits in our visitor surveys. Now, bringing them on high speed rail, such as Enhanced Alternative 1, is a way to bring them around it. Get them out of their cars so they are not sitting there inhaling fumes over there on 64.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
197	197-2	When you look at the number of major metropolitan areas in this part of the east coast, which fall within that 500-mile radius, yes, rail travel, were authentic, high speed, 110 mile per hour travel available as far as -- it could be a major boon for us. And in this post-9/11 world, simply the process of having to go through an airport, go through airport security even to get to the plane, et cetera, is more -- authentic, high speed rail could be much more time effective than flying those segments.	Comment noted.
197	197-3	And we do need 110 mile per hour rail not 90 or 79. For people -- to actually get people out of their cars and pay the money for the fare it is going to have to be appreciably better than as far as what they get from driving.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the .

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
198	198-1	<p>The board of directors of HRACRE has passed a resolution endorsing Alternative 1 with the high speed rail service on the Norfolk Southern 460 corridor and enhanced service on the CSX 64. Allow me to say that the status quo and no action are really not viable alternatives.</p> <p>HRACRE endorses the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhancement of the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
198	198-2	<p>With the increasing importance of rail in the 21st century, Hampton Roads cannot prosper without high speed rail. Efficient rail is analogous to the interstate and national defense highway system. It started in 1956. Can you imagine where our Hampton Roads would be today economically if we did not have an interstate connection?</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
198	198-3	<p>Two-thirds of the Hampton Roads population live and work in the areas served by Alternative 1. It should be pointed out that the comparative analysis of distance, time and operating cost are not apples to apples between Option -- Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. Two-thirds of the population must spend additional time and money to reach the Newport News station adding further congestion to the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel and to the Monitor-Merrimac Bridge-Tunnel.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
198	198-4	<p>In conclusion, the station in Norfolk will connect with the light rail system now under construction and increase ridership ensuring financial success.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
199	199-1	<p>I support the enhanced high speed rail to Hampton Roads for a variety of reasons.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
199	199-2	<p>First, we are sitting on a gold mine in Hampton Roads. We have the port facilities that should be the port of choice on the East Coast. We have the oceanfront that should be the choice destination for tourism. All of this is hindered by a good transportation system.</p> <p>Secondly, we are on a business cul-de-sac, so they say. I say that we are at the point of entry for international commerce for the Hampton Roads area and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Again, this is hindered by a good transportation system for this area. The high speed rail would be the ideal icebreaker for this area leadership and bring unity of visions for Hampton Roads. It will bring the right kind of businesses to spur economic growth for this area and make Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth of Virginia more competitive in business and tourism.</p>	Comment noted.
199	199-3	Thirdly, the Hampton Roads serves as a hometown for the military. The Navy has the largest presence.	Comment noted.
199	199-4	And I remember having to travel regularly to Washington, D.C. for conferences. Tomorrow I would be more than willing to pay a few dollars to save on the anxieties and traffic congestion and take the high speed rail.	Comment noted.
199	199-5	There is only one correct action and that is to bring the 110 mile per hour high speed rail, the optimum design, into Hampton Roads.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
199	199-6	And when it comes to getting out of dodge in a hurry because of an impending hurricane, high speed rail would be the ideal means of transportation as many would be stuck in traffic in the interstates or there may be a stalled vehicle in the tunnel.	Comment noted.
200	200-1	There is a statement that we'd like to make on this evening, it is that COMTO Hampton Roads supports the HRTPO and the future of Hampton Roads resolution in support of designating the Southside 460 route for high speed rail to Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
200	200-2	I just want to share a little bit in reference to the mission of COMTO. It is the mission of our organization to level the playing field and maximum participation in the transportation industry for minority individuals, businesses and communities of color through advocacy, education and professional development.	Comment noted.
201	201-1	Tonight I am here to speak in support as our city has rallied around this project so that we can secure high speed rail for our region. But we do stand in support. My neighborhood is on the alignment for the light rail, and we are excited that now we see a bigger light at the end of the tunnel with if we can connect to this then it will change the whole equation for many people in our area.	Comment noted.
201	201-2	We know that it will affect industry and economic development and growth for all of our cities in the Commonwealth. So we need to get on the high track and the high speed rail.	Comment noted.
201	201-3	I would like to still caution, as we move forward, that we will continue to have open dialogue with all stakeholders. And I did hear our mayor of the city emphasize it. We can -- we need to look at the end now and see where we are going so that we do not have missteps along the way and that would include how we fiscally manage the project and also ensuring that all of our stakeholders in the region are completely committed to seeing this to the end. I would also like to ask that any environmental impacts that would affect our residents or businesses or landowners that are near the high speed rail sites would also be engaged along the way so that input would be considered for any concerns that they may have.	The next phase of project development is the preparation of Tier II Environmental Documentation, which will have a new round of agency and public involvement, and more detailed environmental analysis.
202	202-1	I would like to endorse the remarks made by Mayor Fraim and George Crawley. I am a proud member of the Sierra Club. And there are those in this audience earlier tonight who probably think that the Sierra Club would not want high speed rail. Well, I am here to tell you that this proud member very much wishes to have what the Hampton Roads TPO has put forward. The Enhanced Number 1 selection is the way to go at this stage.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
202	202-2	We are in a situation where we can move forward or we can just stop dead in our tracks. I don't think that is a smart thing to do. And it doesn't matter whether you are a lifetime resident or a newbie that has come to Hampton Roads. We love you all. And it is high time that we got down to the business of solving this transportation nightmare. We will be concerned about some of the environmental impacts but think about this part of the equation: If we have high speed rail and we take tens of thousands of vehicles off of our interstates and we take many more trucks off of our interstates, where will that put us? It will put us in a situation and a position to be able to deal with our air quality and it will help the environment.	Comment noted.
203	203-1	Looking back, before the early '50s, the Southside had high speed rail and that J class ran over a hundred miles an hour. So what we are doing is trying to bring it back. That is before the government told the railroads how fast they can run the trains.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
203	203-2	And so I endorse the Enhanced Alternative 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
203	203-3	And I would suggest that before you can get all of the high speed line ready that if you can get a conventional train running on that line, get people used to riding them. And we need something -- we need alternatives now to what we have. And you -- and a dollar spent on rail goes a whole lot further than a dollar spent any place else.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
203	203-4	<p>And I was raised up with the idea of do it for as little as you possibly could. Because when I had my engineering, that is what an engineer did is do for one dollar what anybody else could do for five. And that is the way I had to approach it. I never had time to make studies. I had to make a quick judgment and then go with it. And then I used the studies to back me up later. A couple of things there. At the Petersburg station, there is a lot of territory west of Petersburg and Richmond that has been ignored ever since Amtrak came into being. You know what the western destination of Route 460 and Interstate 64, same city, Saint Louis, Missouri. It goes through a lot of -- of course, I was born in West Virginia, raised up in Kentucky. So I have travelled all that whole area there. So we need to be ready to go on west. So let's locate the Petersburg station close to the junction between the north/south line and the east/west so we can get back to having east/west. I remember, I've ridden the trains many times on both sides and I have gone a long, long way west. Now you have to go through Washington and Chicago and then go back south to get here today.</p>	<p>The general station location proposed for the Petersburg area has been the subject of the SEHSR environmental documentation. However, selection of an exact station location will be the subject of subsequent environmental documentation prepared by the project proponent. The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project assumes that whatever station location is selected through that process for Petersburg will be the same station location for the Preferred Alternative documented in this Tier I Final EIS.</p>
203	203-5	<p>And also the -- you ought to think about instead of putting that Western Tidewater station at Bowers Hill, put it there at George Washington Highway. Then you can call it Portsmouth/Chesapeake. It is right on the line. And then they will have a part in it and you have more greater population. Also you can interface with your local transportation. We need to coordinate all of our transportation where we can work together. And that new Newport News station, put it there where it can get on the ferry and come across here like they did years ago.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
204	204-1	<p>I support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization resolution to endorse the Route 460 corridor included in Alternative 1. I support the planning of 110 miles per hour or faster trains along Alternative 1 route. And I ask for a higher level of analysis that will provide service compatible and equivalent to the southeastern high speed rail line. I urge the DRPT to be thorough in continuing the Tier I document to Tier II completion and hope that my teenage boys will be able to ride true high speed rail from Hampton Roads to Washington, D.C. or New York by the time they are my age, and I am almost 50. Please include, at a minimum, enhanced service in Alternative 1, and I ask that even higher speeds are entertained in the long-term planning for all high speed rail routes.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>



Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
204	204-2	The final EIS should include long-term design alternatives that include true high speed trains and not traditional passenger trains. The final EIS should address a commitment to assess a through service to the southwest to the Charlotte, North Carolina region.	Comment noted.
204	204-3	The final EIS should also include an update to the draft EIS database. With the national census being conducted in 2010, more accurate and current data will be available on which to base ridership projections and economic impacts	Comment noted.
204	204-4	I know past and present military members contractors that frequently travel to Washington, D.C. for meetings or duty assignments and they would prefer an alternative to plane or automobile travel.	Comment noted.
204	204-5	High speed rail will probably be more affordable than flying and definitely less stressful than driving, as many other people have said, especially to those that live on the Southside and have to deal with the HRBT.	Comment noted.
205	205-1	...this area really needs Alternative 1, and the Hampton Roads area needs the transportation here. One of the things, though, that we have to take -- really take a step back and say, high speed rail is a baby step. And keep in mind that we have the technology and the resources and it has been proven in Japan of Maglev trains that we don't rely on -- that wouldn't rely on fossil fuels. I mean, it surpasses trains, automobiles. The one in Japan goes 361 miles an hour. And there are studies that MIT has done where you can actually have a vacuum of a Maglev train that goes 2,000, 4,000 miles an hour. And that is what we really need to concentrate on is the future not just say, here is a little baby step, but really concentrate on what the future holds for us all.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
206	206-1	I am a member of COMTO, the council -- the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials. I am a business owner in Virginia Beach. I have been involved in transportation. I fully support the Enhanced Alternative 1 for high speed rail connection to Hampton Roads through Petersburg 460 Southside corridor. I also fully endorse immediate upgrade of service on the existing route on the Peninsula with recovery funds. I fully support the fact that we have 110 -- engineered to 110 specifications comparable to -- equal to the southeast and northeast corridor specifications, that we would have throughput single seat service, that the SCIS extends itself to study the southwest route through Weldon, North Carolina and that we have the Virginia crescent get funded first.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
206	206-2	We also want to make sure that all of these processes respect Title VI requirements in terms of inclusion on contracting and environmental justice and hiring practices.	As a department of the Commonwealth of Virginia, DRPT adheres to Title VI requirements. As part of the environmental analysis for this Tier I EIS, potential minority and low-income populations along both study routes were identified. More detailed analysis of potential Environmental Justice communities will be undertaken as part of the Tier II documentation.
626	626-1	We are supportive of the Hampton Roads transportation organization's position with regards to high speed rail between Richmond and Hampton Roads, and we endorse alternatives -- an enhanced Alternative Number 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
626	626-2	Question Number 3 - status quo is the least desirable.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
626	626-3	Question Number 4 - answer to question Number 4, 110 miles per hour.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
627	627-1	<p>MPO's resolution supporting Alternative One, summarized as follows: Supports concurring improvements along Northside and Southside alignments to Hampton Roads. Maintains the Richmond Region's primary focus on fully funding and completing the high speed rail link between Washington and Richmond. Service in the Peninsula/I-64 and Route 460 corridors as follows: - Southside: True high speed rail at speeds of 110+ mph connecting Richmond to Norfolk. - Northside: Improved passenger rail service connecting Richmond to Hampton Roads; includes enhancing existing intercity service and establishing regional commuter service with potential stops at Providence Forge and RIC Airport.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
628	628-1	<p>Isle of Wight County pledges its support for regional high-speed rail as demonstrated by the attached resolution, and strongly believes that the benefits of high-speed passenger rail clearly outweighs the costs and promotes the benefit of using already existing infrastructure. Isle of Wight supports Alternative 1 (Peninsula Conventional/ Southside Higher Speed) and Alternative 2a (Peninsula Higher Speed/Southside Conventional Passenger Rail). From a regional perspective, several localities within and outside of the Hampton Roads region, including Isle of Wight County, will serve as pass-through areas, and will receive direct benefit from passenger rail as an alternative mode of transportation for the following reasons: In particular, Isle of Wight seeks to endorse Alternative 1 being designated a High-Speed Rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor to Hampton Roads, ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph. The existing section of US Route 460 (which traverses Isle of Wight County) east of the Town of Windsor is projected in the long term to become deficient in its level of service (LOS), dropping below a C rating, according to the most recent update to the Isle of Wight County Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

Commenter ID	Comment No	Comment	Response
628	628-2	Passenger rail will 1) provide an alternative to congested highways and help manage traffic congestion between Richmond and Hampton Roads. 8) alleviate congestion on heavily traveled roadways, specifically US Route 460, which is a heavily traveled truck route where tractor trailers compete with automobile traffic via an undivided four-lane highway. Alternative 1 passenger rail, along with improved rail service generally, could help alleviate traffic congestion in experienced on US 460 and improve safety for local and commuter traffic that travels these roadways every day. In addition, Isle of Wight anticipates that there will also be benefits from high-speed passenger rail via improved grade crossings, which will enhance emergency response times and allow for safer stacking distances between the Norfolk Southern railway and US Route 460.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
628	628-3	2) provide an alternative to air travel, provide competitive travel times to and from Richmond/Hampton Roads, and offer rail connections to regional and national destinations.	Comment noted.
628	628-4	3) reduce fuel consumption and improve air quality.	Comment noted.
628	628-5	4) enhance local economies by supporting tourism and local businesses, attracting employees, boosting job growth, and generating new tax revenue. Passenger rail will 5) revitalize urban/rural centers. 6) provide new and improved freight access for a faster and cheaper way to bring goods to market, particularly with the Port of Virginia being located within the Hampton Roads region.	Comment noted.
628	628-6	7) improve rail safety and enhance rail service capacity. 9) utilize already existing infrastructure, minimizing the need for new environmental impacts.	Comment noted.

# Tier I Final EIS Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project

## Survey Monkey Comment-Response Matrix

ID #	Comment	Response
207	This is an essential link to the future of our State and to the Country's Transportation Health. It must be built.	Comment noted.
208		Commenter completed survey only; no response.
209		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
210		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
211	As a long time resident of South Hampton Roads, I have travels from this area to points west dramatically increase with transportation problems dramatically increase as well. Commerce challenges may significantly impact our economy over the long term. How can I help?	Comment noted.
212	Please change from deisel to electric. Electric is faster, cleaner, and less dependent on foreign oil. This system will be outdated before it is built if we don't use electric, even though it will cost more. Also we need more connections between the light rail and the train, the airports, military bases and ports (ships).	The SEHSR and Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project are planned as a diesel-electric technology.
213	Main concern is when one reaches Main Street Station- what then? No transportation in that area.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
214	Although I prefer Alternative 2-B, none of the alternatives appear to address multimodalism. If 97% of current travellers use a combination of highway and airports (see section 1.1.3 of EIS Report), then it seems that the number of riders would increase if stops were available at both Newport News, Williamsburg International & Richmond International Airports. Additional revenues would be generated at each facilities parking decks & economy parking lots while providing alternatives to both commuters + business recreational travelers. Richmond's Masterplan (RIC) already shows a regional rail connection at Richmond International.	The focus of this study is evaluating higher speed passenger rail between Richmond and Hampton Roads. Other planning studies, not necessarily conducted by DRPT, would need to address multimodal conditions. Potential station locations will be better defined during the Tier II analysis and documentation. Direct connections to the listed facilities are not directly related to existing rail lines, which was a factor in developing alternatives.

ID #	Comment	Response
215	The facts are clear; that a metro region of our size does not have rail service to 2/3 of it's population is hard to believe. When combined with the proximity to one of the country's greatest ports, the largest concentration of military in the world, linkage to regional intermodal service, and the people's desire for high speed rail, you have an argument for support that is hard to refute.	Comment noted.
216	I strongly support Alternative #1 because selection will provide an additional linkage between Peninsula and Southside, assist with reducing interstate congestion.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
217		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
218	Below are some points from a recent article I read that sound appealing to me. Ensure the EIS establishes the long term design level and that it plans and provides for "true high speed rail." The plan for Hampton Roads HSR should clearly describe an explicit long-term outcome that meets or exceeds the 110 mph minimum required to qualify for federal HSR funding. This final design must be explicitly documented in the Final EIS (FEIS). This is needed to ensure that any interim construction projects designed for slower speeds will be compatible with the long-term plan. This requirement will ensure that scarce transportation funds are not wasted on a short-term system that would have to be rebuilt. Along the way, we do not want to spend money twice. Ensure that the Hampton Roads corridor has a compatible design and will have equivalent levels of service as those already established for the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor to which we will be connected Fund the Virginia High Speed Rail Crescent first and fund rail to North Carolina second. Funding for construction of the Hampton Roads HSR system should be given priority over Southeast corridor routes south of Petersburg. This preference is justified objectively by Hampton Roads' status as a major port, Virginia's largest tourist destination, and the nation's "Pentagon South," with a ridership likely to exceed any other Southeast corridor metro area. Virginia should recognize the merits of and focus on funding what we are calling the "Virginia HSR Crescent" from DC through Richmond and Petersburg to Suffolk and Norfolk. Ensure Through Service. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly document a federal commitment to assess options for eventual through service both north and south at junctions with the Southeast corridor main line at Petersburg, and the selection of the connecting train station in Petersburg should be made with this criterion in mind. Travelers to and from Hampton Roads should not have to change trains to access the Southeast corridor main line.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. More detailed engineering and design will occur during the Tier II Environmental Documentation and analysis and is not part of the this Tier I Final EIS.

ID #	Comment	Response
219	<p>I have evaluated the options for the Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Study presentation in Richmond and am endorsing Alt # 2A, which boosts existing Peninsula rail service from two trips per day to six, and improves the rail line from Richmond to Petersburg to Norfolk (Southside), provided the line from Petersburg to Norfolk uses the 90 MPH Option, on an existing abandoned rail line. It is imperative to invest in upgraded rail service to both the Peninsula and Southside, to meet the 21st Century travel demands with transit and high speed rail, and reduce gas consumption, sprawl, congestion and air pollution. In doing this, we must take great care to minimize impacts to wetlands (avoid, rather than mitigate, dammit -- that's the law!); protect water quality, sensitive lands and species; and attract development and redevelopment which is transit-oriented, mixed use, higher-density, and walkable and bikeable. I understand that it may be preferable to adjust the location the Bowers station, to avoid wetlands impacts, and I would also like to see the Petersburg Station be located IN Petersburg. I hope these ideas will be evaluated seriously. As far as I am concerned, we should have been building these rail routes when the Commonwealth, VDOT, and VDRPT were flush with funding. However, I feel that these higher speed rail routes are such an essential investment, for Virginia's future prosperity and quality of life, they must proceed as quickly as possible-- even way ahead of new road funding. President Obama is making high speed rail one of the cornerstones of his legacy. I strongly urge you to get Virginia up to speed, and fund and build Alternative 2A.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
220		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
221	<p>Increased rail traffic, by taking cars and trucks off of the road, would benefit the environment long term.</p>	<p>As Chapter I of the Tier I FEIS states, the purpose of the project is to provide a competitive transportation choice between Richmond and the Hampton Roads region that would effectively and efficiently expand the region's transportation system capacity and provide residents, tourists and visitors with a broader array of reliable transportation choices.</p>
222	<p>The economy of scale dictates that expanded on-time service to the peninsula will satisfy the ridership as the conventional service will not gain enough for high-speed rail to be cost-effective. The loger runs from Hampton Roads on the southside will provide added ridership to not only Hampton Roads but also Eastern N Carolina. This will give the highest return on investment and provide quality service to both the Peninsula and Southside Hampton Roads.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
223	<p>Conventional service to the southside should begin as soon as possible to begin developing a customer base. It should include an overnight sleeper to New York. The Peninsula trains could connect at staples Mill station until the Bellwood subdivision is upgraded and then at Main Street. Check baggage service should be offered on at least one train on each route. A new Petersburg Station should be located at the connection between CSX North End Subdivision and NS's Petersburg Beltline to facilitate future passenger service westwards.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
224		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
225	<p>Please can we try to plan this one out a little better than other projects from the area: Do studies of how much it has cost per mile in other areas, test the actual structure of buildings around what construction will need to happen, and assume that as this is a very old city, you will run into obstructions and things underground that are not on the drawings. Let's learn from our mistakes. Also, if we are making this high speed line, we should have plans to connect it to the north also, to Philly and New York, and a few stops in between. I commute in that direction a few times a year, and would love to not have to take my car through ten hours of traffic on what should be a 7 hour trip.</p>	<p>While the project has independent utility and logical termini to stand alone, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, the project has been planned to consistent with the SEHSR project so that future connections could occur.</p>



ID #	Comment	Response
226	<p>Support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization’s (TPO) historic and valuable Resolution of last October that called for the Route 460/Southside corridor to be “designated as the High Speed Rail Corridor” and that called for eventual speeds of “more than 110 mph.” Alternative 1 in the EIS reflects this plan and design, so select Alternative 1 when responding to the electronic comment form and select 110 mph. Ensure the EIS establishes the long term design level and that it plans and provides for “true high speed rail.” The plan for Hampton Roads HSR should clearly describe an explicit long-term outcome that meets or exceeds the 110 mph minimum required to qualify for federal HSR funding. This final design must be explicitly documented in the Final EIS (FEIS). This is needed to ensure that any interim construction projects designed for slower speeds will be compatible with the long-term plan. This requirement will ensure that scarce transportation funds are not wasted on a short-term system that would have to be rebuilt. Along the way, we do not want to spend money twice. Ensure that the Hampton Roads corridor has a compatible design and will have equivalent levels of service as those already established for the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor to which we will be connected. Fund the Virginia High Speed Rail Crescent first and fund rail to North Carolina second. Funding for construction of the Hampton Roads HSR system should be given priority over Southeast corridor routes south of Petersburg. This preference is justified objectively by Hampton Roads’ status as a major port, Virginia’s largest tourist destination, and the nation’s “Pentagon South,” with a ridership likely to exceed any other Southeast corridor metro area. Virginia should recognize the merits of and focus on funding what we are calling the “Virginia HSR Crescent” from DC through Richmond and Petersburg to Suffolk and Norfolk. Ensure Through Service. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly document a federal commitment to assess options for eventual through service both north and south at junctions with the Southeast corridor main line at Petersburg, and the selection of the connecting train station in Petersburg should be made with this criterion in mind. Travelers to and from Hampton Roads should not have to change trains to access the Southeast corridor main line. Launch EIS for future southwest rail route. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly include a federal commitment to conduct an Alternatives Analysis and Tier I EIS (AA/EIS) for potential HSR passenger service to the southwest from Suffolk via Weldon NC to Raleigh in order to serve the population of Northeast North Carolina who are an integral component of the Hampton Roads metro area and to reestablish more direct contact with the NC Piedmont area. As a future concept, this additional track would provide a long desired travel method to the southwest and it would create an HSR loop off the Southeast corridor main line similar to the loop already approved for Winston-Salem in NC. Update the data in the EIS. The data used in calculating financial estimates for the various EIS alternatives should be updated. Much of the data in the EIS dates from 2004, excludes defense department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not</p>	<p>FRA and DRPT selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comments received. The intent of this study was to focus on the area between Richmond and Hampton Roads. This study was done in consideration of the ongoing SEHSR project so that the two lines would be compatible and provide greater connectivity to areas to the north and south. The Final Tier I EIS has been updated to reflect the selection of the Preferred Alternative; however, more detailed analysis on all relevant topic areas will be conducted during the project level Tier II documentation.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
227	Although I feel I've expressed my thoughts in support of Alternative 1, just to reiterate I'll mention that in my opinion the Commonwealth (or the nation for that matter) can't keep up with demands of road construction and bridge and road repair to meet the growing demands of increased population and auto use; the region would be in trouble if a natural disaster occurred be it weather related or terrorists for that matter; having traveled extensively in parts of the world which offers passenger rail transport it's efficient, less stressful, environmentally more friendly, cost effective for construction and for passengers, and lessens dependence on foreign oil- I choose it any time it's an option while traveling.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
228	This is a long-term investment that will cost a lot of state money upfront, even with federal funds going in. I fully understand that. This project is the way for our elected officials in Richmond to show they care about our region and its economic drivers.	Comment noted.
229		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
230		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
231	<p>Admiral Ray Taylor, president of the Future of Hampton Roads says it all very succinctly in the following 8 points: 1. Support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization’s (TPO) historic and valuable Resolution of last October that called for the Route 460/Southside corridor to be “designated as the High Speed Rail Corridor” and that called for eventual speeds of “more than 110 mph.” Alternative 1 in the EIS reflects this plan and design. 2. Ensure the EIS establishes the long term design level and that it plans and provides for “true high speed rail.” The plan for Hampton Roads HSR should clearly describe an explicit long-term outcome that meets or exceeds the 110 mph minimum required to qualify for federal HSR funding. This final design must be explicitly documented in the Final EIS (FEIS). This is needed to ensure that any interim construction projects designed for slower speeds will be compatible with the long-term plan. This requirement will ensure that scarce transportation funds are not wasted on a short-term system that would have to be rebuilt. Along the way, we do not want to spend money twice. 3. Ensure that the Hampton Roads corridor has a compatible design and will have equivalent levels of service as those already established for the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor to which we will be connected. 4. Fund the Virginia High Speed Rail Crescent first and fund rail to North Carolina second. Funding for construction of the Hampton Roads HSR system should be given priority over Southeast corridor routes south of Petersburg. This preference is justified objectively by Hampton Roads’ status as a major port, Virginia’s largest tourist destination, and the nation’s “Pentagon South,” with a ridership likely to exceed any other Southeast corridor metro area. Virginia should recognize the merits of and focus on funding what we are calling the “Virginia HSR Crescent” from DC through Richmond and Petersburg to Suffolk and Norfolk. 5. Ensure Through Service. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly document a federal commitment to assess options for eventual through service both north and south at junctions with the Southeast corridor main line at Petersburg, and the selection of the connecting train station in Petersburg should be made with this criterion in mind. Travelers to and from Hampton Roads should not have to change trains to access the Southeast corridor main line. 6. Launch EIS for future southwest rail route. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly include a federal commitment to conduct an Alternatives Analysis and Tier I EIS (AA/EIS) for potential HSR passenger service to the southwest from Suffolk via Weldon NC to Raleigh in order to serve the population of Northeast North Carolina who are an integral component of the Hampton Roads metro area and to reestablish more direct contact with the NC Piedmont area. As a future concept, this additional track would provide a long desired travel method to the southwest and it would create an HSR loop off the Southeast corridor main line similar to the loop already approved for Winston-Salem in NC. 7. Update the data in the EIS. The data used in calculating financial estimates for the various EIS alternatives should be updated. Much of the data in the EIS dates from 2004, excludes defense department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not likely to be built. Revised cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates must be used in documents submitted to federal authorities and properly archived if our region is to compete effectively with other metro areas for limited federal funds.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received. The study was done in consideration of the ongoing Southeast High Speed Rail Project so that the two lines would be compatible and provide greater connectivity to areas to the north and south. The Final Tier I EIS has been updated to reflect the decision of the Preferred Alternative; however, more detailed analysis on all relevant topic areas will be conducted during the project level Tier II documentation.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
232	- Access to and from shipping - Access to Washington for official military business - Access to military personnel for business and leisure - Reduced road congestion - Reduced construction and maintenance of additional roads - Evacuation	
233	The Alternative 1 Southside route would serve two thirds of the population of Hampton Roads, providing greater potential for populations to use high speed rail. Train passengers would remove cars and drivers from the highways and tunnels, radically improving congestion, improving the quality of our air and in the long run reduce energy consumption. And high speed rail would provide an evacuation route in the face of hurricanes, floods, etc. that might actually allow our citizens to escape natural disasters! Quality of life and economic development are vital issues to our region. To do nothing or not to develop a travel crescent from Washington to Richmond to Petersburg to Norfolk and to the Peninsula envisioned in Alternative 1 Southside/NS route will consign Hampton Roads to become a backwater, losing its arts, its young professionals, its best and brightest brains.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
234		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
235	I saw the proposed location for the Petersburg, Va station which is not really IN Petersburg. Has there been any consideration of building a new station in town? There has been a lot of revitalization going on and it would be great to have it walking distance for some people. Thanks!	The general station location proposed for the Petersburg area has been the subject of the SEHSR environmental documentation. However, selection of an exact station location will be the subject of subsequent environmental documentation prepared by the project proponent. The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project assumes that whatever station location is selected through that process for Petersburg will be the same station location for the Preferred Alternative documented in this Tier I Final EIS.

ID #	Comment	Response
238	<p>We attended the public hearing in Norfolk on 28 January, 2010 and would like to offer our personal input for the HSR proposals: 1. Specify trains designed for 110 mph MAS at least. 2. Verify/revise Alt. 1 cost analysis since Petersburg to Richmond is already covered and should not be included in the SHR-Richmond cost totals. 3. Data assumptions in the analysis are outdated at 10 years old and should be updated. 4. The 3rd crossing bridge/tunnel for SHR is no where in sight so potential impacts of that should be re-evaluated in the DEIS. 5. Travel congestion delays impacting on-time arrival for both air and automobile have become more and more prevalent with the increasing population of SHR and airline security increases. I feel train travel is a better alternative for a reliable expectation of timely arrival and is a more relaxed way to travel, especially after having had the experience of traveling around Europe by their train networks. 6. With the tremendous military presence in SHR and the extensive requirement for short duration visits to D.C. by so many military members of the different commands, contractors and other associated military support entities, as well as just the volume of potential passengers from this region (the largest population center on the East Coast not directly being served by High Speed Rail), it seems it is a gross oversight to not include SHR in the HSR corridor. Thank you for reading our input, Jim and Kaye Tice</p>	<p>FRA and DRPT selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on the comments received during the public hearings. The costs associated with the Petersburg to Richmond segment of the NS/Southside route must be considered in the analysis of cost effectiveness. The National Environmental Policy Act and implementing Council of Environmental Quality regulations require that projects have logical termini and have independent utility. The project is defined as Richmond to Hampton Roads, not Petersburg to Norfolk. The Draft EIS must consider the costs of the Petersburg to Richmond segment in order for the project to have independent utility meaning it does not rely on the SEHSR project to be built. The SEHSR project could be re-defined as Petersburg to Raleigh so that the capital costs of the SEHSR project could be lowered. Data contained within the Tier I EIS will be updated during Tier II documentation and analysis. As explained the environmental study did not include the full third-crossing. It did include the necessary improvements preceding the third-crossing outlined in the HRTPO long range plan as explained in Section 3.1 and Appendix G "Travel Forecasting Methodology" of the Tier I Draft EIS.</p>
239	<p>I am a retired Elementary School Principal from the City of Norfolk, VA. I think this is an excellent "teaching and learning" opportunity for our youth. It covers ALL of the instructional goals in the areas of Math, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies. It is also an excellent way to keep the "minds" and "mobility" of senior citizens who can not drive and travel as they once did. I am looking forward to "seeing" parts of Virginia from a different view than by highways! I do hope that teachers will take advantage of this opportunity! Mrs. Helen P. Shropshire</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
240	<p>When one recognizes the location and strategic importance of the Hampton Roads area, in particular to the State and National security. The region is arguably the world's finest natural harbor and a concentration of federal installations/assets are just two compelling reasons to be included in the mainline strategies.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
241	<p>Ideally, the alternatives would include high speed rail options for both the Peninsula and the Southside with a chunnel linking the two. Minimally, high speed rail must include the Southside with a terminal that is not a sidewalk. The high speed lines from the Southside should include means for connecting with trains that travel to other southern states and to the west. Local public transit routes should allow passengers to move from their homes to the high speed rail lines with the minimum use of single occupancy cars. Currently, to get a train from the Southside, one must stand outside, regardless of weather, and wait for a bus. This is preposterous. This is hardly the kind of service one would expect in a metropolitan area that is as important to our national security as this region is and which has increasingly distinguished medical and higher educational institutions among other outstanding resources. Having been a passenger of high speed rail in Spain as well as having used their efficient, user-friendly public transit system, I cannot wait for work to begin on our high speed rail project. The sacrifices and inconvenience during the long building process will be no greater than what we experience now, but the benefits of the outcome will make it all worthwhile.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
242	<p>Briefly mentioned previously that Hampton Roads is perceived as a cul-de-sac, this area should really be a destination point for tourism and a gateway for commerce, due to the proximity of the oceanfront and the port facility is in this area. High speed rail is critically important to bring needed economic development to the area and expand the transportation options for residents. Having said that, the enhanced high speed rail that exceed the 110 mph design category requirements is the only option to consider. I believe it is the only option that qualifies for federal HSR funding, thus the final design choice must be explicitly documented in the final EIS. Thanks for the opportunity for citizens to express their position on HSR.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
244		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
245		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
246	<p>Option 1 is the least harmful to the environment in the long-term. A rail station in downtown Norfolk will allow riders to take light rail, bus, bike, walk, or ferry over to the station. Tourists will leave their cars at home, thus eliminating more pollution to our air and water and reducing the need for more vehicular parking. There is very little incentive for someone on the Southside to drive up to Newport News to jump on a train to Richmond. Newport News is practically halfway to Richmond already. There is more incentive for someone to drive down to Norfolk from the Peninsula to take a train to Petersburg and then onward to Raleigh. The existing Amtrak train is sufficient to move riders on the Peninsula to Richmond to jump on a high speed train there. Option 1, with speeds greater than 110 mph, is the only option worth investing a great deal of money into.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
247	<p>Much of the data used in the draft Environmental Impact Statement is outdated and excludes Department of Defense input and other critical information necessary to compete for federal funding. We need a commitment to the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's recommendations to designate the Petersburg-Norfolk route as the high-speed rail system at speeds of more than 110 mph and upgrade Richmond-Newport News Amtrak line to achieve 90% on-time performance, as well as a long-term plan for the Petersburg-Norfolk route with the same level of engineering, quality of service, on-time performance, and reliability as the main line of the Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor to ensure parity with lesser metro areas. High-speed rail is a small step and actually outdated. The United States is far behind other countries and should be researching and investing in the best technology and putting that into place. Japan's high-speed Shinkansen trains travel at just below 200 mph and China's maglev trains can reach 361 mph. In 2007, France tested a high-speed train that goes 357.2 mph. This is technology that we should be putting into place here and across the states. No excuses. The things that should be of highest concern are do we have the technology and resources - the answer to both is yes.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
248		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
249	<p>As a resident who moved to Virginia Beach from New York in 2003, 1 month before Hurricane Isabelle hit Hampton Roads, the safety issues involved in living in this coastal community became clear right away. Had that storm ended up a Category 4 as originally predicted, the issue of evacuation (which WAS a big issue even in a Category 1 storm) could have proven catastrophic as we have seen in other areas over the years. Upon living in this community for 7 years, I have come to understand that aside from the issue stated above, this is a community with unlimited potential for economic development and tourism, and has already proven this even being somewhat disconnected from the rest of the state by bridges and tunnels. The traffic congestion is a deterrent for cross consumerism with the Peninsula and that sentiment goes both ways. I strongly support enhanced alternative #1.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
250	<p>An enhanced Alternative 1 will most effectively and economically serve the greatest number of people who, importantly, have the greatest distance to travel. With service to South Hampton Roads the ridership catchment area would, in addition to Hampton Roads, immediately attract a significant number of both residents and tourists traveling to the northeast area of North Carolina. The enhanced Alternative 1 would, with a local collector schedule, increase healthcare, educational, and employment opportunities in one of the most transportation under served populations of the State of Virginia; those living in the Southside, region of Virginia, east of Petersburg to the Atlantic. This area has no means of convenient and safe access to passenger rail, interstate highway, or any other limited access highway connection to major population centers in the state. In reviewing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement pertaining to the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project, there appears to be an absence of any serious analysis or consideration of the overall economic impact of the public (local, state, and federal) rail development, investments on the economic return of such investments. I believe that such consideration would demonstrate the enormous value of improved access to, not only the Hampton Roads and Southside area and population, but to the entire State of Virginia.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
251	<p>Ideally, service should continue all the way to Virginia Beach to service the vacation-goers that jam Interstate 64. This may also make the Peninsula high-speed service option more attractive because it would serve Williamsburg. But the higher-speed route that serves Chesapeake and Norfolk would provide the broadest coverage for the Hampton Roads region in terms of transit reach, and it gets passengers closer to Virginia Beach. Williamsburg's trip would not see significant speed enhancement from high-speed service ... though it could need more than three daily trips. Whatever alignment is chosen, I support the one that comes closest to realizing the long-term ideal of high-speed rail service directly to Virginia Beach. Please consider the long term when making this decision.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
252		<p>Commenter completed the survey only; no response required.</p>
253		<p>Commenter completed the survey only; no response required.</p>
254	<p>It is critical for our region to expand our transportation options and high speed rail is a viable solution for us. It will be criminal if we miss out on this opportunity, and it will negatively impact this region's growth and development. If we don't seize this opportunity now, I believe it will have irreversable repercussions for the Hampton Roads region. We are already at a disadvantage in terms of being able to easily access this region because of the way the interstate system was constructed years ago. If we don't take advantage of this opportunity for high speed rail we will be in a very similar situation. I fully support Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
256		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>



ID #	Comment	Response
257	If this project was self supporting, I am all for it. But it will not be. It will end up being another government waste of money. If this project is all that important, then why hasn't a private company or rail organization stepped up to make this a private enterprise. Because it will not be profitable, just like Amtrak. A bottomless pit we keep throwing money into.	Comment noted.
258	There are several reasons why a spur from the Southeast High-Speed Rail line should connect Richmond to Hampton Roads via the Southside. In fact, Hampton Roads deserves through service with one-ticket rides in both directions. It is the most populated region in Virginia. In fact, it is the largest metropolitan area between D.C. and Atlanta. In particular, it is home to a significant number of government-employees and military members who are likely to make use of HSR traveling north to Washington and Connecticut, and south to Pensacola. It is also an attractive tourist destination. Between just Virginia Beach and Williamsburg, the area brings in hundreds of thousands of visitors every year. With that, our potential rail ridership is larger than any other metro area in the SEHSR corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
259	It is vital to the Hampton Roads region's overall transportation functionality and desirability that we are included in the rail transportation improvements being considered for the eastern seaboard. Connecting Norfolk via high-speed rail to Richmond, then either Washington/New York or Raleigh/Durham would provide a much-needed alternative to further congesting the Interstate 64 corridor, including the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel. The rail enhancement would certainly be a more fuel-efficient, less-polluting/more-environmentally-friendly transportation expenditure than merely adding lanes to I-64. It would further connect Hampton Roads to its logical neighboring regions in the Northeast and Southeast corridors, for the benefit of business, tourism, and personal interests. Certainly providing an alternative exit route in a hurricane emergency would be an additional plus. Norfolk is the already established hub location that makes most sense as the high speed rail terminus in Hampton Roads, and the existing Norfolk Southern line from Norfolk to Petersburg could be fairly easily and inexpensively adapted for this use. With Norfolk Southern being headquartered in Norfolk, there would be no question as to the quality of service that Norfolk Southern's involvement in this alternative would provide. This is a very forward-looking transportation plan that is essential for the enhancement of transportation into and out of Hampton Raods, and I strongly urge its approval. Thank you very much!!	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
260	In my opinion, even alternative 1 as currently proposed is not adequate for the Southside. I support an "enhanced" alternative 1, i.e., more than 6 trains and true high speed rail. That is, high speed rail that uses state of the art high speed cars and track technology. The I-64 corridor is a parking lot most of the time. A Norfolk to Richmond to DC connection would greatly reduce that congestion, do wonders for air quality, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and enhance our national security by giving the many military bases here more transportation flexibility. It's a no-brainer, the Southside needs REAL high speed rail as soon as possible.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.

ID #	Comment	Response
261	The environment is being hurt more by the continued use of cars to drive from the Southside than any train will cause. You will always have some environmental groups complain, but progress must occur or the region will lose more jobs and growth will grind to a halt.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
262	This EIS needs to be UPDATED of all its errors and antiquated information, such as the double accounting of cost for Option one on Petersburg to Richmond, the factoring in of the third crossing, and so on. Hampton Roads is the largest metropolitan area directly on the Atlantic Ocean between greater NY and south Florida, and the majority of its population, 1.1 Million people, live on the Southside, hence the obvious correct choice is Option 1. Hampton Roads is the SECOND most important MSA in the nation in terms of national security and defense readiness, so THIS vital statistic should alone place Hampton Roads on the top of the list! Now that LIGHT RAIL is a reality, such a light rail system could conceivably network throughout Hampton Roads (including over to the Peninsula via a new multi-modal bridge replacement for the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel), and such a light rail system, being founded in Norfolk, would make sense to terminate the High Speed Rail line in downtown Norfolk. For the HSR line, it is important that it be TRUE HSR design and not "higher". It needs to be speeds of 110 MPH or more, and from the get-go. Also, Hampton Roads should get NO LESS THAN SAME-SEAT service to its destinations, such as Washington DC or NYC. Eventually, if a new interstate is built to Raleigh, then either use the right of way thereto OR the Weldon existing RR right of way, for a future HSR system to points south and southwest to Raleigh, Atlanta, and Miami. With this HSR funding, the Peninsula should IMMEDIATELY get its passenger rail service upgraded to where it performs efficiently and on time for the 600,000 people over there. Finally, the CRTB and the VDRPT need to endorse the Resolution adopted by the Hampton Roads TPO which unanimously voted for Alternative 1, and unanimously asked for TRUE HIGH SPEED RAIL. Thank you.	The information provided in the Tier I EIS will be updated during the Tier II Environmental Documentation and analysis. The cost of the segment between Richmond and Petersburg is included in the capital costs because the project is defined as having logical termini at Richmond and either Newport News or Norfolk so that the project has independent utility as required by federal law and NEPA regulations. The project is not Petersburg to Norfolk but Richmond to Hampton Roads. The project includes both costs and the ridership generated by the Richmond-Petersburg segment. Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
263	I don't know why you did not consider the James River crossing, as it seems to me that it would redirect motor traffic from already overburdened federal arteries. But I'll take anything that will get rail service to the Southside.	The James River crossing was considered during the alternatives analysis phase of the study; however, based on the cost and potential environmental effects, it was dropped from further consideration. Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.

ID #	Comment	Response
264	Look at the population growth/concentrations & travel distances to Richmond. Look at existing rail lines and high speed reqmts. impact on environment & project cost per person served (population).	Comment noted.
265		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
266	<p>The EIS report inexplicably determines that providing service to both sides of the James River would increase demand in 2025 by 4% or less versus the “cost effective” Peninsula-only scenario. That conclusion is flawed. It rests heavily on an assumption that travel times for Southside passengers will be similar whether high speed trains originate in Newport News or Norfolk. Shorter rail travel times from Newport News are assumed to offset the increased travel time required to reach stations on the Peninsula, heroically assumed to be only 32 minutes. This, however, flies in the face of worsening and unpredictable congestion at Hampton Roads' bridges and tunnels that makes the notion of an "average" time to reach the Peninsula from Southside almost meaningless. A Peninsula-only passenger rail solution would also deprive Southside travelers of any reasonable way to reach high speed rail via public transportation. In particular, service to Norfolk would connect directly with the Tide light rail system; stations on the Peninsula would not offer similar mass transit interface. The traffic estimates in the EIS report make no sense and must be reconsidered. An additional unsettling item in the EIS report is the assertion that all passengers on high speed trains traveling from either Newport News or Norfolk to Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston would be required to change trains at Washington. Eliminating through service to the major cities of the Northeast corridor would lessen the appeal of any new service and is totally inconsistent with the objective of extending the Boston-Washington corridor to Richmond and Hampton Roads. While the EIS report reaches very questionable conclusions about the relative merits of the high speed rail alternatives, it does provide a compelling argument for moving immediately to improve existing 79 mph rail passenger service on the Peninsula. The report estimates that continuing the existing service of two daily trains would generate 245,500-262,300 passengers per year by 2025. Adding a third round trip, however, is estimated to increase the projected 2025 patronage to 425,700-464,800, a rise of roughly 75%. Whatever the ultimate outcome of efforts to introduce high speed rail to Hampton Roads, it is imperative to move now to expand existing Amtrak service on the Peninsula.</p>	<p>More detailed transportation analysis of the selected Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph) will be conducted during the Tier II documentation and analysis. We agree with the comment that eliminating through service to the major cities of the Northeast Corridor would lessen the appeal of any new service and is totally inconsistent with the objective of extending the Boston-Washington corridor to Richmond and Hampton Roads. The operating schedule for the Hampton Roads trains have not been negotiated with Amtrak yet as it is still very premature in the project development process to do such detailed operations planning. The ridership estimate assumed that all Hampton Roads trains would be through routed to the Northeast Corridor and no capacity constraints north of Washington, DC that may require some Hampton Roads trains to terminate at Union Station requiring transfers. More detailed capacity and operations analysis is required at future phases of project development.</p>
267		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
268		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
269	It looks like DRPT has done a thorough job of looking at alternatives for improved rail service to the Hampton Roads Area. Based on the impacts presented on your website, it appears that Alternative 2b provides the most bang for the buck with fewer environmental impacts.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
270	We need to do this. We need to partner with the environmental groups to find a way to make this happen. We need to stop saying "We can't" and find a way to do this project. Let's make it happen!	Comment noted.
271	Environmental impact is important consideration but I am confident that the proposed options can all meet specific environmental requirements.	Comment noted.
272	I strongly support an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO Robert C. Goodman Jr. Kaufman & Canoles, P.C.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
273	I live in Norfolk but recently accepted a position with the federal government that is based in Arlington, VA. Thanks to modern technology, I can largely work from home, however I do have to travel quite often to the home office. The current Amtrak schedule in only having two weekday and one weekend per day departures to the DC area makes rail a very inconvenient option for commuting. I am completely hopeful that we are able to get high speed rail in Norfolk as I could be so much more efficient in my work if I were able to ride the train as opposed to drive to work. Thank you for all of your work on this initiative. Kelly Stefanko kstefanko@hotmail.com	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
274	The impact on the environment, I believe is greater on the alternative of the Soutside High Speed train. We already have the CSX track that runs through the Peninsula, therefore, no further impact on the environment.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.

ID #	Comment	Response
275	<p>In regards to the alternatives under review, I feel that the high speed Southside route should utilize the same passenger rail cars as the Washington-to-Richmond segment so that passengers can conceivably stay on the same passenger car for a direct rail trip. Secondly, the 110+ mph passenger rail cars are more efficient on a 110+ mile line therefore lowering their overall ownership cost. Lastly, the 110+ mph cars would be interchangeable with the rail cars on the new rail segments being built between Washington, D.C. and Charlotte, NC.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
276	<p>1. Clarify Long Term Design: The EIS does not adequately clarify the long term design for the Southside, Alternative 1 rail line. As written, one could conclude anything. FRA needs to insert the needed discipline and clarification as to what the long term design will be. 2. Ensure Compatible Design and Equivalent Service: The Southside, Alternative 1 rail line will be the 1996 fed-approved "HSR Extension" to Hampton Roads. Fortunately, the feds took this step in 1996. It would have been unbelievably absurd to have left one of the nation's most important metro areas off of the national grid. So, now, the EIS needs to re-endorse this intention, and it needs to ensure and describe that this Southside line will be "compatible with" in a design sense, and provide "equivalent service as" the Southeast HSR Corridor to which it is an Extension. 3. Include Requirement to Assess Route to the Southwest: Looking ahead and for future potential purposes, the EIS should include a requirement to conduct an Alternatives Analysis and Tier I EIS of the rail bed from Suffolk via Weldon to Raleigh. This leg was not examined during the SEHSR analysis process due to the non-involvement of Hampton Roads, and by extension, federal interests. 4. Reassess and Clarify Train Station Issues and Requirements: The train station situations need to be re-assessed. The EIS identifies several challenges associated with the planned Norfolk train station which then are largely unanswered in the EIS. Not included are the adverse effects of the nearby Berkeley Bridge with its frequent openings and closings which clobber traffic several times a day. Irrespective of that, it also seems that the probable importance of the train station in Suffolk is way understated. There is strong likelihood that soon after the line is constructed that the Suffolk train station will become the highest capacity and most used station on the line for several reasons: (1) it will be the station of choice for all passengers travelling to and from Northeast North Carolina (tourists, business) and note that NENC is in the Hampton Roads MSA and thus, a responsible concern for Hampton Roads; (2) the Suffolk train station is surprisingly convenient for passengers traveling to and from the Peninsula, especially Newport News and Hampton, because of the straight line 15 to 20 mile runs across the James River Bridge or the Monitor Merrimac tunnel; and (3) It is likely to be the station of choice for all Chesapeake and Portsmouth residents and for a large portion of southern Virginia Beach residents either to avoid downtown Norfolk congestion or because it is just plain easier. Thus, in the EIS, the Suffolk train station warrants more attention. The Tier II process should be open-minded as well as to where</p>	<p>More detailed design and engineering will be completed during subsequent phases of the project development. As planned and described in the Tier I EIS in Section 1.2.2, this project has been planned to be compatible with the Southeast High Speed Rail project. The focus of the Tier I and Tier II documentation for the Richmond Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is to identify a preferred route for passenger rail improvements and to evaluate impacts associated with that decision. The Tier I documentation has enabled the Commonwealth Transportation Board to select the Preferred Alternative that will be further analyzed during Tier II. More detailed station analysis will be conducted as part of the Tier II documentation. Once again, the intent of the Tier I document is to identify a Preferred Alternative (route) and general station locations.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
277	<p>I support the Alternative # 1 for trains consisting of 6 Southside plus 3 Peninsula. Overall this achieves a blended measure progress while allowing for expansion or re-configuration in the future. My reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Major population on the Southside (VA Beach, Norfolk, Chesapeake, Suffolk) - Puts this market into realistic play and gives people a reason to want to take the train.</li> <li>- Light rail in Norfolk and VA Beach is becoming a reality right now – good tie in.</li> <li>- Ease of rail construction – south of Petersburg VA the Norfolk Southern double track (NS) line is straight and largely ready to go. A transit center at Bowers Hill is cheap and quick to do, even if the main heavy passenger rail was to terminate at Bowers Hill with a light rail connect into Norfolk/VA Beach.</li> <li>- Peninsula Construction and Right of Way difficulties – The Peninsula CSX route has need for major infrastructure improvements to mitigate the old single track twisting right of way. Any slow moving coal train can quickly tie up smooth transit, even with improved sidings on this route.</li> <li>- Budget – Alternative # 1 asks for a budget that includes serious consideration of High Speed rail with a way forward to achieving that goal. However even if not fully achieved in the short term, it puts it on the ‘right track’ so to speak. Short term results are positive for both Southside and the Peninsula.</li> <li>- Ridership – Need to get ridership up to the point of making this a viable and realistic alternative to driving to Richmond or DC. The few minutes (supposedly) saved on the Peninsula route will be wiped out by people not wanting to drive or be driven through the congested tunnels connecting south side to the Peninsula.</li> <li>- Commutership – A good tie in to the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) network out of Raleigh is desirable through Petersburg. Even with a full HSR one cannot expect much daily commuter riding from Norfolk to DC. However various combinations of weekday travel to and from Richmond/DC are realistic within this route. Additionally weekend tourist travel from DC would be highly expected to go to Southside.</li> </ul> <p>As for myself I’m an experienced rail rider from New York City with over 50 years of worldwide rail commuter experience. I drive regularly from my home in Suffolk to job in Yorktown, so I’m familiar with all the automobile and road concerns.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
278	<p>I am strongly in favor of the proposed extension of rail service to the Southside. I am a small-business owner located in Norfolk. I am a former Federal employee, so a high proportion of the training and consulting work that I do now takes place in the Washington metro area. When travelling now, I am often forced to drive because direct airfare from Norfolk to Reagan National Airport is prohibitively expensive and train service is not available to return to this area in the evenings during most of the week. Even though ultimately I pass on my charges for travel to Federal agencies, I can't in good conscience opt for a \$1000 roundtrip air ticket for the trip to DC. Current service requires transportation to Newport News either by bus or car with limited parking availability to leave one's own car long-term if the Amtrak service would match the required dates and travel schedule. I don't think I need to describe the difficulties of driving I-95 and I-64 from Norfolk to Washington and back. Those are well-known. With the number of military and other Federal agencies in this area who often send representatives to Washington, I am sure I am one among many who would gladly utilize rail service if it was more readily available. Please support this effort. I predict that it will result in benefits beyond just relieving traffic congestion. For those of us who regularly travel the corridor, it will improve quality of life, will reduce gasoline consumption, and will open new business opportunities.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
279		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
280		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
281	<p>Many business consultants, like myself, live in South Hampton Roads. We use conference calls, etc., but we still need to travel frequently to the Research Triangle area of NC, to Richmond, to Washington, Baltimore, and beyond. Driving is a hassle, and a psychological strain, with unpredictable timing and no opportunity to relax. Air travel is very expensive and time consuming for short trips -- and often fraught with uncertainty and delays. Besides, many of us truly ENJOY rail travel. We have experienced good, predictable, comfortable rail travel in Europe, Asia, the US northeast corridor, etc. We can plan our trips with precision -- knowing we will have time during the trip to think carefully about the coming meetings and presentations, make phone calls, read, sleep, look out the window, daydream, and arrive refreshed and ready for the business at hand. We business consultants NEED AND WANT high-speed rail in South Hampton Roads.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>



ID #	Comment	Response
282	<p>1. Maximizing the number of travel options is very important. When traveling to/from Norfolk, the unpredictability of tunnel traffic makes it nearly impossible to be certain of travel times to Richmond or DC. 2. Exorbitant airfares between ORF and DCA inhibit air travel; trains would provide a reasonably priced travel alternative. 3. It is simply unbelievable that the three most populous cities in Virginia (Virginia Beach, Norfolk, and Chesapeake) are not currently served by passenger rail service. 4. Enhanced passenger rail service would enhance the region's economic development initiatives and bolster the important tourist industry. 5. The economics of adding rail service are modest compared to the cost of increasing highway capacity. Any auto traffic diverted from the roads by passenger rail service would help reduce congestion at bridge tunnels and on Interstate 64. 6. The current bus-to-rail system from Downtown Norfolk to Newport News is too cumbersome and time consuming to be embraced.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
283		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
284	<p>This is a critical issue to keep Hampton Roads relevant in a more challenging economic future.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
285	<p>I support Hampton Roads High Speed Rail Enhanced Alternative 1</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
286	<p>I support Hampton Roads High Speed Rail Enhanced Alternative 1 as recommended by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
287		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>



ID #	Comment	Response
288	<p>To Whom This May Concern: I have a very simple point of view about the proposed high speed rail connection between Hampton Roads and Richmond/ Washington, D.C.: I have lived in Hampton Roads for 37 years. I used to make frequent automobile visits to D.C. and through Richmond to Charlottesville. By automobile I could make D.C. easily in three hours and Richmond in one and 1/2. I now have to leave myself at least five hours to D.C. and two and 1/2 to Richmond. Needless to say, I make less frequent business and personal visits. Multiply me by the entire population of Hampton Roads and all of the military, port, tourism and technology related travelers from outside the area, and you get lost income, lost jobs, and dangerous congestion in emergency situations. My entire family of five supports an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO. Thank you for considering our point of view. Jackson H. Pope Bernice F Pope</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
289	<p>Public Information Officer Department of Rail &amp; Public Transit 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102 Richmond, VA 23219 As a concerned citizen of Hampton Roads I am writing to encourage the extension of high-speed rail service to Hampton Roads along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor. As compared to the other alternatives being considered this route has to have one of the best returns on investment given the existing infrastructure that only needs to be enhanced to accommodate the 110 MPH target speed. To not consider connecting this region to the north/south rail system that will ultimately service the east coast would be a travesty in preparing for efficient, cost effective transportation alternatives for the future. The cost and maintenance requirements to provide a highway system to serve the needs of this important region of Virginia and the country will become unattainable in the future. National security given the importance of the area to all branches of the military; economic issues (revenue and jobs) given the importance of the port, historic Williamsburg and tourism with the beauty of the oceanfront (5 million tourists annually) are just a couple of reasons this investment would reap large continuous meaningful returns far into the future. I am sure many other individuals and organizations have better articulated more details and reasons for this rail route so I will close. Thanks for your consideration, Craig Popen</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
290	<p>I attended the hearing in Norfolk and was disappointed that the "Public Comments" portion of the hearing was dominated by elected officials. I may be naive and have unfair expectations, but I was hoping that the hearing was an opportunity for average citizens, like me, to ask questions and give input since we taxpayers are largely responsible for the funding of projects like this. While I expected comments from Mayors and City Council members at this hearing, I didn't expect them to fill the majority of the 40 spaces made available for "Public Comments."</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
291	<p>I am an attorney in Virginia. I currently live in Richmond, and I am moving to downtown Norfolk for a new job. I would like to be able to use the train to get to Richmond, but my main priority would be a faster trip to D.C.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
292	I prefer that transportation and transit end in "downtowns" or near major business and residential areas so that travelers can choose from a number of "last mile" transportation options. That is, they will have more choices to get from the high-speed rail station to their final destination, traveling by bike, walking, a short taxi ride, bus, or streetcar.	Comment noted.
293	Long term costs must be considered as well as how the railway will impact on taxes in the State.	Chapter 4 of the Tier I EIS discusses costs and funding for the project. More detailed cost analysis will be conducted as part of the Tier II documentation of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph).
294	I think the 110 mph speed level should be looked into very carefully due to the time value of money. It would be a lot less expensive to build it to that design capacity today than it would be several decades into the future.	The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.
295		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
296	This project has been going on for ages. Please look at the current data for making your recommendation.	Data used to complete the Tier I EIS will be updated during the Tier II documentation and analysis. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on comments received during the public hearing.
297	While not a direct part of tis Tier I effort, need to make strong plea that SEHSR Station in Petersburg be at Squirrel Hill in order to maximize and enhance higher speed passenger rail from south side of James. Some mention needs to be made of not using Main Street Station in Richmond as an alternative- Not a particularly nice outcome, but may be finally doable.	Comment noted.
298		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
299	1. While living at VA beach in the 1940s it was my privilege to ride the VA Beach to Norfolk Rail Bus while finishing Navy High School. Very efficient and appropriate operation. This was powered by a 6 cyl-170hp gasoline engine. Reached speeds of 75mph. 2. In those years often rode the N&W trains from Norfolk to various points along the line-including Cincinnati. Trains would reach 100mph between Suffolk and Petersburg. Steam propelled Deisel-Electric will be even more efficient. Thank you!	This project is planned and will be designed to be compatible with the Southeast High Speed Rail project. Choosing a steam propelled diesel-electric power would not be compatible.
300		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
301	Other benefits- takes cars off roads, reduces final consumption, emissions	Comment noted.
302	With today's increases in population and the resulting increases in traffic, alternate rail transportation is a must.	Comment noted.

ID #	Comment	Response
303	Connecting Southside Hampton Roads directly to Richmond and DC with fast trains is essential and a "no-brainer". DRPT should move this ahead promptly, and Virginia should show same or greater leadership as North Carolina. Illinois, California and Wisconsin are demonstrating on fast rail passenger service.	Comment noted.
304		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
305	The public hearings have been excellent and extremely well-attended - over 1000 citizens in Norfolk. High Speed Rail provides for the Hampton Roads region and the Commonwealth.	Comment noted.
306	Either speed (90mph or 110 mph) is acceptable. Affordability would be the deciding factor. Recently used trains in France and they were wonderful - clean, comfortable, relaxig, food, restrooms and on time. We had first class tickets and wondered why Americans would't be drawn to similar trains for long and short trips. Please provide effective security screening!	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
307		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
310		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
311	It is vitally important to the Hampton Roads region that alternative modes of transportation are developed. This region has, for a variety of reasons, not funded or been funded adequately for road and tunnel projects that would better accommodate the increases in vehicular traffic. Giving the citizens of this region an alternative method to travel to the major metropolitan areas both north and south of Virginia will ease the strain on roadways, lessen the need for imported oil, add additional modes of transit during weather related or other emergency evacuation situations, open up new development opportunites and improve the quality of life in the region. While our neighbors on the Penninsula are important to the region's prosperity as well, the preponderance of the population resides on the Southside and remains hemmed in by an inadequate system of bridges and tunnels that make traveling out of the area more difficult and expensive. Linking this system with and expanded system of light rail in the region will better prepare Virginia to be competitive in business, recreation and travel now and in the future.	Comment noted.
312	Consider rail between Southside and the Penninsula. This would open up academic and business opportunities that presently are stifled by the daunting drive.	Comment noted.

ID #	Comment	Response
313	I recently took the Amtrak from Newport News to Philadelphia and it was a completely unexpected pleasure. The train was comfortable and roomy and it was a relief to avoid the stress of a six hour drive by car. I simply cannot convey how good the trip was on Amtrak compared to going through airport security and being stuffed into a middle seat on an airliner. While the train is a little slower than air travel, it's not too bad when you take into account total flying time including layovers and arriving 2 hours early to get through airport security. For medium length trips, I don't think I'll ever fly again. Now for the problem with Amtrak. It only runs two trains per day out of Newport News. That means I need to drive an hour to get to the train station and I have absolutely no flexibility in scheduling. The addition of six High Speed trains to the SOUTHSIDE cures both problems. Actually the real solution is to extend the Newport News line across the James River to the southside and then run a train every hour. It's just a river, how hard can it be?	The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. A James River crossing was considered during the alternatives analysis phase of this study; however, it was dropped from further consideration due to cost and the potential for substantial environmental impacts.
314	Start construction tomorrow!	Comment noted.
315		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
316		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
317		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
318	#4. 90 mph, unless economic allow 110 mph	Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
319		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
320		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
321		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
322		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
323		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
324		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
325		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
326		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
327		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
328		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
329		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
330		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
331		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
332		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
333		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
334		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
335		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
336		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
337		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
338	Frankly I'm highly disappointed that the route using the James River Bridge is not available. However, increased public transportation options are essential. More options mean less vehicle traffic, less pollution and better living conditions that draw in new businesses. This should be a higher priority in the state funding given the impact it could have on our roads, environment and economy.	The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. Early on in the planning process, an alternative was considered that included a new crossing of the James River. This alternative was dropped from further consideration as it was found to be too costly and would likely have greater environmental impacts.
340	You are contently talking about revenue. Revenue. I'm all for glamorizing Norfolk and bringing in more money. What about parking of these vehicles to ride this High Speed Rail. Where are these parking locations will be provided? Whose property and homes will be taken to provide this. Surely, not the low-income sector of Norfolk. Please address these issues at your next meeting. Sincerely, Doris Parnell	It is expected that parking would be provided at station locations served. As planning for the project progresses, more detailed analysis of parking requirements would occur during Tier II documentation of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph).
341	But 90 MPH would be great also! Ft. Lee in Petersburg is growing because of BRAC. The military needs improved connection to Petersburg and Washington DC as well from the southside. Hampton Roads highways are too crowded. High speed rail will provide relief.	The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.
342	Passenger rail will have a very limited impact on traffic congestion in Hampton Roads. Good freight rail is important to Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
343	Explain where the station at Bowers Hill & Norfolk will be and include Outer Banks and Raleigh in descriptions.	The proposed Bowers Hill Station location would generally be located near I-264 and the Hampton Roads Beltway (I-64/664), just east of railroad crossing with Homestead Road. The Downtown Norfolk Station location is just north of the Elizabeth River, east of the Harbor Park baseball stadium, near I-264 and Park Avenue. The Outer Banks and Raleigh are outside the study area limits set for this project.

ID #	Comment	Response
344	I would prefer 110 however the most overall efficient/effective should be chosen. Transportation in Hampton Roads is a mess. We have to start something and we can make this happen in the near future.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
345	Rail connections needed ASAP!	Comment noted.
346	It is important to provide business and individuals access to high speed rail and points N & S. Evacuation very important if category 3 storm. Major population center need access....????.... access in Norfolk and Va. beach.	Comment noted.
347	Why does this need to be a 10 year + project? The time is now to execute this type of project.	The time required to build the "enhanced" high-speed rail is directly related to the time needed for environmental clearances required by federal law, the time it takes for negotiations with the host freight railroads after considerable detailed study of capacity constraints and engineering solutions and design, construction and testing. This is all constrained by available funding, which is not assured in the future.
348		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
349	As a military family, connectivity from NN to Washington DC is key. It would improve our quality of life and safety of travel. (shorter travel times more family time on the weekends). Given the large military population in HR and the strong links with Washington DC, it is a no brainer to have a better passenger rail service between HR & DC.	Comment noted.
350		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
351	Handout should have included statement of Purpose and Needs. Physical constraints make the investment required to get 110 mph service from Peninsula not worth the massive investment for the small time savings.	Comment noted.
352	Somewhat myopic. Why is there no discussion in the plan of the bus service in all the affected cities. Once we are off the train then what. We must be able to reach our destination without the car we left behind. Also if we are going to have to wait 15-20 years before this plan becomes a reality why not invest in public transportation now. We need to change habits now. We could see results quickly. Also consider having high school students ride city buses instead of school buses like large cities do.	The focus of this study is the provision of passenger rail between Richmond and Hampton Roads.
353	Thinking further, the coordination of public transportation to/from stations have to support ridership. Public transportation in the area just doesn't cut it in its current form. Its not fast enough, far reaching nor well coordinated in its connectivity. Another battle, but it will affect ridership of the proposed rail system.	Comment noted.

ID #	Comment	Response
354		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
355		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
356	No public transportation system makes money. Rates must allow a family of four to travel for costs close to that of automobile travel. How will the state raise the funds to subsidize rail travel?	Public transportation users do not pay the full cost of riding the buses or trains. The difference between fare revenues and costs are made up by taxes collected from the general population. Public transportation systems across the world are subsidized because they provide meaningful and substantial public benefits that are realized by the general population and not just the users of the bus or passenger rail service. Air travelers do not pay the full cost of flying in the value of the ticket purchased. Highway users do not pay the full cost of building and maintaining roads either. Amtrak is subsidized through general appropriations from Congress, which means the funding generally comes from income taxes. All forms of public services provided for the benefit and economic welfare of the general population are “subsidized.” If the users of public libraries had to pay the full cost of “borrowing” books from the library, it would discourage the use of libraries. Because libraries benefit the general welfare, the library is supported by taxes, generally based on the value of properties in the area being served. Amtrak fares average between 15 cents and 25 cents per passenger mile. In some instances, driving could be cheaper for a family of four than taking the train. Virginia has not yet determined how to pay for the costs associated with operating the higher speed passenger rail service not fully covered by passenger fares. Recently, Virginia started state-supported conventional speed passenger rail services between Lynchburg and Washington, DC. More study is required to determine fare structure and operating costs.
357	The current location of the N.N. Rail station is unacceptable. Connectivity to other modes of transit is a must -- Why not place rail stations in close proximity to airports? Operating costs should be subsidized to the point where it is cost effective for people to leave their cars at home.	General station locations were evaluated as part of the Tier I EIS; more detailed and specific locations of station swill occur during the Tier II Environmental Documentation.
358		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
359	No real business case has been made for investing in Public Tax funds for connecting Norfolk to Richmond with higher speed rail. I stongly oppose this project at this time and encourage my representatives to focus our limited tax funds on true transportation needs and not a nice-to-have amenity for special interests.	Comment noted.
360		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
361		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
362		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
363		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
364	High speed passenger rail to and from HRDs, the 36th largest region in the nation, is an economic imperative. Our region is within 250 miles of 75% of the population of the United Stated. Our military community will benefit greatly from reduced travel costs to DC and other parts of the country. The business community will also benefit from the economic development opportunity.	Comment noted.
365	I go to Richmond a lot and would use this train on most of my trips.	Comment noted.
366		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
367	If necessary the govt should sell bonds for 5 years with 5% interest this will give ownership to all virgininans and opportunities to engage and save money in this rumbled economy. Me personally will save over a thousand dollars a year in gas an vehicle expenses also will give opportunity to other families to save as I.	Comment noted.
368		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
369		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
370	We have talked enough, let's do something.	Comment noted.
371		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
372		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
373		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
374		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
375	Ver in favor of high speed rail to Norfolk. 90 mph OT is sufficient and frequent.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
376	Any choice other than 110 mph trains to Southside Hampton Roads wil sub optimize investment in transportation options to: 1 - Improve economic development with alternative xportation options 2 - improve the environment by getting cars off the road 3 - leave Hampton Roads as an afterthught (cul de sac) in Commonwealth xportation planning.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



ID #	Comment	Response
377		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
378	I applaud the people supporting and helping create alternative ways of handling moving people. Please keep up the good work. I support public transportation with my voice and money. It is a good use of my tax dollars.	Comment noted.
379	Southside ridership study seems underestimated relative to Peninsula HST program; if current usage is at 400k, the Peninsula High Speed Rail option is only slightly incremental - not multiplicative. Whereas, the Southside stands to be significantly incremental and take advantage of military transitions of family members and personnel btw Norfolk and Washington DC. Consequently, I believe the Southside option is considerably greater in ridership than reflected. I believe ride demand is underestimated from SS and overestimated from Peninsula based on current ridership.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
380	As someone who will soon have to travel between Hampton Roads (Southside) and Richmond more frequently for work I am excited about the potential of a high speed rail system coming to Hampton Roads. I think its vital for the growth of this region.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
381	Seriously, please don't blow it!	Comment noted.
382		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
383		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
384	I believe that the loop concept for all forms of transportation between the peninsula and southside would be the best alternative - even though it would be the most expensive. If this could be developed with Carny Island development it could provide the 3 crossing that would be so important to the economic vitality of our area.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
385		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
386		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
387		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
388		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
389		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
390		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
391	We really need what Europe has and that is light speed in excess of 350mph.	Comment noted.

ID #	Comment	Response
392	I support an enhances (high speed) alternative 1, but would rather see another option - a line down the Peninsula with a new crossing to Norfolk, then to Chesapeake and through the Carolinas.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. Early on in the planning process, an alternative was considered that included a new crossing of the James River. This alternative was dropped from further consideration.
393		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
394		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
395		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
396	I studied abroad in Germany and enjoyed being able to travel without being dependent on a car	Comment noted.
397		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
398	I would think that the ability to use railroad tracks that are already in existence (Norfolk Southern's) would be a much more environmentally friendly way to add this rail service.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
399		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
400	Given the relatively short distances involved, the minimal time savings expected in the 110 mph MAS does not warrant the attendant extra costs and environmental impact. Service that does not support the southside alternative is of little social, economic or safety (hurricane) value!	
401		Despite the large difference in population between the Northside and Southside, the Newport News-based service also performs relatively well based on the geographic layout of the corridor. The population centers on the Northside are generally arrayed along the peninsula so that few places are very far from the rail corridor. On the Southside, though, the population is more spread out and significant activity centers/destinations such as Virginia Beach, require traveling longer distances to reach the stations. Furthermore, the Northside service features a station that directly serves a significant tourist destination, Colonial Williamsburg.

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401		<p>The costs associated with the Petersburg to Richmond segment of the NS/Southside route must be considered in the analysis of cost effectiveness. The National Environmental Policy Act and implementing Council of Environmental Quality regulations require that projects have logical termini and have independent utility. The project is defined as Richmond/Hampton Roads and not Petersburg – Norfolk. The Tier I Draft EIS must consider the costs of the Petersburg to Richmond segment in order for the project to have independent utility meaning it does not rely on the SEHSR project to be built. The SEHSR project could be re-defined as Petersburg to Raleigh so that the capital costs of the SEHSR project could be lowered.</p>
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402	<p>I detest multiple choice surveys because they allow for no latitude of choice but to agree with someone and possibly choose an answer which is nothing that you actually agree with. That being said, my career has been in railroading and it has always been my love both on and off of the job. I have traveled on Germanys ICE, Englands HST and most of Amtrak both in and out of the NE corridor. Our system seems to be the poorest and our government generally treats it like a wet dog. I would think that anyone who understands passenger service and economics would understand that if you charge a person what it costs to operate a service to ride it they will not. That is why railroads wanted out of passenger service in the first place. If I am not mistaken every nation that operates nationalized rail subsidizes it. If a high speed network is to be developed within our state and particularly to service Hampton Roads it should service the area with greatest population. Anyone who has ever gone into Richmond or beyond can testify that they though they would never get into or through there. Those coming to destinations this side of the harbor would remember that they were still a bus ride away from their destination city when the train stopped. Most people hate to ride buses and do so only as a last resort. If Norfolk never sees high high speed rail, the people on the north side deserve improvement on their side. When CSX single tracked that line it was bad news for passengers. The schedule on that line is very padded. NS south of Petersburg is very straight and a better piece of railroad. I have personally ridden at over 100 MPH on a passenger train behind a steam locomotive on that stretch west of Suffolk , many years ago, of course. I now feel that we could be better served as a whole if Alternative #1 was chosen and built up to the standards of service required for 90mph operation . I do not think that the 110 service costs could be justified by the few minutes saved in transit. It would be unrealistic to think that I will see this in my lifetime but you have my support and assurance that I believe it would be money well spent in the betterment of Hampton Roads and the State of Virginia. There is much more that I could say but I will be fortunate if you get to this point in my rambling tirade. Thank you!</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
403	<p>I strongly support a high speed rail corridor on the south side of the James River.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
404	<p>I support the proposal put adopted by HRTPO on Oct 30, 2009 for a greatly enhanced Alt 1.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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405	Having used the rail system in Europe and especially France's high speed TGV train, I am convinced that expanding rail transportation in this region is crucial to it's economic growth. It is the best use of funds compared to expanding existing infrastructure (tunnels and highways.) It is also the least harmful to the environment in my opinion. A Southside tie in is critical as Southside residents currently do not use Amtrak due to the difficulty in getting to the Peninsula station via the HRBT.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
406		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
407		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
408	Hurry up! We need to get this going	Commented noted.
409		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
410		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
411		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
412		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
413	This is so important to our ever changing world - if we've seen how successful this high speed rail has worked in Europe, why has it taken this long to try to implement it in the US? I think it would be detrimental to leave things as they are.	Comment noted.
414		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

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415	I think that the Commission has done a good job studying the project and has come up with the best alternative for bringing HSR to Hampton Roads. NS and CSX along with the respective Development Authorities and other business leaders need to be brought into the planning process. I would like to see the numbers (I'm a numbers kind of guy) and see how the project can be cost justified (conservatively) and what realistic projected revenues might be to cover the annual operating costs.	The NS and CSX have also commented on the Draft EIS and indicated they would be willing participants in the detailed operations and capacity planning and preliminary engineering that is an element of the project level Tier II EIS conducted for the preferred alternative. Alternative 1 is the preferred alternative selected by the Commonwealth Transportation Board, which specifies 90 mph passenger trains on the Southside route utilizing the CSX right-of-way between Richmond and Petersburg and the NS right-of-way between Petersburg and Norfolk. The next step in the project development process is to subject the preferred alternative to more detailed project level analysis now that a route and speed option has been determined in the Tier I EIS. The project level Tier II EIS evaluates the cost effectiveness and return on investment in greater detail and makes more of the "business case" for the proposed higher speed passenger rail investment. There will be more opportunity to comment on whether the project is cost justified when more detailed technical and financial analysis is completed and available for public review and comment.
416		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
417		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
418	As a taxpayer, cost is always an issue though the impact of doing nothing would be a far greater issue. We must not allow our region to be cut off from the rest of the country.	Comment noted.
419	I believe it is inappropriate to include the cost of Petersburg to Richmond in this study as that is already included in the base project itself and is going to be built whether Hampton Roads is included or not. Besides we would not build it twice. The proper exclusion of this from the cost will certainly and appropriately change the entire dynamic of the cost structure. It is also critical to include in the study a leg from Bowers Hill to Raleigh. It just makes sense. I also believe it is short sighted to look at this as connecting Hampton Roads to Richmond. We're connecting Hampton Roads and it's 1.6 million plus people to the High Speed Rail System of our country. The benefits to our local economy and that our country are huge. This is far reaching. Our world and our lifestyles are changing, let's embrace that reality fully on not short change our country on this. Plan for and make happen an enhanced Alternative One!!!!	The cost of the segment between Richmond and Petersburg is included in the capital costs because the project is defined as having logical termini at Richmond and either Newport News or Norfolk so that the project has independent utility as required by federal law and NEPA regulations. The project is not Petersburg to Norfolk but Richmond to Hampton Roads. The project includes both costs and the ridership generated by the Richmond-Petersburg segment.

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420	Would like to see a breakdown of just adding Southside service and not changing Peninsula service. Why Isn't there be an option for 3 Peninsula and 3 Southside trains, and other trains added as needed? Would the Southside Norfolk station be linked with the light rail system to the beach?	The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph), provides for 6 daily round-trips on the Southside/NS line at 90 mph and 3 daily round-trips operating at 79 mph on the Peninsula/CSXT line. The total number of round-trips is limited to 9 due to capacity constraints between Richmond and Washington, D.C.
421	To remain economically viable for the short and long term future transportation will need to be addressed. The option that best serves this purpose is the enhanced Alternative 1. It deals with immediate problems and, as a true high speed rail, positions the area for the inevitable change in our base mode of travel. While the car will never go away many, many individuals will opt for rail travel, if available, as has been shown in other regions of the US and the world.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
422		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
423	as i mentioned before, starting out small and then moving up in the future would be great. hopefully this will build funds to needed to expand mass transit all over Hampton Roads.	Comment noted.
424		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
425	Mass transit options are limited due to tourism, commuting and energy costs. Light rail and high speed rail offer great reliable and clean alternatives to a congested area. I have lived in Dallas, Detroit and New York, and have traveled to other cities like LA. Our traffic needs help, and now. Like today. The waterways limit how we can travel in Hampton Roads. The residents deal with it fairly well, but tourists avoid this area due to traffic backups in the summertime beginning on Thursday nights and running through to Monday AM. For so many reasons, this is a wonderful option for our area. Thank you, MJSaetta	Comment noted.
426	I would like to see high speed trains from Hampton road to Washington, DC, Philadelphia, NYC and Boston. I would also like to see metro type train service in Hampton roads.	Comment noted.
427		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
428		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
429		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
430	Although there will be some environmental changes that may occur, I don't think there will be anything detrimental enough to scrap the project. People in this area need a better way to commute to jobs that--in some cases--are in Richmond. A service like this will take sleepy drivers off the road. That's an environmental issue. I'm all for it. Thanks for considering making this area better.	Comment noted.

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431		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
432	<p>I am the president of a consulting firm that provides environmental and workforce development services. Our customer base includes a number of government agencies as well as government prime contractors the majority of which are located in Washington DC. As even the most novice of sales/marketing executives knows, it is important to be able to meet your clients in person. The current alternatives available to allow me to do that are either extremely cost prohibitive or logistically unfeasible and unreliable. The following illustrates my point: Air Travel: In looking at air travel one week in advance I found the following availability: Depart Norfolk at 6:00 AM arrive Regan at 7:00 AM non stop; Depart Regan at 5:00 PM connect through New York and arrive in Norfolk at 8:00 PM Fare is \$850.00 Drive: 270 miles round trip using a modest \$0.50 cost per mile will amount to \$190.00 Drive time is 3.5 hrs best case each way. This would require leaving Norfolk at around 4:00 AM in order to get to DC, find parking and be at a client's office by 8:00 AM. Leaving DC at 4 would allow someone to supposedly get back to Norfolk by 8:00 PM. The travel times for both of the above scenarios are most likely understated. Airline schedule unreliability is as well known as the traffic congestion and delays along the I-95 corridor. Given the choices most small business have no alternative but to choose the driving option. Consequently this reduces the frequency that these trips can be scheduled. I am confident that I would be scheduling several trips a month if there was a high speed rail option that was priced somewhere in the \$200 roundtrip range. I would add one caveat. I realize that my comments are somewhat anecdotal, however as the president of a business that was founded in 1986, I can tell you that the impact of affordable access to Richmond and Washington would have a dramatic impact on our ability to increase sales and service our clients. And that translates into more jobs and additional tax revenue. I hope my comments at least give you some insight from a small businessman. Please feel free to contact me if I can provide any clarification regarding my comments. Thank you.</p>	Comment noted.
433	<p>Economic development always follows transportation. Cities and towns were developed along waterways, along the railroad, along highways, and now they will develop along the High Speed Rail. We need to be a part of that rail, which will also increase tourism, provide safety to move people out of the area for emergencies, provide a route in for military to the military bases in this region, and will attract more businesses because it will provide a stronger infrastructure to this area.</p>	Comment noted.

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434	I am fully in support of high speed rail between Norfolk and Richmond via the 460 corridor, as long as it includes stops downtown in each city.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. Stops included as part of this alternative include the existing Richmond, Williamsburg and Newport News Station along the Peninsula and new Petersburg, Bowers Hill, and downtown Norfolk stations along the Southside.
435	Stimulus grants announced for national HSR projects include a minor amount for Virginia. Virginia needs to envision an integrated plan for a high quality of high-speed rail (110 mph and higher) connecting its three most important metro areas--Northern Virginia, Richmond, and Hampton Roads. It should then compete aggressively to get that route funded as its top priority.	Comment noted.
436		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
437	We desperately need to build the infrastructure in Hampton Roads. The roads are insufficient for the population.	Comment noted.
438	I think it would be a mistake not to be part of this project. It is the present and the future for our area's transportation needs. You can count on my support as a member of this society that travels to the Southside every day and is tired of dealing with the traffic each and every day of the week!!!	Comment noted.
439	I think that we should preparing to build true high speed rail system (300KM (186MPH) or more). Rather than having what amounts to just a spur from the I 95 corridor system it would really be a benefit to this area to have true high speed come through the Hampton Roads area as it continues the run up and down the I 95 corridor. All of this of course is in support of the traveling (civilian) pubic as well as all the Military, Government contractors and NASA in the Hampton Roads region. Additionally we should be connected to the (near) mid west in the Louisville or Cincinnati area to help bring the tourists into our area rather having them drive in.	Comment noted.
440		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

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441	<p>I believe the high speed rail initiative to be an excellent proposal but very limited in scope as a jobs creation and domestic growth sustainment proposal. What is required is a national high speed rail program similar to the National Interstate System initiative of the 1950's. Clearly this administration's limited stimulus should be acted upon to plant the seed for all to benefit and create jobs across the state and particularly in economically depressed areas. I would recommend a state wide plan and initiative that could be the model for the nation using the following conceptual approach. I propose developing the following routes independent of the current freight operations and using the existing highway right-a-ways as the paths to tie the states communities together and facilitate future statewide growth. Additionally these paths would facilitate transportation among the key education centers frosting greater collaboration among academic institutions. Paths: I-95 Southbound: Alexandria – Fredericksburg – Richmond – Emporia – Roanoke Rapids I-95 – I-64 Eastbound: Alexandria – Fredericksburg – Richmond – Williamsburg – Newport News I-95 – US-460 Eastbound: Alexandria – Fredericksburg – Richmond – Petersburg – Chesapeake – Norfolk I-66 – US-29 Southbound: Alexandria – Manassas – Culpepper – Charlottesville – Lynchburg – Danville I-66 – I-81 Southwest bound: Alexandria – Manassas – Front Royal – Stanton – Lexington – Roanoke (Blacksburg) – Bristol I-64 – I-81 West-East bound: Norfolk/Newport News – Richmond – Charlottesville – Stanton – Lexington Roanoke US 460 West-East Bound: Roanoke – Lynchburg – Appomattox – Farmville – Petersburg – Richmond – Williamsburg – Newport News VA-3 – US-29 – I-81 West-East Bound: Fredericksburg – Culpepper – Charlottesville – Stanton – Lexington - Roanoke US-220 – US460 – I-85 – US-58 East-West Bound: Norfolk – Chesapeake – Petersburg – South Hill – Clarksville – South Boston – Danville I would be very happy to work on the development plans and sustaining architectures. I am currently an architect/planner, working for The MITRE Corporation a not for profit organization supporting the federal government. Please note the proposed routes enable maximum use of assets with minimum deadhead requirements.</p>	<p>The focus of this study is the Richmond to Hampton Roads Corridor. Evaluating a national system is not included in this current scope of work.</p>
442	<p>Our economic future depends on adequate transportation. We cannot sit back and let our area become a bit player in the economic life of VA. This area has too much to offer to not be connected.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
443		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
444		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
445	<p>Dear Project Team, I'm extremely excited about the prospects for High Speed Rail in Hampton Rds, especially in Norfolk where I have heard so many people (including myself) old and young wish there were better service from Norfolk even to Williamsburg or Newport News, but especially to the Northeast Corridor. As a professor at a university, I know that there are so many universities here that would really benefit from such service as I hear many students and colleagues verbalize this need and wish. With the development of light rail here, I hope that there will be a link from the Harbor Park station, for example, to greater Hampton Rds, to the Peninsula, and the Northeast Corridor. Thanks so much for working on this, and I look forward to the meeting tomorrow night at the Half Moone center. As someone who was born in New York City, I really long for the day when we can just hop on a train and go places rather than clog the highways with gas guzzlers, or the airports with needless and arduous (and expensive) plane travel. We can and should be a transportation hub in Norfolk, and we have existing lines to prove it (seeing pictures of the how Norfolk was in the 30's and 40's is truly inspiring), so I hope we can achieve this! Let me know how I can help, and I applaud your vision of our area and your working on this. With so many tourists and companies to attract here, the better the mass transport we have, the more people we will be able to attract. Warm regards, Dr. Peter Schulman Dept of Foreign Languages and Literatures Old Dominion University</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
446	<p>To the Department of Rail and Public Transportation: May we add our voice to the many that have endorsed the Hampton Roads TPO Resolution 2009-05 and in particular the "enhanced Alternative #1". It is critical that High Speed rail service be afforded to the Hampton Roads area through the Route 460 corridor. It provides the bulk of the population of HR and north-eastern North Carolina with this vital service without a water crossing. In addition: We are the largest concentration of Federal Installations outside of Washington DC. We are in the unique position of being the entrance to the largest deepwater access to the USA. Norfolk is in the construction stage of light rail to which High Speed will be connected to improve public transportation. High Speed Rail would tremendously enhance the evacuation of HR and NE North Carolina in the event of a natural disaster. Please Approve the Resolution 2009-05 with the enhanced Alternative #1 Sincerely, Harry B. Taylor, Jr. M.D. and Joanne A. Taylor</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
447	<p>Considerations such as Tourism development (actually should be considered as part of overall economic development should be given strong consideration in selecting an alternative. The location of two major universities as well as the Tidewater Community College program should also weigh heavily in extending high speed rail to the Southside. Finally absent any major change in the existing road networks, and it is hard to envision such change in any reasonable time frame, even within the life cycle of a project as extensive as extending high speed rail to the Southside the contribution such a capability could make to emergency evacuation is immense and the potential savings in lives and human capital impossible to calculate.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>



ID #	Comment	Response
448		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
449		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
450	Hampton Roads is a tourist destination. Most visitors use their automobile and travel from the northeast. If passenger rail connected to Norfolk; we would be in position to capture part of the 4.5 to 5 million visitors per year. Hampton Roads is also unique in as much as it has more D.O.D. infrastructure & private sector companies than any other state on the East Coast.	Comment noted.
451		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
452		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
453		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
454		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
455		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
456	This line MUST be close to the Light Rail terminal in Norfolk to allow Virginia Beach customers to one day ride light rail to Norfolk and transfer to outbound trains.	Comment noted.
457		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
458		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
459		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
460		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
461	I emphatically support the TPO Resoution for Option 1 as the recommeded alternative to improve rail service to Hampton Road. The Environmental Study to determine which alternatives should be selected needs to be a complete, thorough and comprehensive study. The current EIS Data Base needs to be updated to consider all the options to provide compatible and equivalent high speed rail service to the Hampton Roads area. The study should also address the next steps in the EIS, and there needs to be a committment to access through service and one seat travel north and south. There should also be a committment to study rail service to the southwest as a follow on step.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
462		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
463	About 10 years too late for me, but bound to be improvement for others. Would be great if stops were made for Bush Gardens, Williamsburg, as well as Petersburg, Richmond, and Glenn Allen	Comment noted.
465	High speed rail service connecting the south side to Richmond and DC is important element to having the state economy grow through connectivity and trade between the major Virginia cities (DC-Richmond-Hampton-Norfolk). History teaches us that major cities (light NYC, Chicago, LA, Miami, and etc..) have grown on the backs of the growth of transit growth in the cites. Rail service will serve as the back-bone for the growth of the cities and the state.	Comment noted.
466	Cannot attend but I am astonished by peoples' continued dislike of this project. The public transportation here is horrible and I really look forward to this rail calming the road traffic a bit! When I first moved to Va Beach I searched in vain for ways to get to Ghent/"the city" for a night out without having to drive. I am so sick of driving everywhere!! Would have been even better had it been suspended monorail so it would not take up ground space. Cannot wait to take a leisurely train ride to Richmond for shopping and dining instead of risking my life on dividerless, truck-infested rt. 460.	Comment noted.
467	I have been very dissapointed in the planning for high speed and light rail that has ocured at the state and local level. With the federal funding that is available and the existing rails from Norfolk Southern and CSX it seems to be common sense to extend HSR services to Southside Hampton Roads especially with the potential to link with local light rail. The funding feasibility studies appear to have counted the cost for HSR to Southside twice thereby skewing the cost higher than it should be to provide service. How VDOT could excluded this region is truly a failure of management to understand the state wide economic picture and the negative impact it will have on the Hampton Roads region and the state. We need a comprehensive transportation plan that is fairly executed for all of Virginia and spread funding to the needs of Hampton Roads and not just to the Northern Va area.	Comment noted.
468	We endorse the regional position statement, strengthened alternative #1, designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor for high speed rail and enhancing the CSX/I-64 corridor for intercity I passenger rail service. We would use such service to Richmond and Washington, and probably on to the Northeast, when it becomes available. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Judy and Bill Miner 1006 Hanover Avenue. Norfolk, VA 23508-1229	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
469		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
470	High speed rail service must come all the way to Norfolk, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Suffolk and Virginia Beach. This area is too populous to be left out of high speed rail service. We cannot continue to clog our highways and tunnels to the Peninsula. This area is an economic engine that could produce even more if we had better transportation. Sincerely, Venetta Stephens 757-482-7430	Comment noted.
472	Southside is boxed in and getting worse. Future development will be non existant if high speed rail doesnt come here.	Comment noted.
476		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
477	Unfortunatly I can not attend the hearing but I want to thank you all what you are doing and add my voice to the chorus saying that we need high speed rail to come through Norfolk. I live in the city of Norfolk and just a couple of months ago, was fortunate to get a federal government position which is based in Arlington. Thanks to modern day technology, it looks like I'll be able to accomplish enough of my work via the computer that I won't have to move but I will need to be in Arlington at least once a month. I checked the Amtrak schedule and its abymssmal with only one early morning departure in that direction on Sundays and one morning/one evening departure on the week days. Since neither is convienent to my schedule, I am unlike to be able to use rail as it currently exists for Southeastern Virginia as a way to commute to my new job. I was very dissapointed about that, but remain hopeful that high speed rail will soon be an option. Thanks for all the work you and your group is doing in this area, Kelly Stefanko	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
478		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
479	PLEASE ROUTE MORE TRAINS THRU RICHMOND MAIN STREET STATION. i HAVE DECIDED ON TRAIN ONLY TRAVEL IF AT ALL POSSIBLE AND ONLY FROM MAIN STREET STATION; STAPLE MILLS STATION MUST BE NOTHING BUT A POLITICAL PAY OFF. I WON'T USE THIS STATION IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. MANY POSIBLE RIDERS LIVE IN THW CITY AND DO NOT OWN CARS. i TAKE PUBLIC TRANSIT TO THE TRAIN STATION. THAT IS 2 HRS TO STAPLES MILL. I WANT TO TAKE A DAY TRIP TO THE BEACH HOW CAN I DO THAT UNLESS WE HAVE HIGH SPEED RAIL? I AM A CURRENT RIDER OF AMTRAK. I VISIT FAMILY IN S.C. AND N.C. AS WELL AS STAFFORD AND CHESEPEAKE VA. MORE TRAINS THRU THE MAIN STREET ATATION. I WILL NOT DRIVE ON I-64 OR I-95. DEATH VALLEY TRANSIT.	Comment noted.
480	We have traveled in other countries without automobiles, relying on trains for effecient, comfortable, and reliable transportation. We have also traveled by train in US on occasion and would do more as driving and flying becomes more crowded and hasseled. This is a great opportunity to make Hampton Roads an even better place to live.	Comment noted.

ID #	Comment	Response
481	I think the crux of the problem that is the transient nature of our area. I feel like nothing is conceived as long-term by the majority of our population. The area reeks of transiency and has no substantial sense of permanence. VB is a ghost town for 8 months of the year. We're chock full of colleges and universities. Military and service folks, plus their families, are constantly coming in an out of town, or being re-stationed. The shipping industry and contract workers are the same. I think the majority of our citizens are "asleep" because they don't need to worry about big decisions any longer then 2 years out? They don't have to out run the bear, they aren't in the tent, they're part of the camera crew filming from the truck. Get people to feel permanent and you'll start to see permanent things happen.	Comment noted.
482	Our area would benefit by having Passenger rail available. It would stimulate the economy, help reduce traffic, encourage people to expand their options with employment. The ability to get to your destination in a timely fashion gives us more time to get things done.	Comment noted.
483		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
484	Yes the Environment is very important, but we must not sit back and let these things pass us by. We can make this happen, and still take care of the Environment.	Comment noted.
485		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
486		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
487		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
488	Do't be afraid to bring in multimodal travel benefits- the connection to Richmond/Newport News/Norfolk airports, the bike trails coming forward with Capital Trail and East Coast Greenway. Make this tourist AND resident friendly- everyone should enjoy better travel- whether it be out of towners or locals. Make it modern- we don't need trolley replicas- we want modern workhorses that we can be proud of and are equal to what other advanced countries are doing. <a href="http://www.oregonhill.net/2009/04/17/the-dream-of-high-speed-rail/">http://www.oregonhill.net/2009/04/17/the-dream-of-high-speed-rail/</a>	Comment noted.
489		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
490		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
491		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
492		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
493	No comment. I do not have enough information to speak to this.	No response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
494	I support The Hampton Roads Partnership endorsement of the resolution of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) made October 30, 2009 that encourages DRPT to adopt an enhanced alternative #1. I fully endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor as the Regional High-Speed Rail corridor (110mph and 90 percent reliability) designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph. And, I'd like to enhance the intercity passenger rail service (89mph and 90 percent reliability) along the CSX/I-64 corridor. Both can be done simultaneously and incrementally with the first steps being the extension of passenger rail to Norfolk and improving the on-time performance and reliability of the current passenger rail service to Williamsburg and Newport News. •Single seat service is needed from Hampton Roads/Richmond to destinations on the Northeast Corridor; and •Richmond/Hampton Roads needs to be the Southern-most terminus for the Northeast Corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
495	I would like the wetlands, natural spaces, and noise pollution considered for the residential areas. It is important to have sustainable growth with a balance between environment and economic development. It may be an option to develop eco-tourism areas within the train route. There are options to economic growth and environmental responsibilities. I do not support non action or the elimination of the Southside as options. I would like to be more involved as a citizen on this project.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process. In the future, there will be additional opportunities for your involvement during the development of Tier II Environmental Documentation.
496	The environmental study appears to have included several factors that are misleading: 1. It assumed the third crossing of the Hampton Roads harbor would be completed; there is no funding for this additional cross in the long term transportation plan. 2. The cost for the rail to be run from Richmond to Petersburg is included as a cost to provide service to South Hampton Roads; it should not be included if that portion is to be developed regardless of the route to Hampton Roads. 3. A connection to south Hampton roads, at the proposed end point in Norfolk, would create a truly multi-modal interchange, connecting with the Light Rail line in Norfolk. The light rail is expected to be extended to Virginia Beach and Chesapeake, providing ease of access and more riders to an opportunity to connect with higher speed rail in Norfolk.	As explained, the environmental study did not include the full third-crossing. It did include the necessary improvements preceding the third-crossing outlined in the HRTPO long range plan. A more detailed explanation can be found in Section 3.1 of the Tier I Draft EIS and the technical report "Travel Demand Methodology and Results Report" (April 2005, updated March 2008). The cost of the segment between Richmond and Petersburg is included in the capital costs because the project is defined as having logical termini at Richmond and either Newport News or Norfolk so that the project has independent utility as required by federal and NEPA regulations. The project is not Petersburg to Norfolk, but Richmond to Hampton Roads. The project includes both costs and the ridership generated by the Richmond-Petersburg segment. Alternative 1 includes higher speed trains on the Southside terminating near the LRT station at Harbor Park stadium.
497		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
498		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
499		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
500	<p>I recently moved to HR from Boston, MA. As a resident of the Boston area for 31 years, I as able to access work, education and recreational resources without the aid of a car. The MBTA has worked hard to provide links to bus,train, commuter rail and subway service. Though the systems is not without its problems, it remains to be a fantastic resource to the people of the Boston area. Please consider the success of this system in considering your decisions for Hampton Roads. Moving the general public to a greater acceptance of public transit will take time, great planning and patience. I have a few suggestions: Be very sure that the townships that make up HRs benefit from parking facilities for the transit system. This a major failing of the Boston system. It is my belief that parking fees should be used to maintain the parking area and also be reinvested in the transit system. Create a website for the system that is self contained. The current HRT website uses Google which does not recognize stops that are not named in the street register and often does not recognize that the user is asking for a weekend or holiday information. Create connections that are consistent and don't change during the day causing confusion. Create kiosks where riders can find schedules. Make transit pass purchase available in convenient locations such as major transit intersections. Be sure to create opportunities for the people to celebrate and enjoy the system as new segments become operational. Free rides - parties at each station, school outings. Education classes by grade school programs that help children understand the place of public transit in making a greener planet andin helping them enjoy the wonder of adventure and independence. Create express connections to Norfolk Int'l to rail and bus service at reasonable rates.</p>	Comment noted.
501	<p>W R Systems, Ltd., a Norfolk, VA-based systems engineering firm would like to express its support for high-speed rail transportation between the Hampton Roads Area and Washington D.C. Efficient and cost effective travel to and from the Washington D.C. area is essential in ensuring that the Hampton Roads marketplace remains a viable economic competitor and tourist destination. Hampton Roads, VA is second only to D.C. with the largest concentration of federal activities and is home to the largest naval base in the nation. Effortless travel between Hampton Roads and D.C. is crucial to these operations. Another aspect to consider is the safety of those living in the Hampton Roads area. Currently, emergency evacuation routes are limited. These routes are greatly encumbered by bridges and tunnels. High-speed rail transportation would be a high volume transportation alternative that would allow for the quick movement of citizens and less congestion on the current evacuation routes. In addition, it is important to our business to meet periodically with our corporate staff in Fairfax, VA. Whether meeting halfway in Richmond or at the Norfolk or Fairfax office, a high-speed rail option would be most beneficial. W R Systems, Ltd., is proud to support an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO and that would greatly benefit the Hampton Roads community.</p>	Comment noted.

ID #	Comment	Response
502		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
504		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
505	Support tpo resolution Require long term design Demand compatible and equivalent service Update eis data base Address next step in eis - one seat travel thru-service - commitment to study rail to southwest	Comment noted.
508		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
509	There is a branch of the CSX or other line that goes to Downtown Hampton approx. 3 blocks from City Hall. It would make sense to add a trolley type of service twice a day to couple Hampton city government and Newport News as well as provide rail transportation to the Amtrak station in downtown Newport News. At the very least it should be considered for a later phase of a larger rail solution for the area. We really need to have something to move people around this region instead of cars; traffic is getting worse every year. We should consider rail to provide transportation from the Peninsula to the Southside; park and ride lots are another issue that need to be addressed. With the light rail project between Norfolk and Virginia Beach there is more potential to tie this area together through rail. One of the best selling points that I have made to friends traveling to DC is that sitting on a train reading a good book or playing an online game beats sitting in traffic, inching along, and being frustrated. Thanks for your attention.	Comment noted.
510	Protecting the environment is very important, and taking off thousands of cars from I-64 and reducing traffic in the HRBT will contribute greatly to that. That should far out-weigh the environmental impact of building the southside route, which apparently is to be colocated with existing tracks.	Comment noted.
511	Don't waist time and money on this. The rail lines and right of ways are existing. If this is going to work without hugh subsidies all cost must be controlled. Americans love thier cars!	Comment noted.
512	Get it done.	Comment noted.
513		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
514		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
515		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
516	Consider funding the Virginia Crescent before the connection to North Carolina. Serving the population of Va. is a priority and overlooking HR is a big mistake.	Comment noted.

ID #	Comment	Response
517	I believe that High Speed rail service is essential for economic development in the Hampton Roads region. I believe it would be used by many people of all different socioeconomic backgrounds.	Comment noted.
518	It seems that the plan poses minimal environmental risk, particularly because it uses existing railway tracks. It seems that more significant environmental impact would result from having to expand highways, bridges, etc.	Comment noted.
519		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
520	Please find attached a letter from the Virginia Beach Hotel Motel Association regarding our Board's position in support of the designation of the Norfolk Southern/ Route 460 corridor for the regional high speed rail corridor, in conjunction with the CSX/I-64 corridor on the Peninsula for enhancement of intercity passenger rail service. I plan to be at the public hearing in Norfolk on January 28th to speak, representing the VBHMA's position. If you have any questions or need to speak to me directly, please call 757.428.8015 or email me at nancyperry@vbhma.com Sincerely, Nancy Perry Marscheider Executive Director Virginia Beach Hotel Motel Association ----- January 21, 2010 To Whom It May Concern: In the January 2010 meeting of the Virginia Beach Hotel Association Board of Directors, a motion was carried to support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's resolution supporting regional high speed and intercity passenger rail. The VBHMA supports the designation of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 Corridor as the "High-Speed Rail Corridor" to Hampton Roads, and in conjunction with the high-speed corridor, the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor on the Peninsula. The Virginia Beach Hotel Motel Association represents more than 90 hotel-member properties within our city limits, as well as more than 100 associate members, including related businesses from both Southside Hampton Roads as well as the Peninsula. Should you require additional information from the VBHMA, please contact our office directly at 757.428.8015 or by email at nancyperry@vbhma.com. Sincerely, Nancy Perry Marscheider Executive Director Virginia Beach Hotel Motel Association	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
521		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
522	In order to address the community transportation needs, economic growth toward remaining a thriving community, we will unfortunately need to make sacrifices. I believe it is possible to look toward a balance regarding technological and environmental conflicts. Any development raises environmental and historical land use issues, but I believe the long term benefits of alternative 1 outway the sacrifices that will need to be made with environmental issues.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
523		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.



ID #	Comment	Response
524	<p>High Speed rail to Norfolk and enhanced Amtrak to the Peninsular side of Hampton Roads is so important to our region so that we will remain competitive with other cities in the USA. We must have the same quality one seat service as the other metro areas and we need it now, not later. Please consider rail from Richmond to Norfolk first, before continuing south to NC. Our route will likely be one of the least expensive routes to build and yet provide the most benefit and ridership of any link or line. Rail is needed for life safety reasons. We need more ways to evacuate when time is limited to leave. We've experienced great "log jams" in travel due to simple problems like a tunnel's broken pump, and must move quickly for different solutions to our transportation needs, and rail is ideal. We need to re-connect "pentagon south" w DC. This will create jobs for HR, and allow our region to better serve the rest of the country. Even though Hampton Roads is geographically close to DC, due to poor transportation, it feels like we're states apart. If we were connected to the DC area with affordable, reliable, fast passenger rail service, our Businesses would grow and we'd attract other offices and gov't contractors that compliment Northern Va's vibrant business hub. High Speed rail to Norfolk will insure growth in our tourist business. Since most of our tourists are within a days drive, and most come from the NE, rail would be a great way to visit and would increase our revenue through tourism and would generate jobs. Mass transit incl light rail is solidifying us as a region and high speed will connect us to important trade markets leading to jobs.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
525	<p>I strongly agree with Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
526	<p>As an Environmental Engineer and the owner of a small firm that does a lot of work with the DoD, I understand the environmental concerns and agree that every reasonable measure needs to be taken. However, as someone who grew up in Europe and can appreciate the benefits of rail, I strongly believe that it will hurt HR in the long run if it doesn't establish a more efficient rail system. For example, in an effort to be more "green" I took six of my staff to GreenBuild in Boston via the rail and it took us more than 14 hrs. It was the most painful rail experience I have ever had and agreed with my staff to simply fly back.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
527		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
528		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
529	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is very important to our region. This can be an economic benefit to both metro areas. I go back and forth to Richmond (from Norfolk) on business regularly and would consider this a viable alternative (assuming it is reliable and fast). Please move forward with this project!	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
530	Our company is expanding into Norfolk VA this year. Their innovative light rail through the city and dynamic region is just part of the reasons why we are expanding into that area. I also think it is absolutely imperative that the High Speed Rail reaches out to the Hampton Roads area. Other reasons for consideration are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNIQUE NATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS</li> <li>• SUSTAIN AND GROW TOURISM</li> <li>• ENHANCED ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS</li> <li>• SIGNIFICANT RETURN ON INVESTMENT</li> <li>• SUPPORT INTERCONNECTED LIVABLE COMMUNITIES</li> <li>• PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION</li> </ul> Jeff Prioeschi	Comment noted.
531	Subject: Support for Public Transportation I am 100% in support of a high-speed rail corridor to Hampton Roads and enhanced intercity passenger rail service to the region. Not only would it facilitate my son's travel to and from college in Philadelphia (he does not have a car on campus and comes home by train-we have to pick him up either in Newport News or Richmond) but it furthers my interest in replacing cars with trains, a more environmentally friendly and less energy intensive form of transportation. I would be thrilled to take the train to and from Richmond instead of driving. Marina Liacouras Phillips	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.

ID #	Comment	Response
532	<p>I am writing to express my strong support for an enhanced Alternative 1 high speed rail connection to Hampton Roads that reflects the position of the HRTPO. As the Director of Federal Building Programs with an international Architecture, Engineering and Construction company, I travel frequently to Washington, DC. Like many of my counterparts in my company, other private industry and our government clients, I currently find driving to be the most convenient and viable mode of transportation, in absence of an efficient rail option and affordable airfares. Having said that, the driving option requires an unacceptable amount of unproductive time, the additional cost of an overnight hotel stay, and adds to costly congestion on the highways of Hampton Roads, Richmond and Washington, DC. I am always amazed at the number of cars that travel the same route on a regular basis. I am advised that there is a similar continuous influx of traffic into Hampton Roads by government and industry to conduct business, and families coming to our tourist destination. Adding high-speed rail to Hampton Roads, combined with Light Rail, would provide me and others with the option of using an integrated mass transit system without ever getting on a highway. The payback would be quick, as Hampton Roads' competitiveness in business and tourism increases, required investments in road construction and maintenance decrease, new businesses and government offices feel confident in locating here, and residents are provided another evacuation in the event of an emergency. Sincerely, Gary F. Arnold, AIA, LEED AP Director - Federal Building Programs</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
533	<p>I am supporting the high speed rail corridor to Hampton Roads and the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service to the region. King &amp; Queen Apartments, LLC 732 Scotland Street Williamsburg, VA 23185 757-220-0000 Office 757-220-1966 Fax kqapts@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
534	<p>Dear Sir or Madam, I am writing regarding the proposed link of high speed rail to Hampton Roads. I strongly support of an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO. This Alternative best reflects the long term transportation needs for the Hampton Roads region. Sincerely, Thomas M. Johnston</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
535		

ID #	Comment	Response
536	To Whom It May Concern: I am writing to voice my support for high speed rail service to Hampton Roads. Specifically, I support the position endorsed by the HRTPO (an enhanced Alternative 1 designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhancing the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor). Thank You, Stephen R. Davis Willcox & Savage, P.C.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
537	Would have to consider ways to make it as safe as possible.	Comment noted.
538	As the owner of a Hampton Roads based business that does projects throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region and a long time resident of the area, I strongly support the extension of high speed rail to Hampton Roads through the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor. I specifically support the enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO. With dwindling resources available for highway construction and with an increased understanding of the environmental consequences of our over-dependence on the automobile, rail is the best option for increasing access to our region. It will also provide another means of evacuation in the event of a natural disaster. Sincerely, Bruce Prichard, AIA, IIDA	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
539	What happened to the option of using the Peninsula route and crossing the water? was it too expensive? because that would be the most direct route with greatest ridership. With only one route to take care of it would also mean lower annual operating costs. The officials need to see past the high initial capital costs and see the big picture, that in the long run it would cost less. This is supposed to be a long-term solution to serve for decades, not a couple of years.	This option, at one time referred to as the James River alternative, was screened out during the alternatives analysis phase of the study because of the high cost of crossing a navigable waterway and the potential for substantial adverse environmental impacts.
540	High speed rail convenient to the bulk of the population will be key to acceptance and success.	Comment noted.
541	I've seen bits and pieces of this plan and even participated to a small degree in a few parts of the corridor during the last 6 years. I am really optimistic over what it can and will deliver to deliver to the Commonwealth in the next 30 years and beyond. If you have a website that carries current progress and issues to be considered I would like to be placed on the mailing list. David E. Williams, P.E. Preliminary Engineering Manager Ashland Residency - VDOT	The project website is: <a href="http://www.rich2hrrail.info">www.rich2hrrail.info</a>
542	To whom it may concern, Please accept this email indicating my very strong support of high speed rail access along the Route 460 corridor to Hampton Roads. With the largest population concentrated in southside Hampton Roads, and light rail already under construction, and the Norfolk Southern line location, it is the obvious best solution to serve Hampton Roads with high speed rail. Thank you, Tom Langley Tom B. Langley, PE, LS President Langley & McDonald 309 Lynnhaven Parkway Virginia Beach, VA 23452 757.463.4306 (o) 757.463.3563 (f) <a href="mailto:tlangley@langleymcdonald.com">tlangley@langleymcdonald.com</a> <a href="http://www.langleymcdonald.com">www.langleymcdonald.com</a>	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.

ID #	Comment	Response
543	<p>I am very concerned that Hampton Roads will once again be passed by. In the 60's, the Interstate Road system was designed and left this area at the end of cul-de-sac. I am now seeing that we stand the chance for this to happen once again with High Speed Rail. Hampton Roads needs High Speed Rail. We need it to reduce our dependence on building highways and tunnels. We need it for commerce. We need it for tourism. We need it for a lot of very good reasons. For once, this Region has a plan that has been agreed on by all of the cities and counties in the Region. We have a common vision of what should be done. Please support High Speed Rail for Hampton Roads. Hank Boyd</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
544	<p>I strongly support a high speed rail connection to the Southside of Hampton Roads. Hampton Roads is a unique national asset, containing a huge concentration of federal activities and a critical port. The region houses operations of 16 departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government including all five military services. It is home to the nation's largest naval facility, provides primary air defense to our nation's Capitol, and homeland security to our port and seacoast. Dependable, efficient and cost effective travel to and from the D.C. area is vital to both civilian and military operations and to the economy of this area and the rest of the region served by our port.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
545		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
546	<p>Please do this!</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
547		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
548		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
549		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
550		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
551		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
552		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
553		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
554		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
555	While the EIS addresses the specific impact of adding rail, I'm not convinced it includes the reduced impact of car drivers now on rail service. Overall impact of rail in my opinion is always less than single occupancy cars on highways which make up the bulk of the passenger car traffic. Europeans have benefitted from rail service for many years and it makes good sense for efficiency, climate change curbing objectives, and overall convenience. The worst thing we can do is to choose the status quo. In my opinion, I would choose high speed service from both Norfolk and Newport News and furthermore I would connect those two cities as well as the rest of Hampton Roads with a beltway style loop.	Comment noted.
556		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
557	The Peninsula current has rail service to Richmond and connects to the rail corridor, while South Hampton Roads does not. The road connections between South Hampton Roads and the Peninsula is a significant deterrent or impediment to the use of the existing rail transportation on the Peninsula by resident of South Hampton Roads. Having real passenger rail service in South Hampton Roads will enhance economic growth and competitiveness of the region, not having passenger rail service will have a negative impact on the economic growth and competitiveness of the region. In addition, the large military presence and other government facilities would benefit greatly from having passenger rail service in South Hampton Road to Richmond and the Washington, D.C. area. I work for a company that has offices in South Hampton Roads, Richmond and northern Virginia. Passenger rail service to Richmond and the Washington, D.C. area would provide a significant transportation alternative for my company.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
558		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
559	The Southside transportation needs has been neglected ever since I moved here. This is needed to improve travel and traffic along with the side benefit of evacuation. We are in desperate need of high speed transportation options between Virginia Beach - Richmond and DC.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
560	I write to support the development of high speed rail between Richmond and Hampton Roads along the 460 corridor. Hampton Roads is a key asset to the Commonwealth and the nation. Efficient transportation systems are vital to Hampton Roads' ability to achieve the strategic objectives of: support to the nation's defense, tourism and economic growth. Please record my voice in favor of the proposal to extend high speed rail to Hampton Roads.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
561	I am very supportive of creating the greenest possible mass transit system.	Comment noted.

ID #	Comment	Response
562		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
563	Usage of the existing Norfolk Southern corridor makes so much sense from a number of different levels. The major points being the ability to keep costs much lower, decrease environmental impact since much of the infrastructure already exists, as well as the route being as straight as an arrow which allows a train to get up to speed and maintain.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
564	Knowing that an Environmental Study must be performed, my suggestion would be to get on with it and perform it as quickly as possible.	Comment noted.
565		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
566		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
567	The Hampton Roads population of over 1.6 million is currently not served by passenger rail service and there are few transportation alternatives for entering and leaving the region. A high speed rail connection with enhance tourism by giving visitors an alternative the will preclude sitting in tunnel backups. It will grow our ability to market the port of Hampton Roads by improving linkages along the Rt 460 and invigorate the economy along some more depressed areas in Southampton County and beyond. It will connect our defense industry and military personnel with dependable travel to DC, making day trips again possible. It will provide our citizens and those in NE North Carolina with an alternative evacuation mode that will help mitigate the gridlock on our roads should evacuation every be necessary. This linkage for the region to high speed rail may do more to effect the furture economic prosperity of the area than any other single decision we will make for decades to come. We are a large metro area that must be served by passenger rail to be competitive in the future.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
568	I strongly support development of high speed rail for the 460 corridor.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
569	If we leverage other National and International best management practices with regards to building highway infrastructre while still protecting the environment and surrounding community this should become a mute point.	Comment noted.
570		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
571	I have read only a small portion of the study document. I will read it all and comment more later. At 70 years-of-age, I do not anticipate riding the end product,(I probably won't survive to see the completed product) but I hope that this generation is not foolhardy enough to miss the value to the entire Region of a Southside passenger rail link to Petersburg and then North and South. If we do not plan for a future with more rail public transportation out of this cul de sac where we live we will all pay for it in terms of slowed economic development and changed quality of life.	Comment noted.
572		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
573		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
574	The Hampton Roads region should secede from Virginia if the state cannot get transportation initiatives like rail service accomplished...then let them pay us for access to our ports! I'm sure North Carolina would love to have us.	Comment noted.
575		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
576	Hurry up and build it and lets get this economy moving...!	Comment noted.
577	Hampton Roads is a unique national asset, containing the largest concentration of federal activities anywhere in the country outside of D.C. The region houses operations of 16 departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government including all five military services. It is home to the nation's largest naval facility, provides primary air defense to our nation's Capitol, and homeland security to our port and seacoast. Dependable, efficient, and cost effective travel to and from the D.C. area is vital to operations.	Comment noted.
578		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
579	The Hampton Roads area is the largest population center between Washington,DC and Atlanta. To not have the South Side region of this area with the majority of the population and business not served by rail is stupid. There are so many other compelling reasons from hurricane evacuation to military readiness that also support high speed rail to the south side of Hampton Roads that I can't understand why anyone would be against it.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
580	Nothing can be done today without some environmental impact. We need to weigh the environmental and economic benefits that are created through high speed rail vs increased traffic.	Comment noted.
581		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
582		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.



ID #	Comment	Response
583		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
584	<p>Regarding the "alternatives under review", improvements to the Norfolk Southern route are paramount for several reasons. It is a relatively straight shot from Petersburg to Norfolk requiring less investment per mile to get it "higher speed ready" and a willing contractor to upgrade the rail for this service (Norfolk Southern). Otherwise, it is an underutilized section of rail. The most populated concentration of people on the entire east coast of the U.S. between Jacksonville and New York needs to be connected to a north/south service for several reasons. The high concentration of military personnel from all 5 branches which serve our nations capital in varying ways need high speed, effective transportation alternatives to and from our nations capital. With the high cost of road transportation upgrades and the undecided solutions and funding approaches to improve transportation in the highly congested, Hampton Roads area, higher speed rail would be a welcomed offering. Finally, with Southside Hampton Roads embracing local light rail in Norfolk with future expansions into other southside cities contemplated, a coordinated connection from light rail to higher speed rail in a downtown Norfolk transfer facility would extend higher speed rail to the masses.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
585		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
586		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
587	<p>Given Hampton Roads unique market characteristics, it is crucial that the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is approved as soon as possible to help enhance economic growth in our Region. Hampton Roads offers the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
588		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
589	<p>The use of high speed rail would dramatically improve the air quality for our area.</p>	Comment noted.
590	<p>examine GTV speed of french trains. 110 mph not enough . at 220 you get there in half an hour. every train will be full.</p>	Comment noted.
591		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
592	I support the recommendation of the HRTPO which provides new, high speed service to south Hampton Roads and improved service and reliability to existing service on the Peninsula.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
593		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
594		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
595	Environmental studies should be concise and accurate, but the improvement of the system should be the goal, not only the protection of the environment.	Comment noted.
596		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
597	I am in full support of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. Each year the traffic problems increase, making commutes to the Southside unbearable, especially during rush hour traffic and it's only going to get worse. We need to address the transportation issues now and work on solving. Furthermore, I hope we never have to evacuate this area due to an emergency, as it will be a nightmare and many unnecessary lives lost.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
598		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
599		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
600	The rail ways that are chosen should have the least effect on the environment and forcing current residents out of their property. Good solid comon sense should prevail.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
601	Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
602	No additional comments.	Thank you.

ID #	Comment	Response
603		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
604		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
605		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
606		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
607	I do not know a great deal about the environmental study as I have read only a small part of the available information. However, it would seem to me that the lesser of the total impacts would come from the 460 route. There are factors that lie outside the physical corridor impact alone, especially the impact of total travel time for the largest number of people.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
608		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
609		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
610	The southside of Hampton Roads has more space to build the rails and the state should seek help from Norfolk Southern. Norfolk is the economic center of this region and should not be overlooked by the state. No one from the southside will want to fight ridiculous traffic just to sit in traffic at the tunnel and then drive a longer distance to the station on the peninsula. A station situated in Norfolk/Va Beach would serve a greater purpose to a section of the region striving to be more progressive (and not receiving help from the state if the rails are put in the suburbs).	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
611		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
612		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
613		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.
614		Commenter completed survey only; no response required.

ID #	Comment	Response
615	<p>This is a view from NoVa. One travels from here to Hampton Roads occasionally. One needs only one destination within Hampton Roads. The more high speed trains to that destination, the better. More trains to/from the destination to which one is ticketed are preferable to fewer since that gives the traveler to Hampton Roads more choices. Newport News is closer to Richmond than Norfolk, so the trip is faster. The trip from Alexandria, assuming the Washington/Richmond improvements in the ARRA Track 2 proposal, is likely to be 2h15m or 2h20m to Newport News; around 3 hours to Norfolk. This matters. So 2b is preferable to 2a or 1. Williamsburg is a destination (from NoVa) in itself. Bowers Hill, not so much. (Petersburg is, but Petersburg is served today by 4 conventional trains and will be served by 4 additional high speed trains when SEHSR is finished.) So both of the alternatives 2 a and b are preferable to alternative 1. 57 minutes may be only 6 minutes less than 63 minutes, but put another way, 110 mph service shaves 10% off the time that 90 mph service takes. It's a psychologically important 6 minutes, too: under an hour vs. over an hour. SNCF says that two hours is a psychologically important barrier. The closer you can get Alexandria/Newport News to two hours, the better. So 110 mph service is preferable to 90 mph service.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
616		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
617	<p>Not building higher speed rail for South Hampton Roads is unconscionable, whether for economic development access or congestion relief or emergency management. The Peninsula also deserves better efficiency and reliability.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
618		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
619	<p>Looking at the track coming southeast out of Petersburg towards Chesapeake, I have to wonder why this isn't being used as an opportunity to showcase the benefits of Acela with a 150mph high speed rail line. There is a 50 mile long stretch of straight flat track, with virtually no development in the corridor, at 150 mph, this equates to a 20 minute trip from Chesapeake to Petersburg. If improvements were made to the Richmond/DC leg, a 2 hour commute time from Norfolk to DC would be theoretically possible. Considering the differences in the cost of living between the two MSA's, high speed rail would categorically transform Hampton Roads' economy. With federal money and political will available, I suggest that the options studied in the EIS don't go far enough. atpee@gmail.com</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
620		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
621		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>

ID #	Comment	Response
622	<p>Hampton Roads is a major metropolitan region to both this state and this country. Out of 1.7 million inhabitants, over 1.2 million of them are on the Southside. Virginia Beach and Norfolk are the core cities of the region and hold the largest tax bases, have the largest CBDs, and the highest percentage of tourism dollars. We all know that alternative transportation, such as higher speed rail, are a must for a fully functional region. Hampton Roads deserves higher speed rail to connect to the larger economic markets such as DC, New York, Philly, etc. While the Peninsula is still part of Hampton Roads, the wisest choice is Alternative 1 along 460 and into downtown Norfolk. Amtrak only works because you can step off of the train and into a cities Central Business District. Do you think it would be fun to try to ride a train to New York and be forced to disembark in Jersey City? Norfolk and Virginia Beach are in the process of building light rail transit. The downtown Norfolk higher speed station would create an intermodal station to connect intercity rail, intercity busses, intracity rail, intracity busses, and intercity ferry service. Tourists could arrive by rail, and in the future, ride LRT to the Oceanfront of Virginia Beach. The largest naval base in the world is on the Southside. Military officials could ride rail from DC and be in Norfolk in a couple hours. Every scenario leads to the Southside alternative being the best alternative. Obviously, 110mph trains would be ideal, but if 90mph trains are needed to bring HSR to the Southside, I'm all for it. For the economic prosperity of Hampton Roads and Virginia, build higher speed rail from Richmond into the Southside of Hampton Roads.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>
623		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
624		<p>Commenter completed survey only; no response required.</p>
625	<p>Please provide options that help balance the transportation system for Hampton Roads and allow emergency evacuation for the large southside population.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

# Written and Public Hearing Comment-Response Comparison

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
2-1	We endorse the regional position statement, strengthened alternative #1, designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor for high speed rail and enhancing the CSX/I-64 corridor for intercity I passenger rail service. We would use such service to Richmond and Washington, and probably on to the Northeast, when it becomes available.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
3-1	<p>I view this project, including the high speed rail service along the Route 460 corridor and enhanced inner city passenger rail service along the CSX/Amtrak I64 corridor, as a critical link between Hampton Roads, Richmond and Washington, D.C.</p> <p>This is a rare opportunity to address our transportation challenges as well as to one day hopefully link up with our neighbors to the south for future connectivity as part of the national inner city and high speed passenger rail network.</p>	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
3-2	Among other things, the project would position us to better serve our large military and defense-related populations, which require unencumbered access to Northern Virginia and the nation's capital. We can also improve the lives of our 200,000 uniformed and federal civilian defense workers. DOD invests \$50 billion in Virginia, and we need to enhance our transportation system to bring even more DOD jobs to the Commonwealth.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
3-3	The tourism industry will reap the profits of well-planned transportation improvements. And other important Virginia assets, like our courts, will prosper through such an initiative.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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3-4	Congestion relief for daily commuters is a given if people are using Virginia's highway system -- if fewer people are using Virginia's highway system.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
3-6	I wholeheartedly support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's endorsement of the high speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern 460 route as well as the enhancements to passenger rail service on the peninsula and a regional high speed rail task force.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
4-2	The HRTPO board has overwhelmingly passed a resolution at a special meeting on October 30th. The resolution has two critical components. 1. The designation of a high speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of 110 miles per hour plus. 2. To have enhanced inter city passenger rail service along the CSX/Amtrak I-64 corridor. The Hampton Roads region wants to aggressively implement steps to achieve the ultimate goals of having high speed rail along the Norfolk Southern U.S. 460 corridor and enhanced and strengthened inter city passenger service along the CSX 64 corridor. So these definitely include a partnership between the community of Hampton Roads in its 1.7 million people, the Federal Railroad Administration, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Norfolk Southern, CSX and Amtrak.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
4-3	The establishment of new passenger rail service is critically important to the region of Hampton Roads particularly given the large concentration of military.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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4-6	<p>RESOLUTION 2009-05A RESOLUTION OF THE HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION SUPPORTING REGIONAL HIGH-SPEED AND INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL.</p> <p>WHEREAS, the Obama Administration "proposes to help address the Nation's transportation challenges by investing in an efficient, high-speed passenger rail network of 100-600 mile intercity corridors that connect communities across America;"WHEREAS, significant new Federal funding has been made available in support of implementing the proposed national high-speed rail vision;WHEREAS, the Federal Railroad Administration has initiated a national High-Speed Rail program and a vision for developing a cohesive national intercity and high-speed passenger rail network;WHEREAS, any use of private rail infrastructure requires an agreement between the railroad, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the rail service provider;WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia and State of North Carolina are positioned to extend the Northeast corridor to Charlotte via Richmond/Petersburg; and</p> <p>WHEREAS, the Hampton Roads region is currently included on the U.S. Intercity Passenger Rail Network.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>



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4-7	<p>NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:1. That the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) endorses the designation of a "High-Speed Rail" corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 MPH;2. That the HRTPO, in conjunction with the high-speed rail corridor, endorses the enhancement of the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor; and 3. That the HRTPO establishes a Regional High-Speed Task Force.BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization strongly pursues hiring a long term High-Speed Rail/Intercity Passenger Rail consultant to guide the HRTPO Board through the development of a strategic high speed and intercity passenger rail plan; and APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization Board at its meeting on the 30th day of October, 2009.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.</p>
5-1	<p>Following a presentation from the DRPT on the potential costs and benefits of several alternatives, MPO members asked several questions and received responses relating to rail and highway crossing safety, connecting passenger rail services in Richmond, train noise and vibration, project financing, connection with the southeast high speed rail corridor and the potential for a new passenger rail station that will serve the Tri-Cities Area.The clear consensus of the Tri-Cities MPO membership was preference for Alternative 1 as described in the Table ES1 of the document. The MPO adopted a resolution to this effect.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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5-2	<p>Alternative 1 would provide high speed service along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor and would also offer expanded conventional passenger rail service along the CSX 64 interstate corridor. Alternative 1 would restore passenger rail service along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor that was discontinued during the early 1970s. The largest cities in the Hampton Roads area would have access to high speed service with connectivity to the southeast high speed rail corridor in the Petersburg area. Fort Lee's doubling in size as a major training installation marks the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor even more advantageous. Therefore, the Tri-Cities MPO supports Alternative 1 as the most logical and consistent alternative with the project purpose and the need of providing a competitive and more reliable transportation choice for people travelling to and from the Hampton Roads region from our perspective.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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5-3	<p>RESOLUTION OF THE TRI-CITIES AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION REGARDING THE RICHMOND TO HAMPTON ROADS PASSENGER RAIL PROJECT TIER I DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation provides financial assistance to public agencies for transportation technical studies; and WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation requires approval of regional transportation plans and programs by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in accordance with 23 U.S.C. Part 450; and WHEREAS, the Tri-Cities Area Transportation Policy Committee is the duly designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Tri-Cities Area; and WHEREAS, on January 14, 2010 the Transportation Policy Committee was presented with summary information on alternatives evaluated in the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) dated November 2009. NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Transportation Policy Committee endorses Alternative 1 (along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 Corridor) for designation as the Richmond to Hampton Roads high speed passenger rail corridor. BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, the Transportation Policy Committee supports the ultimate development of passenger rail service along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 Corridor at speeds more than 110 mph.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
6-1	<p>The course of action is embodied in the Hampton Roads TPO resolution.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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6-2	It takes a lot of people, a lot of passengers, a lot of tickets sold, a lot of money in the fare box to make this kind of operation a success. So we need every rider that we can get. And clearly, Southside Hampton Roads is where the population is today and increasingly it will be in the future. With the light rail Norfolk is going to be better prepared to handle people, whether it be urban transit or intercity rail, than any component portion of the Commonwealth south of Northern Virginia. So that is just such an obvious terminal.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
7-2	When high speed rail connects Washington to Richmond to Hampton Roads over three out of every five Virginians will be connected with fast, frequent and reliable passenger rail service. Our position is to support Alternative 1 with enhanced service down to the peninsula.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
7-3	Get a high speed rail on the Southside with 90 percent reliability because high speed rail is about more than just speed. It is making sure that you have a large amount of service and that that service is reliable and running when it is supposed to.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
7-4	Concerned about a potential for a layover in Washington, because of the potential decrease in ridership of up to 50 percent. This decrease can affect economic viability of connecting high speed rail down to Hampton Roads. It can affect how many passengers ride the trains. And it can affect how many tourism and businesses we can bring down to the Commonwealth of Virginia.	Layover in Washington Union Station is dependent on Amtrak scheduling future trains as either terminating in Washington, DC or running through to the Northeast Corridor. More detailed planning is required in the project level EIS now that a preferred route and service schedule has been determined in this Tier I EIS.	Layover in Washington Union Station is dependent on Amtrak scheduling future trains as either terminating in Washington, DC or running through to the Northeast Corridor. More detailed planning will be required for the Tier II Environmental Documentation now that a Preferred Alternative has been selected by the FRA and DRPT in this Tier I EIS.

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7-5	<p>Virginians for High Speed Rail officially supports extending enhanced intercity passenger rail (89 mph) with a 90 percent on-time performance between Richmond and Newport News, also serving Williamsburg; and regional high-speed rail (110 mph) with a 90 percent on-time performance between Richmond and Norfolk, also serving Petersburg and Chesapeake. It is our opinion that both of these corridors can be upgraded simultaneously and incrementally, with the first steps being to improve the on-time performance of the Richmond-Newport News passenger service, and extending passenger rail service to Norfolk via Norfolk Southern's route 460 corridor.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
7-6	<p>Our first concern regards the ridership projections for 2025, which are based on 2007 ridership numbers of 151,171 passengers. The ridership between 2007 and 2009 grew 20.72 percent or 31,319 passengers on the Newport News to Richmond corridor to 182,490 from a FY 2008 peak of 186,199. The FY 2009 ridership numbers reveal that each round-trip train equals 91,245 passengers annually, and the study's best case scenario estimates only a 41.52 percent per train average increase over the next 15 years with the addition of seven new round-trip trains serving the Hampton Roads region. We believe that because the ridership numbers are based on FY 2007 figures that the ridership estimates for improved intercity and high-speed passenger rail service are understated, and should be reviewed in the context of FY 2009 ridership numbers.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Ridership forecasts prepared for the Tier I EIS is intended only to allow discernment of the preferred alternative, route and speed option. Additional ridership studies and estimates will be prepared for the project level Tier II EIS conducted for the preferred alternative.</p>	<p>Ridership forecasts prepared for the Tier I EIS are intended only to allow discernment of the preferred alternative, route and speed option. Additional ridership studies and estimates will be prepared for the Preferred Alternative in the Tier II Environmental Documentation.</p>

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7-7	<p>Our second concern deals with the operating projections. We applaud the Virginia DRPT's effort to keep the operating revenue projections low, however we have concern that the operating projections ranging from a surplus of \$14.56 per passenger (No Action) to a deficit of \$25.01 per passenger (Alternative 1) creates a case where because of the high operating deficit, the project is not deemed economically viable. In context, the current 18 Amtrak Northeast Regional Services, which primarily serve America's only high-speed rail corridor between Washington, D.C. to Boston, MA, have an operating surplus of \$19.56 per passenger. Five of those Amtrak Northeast Regional Services serve Virginia today. While we agree that the likelihood that all future service to Hampton Roads will not have a surplus, the Northeast Corridor has shown that with fast, frequent, and reliable rail service comes the higher potential for an operating surplus.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Additional revenue forecasts will be prepared as the project moves forward in the next cycle of planning.</p>	<p>Additional revenue forecasts will be prepared as the project moves forward in the next cycle of planning.</p>
8-5	<p>We support, based on what we have seen so far, in concept the Alternative 1. We believe that offers the best combination based on the evidence currently in the draft document because it does both enhance the inner city passenger rail service and I64 corridor along the Northside and it extends service on the existing corridor on the Southside. And, as stated previously, given Norfolk's population size, given the presence of military on the Southside are some of the many reasons we think that Southside service and adding that is so important</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>The Tier II Environmental Documentation will examine adverse environmental impacts of the Preferred Alternative in greater detail, and will re-examine station location and specific route alignments.</p>

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8-5	<p>We also would urge you to look at possibilities in, as you go along, not in finalizing the Tier 1, at the very least, in Tier 2, to not only tweak that route of the southern alignment but possibly the stations. It is our understanding that a number of the potential wetlands impacts are tied to the Bowers Hill station, and we would urge you to look at that knowing that there is more than one alternative and alternative route along that Southside of Virginia. Look much more thoroughly. We did not see much under that alternative actually in the DIS itself. The second concern we would like to flag and urge you to look at more thoroughly in the DIS is potential land-use impacts of this project. You mentioned some of the direct land-use impacts of the land that would be affected but you didn't say much about the indirect impacts.</p>	<p>The Tier II EIS will examine in greater detail the potential adverse environmental impacts including re-examining station locations and specific route alignments.</p>	<p>The Tier II Environmental Documentation will examine in greater detail the potential adverse environmental impacts including re-examining station locations and specific route alignments.</p>
8-5	<p>We support, based on what we have seen so far, in concept the Alternative 1. We believe that offers the best combination based on the evidence currently in the draft document because it does both enhance the inner city passenger rail service and I64 corridor along the Northside and it extends service on the existing corridor on the Southside. And, as stated previously, given Norfolk's population size, given the presence of military on the Southside are some of the many reasons we think that Southside service and adding that is so important</p>	<p>The Tier II EIS will examine in greater detail the potential adverse environmental impacts including re-examining station locations and specific route alignments.</p>	<p>The Tier II Environmental Documentation will examine adverse environmental impacts of the Preferred Alternative in greater detail, and will re-examine station location and specific route alignments.</p>

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8-5	We also would urge you to look at possibilities in, as you go along, not in finalizing the Tier 1, at the very least, in Tier 2, to not only tweak that route of the southern alignment but possibly the stations. It is our understanding that a number of the potential wetlands impacts are tied to the Bowers Hill station, and we would urge you to look at that knowing that there is more than one alternative and alternative route along that Southside of Virginia. Look much more thoroughly. We did not see much under that alternative actually in the DIS itself. The second concern we would like to flag and urge you to look at more thoroughly in the DIS is potential land-use impacts of this project. You mentioned some of the direct land-use impacts of the land that would be affected but you didn't say much about the indirect impacts.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	The Tier II Environmental Documentation will examine in greater detail the potential adverse environmental impacts including re-examining station locations and specific route alignments.
9-1	I strongly support a high speed rail connection to the Southside of Hampton Roads. Hampton Roads is a unique national asset, containing a huge concentration of federal activities and a critical port.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
10-1	I am writing in support of a high speed rail connection to the South Hampton Roads area.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
10-5	The Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor offers an exceptional opportunity for providing high speed rail to Hampton Roads at the least cost and in the least amount of time. We must not let this opportunity go untapped.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



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11-1	I am very concerned that Hampton Roads will once again be passed by. In the 60's, the Interstate Road system was designed and left this area at the end of cul-de-sac. I am now seeing that we stand the chance for this to happen once again with High Speed Rail. Hampton Roads needs High Speed Rail. We need it for a lot of very good reasons. For once, this Region has a plan that has been agreed on by all of the cities and counties in the Region. We have a common vision of what should be done. Please support High Speed Rail for Hampton Roads.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
11-2	We need it to reduce our dependence on building highways and tunnels.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
12-1	Please add my name to the long list of those supporting High Speed Raid to Hampton Roads. Our area has lacked this crucial connection for far too long.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
13-1	Please accept this email indicating my very strong support of high speed rail access along the Route 460 corridor to Hampton Roads.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
13-2	With the largest population concentrated in Southside Hampton Roads, and light rail already under construction, and the Norfolk Southern line location, it is the obvious best solution to serve Hampton Roads with high speed rail.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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14-1	Please accept this letter of endorsement for the extension of high speed rail service from Washington D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk and Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph, and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I64 corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
14-3	High-speed rail, coupled with connection to an intercity light rail system whose first phase in under construction, will provide a much needed transportation alternative to visitors	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
14-5	The Hampton Roads region is a major tourism destination attracting nearly 5 million tourists annually. The Norfolk Southern/ Route 460 corridor will be an added benefit to the ports of Hampton Roads and assist the growth of manufacturing and distribution centers along the corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
14-6	The Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor can be implemented with a modest investment and in a short amount of time. Hampton roads offer the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country. The Bowers Hill station will provide easy access to the I-264 corridor and Hampton Roads beltways {I-64/I-664}. Community plans envision an intermodal transfer facility at the harbor park station in downtown Norfolk will link high-speed rail to the light rail systems serving the region.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
14-7	The high speed rail line will be available for emergency evacuation during storms. All major access routes serving the Hampton Roads region are hindered by bridges and tunnels.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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16-1	I wholeheartedly support High Speed Rail in Hampton Roads.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
16-2	The addition of High Speed Rail in Hampton Roads will help bridge the gap between Hampton Roads cities, Richmond and Northern Virginia, and assist with economic development of the area.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
16-3	It is time for Hampton Roads to have a long term vision for the area and High Speed Rail will be key to further connecting the area and to putting us more on the map from a regional standpoint.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
17-1	I am enthusiastically supportive of the development of a high speed rail link into the Hampton Roads area. I view it as an essential component of our strategic development for this century.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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18-1	<p>This is to indicate my full support for the recommendation of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization for rail service to our region. For your reference, I post the basic position below:"Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor."Hampton Roads is America's First Region. As such, we have historical, economic, social, and cultural connections to Virginia and the nation.For all these reasons, I heartily endorse the position taken by our metropolitan transportation planning agency and urge your full commitment.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
19-1	<p>The City of Richmond applauds VDRPT for their efforts in developing the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Tier 1 Study. Connecting the two major urbanized areas with improved passenger rail service and eventual high speed passenger rail infrastructure will provide competitive travel alternatives, enhance the environment, attract jobs, encourage economic development and promote tourism in Central Virginia and Hampton Roads.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
19-6	<p>In reviewing the proposed corridor options, Alternative 1 –extending enhanced intercity passenger rail (79 mph) between Richmond and Williamsburg/Newport News and regional high speed rail (90-110 mph) between Richmond and Norfolk is the most attractive alternative to best serve the City of Richmond and Main Street Station. Both rail corridors would operate with 90 percent on-time performance. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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19-7	This alternative serves the greatest population base, provides new passenger rail to Norfolk, contains one of the highest ridership forecasts and provides the high speed rail capital infrastructure to the South which is a component of the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
19-8	The estimated cost effectiveness of the alternative falls in the mid range of the options. With the continued increase in the existing Amtrak ridership and the proposed increase in service, the projected ridership figures in the study might be understated which would positively impact the cost effectiveness of the alternative. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
19-9	Amtrak's on-time performance for their Northeast Regional service for the past 12 months was at an 80% level. The on-time performance for the Northeast Regional Train 95 providing service between Boston, Richmond's Main Street Station and Newport News for the past 12 months was at a 55% level and negatively impacted the quality of rail service in Richmond. It is encouraged that the two rail corridors in Alternative 1 be upgraded incrementally with the first steps directed at improving the on-time performance of the Richmond-Newport News passenger service and extending passenger rail service to Norfolk via Norfolk Southern's route 460 corridor. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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19-10	<p>The City's position in support of Alternative 1 is shared by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization, (Tri-Cities Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is expected to take action on 1/14/10 in favor of Alternative 1), Virginians for High Speed Rail and the Virginia Association of Railway Patrons. The City of Richmond is very encouraged by the findings of the study and wholeheartedly supports the development of higher and high speed rail from the Hampton Roads area to Richmond and throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. - Dexter White, Director, Department of Public Works</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
20-1	<p>The Hampton Roads Partnership's 115-plus members, including the chief elected official of all seventeen regional communities, leaders from private businesses, higher and secondary education, military and labor from both South Hampton Roads and the Virginia Peninsula, represent approximately 25% of the region's workforce and all of its more than 1.6 million citizens. We endorse the resolution of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) made October 30, 2009 and encourage DRPT to adopt an enhanced alternative #1. The Regional Position: Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor as the Regional High-Speed Rail corridor (110mph and 90% reliability) designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph. And enhance the intercity passenger rail service (89mph and 90% reliability along the CSX/I64 corridor. The HRTPO position is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative #1, which we strongly endorse.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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21-1	<p>The Hampton Roads Partnership's 115-plus members, including the chief elected official of all seventeen regional communities, leaders from private businesses, higher and secondary education, military and labor from both South Hampton Roads and the Virginia Peninsula, represent approximately 25% of the region's workforce and all of its more than 1.6 million citizens. We endorse the resolution of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) made October 30, 2009 and encourage DRPT to adopt an enhanced alternative #1. The Regional Position: Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor as the Regional High-Speed Rail corridor (110mph and 90% reliability) designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph. And enhance the intercity passenger rail service (89mph and 90% reliability along the CSX/I64 corridor. The HRTPO position is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative #1, which we strongly endorse.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
22-1	<p>I support an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
22-2	<p>Given Hampton Roads unique market characteristics; the regions proximity to Washington, D.C.; the suitability of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor to high-speed rail; and the fact that passenger rail service can be implemented in the corridor with a modest investment and in a relatively short period of time, Hampton Roads arguably offers the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>



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22-3	It is estimated that connecting Hampton Roads to the high-speed rail corridor will create or sustain 30,000 jobs and create \$3 billion in economic development. Connecting Hampton Roads is very important for the continued economic success of the Commonwealth and the Hampton Roads.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
23-1	Logic demands that high(er) speed rail must serve the south side of Hampton Roads where all the people are. Please don't let this economic opportunity pass us by.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
24-1	I am writing to submit my support for this rail project.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
26-1	As a manufacturing business owner and Planning Commissioner in the City of Norfolk, I want to express my support for a high speed rail connection to Hampton Roads, specifically an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
26-5	From a community planning standpoint, a light rail tie-in at Harbor Park to high speed rail is a natural boost to our area's public transportation initiatives. With light rail, other cities in the region will have the incentive to support and enhance Norfolk's initiative. Our community desperately needs high speed rail!!	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



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27-1	I saw the proposed location for the Petersburg, Va station which is not really IN Petersburg. Has there been any consideration of building a new station in town? There has been a lot of revitalization going on and it would be great to have it walking distance for some people.	The Southeast High Speed Rail Project and DRPT will be select the Petersburg Station location. Norfolk trains will stop at the Petersburg Station.	The general station location proposed for the Petersburg area has been the subject of the SEHSR environmental documentation. However, selection of an exact station location will be the subject of subsequent environmental documentation prepared by the project proponent. Norfolk trains would stop at the existing Petersburg station.
28-1	I am contacting you today to express my interest in assuring that every serious consideration is given to insuring that Hampton Roads has High Speed Rail access in the near future. Hampton Roads is a unique treasure along the East Coast. We have abundant natural resources; our port, our beaches and climate, economic resources: our port, our military installations, our tourism industry, and cultural resources in the arts and history. These resources will only be enhanced by your decision to bring High Speed Rail to South Hampton Roads, by way of Bowers Hill, along the Rt 460 corridor, and to improve rail travel along the Peninsula.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
28-3	Given Hampton Roads unique market characteristics; the regions proximity to Washington, D.C.; the suitability of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor to high-speed rail; and the fact that passenger rail service can be implemented in the corridor with a modest investment and in a relatively short period of time, Hampton Roads arguably offers the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
29-1	I am writing to ask for your support of Alternative #1 for the Washington DC to Norfolk, VA High Speed Rail Corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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29-2	The Hampton Roads Region is unique in the United States (outside of Washington, DC) for its concentration of military and national security installations. Having High Speed Rail service to our region is imperative to ensure dependable, efficient and cost effective travel to and from the D.C. area from an operational standpoint.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
29-3	Tourism is vital to the regional economy and many of the nation's most historic areas are found within the Hampton Roads region. Our region's economic competitiveness also depends on the completion of this High Speed Rail corridor. In addition to facilitating the movement of people, improvements in the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor will have the added benefit of enhancing the competitiveness of the Port of Virginia, while fostering the growth of manufacturing and distribution centers along the corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
30-1	I am in support of high-speed rail service from Richmond/Petersburg to the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. I also support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's position that includes high-speed rail along NS/Route 460 to Norfolk, and the enhancement of the existing rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor to the Peninsula.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
30-2	To link our area to the high-speed rail service that is planned along the I-95 corridor from Richmond/Petersburg to Washington, D.C.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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30-4	<p>High-speed rail to the Peninsula and South Hampton Roads is very important to the future of tourism in all of Hampton Roads. This area is a major tourist destination (Virginia Beach, Norfolk and Williamsburg to name a few) and with high-speed rail that will connect with our light rail system, a much needed transportation alternative would be provided for visitors to our region. It will also help to reduce traffic congestion, especially during the tourist seasons. Additionally, a high-speed rail station located at the Bowers Hill area will provide convenient access to the interstate highways in Hampton Roads – I-64, I-664, I-464 and I-264. And, a link to the Harbor Park light rail station in Norfolk (now under construction) would provide access to light rail, bus and ferry services as well as cruise ship facilities.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
31-1	<p>The Greater Williamsburg Chamber &amp; Tourism Alliance, representing nearly 1,000 businesses supports the Virginians for High Speed Rail position for enhanced intercity passenger rail service (89 mph and 90 percent reliability) along the existing Peninsula route and classifying the Petersburg to Norfolk corridor as a Regional High Speed Rail corridor.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
32-1	<p>I am writing to voice my strong support for high speed rail service to Norfolk. The Richmond-Norfolk corridor should be the primary high-speed corridor. The Richmond to Newport News corridor for enhanced service should be adequate if schedules can maintained, which they are not currently.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
35-1	<p>I am writing this e-mail to strongly endorse Alternative One of the high speed rail extension to Hampton Roads. It is imperative that this project be funded as Hampton Roads is one of the two most economically important regions in Virginia and is perhaps the most important military installation on the East Coast. We are currently "off the grid" when it comes to rail transportation and</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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35-2	Alternative One is the key element to link our region and help us grow over the next several decades. Hampton Roads is one of the bright spots nationally with job creation and we can't afford to be left behind. I am the CEO of a business with 30 employees and am involved in a number of civic organizations including Eastern Virginia Medical School, the Chrysler Museum, and Norfolk Academy. Each of these organizations would benefit greatly from Alternative One as well.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
36-1	As the owner of a Hampton Roads based business that does projects throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region and a long time resident of the area, I strongly support the extension of high speed rail to Hampton Roads through the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor. I specifically support the enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
37-1	I am a member of Virginia Beach Vision and support the efforts to establish a connection for Hampton Roads to the high speed rail. Specifically, I support an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRPTO.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
38-1	Regarding high speed rail to Hampton Roads, I would like you to know that I support an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRPTO.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
39-1	I am writing to voice my support for high speed rail service to Hampton Roads. Specifically, I support the position endorsed by the HRTPO (an enhanced Alternative 1 designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhancing the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor).	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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43-1	I am writing regarding the proposed link of high speed rail to Hampton Roads. I strongly support of an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO. This Alternative best reflects the long term transportation needs for the Hampton Roads region.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
45-1	I am writing to express my strong support for an enhanced Alternative 1 high speed rail connection to Hampton Roads that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
47-1	I write to support the extension of high speed rail service in Virginia from DC to Richmond and further to Hampton Roads. I support following the NS/Route 460 corridor for high speed rail. I further promote the enhancement of the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
52-1	Let me add my strongest endorsement for extending High Speed rail from Petersburg, Virginia to Downtown Norfolk. As a life-long resident and student of the growth of our region I offer critical considerations in favor of High Speed Rail to south Hampton Roads.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
53-1	Please accept this letter of support for high-speed rail to Hampton Roads. VA as proposed under the "enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO". Our company would use this service extensively in business travels. High-speed rail on the alternative route coming down the peninsular in Newport News would not be used by our employees due to the traffic congestion of accessing that location. We would continue to fly or drive.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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54-1	I strongly urge you to move forward to adopt an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRPTO.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
56-1	I believe that we should proceed with the resolution of the HRPTO regarding the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor. This is a service that is sorely needed and will connect Hampton Roads to rest of the East Coast in a very positive manner.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
59-1	I have a business located in downtown Norfolk (25 years) and live about 4 miles from downtown. I also have property in Maine and make frequent trips – usually drive and sometimes fly to Boston and rent a car from there. I strongly favor high speed rail to Southside. I have tried the train from the peninsula to Boston and it simply takes too long. I would use high speed service – I am a ground lover and not having to drive 750 miles would be very attractive.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
60-1	I am writing to add my support for high speed passenger rail down the 460 corridor and for enhanced service from Newport News to Richmond.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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61-1	I would like to see Alternative 1 implemented - three daily, conventional speed round trip trains on the peninsula route, and six daily, high speed round trip trains on the Southside route.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
62-1	I support high speed passenger rail down the 460 corridor and enhanced service from Newport News to Richmond.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
63-1	Rail Service through Richmond is currently bottlenecked - the scheduled nearly 4 hours from Williamsburg to DC is simply too long (and it's frequently delayed for more than that). Reducing this bottleneck should be a high-priority item well in advance of any other improvements.	Comment noted. FRA and DRPT are working with the host freight railroads to remove bottlenecks in this segment of railroad.	FRA and DRPT are working with the host freight railroad to remove bottlenecks in this segment of railroad.
63-5	If I had my choice, a high-speed "backbone" line between Washington, DC and Richmond would be installed - in effect, an extension of the current NorthEast regional Acela service, terminating in Richmond, with hourly, or bi-hourly arrivals/departures. From there, frequent and fast connections to the Peninsula stations, Petersburg, Charlottesville, etc, including RIC airport using different carriages, with arrivals and departures coordinated to avoid long layovers. Basically, a hub-and-spoke system.	Comment noted. The SEHSR and Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project are planned as a diesel-electric technology.	The SEHSR and Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project are planned as a diesel-electric technology.



Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
64-1	<p>I am a supporting member of Virginians for High-Speed Rail. I frequently travel by rail from Newport News to Richmond, Baltimore and Boston. Portions of my travel have been made on Amtrak's Acela. And I have recently returned from travel to the West Coast and back exclusively on Amtrak. I find rail travel very comfortable and convenient. As much as I would like to see an upgrade to high-speed rail on the peninsula I don't see track speeds getting much over 90 mph. What does make sense is the Southside High-Speed Corridor from Richmond through Petersburg that parallels route 460 to Norfolk. The population and tourist industry would support it. However, southerly expansion directly from Norfolk probably would not be feasible due to population centers being further inland as outlined the Federal Railroad Administration's Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor plan. High-speed rail. It's the future of transportation.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
66-1	<p>I fully support the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
68-1	<p>In the January 2010 meeting of the Virginia Beach Hotel Association Board of Directors, a motion was carried to support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's resolution supporting regional high speed and intercity passenger rail. The VBHMA supports the designation of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 Corridor as the "High-Speed Rail Corridor" to Hampton Roads, and in conjunction with the high-speed corridor, the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor on the Peninsula.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>



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76-1	We officially support extending enhanced intercity passenger rail (89 mph) with a 90 percent on-time performance between Richmond and Newport News, also serving Williamsburg; and regional high-speed rail (110 mph) with a 90 percent on-time performance between Richmond and Norfolk, also serving Petersburg and Chesapeake.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
76-2	It is our opinion that both of these corridors can be upgraded simultaneously and incrementally, with the first steps being to improve the on-time performance of the Richmond-Newport News passenger service, and extending passenger rail service to Norfolk via Norfolk Southern's route 460 corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
76-3	We envision Richmond serving as the passenger rail hub, linking the Northeast Corridor from Boston to Hampton Roads and the Southeast Corridor from Washington to Atlanta. However to accomplish this, we need increased frequency and direct connections between major destination points. The potential for a layover in Washington, DC is our main concern with the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Study Tier 1 EIS. A layover in Washington can account for a 50 percent (or more) decrease in ridership, which will substantially impact the economic viability of extending high-speed rail from Washington to Richmond and Hampton Roads. The extension of high-speed and enhanced passenger rail between Richmond and Hampton Roads is vital to the sustainability of the passenger rail service in greater Richmond. Thus, we endorse Alternative 1 with increased improvements to the Richmond-Newport News rail corridor as mentioned above. Furthermore, we request that the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Study progress, and, that ridership statistics and figures without a layover are included in future tiers of the study.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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79-1	I am in support of the Petersburg to Norfolk High Speed Rail link. I am a senior citizen and really appreciate public transit. I no longer want to drive long distances. I have been a loyal user of Amtrak. I look forward to more efficient and speedier service. I have traveled by rail in Europe, Egypt and South America. The high speed train from Paris to Lyon is superb. I look forward to South Hampton Roads joining the 21st century.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
80-1	I support the high speed rail to South Hampton Roads. The Petersburg to Norfolk extension is vital. I want to be able to travel to DC and points west without having to take a bus to the Peninsula. I want to be able to travel south without going through Richmond. I wish a speedy ride to Richmond without getting into a car.We need and deserve a high speed link.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
81-1	As a licensed professional engineer, I participated in the preparation of many feasibility studies and environmental impact statements in my career, and the manner in which VDOT and FRA deliberately deleted Hampton Roads from the final ROD for SEHSR struck me as incompetent and outrageous. The bypassing of Hampton Roads, the largest SMSA in Virginia and indeed in the entire Southeast between Washington DC and Atlanta, and the largest port and industrial complex in Virginia, is an irrational political decision that does not serve the travelling public. The cost of an additional bridge-tunnel across Hampton Roads to connect existing Peninsula rail ROW to rail corridor south to Raleigh will be insignificant in the overall development cost of SEHSR, and the proposed Richmond-Hampton Roads "spur" is an insulting sop, not a solution. It is long overdue for some of the 18 Hearings on the SEHSR to be held in our region, to let the people express themselves on what should be spent with their money. It is long overdue for VDRPT and the Commonwealth Transportation Board to recognize where the majority of Virginians live and deserve to be served by HSR, rather than simply bow to Richmond political power.	Comment noted. The SEHSR project connects Washington, DC to Raleigh and ultimately Charlotte, NC and Atlanta, GA. The FRA added the Richmond/Hampton Roads "spur" as an acknowledgement of the importance of the Hampton Roads region. The Draft EIS for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project addresses the environmental impacts of the proposed extension of the SEHSR to Hampton Roads.	Hampton Roads is outside the SEHSR Tier II EIS study area. No public meetings for the SESHRS project were or are planned outside the study area.

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82-1	The Navy supports the efforts of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Federal Railroad Administration to analyze the potential impacts of enhanced passenger rail service and its impact on regional traffic.	Comment noted and DRPT appreciates the support of the Norfolk Naval Command.	DRPT appreciates the support of the Norfolk Naval Command.
83-1	High speed rail service must come all the way to Norfolk, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Suffolk and Virginia Beach. This area is too populous to be left out of high speed rail service.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
86-1	I am writing regarding the improvement of Amtrak service to this area and more specifically to Southside Hampton Roads. I have ridden trains to and from this area and Richmond many times since the 1960's, both with Amtrak and on the predecessor lines, Norfolk Southern (NS) and CSX. The line that CSX / Amtrak currently uses on the peninsula is a slow, predominately single track line through a lot of swampland that is shared with a lot of freight traffic. Once you approach Richmond, it goes VERY slowly through a large freight yard before it gets onto the old RF&P line and eventually to the Staples Mill station in Richmond. The corridor line that Norfolk Southern has is far superior and runs through rolling farmland. It is very straight and smooth and is mostly double track. Back when they were running steam excursion trains, I clocked the 611 at over 70 mph coming east from Petersburg with a passenger train of coaches dating back to the '30's and '40's. While their track is used by a lot of freight, it has a lot more capacity for train traffic. The track into Petersburg was onto a branchline to get to the old station downtown the last time we went there from Norfolk. However, Amtrak's north/south trains such as the Florida trains from Richmond currently serve Petersburg / Ft. Lee, I believe at another location.	The existing tracks and other infrastructure will be significantly improved and upgraded permitting safe, reliable operations of both freight and passenger trains on the same tracks. DRPT will work cooperatively with the freight railroad partners and Amtrak to make sure that needed infrastructure will be in place e to assure safe operation.	The existing tracks and other infrastructure will be significantly improved and upgraded permitting safe, reliable operations of both freight and passenger trains on the same tracks along the NS/Southern route. DRPT will work cooperatively with the freight railroad partners and Amtrak to make sure that needed infrastructure will be in place e to assure safe operation.

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86-2	It would seem that running service on the NS would have far less impact on the environment given the fact that it is not through so much swampland and is largely already double track.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
86-3	On this end, to attract usage, it would be critical that the station is easily accessible and has adequate and secure parking similar to the airport. A parking lot by Harbor Park would not work, I certainly would not leave my car there overnight nor would many other people. Currently, there is an Amcoach that picks up at the Oceanfront but the lot there on 19th St. does not allow overnight parking and is not secure nor is it marked. Their other pickup locations have similar problems and this does not encourage its usage. Driving to the current station in Newport News is a nightmare from the Oceanfront.	Detailed examination of station location and design characteristics will be examined in the Tier II EIS now that a preferred alternative has been determined.	Detailed examination of station location and design characteristics will be examined in the Tier II Environmental Documentation now that a preferred alternative has been determined.
87-1	I am writing to advise that as a resident of Hampton Roads and an active member of the business community, I strongly endorse the extension of high-speed rail service between DC, Richmond/Petersburg and Hampton Roads, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk-Southern/US Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and the enhancement of inter-city passenger rail along the CSX/I-64 corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
90-1	May we add our voice to the many that have endorsed the Hampton Roads TPO Resolution 2009-05 and in particular the "enhanced Alternative #1". Please Approve the Resolution 2009-05 with the enhanced Alternative #1.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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90-2	It is critical that High Speed rail service be afforded to the Hampton Roads area through the Route 460 corridor. It provides the bulk of the population of HR and north-eastern North Carolina with this vital service without a water crossing.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
91-1	As a resident of Norfolk, I must express my deepest support for High Speed Rail Service from Richmond to the Hampton Roads Corridor. Of the five alternatives proposed the one that is the most logical is alternative 1 (which is why I am so strongly supportive). Certainly the Status Quo and the No Action alternatives are not even options and must not be considered.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
91-2	The future economic health of South Hampton Roads and our State is dependant on the adoption of alternative 1.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
92-5	Personally, I would regularly use this mode of transportation between Norfolk and Richmond and between Norfolk and Washington, at the very least. It would greatly relieve congestion on the highways and would avoid the inconvenience of short-hop air service.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
95-1	I am very supportive of the High Speed Rail initiative enhanced Alt. 1 for high speed rail into downtown Norfolk. With the majority of the Hampton Roads population on the Southside of Hampton Roads, it makes good sense to have enhanced service into downtown Norfolk. This rail service would tie into the new Light Rail service currently being constructed and eventually branch to neighboring cities and the naval base.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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95-3	Last year I rode the Amtrak train from the Peninsula to Washington DC to attend a Realtor meeting. It was a good trip but I had to ride a bus from downtown Norfolk to Newport News and the train was limited in speed in several areas due to the poor condition of the track. Also, the top speed was limited due to the "freight" standard tracks vice better rails for high speed service.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project will improve on time performance of existing and planned Amtrak passenger trains by making investments in partnership with host freight railroads to eliminate bottlenecks and other cause of rail traffic congestion.	<p>The Preferred Alternative will provide for passenger rail service from Norfolk, eliminating the need to take a bus from Norfolk to catch a train in Newport News. As part of the development of the NS/Southern route to include passenger rail service, coordination with the host freight railroad will occur to make investments that would minimize bottle necks and rail traffic congestion.</p> <p>It is assumed that improvements to the existing CSX/Peninsula route would occur as part of improvements planned by Amtrak that include adding an additional round-trip to that route. As part of those improvements, it is assumed that Amtrak and the host freight railroad will coordinate and make investments that would work to eliminate bottlenecks and other causes of rail traffic congestion</p>
97-4	Infrastructure already in place - with tracks already in place along the 460 corridor - the infrastructure is already in place to build upon.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
100-1	I would like to express my support of High Speed Rail access to Hampton Roads and the need for a dedicated funding source for it. Our area is a growing metropolitan area, second in population to Washington DC. We have abundant resources including beaches, port, military and tourism. Our location on the middle Eastern United States is also an asset. These resources will be enhanced by your decision to bring High Speed Rail to South Hampton Roads. The best route is thru Bowers Hill, along the Route 460 corridor connecting to Norfolk. Please include Alternative #1 as my choice for the study effort.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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102-1	I strongly encourage DRPT to adopt an Enhanced Alternative #1: The extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor. All local governments of Hampton Roads have unanimously support the Southside /Norfolk Southern Route, as is evidenced in a unanimously-passed Transportation Planning Organization resolution.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
103-1	We live in Norfolk, VA. We strongly support high speed rail to Norfolk, VA.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
103-2	Our Southside area is vital to the economic growth of Virginia and high speed rail is vital to the economic growth of the Southside. Let's use the stimulus money to get our people employed and our people moving.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
106-1	I would like to highly endorse Enhanced Alternative #1 regarding the proposal to connect South Hampton Roads to Washington, D.C. via the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



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107-1	I write to express my views concerning the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) regarding the proposed High Speed Rail plan as it concerns the Hampton Roads' region. American Maritime Holdings ("AMH") is the parent company of Marine Hydraulics International, Inc. and Técnico Corporation, two of the Hampton Roads area's largest ship repair contractors. My comments support the resolution adopted by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization on October 20, 2009. Specifically, I support the recommendation to designate the Petersburg-Norfolk route as the High Speed Rail (HSR) corridor to Hampton Roads at regular speeds of 110 mph or higher.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
107-2	However, my strongest recommendation is that the EIS be re-written in order to designate the establishment of a Virginia High Speed Crescent that would link Washington-Richmond-Petersburg-Suffolk and Norfolk.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
107-11	The data used in calculating financial estimates for the various EIS alternatives should be updated. Much of the data in the EIS dates from 2004, excludes defense department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not likely to be built. Revised cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates must be used in documents submitted to federal authorities and properly archived if our region is to compete effectively with other metro areas for limited federal funds.	The Tier I EIS is intended to select a preferred route and speed option for higher speed train service between Richmond and Hampton Roads. Any consideration of service from Hampton Roads to North Carolina on a route other than the route being considered by the SEHSR project would need to be funded and studied separately from this EIS.	The Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative will revise cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates.
108-1	I support the position of the HRTPO, which is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative One, which I strongly endorse.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



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108-2	Alternative 1 will provide the maximum benefit for the region and the Commonwealth by serving a fertile untapped market on the Southside, where the majority of the region's population and jobs reside.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
109-1	On behalf of Virginia Beach Vision, Inc. and its Board of Directors, I write to express our strong support for the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region. The Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor should be designated a high-speed rail corridor with speeds of more than 110 mph ultimately. Concurrently, an enhanced intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor must be included. This position is best reflected in a strengthened alternative one as detailed in the Tier 1 Draft EIS.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
109-5	The ability to rapidly move both people and freight to and from the region and connect with the marketplace is fundamental to Hampton Roads' future competitiveness. In addition to facilitating the movement of people, improvements in the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor will have the added benefit of enhancing the competitiveness of the Port of Virginia, while fostering the growth of manufacturing and distribution centers along the corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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109-7	The proposed Bowers Hill station will provide easy access via I-264 and the Hampton Roads beltway (I-64/I-664). Community plans envision an intermodal transfer facility at the Harbor Park station in downtown Norfolk that will link high-speed rail to the light rail system, intercity and regional bus systems, ferry service, cruise ship facilities and direct interstate access. Along the multi-modal corridors that will be served, business and residential development will be concentrated. When high-speed rail connects Washington-Richmond-Hampton Roads, 3 in 5 Virginians will have access to fast, frequent, and reliable passenger rail service.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
111-1	I support an enhanced alternative1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
112-1	I am writing to express my support for a high-speed rail connection to Hampton Roads, specifically the enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
113-5	As the southeast corridor is designed and built, it is important that TRUE High Speed Rail be constructed first from Richmond to Norfolk, and the existing Amtrak line to Newport News be upgraded immediately. In addition to building a rail line that is truly capable of High Speed trains, it is important that we consider the future and have plans for a line south to Raleigh.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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113-6	And to take from a letter I read about HSR, "The data used in calculating financial estimates for the various EIS alternatives should be updated. Much of the data in the EIS dates from 2004, excludes defense department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not likely to be built. Revised cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates must be used in documents submitted to federal authorities and properly archived if our region is to compete effectively with other metro areas for limited federal funds"	There is considerable misunderstanding of the so-called "third crossing". The "third crossing" is in fact not a crossing at but a series of roadway improvements leading to the existing crossing in anticipation of a future third crossing. Moreover, the travel demand model took into account the difficulty and unreliability of the existing crossings to Newport News from Norfolk and added access time to the trips from Norfolk to Newport News train stations to account for the unreliability of travel times.	The Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative will revise cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates.
114-1	I am in support of a High Speed Rail connection to Hampton Roads, specifically an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
115-1	I am writing today to add my support to the many in Hampton Roads who see a clear benefit of a high speed rail connection for our community. The higher education community has long understood the benefits of rail travel, and this high-speed proposal has distinct advantages for commuter students, parents, faculty and staff that make it clear that this is a proposal whose time has come. We agree that an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization is the best option for today and tomorrow.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
116-1	As a concerned citizen of Hampton Roads I am writing to encourage the extension of high-speed rail service to Hampton Roads along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
116-2	As compared to the other alternatives being considered this route has to have one of the best returns on investment given the existing infrastructure that only needs to be enhanced to accommodate the 110 MPH target speed.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
117-1	My entire family of five supports an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
118-1	I support high speed rail using the Southside Hampton Roads corridor. It is an important project for the maintenance and growth of our region's economy.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
120-2	As you know, currently residents of the Southside of Hampton Roads must get to Newport News on the peninsula in order to board an Amtrak train, This is unacceptable. The bulk of the population of Hampton Roads lives on the Southside. It is vital to Virginia that this area, which already contributes to the economy of the state an amount second only to northern Virginia, be directly connected to Richmond, D.C. and points north.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
120-4	Ridership projections, which grew more than 20% between 2007 and 2009, are based on 2007 figures. I know from personal experience, that when gas prices approached \$4 a gallon, the number of cars on the train leaving Newport News doubled. It has not gone down with the recent (and presumably temporary) small falloff in gas prices.	Ridership estimates will be revisited in the project level Tier II EIS.	Ridership estimates will be revisited in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
121-1	I strongly agree and support the Enhanced Alternative #1 would encourage the DRPT to adopt this resolution.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
123-1	I am writing in support selection of an enhanced Alternative 1 of the Hampton Rods Passenger Rail Study Tier 1 EIS for higher speed (ultimately 110 mph high speed rail service to South Hampton Roads a via the Norfolk Southern Right of Way from Richmond to South Hampton Roads, specifically Norfolk.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
123-4	In discussing the ultimate 110 mph and higher service, there is no more suitable corridor than the arrow-straight stretch of N/S corridor—an unparalleled asset available nowhere else in the Commonwealth. In fact, it offers the longest arrow-straight span of existing track (between Petersburg and Suffolk) on any existing proposed HSR route. So why not take advantage of this speed enhancer we've been blessed with?	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
123-5	These are just some powerful arguments that point directly to Alternative 1 as the premier route over which to move the largest number of likely passengers in the shortest amount of time.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
125-1	I support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization for a high speed rail service from Richmond to South Side Hampton Roads.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
126-1	As members of the Hampton Roads Congressional Delegation, we are writing in support of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) resolution endorsing two critical components of the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. These components are: - the designation of a "High Speed Rail" corridor along the Norfolk Southern/US Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph; and - in conjunction with the high-speed rail corridor, the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/Amtrak/Interstate 64 corridors.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
127-1	The Downtown 1000 is a highly motivated group of volunteers who work to support the vision and mission of the Downtown Norfolk Council. We are a diverse and influential group of young and young-thinking professionals who are actively engaged in helping Downtown Norfolk reach its full potential as a dynamic and vital urban center.As an organization we strongly support the HRPTO's regional position statement:Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I64 corridor. The HRTPO position is best reflected in a strengthen Alternative #1, which we strongly endorse.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
128-1	I have seen announcements of the Public Hearing scheduled in Norfolk for Jan 28, 2010 on the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project and am unable to attend because of prior commitments, however, I reviewed the Tier I Draft EIS available in the local library and would like to submit comments in favor of Alternative 1- Newer Higher Speed Passenger service on Southside/NS route, in addition to existing and currently planned upgrades to conventional rail on the Peninsula/CSXT route.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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128-2	<p>The Southside Hampton Roads has long needed passenger rail service directly to the Norfolk area. With congestion on the Interstates through the tunnels to Newport News and the Peninsula making it very difficult to connect with passenger rail service, there is an even more critical need for High Speed rail service directly to this area.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
129-1	<p>As a private citizen of this region of Virginia for ninety-four years, I support the resolution of HRTPO made October 30, 2009. I do not purport to represent anyone other than myself. I will not be alive to see any high speed rail arrive or depart this area to and from Richmond because I will probably have a normal life expectancy and be dead in the next few years. I will never get to ride the rails that I endorse having available for our citizens, but I believe that they are necessary for our region to be competitive economically with other like areas of the country. Passenger rail service for persons living south of the James River has not been available since I was a much younger man, and the area has sufferered because of it. I hope that the first thing you do is extend passenger service to Norfolk/ Virginia Beach. Several times in the past few years, I have used the train from Newport News to Washington, and wondered how was this part of the country left out of Amtrak service when that system was first established. The idea of not providing it to the Southside of Hampton Roads is simply another in the backward thinking of the authorities in charge of our destiny. Some of that can be corrected by looking at a future with high speed rail in our future. Designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor as the Regional High Speed Rail Corridor is a good idea. People in our neighborhoods would use a convenient high-speed service into the northern transportation corridor.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>



Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
130-1	I want to let my thoughts to be known, regarding Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project: High Speed Rail on the Southside, conventional rail on the Peninsula.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
131-1	Rover Marine has been offering harbor and sightseeing cruises in downtown Norfolk since 1986. Over the years, one of our biggest challenges has been the increased difficulty our customers have reaching our place of business. Our visitation from The Peninsula and Williamsburg have declined steadily as backups and delays on I-64 have become more common. Even meeting planners as close as Richmond hesitate to bring groups to our area because of the transportation challenges they will face. As an organization we strongly support the HRPTO's regional position statement:Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor desgnated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I64 corridor. The HRTPO position is best reflected in a strengthen Alternative #1, which we strongly endorse.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
131-2	Improved rail transportation into our area will be an economic boon for the tourism industry - creating jobs and generating tax revenues for the state. The time is now to make high speed rail into Norfolk a reality.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



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133-1	I am retired so I no longer travel on business, but as I have relatives in the Washington, DC area, I would expect to use the proposed high-speed rail two or three times a year. Of the alternatives offered in the DEIS, I prefer Alternative 1 as the designated high-speed rail route for Hampton Roads. This will serve two-thirds of the population of this large metro area.To serve the other third of the Hampton Roads population, the Peninsula Amtrak should be upgraded to at least 79 mph with 90% on-time performance. This project should be an early priority for funding of conventional rail systems.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
133-2	Several aspects of the DEIS should be clarified:-The document contains outdated data and several inconsistencies that should be corrected before the final EIS is issued. I understand that HRTPO has provided a detailed critique for this purpose.- The final EIS should explicitly require that the designated high-speed route for Hampton Roads be equivalent in all respects to the long-term design for the main line of the Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor. Any interim construction should conform to and build toward the long-term design.- The long-term design in the final EIS should indicate clearly a plan for connecting the designated high-speed route to the SEHSR main line at Petersburg to provide through service, both north and south, without the need to change trains.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option. The EIS clearly states that connections to the SEHSR can be made at Petersburg.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The EIS clearly states that connections to the SEHSR can be made at Petersburg.
133-3	I also recommend that VDRPT view the "crescent" formed by high-speed rail from DC via Richmond and Petersburg to Norfolk as an integral system that should have priority for funding ahead of any extension ahead of any extension further south. This decision would apparently require suggesting a lower priority for the pending application for Tier II funding of the SEHSR Corridor from Richmond to Raleigh.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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135-10	Ch 5, 5-5 (Table 5-5) please provide more details concerning the "cumulative traffic impacts" of this project to the proposed downtown Newport News station.	TThe proposed downtown Newport News station was discussed as part of Alternatives 2a and 2b. The relocation of the existing Newport News station is not considered as part of this Tier I Final EIS.	The proposed downtown Newport News Station was discussed as part of Alternatives 2a and 2b. The relocation of the existing Newport News station is not considered as part of this Tier I Final EIS.
135-11	Ch 6, 6-22 (Section 6.4.1) The City supports a conclusion that brings high speed rail to Hampton Roads, increased passenger rail service to the Peninsula, creates the least environmental impact, and is the most cost-effective alternative.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
136-1	We join with the political leadership of each of our participating jurisdictions in endorsing the position of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization, which endorsed the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and to enhance intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor from Newport News to Richmond.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
137-1	My comments support the resolution adopted by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization on October 20, 2009. Specifically I support the recommendation to designate the Petersburg/Norfolk route as the high-speed rail (HSR) corridor at regular speeds of 110 mph or higher. However, my strongest recommendation is that the EIS be re-written in order to designate the establishment of a Virginia High Speed Crescent that would link Washington, Richmond, Petersburg, Suffolk, and Norfolk.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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137-2	The establishment of this crescent would recognize the geo-strategic importance of Hampton Roads to the Commonwealth and national security. Virginia's premier port area is recognized as the "world's finest natural harbor" and the region's concentration of federal assets ("Pentagon South") are compelling reasons for including Hampton Roads in the national and state mainline strategies. This would be similar to what has been planned for North Carolina's regions of lesser importance.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
137-3	I also endorse that the Virginia High Speed Crescent should be the state's highest funding priority, certainly before any consideration of SEHSR routes south of Petersburg. The long-term plan for the Southside HSR system should specify a level of engineering, quality of service, on-time performance and reliability equivalent to that of the SEHSR main line. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly document a federal commitment to assess options for eventual through service both north and south at junctions with the SEHSR main line at Petersburg, and the selection of the connecting train station in Petersburg should be made with this criterion in mind.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
137-5	The data used in calculating financial estimates for the various EIS alternatives should be updated. Much of the data in the EIS dates from 2004, excludes Defense Department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not likely to be built. Revised cost, cost-benefit analysis, and ridership estimates must be used in documents submitted to federal authorities and properly archived if our region is to compete effectively with other metro areas for limited federal funds.	There is considerable misunderstanding of the so-called "third crossing". The "third crossing" is in fact not a crossing at but a series of roadway improvements leading to the existing crossing in anticipation of a future third crossing. Moreover, the travel demand model took into account the difficulty and unreliability of the existing crossings to Newport News from Norfolk and added access time to the trips from Norfolk to Newport News train stations to account for the unreliability of travel times. Ridership estimates, costs and benefits will be reexamined in the project level Tier II EIS.	There is considerable misunderstanding of the so-called "third crossing". The "third crossing" is in fact not a crossing at all but a series of roadway improvements leading to the existing crossing in anticipation of a future third crossing. Moreover, the travel demand model took into account the difficulty and unreliability of the existing crossings to Newport News from Norfolk and added access time to the trips from Norfolk to Newport News train stations to account for the unreliability of travel times. Ridership estimates, costs and benefits will be reexamined in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
138-1	The Hampton roads region faces many long-term challenges in solving its myriad transportation system issues. Due to its large military presence, this region is a strategic geographical area in our country. I am in favor of continuous improvement to the transportation infrastructure throughout southeastern Virginia. Joint Forces Command is committed to supporting this effort in terms of defining our requirements to move men and material ensuring sustainment of our forces.	Comment noted. DRPT appreciates the support of the U.S. Marine Command.	DRPT appreciates the support of the U.S. Marine Command.
139-1	The ability to rapidly move people and goods and connect to the marketplace is fundamental to any region's competitiveness. That's why we support the position HRTPO, which is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative 1, which we strongly endorse.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
139-2	We believe that Alternative 1 will provide the maximum benefit for the region and the Commonwealth by serving a fertile untapped market on the Southside, where the majority of the region's population and jobs reside and where there is growing demand for another travel option to Washington DC while improving the existing Amtrak passenger rail service on the Peninsula.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
139-3	To get a sense of the potential demand for passenger rail service from the Southside to Washington DC, we, along with several of our private sector counterpart organizations, recently sent an email survey to our members asking them how many round-trips on average do they and their employees make from Hampton Roads to DC on a monthly basis and, if offered at a competitive cost and a Norfolk-to-Union Station travel time under four hours, would they consider traveling to DC by passenger rail. From that one email to our members and with no follow-up, we received more than 180 responses totaling 1,224 round trips on average per month. Almost without exception, the responses were positive.	Ridership estimates will be revisited in the project level Tier II EIS.	Ridership estimates will be revisited in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.

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139-4	The overwhelmingly positive response our ad hoc survey received is further borne out by the fact that, despite walk-up fares of over \$1,000 round trip, DC is one of Norfolk International Airport's top 10 travel destinations. We demonstrated demand for a more convenient, reliable, and affordable travel option from Southside Hampton Roads to Washington DC. The Brookings Institution recently opined that investment in high-speed rail can immediately achieve high ridership levels if a large market exists between points, citing the success of the recently opened Madrid-Barcelona high-speed rail corridor in Spain.	Ridership estimates will be revisited in the project level Tier II EIS.	Ridership estimates will be revisited in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
139-5	Such is the case with the Hampton Roads/Richmond/Washington DC corridor. Given Hampton Roads' unique market characteristics; the largest concentration of federal activities anywhere in the country outside DC and the associated number of contractors who travel to DC on a frequent basis; the region's proximity to the nation's capital; the suitability of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor to high-speed rail;	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
140-1	The DEIS does not explain how environmental resources will be evaluated and factored into the decision on the preferred alignment. This information should be included in the Final EIS.	The process by which the Preferred Alternative was chosen will be documented in the Tier I Final EIS. In Virginia, the Commonwealth Transportaiton Board (CTB) reviews the environmental document prepared and takes into consideration public input to make a selection of a Preferred Alternative.	The process by which the Preferred Alternative was chosen is documented in the Tier I Final EIS. Based on FRA and DRPT recommendations, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) reviews the environmental document prepared and takes into consideration public input to make a selection of a Preferred Alternative.
140-2	It would be useful if the Final EIS would clarify environmental documentation planned to follow the ROD (such as additional EISs or Environmental Assessments).	The current EIS is a program level Tier I document. The next step in the environmental impact investigations is to prepare a project level Tier II EIS document on the preferred alternative, which is enhanced conventional service on the Peninsula and higher speed 90 mph service on the Southside route.	The current EIS is a program level Tier I document. The next step in the environmental impact investigations is to prepare a project level Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative.
140-3	The DEIS should clearly explain how the build alternatives will meet the needs especially if the preferred alternative only has one route;	The preferred alternative is enhanced conventional service on the Peninsula and higher speed 90 mph service on the Southside route.	The Preferred Alternative is enhanced conventional service on the Peninsula and higher speed 90 mph service on the Southside route.

Comment No	Comment	Old Reponse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
140-5	While the DIES gives an overview of potential impacts it does not give the level of detail to provide an analysis of impacts. The project team should continue to avoid and minimize impacts from this project.	Comment noted. This is a Tier I program level EIS and the more detailed environmental impact analysis will be conducted as part of the follow-on project level Tier II EIS for the preferred Alternative which includes higher speed passenger rail service on the Southside and one additional conventional train on the Peninsula. There will likely be no impacts on the Peninsula due the addition of one more train at conventional speeds.	This is a Tier I program level EIS and the more detailed environmental impact analysis will be conducted as part of the follow-on project level Tier II Environmental Documentation for the preferred Alternative which includes higher speed passenger rail service on the Southside and one additional conventional train on the Peninsula. There will likely be no impacts on the Peninsula due the addition of one more train at conventional speeds.
140-6	The DEIS should provide details of mitigation for all impacts.	The project level Tier II EIS of the preferred Alternative 1 with higher speed passenger rail service on the Southside will examine environmental impacts in more detail.	The project level Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative will examine environmental impacts in more detail.
140-7	The DEIS should evaluate the impacts of all activities associated with this project including, access roads, storage areas, maintenance, parking, stations, etc.	The project level Tier II EIS of the preferred Alternative 1 with higher speed passenger rail service on the Southside will examine environmental impacts in more detail.	The project level Tier II Environmental Documentation of the preferred Alternative 1 with higher speed passenger rail service on the Southside will examine environmental impacts in more detail.
141-5	...wetland impacts given in the document are not usable for us in comparing the alternatives or in identifying which alternative may have less impact to aquatic resources.	Information provided in the Tier 1 DEIS enabled the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board to select a Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph). More detailed analysis and assessment of potential impacts will be included in the Tier II documentation of the Preferred Alternative.	Information provided in the Tier I Draft EIS enabled FRA and DRPRT to select a Preferred Alternative. More detailed analysis and assessment of potential impacts will be developed in the Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative.
141-6	Finding suitable areas for restoration of wetlands to compensate for forested wetlands at a 2:1 ratio in the impacted watersheds will likely be required. It will be extremely difficult to compensate for impacts to bottomland hardwoods and cypress-dominated communities, which occur in the corridors on both the Peninsula and the Southside, and every effort should be made to avoid impacting these important aquatic communities.	Comment noted. Every effort will be made to avoid and/or minimize impacts to wetlands during planning and design.	Every effort will be made to avoid and/or minimize impacts to wetlands during planning and design.
142-2	Population assumptions seem to be based on continued patterns of sprawl, and resulted in an emphasis on the entirely new Southside passenger route.	Comment noted. The Preferred Alternative advances higher speed rail passenger service on the Southside and enhances existing conventional services on the Peninsula.	The Preferred Alternative advances higher speed rail passenger service on the Southside and enhances existing conventional services on the Peninsula.

Comment No	Comment	Old Reponse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
142-4	Our evaluation of the discussion and the tables indicates that investing in Alternative 2b would offer the best overall package (without accounting for the unstudied tunnel)	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
142-5	The study acknowledges that there are more significant environmental effects on the Southside and higher costs because of the need to build more new infrastructure. The travel distance is longer and the study refers to more conflicts with Norfolk Southern freight.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
142-9	We are unsure if the Bowers Hill Station makes sense. It is locate near an area of severe congestion and doesn't offer the same advantages of a station located within a more urban, mixed-use and walkable fabric. Growth would be limited by the highways and the need to protect the Great Dismal Swamp.	Comment noted. Station locations will be subjected to additional detailed technical analysis in the project level Tier II EIS.	Station locations will be subjected to additional detailed technical analysis in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
143-4	Finally, there is minimal reference to the issue of mixed slow heavy freight and high speed passenger operations causing deterioration in corridor operating capacity. Adding passenger trains to any freight network requires a robust simulation of the route using a CSXT compatible model such as RTC, with benchmarking against actual operational data to fully test the impacts of the proposal on existing and future CSXT traffic. It has been a longstanding CSXT requirement to use such models to provide validation of the findings.	Comment noted. More detailed technical analysis will be conducted during the project level Tier II EIS including capacity modeling and train operation simulations. This detailed work will be carried out in cooperation with the host freight railroad.	More detailed technical analysis will be conducted during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation including capacity modeling and train operation simulations. This detailed work will be carried out in cooperation with the host freight railroad.



Comment No	Comment	Old Reponse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
143-7	...freight railroads should be compensated for the right-of-way and capacity consumed by passenger operations. In developing new service, the public sector should generally expect to bear the full cost associated with any new facilities required to exclusively accommodate passenger rail unless otherwise negotiated with CSXT.	There are instances and expectations that some passenger rail project improvement costs will be borne by the public sector. In 2009, CSX and DRPT executed a framework agreement where the parties agreed to identify projects or portions of projects where the freight operation and the intercity passenger rail operation could jointly benefit from the improvements made. Under this relationship and logic, DRPT and CSX have worked collaboratively on the construction of passenger and freight rail improvements on the CSX system primarily in the I-95 and U.S. 58/460 corridors. Many of the passenger project improvements made to date include a joint benefit to the freight carrier, for they will have the ability to use facilities during non-passenger train activities, and other projects provide a public benefit to the Commonwealth by removing freight from Virginia's highways. CSX and DRPT have an proven working relationship in this arena.	There are instances and expectations that some passenger rail project improvement costs will be borne by the public sector. In 2009, CSX and DRPT executed a framework agreement where the parties agreed to identify projects or portions of projects where the freight operation and the intercity passenger rail operation could jointly benefit from the improvements made. Under this relationship and logic, DRPT and CSX have worked collaboratively on the construction of passenger and freight rail improvements on the CSX system primarily in the I-95 and U.S. 58/460 corridors. Many of the passenger project improvements made to date include a joint benefit to the freight carrier, for they will have the ability to use facilities during non-passenger train activities, and other projects provide a public benefit to the Commonwealth by removing freight from Virginia's highways. CSX and DRPT have a proven working relationship in this arena.
143-10	There are several short segments of Class 3 track on the Peninsula subdivision and a pocket of Class 2 track near Main Street Station.	Comment noted. All tracks will be upgraded for higher speed passenger rail options at public expense.	All tracks will be upgraded for higher speed passenger rail options at public expense.
143-11	The DEIS does not consider the impacts of the added passenger traffic on adjacent CSXT subdivisions and on CSXT's terminals, such as Richmond's Acca Yard, and on the route between Acca Yard and the proposed CSXT-NS connection to nS at Petersburg. Any passenger trains operating between the New York-Washington area and the Richmond Main Street Station or Petersburg areas flow through the CSXT Acca Yard. The proposed passenger operation will use that critical segment of the CSXT I-95 corridor, an already capacity constrained segment, to reach the NS route to the Southside. CSXT is deeply concerned that, without significant infrastructure improvements to offset the impacts, the additional passenger traffic will result in significant delays to existing passenger and freight operations.	Comment noted. All necessary infrastructure improvements needed to move passenger trains through highly congested segments of the freight railroad will be investigated as part of the project level Tier II EIS and future designs. The host freight railroad will be consulted early and continuously through this planning and design process and will be party to all investigations and decisions regarding infrastructure improvements.	All necessary infrastructure improvements needed to move passenger trains through highly congested segments of the freight railroad will be investigated as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation and future designs. The host freight railroad will be consulted early and continuously through this planning and design process and will be party to all investigations and decisions regarding infrastructure improvements.



Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
143-13	...is it evident that some level of infrastructure improvements will be required to simply improve on-time performance of even the Status Quo Alternative...regardless of which alternative is selected, capacity improvements for passenger rail reliability on the Peninsula will be required.	Comment noted and agreed.	Comment noted.
143-15	The Newport News Downtown Rail Station proposed as part of Alternatives 2a and 2b should be planned on the north side of CSXT tracks to avoid significant passenger rail train delays caused by conflict with CSXT's coal operation.	Comment noted. More detailed investigations on station location will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II EIS.	More detailed investigations on station location will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
143-16	However, to provide sufficient capacity to introduce new passenger service from both the SEHSR corridor and Southside Hampton Roads, the single track James River bridge leading into Main Street Station must also be double tracked.	Comment noted. This will be examined in more detail in the project level Tier II EIS.	This will be examined in more detail in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
143-17	Necessary capacity enhancements from Petersburg to the S line connection at Centralia - a new third tack with thirty foot lateral separation from the existing freight track- are similarly addressed in the SEHSR plan.	Comment noted and assumes as part of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project.	Under this EIS, the connection improvement is assumed to be part of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project (not SEHSR). The connection improvement would therefore be studied in the Tier II Environmental Documentation to be developed for the Preferred Alternative; or provided Tier II Environmental Documentation is developed for this segment, is conducted and approved, the Tier II SEHSR will prevail.
143-18	The 2002 Richmond to South Hampton Roads High-Speed Rail Feasibility Study discussed several alternatives for this connection, but no schematic or drawing showing the proposed design for the "North Collier connection" has been generated to aid in developing a required arrangement.	The SEHSR Project prepared the North Collier Connection asp art of the Tier II EIS.	The North Collier Connection will be analyzed as part of the SESHRS Tier II EIS.
143-19	Further, any capacity improvements in or around Collier Yard should be designed to accommodate future development by CSXT or other entities to allow for enhanced freight operations and correspond with advancement of the Southeast High Speed Rail corridor.	Comment noted. CSXT will be a party to all investigations and technical study in the project level Tier II EIS.	CSXT will be a party to all investigations and technical study in the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
144-2	...(Alternative 1) the Drat EIS suggests that 90-110 mph passenger service may be made compatible with high tonnage freight service on the Norfolk Southern line between Petersburg and Norfolk by reactivating middle tracks and/or reactivating or extending passing sidings. Norfolk Southern does not believe these are viable solutions. Passenger train service above conventional speeds (i.e., in excess of 79 mph) requires special safety equipment, maintenance practices outside of Norfolk Southern's experience, and track geometry incompatible with heavy tonnage operations.	Comment noted. FRA and DRPT will work with NS to resolve issues regarding interoperability, track geometry and related safety issues as part of the project level Tier II EIS process.	FRA and DRPT will work with NS to resolve issues regarding interoperability, track geometry and related safety issues as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation. 90 mph will be the maximum operating speed.
144-3	....(Alternative 2a) the Draft EIS suggests reactivating middle tracks or reinstalling or extending passing sidings to create more passing capacity. Norfolk Southern believes the former center tracks and sidings are largely obsolete and could not be easily integrated into its current operations.	Comment noted. FRA and DRPT will work with NS to resolve issues regarding interoperability, track geometry and related safety issues as part of the project level Tier II EIS process.	FRA and DRPT will work with NS to resolve issues regarding interoperability, track geometry and related safety issues as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation process.
144-6	Section 3.5.5, the Draft EIS mentions the possibility of creating "quiet zones" where train horns cannot be sounded absent exceptional circumstances. Norfolk Southern notes that the process for creating quiet zones is dictated by federal regulation, and we reserve the right to comment on any specific quiet zone proposal. In general, while quiet zones may mitigate noise impacts, they do not always facilitate safer rail operations. Each application for a quiet zone must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and must comply with federal safety requirements.	Comment noted. DRPT will work cooperatively with NS, FRA and other regulatory agencies to mitigate the noise of more frequent train horn soundings either through the use of quiet zones or grade crossing elimination.	DRPT will work cooperatively with NS, FRA and other regulatory agencies to mitigate the noise of more frequent train horn soundings either through the use of quiet zones or grade crossing elimination.
144-7	Norfolk Southern is unaware of any environmental conditions on its Norfolk line that are the result of "current and historic rail operations, as indicated in Section 3.13.3. We suggest that this item be reordered in the list of influences in Section 3.13.3 as its current placement at the top of the list is inappropriate.	Comment noted. However, it is important to note that current and historic railroad operations may be later identified as a potential source of on and off-site contamination.	It is important to note that current and historic railroad operations may be later identified as a potential source of on and off-site contamination.

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144-8	If access to Norfolk Sothern's property is needed for this work (or any other work required in the preparation of the project level EIS), a fully executed right of entry agreement acceptable to Norfolk Southern will be required.	Comment noted and agreed.	Comment noted.
144-11	The project level EIS should evaluate the impact to freight rail operations of the proposed passenger rail service, including operational conflicts during construction, in order to ensure the continued safety of operations and the protection of the public. In addition, effects on rail structures, such as support and erosion, should be evaluated.	Comment noted and agreed.	Comment noted.
144-13	The discussion in Section 4.3.2 could leave readers with the impression that the cost of maintaining tracks owned by a freight railroad and hosting passenger service are borne entirely by the freight railroad. While the freight rail would perform the actual maintenance of its tracks, the freight railroad would expect some portion of the cost of that maintenance to be borne by the passenger operator.	Comment noted and agreed. This will be the subject of any contract agreement between DRPT, the passenger service operator and the host railroads.	This will be the subject of any contract agreement between DRPT, the passenger service operator and the host railroads.
144-14	According to Section 4.3.1, the estimated capital costs are derived from a 2005 report and adjusted to 2008 dollars. We believe the 2005 report was essentially an update of an earlier 2002 report. Norfolk Southern has previously questioned the basis for costs appearing in the 2002 and 2005 reports. The cost estimates in the Draft EIS may be based upon conditions and assumptions that were made eight years ago and were not even valid at the time.	Comment noted. The cost estimates used for the program level Tier I EIS were systematically developed using consistently defined units of measure, unit costs and costing techniques across all alternatives considered. Consequently, DRPT and FRA believe the cost estimates were sufficient to make comparative judgments regarding the various alternatives for purposes of route and speed selections. More detailed cost estimates will be prepared in conjunction with the host railroads based on more detailed capacity and engineering analysis during the project level Tier II documentation.	The cost estimates used for the program level Tier I EIS were systematically developed using consistently defined units of measure, unit costs and costing techniques across all alternatives considered. Consequently, DRPT and FRA believe the cost estimates were sufficient to make comparative judgments regarding the various alternatives for purposes of route and speed selections. More detailed cost estimates will be prepared in conjunction with the host railroads based on more detailed capacity and engineering analysis during the project level Tier II documentation.

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
145-1	WHEREAS the DEIS lacks specificity with respect to the long-term design of the designated HSR route for Hampton Roads, including the nature of any interim construction projects, the location of a connecting station in Petersburg, and options for providing through service both north and south at Petersburg;	The location of the connecting Petersburg Station is the subject of the project level Tier II EIS of the SEHSR project.	The general station location proposed for the Petersburg area has been the subject of the SEHSR environmental documentation. However, selection of an exact station location will be the subject of subsequent environmental documentation prepared by the project proponent. Norfolk trains would stop at the existing Petersburg station.
145-4	WHEREAS the supporting data in the DEIS is now outdated and lacks Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security input crucial to determining the priority of planning, funding, and construction of the project;	Comment noted. More detailed and current analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II EIS to be conducted on the preferred Alternative 1, which includes higher speed 90 mph service in the Southside route and one additional conventional speed train on the Peninsula.	More detailed and current analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation to be conducted on the preferred Alternative 1, which includes higher speed 90 mph service in the Southside route and one additional conventional speed train on the Peninsula.
145-8	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of FHR urges that state and federal planning be undertake to prepare a long-term design for the Hampton Roads HSR system that:(a) incorporates it into Virginia’s Statewide Rail Plan for the SEHSR Corridor at the same level of engineering as the SEHSR main line;(b) provides for and ensures that interim stages of construction will be compatible with and will contribute to the long-term design;(c) locates a Petersburg station where it will allow the most rapid transit onto the SEHSR main line, going both north and south, without the need to change trains; and (d) includes a commitment to study an eventual loop connector from Suffolk through Weldon to Raleigh;	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
145-9	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that FHR proposes that Virginia authorities concentrate on seeking approval and funding first for the Virginia HSR crescent from Washington through Alexandria, Richmond, Petersburg and Suffolk to Norfolk while considering funding of interstate connectors to points further south as a secondary priority, or in short, invest in Virginia first;	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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146-2	<p>...we are disappointed that there are no accommodations for human powered facilities i.e. rails with trails...Active transportation –biking and walking- will be an important and fundamental mode of transportation in Virginia’s future. Rail corridors provide excellent avenues for trails to accommodate walkers and bikers. These facilities also provide feeders to train stations avoiding the traffic and parking issues associated with passengers driving to train stations. Providing alternative transportation to stations works very well in European countries and we should use the examples of the Netherlands, France and Germany and learn from their best practices. The VA Biking Federation feels that as tax dollars are used to fund rail corridor expansions and enhancements, rails with trails should be incorporated in all projects unless extenuating circumstances prohibit this. Rails with trails are consistent with state policy and provide transportation alternatives as well as environmental, health and recreational to our taxpayers.</p>	<p>Trails and other pedestrian facilities can be examined as part of the alternatives definition and development during the project level Tier II EIS for the preferred Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Trails and other pedestrian facilities can be examined as part of the alternatives definition and development during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation for the preferred Alternative 1.</p>

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
146-3	Virginia transportation policy clearly supports the VBF's position. As stated in VTRANS 2025:Improve connections.Projects that connect travel modes will receive increased consideration in modal plans and funding decisions.Think multimodally.Transit, pedestrian, bike and rail-friendly design features will be incorporated, as appropriate, whenever there is a major reconstruction or new construction.Multimodal accommodations are not addressed in the proposed project. According to numerous studies, including those by the Federal Highway Association, Rails to Trails Conservancy and even the recently completed House Document 404 (DRPT, DGIF, DCR) report, rails with trails, when properly designed, provide safe, viable transportation facilities. They benefit our citizens and communities and make sense in a world of increasing energy costs, CO2 emissions and health issues.Citizens across the Commonwealth as well as the United States support our position that rails with trails should be included in all major upgrade corridors. I would encourage DRPT to modify their proposal and recommend the feasibility of rails with trails along the corridor. I would also encourage DRPT to insure that the issue of human powered accommodations be addressed in similar studies moving forward.	Trails and other pedestrian facilities can be examined as part of the alternatives definition and development during the project level Tier II EIS for the preferred Alternative 1.	Trails and other pedestrian facilities can be examined as part of the alternatives definition and development during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation for the preferred Alternative 1.
147-1	I support Alternative 1 of the "Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project" EIS. This option best addresses the unique nature of the Hampton roads region which is separated by water and 400 years of tradition. ...Alternative 1 is closest to the resolution adopted on Oct 30, 2009 by the HRTPO.	Comment noted. More detailed and current analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II EIS to be conducted on the preferred Alternative 1, which includes higher speed 90 mph service in the Southside route and one additional conventional	More detailed and current analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation to be conducted on the preferred Alternative 1, which includes higher speed 90 mph service in the Southside route and one additional conventional train on the Peninsula Route.
147-4	Alternative 1 makes connections at Norfolk's Harbor Park with the Region's light rail system (under construction), ferries, buses, and highways which make for easy inter-regional access.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Comment No	Comment	Old Reponse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
148-1	The CRTB and the VDRPT need to endorse the Resolution adopted by the HRTPO which unanimously voted for Alternative 1, and unanimously asked for TRUE HIGH SPEED RAIL.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
148-2	This EIS needs to be UPDATED of all its errors and antiquated information, such as the double accounting of cost for Alternative 1 on Petersburg to Richmond, the factoring in of the third crossing, and so on.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
148-3	Hampton Roads is the largest metropolitan area directly on the Atlantic Ocean between greater NY and south Florida, and the majority of its population, 1.1 million people, live on the Southside, hence the obvious correct choice is Alternative 1.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
148-4	Hampton Roads is the second most important MSA in the nation in terms of national security and defense readiness, so THIS vital statistic alone should place Hampton Roads on the top of the list when it comes to future High Speed Rail funding.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
148-6	For the HSR line, it is important that it be TRUE HSR design and not "higher". It needs to be 110mph, or more, from the get-go.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



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149-1	HRT's comments on the Tier 1 report reflect the HRTPO's Resolution 2009-05 that endorsed the following:• Designation of a "High-Speed Rail" corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110mph; and• In conjunction with high-speed rail corridor, the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/Amtrak/I-64 corridor. In addition, HRT offers the following specific comments for the Richmond to Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project- Tier 1 DEIS:	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
149-3	ES-11: Please provide additional information regarding potential land use impacts for the proposed station at Bowers Hill. Consideration should be given to place this station in a larger employment and population center.	Station locations will be revisited during the next phase of project development, which is the project level Tier II EIS.	Station locations will be revisited during the next phase of project development, which is the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
149-4	ES-11: Section 2.2.3.1 states that in Norfolk, "existing downtown parking facilities could be used." Where is this parking anticipated to be available? Parking availability within the downtown core is limited. Page 3-21: Please clarify the parking availability in Section 3.2.5.2. While the number of parking spaces available in the downtown area was mentioned, there was no discussion of availability of these spaces. The introduction of Light Rail Service and the subsequent demand on parking was not discussed.	Existing downtown parking spaces in Norfolk is assumed to be near the baseball stadium. More detailed analysis regarding specific parking facilities will be conducted during the next phase of project development, which is the project level Tier II EIS.	Existing downtown parking spaces in Norfolk are assumed to be near the baseball stadium. More detailed analysis regarding specific parking facilities will be conducted during the next phase of project development, which is the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
149-5	ES-33: In the final bullet under the Comparative Evaluation of Impacts, the "cost effectiveness index" is discussed. Please specify the methodology that was used to determine the cost effectiveness. This subject has a specific definition within the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts process, so it should be clarified what methodology was used in the cost-effectiveness calculations.	The "cost-effectiveness index" for the Draft EIS was specifically developed for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project and is NOT defined the same as the FTA New Starts process. The CEI is the annualized capital costs plus annual operating costs.	The "cost-effectiveness index" for the Draft EIS was specifically developed for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project and is NOT defined the same as the FTA New Starts process. The CEI is the annualized capital costs plus annual operating costs.



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149-6	Page 1-19: In section 1.4.3 Multimodal System development, it is stated that "local transit services and better taxi and rental car facilities must accompany any planned improvements in rail passenger service". There is no mention or description of current transit services currently available and the Norfolk Tide, the starter line for light rail transit for the Hampton Roads region. The multimodal connection this project will provide will be vital toward a multimodal connection for high speed rail to the rest of the region.	The Draft EIS does make reference to the Norfolk LRT and will terminate in Norfolk near the LRT station at Harbor Park baseball stadium.	The Draft EIS does make reference to the Norfolk LRT and Southside rail service which will terminate in Norfolk near the LRT station at Harbor Park baseball stadium.
149-7	Page 2-4: More specific analysis is needed to determine if all grade crossings either need to be eliminated or be grade separated.	This more detailed technical analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II EIS.	This more detailed technical analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
149-12	Page 5-4: The Peninsula Rapid Transit Project is listed to be implemented by 2015. After thorough analysis, the Light Rail Transit Alternative did not meet the cost effectiveness requirements under the FTA New Starts program, so it is not active at this time. Therefore, the completion date should be revised to 2018. Please clarify what kinds of projects can be included in the cumulative effects categories. Can proposed projects or those under study but not approved be characterized under this category? Please revise the Tide in Norfolk scheduled opening to 2011.	Correction made in FEIS. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations require that potential cumulative effects of other related projects be taken into account. The regulations specifically required.	Correction made in Tier I Final EIS. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations require that potential cumulative and indirect effects of other related projects be taken into account.
150-1	The Virginia Chapter (of the Sierra Club) does not believe the list of alternatives considered is adequate and the process by which they were selected was inadequate at best, and possibly improper. We are not aware that there was ever a scoping phase for this project as is required by NEPA. The public needs to be able to put forth their ideas openly and with as much information as possible so they can contribute to the planning process.	The scoping meetings were properly advertised in the Federal Register, local newspapers of general circulation and were conducted in 2004. Chapter 7 of the Draft EIS outlines the extensive public outreach program conducted as part of the preparation of the Draft EIS.	The scoping meetings were properly advertised in the Federal Register, local newspapers of general circulation and were conducted in 2004. Chapter 7 of the Tier I Final EIS outlines the extensive public outreach program conducted as part of the preparation of the Draft EIS.

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150-5	Such a new option would go much further in addressing the FTA's revised funding guidelines for new starts. In addition to cost and time saved which the DEIS discusses, future funding decisions will also be based on livability issues such as economic development and environmental benefits. Interconnecting more cities with transit to maximize ridership and permitting quality urban development at critical stations is a plus under the new guidelines.	The sponsoring federal agency is the FRA and not FTA. The FTA New Starts guidance does not apply. The FRA uses a benefit/cost methodology to determine the viability of a project. The benefit/cost calculations will be prepared during the project level Tier II EIS.	The lead federal agency for the project is the FRA and not FTA. The FTA New Starts guidance does not apply. The FRA uses a benefit/cost methodology to determine the viability of a project. The benefit/cost calculations will be prepared during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
150-6	While we wish to advance an option for a tunnel transit crossing, our main concern is for the process that should have permitted this proposal, and possibly other ideas, to come forward at an earlier time according to the procedures outlined in NEPA. We ask that the department establish a scoping phase or at a minimum, that the tunnel option be included among the others for evaluation and public discussion.	The scoping meetings were properly advertised in the Federal Register, local newspapers of general circulation and were conducted in 2004. Chapter 7 of the Draft EIS outlines the extensive public outreach program conducted as part of the preparation of the Draft EIS.	The scoping meetings were properly advertised in the Federal Register, local newspapers of general circulation and were conducted in 2004. Chapter 7 of the Tier I Final EIS outlines the extensive public outreach program conducted as part of the preparation of the EIS.
151-1	The City of Portsmouth endorses (1) extension of high-speed rail service from Washington DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, (2) designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and (3) enhancing the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
152-1	I am writing in my capacity as Chairman of the Downtown Norfolk Council to voice our strong support for the high speed rail link to the Southside as envisioned in Alternative #1 of the DEIS. Downtown's corporations, businesses and property owners have expressed overwhelming support for this alternative and the enhancements outlined in the resolution of the HRTPO. It is essential for Norfolk and South Hampton Roads to have the High Speed Rail connection outlined in Alternative #1 and we urge your approval of an enhanced Alternative #1.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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153-1	Alternative 2b would have the least impact on resources at Petersburg National Battlefield;	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
153-2	The Southside/NS route would have the greatest impact on the resources of Petersburg National Battlefield. The historic battlefields would see a visual, as well as, audible noise impact to our visitors due to the connection from the CSXT "A" line to the Southside/NS route occurring at the northeast quadrant of the off grade railroad crossing between CSXT and Norfolk Southern just north of Collier Yard in South Petersburg.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
153-3	however, if another alternative was adopted as the preferred, mitigation could be possible with screening and/or enhanced study of the affected area for historical research and interpretation for the public.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
154-1	Issuance of the DEIS is one of many critical steps in a federally prescribed press for determining the Commonwealth and the Hampton Roads Region's Preferred Alternative and issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD).It is critically important that the Hampton Roads Region be directly connected to the emerging national high-speed rail network to ensure our region's continued economic competitiveness. To that end of October 30, 2009 the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) unanimously adopted a resolution endorsing the designation of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 Corridor as the "High Speed Rail Corridor's serving the Hampton Roads Region.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
154-6	The DEIS did not evaluate high speed rail option for the Southside	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph. The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the speed option for Alternative 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
154-8	Frequency and speed for high speed rail was not evaluated	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph. The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the speed option for Alternative 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
154-9	Alternatives were defined arbitrarily	The EIS process commences with agency and public scoping meetings, which are documented in Chapter 7 of the Draft EIS. Project alternatives were carefully defined and vetted by public agencies including HRTPO and the City of Norfolk.	The EIS process commences with agency and public scoping meetings, which are documented in Chapter 7 of the Tier I Draft EIS. Project alternatives were carefully defined and vetted by public agencies including HRTPO and the City of Norfolk.
154-10	No Southside high speed rail option	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 90 mph.
154-12	Corrective action: requires a new travel demand forecast	Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II EIS.	Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
154-23	Corrective action: a new option for the Southside should consider high speed train equipment	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph. The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the speed option for Alternative 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
154-33	Conventional trains were assumed	Comment noted. Conventional trains are the preferred technology for emergent high speed rail.	Conventional trains are the preferred technology for emergent high speed rail.

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
154-35	New trains with improved amenities are required to maximize benefits	Comment noted. This is an emergent high speed rail project utilizing conventional equipment.	This is an emergent high speed rail project utilizing conventional equipment.
154-40	Corrective action: the demand forecasts needs to be redone for the Tier I Draft EIS mainly to develop a high speed option.	No changes are needed for the Tier I Final EIS for theRichmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. New travel dmenad estimates will be conducted for the project level Tier II EIS.	No changes are needed for the Tier I Final EIS for the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. New travel demand estimates will be conducted for the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
154-41	No capacity mitigation means understated capital costs	The DRPT, Amtrak and CSXT prepared extensive capacity simulations north of Richmond and allocated 7 additional train operating slots to the Richmond/Hampton Roads project. The track capacity between Richmond and Washington, DC restricts the number of trains in this segment of the line and consequently limits the number of trains that can be added to the SEHSR and Richmond/Hampton Roads services. The number of long distance and SEHSR passenger trains coming from Florida and North Carolina will co-mingle with Richmond/Hampton Roads passenger trains and existing and projected freight train traffic north of Richmond. Utilizing stringline diagrams (appropriate for a Tier I level analysis), track and other infrastructure investments were developed to assure freight railroad fluidity. More detailed cpacity analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II EIS.	The DRPT, Amtrak and CSXT prepared extensive capacity simulations north of Richmond and allocated 7 additional train operating slots to the Richmond/Hampton Roads project. The track capacity between Richmond and Washington, DC restricts the number of trains in this segment of the line and consequently limits the number of trains that can be added to the SEHSR and Richmond/Hampton Roads services. The number of long distance and SEHSR passenger trains coming from Florida and North Carolina will co-mingle with Richmond/Hampton Roads passenger trains and existing and projected freight train traffic north of Richmond. Utilizing stringline diagrams (appropriate for a Tier I level analysis), track and other infrastructure investments were developed to assure freight railroad fluidity. More detailed capacity analysis will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
154-44	It is essential to assess capacity to ensure adequate infrastructure is provided and that measures of efficiency and cost effectiveness are properly measured.	Comment noted. More detailed capacity analysis will be conducted in cooperation with the affected freight railroads as part of the project level Tier II EIS.	More detailed capacity analysis will be conducted in cooperation with the affected freight railroads as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
154-45	Grade crossing treatments exceeds FRA requirements	Comment noted. The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph.	The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph, however the rail service will not exceed 90 mph with the Preferred Alternative.
154-46	Grade crossing treatments exceeds FRA requirements and unreasonably increases Southside capital costs.	Comment noted. The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph.	The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph, however the rail service will not exceed 90 mph with the Preferred Alternative.

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154-47	At \$5-6 million per mile, the capital costs look overstated due to unnecessary grade separations.	Comment noted. The freight railroads are demanding selaed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph. However, this comment contradicts the prior comment requiring dedicated tracks, which will cost substantially more than the average cost indicated in the Draft EIS.	The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph, however speeds would not exceed 90 mph with the Preferred Alternative.
154-48	The DEIS does not treat environmental impacts appropriately.	Comment noted. The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph.	The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph, however the rail service will not exceed 90 mph with the Preferred Alternative.
154-49	Overly conservative treatment of grade crossings increases Southside grade crossing more than the Peninsula.	Comment noted. The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph.	The freight railroads are demanding sealed corridors at speeds in excess of 90 mph, however the rail service will not exceed 90 mph with the Preferred Alternative.
154-50	DEIS does not reflect freight railroad requirement for dedicated track.	The Secretary of Transportation determines whether dedicated tracks are required.	A determination for dedicated freight railroad tracks would be discussed and decided by both the host freight railroad and the US Secretary of Transportation. Dedicated freight railroad tracks were not part of the analysis for this Tier I EIS.
154-51	DEIS uses confrontational language	FRA inserted this language to remind the freight railroads of existing law.	Comment noted.
154-53	Environmental considerations should be evaluated for the dedicated track solution.	The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 with a 90 mph speed option. No dedicated track solutions will be studied.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS. No dedicated track solutions will be studied.
154-54	Electrification discussion is probably wrong	Comment noted. The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project utilizing conventional technology at speeds up to 90 mph.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project utilizing conventional technology at speeds up to 90 mph.
154-57	Wrong evaluation criteria were used for financial and economic analysis.	Comment noted. The financial and economic analysis was appropriate for a program level Tier I EIS. FRA reviewed the Draft EIS and circulated it for public comment. Therefore, the financial and economic analysis conducted for this level of analysis was "approved" by FRA and found to be appropriate.	The financial and economic analysis was appropriate for a program level Tier I EIS. FRA reviewed the Draft EIS and circulated it for public comment. Therefore, the financial and economic analysis conducted for this level of analysis was "approved" by FRA and found to be appropriate.

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154-59	Revenues and ridership were miscalculated.	Comment noted. The ridership and revenue forecasts prepared for the program level Tier I EIS were appropriate for this level of analysis and were assessed adequately to discern comparative differences among alternatives being considered.	The ridership and revenue forecasts prepared for the program level Tier I EIS were appropriate for this level of analysis and were assessed adequately to discern comparative differences among alternatives being considered.
154-60	User and non-user benefits were not adequately assessed.	Comment noted. The ridership and revenue forecasts prepared for the program level Tier I EIS were appropriate for this level of analysis and were assessed adequately to discern comparative differences among alternatives being considered.	The ridership and revenue forecasts prepared for the program level Tier I EIS were appropriate for this level of analysis and were assessed adequately to discern comparative differences among alternatives being considered.
154-61	Consumer surplus was not calculated.	Comment noted. The ridership and revenue forecasts prepared for the program level Tier I EIS were appropriate for this level of analysis and were assessed adequately to discern comparative differences among alternatives being considered.	The ridership and revenue forecasts prepared for the program level Tier I EIS were appropriate for this level of analysis and were assessed adequately to discern comparative differences among alternatives being considered.
154-62	Environmental benefits were not adequately assessed.	Comment noted. The ridership and revenue forecasts prepared for the program level Tier I EIS were appropriate for this level of analysis and were assessed adequately to discern comparative differences among alternatives being considered.	The program level Tier I EIS assessed the vehicle trip reduction potential, air quality, land use and economic benefits that could result from the different alternatives.
154-66	Lack of public outreach	Comment noted. See Chapter 7 for a complete discussion on public outreach for the project.	See Chapter 7 of the Tier I Final EIS for a complete discussion on public outreach for the project.
154-68	The Draft EIS should identify specific opportunities to obtain CEs and FONSI in an effort to simplify or avoid the requirement for a Tier II EIS.	The FRA is the sponsoring federal agency. Current FRA guidance requires the completion of NEPA documentation, which could include Ces for a program of projects that do not include dedicated track or go outside of existing rights-of-way. The strategies for environmental clearances will differ for the enhanced passenger rail service on the Peninsula and higher speed service on the Southside as defined by Alternative 1. The Tier II EIS will be required for the Southside project elements.	The FRA is the lead federal agency. Current FRA guidance requires the completion of NEPA documentation, which could include Categorical Exclusions (CEs) for a program of projects that do not include dedicated track or go outside of existing rights-of-way. The strategies for environmental clearances will differ for the enhanced passenger rail service on the Peninsula and higher speed service on the Southside as defined by Alternative 1. A Tier II Environmental Documentation will be required for the Southside project elements.
154-71	Operating costs need to be developed on a bottom up basis.	Comment noted. Operating cost estimates are sufficient for a program level Tier I EIS analysis.	Operating cost estimates are sufficient for a program level Tier I EIS analysis.



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154-73	Capacity mitigations options are too narrow.	More detailed capacity simulations and engineering analysis will be prepared during the project level Tier II EIS in cooperation with the affected freight railroads.	More detailed capacity simulations and engineering analysis will be prepared during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation in cooperation with the affected freight railroads.
154-74	All environmental benefits estimated in the Draft EIS need to be reviewed and revised inline with more appropriate demand forecasts.	More detailed benefit/cost analysis will be prepared during the project level Tier II EIS.	More detailed benefit/cost analysis will be prepared during the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
155-1	The VMRC states that should construction activities result in impacts to State-owned submerged lands and/or tidal wetlands, permits from the VMRC and or the local wetlands boards may be required. In addition, mitigation measures for any unavoidable impacts should be considered as part of the future evaluation process. for additional information regarding impacts to subaqueous lands and/or tidal wetlands, contact the VMRC.	Comment noted. FRA and DRPT will coordinate future permitting requirements with appropriate local, state and federal agencies. Mitigation for unavoidable impacts will be provided as required.	FRA and DRPT will coordinate future permitting requirements with appropriate local, state and federal agencies. Mitigation for unavoidable impacts will be provided as required.
155-2	DEQ's Tidewater Regional Office (TRO) and Piedmont Regional Office (PRO) state that several of the proposed alternatives will have the potential to impact significant acreage of surface waters and/or wetlands. If surface waters, including wetlands, are impacted, then a VWP may be required. The DEQ TRO recommends that the Tier II EIS incorporate more exact quantitative data regarding the quantity of wetlands within the travel corridors. More detailed quantitative assessments would be supportive of the qualitative assessments that have been documented in the Tier I Draft EIS.	Comment noted. During Tier II analysis and documentation, more detailed evaluations will occur for the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph). More specific quantities of potential wetland impacts will be provided.	The Tier II Environmental Documentation will provide a more detailed analysis of the Preferred Alternative. More specific quantities of potential wetland impacts will be provided.
155-3	...DEQ recommends that all efforts should be taken to ensure that surface waters, including wetlands, are not adversely impacted. DRPT must comply with Section 404(b)(1) guidelines of the Clean Water Act and with the Commonwealth's wetland mitigation policies.	Comment noted. DRPT will comply with all local, state and federal regulatory requirements pertaining to surface waters, including wetlands.	DRPT will comply with all local, state and federal regulatory requirements pertaining to surface waters, including wetlands.
155-4	...DEQ recommends that impact to surface waters, including wetlands, be avoided to the maximum extent practicable...	Comment noted. As planning and design for the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph) progresses, surface waters and wetland areas identified during the Tier I EIS will used as a guide to avoid and minimize impacts to surface waters and wetlands.	As planning and design for the Preferred Alternative progresses, surface waters and wetland areas identified during the Tier I EIS will be used as a guide to avoid and minimize impacts to surface waters and wetlands.



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155-5	localities within the study area are subject to requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. However, the proposed rail project would be considered exempt under Section 9 VAC 10-20-150 B 1 of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations, provided it is conducted in accordance with Erosion and Sediment Control Law and Stormwater Management Act; an erosion and sediment control plan and a storm water management plan approved by the Virginia DCR; or local water quality protection criteria at least as stringent as the above state requirements.	Comment noted. DRPT will comply with all local and state regulatory requirements pertaining to the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.	DRPT will comply with all local and state regulatory requirements pertaining to the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.
155-6	...portions of the proposed alternatives may be located within ozone maintenance areas and emission control areas for the VOCs and Nox, which are contributors to ozone pollution.Future documents should address all applicable regulatory requirements for air emissions due to the construction and operation of any proposed facilities, including 9 VAC 5-50-60 et seq. for open burning. Also, permits may be required for any fuel burning equipment.	Comment noted. More detailed air quality analysis will be conducted, as appropriate, during the Tier II documentation of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph).	More detailed air quality analysis will be conducted, as appropriate, during the Tier II Environmental Documentation of the Preferred Alternative.
155-7	The DEQ-Waste Division states that the scope of the proposed project is extensive. For each area in Virginia where any work is to take place, the applicant should conduct an environmental investigation on or near the property to identify any solid or hazardous waste sites or issues before work can commence. The investigation should include a search of waste-related databases. In addition, the DEQ Tidewater Regional Office concurs that additional information on hazardous materials and contaminants in the proposed project areas must be developed to fully evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed rail corridor. The removal, relocation or closure of any regulated above ground or underground petroleum storage tank(s); installation of any aboveground petroleum storage tanks (>660 gallons) as part of the construction phase; and evidence of petroleum release must be reported to the appropriate DEQ Regional Office.	Comment noted. More detailed analysis of known and potential hazardous waste sites will be conducted as part of the Tier II documentation of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph).	More detailed analysis of known and potential hazardous waste sites will be conducted as part of the Tier II Environmental Documentation of the Preferred Alternative.

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155-8	DCR-DNH states that it cannot select a preferred alternative at this time, since the Tier I Draft EIS does not provide enough information to determine impacts to natural heritage resources for any of the build alternatives. Each alternative has the potential to impact natural heritage resources depending on the areas impacted outside of the existing right-of-way. However, once more information becomes available, DCR will be able to identify potential impacts and at that time select a preferred alternative.	As part of the Tier I DEIS process, the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected a Preferred Alternative to carry into Tier II documentation and analysis. The Preferred Alternative for subsequent evaluation is Alternative 1 at 90 mph. DRPT will coordinate with DCR-DNH upon initiation of the Tier II documentation to minimize and/or avoid impacts to natural heritage resources.	As part of the Tier I DEIS process, FRA and DRPT selected a Preferred Alternative to carry into Tier II documentation and analysis. The Preferred Alternative for subsequent evaluation is Alternative 1 at 90 mph. DRPT will coordinate with DCR-DNH upon initiation of the Tier II documentation to minimize and/or avoid impacts to natural heritage resources.
155-9	DCR is concerned about construction impacts to aquatic species at bridge crossings, as well as in previously undisturbed areas, especially wetlands. The Peninsula/CSXT travel corridor intersects the Elko West Conservation Site (biodiversity significance ranking of B2- very high significance) and coastal plain depression ponds are located along the Southside/NS Route. Natural heritage resources at Elko West are: Cuthbert turtlehead, Swamp-pink; New Jersey rush; Piedmont meadow-rue; Short-beaked Baldrush. Possible rare plant and animal species in coastal plain depression ponds: Mabee's salamander and barking tree frog; tiger salamander; Harper's fimristylis and pondspice.	As part of the Tier I DEIS process, the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected a Preferred Alternative to carry into Tier II documentation and analysis. The Preferred Alternative for subsequent evaluation is Alternative 1 at 90 mph. DRPT will coordinate with DCR-DNH upon initiation of the Tier II documentation to minimize and/or avoid impacts to natural heritage resources.	As part of the Tier I Draft EIS process, FRA and DRPT selected a Preferred Alternative to carry into Tier II documentation and analysis. The Preferred Alternative for subsequent evaluation is Alternative 1 at 90 mph. DRPT will coordinate with DCR-DNH upon initiation of the Tier II documentation to minimize and/or avoid impacts to natural heritage resources, endangered/protected species, and water resources.
155-11	- Implement and adhere to all applicable state and local erosion and sediment control/ storm water management laws and regulations at bridge crossings and where new timers will be installed.	Comment noted. DRPT will adhere to applicable state and local erosion and sediment control/storm water management laws and regulations as appropriate.	DRPT will adhere to applicable state and local erosion and sediment control/storm water management laws and regulations as appropriate.
155-12	- Coordinate with the US FWS and VDACS to ensure compliance with protected species legislation, including the Swamp pink and the New Jersey rush.	Comment noted. DRPT will coordiante with appropriate local, state and federal agencies to ensure compliace with and protection of listed species.	DRPT will coordinate with appropriate local, state and federal agencies to ensure compliance with and protection of listed species.
155-13	- Coordinate with the DCR's Division of Natural Heritage if a significant amount of time passes before the project is implemented, since new and updated information is continually added to the Biotics Data System.	Comment noted. DRPT will coordiante with appropriate local, state and federal agencies to ensure compliace with and protection of listed species.	DRPT will coordinate with appropriate local, state and federal agencies to ensure compliance with and protection of listed species.

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155-14	- Provide preliminary engineering and station locations to DCR as they become available, so that DCR may provide more detailed comments.	Comment noted. DRPT will provide preliminary engineering and station locations for review to applicable agencies.	DRPT will provide preliminary engineering and station locations for review to applicable agencies.
155-23	Erosion and Sediment control Plan: ...must file general erosion and sediment control (ESC) specifications annually with DCR for review and approval. DRPT must comply with their annual ESC specifications approved by DCR.	Comment noted. DRPT will comply with all local and state regulatory requirements pertaining to erosion and sediment control.	DRPT will comply with all local and state regulatory requirements pertaining to erosion and sediment control.
155-24	VSMP General permit for Construction Activities: ...the land owner or its authorized agent is required to apply for registration coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater from Construction Activities and develop a project-specific storm water pollution prevention plan (SWPPP).	Comment noted. As planning and design for the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph) progresses, a specific storm water pollution prevention plan will be prepared. All applicable local, state and federal permits will be obtained prior to project consstruction, as appropriate.	As planning and design for the Preferred Alternative progresses, a specific storm water pollution prevention plan will be prepared. All applicable local, state and federal permits will be obtained prior to project construction, as appropriate.
155-29	The DEQ-Tidewater Regional Office states that section 3.15.5.2 of the document contains several significant errors with respect to the regulatory authorities of DEQ, the VMRC and the Corps.	Comment noted. This section has been revised tp better reflect the regulatory auctorities of DEQ, the VMRC and the Corps.	This section has been revised to better reflect the regulatory authorities of DEQ, the VMRC and the Corps.
155-30	DEQ's Tidewater Regional Office (TRO) states that the Tier I Draft EIS is confusing with respect to wetland impacts associated with the "Status Quo" and "No Action" alternatives. These two alternatives, as well as other alternatives presented in Table ES-3, indicate that 601 acres of wetlands are within the travel corridors. DEQ-TRO understands that this representation is meant to convey that 601 acres of wetlands exist within the study area rather than an impact to 601 acres of wetlands. However, without a better quantitative estimate of wetland impacts for each alternative, DEQ-TRO is unable to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives presented in the Tier I Draft EIS.	More detailed quanitiative analysis of potential wetland impacts will occur during the Tier II documentation and analysis of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1 at 90 mph) selected by the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) .	More detailed quantitative analysis of potential wetland impacts will be developed for theTier II Environmental Documentationand analysis of the Preferred Alternative.

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156-1	We definitely stand in support of the high speed rail, the route that comes to the Southside from Richmond. We really feel like there is a lot of benefit to the region. If we can get that route put in place, it will go a lot towards regionalism for this area.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
157-2	Question Number 2 - Alternative 1, 2A.Question Number 3 - status quo.Question Number 4 - 110 miles an hour.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
158-1	There are two critical pieces to it; one is a high speed rail component south of the James River between Suffolk and Petersburg connecting to Richmond and ultimately to D.C. and the railroad corridor in northeast part of the United States. There's plans for a segment that will go from Richmond and Petersburg down to Raleigh in North Carolina. So, the nation is finally getting the idea that having a cogent, coherent and practical public rail system makes some sense. ...those of us on the Peninsula and those of us on the Southside to come together, work collectively and collaboratively as a region to advocate both, to engage in our people in congress and the legislature, those people who make these decisions to assure that we're not left behind, and that's our goal of bringing people here tonight, to hear what you've got to say, to see whether you think this is the right plan or not, what you would suggest that we do to improve the plan, but given the alternative it seems to me that moving this forward and doing all we can to assure its success, working collaboratively with our colleagues on the Southside is good policy. It's an appropriate way to enhance public transportation in an environment where alternatives are fast fading.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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158-2	<p>There's a component that I think is important to discuss beyond the rail piece itself, and that is that mobility in Hampton Roads is challenged. If you are in your car an extra hour in the morning and an extra hour in the evening going to and from work because congestion won't let you get there any quicker, you have a long day and a frustrating day, you have time away from your family and things that you want to do. If five percent of the work force doesn't, for example, the SHIPYARD and Fort Eustis or the other large employers, it's not just them being late from the loss of their productivity, it's the work that they're not doing in that time period that informs the work of all the other employees. So, the loss is broader than just that of the people who can't get to work on time.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
158-7	<p>If the Southside can get a train that can go 110 miles an hour, it will give the million or so people that live over there a means of transportation they do not now have. There's no rail service on Southside, and people have to come over here. When there was a hope by most of us or some of us to have a third crossing in Hampton Roads which would have been multi-mode, meaning we could have rail through it, we could have had mass transit modalities through it, it would have been easier to just bring folks over here to the Amtrak line and take them without building new and enhancing what's on the Southside but without that connectivity, the high speed rail on the Southside becomes even more important than it has been historically. So, for those reasons, one, I want to encourage the Department of Rail, Commonwealth Transportation Board, to do all that's necessary to assure that we get both projects; the Southside high speed rail and the Peninsula enhanced rail systems.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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160-1	<p>Former senior general counsel for Norfolk Southern, now retired ; Fellow &amp; Vice Chair, Virginia Rail Policy Institute; Immediate Past Chair, Rail Advisory Board; Member, Board of Virginians for High Speed Rail. I speak not for any of those organizations but as someone who has learned a bit about rail in the last five decades and who has spent most of the last 20 years in advocating the expansion and use of rail as a viable alternative to highway.All but two of those alternatives would preclude, for all practical purposes, rail services to one of the largest metropolitan areas in the south and in the United States currently without rail service. It would preclude service to the area of the Commonwealth that contains two of Virginia's largest cities. In fact, the two largest cities in Virginia, one of the largest, and arguably the largest naval base in the world, and one of the largest and fastest-growing populations in the Commonwealth.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
160-2	<p>I stand before you tonight urging you, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Commonwealth Transportation Board, to affirm what this region has accomplished in coming together both politically and technically, to endorse the solution also endorsed by the regional planners and the regional politicians. That is indeed a salutary endorsement.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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160-3	<p>This proposal, if it's endorsed, and particularly if the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor is also endorsed, and it has already been selected by Virginia as its Number 1 rail project, you're talking about not service between Hampton Roads and Richmond, but you're talking about service between Hampton Roads and Richmond and Baltimore and Philadelphia and Washington, to jump it out of order, and New York and Boston. You're also talking about service between Hampton Roads and Richmond and Charlotte and Atlanta and Miami and New Orleans. So, this is not just a link between Hampton Roads and Richmond, it is a link between Hampton Roads and the rest of the United States, and it is critical, in my opinion and in the opinion of many of those who have analyzed this project, that we endorse Alternative 1 because it is the only viable alternative for providing the kinds of high speed rail service to Hampton Roads and to the rest of the area to and from Hampton Roads of which it is inevitably a part.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
160-4	<p>if you do not build a link between Richmond and Petersburg, there is no Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor, and the idea of being bound by an analytical constraint which refuses to recognize the clear fact that the Commonwealth of Virginia is likely to receive no money from the federal government on the high speed rail application you have filed, if it decides to exclude the link between Richmond and Petersburg, that way there would be no high speed rail service anywhere south of Richmond. So, the point where your analytical point of view and for the Commonwealth of Transportation Board is that it is patently unfair from a factual point of view although understandable from an analytical point of view that you include the cost of providing service between Richmond and Petersburg in the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor and not adding to the cost of providing service to Hampton Roads.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>



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161-1	I'm here as a citizen to endorse Alternative 1 and to stress that it does mean enhanced service and frequency to the Peninsula since that's where I'd be taking my trains from. I have a bias for driving across the bridge.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
163-1	Supporters of approved passenger rail in Virginia are excited to see potential results for years of studies of the Commonwealth Rail Advisory Board, the DRPT and rail advocacy groups. We're also pleased that the region is generally speaking with one voice as indicated by the Hampton Roads T.P.O.'s position statement last fall and the one that Dwight Farmer shared with you a few minutes ago. I agree with this regional position and support strengthened Alternative 1 of the study with a change recognizing speeds of 89 miles per hour on the Peninsula. I also support simultaneous and incremental improvements to extend passenger rail to Norfolk while improving performance, frequency and reliability of service to Williamsburg and Newport News.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
164-1	I think that Option 1 makes the most sense for this whole region. We need to think as a region, and I think if we come at this as two different parties, Southside and the Peninsula, the lack of unity will hurt us. It makes sense to add high speed rail service to Southside. I like the Norfolk Southern Corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
164-2	I do agree that in the final presentation, if you could leave out that extra 148 million dollars in costs for the link, I understand for the analysis it needs to be there, but if it helps our case in trying to get this money, that's what we should do.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



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165-1	<p>I would -- I do preferentially choose Alternative 1 or 2-A. As a resident of the Peninsula, I do recognize that the traffic across all of the bridges and tunnels is significant in both directions, and I would look at the introduction of a new rail, both of them include a new rail, and with that said I can see there will be a significant reduction across the bridges and tunnels and potentially hopefully saving lives and losing traffic load, but I would say preferentially we're against cost savings as well the caveat that there is one single additional train added to the Peninsula, I would endorse Alternative 1 as it does extend the high speed rail at the furthest point south and on the mainland, if you will, so that there is potential if there was a terminus at Petersburg. The extension may not go directly from Petersburg but potentially through Hampton Roads onto points south, if this was to be funded first, and then we could potentially be the connectivity down to further points south, and that would be another boon to the economics of the region for traveling through.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
167-1	<p>It is astonishing how much progress has been made and where we are. The fact that it's almost inevitable now that Alternative 1, if I read the tea leaves at public hearing in Richmond last night and what I forecast is going to happen tomorrow, it will be a single achievement accomplishing literally hundreds of decisions that have been held up for several years.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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167-2	<p>In your presentation tonight, I'd like to offer a comment on one item that I think we could change the language of or reconceptualize it or something like that. I mean this to be constructive. It's in no way debilitating, but the whole presentation is terrific, but at some point in there you talk about 90 miles per hour is optimum speed, and I'd like to ask that that phrase be analyzed from another perspective. Let's put a prism to it, let's put another mirror to it. I kind of think you're probably right, 90 miles per hour is the optimum speed, but I don't think it's the optimum design. At the end of the day, the federal government has postulated four design levels, and it's simply a matter of human shorthand that we talk to them as speed. There's the express high-speed rail, 150. There's a regional high-speed rail with 110, there's emerging high speed at 90, and then this conventional rail at 79, and so all the public is locked onto these are speed levels. They are not speed levels. They are not speed levels at all. They are design levels, and so when you thrust forward 90 is optimum, I think we're painting ourselves possible in the lower picture. I don't think Tampa Bay is doing that, Duluth is not doing that, Mobile is not doing that, Las Vegas is not doing that. We need to recognize when we talk about these speeds, we're really talking about designs, and I think the very nature of Alternative 1 is high-speed rail. That's 110 or above, and that's what the T.P.O. resolution was, and so the language that 90 is the optimum speed is maybe unwittingly misleading. We are really talking about design levels, and I think Hampton Roads – I cannot imagine another region in the United States that can produce the ridership that this region can produce point-to-point from here to D.C. or NATO or Washington, and I think that it would be very, very important for this region to comprehend this and to ensure that the EIS going forward clearly establishes an alternate design level and that our briefings point to that design level. As a matter of fact, that was the key point made by the Amtrak reapers at the very day that the T.P.O. made that</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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167-2	<p>resolution, and he made that point twice. If you don't establish the end game where you're going and you incrementally try to go forward, you might not get there, but if you establish where you are going, and then you know where you're going, and so I think it very important that -- because the risk right now is that there's all sorts of solutions popping up because we haven't nailed down the top end, that will force us to spend money, that could be spending money twice, or if it's not spent twice, then it will lock us into 90, and we won't be eligible for certain funds later. So, it's a design-level question, or a speed-level question that I think you're referring to that slide, but it didn't come through that way. I think it could improve the state; actually the state makes us more competitive</p>		
168-1	<p>I want to reiterate and re-enforce what the gentleman said about design speed. That is, he kind of mixed words. Let's not half-step with this. We need to design the system for the highest speeds possible. That is 300 kilometers per hour, eventually we will run that fast, okay.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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169-1	<p>There's an infrastructure that's on this side already. I think they should expand out with the first phase of it, of this project, making the railroads better on this side, and perhaps at a later time when more money is available, when the economy is better, we can go on the other side. I know that the other side is doing infrastructure because of the freight lines going up in Portsmouth in there, and I know that they're doing light rail over there, but to me they should have done -- when the Chesapeake Bay went up, I think it's privately owned, I'm not sure they should have done something with that railway going over there, with the light rail going over that way, because that goes up to Maryland and to other places. So, I just fear that again, like I've seen other things in terms of transportation in this region, it's really not thought through clearly. So, I just would hope instead of making hasty moves that they'd really think about what would be better and what is the best time in terms of time and money being spent to get the project off the road.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
170-2	<p>Second -- first, really, increase train speeds on the Peninsula alignment. Amtrak has to work more closely with CSX railroad in getting the speeds increased through Acca Yard, and that is a problem that I think really needs to be looked at, and that is a tremendous source of delay. Sometimes it will take 45 to 50 minutes to travel to Main Street Station and clear Acca Yard on your way up to Ashland. I suggest that as part of the overall service improvements there must be increased emphasis on getting Amtrak to improve it's relationship with its host railroad, CSX.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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171-1	I'm actually enamored by Alternative 1. It provides the most mobility for a larger region, for the largest amount of populous that we have in the entire region, and as one of the speakers noted, it's not just Northeast Corridor access but also the Southeast and the Midwest and everywhere else in the nation, and since with Richmond and Petersburg being the focus of the center of Hampton Roads on both sides, it's just -- what's the word --more mobility for more people, more access. Despite the costs, it seems that Alternative 1 is absolutely what we need to focus on.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
171-2	Another speaker mentioned that the four-speed categories are too restrictive in what we're looking at. We need to do exactly what he said in making people realize that it's not just speed factors but overall, the overall -- what's the word -- I'll reword the whole sentence. A regional mobility would depend on everyone having access to the best ability including feeder lines for buses, taxis, light rail, air and maritime services and everything combined so that the region retains – regains more mobility than loses it. We can go on highways, it's not going to work. It's obviously not. I just support Alternative 1 for those reasons. We have a massive military operations across the entire region, both sides, and many of them are interdependent.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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171-3	I've noticed the station they're talking about placing downtown Newport News is located pretty close to the SHIPYARD, and I can imagine how many hundreds, if not thousands, of SHIPYARD employees might elect to ride into or from work on a train a way on the Peninsula from Lee Hall, Williamsburg, Richmond or coming into areas closer to those areas from the Middle Peninsula and beyond who can take the train in instead of having to ride cars, car pools, individual cars or buses, that if the cost is effective and the service is reliable I think that would explode in ridership. For that reason, the tourism, SHIPYARD, military operations and various uses for like other modes, Greyhound and the airports, to the airports on the Peninsula line are located right by the tracks. Patrick Henry Airport is about one-half to three-quarters of a mile off Bland Avenue. Let's talk of a station going in there.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
171-4	The Richmond International Airport is right beside Peninsula Railroad, CSX, literally beside the track. I've ridden the Ringling Brother's train very often and watched airplanes taking off as we're passing thinking they need an Amtrak station here that expands to Richmond and beyond, stations placed there. That's for extreme long-range planning, but this today presented by Kevin Page and the others is for now, and that's what we're looking at tomorrow, next year, next decade. Again, Alternative 1 seems the best of all the options for everyone everywhere in the state, especially this region.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
171-5	I like the idea of connecting to the Southeast Corridor. It would be interesting to see how they operate the train service to interconnect with all the others that are going to be added in that corridor as well. If they combine trains northbound, separate them to two sides of the James southbound and/or swap cars to trains from Florida or New Orleans or whatever or Atlanta would be interesting to watch how that develops in coming years, as they used to do before the interstate system was build.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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172-6	First of all, we need a true high speed alternative for South Hampton Roads reflective of the region's resolution of the HRTPO Resolution Number 200905 incorporated in the analysis. This can best be accomplished through an enhancement of Alternative 1. Those are not the only alternatives. We can actually enhance what is in the draft EIS, and that is what we want to try to do.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
172-9	An updated capacity analysis for each corridor should be carried out in conjunction with the freight railroads. Norfolk Southern needs to be at the table. We must ensure that there is an appropriate allocation of costs and revenues, which the EIS does not do, in the Petersburg to Richmond segment of the shared southeast high speed rail and Southside Hampton Roads high speed rail corridor.	Such detailed analyses will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II EIS.	Detailed analyses will be conducted as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Document.
172-10	Finally, we must make sure that the Federal Railroad Administration financial and economic criteria are consistently used to evaluate all options. The overall effect of these changes will show that an Enhanced Alternative 1 consistent with the -- consistent with the HRTPO Resolution 200905 will provide the most effective option for high speed rail service to Southside Hampton Roads and enhanced inner city passenger rail service to the Peninsula.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
173-4	In order to address these points, I believe that the inclusion of Alternative 1 would best reflect the intent expressed by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization in its recent resolution and, therefore, should be incorporated in the final EIS. The region supports the improvement to rail service on the Peninsula down to Newport News including the construction of a new station in Newport News. We also support, as a region, the designation of the Route 460 corridor as the high speed corridor and the construction of that corridor as soon as possible.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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177-1	<p>We have concerns with the current draft of the environmental document. These concerns center on the train operations planning that was completed. Specifically, our concerns include, first, the train sets used in planning purposes in the draft document are good for higher speed, that is, 79 to 90 mile an hour passenger train operations, but they are inadequate for a true high speed alternative, which would operate at speeds of 110 miles an hour or more. The conventional trains currently proposed in the document are very poor performers over 90 miles per hour and, therefore, more appropriate true high speed train technology should be evaluated along with their better performance abilities. It is estimated that in a medium distance, 150-mile corridor, a proper high speed train set will operate at 30 to 40 minutes faster than a conventional train. The high speed trains that have been used to test 110 mile per hour and higher alternatives across the country should be employed in the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project DIS for our high speed rail alternatives. We believe that Hampton Roads deserves and that the study should reflect a true high speed service level.</p>	<p>The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph. The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the speed option for Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.</p>
177-2	<p>Second, the operating costs used for 110 miles per hour options were based only on incrementally higher speed rail. It did not include the economies of sale that would be associated with operating eight to ten true high speed trains per day. This type of scenario would reduce operating costs by 40 percent for a high speed rail option that performs 400 to 600 train miles per year. This would obviously reduce the total cost significantly for the 110 mile per hour options and make them far more competitive.</p>	<p>The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph. The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the speed option for Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.</p>



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177-3	<p>Third, the major -- a major concern is getting our project funded. In the environmental document, in several places, Federal Trans Administration typed evaluation criteria instead of Federal Railroad Administration inner city planning criteria were used, which Federal Railroad Administration criteria would be more appropriate for this type of service. The FRA criteria requires both a positive cost-benefit ratio and operating ratio, which ensures franchise capability together with an ability to show positive benefits for the region. These criteria are best and most competitive for ensuring FRA funding support for any proposed system. If we are to compete with projects in the Midwest, Ohio, Florida and California for funding, we need to ensure we make our arguments as strongly as possible. Accordingly, the more appropriate FRA evaluation criteria should be used in applying for FRA funding.</p>	<p>The FRA is the sponsoring federal agency and signed the Draft EIS allowing it to be circulated for public comment. Therefore, the methodologies and analyses have been "approved" by FRA by definition. The cost effectiveness index utilized in the Draft EIS is not the same criterion as defined by the Federal Transit Administration. More detailed benefit/cost analysis will be conducted as part of the more detailed project level Tier II EIS prepared for the preferred Alternative 1 now that a route and speed option have been selected.</p>	<p>The FRA is the lead federal agency and signed the Draft EIS allowing it to be circulated for public comment. Therefore, the methodologies and analyses have been "approved" by FRA by definition. The cost effectiveness index utilized in the Draft EIS is not the same criterion defined by the Federal Transit Administration. More detailed benefit/cost analysis will be conducted in the Tier II Environmental Documentation for the Preferred Alternative.</p>
177-4	<p>It is consistent -- it is also consistent with the recent Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization resolution that endorsed the designation and development of a high speed rail corridor and service via Southside Norfolk Southern corridor while pursuing the enhancement of the conventional inner city passenger service for the Peninsula via the I64 CSX corridor.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
177-5	<p>The development of a more robust Alternative 1 reflecting true high speed rail service for the Southside, including a faster schedule, more frequency, better reliability and newer trains, needs to be completed. This work must be undertaken in close cooperation with both the regional Transportation Planning Organization as well as the freight railroads to ensure there is full agreement and buy-in of all for the enhanced Alternative 1 that is requested.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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178-1	High speed rail connecting to Downtown Norfolk, as outlined in the regional consensus at the Transportation Planning Organization, will be a major real asset to regional economic by providing new and effective opportunities for business travel.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
178-2	Reviewing the current study from a market perspective, I believe there are a number of issues raised in the ridership and revenue forecast that require re-examination. As mentioned by others, the ridership forecast, as currently contained in the study, is skewed due to the inclusion of the third crossing project in the forecast model.	Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II EIS.	Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II Environmental Document.
178-3	Other related key concerns include the following: One, the demand analysis was not behaviorally based and failed to include differences between business, commuter and tourist travel. As is often said in business, time is money and, therefore, a value of time element should be included in any ridership-forecasting methodology. This is important. There is a different willingness to pay between different groups. I am talking about the differences of service. This is the case of air service. Business travelers are willing to pay a premium for a higher level of service. Most high speed rail systems offer between two to three levels of service that both attract more business riders and an opportunity to charge higher fares for those willing to pay. The impact of not carrying out this type of analysis is to reduce Southside ridership and revenue from 110 mile per hour and higher speed options.	Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II EIS.	Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II Environmental Document.

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178-4	Two, there is a concern about how the forecast reflects short- and medium-distance travel. The average trip length in the model is reported at 275 miles, which far exceeds the length of the two corridors studied. Typically, average trip length is 60 to 70 percent of a corridor trip length. This suggests many shorter within-corridor trips that have been included in the forecast. One factor of these trips is ridership between Petersburg and Richmond. The draft of the environmental impact study has allocated these trips to the south, you have heard this, the southeast high speed rail corridor, known as SEHSR, rather than the Southside route. Yet, if the Southside high speed rail service offers 8 to 12 passenger trains per day in the corridor versus the 12 per day contemplated by the SEHSR, the Southside trains are likely to capture 40 to 50 percent more traffic.	Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project only examined the long-distance travel market and did not consider potential commuter aril services. Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II EIS.	Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project only examined the long-distance travel market and did not consider potential commuter rail services. Ridership and revenue forecasts will be revisited as part of the more detailed investigation of Alternative 1 during the preparation of the project level Tier II Environmental Documentation.
178-6	What was surprising in the DEIS study was that not only did the 110 mile per hour option perform poorly but at some options they produced lower ridership than the 90 mile per hour service. This is unrealistic, which is recognized -- when it is recognized that high speed rail offers an attractive travel alternative to people -- to people for short- and medium-distance trips.	The 100 mph options carried more riders but at significantly higher costs for capital investment and operations. The 90 mph speed option was found to be the most cost effective and was selected by the Commonwealth Transportation Board as the preferred speed option.	The 110 mph options carried more riders but at significantly higher costs for capital investment and operations. The 90 mph speed option was found to be the most cost effective and was selected by FRA and DRPT as the preferred speed option.
178-7	Clearly, to appropriately reflect the HRTPO's position, the Southside corridor should be a true high speed rail corridor through Enhanced Alternative 1 incorporating a demand forecast as it relates to the Southside option. To conclude, the Norfolk Economic Development Authority vigorously supports Southside passenger rail.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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179-2	<p>Norfolk Southern performed a capacity study that assumed three passenger round trips per day, which would use conventional passenger equipment and operate at a maximum speed of 79 miles per hour. We also assumed that these trains would operate over the same tracks as our freight trains. We did not look at speeds higher than 79 miles an hour because high speed trains will conflict with freight trains and mixing high speed passenger trains and freight trains on the same track raises numerous issues. To accommodate 79 mile an hour service, Norfolk Southern will require some additions to our infrastructure such as a station track at Harbor Park, signal improvements, crossovers between tracks and a new connection track between Norfolk Southern and CSX Transportation to Petersburg. The approximate cost of this infrastructure is about \$75 million, and the work can be done within two years of funding. Our estimate did not include the cost of improvement to the Petersburg to Richmond CSX line. It did not include passenger rail equipment, station facilities, staging tracks or train servicing facilities.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option. This includes six trains daily in each direction between Richmond and Norfolk.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. This includes six trains daily in each direction between Richmond and Norfolk.</p>
179-4	<p>Norfolk Southern looks forward to working with both the Commonwealth and the region to both host the incremental starter service and examine other alternatives for the 90 mile an hour or faster high speed trains that the public will demand. The Richmond to Hampton Roads passenger rail study appears to be based on data and assumptions developed nearly ten years ago. Enough has changed since that data and assumptions and should be revisited. Norfolk Southern will continue to support the City of Norfolk and will cooperate with the Commonwealth in future plans to return rail passenger service to South Hampton Roads.</p>	<p>More detailed railroad capacity modeling, engineering and operations planning will be conducted during the project level Tier II EIS. DRPT will work cooperatively with NS to develop suitable plans to reintroduce passenger service on the Norfolk to Petersburg segment of the route to Richmond.</p>	<p>More detailed railroad capacity modeling, engineering and operations planning will be conducted during the project level Tier II Environmental Document. DRPT will work cooperatively with NS to develop suitable plans to reintroduce passenger service on the Norfolk to Petersburg segment of the route to Richmond.</p>

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
180-1	<p>It goes without saying that the ability to rapidly move people and goods and connect to the marketplace is fundamental to any region's competitiveness. That is why we support the position of HRTPO, which is best reflected in a strengthened Alternative 1, which we strongly endorse. We believe that Alternative 1 will provide the maximum benefit for the region and the Commonwealth by serving a fertile, untapped market on the Southside where the majority of the region's population and jobs reside and where there is a significant and growing demand for another travel option to Washington, D.C. while improving the existing Amtrak passenger rail service on the Peninsula.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
180-3	<p>A recent study determined that investment in high speed rail can immediately achieve high ridership levels if a large market exists between points such as the case with the Hampton Roads/Richmond/D.C. corridor. Given Hampton Roads' unique market characteristic, their largest concentration of federal activities anywhere in the country outside of D.C. and the associated number of contractors who have travelled on a frequent basis to D.C., the region's proximity to our nation's capital, the suitability of the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor to high speed rail and the fact that rail service can be implemented on the corridor with a modest initial investment and a relatively short period of time, Hampton Roads arguably offers the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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181-1	<p>I thank you for the opportunity to speak on this topic for it is most critical to the future development of the Hampton Roads region. In that regard, I, too, must salute the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization for its pivotal role in the unified approach on the crucial matter of Hampton Roads connecting with the southeastern high speed rail corridor. Having the Peninsula and Southside leadership reach consensus on supporting Alternative 1 is testament to the leadership of Mayor Sessoms with assistance from Dwight Farmer and the selfless and farsighted thinking and actions of the other members of the board, the mayors and other members.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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181-2	<p>Many of us have taken Amtrak from Newport News to Washington and perhaps points beyond D.C. and back to our home area. Given the hectic pace of travel on the interstate system, we welcome the opportunity for another option in planning our travels. Alternative 1 presents a viable option. The three daily round trips between Newport News and Richmond, as outlined in Alternative 1, with connections to high speed rail from Richmond to other points is a true bonus for travellers from the Peninsula. The proposed six daily round trips at speeds up to 110 miles per hour -- and we want to emphasize that what we have is a draft and we do want to focus on the enhanced alternative of 110 miles per hour -- is most -- is a positive bottom-line issue for the entire Hampton Roads region. The plan includes many other benefits for the region, among them the proposed intermodal transfer facility in Downtown Norfolk, not too far from where we are and it will link with high speed rails, and the city's light rail system, which we hope will soon move into -- we are here, will be moving into Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, through the tunnel to Portsmouth and thereabout. It also will serve and connect, rather, with the inner city and regional bus services, the ferry service, cruise ship service from this impressive facility and direct assets to the interstate, all of which enhances the quality of life for our citizens and visitors.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
181-3	<p>Alternative 1 also sharpens the competitive edge of the Hampton Roads region. High speed rail would lift our region to a level of passenger service comparable to some of the nation's more thriving communities. Finally, Alternative 1 will warmly -- will be greeted warmly by the large number of tourists who travel to Historic Williamsburg, will travel to the proposed activity at Fort Monroe, Virginia Beach Waterfront and the dozens of other highlighted tourist attractions within our region.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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181-4	While improvement to the Norfolk Southern tracks that parallel Route 460 will permit six daily round trips and, again, at speeds up to 110 miles an hour, it also will benefit other Hampton Roads ventures to include, as you have heard, the large number of federal installations in our region – and we are pleased to have all five of the military services here -- and the many other units of public and private -- within the public and private sector.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
182-1	I would really like to acknowledge that Old Dominion emphatically endorses the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's recommendations, a strengthened Alternative 1, which we believe is the best regional solution, obviously, designating the high speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor at speeds of up to 110 miles an hour, in conjunction with this high speed corridor, enhancement of inner city rail travel, service along the CSX I64 corridor.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
182-2	Our endorsement for a strengthened Alternative 1 really recognizes a number of compelling significant factors, many of which have been spoken already about tonight and will be reiterated frequently by other speakers. A highly visible concentration of federal and military activities,	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.



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183-1	<p>I demur from the comments of folks who said that Alternative 1 is the preferred -- Enhanced Alternative 1 is the preferred alternative. I believe that the preferred alternative has not been placed among our choices. The preferred alternative would have high speed rail arc through Hampton Roads and continue south. So it would come down the Peninsula, cross the James River into Southside and proceed on in the direction that high speed rail has been laid out. It would take us through the Carolinas down to Florida. We are not a cul-de-sac. We are a destination. To borrow from Mr. Gates, Hampton Roads, start here, go everywhere. Those ships that come into this port touch everywhere in the world. And Hampton Roads looks not only west to Richmond but east across the Atlantic, west to coal country and south to where the growth has been in this country in the last several decades. So a high speed rail option should certainly embrace us and proceed southward from here. We are not a spur. We are a destination.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
184-1	<p>on behalf of Norfolk Festevents and my associates in the Hampton Roads special events industry, I offer our support for the extension of high speed rail service from Washington, D.C. to Richmond, Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region designating a high speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor and enhancing the inner city passenger rail service along the CSX I64 corridor, which is best reflected in Alternative 1 and its enhancements.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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189-1	<p>I am here this evening as the vice-chair of the Norfolk City Planning Commission. And our mayor has very brilliantly and very aptly spoken regarding this issue. And I am here only to say -- express our resolve that the selection of the Norfolk Southern Route 460 corridor as a recommended high speed rail corridor to the Hampton Roads region is endorsed by our city. The Department of Rail and Public Transportation is urged to advance the completion of the needed studies and plans for future high speed intercity passenger rail service to the Hampton Roads region on the fastest possible time schedule.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
190-1	<p>The Virginia Beach Hotel-Motel Association board of directors officially supports the HRTPO's resolution supporting high speed regional rail and inner city passenger rail. VBHMA supports Alternative 1, the designation of the Norfolk Southern corridor, as the high speed rail corridor, and in conjunction the enhancement of inner city passenger rail service along the CX (sic) I64 corridor on the Peninsula.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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191-1	<p>I am Kathy Nelson, a proud citizen of Hampton Roads who just happens to live in Norfolk. And it is my honor tonight to speak on behalf of my Leadership Hampton Roads class of 2010 and the 1200-plus graduates who have participated in this important Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce program, many of whom were here tonight.As a group, we see no more important transportation proposal affecting this region, and we felt compelled to undertake a class project to increase awareness in support of the Enhanced Proposal # 1 to bring high speed rail at 110 miles an hour here to South Hampton Roads.My Leadership Hampton Roads class has been heartened by the incredible regional leadership and cooperation that has resulted in the singular position as expressed in the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization resolution. We who live here understand the incredible diversity and opportunity of this region. We have no option but to remain competitive by planning and acting now for our future.Hampton Roads is the second-largest population center in the Commonwealth. We are the most infrastructure-dependent region in the nation. We can no longer be satisfied with being a cul-de-sac. We need to stay on the main line. The ribbons we wear here tonight say it all. We need high speed.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
192-1	<p>I am here to proclaim my unanimous support for the proposed high speed rail line from Petersburg via the existing Norfolk Southern line along Route 460 and ending in Downtown Norfolk. The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the resolution adopted by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization on October 30, 2009, and we endorse Alternative 1 as laid out in DRPT survey items. Additionally, we also support enhanced inner city rail improvements along the CSX and I64 corridor on the Peninsula.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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193-3	Another point that I think was just briefly touched on is through service both north and south line. One seat takes you either south or north. They could incorporate a means of coordinating the trains so the trains would continue down past our region for some of the trains. Some trains could come into Hampton Roads and those trains could be either A or B trains and head north or south for single-seat ridership either direction.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project allows passengers to transfer to southbound trains at Petersburg. The issue of direct southbound train service can be examined as part of the project level Tier II EIS.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project allows passengers to transfer to southbound trains at Petersburg. The issue of direct southbound train service can be examined as part of the project level Tier II Environmental Document.
194-2	I want true high speed rail to come to this region. What I mean by that is I want it to have its own set of tracks. I don't want any grade crossings on the tracks. And we have got to do this because if we don't it will be a matter of safety. People will be killed. I don't think that we can put high speed rail using the same set of tracks that freight trains do because they do not work.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph. The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the speed option for Alternative 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
194-4	I want high speed rail, and I do not want mediocre rail. What I mean by high speed rail, it has got to go over 125 miles an hour not 80 or 79 or whatever.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph. The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the speed option for Alternative 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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195-1	<p>I am a cognitive psychologist by training, and I study human behavior. And while we talk about transportation and we talk about cost, we must ask ourselves: What is it that drives human behavior? The things that drive the people in this room, I believe, are the fact that Americans are practical people where impracticality means that we do not want to waste our time. I suspect today time is as important as cost. So what are those factors that impact us as far as time goes? Time with your family. Time with your and opportunities for your family and children. The community life that we have that we enjoy in the City of Norfolk. The practical solutions that we have. I understand cost is a factor. Certainly we are all smart enough to know that. But there is a quality of life issue that goes and rises above those things that we all share. We are a community here. It is these things, it is these interfeelings that we have, these values that we have that are being threatened. And I think that the work that you are trying to do to bring the high speed Enhanced Alternative 1 to this community is a wonderful thing.</p>	<p>The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph. The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the speed option for Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.</p>
196-1	<p>I support Alternative 1 as defined in the HRTPO magnificent resolution.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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197-1	<p>When most of you from elsewhere in the region think of Virginia Beach the first thing you think of is our oceanfront and tourism. To tail off of Councilman Uhrin's comments from early this evening, when -- the most recent survey numbers I have seen of our visitors, the single biggest problem they've cited and why they do not like their trip to Virginia Beach isn't anything at the oceanfront, isn't anything within the City of Virginia Beach itself, it is congestion at the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel. It is registers up in double digits in our visitor surveys. Now, bringing them on high speed rail, such as Enhanced Alternative 1, is a way to bring them around it. Get them out of their cars so they are not sitting there inhaling fumes over there on 64.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
197-3	<p>And we do need 110 mile per hour rail not 90 or 79. For people -- to actually get people out of their cars and pay the money for the fare it is going to have to be appreciably better than as far as what they get from driving.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the .</p>
198-1	<p>The board of directors of HRACRE has passed a resolution endorsing Alternative 1 with the high speed rail service on the Norfolk Southern 460 corridor and enhanced service on the CSX 64. Allow me to say that the status quo and no action are really not viable alternatives. HRACRE endorses the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhancement of the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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198-3	Two-thirds of the Hampton Roads population live and work in the areas served by Alternative 1. It should be pointed out that the comparative analysis of distance, time and operating cost are not apples to apples between Option -- Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. Two-thirds of the population must spend additional time and money to reach the Newport News station adding further congestion to the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel and to the Monitor-Merrimac Bridge-Tunnel.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
199-1	I support the enhanced high speed rail to Hampton Roads for a variety of reasons.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
199-5	There is only one correct action and that is to bring the 110 mile per hour high speed rail, the optimum design, into Hampton Roads.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
201-3	I would like to still caution, as we move forward, that we will continue to have open dialogue with all stakeholders. And I did hear our mayor of the city emphasize it. We can -- we need to look at the end now and see where we are going so that we do not have missteps along the way and that would include how we fiscally manage the project and also ensuring that all of our stakeholders in the region are completely committed to seeing this to the end. I would also like to ask that any environmental impacts that would affect our residents or businesses or landowners that are near the high speed rail sites would also be engaged along the way so that input would be considered for any concerns that they may have.	The next phase of project development is the preparation of a more detailed project level Tier II EIS, which will have a new round of project scoping meetings and more detailed environmental impact assessments.	The next phase of project development is the preparation of Tier II Environmental Documentation, which will have a new round of agency and public involvement, and more detailed environmental analysis.

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202-1	I would like to endorse the remarks made by Mayor Fraim and George Crawley. I am a proud member of the Sierra Club. And there are those in this audience earlier tonight who probably think that the Sierra Club would not want high speed rail. Well, I am here to tell you that this proud member very much wishes to have what the Hampton Roads TPO has put forward. The Enhanced Number 1 selection is the way to go at this stage.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
203-1	Looking back, before the early '50s, the Southside had high speed rail and that J class ran over a hundred miles an hour. So what we are doing is trying to bring it back. That is before the government told the railroads how fast they can run the trains.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph. The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the speed option for Alternative 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.
203-2	And so I endorse the Enhanced Alternative 1.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
203-3	And I would suggest that before you can get all of the high speed line ready that if you can get a conventional train running on that line, get people used to riding them. And we need something -- we need alternatives now to what we have. And you -- and a dollar spent on rail goes a whole lot further than a dollar spent any place else.	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail project is an emergent high speed rail project with speed options up to 110 mph. The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected 90 mph as the speed option for Alternative 1.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of this Tier I Final EIS.



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203-4	<p>And I was raised up with the idea of do it for as little as you possibly could. Because when I had my engineering, that is what an engineer did is do for one dollar what anybody else could do for five. And that is the way I had to approach it. I never had time to make studies. I had to make a quick judgment and then go with it. And then I used the studies to back me up later. A couple of things there. At the Petersburg station, there is a lot of territory west of Petersburg and Richmond that has been ignored ever since Amtrak came into being. You know what the western destination of Route 460 and Interstate 64, same city, Saint Louis, Missouri. It goes through a lot of -- of course, I was born in West Virginia, raised up in Kentucky. So I have travelled all that whole area there. So we need to be ready to go on west. So let's locate the Petersburg station close to the junction between the north/south line and the east/west so we can get back to having east/west. I remember, I've ridden the trains many times on both sides and I have gone a long, long way west. Now you have to go through Washington and Chicago and then go back south to get here today.</p>	<p>The SEHSR Project is examining station locations in Petersburg as part of the Tier II EIS.</p>	<p>The general station location proposed for the Petersburg area has been the subject of the SEHSR environmental documentation. However, selection of an exact station location will be the subject of subsequent environmental documentation prepared by the project proponent. The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project assumes that whatever station location is selected through that process for Petersburg will be the same station location for the Preferred Alternative documented in this Tier I Final EIS.</p>
204-1	<p>I support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization resolution to endorse the Route 460 corridor included in Alternative 1. I support the planning of 110 miles per hour or faster trains along Alternative 1 route. And I ask for a higher level of analysis that will provide service compatible and equivalent to the southeastern high speed rail line. I urge the DRPT to be thorough in continuing the Tier I document to Tier II completion and hope that my teenage boys will be able to ride true high speed rail from Hampton Roads to Washington, D.C. or New York by the time they are my age, and I am almost 50. Please include, at a minimum, enhanced service in Alternative 1, and I ask that even higher speeds are entertained in the long-term planning for all high speed rail routes.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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205-1	<p>...this area really needs Alternative 1, and the Hampton Roads area needs the transportation here. One of the things, though, that we have to take -- really take a step back and say, high speed rail is a baby step. And keep in mind that we have the technology and the resources and it has been proven in Japan of Maglev trains that we don't rely on -- that wouldn't rely on fossil fuels. I mean, it surpasses trains, automobiles. The one in Japan goes 361 miles an hour. And there are studies that MIT has done where you can actually have a vacuum of a Maglev train that goes 2,000, 4,000 miles an hour. And that is what we really need to concentrate on is the future not just say, here is a little baby step, but really concentrate on what the future holds for us all.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
206-1	<p>I am a member of COMTO, the council -- the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials. I am a business owner in Virginia Beach. I have been involved in transportation. I fully support the Enhanced Alternative 1 for high speed rail connection to Hampton Roads through Petersburg 460 Southside corridor. I also fully endorse immediate upgrade of service on the existing route on the Peninsula with recovery funds. I fully support the fact that we have 110 -- engineered to 110 specifications comparable to -- equal to the southeast and northeast corridor specifications, that we would have throughput single seat service, that the SCIS extends itself to study the southwest route through Weldon, North Carolina and that we have the Virginia crescent get funded first.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
626-1	<p>We are supportive of the Hampton Roads transportation organization's position with regards to high speed rail between Richmond and Hampton Roads, and we endorse alternatives -- an enhanced Alternative Number 1.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
626-2	Question Number 3 - status quo is the least desirable.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
626-3	Question Number 4 - answer to question Number 4, 110 miles per hour.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
627-1	MPO's resolution supporting Alternative One, summarized as follows:Supports concurring improvements along Northside and Southside alignments to Hampton Roads.Maintains the Richmond Region's primary focus on fully funding and completing the high speed rail link between Washington and Richmond.Service in the Peninsula/I-64 and Route 460 corridors as follows: - Southside: True high speed rail at speeds of 110+ mph connecting Richmond to Norfolk. - Northside: Improved passenger rail service connecting Richmond to Hampton Roads; includes enhancing existing intercity service and establishing regional commuter service with potential stops at Providence Forge and RIC Airport.	Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

Comment No	Comment	Old Reponse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
628-1	<p>Isle of Wight County pledges its support for regional high-speed rail as demonstrated by the attached resolution, and strongly believes that the benefits of high-speed passenger rail clearly outweighs the costs and promotes the benefit of using already existing infrastructure. Isle of Wight supports Alternative 1 (Peninsula Conventional/ Southside Higher Speed) and Alternative 2a (Peninsula Higher Speed/Southside Conventional Passenger Rail). From a regional perspective, several localities within and outside of the Hampton Roads region, including Isle of Wight County, will serve as pass-through areas, and will receive direct benefit from passenger rail as an alternative mode of transportation for the following reasons: In particular, Isle of Wight seeks to endorse Alternative 1 being designated a High-Speed Rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor to Hampton Roads, ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph. The existing section of US Route 460 (which traverses Isle of Wight County) east of the Town of Windsor is projected in the long term to become deficient in its level of service (LOS), dropping below a C rating, according to the most recent update to the Isle of Wight County Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

Comment No	Comment	Old Repsonse - Deceember 2010	New Response - February 2012
628-2	<p>Passenger rail will 1) provide an alternative to congested highways and help manage traffic congestion between Richmond and Hampton Roads. 8) alleviate congestion on heavily traveled roadways, specifically US Route 460, which is a heavily traveled truck route where tractor trailers compete with automobile traffic via an undivided four-lane highway. Alternative 1 passenger rail, along with improved rail service generally, could help alleviate traffic congestion in experienced on US 460 and improve safety for local and commuter traffic that travels these roadways every day. In addition, Isle of Wight anticipates that there will also be benefits from high-speed passenger rail via improved grade crossings, which will enhance emergency response times and allow for safer stacking distances between the Norfolk Southern railway and US Route 460.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative with 90 mph as the preferred higher speed option.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

# Survey Monkey Comment-Response Comparison

ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
211	As a long time resident of South Hampton Roads, I have travels from this area to points west dramatically increase with transportation problems dramatically increase as well. Commerce challenges may significantly impact our economy over the long term. How can I help?	Commented noted.	Comment noted.
213	Main concern is when one reaches Main Street Station-what then? No transportation in that area.	Comment noted. The focus of this study is evaluating higher speed passenger rail between Richmond and Hampton Roads. Other planning studies, not necessarily conducted by DRPT, would need to address this issue.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
215	The facts are clear; that a metro region of our size does not have rail service to 2/3 of it's population is hard to believe. When combined with the proximity to one of the country's greatest ports, the largest concentration of military in the world, linkage to regional intermodal service, and the people's desire for high speed rail, you have an argument for support that is hard to refute.	Commented noted.	Comment noted.

ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
218	<p>Below are some points from a recent article I read that sound appealing to me. Ensure the EIS establishes the long term design level and that it plans and provides for “true high speed rail.” The plan for Hampton Roads HSR should clearly describe an explicit long-term outcome that meets or exceeds the 110 mph minimum required to qualify for federal HSR funding. This final design must be explicitly documented in the Final EIS (FEIS). This is needed to ensure that any interim construction projects designed for slower speeds will be compatible with the long-term plan. This requirement will ensure that scarce transportation funds are not wasted on a short-term system that would have to be rebuilt. Along the way, we do not want to spend money twice. Ensure that the Hampton Roads corridor has a compatible design and will have equivalent levels of service as those already established for the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor to which we will be connected Fund the Virginia High Speed Rail Crescent first and fund rail to North Carolina second. Funding for construction of the Hampton Roads HSR system should be given priority over Southeast corridor routes south of Petersburg. This preference is justified objectively by Hampton Roads’ status as a major port, Virginia’s largest tourist destination, and the nation’s “Pentagon South,” with a ridership likely to exceed any other Southeast corridor metro area. Virginia should recognize the merits of and focus on funding what we are calling the “Virginia HSR Crescent” from DC through Richmond and Petersburg to Suffolk and Norfolk. Ensure Through Service. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly document a federal commitment to assess options for eventual through service both north and south at junctions with the Southeast corridor main line at Petersburg, and the selection of the connecting train station in Petersburg should be made with this criterion in mind. Travelers to and from Hampton Roads should not have to change trains to access the Southeast corridor main line.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. More detailed engineering and design will occur during the Tier II documentation and analysis and is not part of the this Tier I Final EIS.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. More detailed engineering and design will occur during the Tier II Environmental Documentation and analysis and is not part of the this Tier I Final EIS.</p>

ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
219	<p>I have evaluated the options for the Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Study presentation in Richmond and am endorsing Alt # 2A, which boosts existing Peninsula rail service from two trips per day to six, and improves the rail line from Richmond to Petersburg to Norfolk (Southside), provided the line from Petersburg to Norfolk uses the 90 MPH Option, on an existing abandoned rail line. It is imperative to invest in upgraded rail service to both the Peninsula and Southside, to meet the 21st Century travel demands with transit and high speed rail, and reduce gas consumption, sprawl, congestion and air pollution. In doing this, we must take great care to minimize impacts to wetlands (avoid, rather than mitigate, dammit -- that's the law!); protect water quality, sensitive lands and species; and attract development and redevelopment which is transit-oriented, mixed use, higher-density, and walkable and bikeable. I understand that it may be preferable to adjust the location the Bowers station, to avoid wetlands impacts, and I would also like to see the Petersburg Station be located IN Petersburg. I hope these ideas will be evaluated seriously. As far as I am concerned, we should have been building these rail routes when the Commonwealth, VDOT, and VDRPT were flush with funding. However, I feel that these higher speed rail routes are such an essential investment, for Virginia's future prosperity and quality of life, they must proceed as quickly as possible-- even way ahead of new road funding. President Obama is making high speed rail one of the cornerstones of his legacy. I strongly urge you to get Virginia up to speed, and fund and build Alternative 2A.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
221	<p>Increased rail traffic, by taking cars and trucks off of the road, would benefit the environment long term.</p>		<p>As Chapter I of the Tier I FEIS states, the purpose of the project is to provide a competitive transportation choice between Richmond and the Hampton Roads region that would effectively and efficiently expand the region's transportation system capacity and provide residents, tourists and visitors with a broader array of reliable transportation choices.</p>



ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
226	<p>Support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's (TPO) historic and valuable Resolution of last October that called for the Route 460/Southside corridor to be "designated as the High Speed Rail Corridor" and that called for eventual speeds of "more than 110 mph." Alternative 1 in the EIS reflects this plan and design, so select Alternative 1 when responding to the electronic comment form and select 110 mph. Ensure the EIS establishes the long term design level and that it plans and provides for "true high speed rail." The plan for Hampton Roads HSR should clearly describe an explicit long-term outcome that meets or exceeds the 110 mph minimum required to qualify for federal HSR funding. This final design must be explicitly documented in the Final EIS (FEIS). This is needed to ensure that any interim construction projects designed for slower speeds will be compatible with the long-term plan. This requirement will ensure that scarce transportation funds are not wasted on a short-term system that would have to be rebuilt. Along the way, we do not want to spend money twice. Ensure that the Hampton Roads corridor has a compatible design and will have equivalent levels of service as those already established for the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor to which we will be connected. Fund the Virginia High Speed Rail Crescent first and fund rail to North Carolina second. Funding for construction of the Hampton Roads HSR system should be given priority over Southeast corridor routes south of Petersburg. This preference is justified objectively by Hampton Roads' status as a major port, Virginia's largest tourist destination, and the nation's "Pentagon South," with a ridership likely to exceed any other Southeast corridor metro area. Virginia should recognize the merits of and focus on funding what we are calling the "Virginia HSR Crescent" from DC through Richmond and Petersburg to Suffolk and Norfolk. Ensure Through Service. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly document a federal commitment to assess options for eventual through service both north and south at junctions with the Southeast corridor main line at Petersburg, and the selection of the connecting train station in Petersburg should be made with this</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comments received. The intent of this study was to focus on the area between Richmond and Hampton Roads. This study was done in consideration of the ongoing SEHSR project so that the two lines would be compatible and provide greater connectivity to areas to the north and south. The Final Tier I EIS will be updated to reflect the decision of the Preferred Alternative; however, more detailed analysis on all topic areas will be conducted during the project level Tier II documentation.</p>	<p>FRA and DRPT selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comments received. The intent of this study was to focus on the area between Richmond and Hampton Roads. This study was done in consideration of the ongoing SEHSR project so that the two lines would be compatible and provide greater connectivity to areas to the north and south. The Final Tier I EIS has been updated to reflect the selection of the Preferred Alternative; however, more detailed analysis on all relevant topic areas will be conducted during the project level Tier II documentation.</p>

ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
226	<p>criterion in mind. Travelers to and from Hampton Roads should not have to change trains to access the Southeast corridor main line. Launch EIS for future southwest rail route. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly include a federal commitment to conduct an Alternatives Analysis and Tier I EIS (AA/EIS) for potential HSR passenger service to the southwest from Suffolk via Weldon NC to Raleigh in order to serve the population of Northeast North Carolina who are an integral component of the Hampton Roads metro area and to reestablish more direct contact with the NC Piedmont area. As a future concept, this additional track would provide a long desired travel method to the southwest and it would create an HSR loop off the Southeast corridor main line similar to the loop already approved for Winston-Salem in NC. Update the data in the EIS. The data used in calculating financial estimates for the various EIS alternatives should be updated. Much of the data in the EIS dates from 2004, excludes defense department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not</p>		
227	<p>Although I feel I've expressed my thoughts in support of Alternative 1, just to reiterate I'll mention that in my opinion the Commonwealth (or the nation for that matter) can't keep up with demands of road construction and bridge and road repair to meet the growing demands of increased population and auto use; the region would be in trouble if a natural disaster occurred be it weather related or terrorists for that matter; having traveled extensively in parts of the world which offers passenger rail transport it's efficient, less stressful, environmentally more friendly, cost effective for construction and for passengers, and lessens dependence on foreign oil- I choose it any time it's an option while traveling.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comments received.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
231	<p>Admiral Ray Taylor, president of the Future of Hampton Roads says it all very succinctly in the following 8 points: 1. Support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization’s (TPO) historic and valuable Resolution of last October that called for the Route 460/Southside corridor to be “designated as the High Speed Rail Corridor” and that called for eventual speeds of “more than 110 mph.” Alternative 1 in the EIS reflects this plan and design. 2. Ensure the EIS establishes the long term design level and that it plans and provides for “true high speed rail.” The plan for Hampton Roads HSR should clearly describe an explicit long-term outcome that meets or exceeds the 110 mph minimum required to qualify for federal HSR funding. This final design must be explicitly documented in the Final EIS (FEIS). This is needed to ensure that any interim construction projects designed for slower speeds will be compatible with the long-term plan. This requirement will ensure that scarce transportation funds are not wasted on a short-term system that would have to be rebuilt. Along the way, we do not want to spend money twice. 3. Ensure that the Hampton Roads corridor has a compatible design and will have equivalent levels of service as those already established for the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor to which we will be connected. 4. Fund the Virginia High Speed Rail Crescent first and fund rail to North Carolina second. Funding for construction of the Hampton Roads HSR system should be given priority over Southeast corridor routes south of Petersburg. This preference is justified objectively by Hampton Roads’ status as a major port, Virginia’s largest tourist destination, and the nation’s “Pentagon South,” with a ridership likely to exceed any other Southeast corridor metro area. Virginia should recognize the merits of and focus on funding what we are calling the “Virginia HSR Crescent” from DC through Richmond and Petersburg to Suffolk and Norfolk. 5. Ensure Through Service. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly document a federal commitment to assess options for eventual through service both north and south at junctions with the Southeast corridor main line at Petersburg, and the selection of the connecting</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comments received. The intent of this study was done in consideration of the ongoing Southeast Highspeed Rail Project so that the two lines would be compatible and provide greater connectivity to areas to the north and south. The Final Tier I EIS will be updated to reflect the decision of the Preferred Alternative; however, more detailed analysis on all topic areas will be conducted during the project level Tier II documentation.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received. The study was done in consideration of the ongoing Southeast High Speed Rail Project so that the two lines would be compatible and provide greater connectivity to areas to the north and south. The Final Tier I EIS has been updated to reflect the decision of the Preferred Alternative; however, more detailed analysis on all relevant topic areas will be conducted during the project level Tier II documentation.</p>

ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
231	<p>train station in Petersburg should be made with this criterion in mind. Travelers to and from Hampton Roads should not have to change trains to access the Southeast corridor main line. 6. Launch EIS for future southwest rail route. The Rail to Hampton Roads EIS should explicitly include a federal commitment to conduct an Alternatives Analysis and Tier I EIS (AA/EIS) for potential HSR passenger service to the southwest from Suffolk via Weldon NC to Raleigh in order to serve the population of Northeast North Carolina who are an integral component of the Hampton Roads metro area and to reestablish more direct contact with the NC Piedmont area. As a future concept, this additional track would provide a long desired travel method to the southwest and it would create an HSR loop off the Southeast corridor main line similar to the loop already approved for Winston-Salem in NC. 7. Update the data in the EIS. The data used in calculating financial estimates for the various EIS alternatives should be updated. Much of the data in the EIS dates from 2004, excludes defense department input, and assumes a third crossing that is not likely to be built. Revised cost, cost-benefit analyses, and ridership estimates must be used in documents submitted to federal authorities and properly archived if our region is to compete effectively with other metro areas for limited federal funds.</p>		

ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
238	<p>We attended the public hearing in Norfolk on 28 January, 2010 and would like to offer our personal input for the HSR proposals: 1. Specify trains designed for 110 mph MAS at least. 2. Verify/revise Alt. 1 cost analysis since Petersburg to Richmond is already covered and should not be included in the SHR-Richmond cost totals. 3. Data assumptions in the analysis are outdated at 10 years old and should be updated. 4. The 3rd crossing bridge/tunnel for SHR is no where in sight so potential impacts of that should be re-evaluated in the DEIS. 5. Travel congestion delays impacting on-time arrival for both air and automobile have become more and more prevalent with the increasing population of SHR and airline security increases. I feel train travel is a better alternative for a reliable expectation of timely arrival and is a more relaxed way to travel, especially after having had the experience of traveling around Europe by their train networks. 6. With the tremendous military presence in SHR and the extensive requirement for short duration visits to D.C. by so many military members of the different commands, contractors and other associated military support entities, as well as just the volume of potential passengers from this region (the largest population center on the East Coast not directly being served by High Speed Rail), it seems it is a gross oversight to not include SHR in the HSR corridor. Thank you for reading our input, Jim and Kaye Tice</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportaiton Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on the comments received during the public hearings. The costs associated with the Petersburg to Richmond segment of the NS/Southside route must be considered in teh anaysis of cost effectiveness. The National Environmental Policy Act and implementing Council of Environmental Quality regulations require that projects have logical termini and have independent utility. The project is defined as Richmond to Hampton Roads, not Petersburg to Norfolk. The Draft EIS must consider the costs of the Petersburg to Richmond segment in order for the project to have independent utility meaning it does not rely on the SEHSR project to be built. The SEHSR project could be re-defined as Petersburg to Raleigh so that the capital costs of the SEHSR project could be lowered. Data contained within the Tier I EIS will be updated during Tier II documentation and analysis. As explained the environmental study did not include the full third-crossing. It did include the necessary improvements preceding the third-crossing outlined int eh HRTPO long range plan as explained in Section 3.1 of the Tier I Draft EIS and the technical report "Travel Demand Methodology and Results Report", updated March 2008.</p>	<p>FRA and DRPT selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on the comments received during the public hearings. The costs associated with the Petersburg to Richmond segment of the NS/Southside route must be considered in the analysis of cost effectiveness. The National Environmental Policy Act and implementing Council of Environmental Quality regulations require that projects have logical termini and have independent utility. The project is defined as Richmond to Hampton Roads, not Petersburg to Norfolk. The Draft EIS must consider the costs of the Petersburg to Richmond segment in order for the project to have independent utility meaning it does not rely on the SEHSR project to be built. The SEHSR project could be re-defined as Petersburg to Raleigh so that the capital costs of the SEHSR project could be lowered. Data contained within the Tier I EIS will be updated during Tier II documentation and analysis. As explained the environmental study did not include the full third-crossing. It did include the necessary improvements preceding the third-crossing outlined in the HRTPO long range plan as explained in Section 3.1 and Appendix G "Travel Forecasting Methodology" of the Tier I Draft EIS.</p>

ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
241	<p>Ideally, the alternatives would include high speed rail options for both the Peninsula and the Southside with a chunnel linking the two. Minimally, high speed rail must include the Southside with a terminal that is not a sidewalk. The high speed lines from the Southside should include means for connecting with trains that travel to other southern states and to the west. Local public transit routes should allow passengers to move from their homes to the high speed rail lines with the minimum use of single occupancy cars. Currently, to get a train from the Southside, one must stand outside, regardless of weather, and wait for a bus. This is preposterous. This is hardly the kind of service one would expect in a metropolitan area that is as important to our national security as this region is and which has increasingly distinguished medical and higher educational institutions among other outstanding resources. Having been a passenger of high speed rail in Spain as well as having used their efficient, user-friendly public transit system, I cannot wait for work to begin on our high speed rail project. The sacrifices and inconvenience during the long building process will be no greater than what we experience now, but the benefits of the outcome will make it all worthwhile.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
242	<p>Briefly mentioned previously that Hampton Roads is perceived as a cul-de-sac, this area should really be a destination point for tourism and a gateway for commerce, due to the proximity of the oceanfront and the port facility is in this area. High speed rail is critically important to bring needed economic development to the area and expand the transportation options for residents. Having said that, the enhanced high speed rail that exceed the 110 mph design category requirements is the only option to consider. I believe it is the only option that qualifies for federal HSR funding, thus the final design choice must be explicitly documented in the final EIS. Thanks for the opportunity for citizens to express their position on HSR.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
246	<p>Option 1 is the least harmful to the environment in the long-term. A rail station in downtown Norfolk will allow riders to take light rail, bus, bike, walk, or ferry over to the station. Tourists will leave their cars at home, thus eliminating more pollution to our air and water and reducing the need for more vehicular parking. There is very little incentive for someone on the Southside to drive up to Newport News to jump on a train to Richmond. Newport News is practically halfway to Richmond already. There is more incentive for someone to drive down to Norfolk from the Peninsula to take a train to Petersburg and then onward to Raleigh. The existing Amtrak train is sufficient to move riders on the Peninsula to Richmond to jump on a high speed train there. Option 1, with speeds greater than 110 mph, is the only option worth investing a great deal of money into.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
249	<p>As a resident who moved to Virginia Beach from New York in 2003, 1 month before Hurricane Isabelle hit Hampton Roads, the safety issues involved in living in this coastal community became clear right away. Had that storm ended up a Category 4 as originally predicted, the issue of evacuation (which WAS a big issue even in a Category 1 storm) could have proven catastrophic as we have seen in other areas over the years. Upon living in this community for 7 years, I have come to understand that aside from the issue stated above, this is a community with unlimited potential for economic development and tourism, and has already proven this even being somewhat disconnected from the rest of the state by bridges and tunnels. The traffic congestion is a deterrent for cross consumerism with the Peninsula and that sentiment goes both ways. I strongly support enhanced alternative #1.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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250	<p>An enhanced Alternative 1 will most effectively and economically serve the greatest number of people who, importantly, have the greatest distance to travel. With service to South Hampton Roads the ridership catchment area would, in addition to Hampton Roads, immediately attract a significant number of both residents and tourists traveling to the northeast area of North Carolina. The enhanced Alternative 1 would, with a local collector schedule, increase healthcare, educational, and employment opportunities in one of the most transportation under served populations of the State of Virginia; those living in the Southside, region of Virginia, east of Petersburg to the Atlantic. This area has no means of convenient and safe access to passenger rail, interstate highway, or any other limited access highway connection to major population centers in the state. In reviewing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement pertaining to the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project, there appears to be an absence of any serious analysis or consideration of the overall economic impact of the public (local, state, and federal) rail development, investments on the economic return of such investments. I believe that such consideration would demonstrate the enormous value of improved access to, not only the Hampton Roads and Southside area and population, but to the entire State of Virginia.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received. More detailed documentation and analysis will occur during the Tier II documentation of the Preferred Alternative.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>



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251	<p>Ideally, service should continue all the way to Virginia Beach to service the vacation-goers that jam Interstate 64. This may also make the Peninsula high-speed service option more attractive because it would serve Williamsburg. But the higher-speed route that serves Chesapeake and Norfolk would provide the broadest coverage for the Hampton Roads region in terms of transit reach, and it gets passengers closer to Virginia Beach. Williamsburg's trip would not see significant speed enhancement from high-speed service ... though it could need more than three daily trips. Whatever alignment is chosen, I support the one that comes closest to realizing the long-term ideal of high-speed rail service directly to Virginia Beach. Please consider the long term when making this decision.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
254	<p>It is critical for our region to expand our transportation options and high speed rail is a viable solution for us. It will be criminal if we miss out on this opportunity, and it will negatively impact this region's growth and development. If we don't seize this opportunity now, I believe it will have irreversable repercussions for the Hampton Roads region. We are already at a disadvantage in terms of being able to easily access this region because of the way the interstate system was constructed years ago. If we don't take advantage of this opportunity for high speed rail we will be in a very similar situation. I fully support Alternative 1.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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258	<p>There are several reasons why a spur from the Southeast High-Speed Rail line should connect Richmond to Hampton Roads via the Southside. In fact, Hampton Roads deserves through service with one-ticket rides in both directions. It is the most populated region in Virginia. In fact, it is the largest metropolitan area between D.C. and Atlanta. In particular, it is home to a significant number of government-employees and military members who are likely to make use of HSR traveling north to Washington and Connecticut, and south to Pensacola. It is also an attractive tourist destination. Between just Virginia Beach and Williamsburg, the area brings in hundreds of thousands of visitors every year. With that, our potential rail ridership is larger than any other metro area in the SEHSR corridor.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

ID #	Comment	Old Response - December 2010	New Response - February 2012
259	<p>It is vital to the Hampton Roads region's overall transportation functionality and desirability that we are included in the rail transportation improvements being considered for the eastern seaboard. Connecting Norfolk via high-speed rail to Richmond, then either Washington/New York or Raleigh/Durham would provide a much-needed alternative to further congesting the Interstate 64 corridor, including the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel. The rail enhancement would certainly be a more fuel-efficient, less-polluting/more-environmentally-friendly transportation expenditure than merely adding lanes to I-64. It would further connect Hampton Roads to its logical neighboring regions in the Northeast and Southeast corridors, for the benefit of business, tourism, and personal interests. Certainly providing an alternative exit route in a hurricane emergency would be an additional plus. Norfolk is the already established hub location that makes most sense as the high speed rail terminus in Hampton Roads, and the existing Norfolk Southern line from Norfolk to Petersburg could be fairly easily and inexpensively adapted for this use. With Norfolk Southern being headquartered in Norfolk, there would be no question as to the quality of service that Norfolk Southern's involvement in this alternative would provide. This is a very forward-looking transportation plan that is essential for the enhancement of transportation into and out of Hampton Roads, and I strongly urge its approval. Thank you very much!!</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
260	<p>In my opinion, even alternative 1 as currently proposed is not adequate for the Southside. I support an "enhanced" alternative 1, i.e., more than 6 trains and true high speed rail. That is, high speed rail that uses state of the art high speed cars and track technology. The I-64 corridor is a parking lot most of the time. A Norfolk to Richmond to DC connection would greatly reduce that congestion, do wonders for air quality, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and enhance our national security by giving the many military bases here more transportation flexibility. It's a no-brainer, the Southside needs REAL high speed rail as soon as possible.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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261	The environment is being hurt more by the continued use of cars to drive from the Southside than any train will cause. You will always have some environmental groups complain, but progress must occur or the region will lose more jobs and growth will grind to a halt.	The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comment received.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.

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262	<p>This EIS needs to be UPDATED of all its errors and antiquated information, such as the double accounting of cost for Option one on Petersburg to Richmond, the factoring in of the third crossing, and so on. Hampton Roads is the largest metropolitan area directly on the Atlantic Ocean between greater NY and south Florida, and the majority of its population, 1.1 Million people, live on the Southside, hence the obvious correct choice is Option 1. Hampton Roads is the SECOND most important MSA in the nation in terms of national security and defense readiness, so THIS vital statistic should alone place Hampton Roads on the top of the list! Now that LIGHT RAIL is a reality, such a light rail system could conceivably network throughout Hampton Roads (including over to the Peninsula via a new multi-modal bridge replacement for the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel), and such a light rail system, being founded in Norfolk, would make sense to terminate the High Speed Rail line in downtown Norfolk. For the HSR line, it is important that it be TRUE HSR design and not "higher". It needs to be speeds of 110 MPH or more, and from the get-go. Also, Hampton Roads should get NO LESS THAN SAME-SEAT service to its destinations, such as Washington DC or NYC. Eventually, if a new interstate is built to Raleigh, then either use the right of way thereto OR the Weldon existing RR right of way, for a future HSR system to points south and southwest to Raleigh, Atlanta, and Miami. With this HSR funding, the Peninsula should IMMEDIATELY get its passenger rail service upgraded to where it performs efficiently and on time for the 600,000 people over there. Finally, the CRTB and the VDRPT need to endorse the Resolution adopted by the Hampton Roads TPO which unanimously voted for Alternative 1, and unanimously asked for TRUE HIGH SPEED RAIL. Thank you.</p>	<p>The information provided in the Tier I EIS will be updated during the Tier II documentation and analysis. The cost of the segment between Richmond and Petersburg is included in the capital costs because the project is defined as having logical termini at Richmond and either Newport News or Norfolk so that the project has independent utility as required by federal law and NEPA regulations. The project is not Petersburg to Norfolk but Richmond to Hampton Roads. The project includes both costs and the ridership generated by the Richmond-Petersburg segment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative based on public comments received.</p>	<p>The information provided in the Tier I EIS will be updated during the Tier II Environmental Documentation and analysis. The cost of the segment between Richmond and Petersburg is included in the capital costs because the project is defined as having logical termini at Richmond and either Newport News or Norfolk so that the project has independent utility as required by federal law and NEPA regulations. The project is not Petersburg to Norfolk but Richmond to Hampton Roads. The project includes both costs and the ridership generated by the Richmond-Petersburg segment. Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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269	It looks like DRPT has done a thorough job of looking at alternatives for improved rail service to the Hampton Roads Area. Based on the impacts presented on your website, it appears that Alternative 2b provides the most bang for the buck with fewer environmental impacts.	The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
272	I strongly support an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO Robert C. Goodman Jr. Kaufman & Canoles, P.C.	The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
273	I live in Norfolk but recently accepted a position with the federal government that is based in Arlington, VA. Thanks to modern technology, I can largely work from home, however I do have to travel quite often to the home office. The current Amtrak schedule in only having two weekday and one weekend per day departures to the DC area makes rail a very inconvenient option for commuting. I am completely hopeful that we are able to get high speed rail in Norfolk as I could be so much more efficient in my work if I were able to ride the train as opposed to drive to work. Thank you for all of your work on this initiative. Kelly Stefanko kstefanko@hotmail.com	The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.

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274	The impact on the environment, I believe is greater on the alternative of the Southside High Speed train. We already have the CSX track that runs through the Peninsula, therefore, no further impact on the environment.	The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
275	In regards to the alternatives under review, I feel that the high speed Southside route should utilize the same passenger rail cars as the Washington-to-Richmond segment so that passengers can conceivably stay on the same passenger car for a direct rail trip. Secondly, the 110+ mph passenger rail cars are more efficient on a 110+ mile line therefore lowering their overall ownership cost. Lastly, the 110+ mph cars would be interchangeable with the rail cars on the new rail segments being built between Washington, D.C. and Charlotte, NC.	The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.

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278	<p>I am strongly in favor of the proposed extension of rail service to the Southside. I am a small-business owner located in Norfolk. I am a former Federal employee, so a high proportion of the training and consulting work that I do now takes place in the Washington metro area. When travelling now, I am often forced to drive because direct airfare from Norfolk to Reagan National Airport is prohibitively expensive and train service is not available to return to this area in the evenings during most of the week. Even though ultimately I pass on my charges for travel to Federal agencies, I can't in good conscience opt for a \$1000 roundtrip air ticket for the trip to DC. Current service requires transportation to Newport News either by bus or car with limited parking availability to leave one's own car long-term if the Amtrak service would match the required dates and travel schedule. I don't think I need to describe the difficulties of driving I-95 and I-64 from Norfolk to Washington and back. Those are well-known. With the number of military and other Federal agencies in this area who often send representatives to Washington, I am sure I am one among many who would gladly utilize rail service if it was more readily available. Please support this effort. I predict that it will result in benefits beyond just relieving traffic congestion. For those of us who regularly travel the corridor, it will improve quality of life, will reduce gasoline consumption, and will open new business opportunities.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>



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281	<p>Many business consultants, like myself, live in South Hampton Roads. We use conference calls, etc., but we still need to travel frequently to the Research Triangle area of NC, to Richmond, to Washington, Baltimore, and beyond. Driving is a hassle, and a psychological strain, with unpredictable timing and no opportunity to relax. Air travel is very expensive and time consuming for short trips -- and often fraught with uncertainty and delays. Besides, many of us truly ENJOY rail travel. We have experienced good, predictable, comfortable rail travel in Europe, Asia, the US northeast corridor, etc. We can plan our trips with precision -- knowing we will have time during the trip to think carefully about the coming meetings and presentations, make phone calls, read, sleep, look out the window, daydream, and arrive refreshed and ready for the business at hand. We business consultants NEED AND WANT high-speed rail in South Hampton Roads.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
282	<p>1. Maximizing the number of travel options is very important. When traveling to/from Norfolk, the unpredictability of tunnel traffic makes it nearly impossible to be certain of travel times to Richmond or DC. 2. Exorbitant airfares between ORF and DCA inhibit air travel; trains would provide a reasonably priced travel alternative. 3. It is simply unbelievable that the three most populous cities in Virginia (Virginia Beach, Norfolk, and Chesapeake) are not currently served by passenger rail service. 4. Enhanced passenger rail service would enhance the region's economic development initiatives and bolster the important tourist industry. 5. The economics of adding rail service are modest compared to the cost of increasing highway capacity. Any auto traffic diverted from the roads by passenger rail service would help reduce congestion at bridge tunnels and on Interstate 64. 6. The current bus-to-rail system from Downtown Norfolk to Newport News is too cumbersome and time consuming to be embraced.</p>	<p>The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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288	<p>To Whom This May Concern: I have a very simple point of view about the proposed high speed rail connection between Hampton Roads and Richmond/ Washington, D.C.: I have lived in Hampton Roads for 37 years. I used to make frequent automobile visits to D.C.and through Richmond to Charlottesville. By automobile I could make D.C. easily in three hours and Richmond in one and 1/2. I now have to leave myself at least five hours to D.C. and two and 1/2 to Richmond. Needless to say, I make less frequent business and personal visits. Multiply me by the entire population of Hampton Roads and all of the military, port, tourism and technology related travelers from outside the area, and you get lost income, lost jobs, and dangerous congestion in emergency situations. My entire family of five supports an enhanced Alternative 1 of the EIS that reflects the position of the HRTPO. Thank you for considering our point of view. Jackson H. Pope Bernice F Pope</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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289	<p>Public Information Officer Department of Rail &amp; Public Transit 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102 Richmond, VA 23219 As a concerned citizen of Hampton Roads I am writing to encourage the extension of high-speed rail service to Hampton Roads along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor. As compared to the other alternatives being considered this route has to have one of the best returns on investment given the existing infrastructure that only needs to be enhanced to accommodate the 110 MPH target speed. To not consider connecting this region to the north/south rail system that will ultimately service the east coast would be a travesty in preparing for efficient, cost effective transportation alternatives for the future. The cost and maintenance requirements to provide a highway system to serve the needs of this important region of Virginia and the country will become unattainable in the future. National security given the importance of the area to all branches of the military; economic issues (revenue and jobs) given the importance of the port, historic Williamsburg and tourism with the beauty of the oceanfront (5 million tourists annually) are just a couple of reasons this investment would reap large continuous meaningful returns far into the future. I am sure many other individuals and organizations have better articulated more details and reasons for this rail route so I will close. Thanks for your consideration, Craig Poppen</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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356	No public transportation system makes money. Rates must allow a family of four to travel for costs close to that of automobile travel. How will the state raise the funds to subsidize rail travel?	<p>Public transportation users do not pay the full cost of riding the buses or trains. The difference between fare revenues and costs are made up by taxes collected from the general population. Public transportation systems across the world are subsidized because they provide meaningful and substantial public benefits that are realized by the general population and not just the users of the bus or passenger rail service. Air travelers do not pay the full cost of flying in the value of the ticket purchased. Highway users do not pay the full cost of building and maintaining roads either. Amtrak is subsidized through general appropriations of Congress, which means the funding generally comes from income taxes. All forms of public services provided for the benefit and economic welfare of the general population are "subsidized." If the users of public libraries had to pay the full cost of "borrowing" books from the library, it would discourage the use of libraries. Because libraries benefit the general welfare, the library is supported by taxes, generally based on the value of properties in the area being served. Amtrak fares average between 15 cents and 25 cents per passenger mile. In some instances, driving could be cheaper for a family of four than taking the train. Virginia has not yet determined how to pay for the costs associated with operating the higher speed passenger rail service not fully covered by passenger fares. Recently, Virginia started state-supported conventional speed passenger rail services between Lynchburg and Washington, DC. The service covered its operating costs from fare receipts for the month of December 2009. More study is required to determine fare structure and operating costs.</p>	<p>Public transportation users do not pay the full cost of riding the buses or trains. The difference between fare revenues and costs are made up by taxes collected from the general population. Public transportation systems across the world are subsidized because they provide meaningful and substantial public benefits that are realized by the general population and not just the users of the bus or passenger rail service. Air travelers do not pay the full cost of flying in the value of the ticket purchased. Highway users do not pay the full cost of building and maintaining roads either. Amtrak is subsidized through general appropriations from Congress, which means the funding generally comes from income taxes. All forms of public services provided for the benefit and economic welfare of the general population are "subsidized." If the users of public libraries had to pay the full cost of "borrowing" books from the library, it would discourage the use of libraries. Because libraries benefit the general welfare, the library is supported by taxes, generally based on the value of properties in the area being served. Amtrak fares average between 15 cents and 25 cents per passenger mile. In some instances, driving could be cheaper for a family of four than taking the train. Virginia has not yet determined how to pay for the costs associated with operating the higher speed passenger rail service not fully covered by passenger fares. Recently, Virginia started state-supported conventional speed passenger rail services between Lynchburg and Washington, DC. More study is required to determine fare structure and operating costs.</p>

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375	Ver in favor of high speed rail to Norfolk. 90 mph OT is sufficient and frequent.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
376	Any choice other than 110 mph trains to Southside Hampton Roads wil sub optimize investment in transportation options to: 1 - Improve economic development with alternative xportation options 2 - improve the environment by getting cars off the road 3 - leave Hampton Roads as an afterthought (cul de sac) in Commonwealth xportation planning.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
379	Southside ridership study seems underestimated relative to Peninsula HST program; if current usage is at 400k, the Peninsula High Speed Rail option is only slighjtly incremental - not multiplicative. Whereas, the Southside stands to be significantly incremental and take advantage of military transitions of family members and personnel btw Norfolk and Washington DC. Consequently, I believe the Southside option is considerably greater in ridership than reflected. I believe ride demand is underestimated from SS and overestimated from Peninsula based on current ridership.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
380	As someone who will soon have to travel between Hampton Roads (Southside) and Richmond more frequently for work I am excited about the potential of a high speed rail system coming to Hampton Roads. I think its vital for the growth of this region.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.

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384	I believe that the loop concept for all forms of transportation between the peninsula and southside would be the best alternative - even though it would be the most expensive. If this could be developed with Carny Island development it could provide the 3 crossing that would be so important to the economic vitality of our area.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.
392	I support an enhances (high speed) alternative 1, but would rather see another option - a line down the Peninsula with a new crossing to Norfolk, then to Chesapeake and through the Carolinas.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. Early on in the planning process, an alternative was considered that included a new crossing of the James River. This alternative was dropped from further consideration as it was found to be too costly and would likely have	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. Early on in the planning process, an alternative was considered that included a new crossing of the James River. This alternative was dropped from further consideration.

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401	<p>I attended the forum on Thursday in Norfolk. The consensus of the audience could not have been clearer, nor the level of interest in the subject. What disturbs me greatly is the Comparative Analysis of Alternatives, specifically the ridership estimates for the various alternatives. To claim that total ridership would be essentially the same (around 1.1 million) regardless of alternative is simply not reality-based. To say that the same number of rides would occur even if there were no service to the Southside (2b) makes no sense. Who came up with such ridiculous estimates, and how? Anyone who lives here would instantly realize that is totally illogical. Either someone (perhaps from another area) does not realize what a barrier the tunnel crossings are, or the numbers have been manipulated. If I want to take the train to Richmond but first have to fight the tunnel traffic to get to Newport News allowing plenty of time for delays I might as well stay in my car and continue on to Richmond as the worst of the trip is over at that point. Most anyone who lives on the Southside would tell you the same thing. I cannot speak to the other numbers in the Analysis but the ridership numbers make me question the accuracy of the rest of the report. I do understand that the cost figures for Southside service are misleading at best as they include the capital costs of the line between Richmond and Petersburg, which will be built as part of the Richmond to North Carolina service regardless. Finally, as far as I could tell the EIS does not consider the impact of light rail now being built which would tie in directly to a Harbor Park terminus in alternative 1.</p>	<p>Travel to Richmond by train from Hampton Roads is not very time competitive with auto trips when compared to longer distance markets such as Hampton Roads to/from the Northeast Corridor. In the shorter distance markets such as those within the Richmond/Hampton Roads corridor, intercity rail service is less competitive with door-to-door automobile travel time. Under all of the alternatives, most of the forecasted ridership is traveling longer distances (Hampton Roads to/from DC and north). As the distance of the total trip increases, the negative impact of extended access/egress times decreases. It's in these markets where we expect some Southside-based trips to utilize Newport News-based service. We do not expect to see Southside-based travelers use Newport News-based service to travel to/from Richmond.</p>	<p>Ridership forecasts are inherently uncertain and subject to some degree of inaccuracy simply because it is difficult to predict the future. The travel demand model accounts for future probable delays at the tunnel crossings by assigning longer travel times to each and every trip crossing between Norfolk and Newport News. As pointed out in the Tier I Draft EIS, the elapsed travel times for trips originating in Norfolk and elsewhere on the Southside have longer access travel time to get to the train station in Newport News. However, some would still be expected to make these trips in the future. Currently, a substantial amount of the ridership at the existing Amtrak station in Newport News is coming from or going to the Southside (over 50% in one Amtrak survey). This is in spite of the fact that the existing Newport News station is a longer distance access to/from most Southside places.</p>

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461	<p>I emphatically support the TPO Resoution for Option 1 as the recommended alternative to improve rail service to Hampton Road. The Environmental Study to determine which alternatives should be selected needs to be a complete, thorough and comprehensive study. The current EIS Data Base needs to be updated to consider all the options to provide compatible and equivalent high speed rail service to the Hampton Roads area. The study should also address the next steps in the EIS, and there needs to be a committment to access through service and one seat travel north and south. There should also be a committment to study rail service to the southwest as a follow on step.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>
468	<p>We endorse the regional position statement, strengthened alternative #1, designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor for high speed rail and enhancing the CSX/I-64 corridor for intercity I passenger rail service. We would use such service to Richmond and Washington, and probably on to the Northeast, when it becomes available. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Judy and Bill Miner 1006 Hanover Avenue. Norfolk, VA 23508-1229</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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477	<p>Unfortunatly I can not attend the hearing but I want to thank you all what you are doing and add my voice to the chorus saying that we need high speed rail to come through Norfolk. I live in the city of Norfolk and just a couple of months ago, was fortunate to get a federal government position which is based in Arlington. Thanks to modern day technology, it looks like I'll be able to accomplish enough of my work via the computer that I won't have to move but I will need to be in Arlington at least once a month. I checked the Amtrak schedule and its abymssmal with only one early morning departure in that direction on Sundays and one morning/one evening departure on the week days. Since neither is convenient to my schedule, I am unlike to be able to use rail as it currently exists for Southeastern Virginia as a way to commute to my new job. I was very dissapointed about that, but remain hopeful that high speed rail will soon be an option. Thanks for all the work you and your group is doing in this area, Kelly Stefanko</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Viriginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
494	<p>I support The Hampton Roads Partnership endorsement of the resolution of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) made October 30, 2009 that encourages DRPT to adopt an enhanced alternative #1. I fully endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, D.C. to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor as the Regional High-Speed Rail corridor (110mph and 90 percent reliability) designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph. And, I'd like to enhance the intercity passenger rail service (89mph and 90 percent reliability) along the CSX/I-64 corridor. Both can be done simultaneously and incrementally with the first steps being the extension of passenger rail to Norfolk and improving the on-time performance and reliability of the current passenger rail service to Williamsburg and Newport News. •Single seat service is needed from Hampton Roads/Richmond to destinations on the Northeast Corridor; and •Richmond/Hampton Roads needs to be the Southern-most terminus for the Northeast Corridor.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Viriginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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495	<p>I would like the wetlands, natural spaces, and noise pollution considered for the residential areas. It is important to have sustainable growth with a balance between environment and economic development. It may be an option to develop eco-tourism areas within the train route. There are options to economic growth and environmental responsibilities. I do not support non action or the elimination of the Southside as options. I would like to be more involved as a citizen on this project.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process. In the future, there may be additional opportunities for your involvement during the Tier II phase.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process. In the future, there will be additional opportunities for your involvement during the development of Tier II Environmental Documentation.</p>

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520	<p>Please find attached a letter from the Virginia Beach Hotel Motel Association regarding our Board’s position in support of the designation of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor for the regional high speed rail corridor, in conjunction with the CSX/I-64 corridor on the Peninsula for enhancement of intercity passenger rail service. I plan to be at the public hearing in Norfolk on January 28th to speak, representing the VBHMA’s position. If you have any questions or need to speak to me directly, please call 757.428.8015 or email me at nancyperry@vbhma.com Sincerely, Nancy Perry Marscheider Executive Director Virginia Beach Hotel Motel Association ----- January 21, 2010 To Whom It May Concern: In the January 2010 meeting of the Virginia Beach Hotel Association Board of Directors, a motion was carried to support the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization’s resolution supporting regional high speed and intercity passenger rail. The VBHMA supports the designation of the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 Corridor as the “High-Speed Rail Corridor” to Hampton Roads, and in conjunction with the high-speed corridor, the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor on the Peninsula. The Virginia Beach Hotel Motel Association represents more than 90 hotel-member properties within our city limits, as well as more than 100 associate members, including related businesses from both Southside Hampton Roads as well as the Peninsula. Should you require additional information from the VBHMA, please contact our office directly at 757.428.8015 or by email at nancyperry@vbhma.com. Sincerely, Nancy Perry Marscheider Executive Director Virginia Beach Hotel Motel Association</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS.</p>

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522	<p>In order to address the community transportation needs, economic growth toward remaining a thriving community, we will unfortunately need to make sacrifices. I believe it is possible to look toward a balance regarding technological and environmental conflicts. Any development raises environmental and historical land use issues, but I believe the long term benefits of alternative 1 outway the sacrifices that will need to be made with environmental issues.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
524	<p>High Speed rail to Norfolk and enhanced Amtrak to the Peninsular side of Hampton Roads is so important to our region so that we will remain competitive with other cities in the USA. We must have the same quality one seat service as the other metro areas and we need it now, not later. Please consider rail from Richmond to Norfolk first, before continuing south to NC. Our route will likely be one of the least expensive routes to build and yet provide the most benefit and ridership of any link or line. Rail is needed for life safety reasons. We need more ways to evacuate when time is limited to leave. We've experienced great "log jams" in travel due to simple problems like a tunnel's broken pump, and must move quickly for different solutions to our transportation needs, and rail is ideal. We need to re-connect "pentagon south" w DC. This will create jobs for HR, and allow our region to better serve the rest of the country. Even though Hampton Roads is geographically close to DC, due to poor transportation, it feels like we're states apart. If we were connected to the DC area with affordable, reliable, fast passenger rail service, our Businesses would grow and we'd attract other offices and gov't contractors that compliment Northern Va's vibrant business hub. Hi Speed rail to Norfolk will insure growth in our tourist business. Since most of our tourists are within a days drive, and most come from the NE, rail would be a great way to visit and would increase our revenue through tourism and would generate jobs. Mass transit incl light rail is solidifying us as a region and hi speed will Connect us to important trade markets leading to jobs.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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525	I strongly agree with Alternative 1.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
529	The Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is very important to our region. This can be an economic benefit to both metro areas. I go back and forth to Richmond (from Norfolk) on business regularly and would consider this a viable alternative (assuming it is reliable and fast). Please move forward with this project!	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
531	Subject: Support for Public Transportation I am 100% in support of a high-speed rail corridor to Hampton Roads and enhanced intercity passenger rail service to the region. Not only would it facilitate my son's travel to and from college in Philadelphia (he does not have a car on campus and comes home by train-we have to pick him up either in Newport News or Richmond) but it furthers my interest in replacing cars with trains, a more environmentally friendly and less energy intensive form of transportation. I would be thrilled to take the train to and from Richmond instead of driving. Marina Liacouras Phillips	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.



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532	<p>I am writing to express my strong support for an enhanced Alternative 1 high speed rail connection to Hampton Roads that reflects the position of the HRTPO. As the Director of Federal Building Programs with an international Architecture, Engineering and Construction company, I travel frequently to Washington, DC. Like many of my counterparts in my company, other private industry and our government clients, I currently find driving to be the most convenient and viable mode of transportation, in absence of an efficient rail option and affordable airfares. Having said that, the driving option requires an unacceptable amount of unproductive time, the additional cost of an overnight hotel stay, and adds to costly congestion on the highways of Hampton Roads, Richmond and Washington, DC. I am always amazed at the number of cars that travel the same route on a regular basis. I am advised that there is a similar continuous influx of traffic into Hampton Roads by government and industry to conduct business, and families coming to our tourist destination. Adding high-speed rail to Hampton Roads, combined with Light Rail, would provide me and others with the option of using an integrated mass transit system without ever getting on a highway. The payback would be quick, as Hampton Roads' competitiveness in business and tourism increases, required investments in road construction and maintenance decrease, new businesses and government offices feel confident in locating here, and residents are provided another evacuation in the event of an emergency. Sincerely, Gary F. Arnold, AIA, LEED AP Director - Federal Building Programs</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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533	I am supporting the high speed rail corridor to Hampton Roads and the enhancement of intercity passenger rail service to the region. King & Queen Apartments, LLC 732 Scotland Street Williamsburg, VA 23185 757-220-0000 Office 757-220-1966 Fax kqapts@yahoo.com	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
534	Dear Sir or Madam, I am writing regarding the proposed link of high speed rail to Hampton Roads. I strongly support of an enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO. This Alternative best reflects the long term transportation needs for the Hampton Roads region. Sincerely, Thomas M. Johnston	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
536	To Whom It May Concern: I am writing to voice my support for high speed rail service to Hampton Roads. Specifically, I support the position endorsed by the HRTPO (an enhanced Alternative 1 designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhancing the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor). Thank You, Stephen R. Davis Willcox & Savage, P.C.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.

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538	<p>As the owner of a Hampton Roads based business that does projects throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region and a long time resident of the area, I strongly support the extension of high speed rail to Hampton Roads through the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor. I specifically support the enhanced Alternative 1 that reflects the position of the HRTPO. With dwindling resources available for highway construction and with an increased understanding of the environmental consequences of our over-dependence on the automobile, rail is the best option for increasing access to our region. It will also provide another means of evacuation in the event of a natural disaster.</p> <p>Sincerely, Bruce Prichard, AIA, IIDA</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
542	<p>To whom it may concern, Please accept this email indicating my very strong support of high speed rail access along the Route 460 corridor to Hampton Roads. With the largest population concentrated in southside Hampton Roads, and light rail already under construction, and the Norfolk Southern line location, it is the obvious best solution to serve Hampton Roads with high speed rail. Thank you, Tom Langley Tom B. Langley, PE, LS President Langley &amp; McDonald 309 Lynnhaven Parkway Virginia Beach, VA 23452 757.463.4306 (o) 757.463.3563 (f) tlangley@languelismcdonald.com www.languelismcdonald.com</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
543	<p>I am very concerned that Hampton Roads will once again be passed by. In the 60's, the Interstate Road system was designed and left this area at the end of cul-de-sac. I am now seeing that we stand the chance for this to happen once again with High Speed Rail. Hampton Roads needs High Speed Rail. We need it to reduce our dependence on building highways and tunnels. We need it for commerce. We need it for tourism. We need it for a lot of very good reasons. For once, this Region has a plan that has been agreed on by all of the cities and counties in the Region. We have a common vision of what should be done. Please support High Speed Rail for Hampton Roads. Hank Boyd</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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544	<p>I strongly support a high speed rail connection to the Southside of Hampton Roads. Hampton Roads is a unique national asset, containing a huge concentration of federal activities and a critical port. The region houses operations of 16 departments and agencies of the Executive Branch of the federal government including all five military services. It is home to the nation's largest naval facility, provides primary air defense to our nation's Capitol, and homeland security to our port and seacoast. Dependable, efficient and cost effective travel to and from the D.C. area is vital to both civilian and military operations and to the economy of this area and the rest of the region served by our port.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
557	<p>The Penninsul cThe Peninsula current has rail service to Richmond and connects to the rail corridor, while South Hampton Roads does not. The road connections between South Hampton Roads and the Peninsula is a significant deterrent or impediment to the use of the existing rail transportation on the Peninsula by resident of South Hampton Roads. Having real passenger rail service in South Hampton Roads will enhance economic growth and competitiveness of the region, not having passenger rail service will have a negative impact on the economic growth and competitiveness of the region. In addition, the large military presence and other government facilities would benefit greatly from having passenger rail service in South Hampton Road to Richmond and the Washington, D.C. area. I work for a company that has offices in South Hampton Roads, Richmond and northern Virginia. Passenger rail service to Richmond and the Washington, D.C. area would provide a significant transportation alternative for my company.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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559	<p>The Southside transportation needs has been neglected ever since I moved here. This is needed to improve travel and traffic along with the side benefit of evacuation. We are in desperate need of high speed transportation options between Virginia Beach - Richmond and DC.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
560	<p>I write to support the development of high speed rail between Richmond and Hampton Roads along the 460 corridor. Hampton Roads is a key asset to the Commonwealth and the nation. Efficient transportation systems are vital to Hampton Roads' ability to achieve the strategic objectives of: support to the nation's defense, tourism and economic growth. Please record my voice in favor of the proposal to extend high speed rail to Hampton Roads.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
563	<p>Usage of the existing Norfolk Southern corridor makes so much sense from a number of different levels. The major points being the ability to keep costs much lower, decrease environmental impact since much of the infrastructure already exists, as well as the route being as straight as an arrow which allows a train to get up to speed and maintain.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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567	<p>The Hampton Roads population of over 1.6 million is currently not served by passenger rail service and there are few transportation alternatives for entering and leaving the region. A high speed rail connection with enhance tourism by giving visitors an alternative the will preclude sitting in tunnel backups. It will grow our ability to market the port of Hampton Roads by improving linkages along the Rt 460 and invigorate the economy along some more depressed areas in Southampton County and beyond. It will connect our defense industry and military personnel with dependable travel to DC, making day trips again possible. It will provide our citizens and those in NE North Carolina with an alternative evacuation mode that will help mitigate the gridlock on our roads should evacuation every be necessary. This linkage for the region to high speed rail may do more to effect the future economic prosperity of the area than any other single decision we will make for decades to come. We are a large metro area that must be served by passenger rail to be competitive in the future.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
568	<p>I strongly support development of high speed rail for the 460 corridor.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
579	<p>The Hampton Roads area is the largest population center between Washington,DC and Atlanta. To not have the South Side region of this area with the majority of the population and business not served by rail is stupid. There are so many other compelling reasons from hurricane evacuation to military readiness that also support high speed rail to the south side of Hampton Roads that I can't understand why anyone would be against it.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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584	<p>Regarding the "alternatives under review", improvements to the Norfolk Southern route are paramount for several reasons. It is a relatively straight shot from Petersburg to Norfolk requiring less investment per mile to get it "higher speed ready" and a willing contractor to upgrade the rail for this service (Norfolk Southern). Otherwise, it is an underutilized section of rail. The most populated concentration of people on the entire east coast of the U.S. between Jacksonville and New York needs to be connected to a north/south service for several reasons. The high concentration of military personnel from all 5 branches which serve our nations capital in varying ways need high speed, effective transportation alternatives to and from our nations capital. With the high cost of road transportation upgrades and the undecided solutions and funding approaches to improve transportation in the highly congested, Hampton Roads area, higher speed rail would be a welcomed offering. Finally, with Southside Hampton Roads embracing local light rail in Norfolk with future expansions into other southside cities contemplated, a coordinated connection from light rail to higher speed rail in a downtown Norfolk transfer facility would extend higher speed rail to the masses.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
587	<p>Given Hampton Roads unique market characteristics, it is crucial that the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project is approved as soon as possible to help enhance economic growth in our Region. Hampton Roads offers the single best return on investment of any rail corridor in the country.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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592	I support the recommendation of the HRTPO which provides new, high speed service to south Hampton Roads and improved service and reliability to existing service on the Peninsula.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
597	I am in full support of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. Each year the traffic problems increase, making commutes to the Southside unbearable, especially during rush hour traffic and it's only going to get worse. We need to address the transportation issues now and work on solving. Furthermore, I hope we never have to evacuate this area due to an emergency, as it will be a nightmare and many unnecessary lives lost.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
600	The rail ways that are chosen should have the least effect on the environment and forcing current residents out of their property. Good solid comon sense should prevail.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
601	Endorse the extension of high-speed rail service from Washington, DC to Richmond/Petersburg and the Hampton Roads region, designating a high-speed rail corridor along the Norfolk Southern/Route 460 corridor designated ultimately at speeds of more than 110 mph, and enhance the intercity passenger rail service along the CSX/I-64 corridor	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.



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607	I do not know a great deal about the environmental study as I have read only a small part of the available information. However, it would seem to me that the lesser of the total impacts would come from the 460 route. There are factors that lie outside the physical corridor impact alone, especially the impact of total travel time for the largest number of people.	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.
610	The southside of Hampton Roads has more space to build the rails and the state should seek help from Norfolk Southern. Norfolk is the economic center of this region and should not be overlooked by the state. No one from the southside will want to fight ridiculous traffic just to sit in traffic at the tunnel and then drive a longer distance to the station on the peninsula. A station situated in Norfolk/Va Beach would serve a greater purpose to a section of the region striving to be more progressive (and not receiving help from the state if the rails are put in the suburbs).	Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.	Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.

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615	<p>This is a view from NoVa. One travels from here to Hampton Roads occasionally. One needs only one destination within Hampton Roads. The more high speed trains to that destination, the better. More trains to/from the destination to which one is ticketed are preferable to fewer since that gives the traveler to Hampton Roads more choices. Newport News is closer to Richmond than Norfolk, so the trip is faster. The trip from Alexandria, assuming the Washington/Richmond improvements in the ARRA Track 2 proposal, is likely to be 2h15m or 2h20m to Newport News; around 3 hours to Norfolk. This matters. So 2b is preferable to 2a or 1. Williamsburg is a destination (from NoVa) in itself. Bowers Hill, not so much. (Petersburg is, but Petersburg is served today by 4 conventional trains and will be served by 4 additional high speed trains when SEHSR is finished.) So both of the alternatives 2 a and b are preferable to alternative 1. 57 minutes may be only 6 minutes less than 63 minutes, but put another way, 110 mph service shaves 10% off the time that 90 mph service takes. It's a psychologically important 6 minutes, too: under an hour vs. over an hour. SNCF says that two hours is a psychologically important barrier. The closer you can get Alexandria/Newport News to two hours, the better. So 110 mph service is preferable to 90 mph service.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>
617	<p>Not building higher speed rail for South Hampton Roads is unconscionable, whether for economic development access or congestion relief or emergency management. The Peninsula also deserves better efficiency and reliability.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. The selection was based on analysis completed for the Tier I Draft EIS and on the public comments received.</p>

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622	<p>Hampton Roads is a major metropolitan region to both this state and this country. Out of 1.7 million inhabitants, over 1.2 million of them are on the Southside. Virginia Beach and Norfolk are the core cities of the region and hold the largest tax bases, have the largest CBDs, and the highest percentage of tourism dollars. We all know that alternative transportation, such as higher speed rail, are a must for a fully functional region. Hampton Roads deserves higher speed rail to connect to the larger economic markets such as DC, New York, Philly, etc. While the Peninsula is still part of Hampton Roads, the wisest choice is Alternative 1 along 460 and into downtown Norfolk. Amtrak only works because you can step off of the train and into a cities Central Business District. Do you think it would be fun to try to ride a train to New York and be forced to disembark in Jersey City? Norfolk and Virginia Beach are in the process of building light rail transit. The downtown Norfolk higher speed station would create an intermodal station to connect intercity rail, intercity busses, intracity rail, intracity busses, and intercity ferry service. Tourists could arrive by rail, and in the future, ride LRT to the Oceanfront of Virginia Beach. The largest naval base in the world is on the Southside. Military officials could ride rail from DC and be in Norfolk in a couple hours. Every scenario leads to the Southside alternative being the best alternative. Obviously, 110mph trains would be ideal, but if 90mph trains are needed to bring HSR to the Southside, I'm all for it. For the economic prosperity of Hampton Roads and Virginia, build higher speed rail from Richmond into the Southside of Hampton Roads.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selected Alternative 1 at 90 mph as the Preferred Alternative. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>	<p>Build Alternative 1 (Higher-speed Southside/Conventional Speed Peninsula) at maximum authorized speeds of up to 90 mph has been selected as the Preferred Alternative by FRA and DRPT. More detail on the Preferred Alternative is provided in Chapter 2 of the Tier I Final EIS. This selection was made based on public input during the public hearing process.</p>