



DC2RVA Town of Ashland/Hanover County Area CAC
August 17, 2017

Dear CAC Members:

In preparation for the Town of Ashland/Hanover County Community Advisory Committee (CAC) August 28 meeting, I am writing to outline the additional information DRPT is compiling for the CAC, and also to sketch out a potential decision making process for the CAC.

After three meetings laying out the project background, illustrating the many technical and environmental issues, and accepting significant public comment, I believe the CAC is now in a position to focus on deliberations for a recommendation on alternatives through the Ashland/Hanover area. The CAC has rightly emphasized the importance of community impacts, which I expect will inform your recommendations to DRPT and to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB).

With that in mind, I offer the following for your consideration:

- As discussed at the July meeting, one possible starting point might be to seek the least objectionable option within each category (east bypass, through town, under town, west bypass). It is important for this group to demonstrate to the public and stakeholders that you have fully considered all of the potential options. If the group can coalesce around a recommendation or set of recommendations on August 28th, I would like to ask the CAC to designate a spokesperson to brief the CTB at its September 19th workshop.
- The CAC has received a wealth of materials in response to questions and as part of DC2RVA background presentations – all of which will support the CAC to complete its tasks. It is time for DRPT and the project team to step back and for the CAC to develop and finalize its recommendations to DRPT and the Commonwealth Transportation Board. We will continue to be available to answer questions, but we will limit our presentations to allow for CAC discussion, as each of you knows your community impacts far better than we do.
- Finally, the CAC and the public worked very hard at our July meeting to share various and competing viewpoints. My request to the public on August 28 will



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be to allow the CAC to do its work, to deliberate, to wordsmith, to compromise, and, hopefully, to reach a recommendation or a set of recommendations to the department and the CTB.

DRPT is committed to an open and transparent process, and cannot engage in email deliberations with the CAC. CAC members should conduct business consistent with Virginia's open meeting laws, as well. If you have questions or concerns about this approach, please feel free to contact me or Emily Stock. We have heard from CAC members since the last meeting with questions on specific topics. Responses to those questions will be shared with the rest of the CAC and the public, as is the approach for all public comments.

Meeting materials will be provided in advance of the next meeting via email from the project team. I strongly encourage you to review these materials ahead of the August 28th meeting so that we can focus on the key community impact issues of most importance to the CAC. In addition to the meeting agenda, emailed materials will include updated mapping with more recent imagery for each alternative, additional details about the proposed trench concept and Buckingham Branch Railroad concept, and a full report of all comments and responses to date. Emily Stock will be following up with you individually to see if you have any other informational requests or needs prior to the August 28th meeting.

Jennifer Mitchell

Director

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation



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