

Purpose and Need for DC2RVA

The Purpose and Need Statement summarized below identifies the problems to be solved and enables decision makers to determine which alternatives best address issues that pertain to the project and the transportation needs of the region. Preliminary alternatives that don't meet the purpose and need will not be considered for further evaluation.

What's the Purpose of D.C. to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail?

To develop an intercity passenger rail service between Washington, D.C. and Richmond that will provide a competitive transportation option for travelers in the corridor and beyond. Reducing travel times, improving reliability, and increasing service frequencies are key components of this strategy and will require improvements that increase rail capacity in the corridor.

What's the Need for D.C. to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail?

The following conditions, which were first outlined in the 2002 Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), have become a reality and are the foundation for the current Tier II EIS.

- Population growth and changing demographics are leading to an increased demand for reliable and safe travel options.
- The I-95 corridor is congested, and trip times can be unreliable.
- Travel by air is increasingly at capacity and causing increased travel delays.
- Demand for freight transportation through and within the corridor is growing.
- The transportation network needs a more reliable and convenient way to move goods and people.
- In some segments, the existing shared freight, commuter and passenger rail corridor between Washington, D.C. and Richmond is nearing capacity.
- Emissions from transportation-related mobile sources are increasing and impacting regional air quality.

We're Moving Forward.

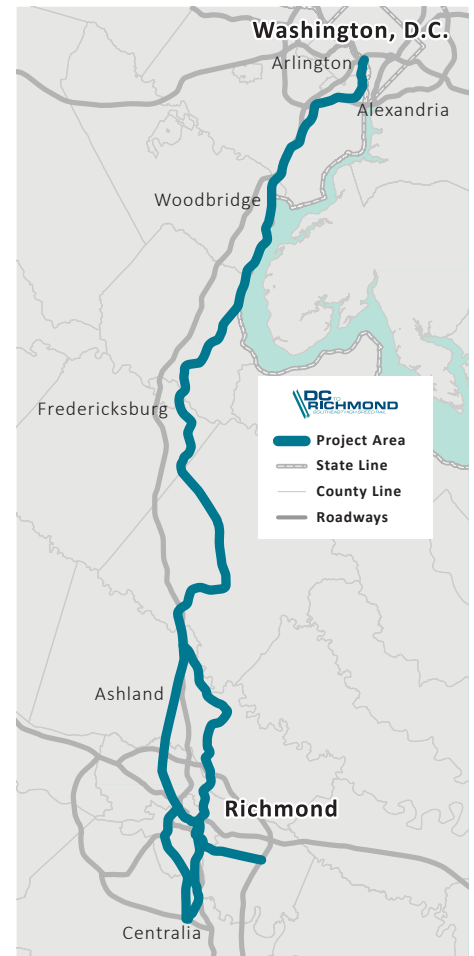
Thank you for your interest in the Washington, D.C. to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail (DC2RVA) and the future of intercity passenger rail in the corridor. The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are continuing the preliminary engineering and environmental review of this 123-mile segment of the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) corridor.

Currently, we are in the process of evaluating initial rail alignment options and the criteria for the evaluation and selection of the most viable improvement alternatives.

Proposed improvements to the corridor may include:

- Constructing additional main-line track in some segments
- Straightening curves and improve grade crossings
- Improving sidings and signals
- Improving stations
- Adding eight new higher speed intercity passenger rail round trips

Before any decisions are made, we want your input on the rail alignment options and the screening process we will use to evaluate alternatives. In June 2015 we are holding the first of two sets of public meetings related to alternatives development. We will hold another set of meetings in late 2015 to present the most reasonable alternatives resulting from the evaluation process.



At June 2015 Public Meetings, We Will:

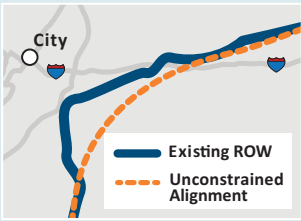
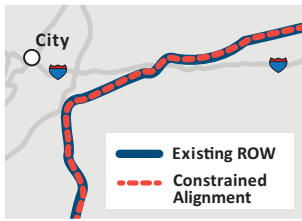
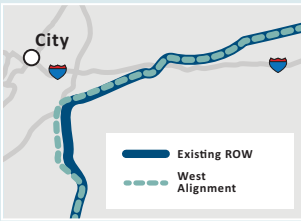
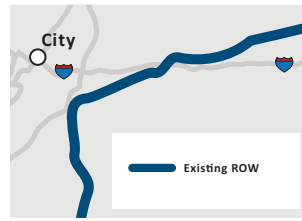
- Present what we heard in the recently completed Scoping Phase
- Present the alternatives development process and introduce the range of rail alignment options
- Discuss the path forward toward establishing a reasonable set of alternatives
- Request your input by **Tuesday, June 23, 2015**

Alternatives Development Process to Improve Intercity Passenger Rail Service

The goal of the alternative development process is to define a set of potential improvements to be carried forward for detailed evaluation. The improvement alternatives are intended to meet the project’s service goals: **improved reliability, decreased travel time, and increased frequency.**

Range of Rail Alignment Options

In order to meet the project’s service goals, we need to add capacity to the railroad corridor. To do this, a new track and other infrastructure may need to be added in some segments. As a first step in this process, DRPT developed four basic rail alignment options, one of which involves only minor improvements that would not include building any additional track. The corridor will be evaluated in segments, and most likely, the preferred alternative will be a combination of elements from these options. Your input will help determine the options to carry forward into a more detailed screening phase.

Element	Unconstrained Alignment Option	Constrained Alignment Option	West/East Track Alignment Option	Minor Improvements Option
Description	Reconfigure existing main-line tracks along much of the corridor. Design track capable of a maximum allowable speed of 90 mph without regard for impacts outside of right-of-way (ROW).	Design to maximize speed up to 90 mph where possible within the limits of the existing ROW.	Add one additional main-line track to the existing alignment. Two versions of this option: west and east track additions. Speed-related modifications are not included in this option.	Minor improvements would include updating or adding station platforms and upgrading track or sidings at specific locations.
New Tracks	One new track, existing tracks reconfigured	One new track, existing tracks reconfigured	One track added to west or east side of existing mainline	No new tracks
Design Speed	Achieves a maximum of 90 mph for much of the corridor	Achieves 90 mph within some segments	Maintains existing 70 mph track speed	Maintains existing 70 mph track speed
General Path	Follows corridor but can go outside ROW 	Stays within the existing ROW 	Stays mainly within the existing ROW 	No new track added 

ROW = right-of-way mph = miles per hour

Service Improvements – Eight New Trips Added

To meet the goal of increasing service, DRPT has identified eight new round trips to be added at the following locations:

- 4 additional round trips to North Carolina
- 3 additional round trips to Norfolk
- 1 additional round trip to Newport News

The rail alignment options presented above will accommodate these new trips. Ultimately, the preferred alternative would add the capacity needed to support these eight corridor long round trips.

Evaluating the Alternatives

A four-stage screening process will be applied to alternatives as they are developed and refined. The evaluation criteria will distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable alternatives by addressing: purpose and need requirements; effects on passenger and freight rail service and capacity; impacts to

the human and natural environments; and engineering practicality. The screening process will define a set of feasible and reasonable alternatives, which will be shared with the public in the next phase and evaluated in greater detail in the Draft EIS.

Screening Stage	Evaluation Criteria
<p>Stage I: Fatal Flaws Considers direct impacts on key environmental resources outside of the existing CSX right-of-way (ROW)</p>	<p>Are there direct impacts on the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic resources listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places • Federal, state or local parks and recreation areas • Federal or state wildlife/waterfowl refuges • Military bases
<p>Stage II: Order of Magnitude Impacts Evaluates impacts that occur outside of the ROW on environmental resources not already addressed in the first stage screening</p>	<p>How many urban/suburban/rural areas are impacted? Are there direct effects on the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known hazardous material sites • State-listed agricultural or forestal districts • Wetlands and Water Resources • Cemeteries
<p>Stage III: Infrastructure Constraints Considers the effects of existing infrastructure limitations on each alignment and considers each alignment’s potential ability to reduce trip time based on track design speed improvements</p>	<p>Are there existing or planned infrastructure improvements that make any of the options less attractive?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing rail bridges • Planned rail bridges • Existing road overpasses
<p>Stage IV: Area Options Examines rail alignment options and improvement elements that may not follow the existing alignment</p>	<p>The following are area options DRPT is considering for Fredericksburg, Ashland, and Richmond. These include station options, yard options, and other ancillary facilities.</p> <p>Fredericksburg Area Options: DRPT is evaluating options to bypass freight traffic around Fredericksburg in order to add capacity and reduce conflicts with VRE and Amtrak passenger trains.</p> <p>Ashland Area Options: DRPT is evaluating options for adding the new track at grade, which would impact existing car lanes, as well as elevated and below grade options. DRPT will also evaluate bypassing some or all rail traffic around Ashland.</p> <p>Richmond Area Options: The issues in Richmond are more complicated than in the rest of the corridor as there are multiple alignments that could carry additional passenger or freight service. Richmond alignments will be based on which stations are served and the associated passenger and freight service operational requirements. Station options being considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing Main Street only • Existing Staples Mill Road only • New Boulevard/Broad Street only • Main Street and Staples Mill Road • Main Street and Broad Street • Broad Street and Staples Mill Road <p>Are there any unique options to consider for the specific geographic areas above and beyond the four initial alignment options listed on the previous page?</p>

What Did We Hear During Scoping?

During the Scoping Phase of the project in November – December 2014, more than 700 people attended the four DC2RVA Public Scoping Meetings and the online meeting. During these meetings, DRPT shared the proposed scope of work and asked for the public’s input. As a result, 1,600 comments were received. Your input, combined with information from previous studies and the Purpose and Need Statement, has shaped the process we will use to screen alternatives. Common themes you commented on included:

- Support for improved intercity passenger service.
- A desire for speeds higher than the project’s proposed speeds.
- Concerns about cost and impacts.
- Interest in a greenway along the corridor.
- Support for improved transportation connectivity within the Commonwealth.

In addition to these topics, DRPT received many comments regarding site-specific issues and suggestions. You can review a summary of input received and learn how DRPT will apply this feedback in the Scoping Summary Report, available on the Documents page of www.DC2RVArail.com.

Next Steps

Once public and agency comments have been reviewed, the rail alignment options presented will be used to identify reasonable preliminary alternatives. These alternatives will go through the four-stage screening process outlined on the previous page to narrow them to the most viable solutions.

We will hold another set of public meetings in late 2015 to present these possible solutions.

What Do You Think About the Preliminary Rail Alignment Options and the Screening Process?

You are encouraged to review materials at the meetings and online and provide comments on the preliminary rail alignment options and the screening process by Tuesday, June 23. In addition, general comments and questions may be submitted at anytime throughout the project. You can also review materials by participating in a self-guided meeting at www.DC2RVArail.com.

- Send your comments and questions electronically through the project website, www.DC2RVArail.com.
- Leave a comment on our toll-free hotline: 888-832-0900 or TDD 711.
- Mail comments to: Emily Stock, Manager of Rail Planning, DRPT, 801 East Main Street, Suite 1000, Richmond, VA 23219.

En Español?

Si necesita servicios de traducción para participar, por favor envíe un email a: espanol@DC2RVArail.com. También puede llamar a la línea directa del proyecto para dejar sus comentarios: 888-832-0900.

DRPT Mission:

The Department of Rail and Public Transportation’s mission is to improve the mobility of people and goods while expanding transportation choices in the Commonwealth through rail, public transportation, and commuter services.

DRPT is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. For additional information on DRPT’s nondiscrimination policies and procedures or to file a complaint, please contact the Title VI Compliance Officer, Linda Balderson, (804) 786-4440, 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219.

