

Theme	Question or Comment	Response
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I own a historical property on the tracks in Ashland. There are two thriving businesses in my building. The high speed rail will kill both businesses! • In addition, I live a block off the tracks and high speed rail would prevent my grandson from walking to school. In how many communities can children still walk to school? This is a magical town – don’t ruin it. • As a Center St. resident and a town business owner – the third rail option would be a devastating blow on both a personal and professional level. Please allow Ashland to continue to grow and thrive! • We need a decision ASAP so that our community and businesses alike can get on with our lives and livelihood. 	<p>DRPT is still preparing the Draft EIS, which will describe the improvement alternatives considered for the entire 123-mile corridor including Ashland, along with their associated benefits and impacts. The Draft EIS and supporting technical documents will identify properties that could be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed alternatives. Once the Draft EIS is completed, it will be made available to the public for review in conjunction with a series of public hearings, which will provide you further opportunity to learn about the project and provide your specific comments. Please note that right-of-way representatives and project staff members will be on hand at the public hearings to discuss your concerns with you. If you haven’t already, please sign up on our email list at www.dc2rvarail.com to receive updates on the Draft EIS and notice of public hearing dates.</p>

Theme	Question or Comment	Response
Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our family working farm, White Oak Farm is one of the properties that would be bisected if the western bypass is the chosen route – the town of Ashland has, of course, pulled out all the stops by inviting citizens to come out and be seen walking, dining etc during their portion of the tour. Unfortunately, it’s not that simple for those of us in the western bypass path – you will see empty fields, woods, and scattered homes and hear crickets – Our crops have mostly been harvested at this point. The large combines are working elsewhere, not on Yowell, hay is being baled elsewhere. Though it won’t seem so today, White Oak Farm and all the other farms in the western bypass path will greatly affected – field will not be planted if machinery cannot get to them. Cows cannot be raised if water is on the other side of the tracks. • Please keep in mind – Ashland is a “train town.” They pride themselves on it. There is a “train day.” People who live on the tracks paid premium prices to do so. We live to the west. We do not, cannot, continue to function as a farm with a train in our yard and fields. Ashland has built its reputation as a train town. Please bear this in mind as you made this very important decision. • Farmland on the western bypass should be a major consideration. 	<p>DRPT is still preparing the Draft EIS, which will describe the improvement alternatives considered for the entire 123-mile corridor including Ashland, along with their associated benefits and impacts. The Draft EIS and supporting technical documents will identify properties that could be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed alternatives. Once the Draft EIS is completed, it will be made available to the public for review in conjunction with a series of public hearings, which will provide you further opportunity to learn about the project and provide your specific comments. Please note that right-of-way representatives and project staff members will be on hand at the public hearings to discuss your concerns with you. If you haven’t already, please sign up on our email list at www.dc2rvrail.com to receive updates on the Draft EIS and notice of public hearing dates.</p>

Theme	Question or Comment	Response
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the dollar value of CSX’s investment in the project? 	<p>The current DC2RVA Tier II EIS and preliminary engineering study is being funded through a \$55.4 million grant that is a combination of Federal, State, and private funds, including \$2,976,000 from CSXT. Funding for future improvements to the corridor identified as part of the DC2RVA project has not been determined. DRPT anticipates that these future improvements would be funded by some mix of federal, state, and private funds, but the apportionment of costs is unknown.</p>
Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When does the lease on the Buckingham Branch expire? 	<p>In December 2004, Buckingham Branch Railroad entered into a 20-year lease with CSX Transportation to operate 200 miles of track in Virginia on the latter’s Piedmont, Washington, North Mountain subdivisions – this includes the approximately 26 mile section of track between Richmond and Doswell.</p>

Theme	Question or Comment	Response
Opposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No third rail! The station we have now is enough of a nuisance. • We are divided enough! • No third rail please. • Center Street cannot be destroyed – Our history, culture, businesses and homes are a valuable part of Virginia. This is not the right path. • Way to take land from a historical school. You wouldn't do it to a public university, so don't do it to us. We have houses for dept. offices because we need space. Don't do it. We pay too much for R-MC to make the campus even less accessible. • The definition and high speed rail as I understand it in to more passenger trains more rapidly –it is ridiculous to go forward with this project through the center of Ashland. • It is equally ridiculous which this project really seems about- to use the western corridor for high – speed freight. • You are dividing and splitting a community- the community is not just Ashland. Those of the western bypass corridor are bound tightly to the town proper by blood, experience, friendship and business. This will tear us all apart. • I am vehemently opposed to the third rail. This could make getting to important departments, sports fields, and special interest housing impossible. • Dear CTB, please represent the hard working Americans 	<p>DRPT is still preparing the Draft EIS, which will describe the improvement alternatives considered for the entire 123-mile corridor including Ashland, along with their associated benefits and impacts. The Draft EIS and supporting technical documents will identify properties that could be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed alternatives. Once the Draft EIS is completed, it will be made available to the public for review in conjunction with a series of public hearings, which will provide you further opportunity to learn about the project and provide your specific comments. Please note that right-of-way representatives and project staff members will be on hand at the public hearings to discuss your concerns with you. If you haven't already, please sign up on our email list at www.dc2rvarail.com to receive updates on the Draft EIS and notice of public hearing dates.</p>

Theme	Question or Comment	Response
	<p>of Central Virginia and not CWX [CSXT] by retracting the proposal for a 3rd rail and huge train station that would devastate the town.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you consider Ashland so insignificant to as to put a 3rd rail through it? Do people not live and breathe in Ashland? Are we not tax paying Americans too? It is an insult to the town that you would even consider putting a 3rd rail/commuter lot in town! • Not cost effective! • No third rail through Ashland! • Please – no third rail in town! • It would be detrimental to the character of both the town and the college, especially with the proposed station being built on Historic Campus. • Our school is historic and loves our quaint train station that does not impede my daily life. This third rail proposal is a mistake and I in no way support it. • Don't use my taxes to destroy my town! Also don't use my taxes to profit CWX [CSXT]! Put the rail around town. A 3rd rail would only be for the profit of CWX [CSXT]! 	

Theme	Question or Comment	Response
Right of Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should those of us in the proposed paths consider our property under the threat of condemnation? 	<p>DRPT is still preparing the Draft EIS, which will describe the improvement alternatives considered for the entire 123-mile corridor including Ashland, along with their associated benefits and impacts. The Draft EIS and supporting technical documents will identify properties that could be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed alternatives. Once the Draft EIS is completed, it will be made available to the public for review in conjunction with a series of public hearings, which will provide you further opportunity to learn about the project and provide your specific comments. Please note that right-of-way representatives and project staff members will be on hand at the public hearings to discuss your concerns with you. If you haven't already, please sign up on our email list at www.dc2rvarail.com to receive updates on the Draft EIS and notice of public hearing dates.</p>

Theme	Question or Comment	Response
Bypass Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where does the western bypass stand now? • Re: Bypass – It appears that you have ruled out the eastern route, but the amount of housing seems to be the same as the western. Please reconsider. • Bypass seems inevitable. • Why is the eastern route of the table? That has never been adequately explained. 	<p>There is a range of alternatives still being considered as DRPT prepares the EIS. The purpose of the environmental process is to gather data to assist in the evaluating the merits of different alternatives. A final decision on a preferred alternative will not be made until the EIS process is complete.</p> <p>DRPT evaluated rail alignment bypass options on the east and west of Ashland as potential alternatives in lieu of adding a third track through Ashland. The bypass options east of Ashland, including the use of the Buckingham Branch Railroad, were screened out because they are not feasible from an engineering perspective, have a higher relative cost, and present more impacts to human and natural resources, as well as existing infrastructure. The east side is more heavily developed than the west. Also a bypass east of Ashland would require multiple crossings of Route 1 and I-95</p>

Theme	Question or Comment	Response
Routing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will Elmont Rd be closed in any area? 	<p>Currently, none of the proposed alternatives requires the closing of the at-grade rail crossing at Elmont Road. The project inventoried and assessed existing and proposed crossings based on a number of site-specific factors, including rail geometry and traffic volumes, highway geometry and traffic volumes, crossing protection, type of vehicles using the crossing, emergency access, pedestrian access, and safety. Safety measures typically include warning signs, traffic signals, warning horns or gates designed to alert motorists or pedestrians of oncoming trains. The draft EIS makes recommendations regarding the appropriate level of warning devices and other safety measures at each crossing on a site-by site basis using thresholds based on Federal standards and project goals.</p>
Stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please leave the historic station in place and modern working station either North or South of town. If you need a big station, move it up to Vaughan, This would also make easier access by car and reduce traffic on 54. Why do they need to put a commuter train station in the middle of a town? Don't they normally put commuter lots in the middle of nowhere like in a field? 	<p>Station needs will be identified in accordance with FRA and Amtrak guidance, ridership surveys, operations and revenue modeling, and public input, as well as proximity and connectivity to other transportation modes and effects on existing and planned Amtrak, VRE, or other stations to be served by any additional passenger service. Amtrak provides intercity passenger rail service, and typically seeks stations in or near a town or city's central business district.</p>

Theme	Question or Comment	Response
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a student at RMC and the thought of a third rail completely terrifies me. The safety factor to not only the college but the community itself is not worth jeopardizing. There are countless students, faculty, staff, and citizens that have to cross that rail everyday. There are also parents and fans who have to cross that on game days for multiple sports. • We also have handicap students that have to cross it. One guy even got stuck crossing the other day and if it wasn't for helpful bystanders he would've been hit! Please think about the safety of everyone involved with the college and the community of Ashland! • A high-speed, non-stop rail is not worth compromising the safety of all. Please keep us in mind when going through the process! • The addition of a third rail, especially a high speed – nonstop rail, would compromise the safety of people and businesses around the rail. • I am a Randolph-Macon College student and safety is already a concern for many students and faculty who need to cross the tracks. There are many college buildings on the other side of the tracks that are vital and we do not want to be separated by yet another rail. 	<p>Safety is of paramount importance and was a primary consideration in the development of improvement concepts. Safety analyses were performed as a part of the Draft EIS and the report will address the effectiveness of each proposed concept with regard to safety. Proposed project improvements include new and enhanced safety features such as road and rail grade separations, consolidation of existing crossings, and/or flashing lights and gates at roadway-rail at-grade crossings throughout the corridor as appropriate. Preliminary design will comply with all FRA, Amtrak, CSX, VDOT, and other federal and state safety standards to allow for the safe operation of higher speed service, including requirements for positive train control (PTC) as mandated by Congress in the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (RSIA). PTC is designed to prevent train-to train collisions; derailments caused by excessive speed; unauthorized incursions by trains onto sections of track where maintenance activities are taking place; and movement of a train through a track switch left in the wrong position.</p>