

APPENDIX B

DETAILED RESPONSES TO AGENCY AND ORGANIZATION COMMENTS



D.C. TO RICHMOND SOUTHEAST HIGH SPEED RAIL

Appendix B

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HOW TO USE THIS APPENDIX

Following this introduction, detailed responses to agency and organization comments are presented in the following order:

- **B1. Detailed Responses to Federal Agency Comments**
- **B2. Detailed Responses to State Agency Comments**
- **B3. Detailed Responses to Local Agency Comments**
- **B4. Detailed Responses to Consulting Party Comments**
- **B5. Detailed Responses to Operator Comments**
- **B6. Detailed Responses to Other Organization and Group Comments**

Responses to agency and organization comments are provided in a side-by-side format with each agency and organization letter. The left side of the page is a full reproduction of each letter, with individual comments noted and numbered on each page of the letters (indicated by vertical black, numbered bars). The right side of the page contains detailed responses to each comment that correspond to the black-bar numbering on each letter.

AGENCY AND ORGANIZATION COMMENT RESPONSE PROCESS

As described in Chapter 2 of this Final EIS, thirty-four (34) agencies and organizations submitted comments regarding the Project during the formal comment period and public hearing process that followed publication of the Draft EIS. The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) carefully reviewed each comment, concern, and request, and provided detailed responses to substantive comments, which are provided in this appendix; these detailed responses include reference to information provided in both the Draft EIS and this Final EIS, and are the outcome of ongoing agency coordination and additional analyses that have occurred since the publication of the Draft EIS. Additionally, responses to substantive comments are incorporated by way of minor corrections, clarifying explanations, or supplemental documentation, as needed, into the content of the appropriate sections of this Final EIS. In general, substantive comments are those that question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information and methodology in the Draft EIS or present new information not considered in the Draft EIS, and cause changes or revisions in one or more alternative or environmental resource.

Many agency and organization comments included the following topics, which did not warrant changes to the methodologies or information provided in the Draft EIS. Notwithstanding, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and DRPT provided responses to these topics within the detailed responses provided in this appendix.

- Overall position/opinion for or against the Project.
- Preference for and/or opposition to a specific alignment or Build Alternative that was evaluated in the Draft EIS.
- Suggestion of additional alternatives to consider, most of which were considered but dismissed during the 2002 Tier I EIS for the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) corridor between Washington, D.C. and Charlotte, NC, or do not align with the implementing actions that were the outcome of the 2002 Tier I EIS and Record of Decision (ROD).
- Requests for detailed information or data that is beyond the scope of an environmental document and would be developed during the final design and permitting process.
 - Environmental documentation for the Project is based on conceptual engineering, which is approximately a 10% design level.
 - Chapter 5 of this Final EIS clarifies the use of temporary and permanent impacts to environmental resources. Temporary impacts at the conceptual design level are a fixed offset from the permanent impact limits; this is an allowance for possible construction means and methods that may exceed the permanent impact limits.
 - Final design will clarify the potential construction means and methods that might be used to eliminate or mitigate temporary impacts. Final design will occur in the future after Project funding becomes available and incremental improvements are scheduled.
 - Chapter 7 of this Final EIS has been included to add descriptions of future steps for the Project.
- Requests for ongoing coordination beyond the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) phase of the Project; refer to Section 7.8 of the Final EIS for details of Project regulatory actions, approvals, and commitments.