

**DC2RVA TOWN OF ASHLAND/HANOVER COUNTY CAC  
AUGUST 2017 CORRESPONDENCE**

**HANOVER COUNTY**

**From:** Stock, Emily (DRPT) [mailto:Emily.Stock@drpt.virginia.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 23, 2017 5:33 PM  
**To:** Harksen, Frank W.  
**Cc:** Selleck, Randy (DRPT); DC2RVAdocumentcontrol  
**Subject:** RE: DC2RVA Rail - Hanover questions

Frank: Please see below for answers in green text. Thanks! Emily

**From:** Harksen, Frank W. [mailto:fwharksen@hanovercounty.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 23, 2017 8:31 AM  
**To:** Stock, Emily (DRPT) <Emily.Stock@drpt.virginia.gov>  
**Cc:** Selleck, Randy (DRPT) <Randy.Selleck@drpt.virginia.gov>; DC2RVAdocumentcontrol <DC2RVAdocumentcontrol@hdrinc.com>  
**Subject:** RE: DC2RVA Rail - Hanover questions

Emily, thank you for the responses. Before I forward them a few clarifications.

This is the response to the bored tunnel versus deep bore tunnel:

*How does this shorter tunnel affect the number and placement of ventilation facilities? That is, can some of the ventilation structures be eliminated and thus not have one mid-downtown?*

DRPT's conceptual engineering indicates that the soft earth tunnel would not be substantially shorter than the deep bore tunnel, and the ventilation requirement would also not differ.

Comment: The drawings distributed to the committee members during the last meeting appear to show the bore tunnel is a mile shorter (MP CFP 13.8 – 16.3, which includes the cut and cover portion of the tunnel) than the deep bore (MP CFP 12.6 – 16.3, which includes the cut and cover portion of the tunnel) – or about a third shorter. This is consistent with what I heard when we met when it was stated the deep bore tunnel needed to start further south due to Stony Run and the need to avoid it. Please help me understand what I am looking at wrong.

**DRPT Response (08-23-2017)** - You are looking at the previous information supplied to the CAC correctly. The DC2RVA team has continued to advance the conceptual engineering for both the deep bore and soft earth tunnel options. The total length of the soft earth tunnel is approximately one mile shorter than the deep bore tunnel. However, the reduction in buried length does not reduce the number of ventilation structures. It may reduce the size of the facilities which would be determined during detailed design and modeling should either tunnel be identified as the preferred alternative and advance to preliminary engineering.

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Here is the response to the grade separation question.

*Does the option include grade separations at say Ashcake Road and Vaughan Road?*

The tunnel option would divert sufficient train traffic to the tunnel such that it would no longer be necessary to grade separate either Ashcake Road or Vaughan Road.

Note that the Town of Ashland is pursuing a Vaughn Road grade separation. This project is listed in the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization's Constrained Long Range Plan in the FY22-27 timeband.

Comment: The grade separation question was related to the 3-2-3 option rather than a tunnel option. Thank you for the information about the Vaughan Road grade separation project being in the TPO's long range plan.

**DRPT Response (08-23-2017)** – I am sorry that we mistakenly discussed the tunnel options and not the maintaining two tracks through town (3-2-3) option. Yes, the maintaining two tracks through town (3-2-3) option would include grade separations at both Ashcake Road and at Vaughan Road.

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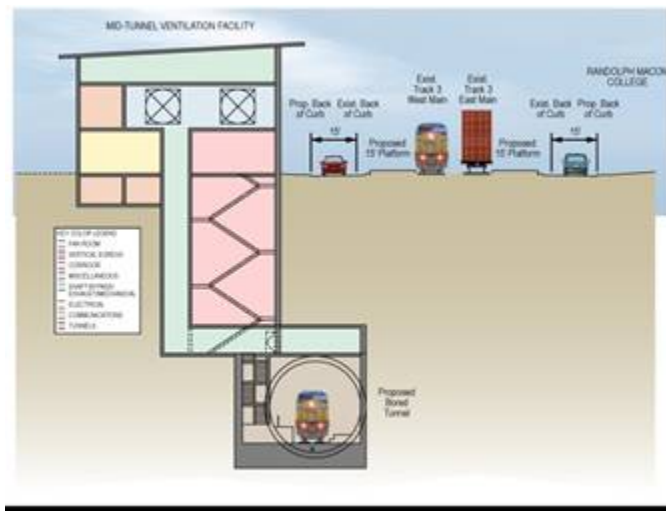
**From:** Stock, Emily (DRPT) [<mailto:Emily.Stock@drpt.virginia.gov>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 22, 2017 4:39 PM  
**To:** Harksen, Frank W.  
**Cc:** Selleck, Randy (DRPT); DC2RVAdocumentcontrol  
**Subject:** RE: DC2RVA Rail - Hanover questions

Frank:

Thank you for sending Hanover BOS' questions last week. DC2RVA Project team has reviewed your questions and provided the following responses. I plan to share these with the CAC membership, as well.

1. *Where are there examples of the kinds of ventilation buildings that would be needed and can photos be provided?*

The following graphic depicts the anticipated configuration and scale of the ventilation building required for either the deep bore tunnel option or soft earth tunnel option. DRPT expects that three ventilation buildings would be required, one near Vaughan Road/Archie Cannon Drive near the north tunnel portal, one near Ashcake Road near the south tunnel portal, and one at the center of the tunnel near England Street. The center ventilation building near England Street would be about 100-feet by 70-feet in size and 3-stories high. Below is an artist illustration to provide the CAC and the public with a concept of the building. DRPT is also preparing a surface-level rendering for the CAC.



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2. *How is the size of the ventilation buildings determined?*

The building is sized to comply with National Fire Protection Association Standard 130 (Standards for Fixed Guideway Transit and Passenger Rail Systems) requirements for passenger rail tunnels. Factors that drive sizing are tunnel length and tunnel diameter.

3. *How is the number determined?*

The required number of ventilation shafts is determined through air flow modeling efforts.

4. *What do the additional points of access look like?*

Emergency egress can be surface grates and contained completely within a sidewalk area such as the example below. This approach is used by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.



5. *During the building of such a tunnel, what is the disruption above ground?*

Above ground disruptions during tunnel construction would include the construction of the ventilation ports, buildings and systems, of the emergency ingress/egress stairs and covers, and of the intermediate drainage pump systems, if needed. Potential disruptions may include the excavation of emergency shafts to be used to extract personnel or equipment if a cave-in or equipment failure occurs that prevents removal using the tunnel.

6. *What is the reality of such an option being chosen or built given the cost?*

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Cost is one of many factors considered in the DEIS analysis, along with potential cultural and natural resource impacts, transportation benefits, and public comment. Because of community concerns about proposed alternatives in this area, DRPT asked the CAC to take a more intensive look at all options, and advise DRPT in its recommendation of a preferred alternative. DRPT will recommend a Preferred Alternative based on all the data collected, and will have to justify to the CTB and FRA that the cost of the preferred alternative is a reasonable and appropriate expenditure of public funds.

- 7. How does this shorter tunnel affect the number and placement of ventilation facilities? That is, can some of the ventilation structures be eliminated and thus not have one mid-downtown?*

DRPT's conceptual engineering indicates that the soft earth tunnel would not be substantially shorter than the deep bore tunnel, and the ventilation requirement would also not differ.

- 8. How will the shallower tunnel without the bedrock on top of it affect the surface? Will there be more vibration felt and/or noise heard?*

Ground-borne noise and vibration are sometimes a concern when trains travel in tunnels. Ground-borne noise is the term sometimes used to refer to a rumble-like sound that's produced when ground-borne vibration energy enters the foundation of a building. A shallower tunnel could potentially transmit more, or block less noise and vibration than a deeper tunnel. Bedrock or concrete could act as a barrier that reduces the amount of noise and vibration that is transmitted from a train in a tunnel to a structure above the tunnel at or near the surface. Without detailed geotechnical data and final engineering design data, it is very difficult to quantify the difference in noise and vibration that might occur between tunnels of two different depths and designs. Under either tunnel alternative, it is unlikely that noise or vibration will be noticeable outdoors at ground level above the tunnel.

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9. *What would the differences to the answers to the above be for freight only use versus freight and passenger use?*

Freight-only tunnels have a different, less stringent ventilation requirement. This may reduce the size and/or mass of the ventilation facility above ground, but it may not reduce the number of ventilation facilities due to the length of the tunnel. It is not likely that the perceptible ground-borne vibration would change substantially if the tunnel was freight only.

Train-induced ground-borne vibration is related to the weight of the train vehicle. According to the Federal Transit Authority and FRA, diesel-electric locomotives are among the heaviest vehicles in passenger and freight trains. Typically, the passenger cars in a passenger train produce less vibration than the locomotive does. The weight of railcars in freight trains varies; empty boxcars are lighter than fully loaded tanker cars carrying oil or other viscous liquids. Train noise is related to generally related speed. However, longer freight trains generally produce more noise exposure due to the longer duration of the pass-by event. It is not likely that the perceived ground-borne vibration would change substantially if the tunnel was freight only.

10. *Are there any additional differences between the 2 tunnel construction methods?*

A deep bore tunnel utilizes a tunnel boring machine which performs best in uniform ground conditions including hard bedrock. A soft earth tunnel presents unique challenges to prevent settlement. A cut and cover tunnel or a trench option requires supportive excavation and has substantial impacts to the surface activities.

11. *Does the option include grade separations at say Ashcake Road and Vaughan Road?*

The tunnel option would divert sufficient train traffic to the tunnel such that it would no longer be necessary to grade separate either Ashcake Road or Vaughan Road. Note that the Town of Ashland is pursuing a Vaughn Road grade separation. This project is listed in the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization's Constrained Long Range Plan in the FY22-27 timeband.

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- 12. If there is a need for a third track, doesn't the clog caused by 3-2-3 undermine much of the good of a third rail?*

The Maintain Two Tracks Through Town (3-2-3) alternative proposes a three-track railroad corridor north and south of Town of Ashland, while leaving approximately two miles of the existing two-track railroad through the town of Ashland. This alternative establishes a condition that looks like a three-lane roadway narrowing to a two-lane roadway. One important difference is that train traffic operates under the direction of a railroad dispatcher, with the ability to prioritize and sequence the train traffic, unlike automobile traffic, which operates independently and tends to back up at merges. Using computer-based modeling, the DRPT has been working with the FRA to determine the impacts to rail operations under several different infrastructure conditions, including alternatives with a full three-track corridor between Alexandria and Richmond, as well as alternatives with a three track corridor between Alexandria and Richmond (except through the town of Ashland). The most recent computer-based modeling work incorporated analysis of the two-track Ashland alternative, along with other infrastructure, operating, and train schedule changes requested by FRA in order to estimate potential impacts to passenger and freight train performance. This modeling work estimated that under a two-track Ashland alternative, when combined with the other operating and schedule changes requested by FRA, passenger trains would be able to achieve the on-time performance targets established for the project. DRPT is working with CSX to determine the impact on freight train performance.

- 13. Would the sheer volume of trains going through the town in a 3-2-3 scenario essentially cause the closing of Route 54 for much of the day by 2040?*

Projections for train traffic and schedules for 2045 indicate that the crossing gates will be activated approximately 70 times in a 24-hour period for a total time of approximately 2 hours. Currently, gates activate approximately 39 times in a 24-hour period for a total gate down time of approximately 1 hour. Note that gate activation assumes a minimum of approximately 37 seconds for a passenger train to clear the

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crossing, and up to more than three minutes for a freight train to clear the crossing.

14. *As regards the eastern bypass, or any bypass really, at what point does the amount of wetlands scuttle a project? Like any other development project is there the option for mitigation and does the Army Corps of Engineers have a position on how much is too much for such mitigation?*

There is no “upset limit” to wetland impacts that will scuttle a project. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and other regulatory agencies (e.g., Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)) will review the total impacts in relation to the “context” of wetland systems in the area. Their decision will be based on the “intensity” of the impacts to the system – that is to say a 1 acre impact in a 5-acre system is far more significant than a 1 acre impact in a 1,000-acre system. The regulatory agencies will accept a variety of mitigations depending on the wetland type and extent of impact. These will vary depending on the functional value of the impacted wetland and will be determined in coordination with the agencies. These types of discussions have already been initiated with the USACE and DEQ who have joined our wetland teams during field surveys.

15. *If an option supported by the CAC is ultimately rejected by the FRA will the Committee be given the opportunity to offer an alternate option? A commitment to allow the Committee to be involved in a future option decision if the initial one is rejected by FRA is important.*

DRPT appreciates the support and meaningful engagement of the CAC, and believes that this open and transparent community involvement has greatly aided the Commonwealth’s decision making process. After the consideration of the CAC’s recommendation and all public comments, DRPT will make a recommendation to the CTB regarding the Ashland/Hanover County area. The CTB will determine the Commonwealth’s preferred alternative. FRA will consider all of the agency and public comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the recommendation of the CTB for the Final EIS and Record of Decision. In addition, after the Record of Decision has been finalized, DRPT will develop an implementation plan and work



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with the Legislature and the federal government to identify construction funding. Final design will not begin until after construction funding has been secured. DRPT will endeavor to keep the CAC members informed of our progress during future steps of the process. In addition, should the decision of the FRA not be fully aligned with the recommendation of the CAC, there will be opportunities during the final design process to identify mitigation and other measures which will help offset potential community impacts.

Thank you again for giving your time to this effort. We look forward to continuing to work with you on this Project.

Best regards,  
Emily Stock

*Emily Stock, AICP  
Manager of Rail Planning  
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**DC2RVA TOWN OF ASHLAND/HANOVER COUNTY CAC  
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**HANOVER COUNTY, CONTINUED**

**From:** Harksen, Frank W. [<mailto:fwharksen@hanovercounty.gov>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 15, 2017 2:31 PM  
**To:** Stock, Emily (DRPT) <[Emily.Stock@drpt.virginia.gov](mailto:Emily.Stock@drpt.virginia.gov)>; Selleck, Randy (DRPT) <[Randy.Selleck@drpt.virginia.gov](mailto:Randy.Selleck@drpt.virginia.gov)>  
**Subject:** DC2RVA Rail - Hanover questions

Emily, as some of our Board members have been discussing the various options several questions arose. The Board members' questions are noted below. It is important to have the answers to the questions in order to make an informed recommendation and more fully understand the impacts so it would be helpful to have the answers in advance of the August 28<sup>th</sup> CAC meeting.

Regarding the tunnel in general:

- Where are there examples of the kinds of ventilation buildings that would be needed and can photos be provided?
- How is the size of the ventilation buildings determined?
- How is the number determined?
- What do the additional points of access look like?
- During the building of such a tunnel, what is the disruption above ground?
- What is the reality of such an option being chosen or built given the cost?

Past 'tunnel' conversations have focused primarily on the Deep Bore Tunnel, its length, presumed ventilation needs and emergency access/egress requirements. It appears the regular Bore Tunnel (referred to by some as soft bore) is significantly shorter, perhaps shorter by a third.

- How does this shorter tunnel affect the number and placement of ventilation facilities? That is, can some of the ventilation structures be eliminated and thus not have one mid-downtown?
- How will the shallower tunnel without the bedrock on top of it affect the surface? Will there be more vibration felt and/or noise heard?
- What would the differences to the answers to the above be for freight only use versus freight and passenger use?
- Are there any additional differences between the 2 tunnel construction methods?

Because the 3-2-3 option is being considered again:

- Does the option include grade separations at say Ashcake Road and Vaughan Road?
- If there is a need for a third track, doesn't the clog caused by 3-2-3 undermine much of the good of a third rail?
- Would the sheer volume of trains going through the town in a 3-2-3 scenario essentially cause the closing of Route 54 for much of the day by 2040?

As regards the eastern bypass, or any bypass really, at what point does the amount of wetlands scuttle a project? Like any other development project is there the option for mitigation and does the Army Corps of Engineers have a position on how much is too much for such mitigation?

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If an option supported by the CAC is ultimately rejected by the FRA will the Committee be given the opportunity to offer an alternate option? A commitment to allow the Committee to be involved in a future option decision if the initial one is rejected by FRA is important.

Thank you,

Frank



*Frank W. Harksen, Jr. | Deputy County Administrator  
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*Hanover: People, Tradition and Spirit*

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AUGUST 2017 CORRESPONDENCE**

**RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE**

**From:** Stock, Emily (DRPT)  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2017 3:31 PM  
**To:** 'Bryant, L. Preston Jr.' <pbryant@mwcllc.com>  
**Cc:** DRPT Jennifer Public <Jennifer.Mitchell@drpt.virginia.gov>; DC2RVAdocumentcontrol <DC2RVAdocumentcontrol@hdrinc.com>  
**Subject:** RE: DC2RVA - "trench" information request for Aug. 28, 2017 CAC meeting

Dear Mr. Bryant:

Thank you for your comments and your participation in the Town of Ashland/Hanover County Area Community Advisory Committee. Yes, DRPT is preparing for a significant discussion with the CAC about a trench option. We are preparing detailed information about this concept, which 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.

Best regards,  
Emily Stock

*Emily Stock, AICP  
Manager of Rail Planning  
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation  
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office 804-786-1052  
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**From:** Bryant, L. Preston Jr. [mailto:pbryant@mwcllc.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 10, 2017 3:53 PM  
**To:** DRPT Jennifer Public <Jennifer.Mitchell@drpt.virginia.gov>; Stock, Emily (DRPT) <Emily.Stock@drpt.virginia.gov>  
**Subject:** DC2RVA - "trench" information request for Aug. 28, 2017 CAC meeting

Dear Ms. Mitchell and Ms. Stock:

I write as a member of the Citizen Advisory Committee, representing Randolph-Macon College, studying the DC2RVA / Ashland matter.

It is my understanding that there has been increasing interest in a "trench" option through the Town of Ashland.

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I request that at the next CAC meeting (Aug. 28, 2017), DRPT include a significant discussion about a “trench” option, including clear graphics and other information that would demonstrate to all what the concept would be.

Thank you for your consideration.

Preston

**L. Preston Bryant Jr.**

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**TOWN OF ASHLAND**

**From:** Stock, Emily (DRPT)  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2017 3:16 PM  
**To:** 'Josh Farrar' <jfarrar@ashlandva.gov>; DRPT Jennifer Public <Jennifer.Mitchell@drpt.virginia.gov>  
**Cc:** DC2RVAdocumentcontrol <DC2RVAdocumentcontrol@hdrinc.com>  
**Subject:** RE: DC2RVA - "trench" information request for Aug. 28, 2017 CAC meeting

Dear Mr. Farrar:

Thank you for your comments and your participation in the Town of Ashland/Hanover County Area Community Advisory Committee. Yes, DRPT is preparing for a significant discussion with the CAC about a trench option. We are preparing detailed information about this concept, which 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.

Best regards,  
Emily Stock

*Emily Stock, AICP  
Manager of Rail Planning  
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation  
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Richmond, VA 23219  
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**From:** Josh Farrar [mailto:jfarrar@ashlandva.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2017 1:48 PM  
**To:** DRPT Jennifer Public <Jennifer.Mitchell@drpt.virginia.gov>; Stock, Emily (DRPT) <Emily.Stock@drpt.virginia.gov>  
**Subject:** DC2RVA - "trench" information request for Aug. 28, 2017 CAC meeting

Dear Ms. Mitchell and Ms. Stock:

I understand CAC member Preston Bryant sent you an email yesterday requesting “a significant discussion about a “trench” option, including clear graphics and other information that would demonstrate to all what the concept would be.” Mayor Foley would also like to see information about this option. I would request that if you present supplemental information about this option that DRPT staff be substantially prepared to discuss the construction impacts on the Town; specifically downtown Ashland. The end results of a trench option may be a product the CAC

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could agree upon, but the deciding factors of whether it will garner support will likely be the extent of the destructive impact it would have on the Town during the construction process. Thank you again for your work on this project, and your support towards helping CAC members make informed decisions.

Joshua S. Farrar, ICMA-CM  
Town Manager  
(804) 798-9219  
Jfarrar@ashlandva.gov  
Town of Ashland, VA  
*The Center of the Universe*

**From:** Stock, Emily (DRPT)  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2017 2:41 PM  
**To:** 'Josh Farrar' <jfarrar@ashlandva.gov>  
**Cc:** DC2RVAdocumentcontrol <DC2RVAdocumentcontrol@hdrinc.com>; Selleck, Randy (DRPT) <Randy.Selleck@drpt.virginia.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: DC2RVA - Questions about Modeling

Josh:

Thanks for your thoughtful comments and questions from last week. I worked with the DC2RVA team to compile answers to your questions, which are listed below.

First, please note that the DC2RVA Draft Tier II EIS (Draft EIS) has not yet been published. The early draft document that you reference was an incomplete work-in-progress provided to the Town as part of our response to your Freedom of Information Act request last year. At the time DRPT emphasized that the document was preliminary, still under development, and should not be relied upon. Since then, DRPT has continued to develop information, collect data, refine our analysis, consult with coordinating agencies, and develop the Draft EIS. In addition, FRA has provided extensive comments and the Draft EIS has been revised and updated. The Town of Ashland will have an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft EIS when it is published in the next few weeks. For that reason, we are not prepared to compare statements and information that DRPT provided as part of the CAC process and the incomplete document you referenced.

Here are responses:

**Minor Improvements Questions**

*Combined Response - The Minor Improvements alternative (also referred to as “No Additional Track,” or “3-2-3” alternative) will be fully evaluated in the Draft EIS. As we stated during the July 24<sup>th</sup> CAC meeting, DRPT is working with CSX to determine if this alternative will meet the project requirements, specifically as it related to freight movement.*

**3-2-3 Question 1** - Why was the “minor improvements” option introduced last year when the modeling did not support it? When did the FRA request new modeling?

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*Response - DRPT has consistently included the “No Additional Track” or “minor improvements” option since the first scoping meetings in 2014. This alternative is included in the Draft EIS. Modeling for the DC2RVA project has been on-going. While previous studies have generally recommended a continuous third track in the DC2RVA corridor, DRPT has included the no additional track option, in both Ashland and Fredericksburg, to more completely evaluate the potential range of options. The initial modeling for the DC2RVA project was undertaken to compare the range of concepts, and to inform the Draft EIS. The most recent modeling, which was conducted in April, May and June of 2017, was undertaken at the request of FRA to help confirm the infrastructure requirements for the entire DC2RVA corridor.*

**3-2-3 Question 2** – What exactly has changed in the new modeling that’s resulted in more positive outcomes, at least with passenger OTP?

*Response - To help FRA understand how the infrastructure proposed would perform in a real world scenario, FRA requested that DRPT incorporate track and platform assignments plans into the operations model. These plans are simply directions to the model regarding which track and which platform specific trains would use. These plans put limitations on the flexibility that the computer model has in dispatching trains and therefore serve to “stress” the infrastructure. FRA also requested that DRPT refine the passenger train schedules consistent with the change in capacity resulting from the imposition of track and platform assignment plans. The model also assumed a full service scenario in Richmond serving both Main Street and Staples Mill Road stations, and at least three tracks from the VRE station in Spotsylvania north to Arlington, and a four track Long Bridge across the Potomac river into Washington, D.C.*

**3-2-3 Question 3** – If freight impacts are still being evaluated, and the new modeling comes back with negative impact results, what then? Is 3-2-3 off the table? Will we know about freight impacts and the fate of 3-2-3 before the CAC is asked for a decision?

*Response - DRPT is working with CSX, along with FRA, VRE, and Amtrak, to better define what, if any, additional operational analysis may be required. It is likely that any additional analysis will take several months to complete.*

**3-2-3 Question 3** – Are corridor congestion and dispatching conflicts also being re-modeled, or are they included under freight impacts?

*Response - Both corridor congestion and dispatching conflicts are outputs of the operations modeling, and included under freight impacts.*

**Tunnel Question 1** – Is the tunnel option also being remodeled? If not, why is it back on the table as a viable option, given the modeling?

**Tunnel Question 2** – THE DEIS states that a deep-bore tunnel “warranted further evaluation.” (2.4.2.3) Does this mean that only a deep-bore tunnel option was modeled?

**Tunnel Question 3** – Again, will we have tunnel remodeling results before the CAC must make a recommendation?

*Combined Response - DRPT is not proposing to model the tunnel options since the modeling performed to date demonstrates that three tracks with co-mingled service (passenger and freight) meet the Project’s requirements. From an operations modeling standpoint there is no substantive difference between a third track in a tunnel and a third track on the surface. In other words, to the computer the three track scenarios all look essentially the same.*



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Best regards,  
Emily Stock

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**From:** Josh Farrar [mailto:jfarrar@ashlandva.gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 7, 2017 4:51 PM  
**To:** Stock, Emily (DRPT) <Emily.Stock@drpt.virginia.gov>; Selleck, Randy (DRPT) <Randy.Selleck@drpt.virginia.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: DC2RVA - Questions about Modeling

Emily,

Our Town Council and staff have done some additional analysis of the DEIS from November and continue to have questions about the modeling and OTP of the two in Town rail options and the so called 3-2-3. If we could get some clarity on the questions below it would put the Town Council, staff, community and CAC members in a better position to consider compromising on the various alternatives under consideration.

In the presentation from the July 24 Community Advisory Committee meeting, on page 12 (Modeling), it states that the No Build and Full Build Two Tracks south of Spotsylvania did not meet corridor performance objectives. The subsequent bullet states: "For the remainder of the cases and assumptions, passenger and commuter trains met on time performance goals." These cases include 2-track and 3-track options for Ashland.

On the next page, regarding Ashland/Hanover considerations, it says: "A two-track alternative is included in the Draft EIS, but we are still evaluating if it meets Project requirements."

At first, these seem like contradictory statements, but we may have figured it out. The Full Build, Two Track option in Ashland (assuming this is 3-2-3) met OTP passenger goals, but is still being evaluated because of possible negative impacts on freight performance. Is this your understanding?

We also have some questions about current modeling versus the previous modeling included in the DEIS that we received in November. Here are some of the statements about Ashland and Fredericksburg in that document, which includes the 3-2-3 modeling:

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1. 2.6.2.1 -- "Although results were achieved for all operations simulations in the year 2025, when simulations for the year 2045 were modeled, the simulations with only two tracks through Fredericksburg and Ashland failed to operate as a result of unresolvable dispatching conflicts, i.e. *the corridor became inoperable due to train congestion and train movement ceased.*" (emphasis mine)
2. Corridor congestion has "tall peaks on either side of Ashland" by 2025
3. Dispatching conflicts "significantly higher" by 2025
4. Passenger train OTP at 90% by 2025, but "when normal conditions are added to the Rail Traffic Controller operations simulation modeling program - activities such as maintenance of way, track inspection, station delays, and late-arriving trains - the two-track 2025 cases is expected to fall below the 90% OTP threshold required under federal law."

It seems that the 3-2-3 option was dead in the water because of the modeling results. It was never presented to the public as an alternative, until the DRPT brought forward the "minor improvements" option at the Hanover meeting on April 4, 2016.

Questions about 3-2-3:

1. Why was the "minor improvements" option introduced last year when the modeling did not support it? When did the FRA request new modeling?
2. What exactly has changed in the new modeling that's resulted in more positive outcomes, at least with passenger OTP?
3. If freight impacts are still being evaluated, and the new modeling comes back with negative impact results, what then? Is 3-2-3 off the table? Will we know about freight impacts and the fate of 3-2-3 before the CAC is asked for a decision?
4. Are corridor congestion and dispatching conflicts also being re-modeled, or are they included under freight impacts?

Finally, the DEIS mentions additional simulation cases. It states: "Constructing a third track in a tunnel below Ashland had a decreased passenger train OTP and increased freight delay." (2.6.2.2)

Questions about tunnels:

1. Is the tunnel option also being remodeled? If not, why is it back on the table as a viable option, given the modeling?
2. The DEIS states that a deep-bore tunnel "warranted further evaluation." (2.4.2.3) Does this mean that only a deep-bore tunnel option was modeled?
3. Again, will we have tunnel remodeling results before the CAC must make a recommendation?

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The community feels we need to have answers in order for the CAC to make an informed decision.

Joshua S. Farrar, ICMA-CM  
Town Manager  
(804) 798-9219  
Jfarrar@ashlandva.gov  
Town of Ashland, VA  
*The Center of the Universe*

**From:** Stock, Emily (DRPT)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 2, 2017 1:07 PM  
**To:** 'Josh Farrar' <jfarrar@ashlandva.gov>  
**Cc:** Selleck, Randy (DRPT) (Randy.Selleck@drpt.virginia.gov) <Randy.Selleck@drpt.virginia.gov>; DC2RVAdocumentcontrol <DC2RVAdocumentcontrol@hdrinc.com>  
**Subject:** RE: DC2RVA Questions

Josh:

See below for answers to your questions. Thanks for sending this. We will be incorporating these questions and others we get from the CAC/the public into our FAQs on the website. Please let me know if you have any follow up questions. I'll be out of the office starting tomorrow through 8/15. Please contact Randy Selleck at (804)591-4442 if you need anything while I'm gone.

Best,  
Emily

**From:** Josh Farrar [mailto:jfarrar@ashlandva.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 26, 2017 2:44 PM  
**To:** Stock, Emily (DRPT) <Emily.Stock@drpt.virginia.gov>  
**Subject:** DC2RVA Questions

Good Afternoon Emily,

The maps that were handed out on Monday and are now online have raised a few questions so I am passing them along.

1. At one point was the cut and cover three tracks centered option eliminated? I don't believe I've heard much about that one in a couple years, and don't believe anyone has discussed it in our three CAC meetings.  
*For the purposes of the CAC none of the options have been eliminated. DRPT simply provided some additional information on the options that CAC members discussed, and the three tracks cut and cover tunnel is an option for the CAC to consider. DRPT provided a typical cross section*

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*for the cut and cover three track option within the Member Materials that were distributed at the end of the third CAC meeting. It is also posted on the website within the Below Grade Options pdf: <http://dc2rvarail.com/about/ashland-alternatives/ashland-cac/>*

2. Some in the community are concerned that maps of the western bypass options are not showing up on the website. They are making the assumption that that option has been eliminated. <http://dc2rvarail.com/about/ashland-alternatives/ashland-cac/>. Will maps of the western bypass alternatives be uploaded, or am I simply missing them within the links already provided?

*For the purposes of the CAC, none of the options have been eliminated. An expanded selection of western bypass maps are now available on the project website under Additional Materials: <http://dc2rvarail.com/about/ashland-alternatives/ashland-cac/>*

3. Can anyone give a definitive answer on safety fencing that may or may not be required for any of the through Town options? If fencing will be required, is there any reasonable way to guess where they may be located on the maps provided?

*DRPT has not proposed fencing as part of any of the options that we developed. FRA's guidance advises against conditions that allow passengers to cross between platforms across the active tracks at stations. The CAC, FRA, and other stakeholders can work on a specific approach to encourage passengers to use the crossings provided. Safety fencing at the station, if required by FRA/Amtrak, would be located between tracks and pedestrian walkways parallel to the tracks. It would be a minimum of 9 feet from the centerline of the nearest track. Fencing may conform to architectural desires as long as it meets safety requirements.*

My final two questions follow up to one I asked at our meeting July 14, and to an email I sent after the meeting.

1. Are the CAC members subject to Open Meetings law provisions? Can we meet in groups of 2 or more without violating the law?

*DRPT is committed to an open and transparent process. CAC members should conduct business consistent with Virginia's open meeting laws.*

2. Did you receive my email referencing Section 4(f) review of the East Coast Greenway and National Bike Routes 1 and 76? Should I expect a response similar to the letters generated for the parks in Town and the Trolley Line trail?

*Both the East Coast Greenway and Bike Routes 1 and 76 are located on the existing public road rights-of-way which are considered for transportation use and do not fall under protection through Section 4(f). We do still intend to address these facilities in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and will work to avoid and minimize any impact the project may have on these resources. Here is more information from Section 4(f):*

- *Section 4(f) of the U.S. DOT Act of 1966 (23 U.S.C. 138) prohibits use of land from a public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless it can be demonstrated that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to avoid the property and the proposed Project included all possible planning to minimize impacts. For recreational resources, Section 4(f) applies only to publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges. Similar resources that are privately owned yet open to the public are not considered Section 4(f) resources.*

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- *When applying Section 4(f) to multiple-use public land holdings, Section 4(f) applies only to those portions of a multiple-use public property that are designated by statute or identified in an official management plan of the administering agency as being primarily for public park, recreation, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge purposes, and are determined to be significant for such purposes.*

Thanks for your assistance.

Joshua S. Farrar, ICMA-CM  
Town Manager  
(804) 798-9219  
Jfarrar@ashlandva.gov  
Town of Ashland, VA  
*The Center of the Universe*

**From:** Stock, Emily (DRPT)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 26, 2017 3:10 PM  
**To:** 'Josh Farrar' <jfarrar@ashlandva.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: DC2RVA Questions

Josh:

Thanks for passing these questions along. We are working on answers and will be back in touch shortly.

For now, here is an answer to #2 re: bypass maps. Please reference the [Ashland/Hanover County Alternatives Section](#) of the website – one level above Ashland CAC – for all documents related to Ashland/Hanover County Alternatives. Here is a link to a [bypass options map](#) in that section that may be helpful.

Thanks!  
Emily

**From:** Josh Farrar [mailto:jfarrar@ashlandva.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 26, 2017 2:44 PM  
**To:** Stock, Emily (DRPT) <Emily.Stock@drpt.virginia.gov>  
**Subject:** DC2RVA Questions

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Thanks for your assistance.

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