



**Richmond/Hampton Roads
Passenger Rail Project**
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation



Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project Public Hearing Information Packet

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Public Comment Sheet

Welcome, and thank you for your participation in this important regional transportation initiative.

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is holding public hearings in Richmond, Newport News and Norfolk to seek your feedback on the best potential option to improve passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads. Information stations are available all evening for participants to collect information and ask questions of project staff before offering formal testimony and comments.

During the hearing, you will receive information about:

- Potential passenger rail options
- Environmental impacts of each option
- Ridership forecasts
- Capital and operating cost estimates
- Necessary infrastructure improvements
- How to provide public comments

We encourage you to review the Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) document and the information provided at tonight's meeting before letting us know which option will, in your opinion, best meet the region's needs for improved passenger rail service. We've included tables on pages 3 and 4 that compare the options evaluated in the Draft EIS. A reference copy of the complete Draft EIS document is available for review at this meeting, at area libraries and online at the project Web site. Please refer to the project Web site (www.rich2hrrail.info), or contact us at **804-786-4440** or **TDD 711**, for a list of library locations.

About the Project

DRPT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are analyzing ways to improve passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads. This improved service will ultimately connect the Northeast Corridor and the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor to provide access to the entire East Coast rail network.

The Tier I Draft EIS defines each potential option for improving passenger rail service, and evaluates each option based on the following key criteria:

- Routes served (Southside, Peninsula, or both routes)
- Number of trains
- Operating speed for each train
- Capital and operating costs
- Ridership projections
- Environmental impacts
- Necessary infrastructure improvements

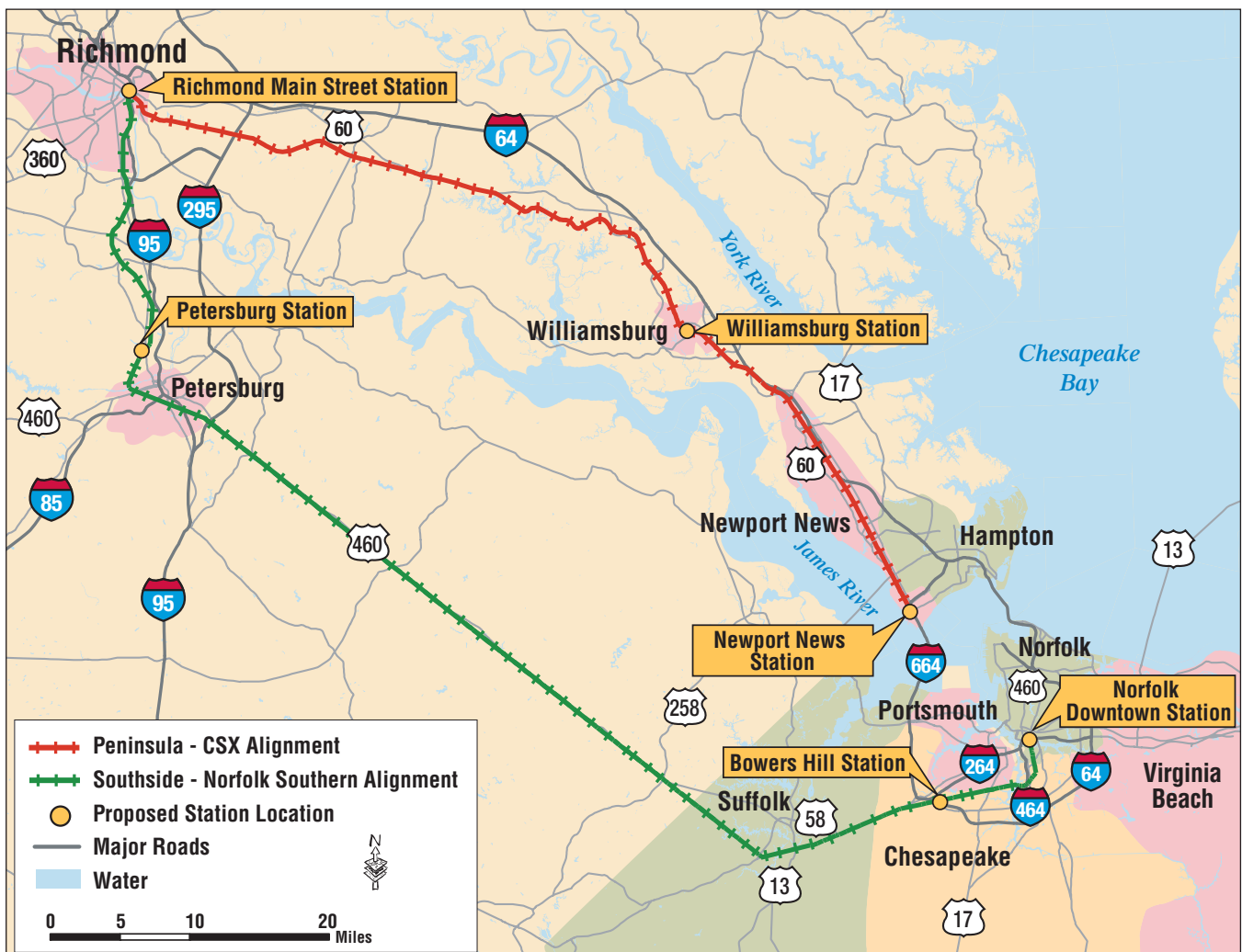
Your opinion regarding which option should be advanced for additional evaluation is important in order to conclude the Tier I EIS.

After public comments have been received, a preferred alternative will be identified and recommended as part of the Tier I Final EIS document. This final document will be submitted to the FRA for review. The FRA will then issue a Record of Decision on the alternative that will be eligible to receive federal funding. This decision will guide the next steps in the project development process.

Project Schedule

Tier I Draft EIS Available for Public Comment	Dec. 18, 2009
Public Hearings	Jan. 26, 27 & 28, 2010
End of Comment Period	Feb. 11, 2010
Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) makes decision on Preferred Alternative	Feb. 2010
Federal Funding Application Submitted	Mar. 2010
Tier I Final EIS Submitted to FRA	Summer/Fall 2010
Record of Decision from FRA	Winter 2010/2011

This schedule is subject to federal approval.



Key Alternative Comparisons

Alternative	Total # Trains	Speed	Time to Richmond (hours)	Annual Ridership (high)	Capital Costs	Annual Operating Costs	Annualized Cost per Rider (high)
Status Quo: maintains existing service on the Peninsula	2 Peninsula	79 mph	1:25	262,300	\$0	\$16,900,000	\$64.43
No Action: adds one Amtrak train on the Peninsula	3 Peninsula	79 mph	1:11	464,800	\$0	\$21,300,000	\$45.83
Alternative 1: High speed rail on the Southside, conventional speed rail on the Peninsula	6 Southside (HSR), 3 Peninsula (79 mph)	90 mph	1:35	1,110,100	\$475,400,000	\$80,000,000	\$106.03
		110 mph	1:27	1,162,200	\$543,000,000	\$81,400,000	\$107.09
Alternative 2a: High speed rail on the Peninsula, conventional speed rail on the Southside	3 Southside (79 mph), 6 Peninsula (HSR)	90 mph	1:03	1,124,300	\$742,300,000	\$77,900,000	\$121.64
		110 mph	0:57	1,161,400	\$844,200,000	\$79,400,000	\$126.01
Alternative 2b: High speed rail on the Peninsula, no rail service on the Southside	9 Peninsula (HSR)	90 mph	1:03	1,101,100	\$330,000,000	\$71,700,000	\$88.88
		110 mph	:57	1,147,000	\$431,900,000	\$72,400,000	\$92.98

Notes:

Southside conventional train at 79 mph would take 1:38 to Richmond.

HSR = High Speed Rail

Benefits of Improved Transportation Choices

Enhanced passenger rail service will improve the connectivity of Hampton Roads, Richmond, and ultimately the entire East Coast, by achieving the following goals:

- Save travel time between Hampton Roads, Richmond and other destinations
- Connect Hampton Roads communities to the Northeast Corridor, the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor and the entire East Coast rail network
- Provide highway congestion relief
 - Provide a new transportation choice for people traveling within and through the corridor

In the Northeast Corridor, rail carries more passengers than all airlines combined. Passenger rail is a competitive transportation choice for the traveling public.

- Support economic development through improved access to businesses and tourist attractions
- Reduce fuel consumption and improve air quality
- Provide an additional evacuation route during emergency situations, such as hurricanes

Public Comments & Testimony

All public comments are due to DRPT by **February 11, 2010**, in order to be considered and to become part of the public record for this project. For your convenience, you may comment in several ways:

At the hearing: You may complete and turn in a comment form, give public testimony during the hearing portion of the meeting or dictate your comments to the stenographer at any point during the evening.

Online: Visit www.rich2hrrail.info. We have provided an electronic comment form that you can submit online or download, print and mail the hardcopy form.

By mail: Written comments may be sent to:
Public Information Office
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
600 E. Main St., Suite 2102
Richmond, VA 23219

Environmental Screening and Ratings

The alternatives under consideration are measured in terms of their ability to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the project. These measures address the goals of regional mobility and linkages,

highway congestion, safety, cost-effectiveness and environmental impacts. The following table provides a summary rating for each alternative's ability to meet the project goals and objectives. The evaluation uses both quantitative and qualitative criteria and is based on the findings of the Tier I Draft EIS.

Planning Year 2025

Limit Highway Congestion	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	—	—	O*	O*	+	+	+	+
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	+	+	O*	O*	No train	No train
Overall rating	—	—	+	+	+	+	+	+
Probable Air Quality Impacts	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	O	O	O*	O*	+	+	+	+
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	+	+	+	+	No train	No train
Overall rating	O	O	+	+	+	+	+	+
Probable Wetland, Floodplain and Wildlife Habitat Impacts	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	O	O	O*	O*	—	—	—	—
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	—	—	—	—	No train	No train
Overall rating	O	O	—	—	—*	—*	—	—
Probable Noise Impacts	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	O	O	O*	O*	—	—	—	—
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	—	—	—	—	No train	No train
Overall rating	O	O	—	—	—*	—*	—	—
Probable Vibration Impacts	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	O	O	O*	O*	—	—	—	—
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	—	—	—	—	No train	No train
Overall rating	O	O	—	—	—*	—*	—	—
Sensitive Land Uses, Historic Properties and Open Space Impacts	Status Quo	No Action	Alternative 1		Alternative 2a		Alternative 2b	
	79 mph* MAS	79 mph* MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS	90 mph MAS	110 mph MAS
Peninsula/CSXT route	—	—	O*	O*	+	+	++	++
Southside/NS route	No train	No train	+	+	+	+	No train	No train
Overall rating	—	—	+	+	+	+	++	++

- ++ Strongly supports project goal or objective.
- + Supports project goal or objective.
- O No impacts relative to project goal or objective.
- Does not support project goal or objective due to minor negative impacts.
- Does not support project goal or objective due to severe impacts.
- * Conventional speed trains with a maximum authorized speed (MAS) of 79 mph.