



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 22, 2014

Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Contact: Lynne McCarthy

Phone: (804) 786-4443

Email: lynne.mccarthy@drpt.virginia.gov

DRPT and FRA to Host Public Meetings to Discuss Washington, D.C. to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail *Public meetings held November 5 & 6 and 12 & 13, 2014*

RICHMOND—The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), has scheduled public information meetings to introduce a preliminary engineering and environmental review project that will evaluate options for providing higher speed passenger rail service between Washington, D.C. and Richmond. The project includes a Tier II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the 123-mile rail corridor that goes through all cities and counties along the I-95 corridor between Arlington County (the south bank of the Potomac River) and Chesterfield County (Centralia).

The rail corridor from Washington, D.C. to Richmond is the northernmost segment of the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) Corridor, which stretches southward from Washington, D.C. through Richmond to Raleigh, N.C. and Charlotte, N.C. and points beyond, ultimately connecting to a larger network of higher speed rail corridors. Improved passenger rail service in the Commonwealth will offer citizens more transportation choices and faster, more reliable rail service that connects the northeast and southeast.

The public is invited to attend any of four public meetings that will be held throughout the corridor. These initial meetings will offer citizens an opportunity to learn details of the study, review information from the Tier I EIS, and provide feedback.

Dates, Times & Locations

Open house from 5 to 7:30 p.m. and formal presentation at 6 p.m. each evening.

- more -

Ashland	Richmond	Fredericksburg area	Arlington
November 5, 2014	November 6, 2014	November 12, 2014	November 13, 2014
Hanover Arts and Activities Center 500 South Center Street	Department of Motor Vehicles 2300 W. Broad Street	National Museum of the Marine Corps - Quantico 18900 Jefferson Davis Highway	Westin Crystal City 1800 Jefferson Davis Highway
Transit info: http://www.amtrak.com	Transit info: http://www.ridegRTC.com	Transit info: http://www.prtctransit.org/	Transit info: http://www.wmata.com http://www.arlingtontransit.com/

An online meeting also will be available October 27, 2014 – December 5, 2014. The public can review materials at the meetings or online and provide comments by December 5, 2014. Comments may be submitted using the interactive comment form on the study website or by mailing comments to: Emily Stock, Manager of Rail Planning, DRPT, 600 E. Main St, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219.

Public meeting locations are accessible to persons with disabilities. DRPT strives to provide reasonable accommodations and services for persons who require assistance to participate. For special assistance, citizens should call the Title VI Compliance Officer, 804-786-4440 or TDD 711 by November 1, 2014. Si usted necesita servicios de traducción a participar, por favor manda un email: espanol@DC2RVArail.com

Project website: www.DC2RVArail.com

Project toll-free phone number: 1-888-832-0900 or TDD 711

Background

DRPT and FRA are preparing the Washington, D.C. to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail Tier II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A Tier I EIS for this corridor and beyond to Charlotte, N.C. was completed in 2002. The current Tier II EIS is the next step toward a more rigorous environmental study of potential alternatives to bring higher speed rail to the Commonwealth. In addition to completing this next phase of environmental study, DRPT will conduct preliminary engineering to evaluate station, track, and safety improvements as well as the feasibility of adding a third track in several areas. These improvements are required in order for additional intercity passenger trains on the corridor to operate at higher speeds.

- more -

The goal of the Tier II EIS environmental review and preliminary engineering effort is to develop a set of approvable and buildable projects that meet the project's Purpose and Need while protecting environmental and community resources. The end result will be an EIS, coupled with a service development plan and preliminary engineering for improvements that will lead to final design and construction of the corridor in the future.

Washington, D.C. to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail is an integral component of the Commonwealth's transportation system and will complete a critical link in the U.S. intercity passenger rail system between the Northeast Corridor (Boston, Mass. to Washington, D.C.) and the SEHSR corridor. The improvements evaluated and designed as part of the project will enhance connectivity between Washington, D.C., Richmond, and beyond by providing faster and more reliable intercity passenger rail service.

This project is funded through a cooperative agreement between the DRPT and FRA for the completion of preliminary engineering and Tier II environmental review.

About the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

The Virginia 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 or TDD 711, 600 E. Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219.

###