



HJ 542 Final Report

Virginia Transit Equity and Modernization Study

October 2022



Agenda

- Study Overview
- Public and Stakeholder Engagement
- Study Findings
- What Does this Mean for Riders?
- What Does this Mean for Transit Agencies?
- Next Steps

Study Overview

- House Joint Resolution 542 passed during the 2021 General Assembly session
- Requires DRPT to complete a needs assessment that focuses on the equitable delivery of transit services and the modernization of transit in Virginia
- The results of the study include:
 - Study Findings
 - Targeted recommendations and actions for Virginia's transit agencies and communities

Study Overview

- Several technical transit topics have been explored, including:



Accessibility



Emerging Technologies



Safety



Adequacy of Infrastructure



Electrification



Engagement and Governance

Study Process



Public and Stakeholder Engagement

3,500+ Interactions



1 virtual public forum with 77 attendees



4 Transit Equity and Modernization Committee meetings



16 Technical Working Group meetings



3,300 study website visits



1 study feedback questionnaire



7 rider focus groups with 48 participants



“Share Your Transit Story” campaign with 24 responses



2 surveys of local transit agencies with responses from all 39



30 briefings to local and regional governing bodies

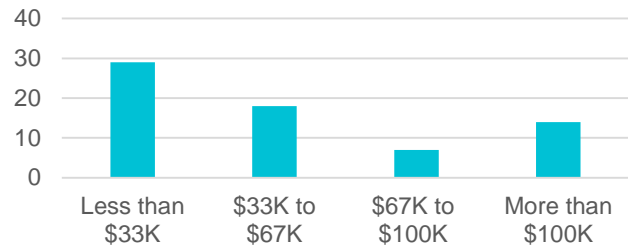


7 e-newsletters and 15 social media posts from DRPT and partners

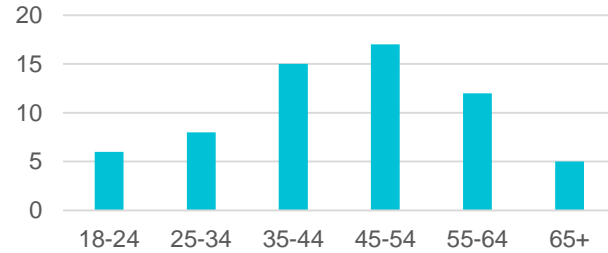
Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Rider Focus Group Participant Statistics

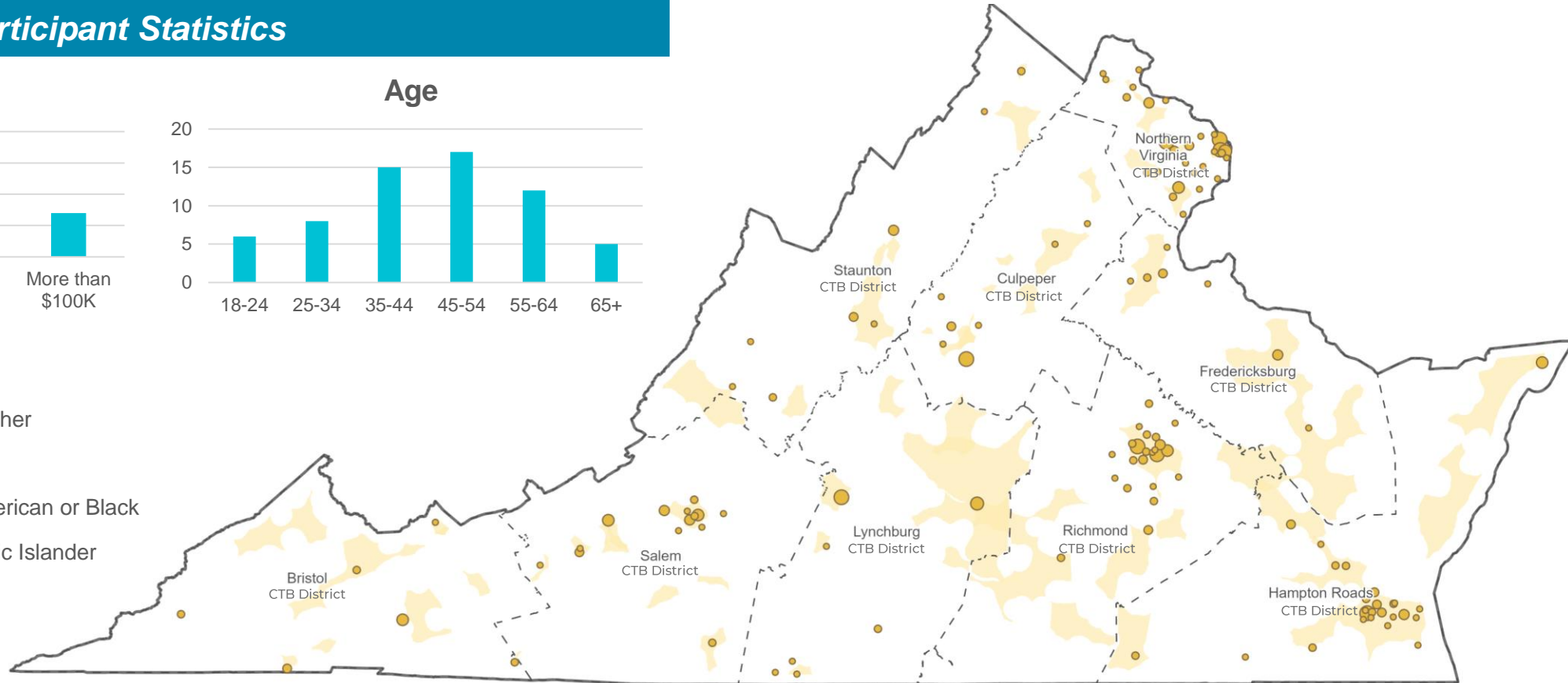
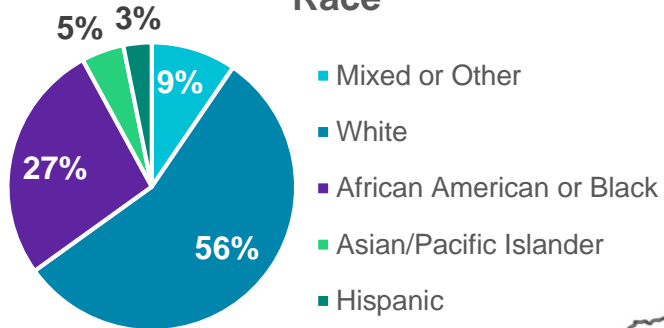
Income



Age



Race



Study Findings

Study Findings



Accessibility / Adequacy of Infrastructure

- Equity and accessibility must be more heavily considered in guidance, requirements, and funding programs for transit agencies.
- Many bus stops are poorly placed and not well-connected to sidewalks.
- Basic transit infrastructure is inconsistent.
- There is increasing interest in piloting zero-fare service to overcome barriers to transit access.
- The availability of transit in Virginia is high, but gaps exist.

Study Findings



Emerging Technologies / Electrification

- There is strong interest in transitioning to zero-emission fleets across Virginia transit agencies.
- There are unique needs for and barriers to adopting new and emerging technology among Virginia's transit agencies.

Study Findings



Safety

- Transit is among the safest ways to travel, but there is room to improve both perceived and actual safety for transit riders, operators, and employees.



Engagement and Governance

- Transit riders have limited opportunities to be a part of the decision-making process.



Study-wide

- More data with better precision is needed to make informed decisions.

Action Plan: What Does this Mean for Transit Riders?

Action Plan

What Does this Mean for Riders?

Improved processes focused on rider needs



Action: Develop suggested best practices for coordination between land use planning and transit planning.



Action: Provide technical guidance or best practices for monitoring and reporting infrastructure performance.

“

Transit is my lifeline. I don't own a car, so my feet, my bike, and the bus is all I have to get around for work, shopping, and the rest of my trips.”

— SHARE YOUR TRANSIT STORY SUBMISSION



Action: Identify and share inclusive transit safety training opportunities for agency staff.



Action: Develop qualitative and quantitative metrics to measure reliable and efficient transit service that promotes access to opportunity and lifeline services.



Action Plan

What Does this Mean for Riders?

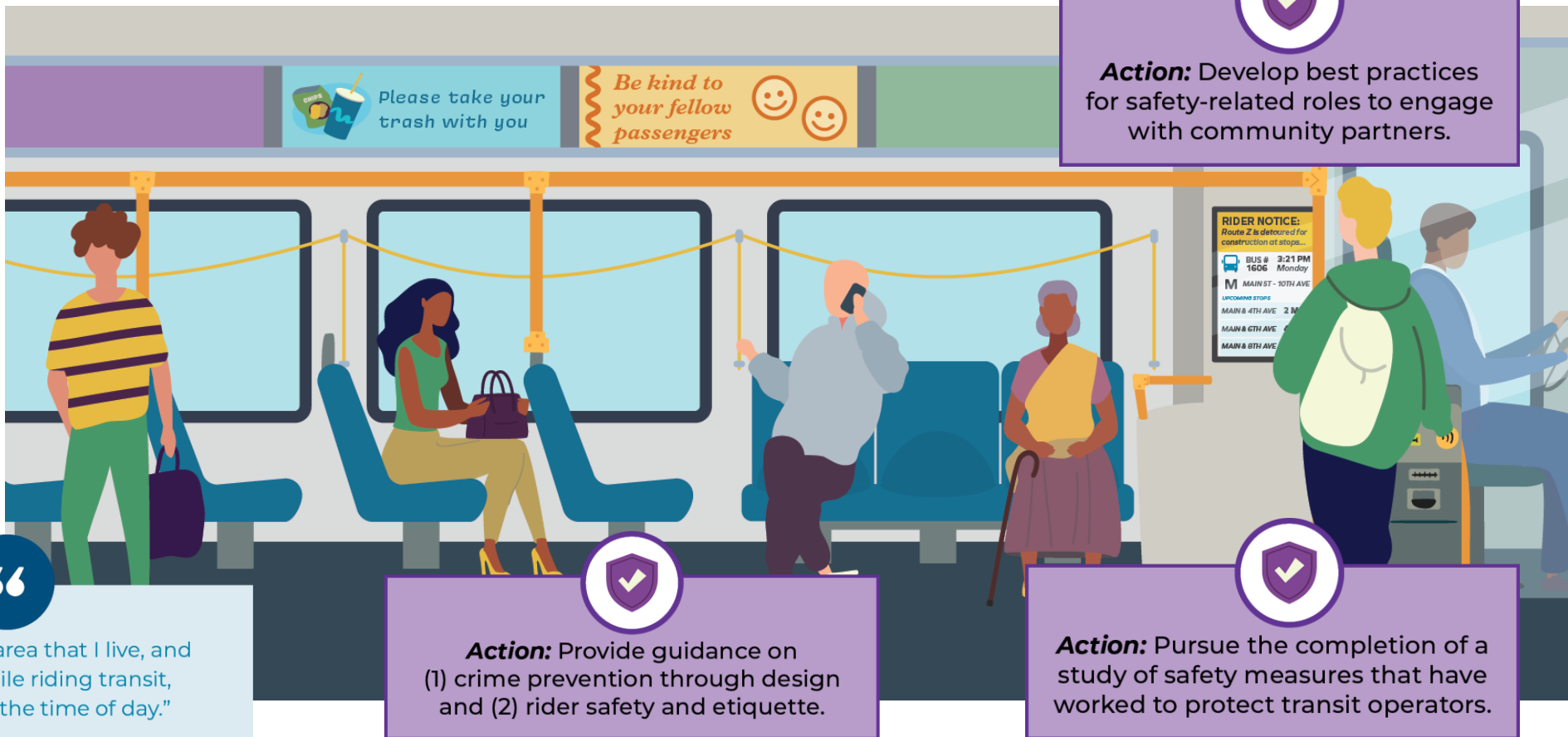
Increased use of state-of-the-art technologies



Action Plan

What Does this Mean for Riders?

Improved perception of and actual safety while using transit



Action Plan

What Does this Mean for Riders?

Expanded opportunities for rider input to ensure services provided are more closely aligned with desired rider travel patterns

“

Folks that need to have access to services may be told they have a seat at the table, but I haven't actually seen that be the case.”

—FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT



Action: Create rider advisory councils within local transit agencies.

Action: Develop a public engagement handbook that outlines expectations and techniques for more inclusive public engagement at the local level.

Action Plan

What Does this Mean for Riders?

Improved experience through high quality transit infrastructure



Action: Develop technical guidance or policies on bus stop design elements and development.



Connected sidewalks and facilities that get people of all abilities to bus stops safely is important to reduce barriers to transit use.”

— TWG MEMBERS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS



Action: Provide guidance or best practices for more effective stakeholder coordination when prioritizing improvements around bus stops.

**Subset of actions that aim to address the above theme*

Action Plan

What Does this Mean for Riders?

New or enhanced transit service

“

More money and resources need to be invested in current and future rural transit systems.”

— WEBSITE COMMENT



Action: Identify areas with unmet demand for transit service and provide new or enhanced service.



Action: Allocate funding to prioritize expansion or enhancements of transit service to underserved areas and populations.



**Subset of actions that aim to address the above theme*

Action Plan: What Does this Mean for Transit Agencies?


Agency Benefits

- More informed decision-making
- More efficient allocation of resources
- Increased coordination with partner agencies
- Shared knowledge of industry best practices
- New or improved metrics and measures to track performance
- Additional funding opportunities
- Improved requirements to ensure better transit outcomes

Moving Forward

- DRPT will lead many of the actions listed in the Final Report

Final Report →

Technical Area	Action	Study Findings Addressed	Lead Agency
 Safety	Develop best practices for safety-related roles to engage with community partners	▶ Transit is among the safest ways to travel, but there is room to improve both perceived and actual safety for transit riders, operators, and employees	DRPT

- Coordination with supporting agencies and other partners will be important to implement and realize the benefits of actions

Including:

Local Transit Agencies

State Agencies

Technology Vendors and Data Partners

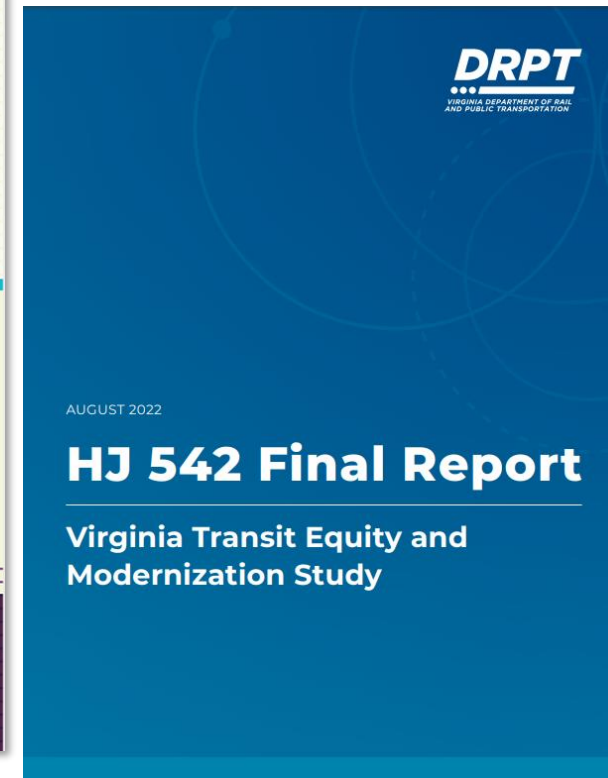
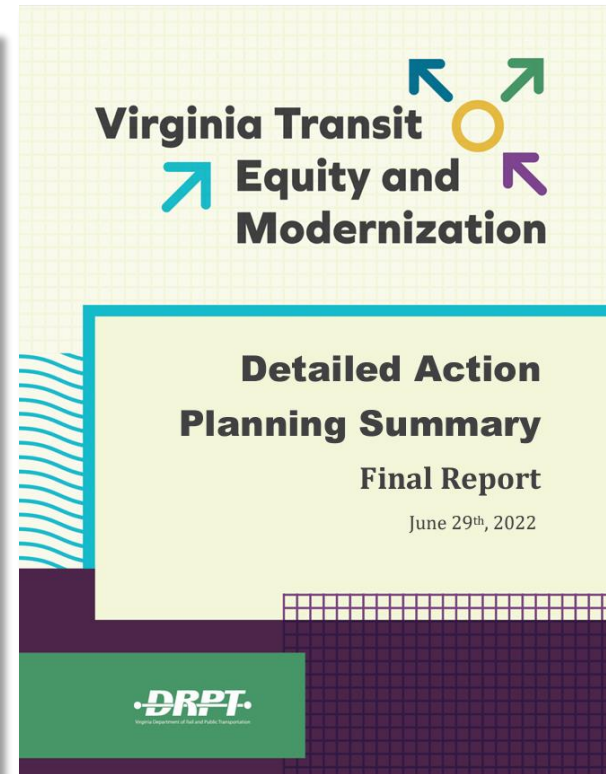
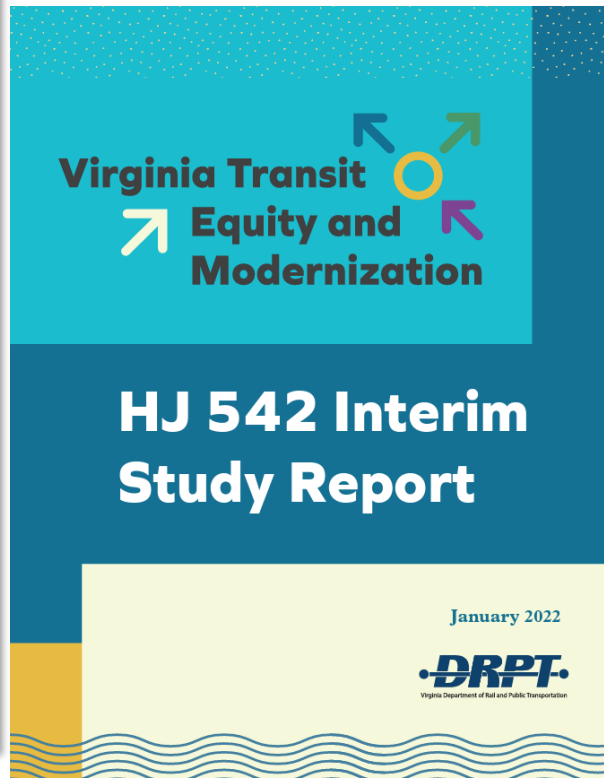
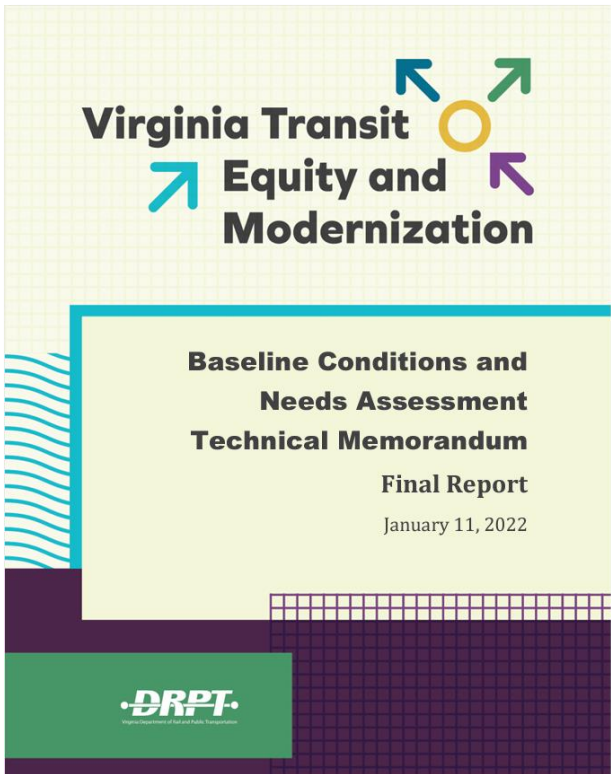
Advocacy Organizations

Local Agencies and Departments

Consultants

And many others...

Next Steps



View all study documentation at <https://www.drpt.virginia.gov/studies-and-reports/virginia-transit-equity-and-modernization-study/>

Next Steps

- Final report submitted to the General Assembly as directed by House Joint Resolution 542
- DPRT, in partnership with transit agencies, will work toward implementing near-term actions.
 - Identify funding opportunities
 - Identify partnership opportunities
- Continuous investment and commitment from Commonwealth leaders
- Support from local and regional partners
- DRPT will monitor and evaluate progress

Thank You!

www.drpt.virginia.gov