



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

Item #5

MEMORANDUM

March 12, 2015

TO: Transportation Planning Board

FROM: Kanti Srikanth *RSG for Kanti Srikanth*
Director, Department of Transportation Planning

RE: Letters Sent/Received Since the February 18th TPB Meeting

The attached letters were sent/received since the February 18th TPB meeting. The letters will be reviewed under Agenda #5 of the March 18th TPB agenda.

Attachments



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Railroad
Administration**



To Kati

February 24, 2015

Mr. Chuck Bean
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 N Capitol Street NE
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002

Subject: Tier II Environmental Impact Statement
Southeast High Speed Rail - DC to Richmond
Participating Agency Invitation

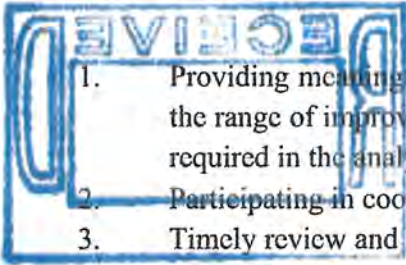
Dear Mr. Bean:

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) are commencing environmental studies associated with the Tier II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Washington, DC to Richmond segment of the Southeast High Speed Rail corridor. The limits of the project extend from Control Point RO (MP CFP-110) in Arlington, Virginia south to the CSX Transportation (CSXT) A-Line/CSXT-S-Line junction at MP A-11 in Centralia, Virginia (Chesterfield County), a distance of approximately 123 miles (see attached corridor map). The Tier II EIS will involve further analysis of the route alignments and improvement concepts progressed through the 2002 Tier I EIS and Record of Decision (ROD), including the Buckingham Branch Railroad and the CSXT S-Line and A-Line routes from Greendale north of Richmond to Centralia south of Richmond. Additional information on the Tier II EIS may be found at the project website: www.DC2RVArail.com.

This project is receiving federal funding through FRA (the lead federal agency), requires permits issued by other federal agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and will traverse federal land including parcels owned by the U.S. Marine Corps and the National Parks Service, among others. Due to the involvement of several federal entities, the undertaking requires compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Your agency has been identified as one that may have an interest in the study. As such, we extend your agency an invitation to become a Participating Agency in the development of the Tier II EIS for this project. Being a Participating Agency does not imply that your agency either supports the project or has any special responsibilities with respect to evaluation of the project.

Participating Agencies are responsible to identify, as early as practicable, any issues of concern regarding the project's potential environmental impacts that could substantially delay an agency from granting a permit or other approval that is needed for the project. We suggest that your agency's role in the development of the Tier II EIS should include the following as they relate to your agency's area of interest:



1. Providing meaningful and early input on defining the purpose and need, determining the range of improvements to be considered, and the methodologies and level of detail required in the analysis of potential improvements.
2. Participating in coordination meetings and joint field reviews as appropriate.
3. Timely review and comment on environmental documentation to reflect the views and concerns of your agency.

In order to best facilitate the Tier II proceedings, we ask that your agency designate a single individual that will serve as your assigned representative to the study. We encourage the assignment of an individual that will best represent your agency's interests as well as convey study findings and decisions back to others within your agency.

If you have any questions regarding this environmental review, please contact John Winkle of my staff at 202-493-6067 or John.Winkle@dot.gov.

Thank you in advance for your interest and participation in this project.

Sincerely,

David Valenstein
Chief, Environmental and Planning Division
Federal Railroad Administration

Attachments: Corridor Map
Project Brochure

cc: Emily Stock
Manager of Rail Planning
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

John Morton
Consultant Project Manager



Let's Get Virginia Moving!

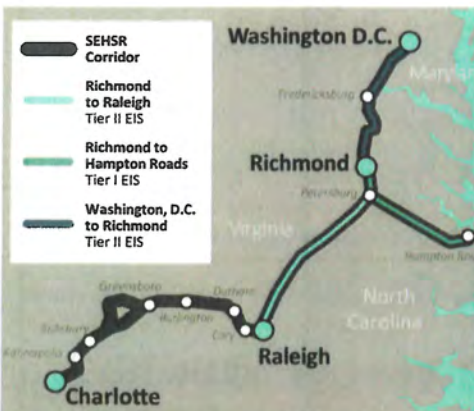
The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are working to improve passenger rail service between Washington, D.C. and Richmond, Va. We are in the process of evaluating potential environmental impacts and benefits that may occur if changes are made to CSX's RF&P rail line, which runs generally parallel to I-95.

This project will provide the critical link between the northeast rail corridor and the rest of the Southeast High Speed Rail corridor, enhancing connectivity between Washington, D.C., Richmond, and beyond by providing faster and more reliable rail service.

This project will be evaluated in a Tier II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will describe actions needed to expand the capacity of the rail network and document whether those actions would affect the man-made and natural environments. The EIS is intended to help decision makers understand the benefits and risks of moving forward with this project.

DC2RVA at a Glance:

- Northern Terminus – Arlington, Va.
- Southern Terminus – Centralia in Chesterfield County, Va.
- Approximately 123-mile segment generally parallel to the I-95 corridor
- Shared freight rail and passenger rail corridor



SEHSR Timeline

- 1992 - USDOT designated SEHSR from Washington, D.C. to Charlotte, N.C. as a national high-speed rail corridor
- 1999 - Tier I EIS began for the entire SEHSR corridor
- 2002 - SEHSR Corridor Tier I Final EIS and Record of Decision
- 2012 - Tier I Final EIS and Record of Decision for Richmond to Hampton Roads *A preferred high-speed rail alternative was identified*
- 2015 - Tier II Final EIS and Record of Decision expected for Richmond to Raleigh
- 2017 - Tier II Final EIS and Record of Decision expected for Washington, D.C. to Richmond

