

Rail Station Project Summary

The Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact are part of the National Environmental Policy (NEPA) process. Congress intended that NEPA provide decision-makers with enough information to make a reasonable decision when spending federal money. Although the NEPA process is discussed as the environmental process the problem to be solved must also be considered.

Common Things

All the station sites share several common assumptions. This section highlights some of those common factors.

- Ridership
 - All Stations assume around 30,000 passengers per year (80 daily) today.
 - All Stations assume around 98,000 passengers per year (270 daily) by 2025¹.
- All the alternatives include the following features²
 - A center passenger platform (564' to 833' long x 24' wide) between the eastern most main line track and the Southeast High Speed Rail (SESHR) track³
 - A tunnel, or overhead walkway, to provide safe access to the platform
 - A building of approximately 3600 square feet
 - A parking lot for 130-170 vehicles (about 0.6 acres)

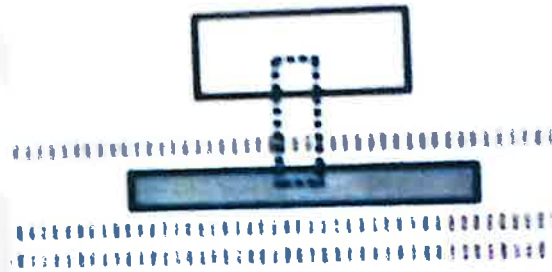


Figure 1: Platform Schematic (Source: AMTRAK)

Table 1: Summary Table

Alternative Site (Alphabetical Order)	Purpose and Need	Environmental	Cost (\$ Million)	
			Low	High
Boulevard	94,000 People w/i 10 minutes travel ⁴ ~1.0 mi from I-95 Exit (Temple Ave.) 3 turnings from the ramp Visible from US 1 564 foot long platform 170 Parking Spaces	2.67 Acres Private Owner Paved Site DHR has Concurred with this site Parts of the site are within the 1% flood plain. ⁵	\$9.0	\$12.0

¹ DRPT, *Pre-NEPA Evaluation Tri-Cities Area Multimodal Station Study* (2012), 7.

² *Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Statement for the Tri-Cities Multimodal Station* (2017), ES-12.

³ The minimum platform length given is 300 feet outside the Northeast Corridor. *Amtrak Station Programing and Planning Guide* (2013), 87.

⁴The persons within ten minutes travel has been estimated using GIS.

Attachment 4-Draft Rail Station Summary

Alternative Site (Alphabetical Order)	Purpose and Need	Environmental	Cost (\$ Million)	
			Low	High
	New Access Road ~0 ft.	Additional Permits are needed		
Branders Bridge	91,000 People w/i 10 minutes travel ~1.1 mi from I-95 Exit 54 (Temple Ave.) 4 turnings from the ramp Visible from Branders Bridge Rd 833 foot long platform 153 Parking Spaces New 24' wide Access Road ~600 ft.	2.57 Acres Private Owner Wooded Site Potential Endangered Species ⁶ Needs DHR Concurrence No Flood Plain Impact Additional Permits are needed This site may be affected by the need for an overpass of Branders Bridge with the rail line ⁷ .	\$9.0	\$11.0
Collier Yard	66,000 People w/i 10 minutes travel ~0.9 mi from I-85 Exit 65 (Squirrel Level Rd.) 3 turnings from the ramp Visible from Halifax Road 2,250 foot long platform 135 Parking Spaces New 24' wide Access Road~2,575 ft.	4.30 Acres Wooded Site Owned by Petersburg Needs DHR Concurrence No Flood Plain Impact Additional Permits are needed	\$14.0	\$17.0
Ettrick (Build)	74,000 People w/i 10 minutes travel ~2.0 mi from I-95 Exit 54 (Temple Ave.) 5 turnings from the ramp Not visible from River Road 833 foot long platform 150 Parking Spaces New 24' wide Access Road ~210 ft.	2.34 Acres Paved Site Owned by CSXT Needs DHR Concurrence No Flood Plain Impact Additional Permits are needed	\$7.0	\$9.0

⁵ The term '100 year flood' plain implies that a flood occurs only once in a hundred years. Actually, this size flood could happen back to back so resource agencies are switching to the more precise 1% chance of recurrence.

⁶ This impact can be mitigated by avoiding land clearing during certain months.

⁷ See Additional Work below.

Alternative Site (Alphabetical Order)	Purpose and Need	Environmental	Cost (\$ Million)	
			Low	High
Etrick (No Build)⁸	74,000 People W/I 10 minutes travel ~2.0 mi from I-95 Exit 54 (Temple Ave.) 5 turnings from the ramp No Additional Parking	NA Paved Site Owned by CSXT No DHR Concurrence Required No Flood Plain Impact	\$0.0	\$0.0 ⁹

Purpose and Need

As stated in the Environmental Assessment Report:

“The purpose of this Project is to construct a multimodal station for current intercity passenger rail service through Petersburg, including the relatively new conventional [rail] service to Norfolk, and prepare for the future introduction of high speed rail service on the SEHSR corridor to Norfolk and North Carolina:

The secondary purposes of this Project are to:

- Construct a station in a location that supports the SEHSR goal of diverting trips from air and highway within the travel corridor to passenger rail use, thus reducing the growth rate of congestion on I-95; and
- Construct a station in a location that serves long-distance, regional, business and leisure travelers within and beyond Virginia, including Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor (NEC), extending from Washington, DC, to Boston, MA, as well as points south (the SEHSR Tier-II EIS serves as the key link for these travelers to the busy Northeast) and east to the Norfolk and Hampton Roads area”¹⁰.

The first paragraph implies a desire for a modern station building and platform with modern amenities including safe trackside access and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. All of the constructions alternatives meet these goals.

The second paragraph implies that a new station should be close to the center of population, be close to the Interstate, and be easy to find and see from the road. The construction alternatives fulfill the requirements of the second paragraph to varying degrees. Table 1 and Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7 show each construction alternative meets the goals of the second paragraph.

⁸ The No-Build does not meet the requirements of the purpose and need statement. *Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Statement for the Tri-Cities Multimodal Station (2017), 29*

⁹ The No-Build Option will require work to make the station Americans with Disabilities Act Compliant.

¹⁰ *Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Statement for the Tri-Cities Multimodal Station (2017), P-ES-6.*

Environmental

- During the NEPA process Federal and State Resource Agencies have reviewed each location
 - Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
 - Virginia Department of Game and Fisheries
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Virginia Department of Historic Resources (*i.e.*, SHPO)
 - U.S. Department of the Interior – National Park Service (Petersburg National Battlefield)
- The Resource Agencies have not identified significant impacts for any site. Thus all the sites are permit able.
- It appears that the resource agencies have given standard responses to requests for comments. These responses include lists of permits needed later in the construction process.
- Building a new station adjacent to the existing Ettrick Site appears to have the fewest environmental impacts.¹¹

Cost

The costs in the Environmental Assessment Report are planning level estimates they are basically averages of costs of similar work on several recent rail stations. The Environmental Assessment report shows a range of costs for each alternative will become clearer.

There has been some discussion of land acquisition costs for the Boulevard site. The Environmental Assessment

CTB Station Policy

In January 2018 the Commonwealth Board of Transportation adopted an *Intercity Passenger Rail Station Policy*. This section summarizes key parts of that policy.

Success Factors

DRPT lists these factors for successfully in developing rail station projects:

- Regional consensus,
- Preferred Site for Station Location, and
- Existing Land use that supports density,
- and connectivity to final destinations.¹²

Cost Factors

Figure 2 summarizes elements of rail capital and operational costs that the Commonwealth Transportation Board will participate in. Effectively Virginia may choose to participate in the capital costs of: track and platform improvements, grade separations, and ADA and safety improvements at stations, drainage improvements and lighting. The local sponsor will be responsible for building the station itself, parking facilities, landscaping and access to the site.

¹¹ *Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Statement for the Tri-Cities Multimodal Station (2017), ES-14 to ES-16.*

¹² DRPT, *Intercity Passenger Rail Station Policy*, 2018) 8,9.

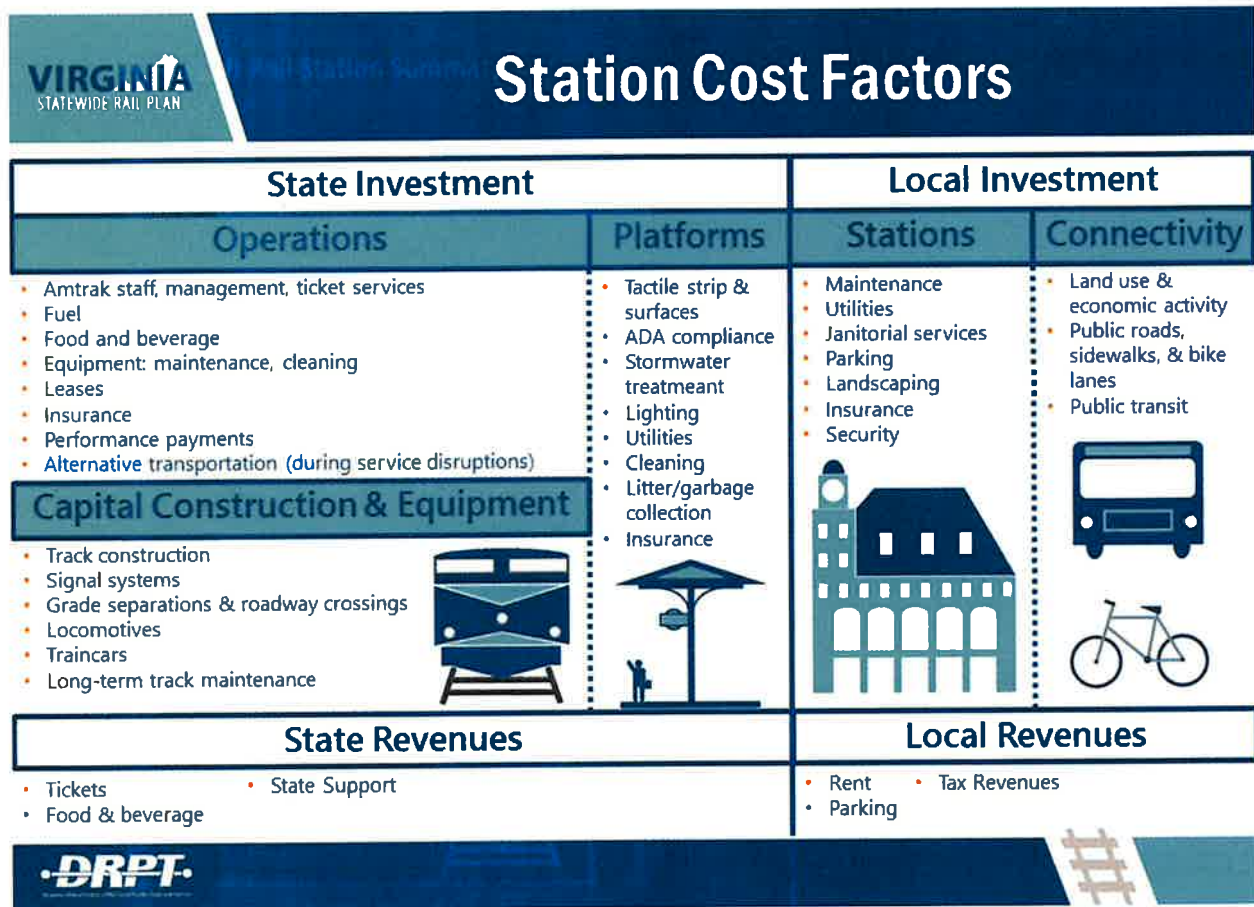


Figure 2: DRPT Station Cost Factors¹³

Unanswered Questions

There are a number of policy questions that have no technical answer. This section shares some of those questions.

- Will Federal Rail Administration accept the Tri-Cities MPO's selection or will Federal Rail Administration continue with the preferred alternative described in the Environmental Assessment Report?
- If Federal Rail Administration chooses a site different from the preferred alternative identified in the *Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Statement for the Tri-Cities Multimodal Station*
 - what additional work will be needed to complete the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI);
 - how will this work be paid for (the UPC for this project has been closed for several months);
 - who will manage the work ; and

¹³ DRPT, *Intercity Passenger Rail Station Policy*, (2018), 3.

- Will the Commonwealth Board of Transportation fully support a site chosen by the MPO?

Additional Work Needed to Support High Speed Rail

The work described below does not affect the station location decision but is included as additional information. The Tier II Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Southeast High Speed Rail Project cites some additional work that the region needs to undertake to support high speed rail between Richmond and Raleigh. The work highlighted here will need to be done to improve overall rail service and ultimately to support high speed rail.

- Completely double track the rail line from Collier Yard to the Staple Mills Road Station
- Replace the at grade crossing of Branders Bridge Road with an overpass
- Replace the existing railroad overpass bridge at US 1 (in Colonial Heights)
- Additional Landscaping near River Road
- A land exchange with the National Park Service to mitigate impacts near the Fort Wadsworth Unit of the Petersburg National Battlefield

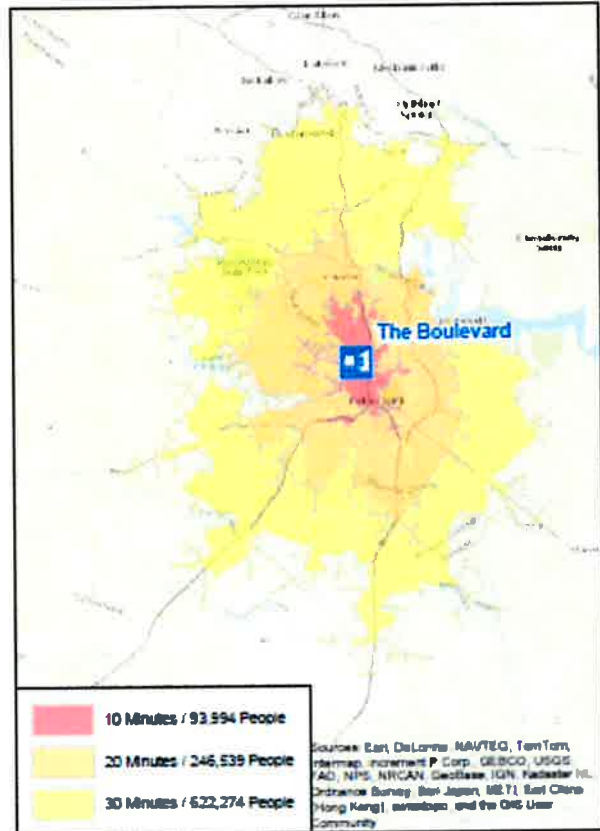


Figure 3: Boulevard Site

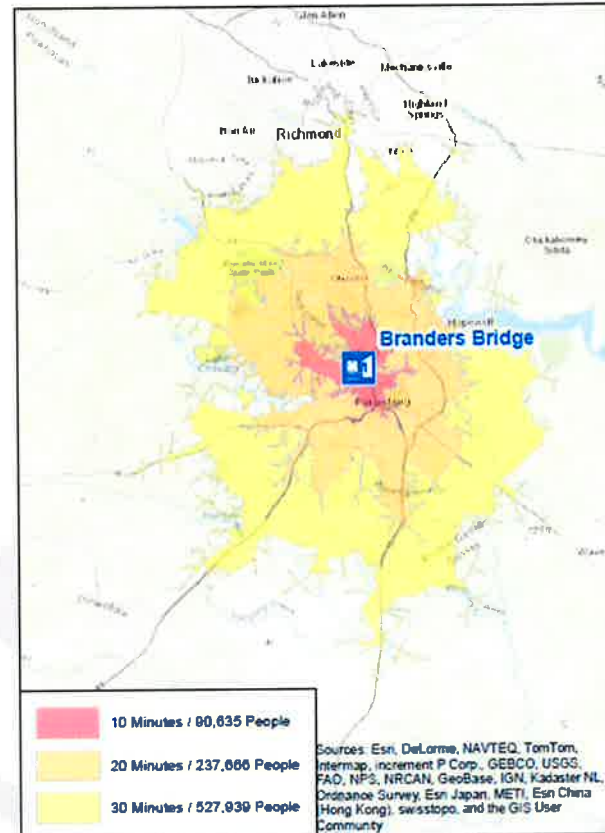


Figure 4: Branders Bridge Site

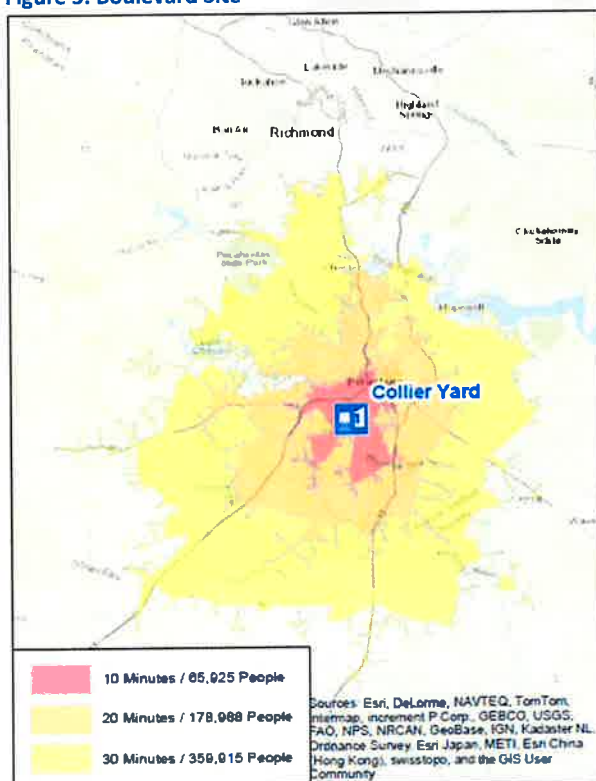


Figure 5: Collier Yard Site

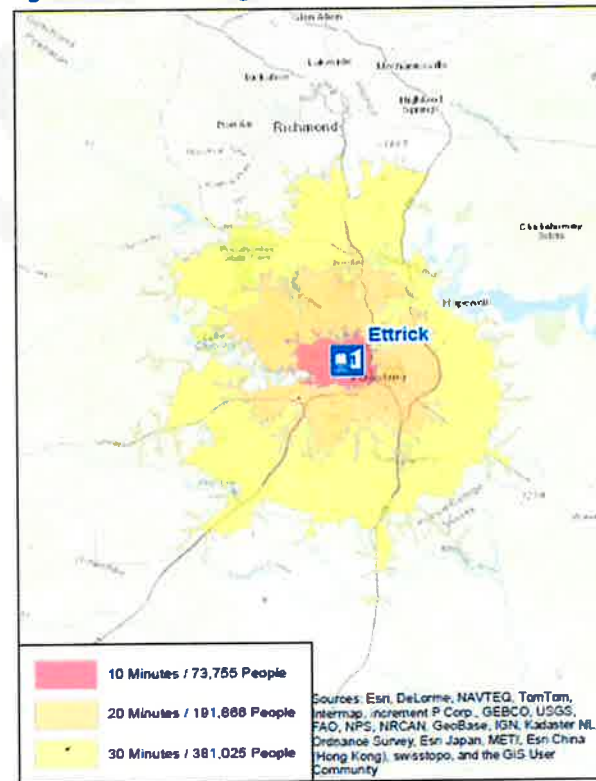


Figure 6: Ettrick Site