

February/March 2022

# New River Valley Passenger Rail Station Feasibility Study

Public Meeting

VIRGINIA  
PASSENGER RAIL  
AUTHORITY



TRANSFORMING  
RAIL IN VIRGINIA

# Participation in Presentation

- Meeting is being recorded & Moderated
  - Presentation will be posted on project website March 2nd
- Questions and Answers:
  - Please type questions in the chat box
  - Questions will be moderated and grouped together by subject
  - Answers will be provided at the conclusion of the presentation
- Comments:
  - Enter comments into the chat box
  - Each comment will be considered by the Project Team and made available as part of the public meeting summary





# Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

- Created by 2020 General Assembly
- Given all powers necessary for carrying out its statutory purposes:
  - Design, build, finance, and maintain rail facilities
  - Direct recipient of USDOT Grants
  - Eminent domain powers
- Will own all rail assets and right of way
- Will partner with others to operate passenger and commuter rail service
- Governed by a 15-Member Board



# Transforming Rail in Virginia

December 19, 2019

Virginia, CSX, Amtrak, and VRE announce landmark rail initiative, with end goal to separate freight and passenger service.

March 30, 2021

Virginia, Amtrak, VRE, CSX & US DOT Secretary Buttigieg announced the signing of the Definitive Agreements.

May 5, 2021

Agreement with Norfolk Southern Railway (NSR) to expand to New River Valley announced.

January 10, 2022

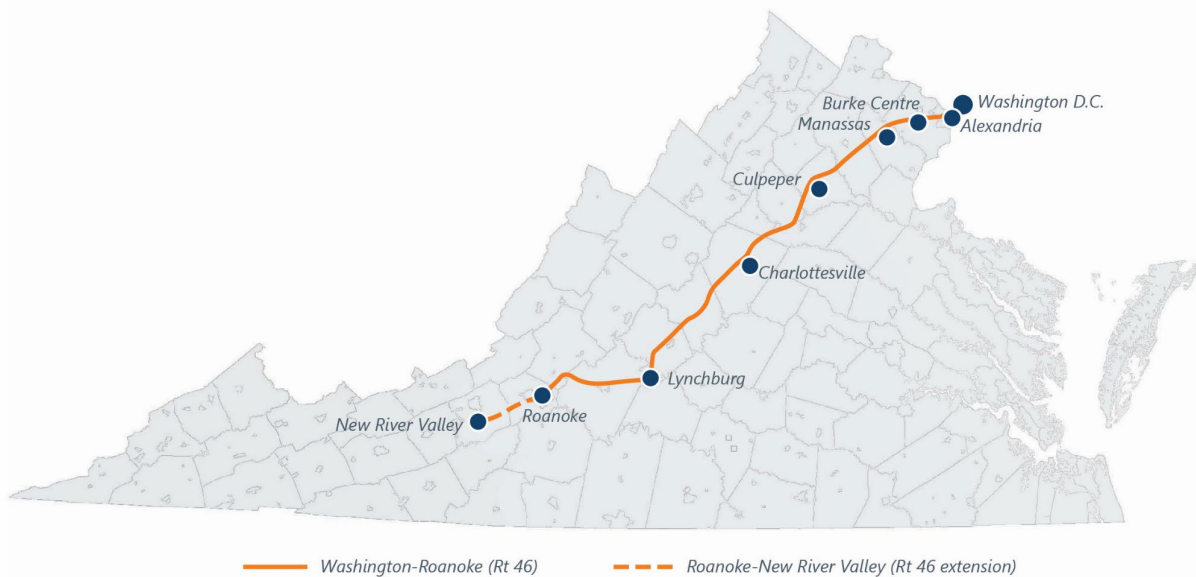
Definitive agreements between VPRA & NSR were finalized on January 10<sup>th</sup>, with financial close coming in mid-2022 after further regulatory and other due diligence is complete.





# Norfolk Southern Agreement: Roanoke Route Background

- Amtrak Regional daily service began in October 2009 with one round trip between Lynchburg and Boston - annual ridership forecast of 33,100.
- Service more than tripled the ridership forecast in the first full year.
- Service expanded to Roanoke in November 2017.
- Route carried over 220,000 passengers in 2019.



- Announced Service Expansion 2021: NS will allow a second Roanoke train and an extension to the New River Valley once certain infrastructure projects are complete.
- Virginia purchasing 28 miles of the Virginian Line from Norfolk Southern.

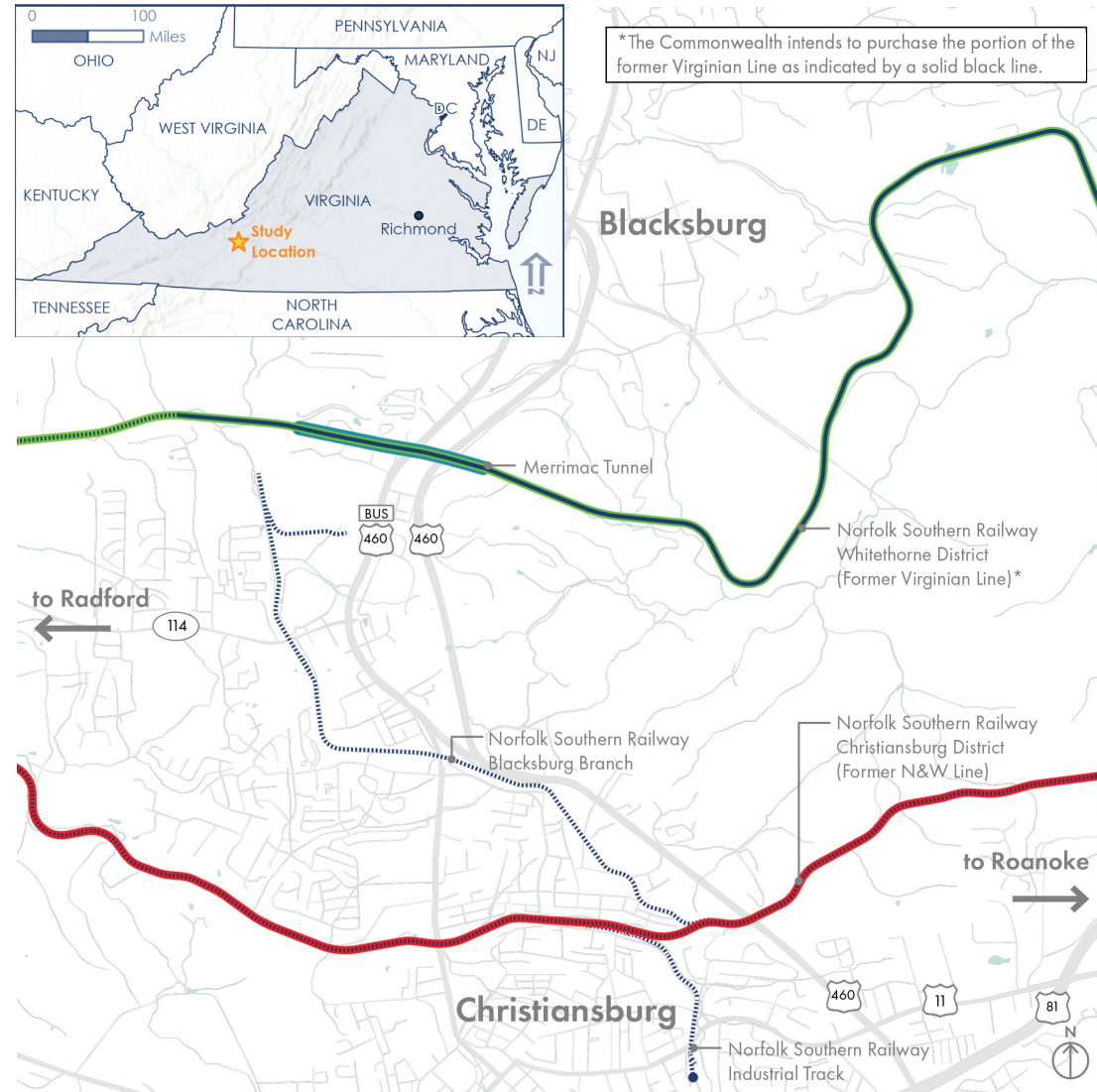
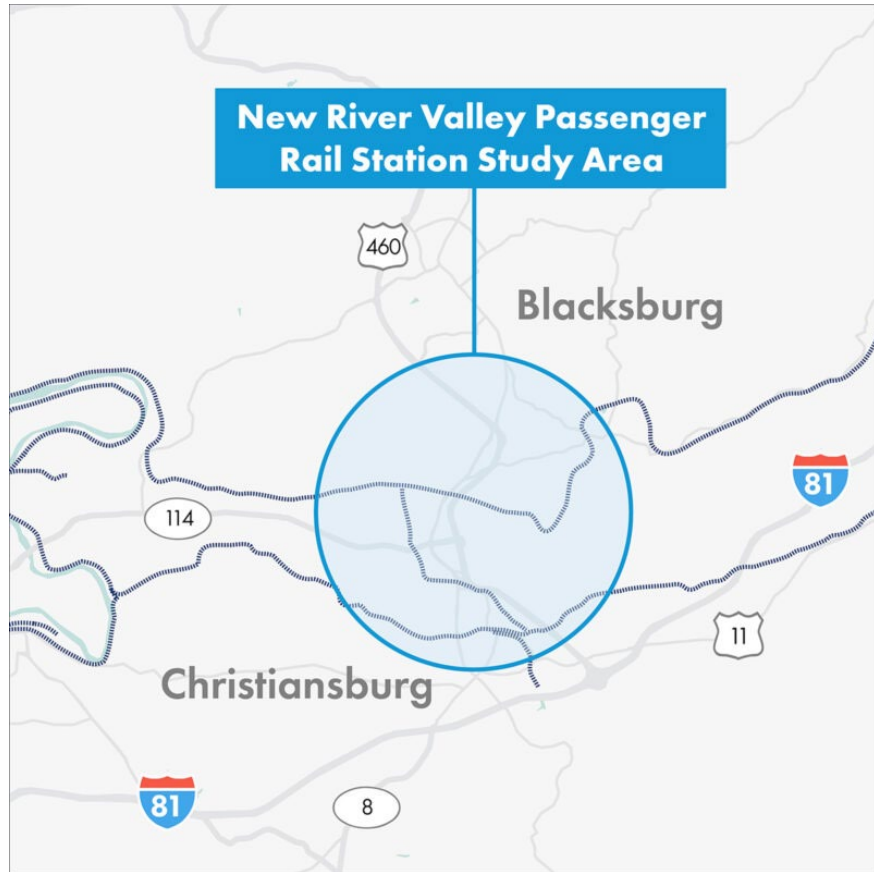


# Improvements: Manassas to the New River Valley

- Over \$200M worth of capital infrastructure improvements.
- 80,000 net new riders estimated in first year after the extension to the New River Valley.
- Passenger Service to the New River Valley for the first time since 1979.

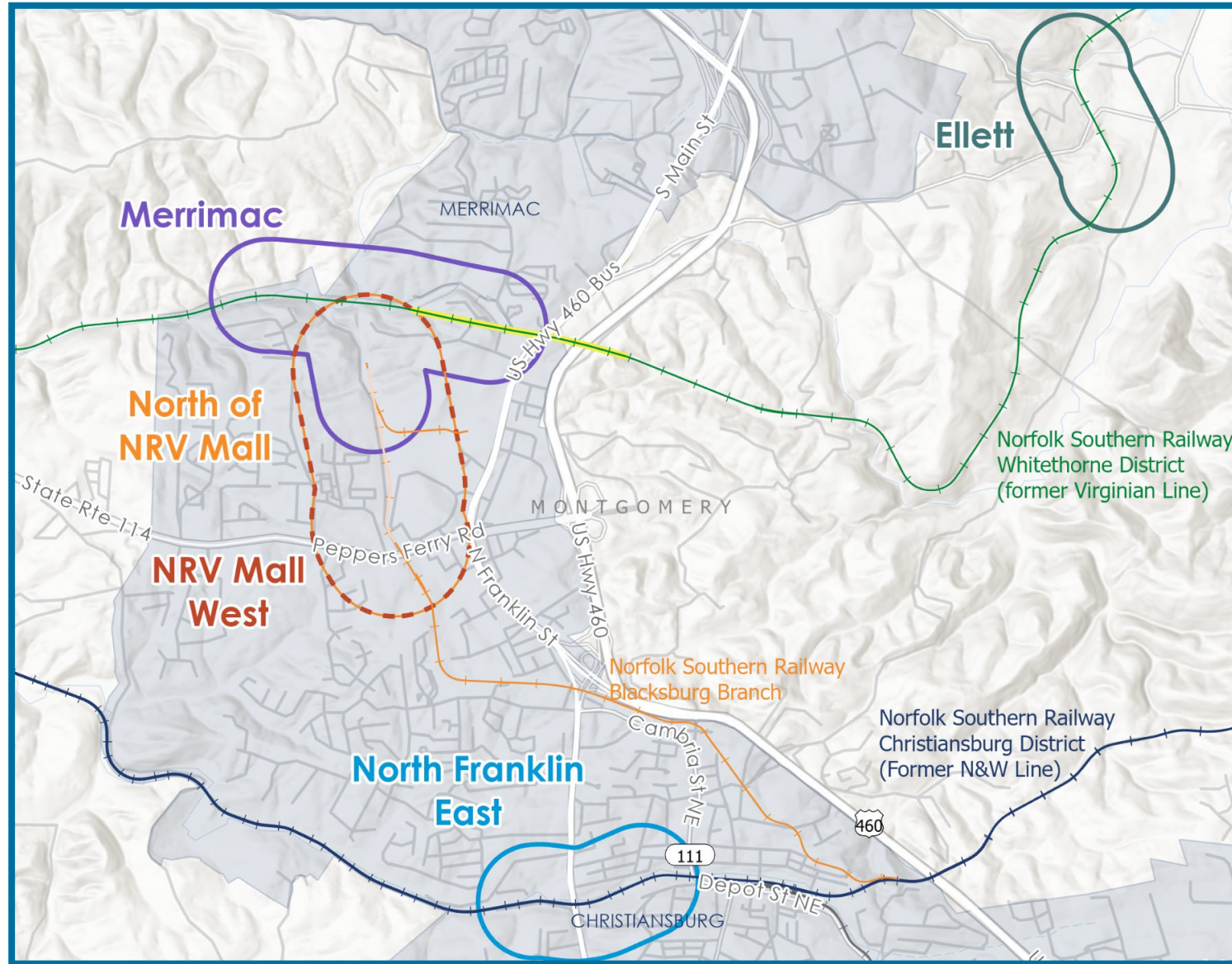


# New River Valley Study Area & Rail Corridors



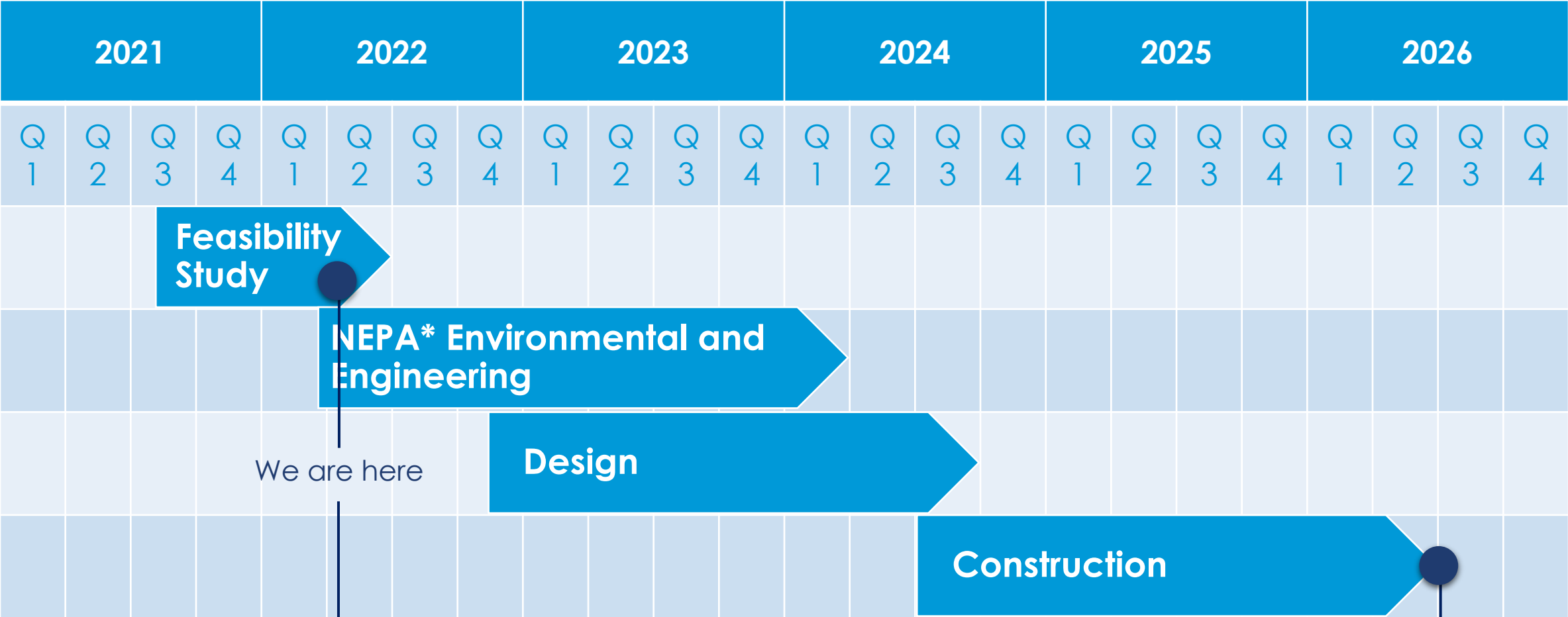


# Passenger Rail Station Alternative Study Areas



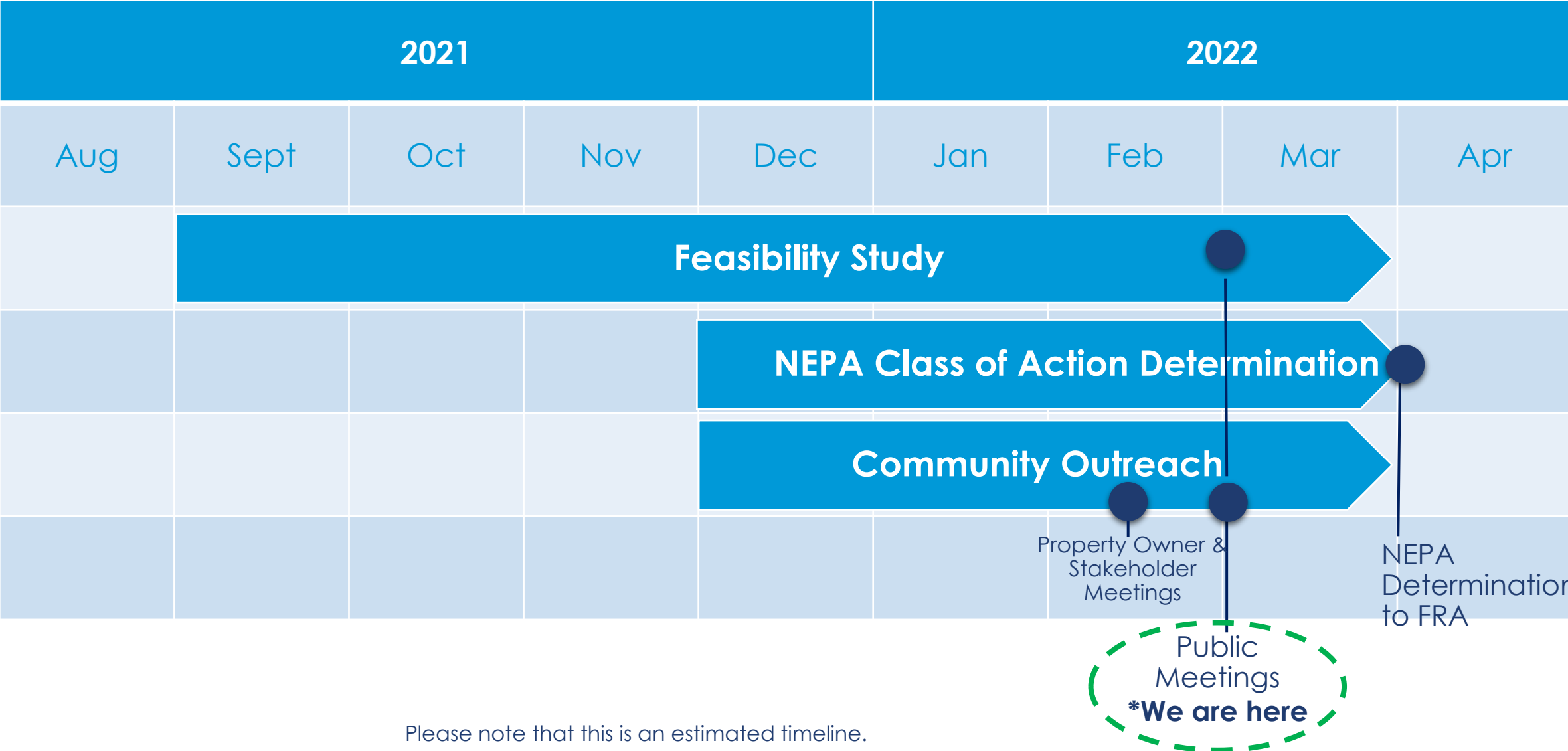


# Project Timeline



\*National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)  
Please note that this is an estimated timeline.

# Feasibility Study Timeline



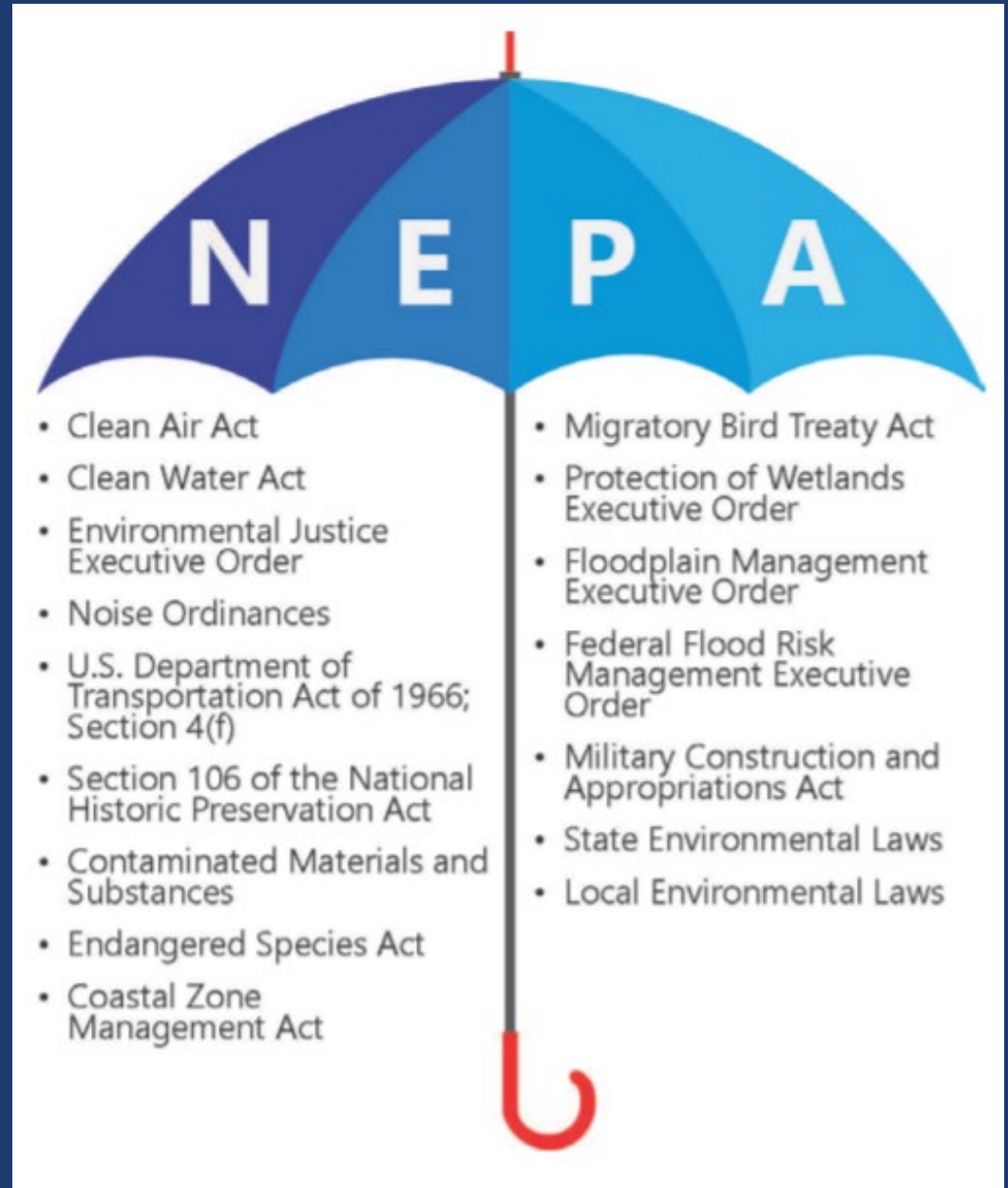
Please note that this is an estimated timeline.



# What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions.

NEPA encourages integrated compliance with other environmental laws so that a proposed project's impacts are comprehensively evaluated before implementation.



# Objectives of the Study

## Step 1

Determine technical feasibility of potential future passenger rail stations in the NRV



## Step 2

Develop a Purpose & Need Statement to complete screening analysis of sites

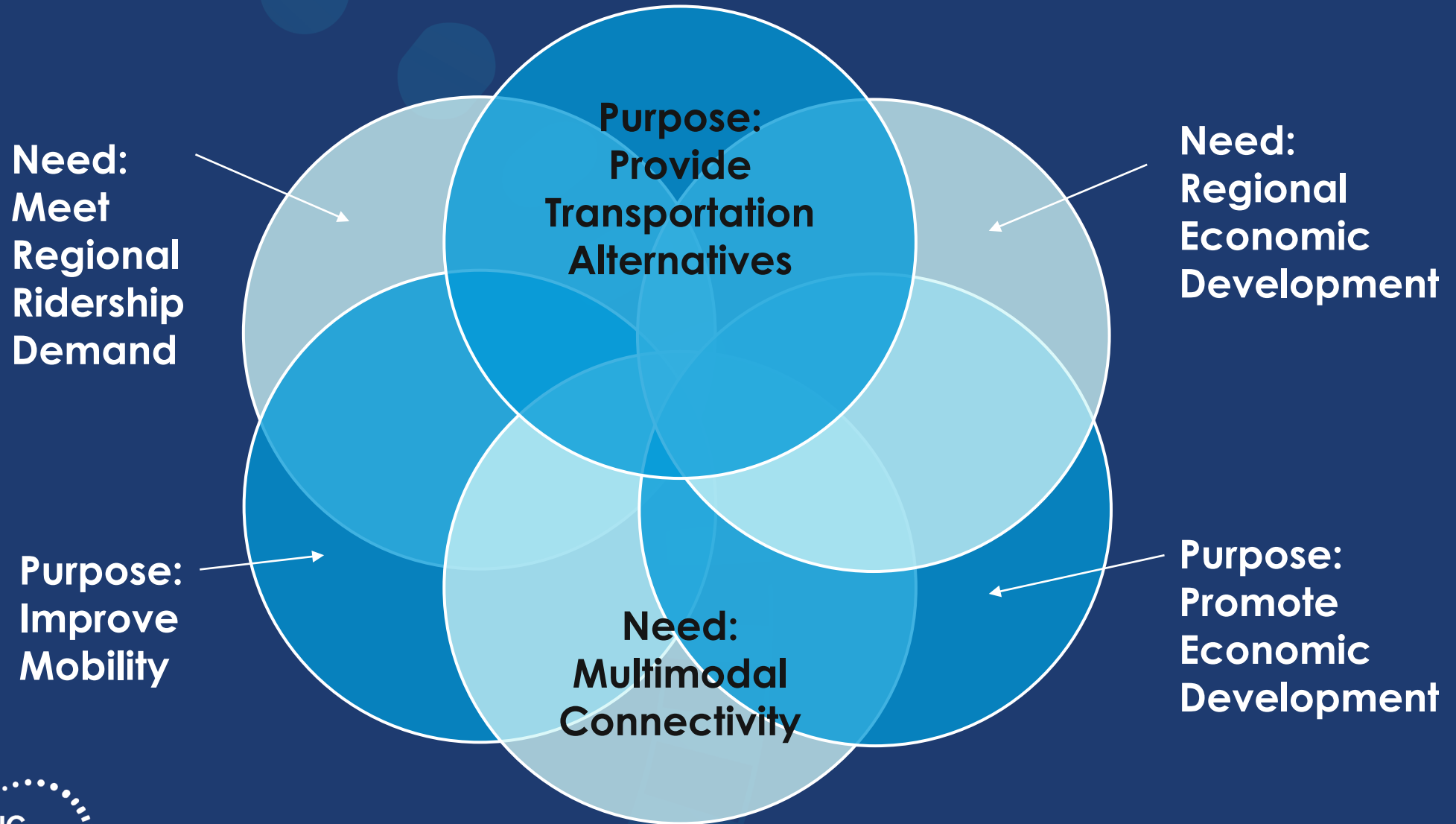


## Step 3

Complete technical work to obtain a NEPA Class of Action determination from FRA



# Purpose & Need



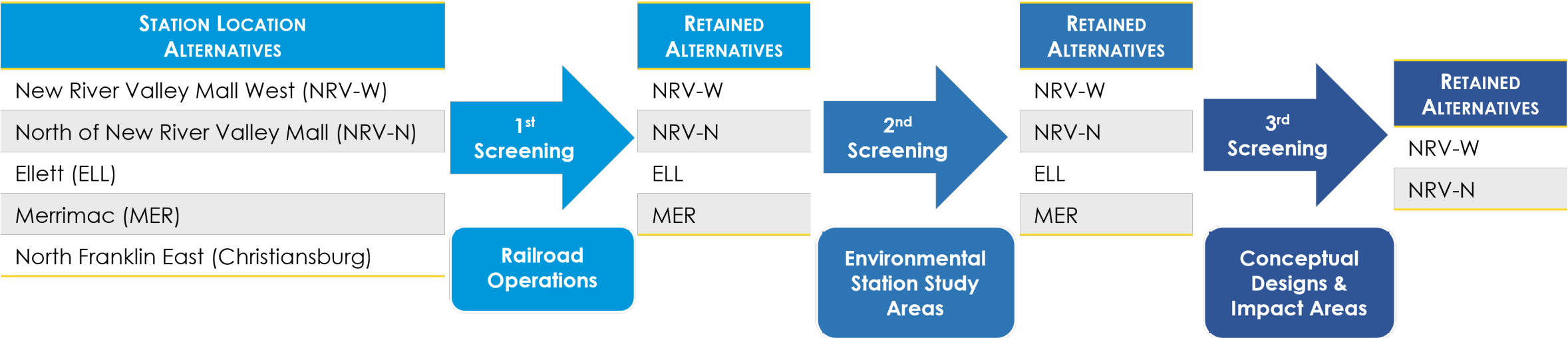
# Process

Purpose & Need Element	Screening Criterion		
	#1 – Railroad Operations	#2 – Environmental Station Study Areas	#3 – Conceptual Designs & Impact Areas
<b>Provide Transportation Alternatives</b>	Safety Track Geometry	Hazardous Materials Permitting Requirements	Track Alignment Track Grade Constructability Security Hazardous Materials Permitting Requirements
<b>Regional Economic Development</b>		Air Quality Noise & Vibration Prime Farmland Protected Species & Critical Habitat Section 4(f) & 6(f)	Property Acquisition Relocations Air Quality Noise & Vibration Prime Farmland Protected Species & Critical Habitat Section 4(f) & 6(f)
<b>Promote Economic Development</b>		Community Resources Cultural & Historic Resources Water Resources	Topography Utilities Future Expansion Incremental Development Community Resources Cultural & Historic Resources Water Resources
<b>Multimodal Connectivity</b>		Land Use & Zoning	Bicycle Access Pedestrian Access Transit Access Highway Access Land Use & Zoning
<b>Improve Mobility</b>	Operations	Regulatory Agency Involvement	Traffic Impacts Railroad Operations Regulatory Agency Involvement
<b>Meet Regional Ridership Demand</b>		Environmental Justice	Platform Parking Environmental Justice





# Matrix Screening



# Station Design Assumptions\*



**Caretaker Station – Paso Robles, CA (with Community Services)**

Paso Robles, CA (PRB). Great American Stations. (n.d.). Retrieved January 25, 2022, from <https://www.greatamericanstations.com/stations/paso-robles-ca-prb/>



**High-Level Platform – Great American Stations\***



**High-Level Platform – Springfield, MA**  
Difdesign. (2020, January 10). *Springfield union station platform C elevator ready, awaits Amtrak inspection*. EDC. Retrieved January 25, 2022, from <https://www.westernmassedc.com/springfield-union-station-platform-c-elevator-ready-awaits-amtrak-inspection/>

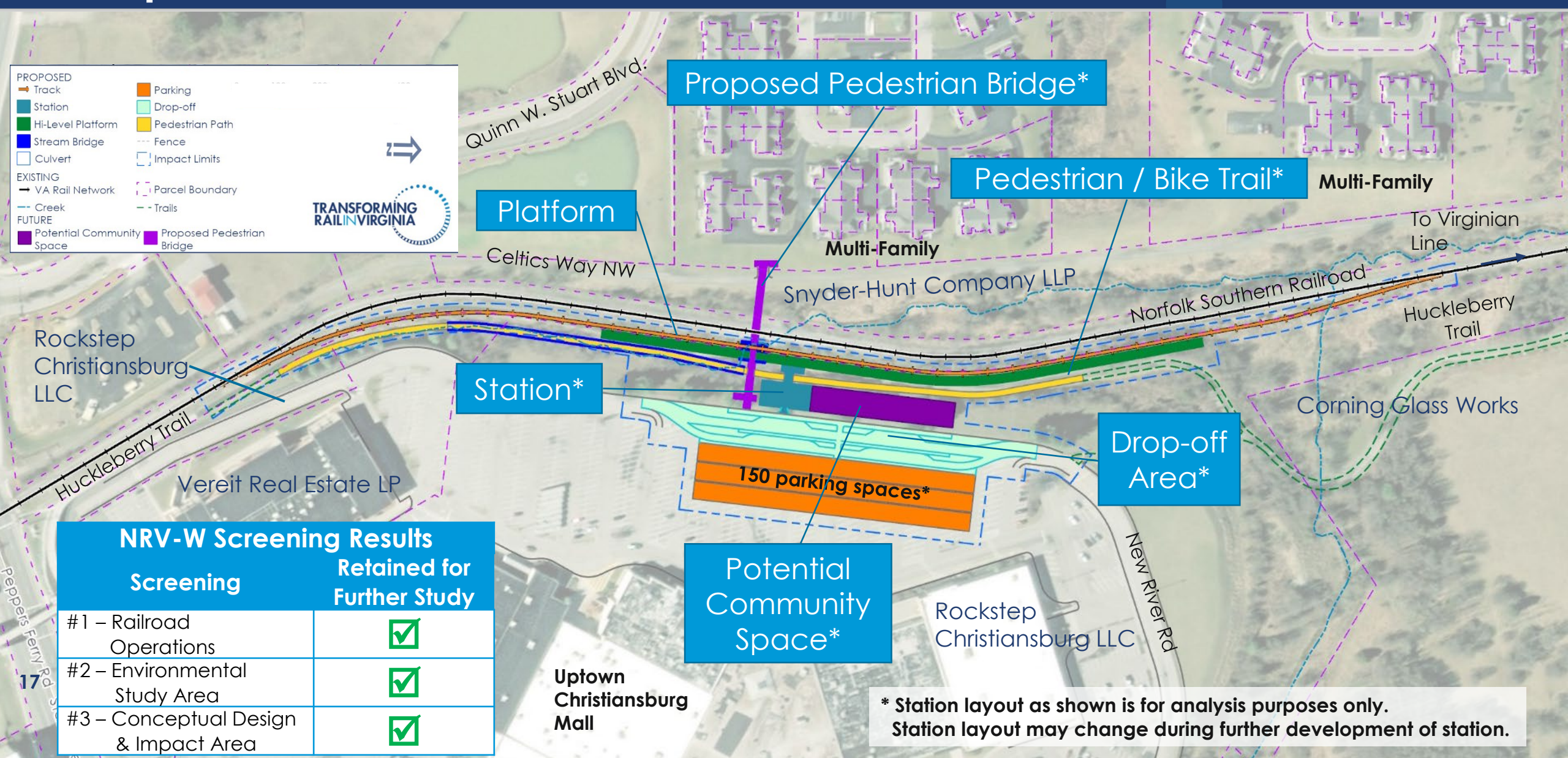
Amtrak Station Design Guidance	Proposed Station Design Parameters
<p><b>Ridership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 40,000 to 87,000 annual passengers</li><li>• 128 to 279 daily passengers</li></ul> <p><b>Station</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Type: Amtrak Caretaker</li><li>• 20,000 to 100,000 annual passengers</li><li>• Size: 3,500 square feet</li></ul>	<p><b>Platform (High-Level)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Length: 1000 feet long</li><li>• Width: 15 feet wide</li><li>• Height: 4 feet above track</li></ul> <p><b>Multi-Modal Station</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transit: Circular route with drop-off</li><li>• Vehicle: Parking for 64 to 140 spaces (2 passengers per vehicle)</li><li>• Vehicle: Circular route with drop-off</li><li>• Bicycle: Trail connection</li><li>• Pedestrian: Trails and sidewalks</li></ul> <p><b>Future Community Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Size: 10,000 square feet</li></ul>

\* Station planning guidelines. Great American Stations. (n.d.). Retrieved January 25, 2022, from <https://www.greatamericanstations.com/planning-development/station-planning-guidelines/>



# New River Valley Mall - West (NRV-W) Site

## Proposed Station



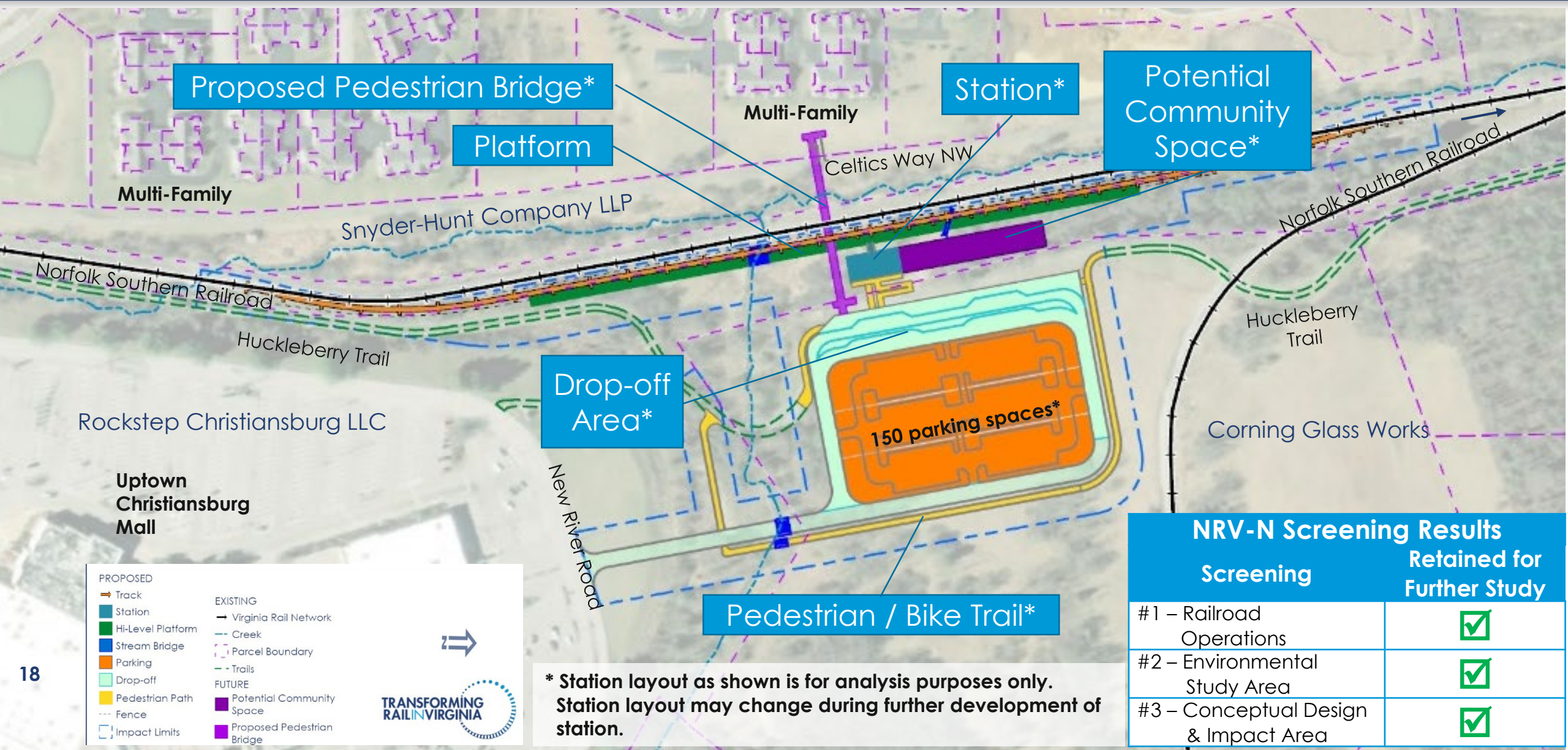
NRV-W Screening Results	
Screening	Retained for Further Study
#1 – Railroad Operations	✓
#2 – Environmental Study Area	✓
#3 – Conceptual Design & Impact Area	✓

\* Station layout as shown is for analysis purposes only. Station layout may change during further development of station.



# North of New River Valley Mall (NRV-N) Site

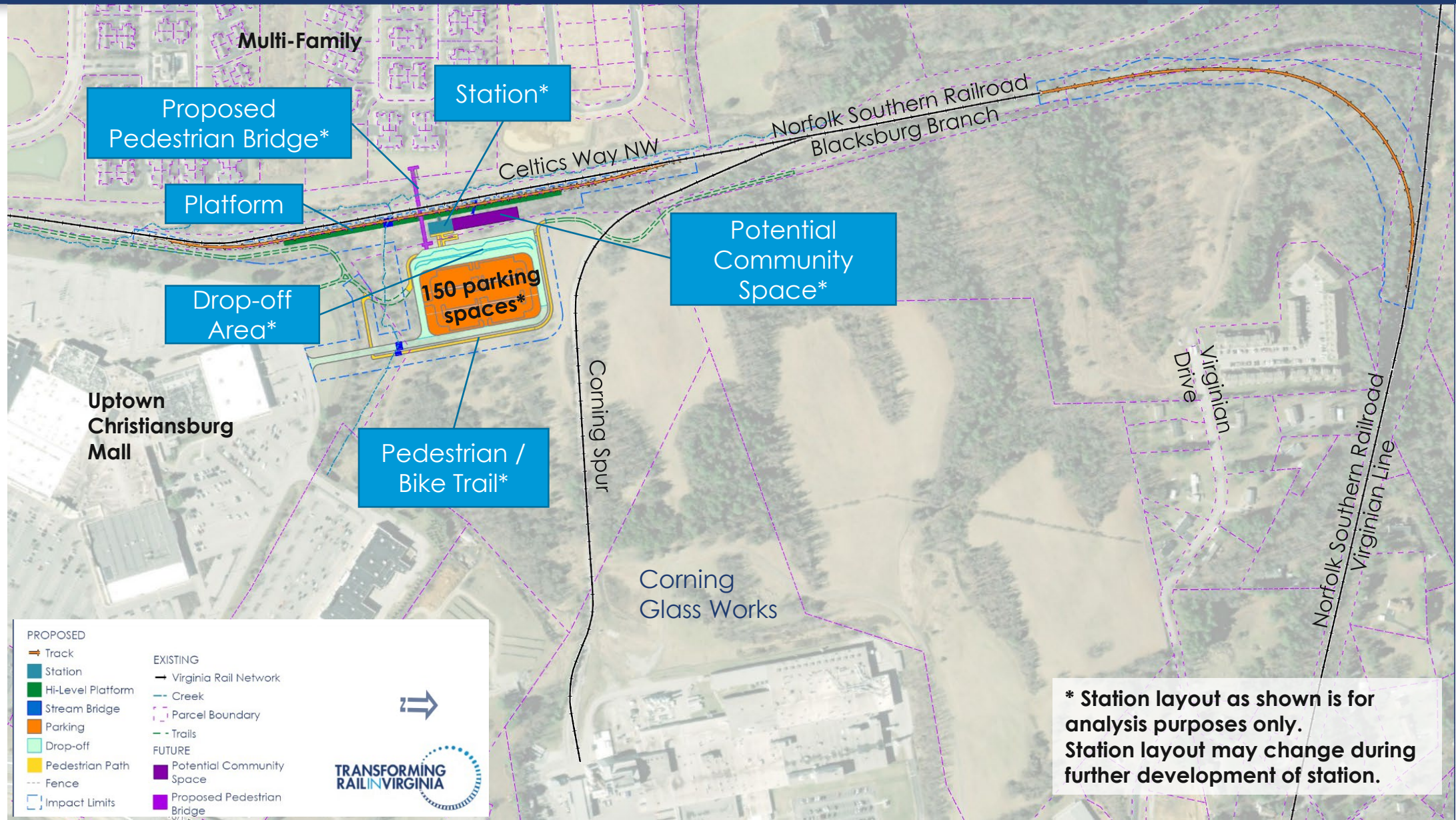
## Proposed Station





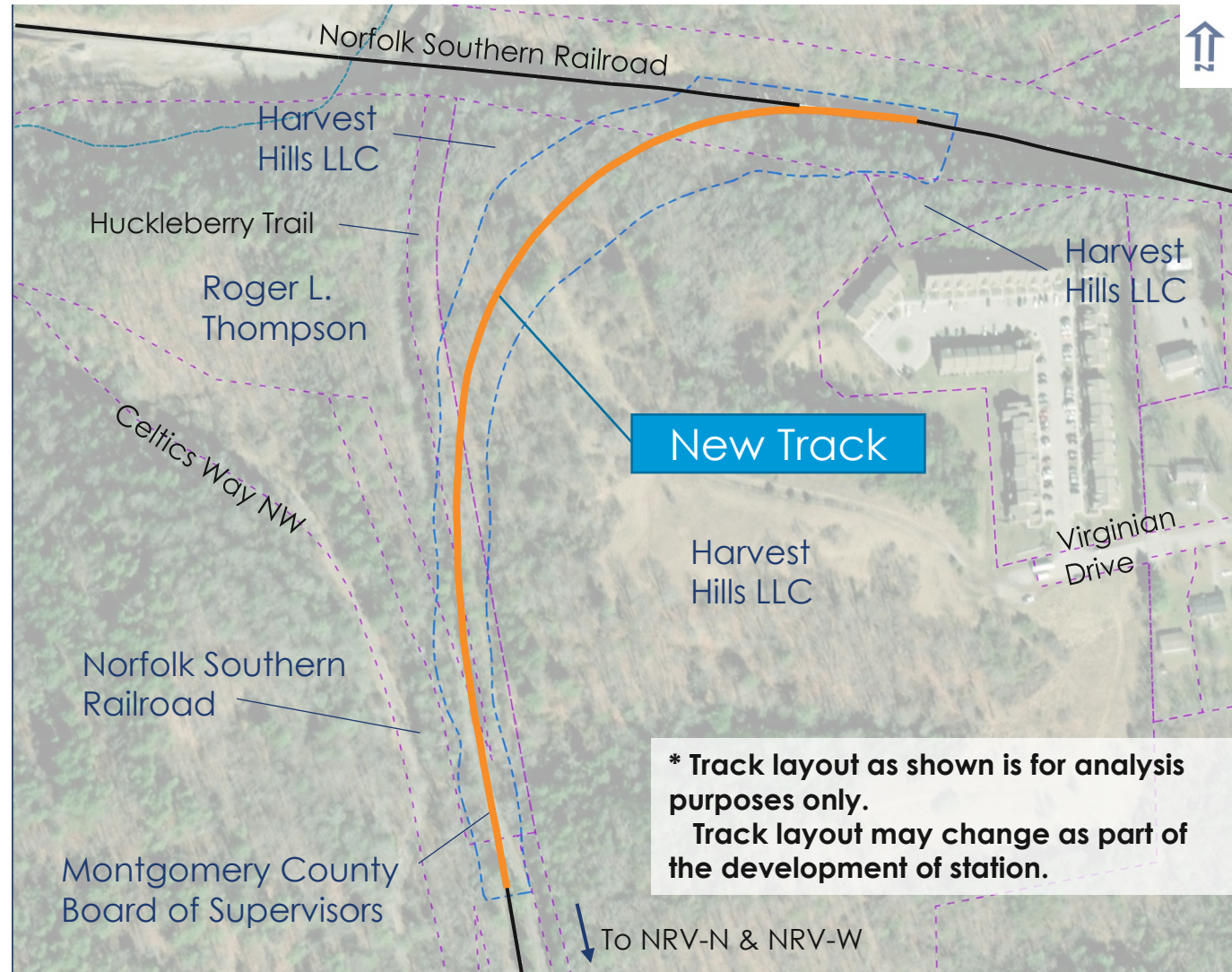
# North of New River Valley Mall (NRV-N) Site

## Proposed Station



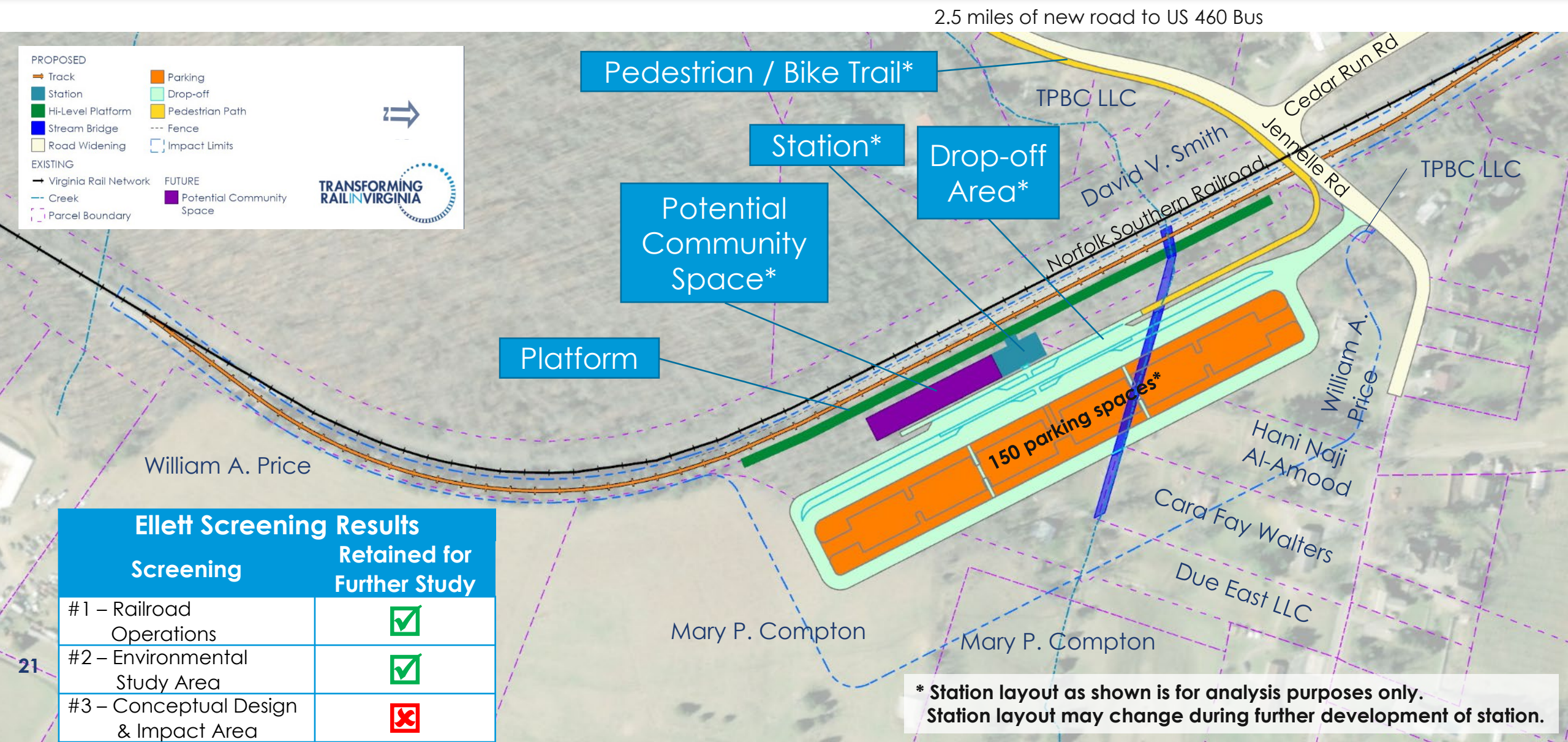


# NRV-N & NRV-W Sites – Off-site Infrastructure Improvements





# Ellett Site – Station Site

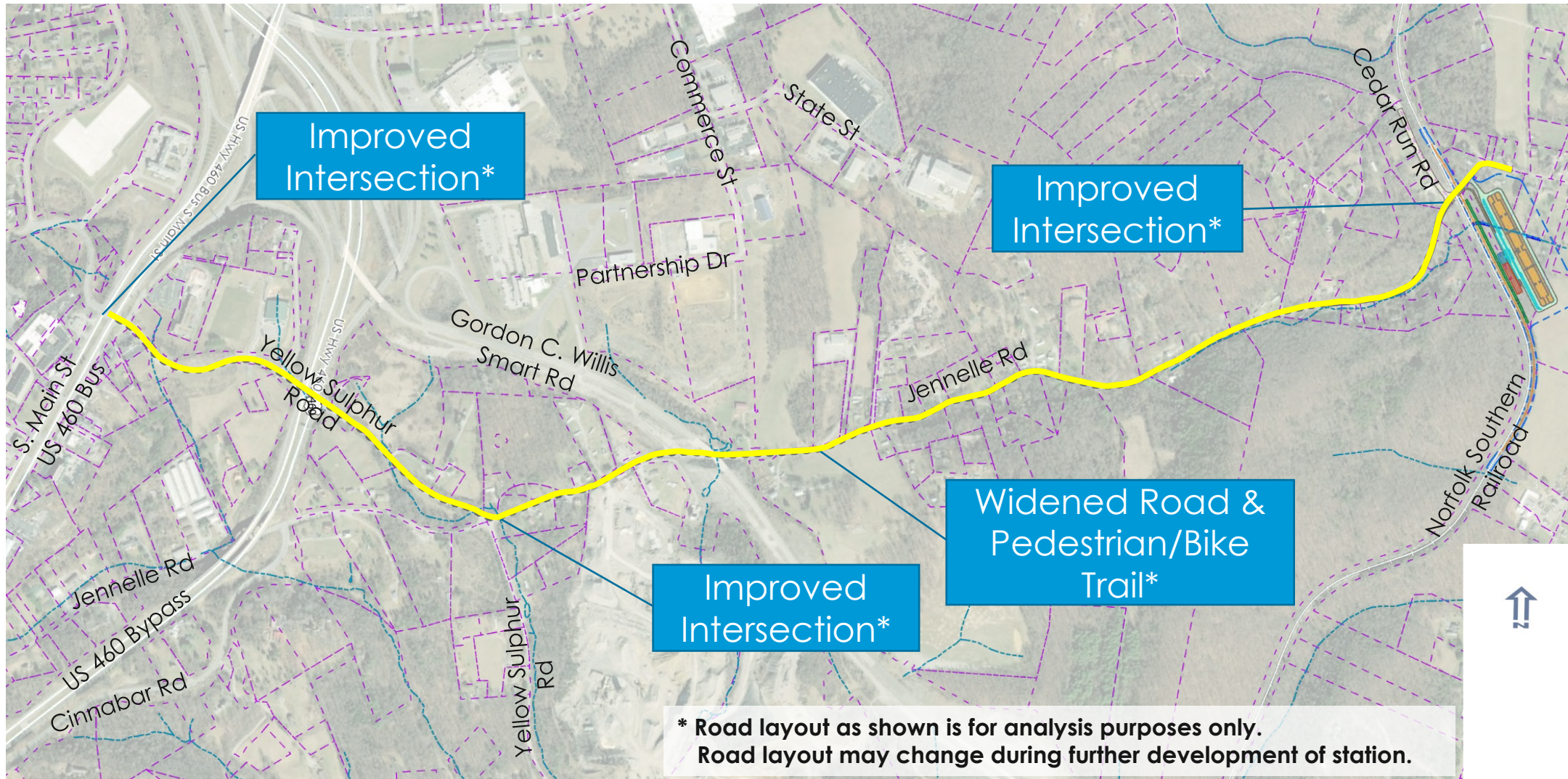


Ellett Screening Results	
Screening	Retained for Further Study
#1 – Railroad Operations	✓
#2 – Environmental Study Area	✓
#3 – Conceptual Design & Impact Area	✗

\* Station layout as shown is for analysis purposes only. Station layout may change during further development of station.

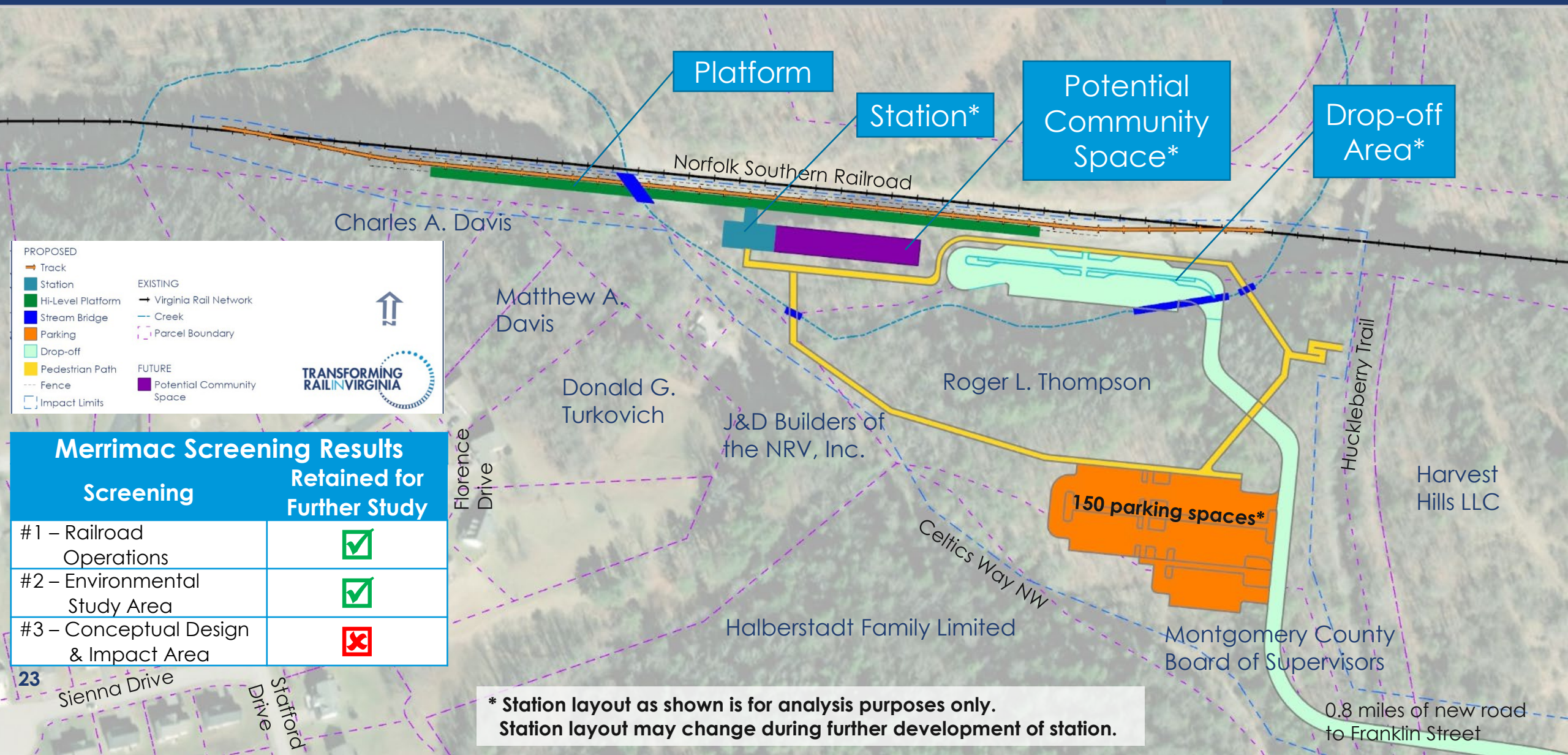


# Ellett Site – Off-site Infrastructure Improvements





# Merrimac Site – Proposed Station



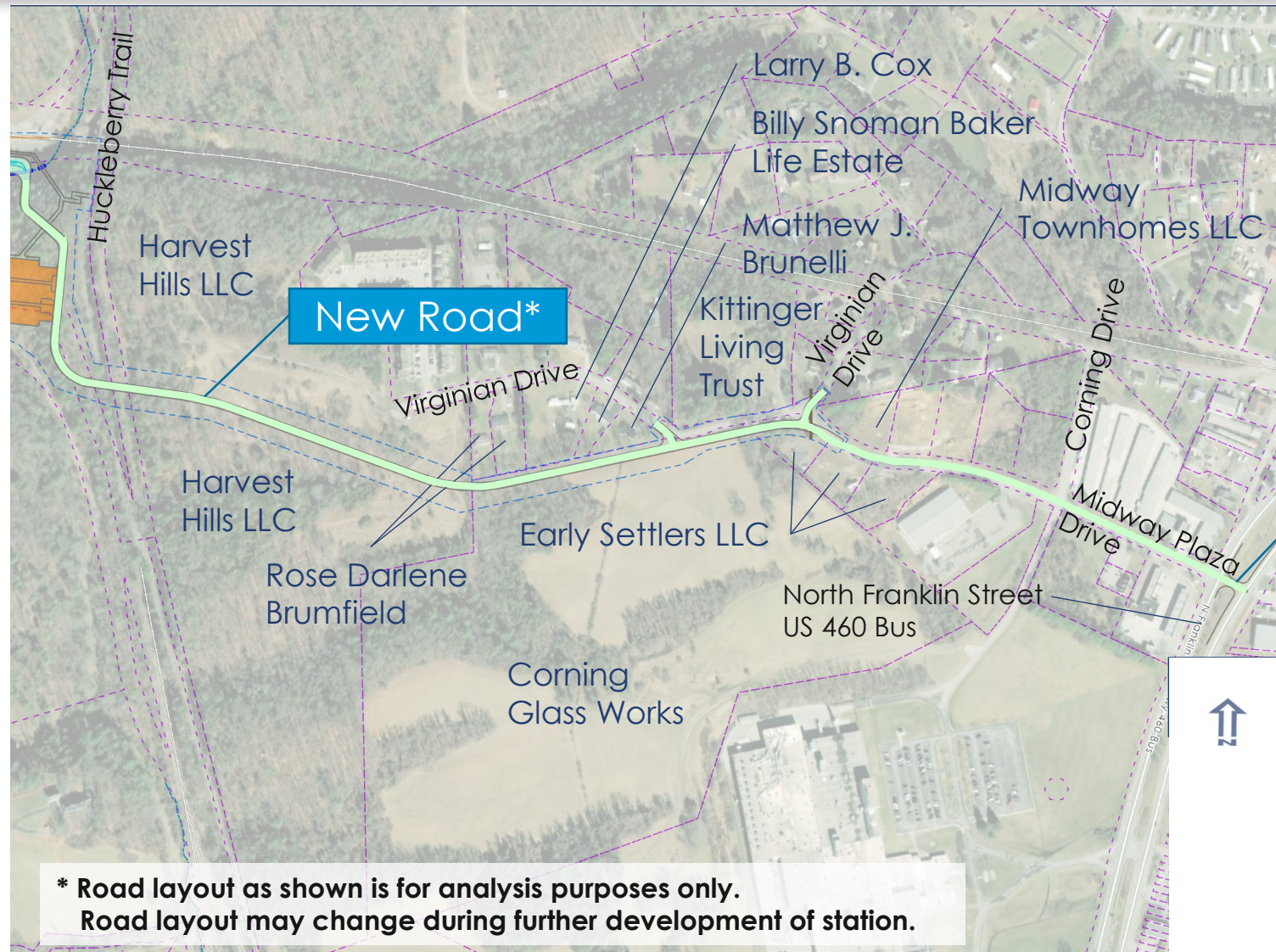
## Merrimac Screening Results

Screening	Retained for Further Study
#1 – Railroad Operations	✓
#2 – Environmental Study Area	✓
#3 – Conceptual Design & Impact Area	✗

\* Station layout as shown is for analysis purposes only.  
Station layout may change during further development of station.



# Merrimac Site – Off-site Infrastructure Improvements



# Capital Cost Estimates\*

Station Alternative	Station Systems Cost (\$M)	Off-Site Infrastructure Cost (\$M)	Total Capital Cost (\$M)
NRV Mall West Site	\$37.3	\$19.3	\$56.6
NRV Mall North Site	\$33.0	\$19.3	\$52.3
Merrimac Site	\$48.0	\$25.6	\$73.6
Ellett Site	\$77.5	\$97.2	\$174.7

\* Costs are an order of magnitude estimate due to the number of unknown conditions at this level of study.

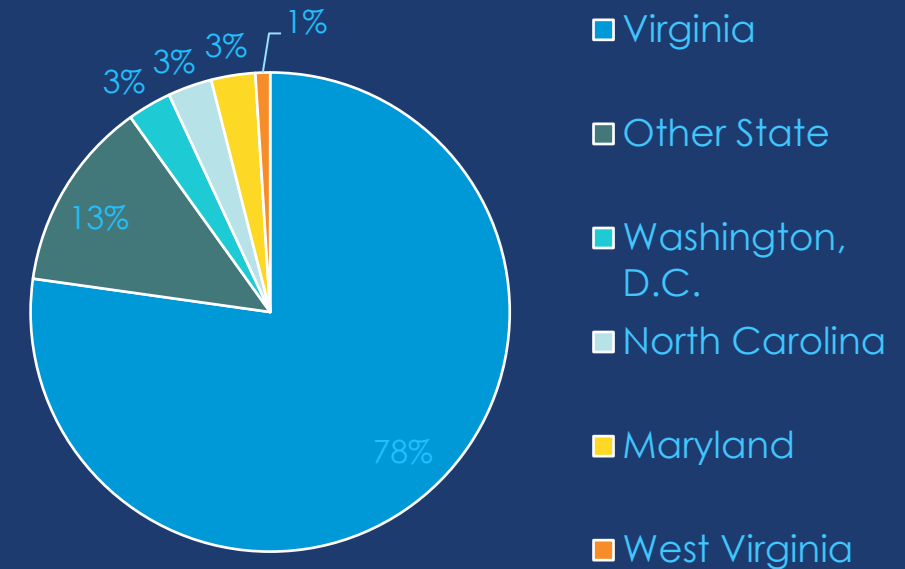
# Feasibility Study Community Outreach

- Survey 1: December 22, 2021 – January 31, 2022
- Property Owner Meetings: January-February 2022
- Key Stakeholder Focus Group Meetings: February 2022
- Public Meeting:  
February 28, 2022 & March 1, 2022
- Post Public Meeting
  - Survey 2: February 28, 2022 – March 15, 2022
  - Meeting Recording
  - Public Outreach Summary

## Survey 1 Participation

- 2,630 survey participants
- Estimated time to complete: 5 minutes

## Participant Location by State





# Survey 2

- Open from February 28 – March 15, 2022
- Final opportunity to provide feedback on the Feasibility Study

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NewRiverValleyStationSurvey2>



Scan the QR code with your phone's camera app to be directed to the Survey.

# Next Steps

- Complete the New River Valley Passenger Rail Feasibility Study
- Survey 2: Available until March 15, 2022
- Complete NEPA Class of Action with the Federal Railroad Administration
- Advance NEPA Study & Begin Concept Design for Station
- Continue to meet with Stakeholders
- This public meeting is conducted in compliance with Title VI\*



**[contactus@vpra.virginia.gov](mailto:contactus@vpra.virginia.gov)**

\*VPRA and DRPT are committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, its services based on race, color or national origin as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. VPRA and DRPT will also provide reasonable accommodations and interpretive services for persons who require special assistance to participate in this public involvement opportunity as required by the ADA. For accommodations, additional information or to file a complaint, please contact Mike Mucha, our Title VI Compliance Officer, at 804.786.4440, 600 E. Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219 or visit [www.drpt.virginia.gov](http://www.drpt.virginia.gov)



# Q&A

- Please use the chat box to enter questions and comments
- Chat will be open for a half-hour
- Any questions that are not addressed during the meeting will be collected and addressed as part of the Public Meeting Summary
- The Public Meeting Summary will be available to the public on the project website



Scan the QR code with your phone's camera app to be directed to the project webpage.