Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Background and Overview

Michael McLaughlin, Chief of Rail – DRPT
Background: Need for I-95 Corridor Rail Solutions

- The Commonwealth promotes multimodal solutions to moving people and goods efficiently through transportation corridors.
- The I-95 Corridor has some of the highest congestion for rail and roadways.
- Virginia (DRPT and VRE) have worked collaboratively with CSX to improve rail capacity, especially in VRE territory.
- Increased Amtrak and VRE service has placed more demands on the entire rail network.

![Daily Traffic in I-95 Corridor](chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Traffic Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSX CARRIES</td>
<td>83,000 TONS OF FREIGHT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRE CARRIES</td>
<td>18,000 PEOPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRUCKS CARRY</td>
<td>271,000 TONS OF FREIGHT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARS AND BUSES</td>
<td>350,000 PEOPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METRORAIL</td>
<td>90,000 PEOPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMTRAK CARRIES</td>
<td>4,500 PEOPLE</td>
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</tbody>
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Rail Capacity and Bottlenecks

- In order to add more freight and passenger rail, the biggest rail bottleneck on the East Coast – Long Bridge – needs to be addressed.
- Long Bridge carries almost 80 trains a day over a 100-year old 2-track bridge.
- The bridge is at 98% capacity during peak hours.
- Environmental clearance started in 2016 and was finalized in September 2020; names Virginia as the lead on design and construction.
- Agreement with CSX was needed to move the project forward.
Transforming Rail in Virginia Program

• On December 19th Governor Northam, Secretary Valentine, CSX, Amtrak, and VRE announced a $3.7B landmark agreement – called Transforming Rail in Virginia (TRV) – that includes purchase of over:
  o 350 miles of railroad ROW
  o 225 miles of track

• Commonwealth to fund approximately 2/3 with state and local revenues
Transforming Rail in Virginia Leads to Creation of VPRA

• General Assembly created the VPRA in the winter 2020 Legislative Session.

• Paradigm shift in rail transportation for Virginia:
  • Virginia will own active railroad tracks and railroad ROW.
  • Virginia will construct and maintain a growing rail network.
  • Virginia will need innovative ways to finance and fund construction and grow passenger rail operations.
Purpose of the VPRA

• Promote new approaches to economic development through an increase in passenger rail capacity.
• Promote, sustain, and expand the availability of passenger and commuter rail service to increase ridership by connecting population centers.
• Own rail right-of-way and infrastructure assets.
• Oversee passenger rail operations statewide (not an operator).
• Operate independently of some state requirements to provide flexibility in delivering the TRV Program.