

# APPENDIX C1

## INDEX TO GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS



D.C. TO RICHMOND SOUTHEAST HIGH SPEED RAIL

# Appendix C1

## INDEX TO GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

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## STUDY PROCESS

### PURPOSE AND NEED

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1. How is the purpose of this Project different than the previous 2002 Tier I document? ..... C2-1
2. Why is the Project adding more trains? Existing Amtrak trains do not appear to be full, and the corridor does not appear to be a major commuter route. .... C2-2
3. The 2002 Tier I EIS stated that this Project should minimize impacts by using existing rail corridors. Therefore, the bypass options under consideration as part of this Project do not conform to the Tier I recommendation..... C2-3
4. The Project made a recommendation based on the assumption that Long Bridge and Union Station capacity improvements will be complete, when the timeline of neither is known. .... C2-3
5. Concerns over area-specific capacity needs..... C2-4
  - a. Why is more rail capacity needed in Area 5 (Ashland) but not Area 2 (Northern Virginia)?
  - b. Additional rail capacity through Area 5 (Ashland) is not needed and not appropriate.
  - c. In all Build Alternatives, Ashland will become a choke point for rail traffic for the entire corridor and Project capacity goals will not be met.
6. CSXT does not support Build Alternative 5A (commonly known as the “3-2-3” option) due to capacity constraints. Why is it considered? Isn’t their support required to meet the Purpose and Need of the Project? ..... C2-4
7. The Purpose and Need is based on an analysis of the “current” Need for the Project. However, the Draft EIS stated that the Project would be constructed between 15 and 25 years from now and the projections of the demand for enhanced passenger rail and freight service are presented for between 2025 and 2045 – neither of which are “current.” ..... C2-5
8. The DC2RVA proposed solutions do not demonstrate that the rail options will truly support the service growth and results required to meet the Project Purpose and Need. .... C2-6
  - a. Why is a proposed third track needed?
  - b. Are even more tracks needed?
  - c. Would it be worth it from a cost-benefit perspective to add more lines as part of this Project, to plan for the future?
9. There is no point to this Project without a national plan for better passenger rail. .... C2-6
10. High speed rail won’t meaningfully reduce vehicle traffic, which is stated as an element of the Purpose and Need. The touted reduction in I-95 congestion by adding a high speed rail in the Project documentation is not true..... C2-7

### PROPOSED TRAIN SERVICE / OPERATIONS / SCHEDULE

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1. The lack of specific travel time saved associated with each Build Alternative in the Draft EIS suggests the Project will provide negligible benefits for unacceptable costs. .... C2-7

2. Amtrak service is not a reliable transportation choice. Amtrak doesn't need to be faster, just more reliable. What is this Project doing to improve the frequent delays and/or cancellations that currently occur on Amtrak? ..... C2-7
3. The passenger trains proposed by the Project should go faster. This is not true high speed rail that other countries have. .... C2-8
4. Concerns about rail technology assumed and/or evaluated in the Draft EIS ..... C2-9
  - a. The Project does not use the most up-to-date technology, such as hyperloop.
  - b. This type of rail is an antiquated system and is not the future of transportation.
  - c. No consideration is given to the fact that rail technology is changing (as reported in Draft EIS Appendix I); this assumption should be added to the report and then defended. The contents of Draft EIS Appendix J lists five types of transportation, but fails to identify new or emerging technologies.
5. Concerns about operations of new service proposed by the Project ..... C2-10
  - a. When will the proposed trains run?
  - b. Why is there no late train?
  - c. Are trips seven days a week?
  - d. Are trips only for commuters?
  - e. Monday through Friday service is insufficient, and weekends are needed too.
6. Concerns about freight service ..... C2-10
  - a. Project forecasts of future freight should be viewed with skepticism.
  - b. The Project fails to anticipate major shifts in distribution patterns for freight that will be implemented over the next 20 to 40 years.
  - c. The growth in the freight capacity is an assumption that may not hold up. Data published by the Association of American Railroads shows that the number of carloads in the year 2017 to date is below the number for the years 2015 and 2016.
  - d. Higher speeds are needed by freight trains.
  - e. Amtrak may use the rail corridor, but over 90% of rail traffic will be CSXT freight trains.
7. Concerns about Virginia Railway Express (VRE) service..... C2-12
  - a. Are VRE changes part of the Project?
  - b. Can night and/or weekend trains to VRE be added as part of this Project?
  - c. A better alternative would be to expand commuter service between Fredericksburg and Richmond by the VRE or use Mobile Diesel Units to provide service connecting with VRE.
8. Reliable travel times and schedules are an unachievable goal even if all of the recommendations of the Draft EIS were adopted because many of the trains originate outside of the corridor. The Draft EIS fails to acknowledge barriers to faster or more reliable travel times that are outside of the area of proposed DC2RVA capacity improvements, such as at Long Bridge across the Potomac River or at Washington's Union Station. The improvements will not make corridor trains a competitive alternative to automobiles and are not worth the costs to affected stakeholders. .... C2-13

- 9. Concerns about the design of track crossovers ..... C2-14
  - a. Did the Project consider upgrading all rail line crossovers along the corridor to be at least 45 mph?
  - b. The current crossovers at Doswell and Milford are only 30 mph and the resulting approaching signals slow trains down farther out than is necessary, both of which results in operations delays in the corridor.

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

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- 1. How are our voices being heard?..... C2-14
  - a. Are email and written comments being processed the same way?
  - b. Mass comments dilute the messages of local residents.
  - c. The comment-response is an unethical process – “form” comments sent through auto-generated websites should be eliminated/should not be “counted” as equivalent to citizen comments.
  - d. Will all repeat comments by a single person be counted as individual comments in the record?
  - e. What is considered more helpful by the DRPT – the total number of comments for or against an option or the quality of the comments?
- 2. Concerns about public outreach and involvement in Area 5 (Ashland) ..... C2-15
  - a. Within Ashland, the communication and transparency with the public was lacking.
  - b. Homeowners along the proposed bypass should have been included/notified earlier.
  - c. Ashland is getting a disproportionate amount of time/effort. It is one small town in a 123-mile corridor that will benefit from this Project.
  - d. Why did Ashland have to do something other communities have not completed (i.e., the CAC, subsequent to publication of the Draft EIS)?
- 3. What was the outcome of the Ashland CAC after the publication of the Draft EIS? ..... C2-16
  - a. How does it affect analyses that occurred within the Draft EIS or in the Final EIS?
  - b. There needs to be a formal comment period on any recommendations in Area 5 prior to the next step in the process.
- 4. DRPT has ignored public input for not expanding the CSXT rails. .... C2-17

**OTHER**

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- 1. Will this process happen again in 20 years because of infrastructure upgrade issues? .... C2-18
- 2. Opposition to CSXT’s level of involvement in the Project..... C2-18
  - a. CSXT is not funding its fair share of this Project.
  - b. CSXT attempt to “control” the decision of Ashland based on their own in-house study of Project impact on CSXT.

**EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES**

**CORRIDOR OPTIONS NOT EVALUATED IN THE DRAFT EIS**

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1. Did the Project consider improvements outside of the existing rail corridor to improve train speed (such as construction of straighter lines, separate additional rail lines, flyovers, and/or tunnels)?..... C2-19
2. Did the Project consider moving all freight rail away/separate from passenger rail? .... C2-20
  - a. It is disappointing that no cost/benefit study was made of the alternative of diverting substantial numbers of freight trains to the existing rail line in Maryland along the Route 301 corridor. The expense of building a new Potomac River bridge at Dahlgren and building connecting tracks to the RF&P line would be outweighed by both the homeland security benefits of bypassing the national capital and the benefits of freeing up the Fredericksburg-D.C. line for passenger rail.
3. Did the Project consider improving highway capacity, instead of and/or in addition to rail capacity?..... C2-21
4. Did the Project consider rail in the I-95 corridor right-of-way and/or within powerline right-of-way?..... C2-21
5. Did the Project consider having two freight lines and two high speed passenger rail lines? ...  
..... C2-22
6. Did the Project consider a three-track option with overtaking lanes (i.e., outer tracks would handle freight traffic and inner track would be utilized for passenger rail service only, in both directions)? ..... C2-22

**ASHLAND AREA ALTERNATIVES**

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1. How and why was a western bypass alternative in the Ashland area brought forward as an alternative in the Draft EIS? ..... C2-22
2. Support for options not evaluated in the Draft EIS..... C2-23
  - a. One elevated track through downtown Ashland
  - b. Tunnel beneath the Town of Ashland
  - c. Bypass for vehicular traffic around Ashland
  - d. Use of the existing eastern rail alignment (i.e., the Buckingham Branch Line)
3. Could the proposed alignments through the Ashland Area (Area 5) be modified have less impacts overall, especially to homes?..... C2-24

**RICHMOND AREA ALTERNATIVES**

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1. How will the Project route trains on the S-Line in Richmond? Isn't exclusively using the S-Line a missed opportunity of capacity for the existing A-Line?..... C2-24
2. The Richmond Area improvements should be further broken down into smaller projects that will allow for the steady increase of passenger rail service at Main Street Station to Hampton Roads and the Southeast United States. .... C2-25

**STATION EVALUATION**

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1. Concern about which stations are being served by new DC2RVA service throughout the corridor, why those locations were chosen, and/or suggestions of additional stations or transit services that should be added along the corridor ..... C2-26
2. Concern about which stations are being served within Richmond, their operations, and/or their connections to other modes of travel..... C2-26
3. Concern regarding proposed level of boarding platforms at stations as part of Project improvements ..... C2-28
  - a. The Project should ensure that all platforms are at train-door level so that ADA customers do not have to utilize a lift / wait for the conductor to find a ramp at the station.
  - b. Not having “high-level” platforms in this Project adds travel time to trips. It looks like the Project will have at least four stations (if not more) that are “low-level” and that's going to add at least two minutes to every train in both directions.
  - c. The objections to “high-level” platforms seem to be that VRE owns equipment designed for “low-level” platforms and that freight railroads don’t like “high-level” platforms, but there has to be a solution to those concerns from other places in the country.
4. Are future parking demands being addressed / increased at stations as part of this Project? .  
..... C2-29
5. Station-specific concerns..... C2-30
  - a. Carmel Church Station has been supported by the last three administrations and has been included in the last two Virginia State Rail plans. It was studied in depth by DRPT and affirmed in the Amtrak Station Area Planning and Land Use Analysis study from August 2008. While the Project states that it does not preclude the development of new stations, the Project should include the station that the Caroline County community has been working on with the full support of the Commonwealth.
  - b. In Fredericksburg, the Project should look into renovating the current historic station as a passenger station rather than building a new station.
  - c. What is happening at the Ashland Station? The Project needs to be sensitive to the aesthetics of the historic building.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

**GENERAL**

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1. Is there no route which would not impact local citizens? ..... C2-31
2. The environmental impacts and/or monetary cost of the Project are not worth the projected time-savings of passenger rail. High speed rail is prohibitively expensive when compared to the time-savings for passengers using these trains. It is not fair to ask residents to “pay” for this when they will not be seeing any benefit. .... C2-31

**TRAFFIC / TRANSPORTATION**

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1. Concern about safety and/or accessibility of public at-grade roadway crossings as evaluated in the Draft EIS..... C2-32
2. What is happening to the existing at-grade treatments in the corridor (public crossings)? ..... C2-33
3. Concern over private driveway access and/or crossing treatment throughout the corridor .... C2-33
4. Ashland-specific traffic concerns ..... C2-34
  - a. In Ashland, the proposed alternatives would not increase safety of at-grade roadway crossings, especially at the main intersection in downtown Ashland (England Street/Thompson Street crossing).
  - b. In Ashland, railway traffic currently affects traffic flow by blocking intersections up to 15 – 20 minutes. This is not covered in the Draft EIS.
  - c. There has not been adequate attention to how disruptive the destruction/ construction through the town of Ashland would be. Shutting down Center Street for several years will create an inconvenience to all residents.
5. Concern over access of specific crossings ..... C2-35
  - a. In the Northern Virginia Area, there is no reference to problems at Railroad Avenue in Woodbridge. If a new 2-track bridge is to be built east of the existing bridge at Occoquan Creek, what will happen to access to houses on Railroad Avenue? The properties have no legal access to a public road except by using Railroad Avenue, which belongs to CSXT. There should be a frontage road study, with pedestrian passage.
  - b. In Ashland, what is the plan for the Gwathmey Church Road crossing, which serves a landlocked community? As rail traffic increases, the safety of the crossing will become more of a problem.
  - c. In Ashland along the western bypass (Build Alternatives 5C and 5C-Ashcake in the Draft EIS), there are families who presently gain ingress and egress from Cross Road. With the rail corridor replacing Cross Road, what happens to property owners in this area?

**RIGHT-OF-WAY / DISPLACEMENTS / PROPERTY VALUE**

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1. Concern about process for acquiring private property, including compensation, timing, need, and methods..... C2-36
2. How are farms addressed in the property evaluations of the Draft EIS? Are farms considered businesses? ..... C2-37
3. It seems that people with property the railroad crosses would only be compensated for the actual amount of land used by the physical railroad, with no value given to a single property that is split into pieces by the Project, such as a farm with a barn on one side and a pasture on the other. .... C2-37

4. Concern about property values ..... C2-37
  - a. Since the Project might not be completed until 15–20 years from now, this Project would encumber property owners land by basically tying their hands in the ability to utilize their property rights, and the value of their property would be devalued.
  - b. In the Ashland Area, concern that the impact on property values of the proposed Project is immediate. Even just the discussion of shutting down Center Street for 2–3 years is hurting real estate prices now.
5. Concern that impacts to homeowners that are not directly located on the tracks are not considered as part of the Project ..... C2-38
6. Concern that the Draft EIS did not address the economic impact in the Ashland Area... C2-39
  - a. In the Ashland Area, concern about negative economic impact of the construction of alternatives through town. The FRA decision will have immediate economic impacts, even if it is scheduled for 15–20 years in the future.
  - b. In the Ashland Area, the western bypass option will significantly impact taxpaying property owners with lower property values for homes, farms, and land. This negative economic impact will not simply affect the homes and lands in the immediate area of the proposed tracks, but many more homes, farms, and lands in the vicinity of the entire western bypass. These additional taxpaying property owners have not been included in the fact-finding efforts of the rail reports.
7. In the Richmond area, there was no discussion of any potential impacts to local industrial businesses that this Project would affect outside of the Main Street Station Area. .... C2-39
8. In the Ashland area, it is not clear from the Draft EIS documentation exactly how many houses are impacted by the bypass alignments? ..... C2-40

## LAND USE

1. Lansdowne Road in Spotsylvania County is currently a two-lane facility. The Draft EIS mentions a grade separation where it crosses the tracks near the City of Fredericksburg. The County Comprehensive Plan recommends a future four-lane divided roadway for Lansdowne Road that should be considered as part of this Project..... C2-40
2. In Ashland, concern how a bypass would adversely impact Hanover County growth plans and/or is not compatible with County land use plans. For properties along the bypass alignment, houses are zoned for residential, so how can a bypass be built?..... C2-40
3. In Ashland, what is the opinion that VDOT has on this western bypass which is in conflict with their planned 4-lane north and western bypass of Ashland (starting at Cross Corner Road and ending at Staples Mills (Route 33))? That study was performed in the early 1990s. Numerous town meetings were held, and the route was chosen either on or very close to existing roadways. How does DRPT propose to close off Cross Corner Road with this West Ashland Bypass and still incorporate VDOT's planned bypass? Does DRPT or FRA have the authority to supersede existing plans by VDOT? ..... C2-41

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES / TITLE VI / ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

1. Concern over Title VI and environmental justice (EJ) populations..... C2-41
  - a. Will the Project affect more environmental justice (EJ) communities than non-EJ communities? If so, are there viable alternative routes which would have less of an impact on an EJ community and why haven't they been chosen?
  - b. What specific actions have been taken to ensure that minority and/or low-income communities are not disproportionately affected by the construction and use of high speed rail? How will coordination with these communities be conducted?
2. It is discrimination that the Project does not include roll on / roll off level platforms at all stations. .... C2-42
3. Is Long Bridge Park affected by the Project? ..... C2-42
4. Concern that the third rail options through Ashland do not appropriately consider impacts to Randolph-Macon College..... C2-43
5. Concern about specific community facilities located along the bypass alignments in Ashland ..... C2-43
  - a. To Independence Christian Church from the Western Bypass alternatives in the Ashland Area (Build Alternative 5C and 5C-Ashcake).
  - b. To Kiddie Kingdom (a non-profit child care center) from the Western Bypass alternatives in the Ashland Area (Build Alternative 5C and 5C-Ashcake).
6. What is impact to Leesylvania State Park? ..... C2-43
7. No consideration was made for any individuals with disabilities, who would be impacted by the sound and vibrations from a rail being close to houses along the Ashland Western Bypass alignment. .... C2-43

**FARMLAND**

1. The proposed Project would impact acres of land that are currently farmed. Not only does this mean that farmers would be unable to farm the land, but it could be impossible to leave cattle in pastures split by a train track. Does the Project account for these ramifications? ..... C2-44
2. The Project should uphold the Farmland Protection Act and the Local Agriculture Districts Act quoted in the Draft EIS which were put in place to minimize the conversion of the Commonwealth's farmland to nonagricultural uses..... C2-44
3. The dairy industry is in peril all on its own. Over the last 15 years dairies in Hanover have diminished and warrant protection. .... C2-45

**BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES**

1. Concern regarding consideration/accommodation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities .. C2-45
  - a. It is an oversight that the Project does not include a parallel greenway. The Project corridor should include a multiuse path that connects to trailways that are in place or planned along the corridor, such as the East Coast Greenway.

- b. The Draft EIS did not focus enough on bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be considered and accommodated as part of at-grade and/or grade separated crossings.
  - c. Walking over the tracks is an impediment and impossible for wheelchairs and mobility aids. How does the Project improve these problems?
2. Will bicycles be allowed / accommodated for on all the new trains? If not, why? ..... C2-46
  3. Ashland is home to the intersection of Bicycle Routes 1 and 76. The Draft EIS did not consider these trails that would be impacted by all through-town build alternatives..... C2-47

**CULTURAL RESOURCES**

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1. Concern regarding the Main Street Station options in Richmond and their impact on the Shockoe Bottom Area and the cultural resources related to slave trade in the area, including the footprint of the “Burial Ground for Negros”, Lumpkins Jail/Devil’s Half Acre, and/or the proposed Memorial Park. Concern that impacts to these resources, either individually or as a whole, were not fully considered within the Draft EIS..... C2-47
2. Concern regarding the third-rail options through Ashland and their impact on the historic districts / properties, including the potential Berkleytown Historic District. The Section 106 study revealed buildings that are potentially eligible for individual listing. Aren’t historic districts and buildings elevated to individual listings supposed to be protected?..... C2-50
3. In the Ashland Area, how did cultural resources studies along the bypass alignment differ from those along the main corridor through Ashland? Have any studies been conducted on any potential structural changes that may occur to these properties due to additional freight and passenger rail trains?..... C2-51
4. Concern regarding the Rosemont Historic District in Alexandria ..... C2-51
5. In Ashland, residents living along the tracks receive tax credits from the state to maintain and preserve historic homes. How will this be impacted by the Project?..... C2-51
6. In Ashland, the Commonwealth has invested in the town itself to preserve its historic character. Any three-track option through town would be at odds with those state-sponsored efforts –how does the document account for this investment?..... C2-52
7. The Draft EIS did not give adequate consideration to the impact on the cultural, archeological, and historic site of Ferry Farm, George Washington's boyhood home. Currently Stafford County is re-configuring the entrance road to this cultural site to align with the Ferry Road and Route 3 (Kings Highway) intersection, which would be directly across from the rail crossing of Ferry Road on the Dahlgren spur (relevant to the 3C option). ..... C2-52

**NATURAL AND WATER RESOURCES**

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1. How will the Project reduce and/or mitigate the effects on the groundwater and private wells throughout the construction and long-term operation of the railways? Will the Project be assessed for its potential to contaminate water supplies under the Safe Water Drinking Act amendments? How will these specific potential sources of pollution be monitored and addressed so that contamination is minimized to the lowest levels possible? Are there measures in place for how to address a contamination episode if one occurs due to the Project?

- A testing and alert mechanism for contaminated water should be implemented in order to ensure groundwater stays clean and safe for use. .... C2-53
2. How will the Project protect flood zones / wetlands or get approval from DEQ to build in these areas? More must be done to absorb the cost of losing wetland ecosystems. .... C2-53
  3. The effects of sea level rise are not considered by the Draft EIS. Currently, there are stretches along the corridor where the water seems to be lapping at the tracks already. That's going to be a growing problem and needs to be addressed. .... C2-54
  4. Concern over "missed" natural and/or water resources in the Ashland Area along the Western Bypass alternatives (Draft EIS Build Alternatives 5C and 5C-Ashcake)..... C2-55
    - a. In the Ashland Area, the proposed bypass (Build Alternatives 5C and 5C-Ashcake in the Draft EIS) would kill a Giant Sequoia on the land at 12311 Elmton Road.
    - b. In the Ashland Area, a property owner along the Western Bypass (Draft EIS Build Alternative 5C and 5C-Ashcake) found a male (red eyed) eastern box turtle. Its roaming radius is approximately 1 mile.
    - c. In the Ashland Area, property along the Western Bypass (Draft EIS Build Alternative 5C and 5C-Ashcake) has wetlands and flood zone areas. If property owners cannot build in this area, how is it legal to build a train track? The number of trees that will have to be cut and soil that will have to be disturbed will be devastating. The DEQ of VA website seems very clear that it can't happen. These areas are also home to native wildlife such as deer fox owls and eagles, which could become landlocked if the Project is built.
  5. As our region and state see more traffic, investment in Long Bridge across the Potomac is a critical component to handle growth in Amtrak and VRE and freight. All that construction must meet high standards for sediment and erosion control and long-term stormwater management. .... C2-56
  6. What is the plan for design of bridge openings over navigable waterways, including Neabsco Creek?..... C2-56

**NOISE AND VIBRATION**

1. Concern about what noise and /or vibration studies have been conducted as part of the Project..... C2-57
  - a. How will noise and vibration of high speed rail compare to current Amtrak, CSXT, and commuter trains?
  - b. Noise and vibration levels were not studied for all traffic that would travel on new line such as freight and other passenger trains.
  - c. The effects of increased weight from heavier and longer trains and the increases in the future were not considered, nor is the closer distance about 15 feet considered.
  - d. What about impacts due to existing trains or when existing trains pass by each other? This Project will increase the ability of other trains to move more quickly. What would the vibration and noise impacts be of increased speeds of these other trains?
  - e. The noise impact assessment failed to assess and compare current noise exposure versus projected future in terms of length of time of exposure and any increases in decibels.
  - f. Concern over impact to underground pipelines within the railroad easement, especially since some of these may be very old and not withstand increased vibrations from the Project.

2. Concern about noise and vibration mitigation..... C2-59
  - a. What noise and vibration mitigations are occurring? Residences already have noise impacts and/or shaking of homes when the trains go past, which will get worse with the addition of new rails. Can an impact study and/or mitigation (natural and/or manmade, i.e., noise barriers) be completed? Are you going to pay for damage that the Project does to homes shaking?
  - b. Concern that Draft EIS does not detail mitigation. When will residents know whether the severely impacted residential areas will be looked at for noise barriers? Will mitigation include sound walls and / or requests for sound walls?
3. Concern about noise and vibration during construction, which doesn't seem to be evaluated in the Draft EIS..... C2-60
4. The noise and vibrational impact section of the Draft EIS falls far short of describing, if not actively disguises, the increased vibrational and noise impact that another set of tracks and the resulting increased high speed train and freight traffic will have on the livability of the surrounding neighborhoods. The report fails to note that some homes are all built on marine clay. This is in contrast to what the report says, which states that the soil on which the tracks are built minimally conducts vibration or noise. The Project should mandate slow moving trains and lighter trains and enforce these regulations. .... C2-60
5. If adequate engineering studies had been done, the conclusion would be that many of the historic homes along the corridor would not be able to withstand the construction / drilling impact that will occur because of the Project. .... C2-61
6. Why has no one has done a noise and vibration study on any of the houses on Mount Vernon Avenue near King Street Metro? Due to the proximity of these houses to the tracks, such a study should have been a priority for this EIS to be taken seriously..... C2-61
7. Concern about train horn use ..... C2-61
  - a. There are existing quiet zones in the corridor to prevent the trains from blowing horns. The Project should establish new quiet zones in other areas throughout the corridor?
  - b. Will the Project significantly decrease frequency and decibels of train horns?
  - c. The process for evaluating locomotive air horn noise in Crystal City and Alexandria is flawed. 110 decibels is in the Code of Federal Regulations, but that level of air horn noise is an issue.

## AIR QUALITY

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1. The Draft EIS doesn't seem to reflect the reduction in highway emissions that could occur if more people chose to travel by rail. .... C2-62
2. Increased train traffic from the Project will cause an environmental burden on the people living next to the tracks because of the additional diesel fumes and related emissions which impact the air quality, which was not addressed in the Draft EIS. .... C2-62
3. There is no consideration given to air quality during construction in the Draft EIS. There will be fumes and noises coming from construction that it will be unhealthy to residents and their posterity. .... C2-63

**VISUAL/ AESTHETIC**

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1. How are visual impacts evaluated, both throughout the corridor and within historic downtown Ashland streetscape specifically?..... C2-63
2. Page 3-54 of the Draft EIS lays out the definition of Visual Resources: “Viewers in visually sensitive resource areas are typically involved in outdoor activities where their sensitivity to the surrounding visual environment may be heightened.” However, later on page 3-66 of the Draft EIS, it states in regard to VAU 5-2 or the western bypass of Ashland that “no sensitive visual resources are identified within this unit.” This is incorrect, as bicyclists, walkers, and joggers frequent Yowell Road and the private residences there. This area of private residences provides a visual resource to viewers traveling in this VAU and should be taken into consideration in the final copy of the EIS given its regular recreational use. .... C2-64
3. The Project will have a negative visual and noise impact on homes and Blue Park in Alexandria if the existing “greenbelt” of mature trees and shrubs along the railroad tracks are cut down. The Draft EIS maps show that some of this greenbelt is within the Project’s area of temporary and permanent impact. .... C2-64

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

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1. The DC2RVA will provide CSXT an upgraded rail system with the potential of moving more freight and toxic materials through the Project corridor. .... C2-65
  - a. Do more trains mean more chances that a hazardous spill will happen?
  - b. In the Bypass alignments, the Project will be introducing the potential for hazardous materials in previously pristine places. How is that accounted for?

**INDIRECT AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

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1. Concern about secondary/cumulative impacts in and around Fredericksburg..... C2-65
2. In the Richmond Area, the Draft EIS does not take into account the indirect/cumulative effects of the Project, including induced development. .... C2-66

**SAFETY**

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1. Does adding a third rail increase the risk of train derailments?..... C2-66
2. Within Ashland, a third track would significantly endanger Randolph-Macon College’s students, faculty and staff, and tens of thousands of annual visitors. .... C2-66
3. Within Ashland, parked cars on Center Street/Railroad Avenue block visibility whether driving, walking, or biking. The difficult combination of street traffic, pedestrians, and trains from multiple directions is unsafe – how will the Project change these unsafe conditions?..... C2-67

**OTHER**

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1. In Ashland, the analysis of the through town alternatives does not take into account the 100-year old trees and their history that would be destroyed. They date back to the Civil War. .... C2-67

- 2. What are the impacts to east coast commerce and international trade, if the DC2RVA corridor were incapacitated? There should be a north-south rail infrastructure back-up plan in a geographically separate location in case something occurred along the DC2RVA corridor, such as a natural or man-made emergency. .... C2-67

## FUNDING, CONSTRUCTION, AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 1. Questions regarding Project funding, funding sources and timing, and/or funding for construction. .... C2-68
  - a. Who is paying for this Project?
  - b. DRPT claims that this Project will be paid for by "federal state and local sources" but have failed to advise the public that this "source" is our tax dollars.
- 2. How much will the new service fare cost? The cost of travel, not the number of trains, is the biggest obstacle to regularly using Amtrak. Will there be fare reductions compared to existing pricing?..... C2-68
- 3. Construction-related questions and/or issues ..... C2-69
  - a. How long would the Project take to construct?
  - b. What does access to private property during construction look like?
  - c. How will emergency access to properties occur during construction?
  - d. What does construction phasing look like? Could the third rail alternatives be phased within Ashland that Center Street is not closed for the duration of the construction?
  - e. There needs to be a robust process to ensure that new construction minimizes the impacts on adjacent neighborhoods and that there is a robust and transparent process for residents to monitor decisions and to be able to influence plans and actions.
- 4. After the Final EIS and ROD, what other tasks / deliverables are part of this Project? What is the "conceptual design" of this EIS versus "final design," and when would that occur? C2-70