Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Draft Categorical Exclusion (CE)

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: Franconia Third Track

Location: Fairfax County, Virginia

Project Limit–From: Approximately one mile north of the Franconia-Springfield VRE Station (~CFP 98.8)

Project Limit–To: Approximately 400 feet north of Furnace Road, just north of the Occoquan River (~CFP 90.08)

Project Description: The Franconia Third Track Project (the "Project") would add a third mainline track through approximately 8 miles of an existing railroad right-of-way that currently contains two railroad tracks. The Project would: shift tracks to increase speed through curves; replace two existing two-track bridges and add two new rail bridges; and add a new passenger rail bypass with an elevated bridge to remove conflicts between freight and passenger trains. The Franconia-Springfield VRE Station, the Lorton VRE Station, and the Amtrak Auto Train Station are located within the 8-mile area proposed for a third mainline track.

Additionally, north of the Franconia-Springfield Station, the Project would realign three existing tracks for approximately ¾ of a mile to accommodate station improvements. All proposed improvements are within existing CSXT and/or VDOT right-of-way. The Project is solely an infrastructure improvement project and does not include additional passenger rail service.

Date CE level document approved by VA Division FHWA: 01/13/2020 *(See **Attachment A**)*

FHWA Contact: John Simkins (Planning, Environment, Realty and Freight Team Leader)

Project in STIP: Yes *(See **Attachment B**)* **In Long Range Plan?** Yes

Logical Termini and Independent Utility: Yes

Next Phase of Funding Available? Yes. Next phase is engineering design completion followed by construction. DRPT anticipates the Project being designed and constructed in several phases, as funding becomes available; the Project will be funded in accordance with Virginia's STIP.

CE Citation: 23 CFR 771.116(c)(12), 23 CFR 771.116(c)(17), and 23 CFR 771.117(h)

Comments:

Background: The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), in coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), CSX Transportation (CSXT), Amtrak, and Virginia Railway Express (VRE), is advancing the Washington, D.C. to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail project (DC2RVA). DC2RVA includes additional track and other rail structural improvements plus additional passenger train service on the existing 123-mile rail corridor between Washington, D.C. and Richmond, Virginia. DRPT completed a Tier II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and subsequent Record of Decision (ROD) in September 2019 and has since completed preliminary engineering (30% design). The ROD for DC2RVA provides clearance under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for additional passenger service along the entire corridor and rail improvements with the exception of the 8.72-mile portion of corridor between Franconia and Occoquan in Fairfax County, Virginia.

In 2009, DRPT and CSXT constructed 12 miles of third mainline track between the Potomac River and the Franconia-Springfield VRE Station, terminating the third track just north of the station. In 2015, DRPT identified the Project area and the need to advance and separate an 8-mile portion of third mainline track from Franconia to just north of the Occoquan River from the ongoing longer-term DC2RVA EIS. The Project's 8-mile portion of the rail corridor is one of the most heavily traveled parts of the DC2RVA corridor, carrying rail traffic from CSXT, Amtrak, and VRE trains and serving the Franconia-Springfield VRE Station, the Lorton VRE Station, and the Amtrak Auto Train Station. The proposed eight miles of additional mainline track would extend the existing third track further south, establishing 20 continuous miles of triple-tracked rail corridor south of Washington, D.C. where commuter, intercity passenger, and freight rail share overburdened infrastructure.

On September 24, 2015, FRA issued a NEPA class of action letter that supported advancing the Franconia Third Track Project separately from, but compatible with, DC2RVA. FRA determined the NEPA class of action to be a Categorical Exclusion (CE) with documentation. A draft CE document was prepared and submitted to FRA; however, subsequent discussions between FRA and DRPT regarding potential funding sources led DRPT to approach FHWA for finalization of the NEPA process. On January 13, 2020, FHWA signed the NEPA Concurrence Form for preparation of a CE for the Franconia Third Track Project per 23 CFR 771.116(c)(12), 23 CFR 771.116(c)(17), and 23 CFR 771.117(h).

Project Area: The Project is located in Fairfax County, Virginia as shown in **Figure 1**. **Figure 2** depicts specific Project improvements. As shown in that figure, the Project area limits include roughly 8 miles of adding a third main track and roughly ¾ of a mile of shifting existing tracks (at the north end). The limits of the proposed rail improvements extend from approximately one mile north of the Franconia-Springfield VRE Station (CFP* 98.8) to approximately 400 feet north of Furnace Road (CFP 90.08), which is just north of the Occoquan River. Improvements north of CFP 98.8 and south of CFP 90.08 are included as part of DC2RVA.

**Note that CSXT uses the abbreviation "CFP" in lieu of the more common "MP" for milepost.*

Purpose and Need: The purpose and need of the project is to improve passenger and freight service performance in a crowded rail corridor.

Proposed Infrastructure Improvements: The proposed infrastructure improvements are described below, from north to south. The Project is solely an infrastructure project and does not include additional passenger rail service. At the end of this section, **Figure 3** illustrates the typical three-track section, **Figure 4** illustrates the typical grade-separated bypass structure, and **Figure 5** illustrates the new rail bridges over Route 1 and Newington Road that are being proposed as part of these improvements and are described below.

- The existing three tracks between the curves at CFP 98.8 to CFP 98.0 would be shifted slightly west within the existing right-of-way to avoid impacts to the Franconia-Springfield Parkway bridge as well as to accommodate the increase in the track centers required for a new island platform (to be constructed by VRE) at the Franconia-Springfield VRE Station.
- The Project would add a new third track on the east side from CFP 98.0 to just south of the Franconia-Springfield VRE Station. The new third track would pass the station on the east, and accommodate an expanded east side platform (the east side platform would become a center platform with construction of the third track, with platform modifications to be designed and constructed by VRE). In addition, the Project would modify the pedestrian bridge or construct a tunnel at Franconia-Springfield Station to accommodate pedestrian access on the east side (VRE will design and construct the means of vertical access).
- Modifying existing curves to make the appropriate transition, a new track would be added on the west side starting just past where the WMATA tracks end and extending south onto a new two-track passenger rail bypass on an elevated structure, approximately 1,700 feet in length between CFP 97.2 and 96.3. The elevated bypass structure would allow passenger trains to cross between the west side and east side without occupying the existing two main tracks. The bypass would be designed for passenger and commuter trains only, and would be built to hold two tracks, with only one track added as part of the Project.
- The Project would add a new third track on the east side from CFP 96.3 to approximately CFP 91.0. A new railroad bridge with capacity for two tracks would be added to the east side at the existing railroad bridge over Newington Road. The new bridge and the track would be raised and expanded to accommodate improved roadway underpass geometry beneath the bridge (road improvements are not part of the Project). Initially, two tracks would be active on the new bridge, and rail traffic would be routed onto the new bridge. The existing rail bridge over Newington Road would then be removed, and a new two-track bridge with raised track to accommodate improved roadway underpass geometry would be constructed. Rail traffic would then be routed back onto the replacement bridge, and one track removed from the new bridge, maintaining a three-track rail corridor.
- Tracks would be aligned at the Lorton VRE Station to accommodate a longer side platform on the east side and a center platform on west side. The platform modifications at the Lorton Station would be designed and constructed by VRE and are not part of the Project.
- A new rail bridge would be added over Pohick Creek on the east side of the existing bridge. The new bridge would have capacity for two tracks, but only one track would be added as part of the Project.
- The new third track on the east would extend past Amtrak's Lorton Auto Train Station. A new rail bridge with capacity for two tracks would be constructed over Lorton Road (Route 642) on the east side of the existing bridge, but only one track would be added as part of the Project. The new third track would continue on the east side of the corridor until approximately CFP 91.0.
- The Project would add a new track on the west side between approximately CFP 91.0 and 90.0. A new railroad bridge with capacity for two tracks would be added to the west side at the existing railroad bridge over U.S. Route 1. The new bridge and the track would be raised and expanded to accommodate improved roadway underpass geometry beneath the bridge (road improvements are not part of the Project). Initially, two tracks would be active on the new bridge, and rail traffic would be routed onto the new bridge. The existing rail bridge over U.S. Route 1 would then be removed, and a new two-track bridge with raised track to accommodate improved road underpass geometry would be constructed. Rail traffic would then be routed back onto the replacement bridge, and one track removed from the new bridge, maintaining a three-track rail corridor.

- At CFP 90.08, any new track or other rail improvements would align with the rail improvements described in the DC2RVA Final EIS and ROD, including a new third track on the east extending from CFP 90.08 south to Woodbridge Station (not part of the Project).
- The new third track centerline would typically be placed 15 feet from the existing near track centerline along the corridor; the distance between the new track and the existing tracks would expand to accommodate the bypass, other new bridges, and station platforms.
- In addition to the new third track, the two existing tracks would also be shifted to the east or west through curves to transition the new third track from the east side of existing tracks to the west side and back to the east side, and improve speed and performance.
- Existing track speed in most of the Project area is 70 mph for passenger service and 60 mph for freight. Project track speeds will be determined during final design, but are anticipated to be 75 to 80 mph for passenger service and remain at 60 mph for freight on the three mainline tracks. The tracks on the bypass would be passenger only, with a design speed between 70 to 80 mph (to be determined during final design).
- The Project's track alignments will be coordinated with VRE's platform improvement projects at the Franconia-Springfield VRE Station and Lorton VRE Station. At the Franconia-Springfield Station, tracks would be aligned to accommodate expansion of the east side platform to become a center platform with construction of the third track. At the Lorton VRE Station, tracks would be aligned to accommodate a 700-foot side platform on the east side, and an identically-sized center platform on west side, with room for both platforms to increase in length. Platform improvements are being designed and constructed by VRE, and are not part of the Project.
- All new bypass and bridge structures would be built to accommodate two tracks, although only one track would be added as part of the Project. New crash walls would be constructed at the Pohick Road highway bridge and the Franconia-Springfield Parkway highway bridge to accommodate the reduced horizontal clearance (less than 10 feet) resulting from the construction of the third track.

Additional work included as part of the proposed Project includes:

- Extending the existing culverts along the alignment to accommodate the new third mainline track.
- Installing additional 36- to 48-inch culverts, as required for drainage, under the rail line along the entire eight-mile corridor.
- Modifications to the Lorton Interlocking.
- Signal and communication facilities.

Ability to Meet Purpose and Need: The Project would meet the purpose and need by adding capacity (e.g., a third mainline track) and reducing an existing bottleneck caused by conflicting at-grade passenger train movements between main tracks.

(1) **Adds Capacity:** The existing two mainline tracks in the Project corridor have a combined daily peak volume of 66 trains: 20 Amtrak trains, 16 VRE trains, and 30 CSXT trains. The two main tracks are inter-operational and carry both passenger (Amtrak and VRE) and freight (CSXT) trains – all with varying schedules, speeds, lengths, and operational requirements. All VRE trains stop at VRE's Franconia-Springfield and Lorton Stations within the Project area and are served by platforms with one edge on the outside of the eastern track. During VRE train station stops, the eastern track is blocked. The number of daily trains, the inter-operations of passenger, commuter, and freight trains, and the frequent stops by VRE's commuter trains create a congested rail corridor. The Project addresses this existing congestion by adding a third main track for almost 8 miles, extending through VRE's two stations and past the Amtrak Autotrain station as well. The new third main track would also benefit future expansion of rail service.

(2) **Reduces Bottleneck:** VRE trains and some Amtrak trains are served by station/platform combinations that require them to be on the east side of the corridor south of Franconia, but on the west side of the corridor north of Franconia. The east to west movement of passenger trains currently occurs at-grade and creates a bottleneck in the corridor. The bottleneck occurs because crossing trains are required to slow down, move through an interlocking track, and occupy both main tracks simultaneously, which blocks all other train movements. The Project addresses the existing bottleneck by adding a grade-separated bypass to carry the new third track from one side of the corridor to the other on an elevated structure. With the bypass, passenger trains would be separated and able to cross over the main tracks without interfering with trains on the main tracks.

The Project would provide the infrastructure necessary to allow separation of freight and passenger rail movements to occur and would generally reduce congestion and increase capacity in the corridor – allowing for more efficient and reliable movement of passenger rail service as well as freight traffic. By constructing a third mainline track, the Project would create a continuous corridor with three interoperable mainline tracks for nearly 20 miles between the Potomac River and the Occoquan River. The Project provides a discrete set of improvements that can stand alone without requiring other improvements on adjacent sections of the rail corridor.

Attachments: A: Signed NEPA Concurrence Form (January 13, 2020)
B: STIP/TIP Documentation
C: Aerial Mapbook with Permanent and Temporary Limits of Disturbance (LOD)
D: Coordination with DHR
E: Coordination with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
F: Noise and Vibration Assessment

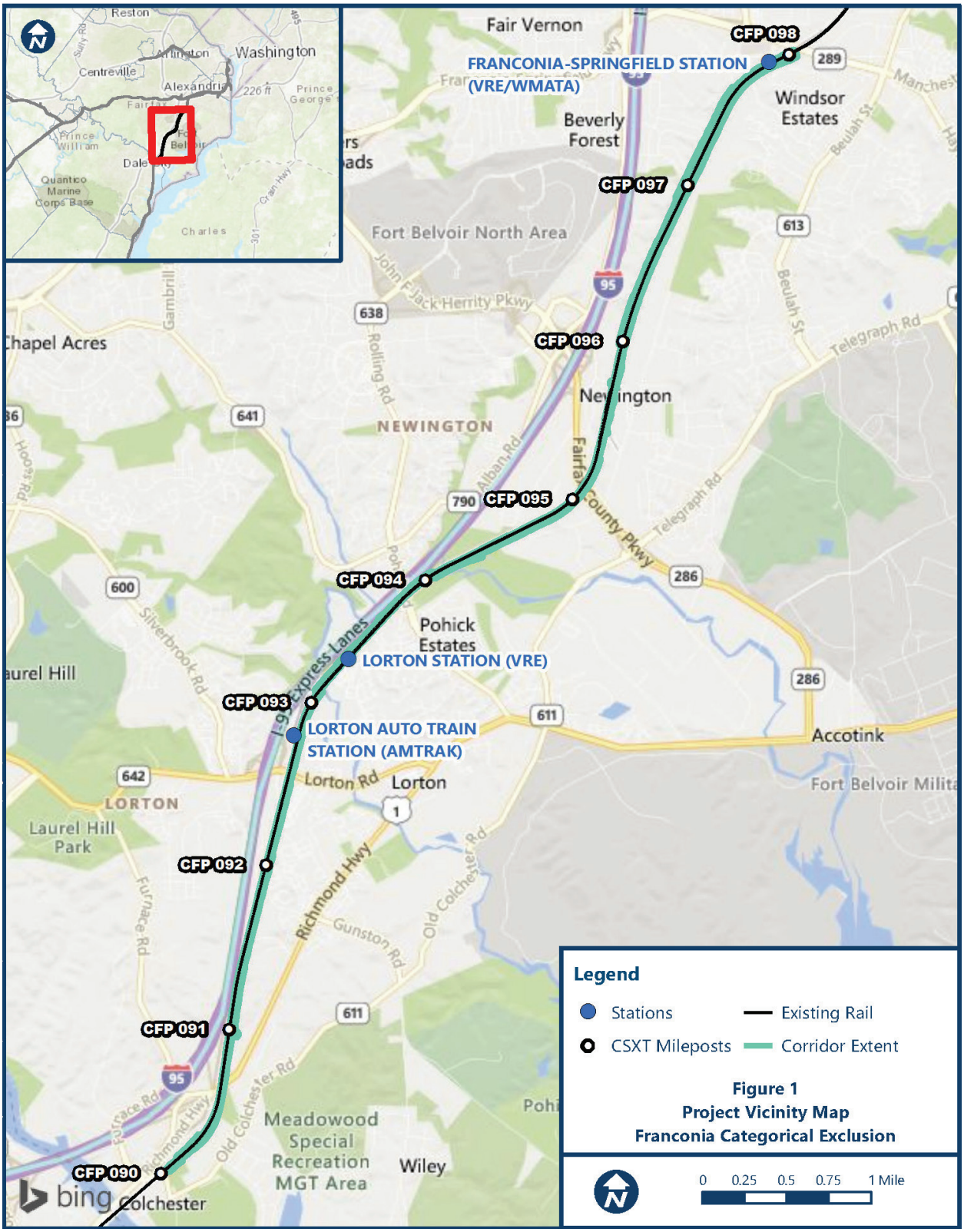


Figure 1. Project Location

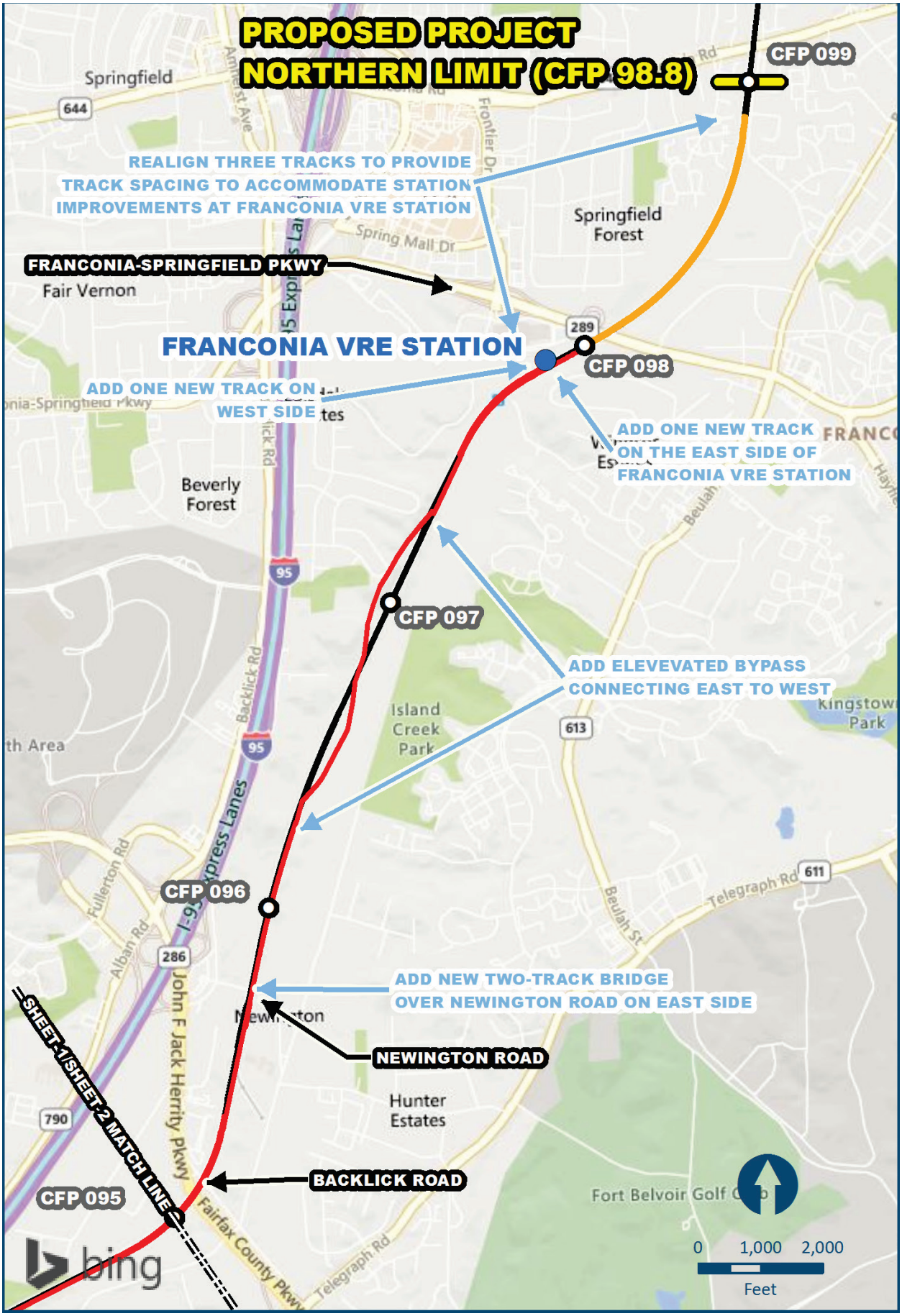


Figure 2a. Project Area / Summary of Proposed Improvements

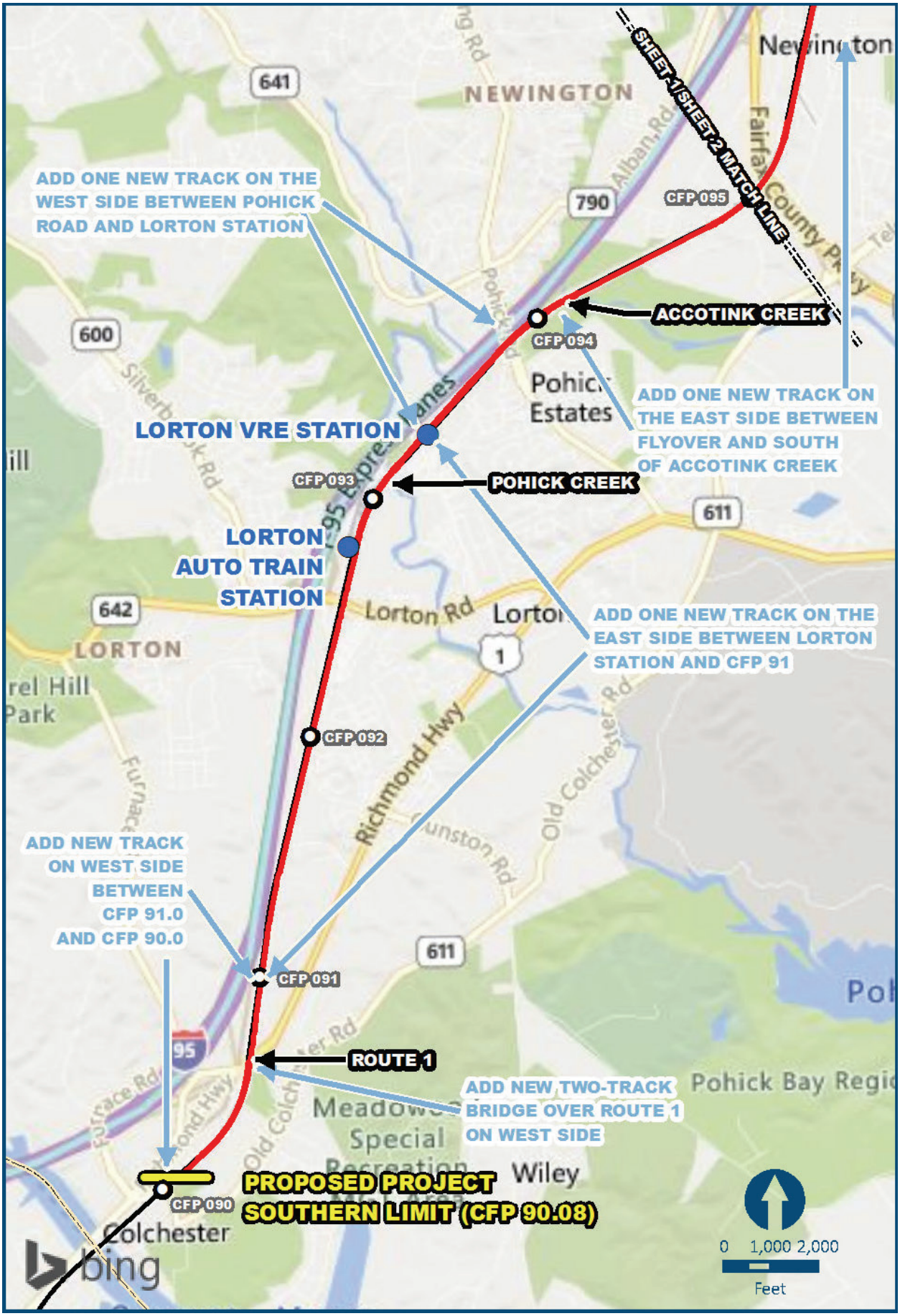


Figure 2b. Project Area / Summary of Proposed Improvements

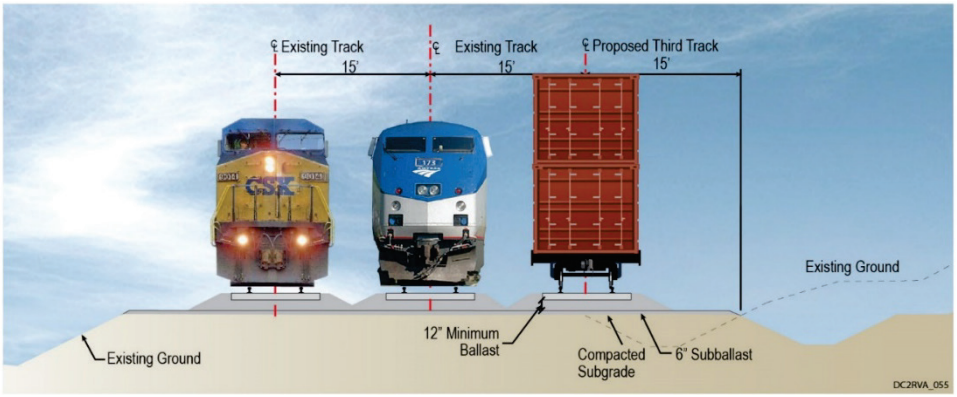


Figure 3. Proposed Three-Track Typical Section

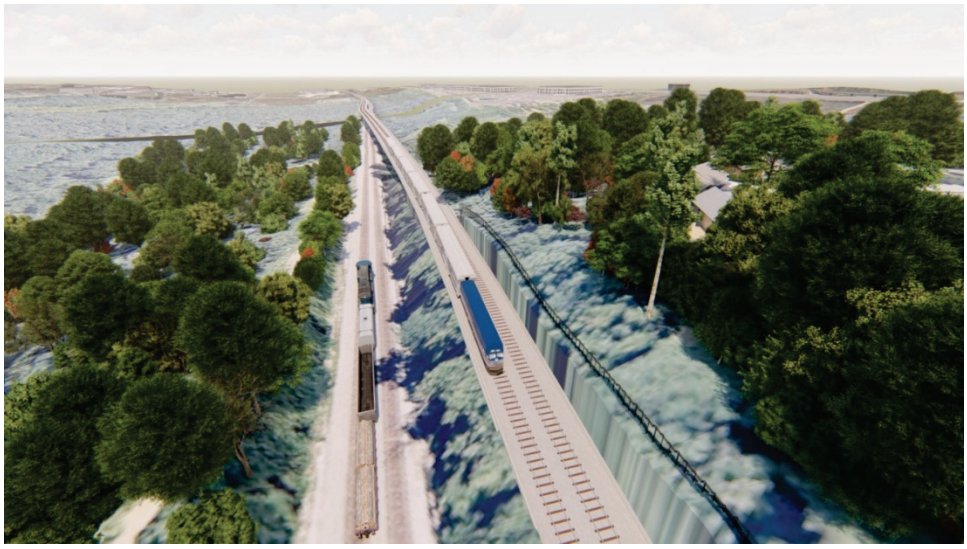


Figure 4. Proposed Typical Bypass (Looking South)

Note that only one track would be added to the bypass as part of the Project. Rendering prepared by Kimley-Horn Inc (2019)

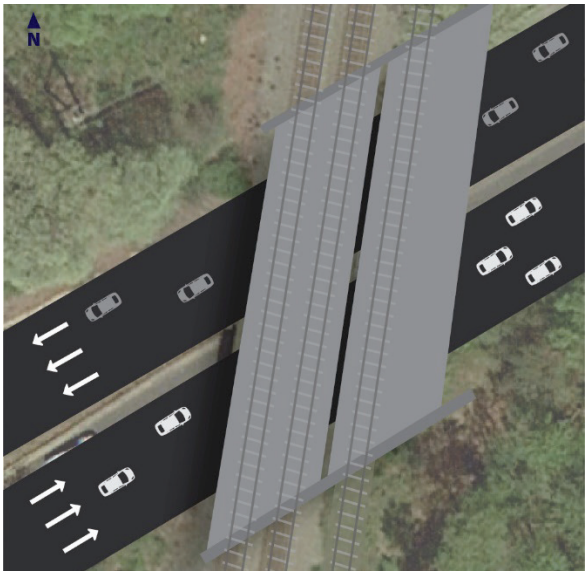


Figure 5. Proposed Typical Route 1 and Newington Road Improvements

Figure from VDOT's CSX Bridges over Route 1 and Route 877 Conceptual Bridge Replacements Feasibility Study Report (February 2019). Note that only one track would be added on the new bridges as part of the Project.

RIGHT-OF-WAY AND RELOCATIONS

Right-of-way required? No **Acreage Amount:** N/A

Residential Relocations: No **Number:** 0

Commercial Relocations: No **Number:** 0

Non-Profit Relocations: No **Number:** 0

*Source: Fairfax County Parcel Boundaries and Zoning Data (2015); CSX Bridges over Route 1 and Route 877 - Conceptual Bridge Replacement Feasibility Study Report (2019); Conceptual Bypass Design Drawings (2019); Project LOD (see **Attachment C**)*

Septic Systems, Wells, or Public Water Supplies: Present **Impacts:** Yes

Source: Comprehensive Environmental Data and Reporting System (CEDAR) – Virginia Department of Health (VDH) (2018)

Hazardous Materials: Present **Impacts:** Yes (5 sites, see table below)

Source: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Facility Register Service (FRS) Database (2016)

Right-of-way and Relocations Comments:

Right-of-way: All Project improvements (as enumerated in the Project Description and Proposed Improvements sections) are located within existing CSXT and/or VDOT right-of-way. CSXT has continuous right-of-way on the ground and VDOT has aerial right-of-way over/under CSXT at roadway crossings. For the at-grade rail improvements, DRPT estimated the typical maximum limits of disturbance (LOD) distance to be 75 feet from centerline of existing track on either the east or west side depending on placement of the third track. Where the distance from centerline of existing track to edge or right-of-way is less than 75 feet, DRPT assumed the LOD as the actual right-of-way. In these areas, DRPT assumed, based on previous similar DC2RVA design that the proposed at-grade rail improvements can be refined during final design to remain within existing right-of-way by use of retaining walls or other minimization measures. The proposed bypass is also located within existing right-of-way, as detailed on the plan/profile drawings separately prepared by Kimley-Horn Inc. (dated July 17, 2019).

For the improvements related to the two new rail bridges (Newington Road and Route 1), DRPT used the proposed LOD indicated in VDOT's CSX Bridges over Route 1 and Route 877 - Conceptual Bridge Replacement Feasibility Study Report (February 2019), which included both permanent limits (which were within existing right-of-way) and temporary construction limits. The temporary construction limits shown in the 2019 VDOT report are primarily located on the back side of the industrial properties on the east side of the existing rail corridor at the Newington Road crossing (i.e., the Gunston/Newington Industrial Park properties. Temporary construction limits are also located on the west of Fort Belvoir) and over a portion of the parking lots of the Northern Virginia Auto Recycling property (north of the Route 1 crossing) and the Quality Moving Services property (south of the Route 1 crossing). Similar to the at-grade rail improvements, DRPT assumes the bridge improvements can be refined during final design to further minimize impacts, such as use of a retaining wall.

DRPT estimated additional areas of temporary LOD in locations where the existing right-of-way extended beyond the above-referenced 75 feet. DRPT assumes that temporary areas would be used for access, staging, and construction-related purposes. **Attachment C** shows the locations of temporary LOD outside of existing right-of-way, the total area of which is 1.8 acres.

Relocations: DRPT anticipates no permanent property acquisition for the Project.

Septic Systems, Wells, or Public Water Supplies: The closest public surface water supply intake is the Occoquan Reservoir, which is located upstream of the Project and separated by a dam (over two miles upstream from the CSXT crossing of the Occoquan River, south of the Project LOD). There are two private wells within 100 feet of the permanent LOD (located south of the Lorton Road overpass), and one public groundwater source within a mile of the LOD (a drilled well at the FX Yacht Club, which is located on the Occoquan River, south of the Project LOD). There are no anticipated impacts to water quality as a result of the Project.

Hazardous Materials: There are five sites with recordings of hazardous materials in the permanent LOD, as shown in the table below (with adjacent property information noted therein for reference). DRPT will comply with the requirements for solid and hazardous wastes and hazardous materials specified by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) during construction and will remediate existing sources of contaminants where disturbed by construction activities in accordance with federal, state, and local requirements. Before the construction of the Project, thorough site investigations will be conducted to determine whether any of the sites are actually contaminated, and, if so, the nature and extent of that contamination. All solid waste material resulting from clearing and grubbing, demolition, or other construction operations will be removed and disposed of according to regulations. Any additional hazardous materials discovered during construction of the Project will be removed and disposed of in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. All necessary remediation will be conducted in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local environmental laws and will be coordinated with EPA, Virginia DEQ, and other federal or state agencies as necessary.

Owner/ Property (Adjacent to LOD)	Petroleum Release Site	Leaking Storage Tank	RCRA Generator
7001 Newington Road	✓		
WMATA/ 7901 Cinder Bed Road	✓		
Potomac Valley Brick / 8306 Cinder Bed Road	✓		
Mims Street LLC / 8100 Mims Street	✓	✓	✓
AAAACO LLP / 10212 Richmond Highway	✓		
TOTAL	5	1	1

SOCIO-ECONOMIC

Minority/Low Income Populations: Present **Disproportionate Impacts to Minority/Low Income Populations:** No

Source: DC2RVA Tier II EIS and ROD (2019)

Consistent with Local Land Use: Yes

Source: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan (2017); DC2RVA Tier II EIS and ROD (2019)

Community Services: Not Present

Existing or Planned Public Recreational Facilities: Present; No Impact

Existing or Planned Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities: Existing Present: No Impact

Source: Fairfax County, VA Open Geospatial Data (2019); Aerial Imagery

Socio-Economic Comments:

Title IV and Environmental Justice: Analysis to determine the presence of and impact to Environmental Justice populations was conducted for the 123-mile DC2RVA corridor, inclusive of the 8 miles from Franconia to Occoquan, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order (EO) 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, and U.S. DOT Order 5610.2. As part of DC2RVA, FRA and DRPT identified these populations through the use of US Census data, National Center for Education Statistics data, and information from public involvement and outreach activities; EPA concurred with the analysis approach on September 16, 2015. In the DC2RVA Tier II Draft and Final EIS, FRA and DRPT performed analysis across all of the potential environmental effects to Environmental Justice populations (residential relocations, community cohesion, relocations of community facilities, access to community facilities, changes in response times for emergency services, and noise and vibration impacts) and determined that DC2RVA would not have disproportionate adverse effects on Environmental Justice populations in comparison to other Build Alternatives evaluated as part of those documents. In the ROD for DC2RVA, FRA determined that DC2RVA is consistent with the requirements of Executive Order 12898. Because the Project is within the same area as the DC2RVA area, the proposed improvements would not cause additional environmental effects to Environmental Justice populations, and there are no emergency services or local schools that would be impacted by the proposed improvements. Additionally, the Project would result in a safer and less congested railroad network, which would provide better access and mobility to all communities and populations; therefore, no further Environmental Justice analysis is required.

Public Recreational Facilities: While several public recreational facilities are located adjacent to the railroad corridor, such as Loisdale Park west of the right-of-way near the bypass or Mason Neck West Park east of the right-of-way south of Route 1, the facilities are located outside of the right-of-way.

Land Use: The Project is consistent with the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan goal to "have a land use pattern which increases transportation efficiency, encourages transit use, and decreases automobile dependency" (per Countywide Objective 6 in the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan). There is no permanent land use conversion associated with the Project as all improvements are continuing an existing use and are located within the existing CSXT and/or VDOT right-of-way (see Right-of-way and Relocations section, above).

Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility: The following bicycle/pedestrian facilities are within and/or traverse the permanent LOD of the Project, primarily as part of a roadway facility. Project improvements would maintain all existing (or future planned, at that time) bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and detail the specifics as part of final design.

- Trail connecting east side of Franconia-Springfield Metro Station to Barry Road
- Multiuse path on Backlick Road overpass (east side of roadway)
- Sidewalk on Pohick Road overpass (east side of roadway)
- Bicycle lane and sidewalk on both sides of Lorton Road (railroad overpass)

CULTURAL RESOURCES/SECTION 106 OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT DETERMINATION

Phase I Architecture Conducted	☒ Complete (as part of DC2RVA Tier II EIS and additional studies conducted as part of the Franconia Third Track project, as provided in **Attachment D**)
Phase II Architecture Conducted	☒ Complete (as part of DC2RVA Tier II EIS)
Phase I Archaeology Conducted	☒ Complete (as part of DC2RVA Tier II EIS)
Phase II Archaeology Conducted	☐Complete (N/A)

Name of Historic Property: RF&P Railroad Corridor (500-0001) *[Resource includes the ~8 miles of track within the Franconia Third Track Project area]*

Section 106 Effect Determination: Adverse Effect **DHR Concurrence Date:** July 22, 2020

Name of Historic Property: Old Colchester Road, Potomac Path, King's Highway (029-0953) *[Resource is within the APE of the Franconia Third Track Project]*

Section 106 Effect Determination: No Effect **DHR Concurrence date:** July 22, 2020

Name of Historic Property: Colchester Arms, Fairfax Arms, 10712 Old Colchester Road (029-0043) *[Resource is within the APE of the Franconia Third Track Project]*

Section 106 Effect Determination: No Adverse Effect **DHR Concurrence date:** July 22, 2020

*Source: Section 106 Evaluation from the DC2RVA Tier II EIS and additional studies conducted as part of the Franconia Third Track Project (see **Attachment D** for documentation of additional studies)*

Section 106 MOA Execution Date: DC2RVA Section 106 MOA executed on 7/16/2019; Amendment ongoing

Cultural Resource Comments:

DRPT and FRA conducted cultural resource identification and evaluation studies of historic properties in consultation with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) for the 123-mile DC2RVA corridor, inclusive of the 8 miles from Franconia to Occoquan. However, the DC2RVA Section 106 consultation did not include the improvements to the two new bridges (Newington Road and U.S. Route 1) or the new elevated bypass structure that are part of the current undertaking that have been added since the DC2RVA cultural resource review. The presence of newly designed elevated structures requires a 1,000-foot area of potential effects (APE); a 500-foot APE was included in the original study. Accordingly, DRPT conducted additional architectural survey (summarized below and detailed in a report provided in **Attachment D**).

Through the original DC2RVA studies and the additional research within the elevated structure APE, it was determined that there are three historic properties in the 8-mile long project area, as listed above, and that the Project would have an adverse effect on one of these resources: the RF&P Railroad Corridor (500-0001). A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlining stipulations to mitigate adverse effects to the RF&P Railroad Corridor due to DC2RVA was executed in July 2019. Stipulation I.B of the DC2RVA MOA states that design changes associated with the DC2RVA project or associated projects are permitted as long as the modifications are reviewed by the DHR and the previous effect determinations are not modified and the mitigation stipulations remain appropriate for the undertaking. The impacts to the RF&P Railroad Corridor from the Franconia Third Track Project mirror those of the larger DC2RVA project.

The DHR reviewed the Project impacts to the RF&P Railroad Corridor as part of the Franconia Third Track Project and concurred that the current mitigation stipulations set forth in the DC2RVA MOA are appropriate as presented; the DHR concurrence letter, dated July 22, 2020, is provided in **Attachment D**. An amendment to the DC2RVA MOA is being prepared, inclusive of FHWA as an invited signatory. The mitigation stipulations will be carried out prior to commencing construction on the Franconia Third Track Project.

Cultural resource studies have thus been completed, and full documentation is provided in **Attachment D**.

SECTION 4(f) AND SECTION 6(f)

Use of Section 4(f) Property: Yes, one property

Name of Resource: RF&P Railroad Corridor (500-0001)

Type of Resource: Individually Eligible Historic Property

De Minimis: No

Type of Use: Permanent Incorporation

Section 4(f) Evaluation Attached: The DC2RVA Final Section 4(f) Evaluation and Record of Decision are available on the Project website: www.DC2RVARail.com

Conversion of Section 6(f) Property: No **Acres of Conversion:** None

Source: Final Section 4(f) Evaluation from the DC2RVA Tier II EIS and ROD (2019)

Section 4(f) Comments:

Determination of use was conducted by DRPT for the 123-mile DC2RVA corridor, inclusive of the 8 miles from Franconia to Occoquan. There were no Section 4(f) uses of any publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges in the Franconia Third Track Project area, and the proposed bridge/bypass improvements do not require further Section 4(f) analysis as there are no such resources present in that area of the Project LOD.

Similarly, for historic properties, DRPT found no use of the historic properties located within the Franconia Third Track Project area, other than the RF&P Railroad Corridor. The entire RF&P Railroad Corridor (500- 0001) is a National Register of Historic Properties (NRHP) -eligible property. As part of the DC2RVA Section 4(f) Evaluation, DRPT determined that construction would result in removal or large-scale modifications to several contributing elements to the railroad district and several bridges along the corridor, resulting in a use (permanent incorporation) of this historic property. FRA approved the use of the RF&P Railroad Corridor, including the portion within the Franconia Third Track Project limits, in the DC2RVA Final Section 4(f) Evaluation and ROD. The DC2RVA Section 4(f) Evaluation did not include the two bridge replacements (Newington Road and U.S. Route 1) or the new elevated bypass bridge that are part of the current undertaking and that have added since the DC2RVA review. The two bridge replacements and the bypass are an exception to the requirement for Section 4(f) approval per 23 CFR 774.13(a)(2).

Section 6(f) Comments:

None.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Are Waters of the U.S. (WOUS) present? Yes

Surface Water Name(s): Long Branch, Accotink Creek, Pohick Creek, and Giles Run, plus multiple small unnamed streams and tributaries

Total Linear Feet of Impact: 2,600 feet in permanent LOD

Source: Delineated WOUS, DC2RVA Field Surveys (2015-2016)

Federal Threatened or Endangered Species:

Terrestrial: Northern Long-eared Bat *(Myotis septentrionalis)* – Threatened – No effect

Aquatic: None

Plants: Small Whorled Pogonia *(Isotria medeoloides)* – Threatened – No effect

Critical Habitat: None

*Source: USFWS Online Project Review Process, Consultation Code 05E2VA00-2020-SLI-1868. See **Attachment E**.*

100 Year Floodplain: Present with impacts **If yes, Identify Regulatory Floodway Zone:** High Risk Area Zone A (areas with 1% annual chance of flooding) and High Risk Area Zone AE (base floodplain where base floodplain elevations are provided).

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (2018)

Tidal Waters/Wetlands: Not present

Wetlands: Present

Type: Palustrine emergent (PEM); Palustrine forested (PFO); Palustrine shrub (PSS); PEM-PFO; and PEM-PSS

Total Wetland Acres of Impact: 2.7 acres in permanent LOD

Source: Delineated WOUS, DC2RVA Field Surveys (2015-2016)

Are permits required? Yes

Natural Resource Comments:

Waterways: There are no navigable waterways crossed by the Project corridor. Four named streams (Long Branch, Accotink Creek, Pohick Creek, and Giles Run) as well as approximately 30 small and intermittent unnamed streams and tributaries cross the permanent and temporary LOD, as summarized in the table below. DRPT anticipates minimal encroachments on or impacts to these waterways. All streams are currently spanned on existing structures or are carried beneath the railbed via culverts. New/replacement bridges built to accommodate the third track would be designed to be compatible with clearances of existing bridges and to minimize hydraulic alterations, and existing culverts would be extended to accommodate the new third track.

Name	Permanent LOD (linear feet)	Temporary LOD (linear feet)
Long Branch	115	0
Accotink Creek	74	0
Pohick Creek	82	0
Giles Run	13	31
Unnamed small/intermittent streams and tributaries	2,376	137
TOTAL	2,660	168

Wildlife, including Federal Threatened and Endangered Species: The majority of the LOD is existing railroad corridor with the fringes classified as either upland forest or urban/developed land habitat. DRPT completed USFWS's online project review process for the Project (Consultation Code 05E2VA00-2020-SLI-1868), which included obtaining an Official Species List that included two species: the Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) and the Small Whorled Pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*). The Official Species List noted no Critical Habitat for either species in the project area. Additionally, as prescribed by the online step-by-step project review process, DRPT assessed the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee (*Bombus affinis*), which has a historic range in Fairfax County, and the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), which is protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. DRPT concluded a No Effect determination for all noted species and their critical habitat. Documentation on these determinations and the signed self-certification letter were submitted to USFWS on May 22, 2020. **Attachment E** includes copies of these documents.

Additionally, according to the CEDAR database, several species of anadromous fish are found in two of the waterways: Accotink Creek (alewife and yellow perch) and Pohick Creek (alewife, blueback herring, and yellow perch). DRPT will ensure that best management practices for instream work will occur to minimize interruptions to anadromous movements of these species. Once completed, the proposed improvements would not cause any impediments or interruptions to anadromous movements.

Floodplains: The following table quantifies the amount of the permanent and temporary LOD that are within the 100-year floodplain. These encroachments would have no short-term or long-term impacts on the functional values of the associated floodplains, nor would they result in any measurable increase in backwater elevations of associated waterways.

Impact Type	100-Year Floodplain Impact (Acres)
Permanent LOD	3.9
Temporary LOD	1.1

Wetlands: The wetlands areas are summarized in the table below and show small areas of fragmented wetlands in the undeveloped portions of the existing CSXT right-of-way, and are reflected within the permanent and temporary LOD. Compensation for permanent loss of wetlands will be provided in accordance with conditions of the Nationwide Permit (see Permits text below).

Wetland Type	Permanent LOD (acres)	Temporary LOD (acres)
PEM/PFO	0.9	0
PSS	0.05	0
PEM/PSS	0.05	0
PEM	1.2	0.03
PFO	0.5	0.3
TOTAL	2.7	0.3

Permits: It is expected that the Project would qualify for the Nationwide Permit (Section 404) and no individual permits would be required. The Section 401 Water Quality Permit would be issued from DEQ as part of the Joint Section 404 Permit. A Section 402 Construction General Permit (CGP) may be needed for construction near and in streams. The Project will be coordinated with USACE and a permit application will be made at final design.

DRPT submitted a Virginia Coastal Zone consistency determination for the entire 123-mile DC2RVA corridor, including the 8-mile Franconia to Occoquan segment; on August 17, 2020, the DEQ completed its review of the DC2RVA federal consistency determination (FCD) and determined that it was consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of the Virginia Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program.

AGRICULTURAL/OPEN SPACE

Open Space Easements: Present, No Impact

Agricultural/Forestal Districts: Not Present

Source: CEDAR – VDCR (2018)

Agricultural/Open Space Comments:

DRPT does not anticipate any permanent impacts to agricultural or open space easements. There is dedicated federal conservation land directly adjacent to the east side of the CSXT right-of-way, south of Newington Road in the Newington Industrial Park parcels that are managed by Fort Belvoir (US Department of the Army). Approximately 0.6 acres of this conservation land are located in the temporary construction LOD shown in VDOT's CSX Bridges over Route 1 and Route 877 - Conceptual Bridge Replacement Feasibility Study Report (2019). DRPT assumes that the conceptual bridge improvements can be refined during final design to further minimize impacts, such as use of best management practices during construction to limit site clearing or construction access impacts.

FARMLAND

NRCS Form CPA-106 Attached? No **If yes, rating:** N/A

If NRCS Form CPA-106 is not attached, check all that are applicable:

☐ Land already in Urban use

☒ Entire Project in area not zoned agriculture

☐ NRCS responded within 45 days

☐ NRCS Determined no prime or unique farmland in the project area

Alternatives Analysis Required? No

Source: Fairfax County Zoning Data (2015)

Farmland Comments:

There are no farmlands within the permanent or temporary LOD of the Project.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive Species in the project area? Unknown

Invasive Species Comments:

There is potential for invasive plant species to become established within the limits of disturbance of the Project during and following construction. Section 244.02(c) of VDOT's Road and Bridge Specifications (2016) includes provisions intended to control noxious weeds (which includes non-native and invasive species).

While rights-of-ways are at risk from invasive species colonization from adjacent properties, implementing the above provisions would reduce or minimize potential for introduction, proliferation, and spread of invasive species. Additionally, the implementation of best management practices for erosion/sediment control and abatement of pollutant loading would minimize indirect impacts to adjoining communities and habitat by reducing excess nutrient loads that could encourage invasive species proliferation.

DRPT does not anticipate temporary and/or permanent impacts from invasive species and commits to the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other measures included in VDOT's standard construction specifications. For example, DRPT will ensure that standard VDOT seed mixes will be used.

AIR QUALITY

Carbon Monoxide

This project is located in a CO: ☒ Attainment Area ☐ Maintenance Area

CO Hotspot Analysis Required for NEPA? No

Source: https://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbook/anayo_va.html for Fairfax County

Ozone

This project is located in an Ozone: ☐ Attainment Area ☒ Maintenance Area (2008 standard)

☒ Nonattainment Area (2015 standard) ☐ Early Action Compact Area

Source: https://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbook/anayo_va.html for Fairfax County

Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5)

This project is located in a PM2.5: ☒ Attainment Area ☐ Maintenance Area

☐Nonattainment Area

PM Hotspot Analysis Required? No

Source: https://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbook/anayo_va.html for Fairfax County

Mobile Source Air Toxics

This project: ☒ is exempt with no meaningful potential MSAT effects

☐ is one with low potential MSAT effects (attach qualitative MSAT analysis)

☐ is one with high potential MSAT effects (attach quantitative MSAT analysis)

Source: DC2RVA Tier II EIS and ROD

Air Quality Comments:

The Franconia Third Track Project would not result in any long-term impacts to air quality as it is an infrastructure improvement, aimed at easing train operations in the Project corridor by reduce conflicting train movements, the Project does not increase rail/diesel engine or vehicle traffic, as a result, the Project is exempt from air quality conformity requirements.

Notwithstanding, the Project lies in an area that is currently in attainment or maintenance with all of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), except for ozone (2015 standard). As part of the environmental review of DC2RVA Tier II EIS (which also included emissions from increased passenger service that are not part of the Franconia Third Track Project), FRA conducted a general conformity evaluation for air quality pursuant to 40 C.F.R. Part 51, Subpart W and 40 C.F.R. Part 93 Subpart B, as document in the DC2RVA ROD. FRA determined that DC2RVA-generated predicted annual pollutant emissions in nonattainment and/or maintenance areas were all below general conformity de minimis threshold values required and that no conformity determination was required. Additionally, the DC2RVA analyses indicated that increases in CO2 emissions associated with additional intercity passenger rail service are expected to be more than offset by reductions in CO2 emissions due to reduced use of other transportation modes, and similarly that regional MSAT emissions would decrease due to reductions in other transportation modes and implementation of EPA's vehicle and fuel regulations.

Construction-related activities can result in short-term increases in fugitive dust and equipment-related particulate emissions in and around the Project area. These potential air quality impacts would be short-term, occurring only while demolition and construction work is in progress and local conditions are appropriate. The potential for fugitive dust emissions is typically associated with building demolition, ground clearing, site preparation, grading, stockpiling of materials, on-site movement of equipment, and transportation of materials. The potential is greatest during dry periods, periods of intense construction activity, and during high wind conditions. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would also be generated during construction. However, these emissions are likely to be relatively minor given the nature and size of the proposed improvements, and the limited duration of the construction activities. All construction would be performed in accordance with VDOT's Standard Road and Bridge Specifications and would assure the following DEQ air pollution regulations are adhered to: 9 VAC 5-130, Open Burning restrictions; and 9 VAC 5-50, Article 1, Fugitive Dust precautions.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

Noise and Vibration Analysis Attached: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Noise Barriers Under Consideration? ☐ Yes ☒ No

*Source: Noise and Vibration Assessment for the Franconia Third Track Project (see **Attachment F**) Noise and Vibration Assessment from the DC2RVA Tier II EIS (2019)*

Noise and Vibration Comments:

To evaluate noise and vibration from trains that travel at speeds of 90 miles per hour (mph) or lower, FRA endorses use of noise and vibration impact assessment methodologies published in the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) "*Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*" manual (May 2018). Train speeds proposed on the DC2RVA corridor and within the Franconia Third Track Project limits are at or lower than 90 mph, therefore use of the FTA methods for evaluating Project-related noise and vibration are appropriate.

DRPT evaluated noise and vibration associated with construction and operation of the Franconia Third Track Project in two parts:

- Part 1 for the construction and operation of a third main track at existing grade plus the effects of increased passenger train service between Franconia and Occoquan in conjunction with DC2RVA.
- Part 2 for the construction and operation of the proposed elevated bypass structure, just south of the Franconia-Springfield VRE station.

The Part 1 evaluation is documented in the DC2RVA Tier II EIS and ROD. DRPT's noise and vibration impact assessments for the DC2RVA corridor evaluated the impacts of constructing an additional main track along the corridor, plus the effects of additional passenger train service in the future. DRPT's analyses, presented within the DC2RVA Tier II EIS, included the Franconia to Occoquan segment in order to fully assess the potential noise and vibration effects of the additional passenger service, even though the construction of a third track between Franconia and Occoquan was to be advanced as a separate Project. DRPT concluded there were no noise or vibration impacts in the Franconia to Occoquan segment from construction of a third track at existing grade and operation of additional passenger service.

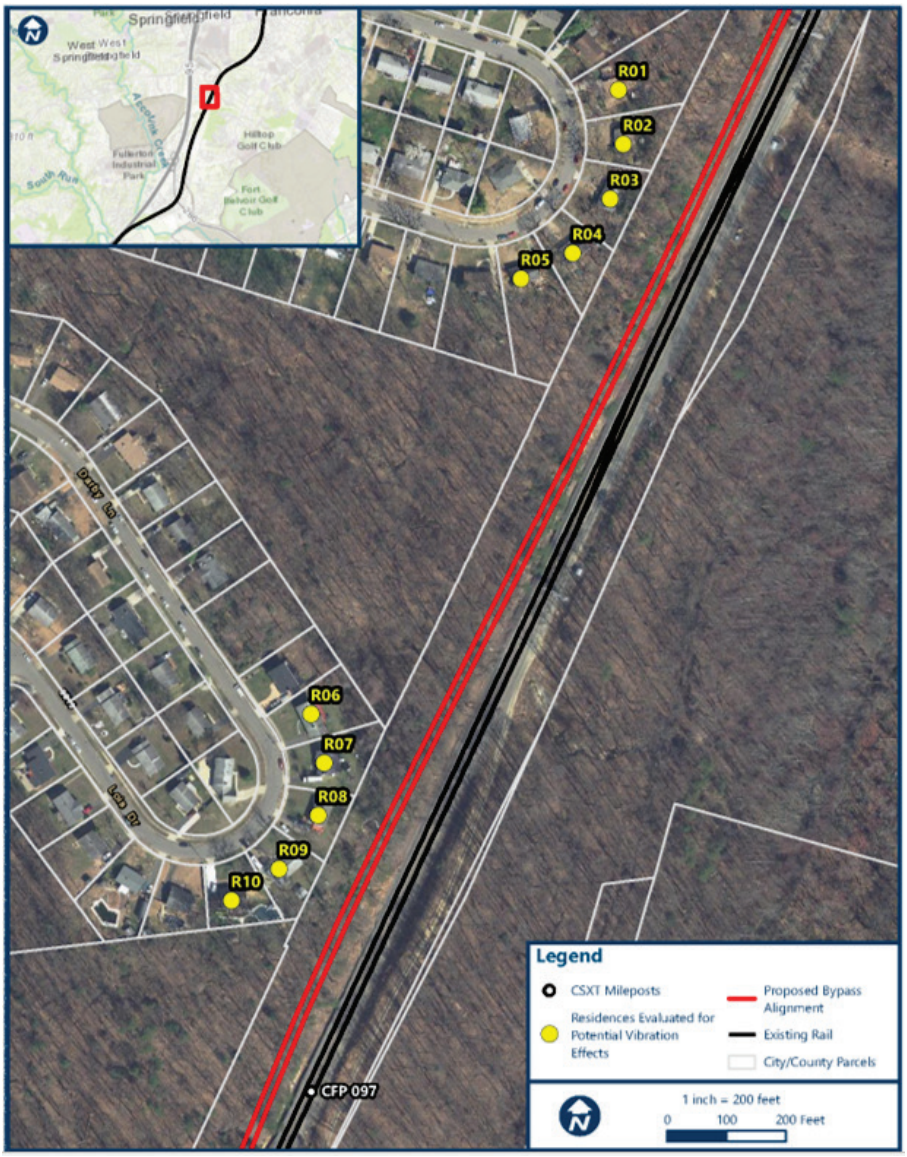
The Part 2 evaluation is provided in **Attachment F**, and focuses on the potential noise and vibration effects of passenger trains (both Amtrak passenger trains and VRE commuter trains), being routed onto an elevated bypass structure to allow trains to move across the existing two main tracks to avoid conflicts with freight trains. DRPT conducted the additional noise and vibration assessment to fully assess the potential effects of operating the trains on an above-grade structure. Train speed is a key factor in noise and vibration levels, and DRPT considered varying operating speeds (70, 75, and 80 mph) on the bypass for the analysis.

DRPT's analyses of the construction and operation of the proposed passenger train bypass indicate that:

- Noise impacts from train operations on the bypass are not projected to occur at any of the three speeds evaluated. Bypass construction noise levels could approach, but are not likely to exceed, temporary noise impact levels.
- Vibration impacts are projected to occur at three locations (nearby single-family residences, listed below and shown in the figure below) if the passenger trains on the bypass are operating at 80 mph, and only one location at lower speeds. The vibration impact is not projected to occur with passenger train speeds of 65 mph or less on the bypass.
    - The three potential locations of vibration impacts at 80 mph operating speeds along the bypass are: 6701 Jerome Street (R03); 6802 Darby Lane (R08); and 6800 Darby Lane (R09).
    - The one location that would also experience impacts at lower operating speeds is 6802 Darby Lane (R08).

Note that some of the vibration energy travels along the surface of the ground, and some of it travels through the ground. The vibration levels would be the highest at the nearest homes when trains are traveling at ground-level; vibration levels when trains are on the actual bypass structure would be lower due to the loss of energy that occurs when vibration travels through the structure.

DRPT will determine the passenger and commuter train operating speed on the bypass during final design, and will conduct additional vibration assessments (potentially including propagation measurements in the field) if the bypass is designed to accommodate passenger train speeds greater than 65 mph. In addition, DRPT will require construction noise best management practices and mitigation measures be included in the bypass's construction plans to ameliorate potential temporary disturbances from construction noise. Temporary construction vibration levels will be minimized in accordance with VDOT's Standard Road and Bridge Specifications.



VISUAL QUALITY

Visual Impacts to Mitigate: No

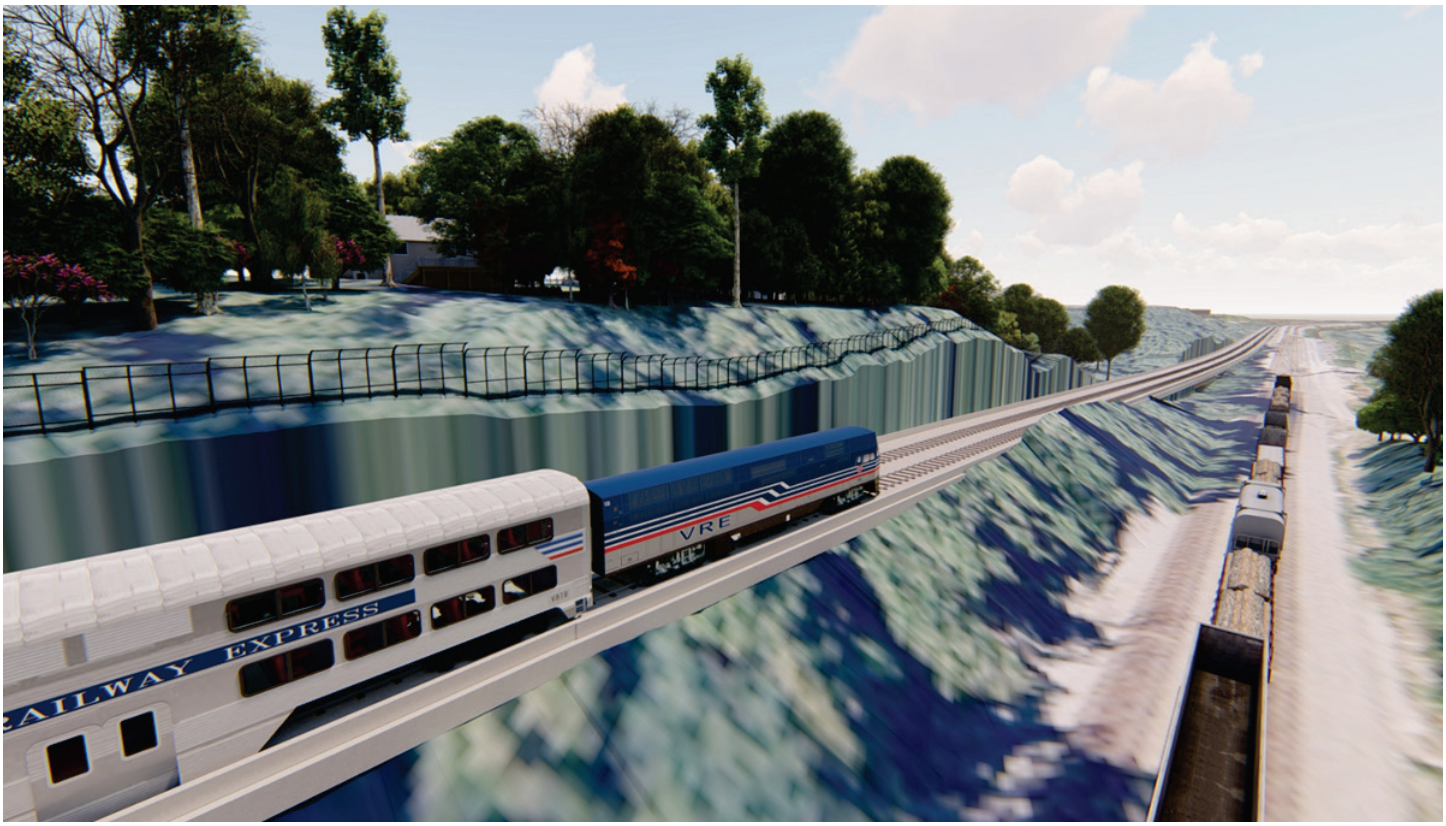
Sources: Visual Impact Assessment from the DC2RVA Tier II EIS and ROD (2019)

Renderings of the proposed passenger rail bypass as prepared for DRPT by Kimley-Horn Inc. (2019)

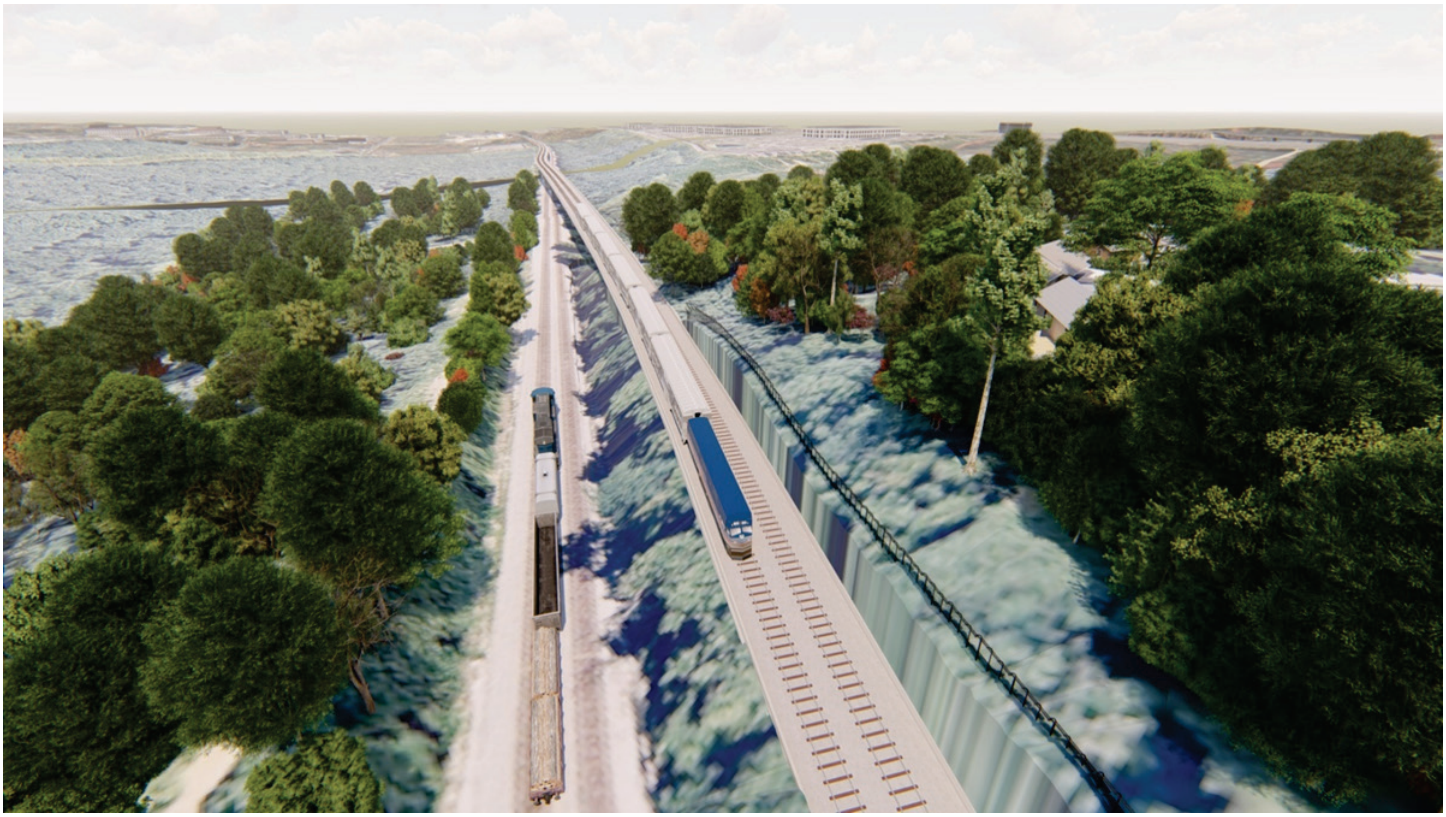
Visual Comments:

DRPT determined that the addition of an at-grade third rail would have a low visual impact along the corridor per the DC2RVA Tier II EIS analyses. DRPT found that the third rail elements are consistent with the existing visual elements in the landscape. The proposed bridge improvements over US Route 1 and Newington Road would be similar in kind to existing structures, such as line, form, texture, and color, and the improvements would blend with the existing visual character. Viewers are generally not very sensitive to these changes.

For the proposed elevated bypass structure, the shielding effects of the cut section/retaining wall and mature trees block the direct line of sight between the proposed elevated bypass and the closest residential properties along Darby Road, as shown in the renderings below. As such there would be no new visual intrusions to the viewsheds from these residences.



Looking north along rail corridor with bypass (Rendering by Kimley-Horn Inc, 2019)



Looking south along rail corridor with bypass (Rendering by Kimley-Horn Inc, 2019)

Looking east from Darby Lane, aerial view (Rendering by Kimley-Horn Inc, 2019)

Looking east from Darby Lane, street level view (Rendering by Kimley-Horn Inc, 2019)

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Energy Comments:

The proposed Project improvements support the proposed beneficial energy impacts, as documented in the DC2RVA Tier II EIS analyses for the 123-mile corridor inclusive of the approximate 8-mile Franconia Third Track Project.

Transportation/Operations Comments:

The Project would result in beneficial impacts to existing and future rail operations by reducing existing congestion and supporting the growth in the area and in the rail system. The Project would support an incremental improvement in the reliability of commuter and passenger rail service and would extend the existing third mainline track by 8 additional miles, establishing 20 continuous miles of three-track corridor.

The Project provides three mainline tracks through VRE's Franconia-Springfield and Lorton Stations, and along the Amtrak Autotrain Station. In addition, the Project provides a bypass to reduce passenger and freight train conflicts. The Project addresses recognized bottlenecks and congestion that are barriers to efficient passenger rail operations today with a discrete set of improvements for near- and long-term passenger rail benefits. The bottlenecks and congestion are attributed to a combination of limited infrastructure, a high volume of existing train traffic, and the unique operational characteristics of a shared-use system with freight (CSXT), intercity passenger (Amtrak), and commuter rail (VRE). The addition of a third mainline track and bypass coupled with additional crossovers and some minor curve realignments would reduce bottlenecks and congestion in the DC2RVA corridor by providing more opportunities for train overtakes. It would improve the safety, reliability and efficiency of the system. The Project would also be coordinated with VRE's Penta-Platform project which includes improvements at the Franconia-Springfield VRE Station and Lorton VRE Station which would result in improved conditions for passengers and station users at the platforms.

The two new bridges associated with the Project (Newington Road and Route 1) would improve the infrastructure and safety conditions of the transportation system of the area by eliminating existing structural limitations to future roadway improvements (however, those future roadway improvements are not part of the Project). All of these impacts would be beneficial. There would not be any permanent negative or adverse significant impacts to transportation.

Public Safety & Security Comments:

The Project would not result in any adverse impacts to public safety or security. Communities have grown and developed around the existing railroad right-of-way. This includes the roadway network, which has also developed around the railroad right-of-way and is used by residents, businesses, school transportation, and emergency services. Each of the operators (CSXT, Amtrak, and VRE) have strict safety procedures, including extensive safety training and certification, regarding access to the right-of-way. The Project corridor is grade separated from the area's roadway and transit network and there are no at-grade crossings in the Project area.

The Project will be designed in accordance with FRA regulations, industry standards, and CSXT requirements. The Project would also provide many benefits to the rail system in Northern Virginia by replacing older infrastructure, decreasing congestion, and grade-separating crossover movements that would provide a greater level of safety for all rail traffic.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

DRPT anticipates minor short-term impacts that are temporary and occur only during construction. DRPT will ensure that VDOT's standard construction specifications are followed and appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) are utilized to minimize/mitigate temporary construction impacts to the maximum extent practicable.

DRPT anticipates that construction of the new rail bridges over the public roadways would result in short-term disruptions to the local roadways, however roadway traffic impacts would be minimized through a VDOT-approved Maintenance of Traffic plan which will be developed during final design. Temporary construction impacts could include:

- Rail Impacts - Track closures and shifts could affect rail operations; construction of the additional track, infrastructure additions and modifications to control points would require a phased construction approach to maintain operations.
- Land Use and Access - Temporary and localized detours, modifications to access and increases in truck traffic could be necessary to allow for equipment staging and construction. Project plans will address maintenance of traffic, construction staging, and phased implementation of improvements. All land use temporarily affected by construction activities will be returned to its original use after construction is complete.
- Air Quality – Short-term increases in fugitive dust and equipment-related particulate emissions in and around the Project will be addressed through standard construction best management practices to minimize air quality effects during construction, including methods outlined in 9VAC 5-50-60 et seq. of the Regulations for the Control and Abatement of Air Pollution (Air Regulations). The VDOT Road and Bridge Specifications also include provisions on fugitive dust control.
- Noise – Localized noise levels would increase during construction. Typically, noise increases associated with construction equipment are temporary and progress linearly along the corridor. DRPT will restrict construction to daylight hours in the proximity of sensitive noise receptors to reduce the impact.
- Water Resources – Construction could potentially result in short-term effects such as increased erosion and sedimentation, increases in turbidity from in-stream work, and increased stormwater runoff. All temporary and permanent impacts to water resources associated with the Project are regulated by the USACE and DEQ through Sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act as well as by the Virginia Water Protection Program. DRPT will be responsible for ensuring that all federal, state, and local requirements for water resources are met by the Project contractors.
- Wildlife and Habitat – Human activity and noise increases during construction could displace some species of wildlife, and clearing of land for the new main track would decrease some habitat. DRPT anticipates that construction would be monitored to adhere to a strict schedule with possible time of year restrictions to avoid disrupting the critical life cycles of both aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, which would be coordinated with the appropriate agencies during final design and construction. DRPT will also ensure measures are taken by Project contractors to limit the spread of invasive plant species and to provide temporary and permanent revegetation of cleared areas.

CUMULATIVE AND INDIRECT IMPACTS

Present or reasonably foreseeable future projects (highway and non-highway) in the area: Yes

Impact same resources as the proposed project (i.e., cumulative impacts): No

Indirect (Secondary) impacts: No

Source: DRPT, VDOT, and VRE Planned Projects

Cumulative and Indirect Impacts Comments:

The Project takes place within the existing railroad corridor which is located in a heavily developed area of Fairfax County, parallel to I-95. Adverse impacts to sensitive and vulnerable natural resources in the area have occurred over time, first due to agricultural uses of the land and then to residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and public infrastructure development; however, remaining natural resources have adapted to the railroad (i.e., drainage patterns, wildlife movements, habitats) and current regulatory requirements and planning practices are helping avoid or minimize the contribution of present and future actions to adverse cumulative effects. Impacts are a part of overall urban growth and development of the area.

The Project occurs within the CSXT and/or VDOT right-of-way included within both DC2RVA and the recently announced Transforming Rail in Virginia Program. As previously discussed, the DC2RVA Project includes rail capacity improvements along the corridor north and south of the Franconia Third Track Project and a gradual increase in passenger rail service frequency by passenger operators in the Project corridor. DC2RVA projected adding 9 new passenger trains (18 roundtrips), with timing subject to available capacity and future operating schedule. DC2RVA also includes addition of a third mainline track connecting to the southern terminus of the third track for Franconia Third Track Project, and extending south across the Occoquan River on a new bridge, through VRE's Woodbridge Station, and continuing south to connect to existing third track near Quantico. The timing for construction of this new DC2RVA third track south of the Franconia Third Track Project is uncertain, and dependent on available funding.

The Transforming Rail in Virginia Program enables Virginia to build 37 miles of track in the I-95 corridor incrementally (including the Project and a new two-track Potomac River crossing, known as Long Bridge) over the next ten years. Virginia is acquiring approximately one-half of the CSXT-owned railroad right-of-way between Washington, DC and Richmond, VA along the RF&P railroad corridor. Track within the right-of-way purchased by Virginia also becomes Virginia property. With the acquisition, Virginia has committed to a series of infrastructure improvements to the railroad right-of-way that would allow for doubling Amtrak state-supported and VRE Fredericksburg Line service, including the addition of VRE weekend service. Following the close of the transaction, Virginia would be able to provide one new roundtrip between Washington, DC and Norfolk, VA and one new roundtrip on VRE's Fredericksburg line. Service would be coordinated through Amtrak and VRE with start dates to be announced in 2021. Additional service would grow over the next decade incrementally as capacity improvements are completed within the right-of-way acquired by Virginia from CSXT (including elements of the Franconia Third Track Project). By 2030, Amtrak state-supported service and VRE Fredericksburg Line service would double (including new weekend service), with opportunities to expand further.

The Franconia Third Track Project design would accommodate VRE's planned improvements at the Franconia-Springfield and Lorton Stations as well as VDOT's Backlick Road Bridge Reconstruction project.

- VRE's Franconia-Springfield and Lorton Station improvements. The Franconia Third Track Project includes the construction of the third track through these stations. At the Franconia-Springfield Station, VRE's proposed improvements include lengthening the existing west platform adjacent to WMATA Metrorail and lengthening/widening the existing east platform to accommodate an eight-car consist. At the Lorton Station, VRE is adding a second, 700-foot-long island platform, across the tracks from the current platform. The Franconia Third Track Project is included in VRE's plans; any new or expanded VRE service in the corridor is dependent on additional actions and such service would be independently evaluated and approved.
- VDOT's Backlick Road Bridge reconstruction project. VDOT recently completed reconstruction of the Backlick Road bridge over the railroad tracks, near the Fairfax County Parkway. The improvements include a wider horizontal and vertical clearance under the bridge, which would support the addition of the third track proposed by the Franconia Third Track Project.

The foreseeable transportation projects listed above are all within the existing transportation corridor. As such, disruptive effects would be limited by containing construction within the existing rights-of-way, where possible. Consequences of the narrow linear nature of the Project presents a limited footprint of direct impacts and, therefore, a limited potential for expansive indirect impacts attributable to encroachment and alteration. Additionally, indirect effects would be limited because proposed improvements would modify an existing rail facility within which the locations of potential induced development are limited to station areas where development already is prevalent. When considered in the context of the Project setting, the nature and magnitude of the cumulative effects of the Project would be small in the context of the effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. The Project would not result in a significant contribution to cumulative impacts or cause significant indirect impacts.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Substantial Controversy on Environmental Grounds: No

Public Hearing: No

Type of Hearing: N/A

Other Public Involvement Activities: Yes

Type of Involvement: Public Review

Public Involvement Comments:

The Draft Categorical Exclusion for the Project will be posted on the DRPT website and made available for public review for 15 days.

COORDINATION

State Agencies:

Virginia Department of Transportation

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

Federal Agencies:

Federal Railroad Administration

Local Entity:

Fairfax County Department of Transportation

CONCLUSION

This Project meets the criteria for a Categorical Exclusion pursuant to 40 CFR 1508.4 and 23 CFR 771 and will not result in significant impacts to the human or natural environment.