

Bedford/Franklin County Regional Passenger Rail Stop Study

Public Information Meeting
October 25, 2021



Agenda

- Introduction & Safety Briefing
- Study Scope
- Site Selection
- Cost Estimates
- Ridership Methodology
- Traveler Surveys
- Rail Operations Modeling
- Next Steps



Photo courtesy of http://www.oldlibertystation.com/ols_history.asp

Welcome

- Please wear a face covering and practice social distancing
- There will be a designated public comment/question period at the conclusion of the presentation
- Those attending in person are asked to hold questions until the end
- Throughout the presentation, the Virtual audience is encouraged to type their questions into the Question Panel in the GoToWebinar Dashboard
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Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

- The mission of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is to **facilitate and improve the mobility** of the citizens of Virginia and to promote the efficient transport of goods and people in a safe, reliable, and cost-effective manner.
- We are the Commonwealth's advocate for **promoting transportation options** to the general public, businesses, and community decision makers.
- As an agency entrusted with public dollars, we seek the **highest possible return on investment** to maximize limited funding and strive to implement best practice management tools and techniques.



Study Scope

Planning-Level Conceptual Design

- Develop potential station locations and layouts consistent with Amtrak, Norfolk Southern, DRPT and Bedford standards

Planning-Level Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

- Develop probable capital costs of station alternatives

Traveler Survey

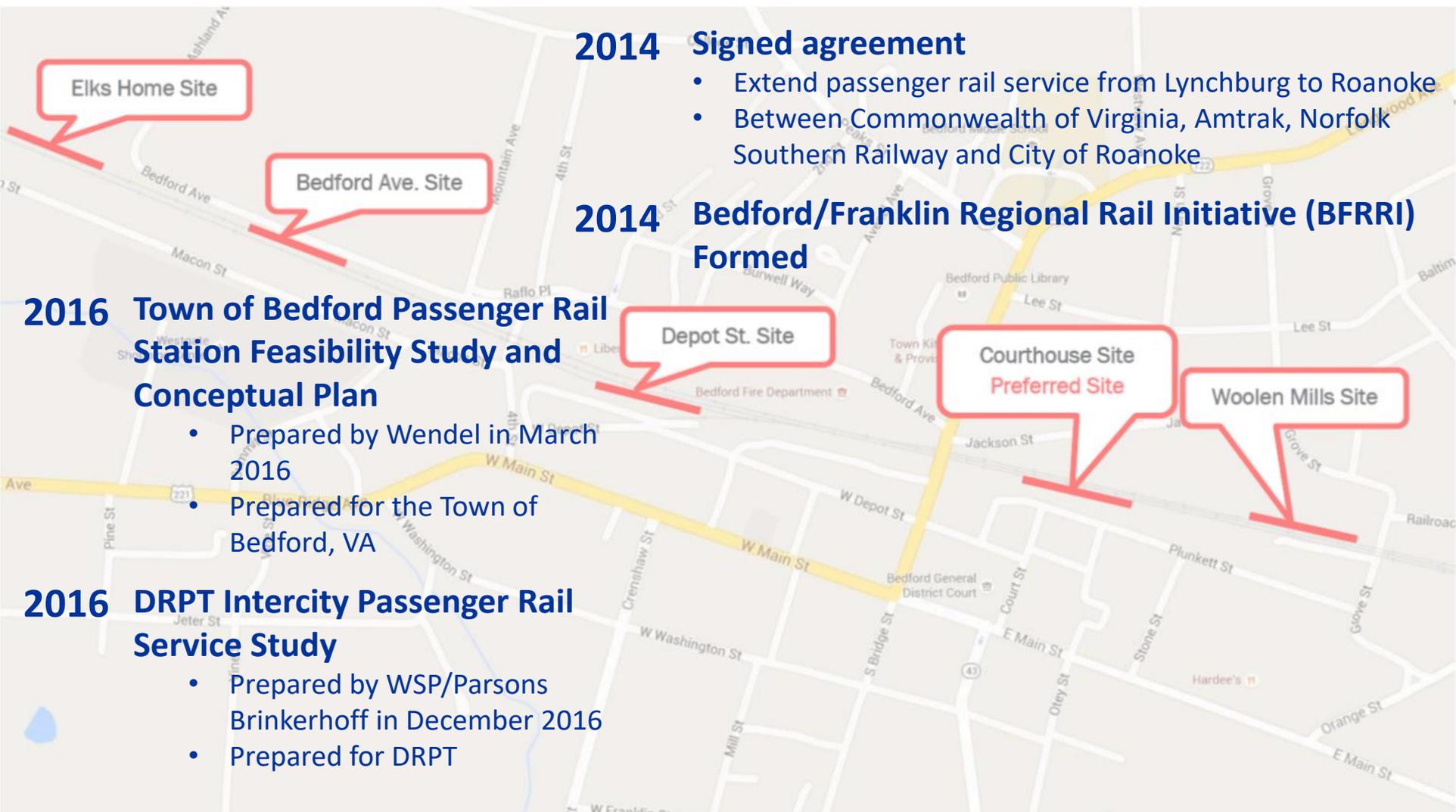
- Develop and conduct a traveler survey and report results to inform a ridership forecast

Ridership Analysis

- Develop revenue and ridership methodology and forecasts for the station concepts

General Assembly Study → Rail operations modeling conducted to assess any infrastructure or network costs needed to service a rail station in Bedford, Virginia

Background



2014 Signed agreement

- Extend passenger rail service from Lynchburg to Roanoke
- Between Commonwealth of Virginia, Amtrak, Norfolk Southern Railway and City of Roanoke

2014 Bedford/Franklin Regional Rail Initiative (BFRRI) Formed

2016 Town of Bedford Passenger Rail Station Feasibility Study and Conceptual Plan

- Prepared by Wendel in March 2016
- Prepared for the Town of Bedford, VA

2016 DRPT Intercity Passenger Rail Service Study

- Prepared by WSP/Parsons Brinkerhoff in December 2016
- Prepared for DRPT

Site Location Analysis - Considerations



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Railroad
Administration

Level-boarding (high level) platform criteria

- 49 C.F.R. Parts 27, 37, and 38

Norfolk Southern Passenger Station Requirements

- “...(high level platform) not allowed adjacent to freight tracks.”
- “...(high level platform) may only be placed adjacent to tracks used exclusively by passenger trains.”
- “...side platforms shall **NOT** be located near public at-grade crossings...”
- “Adjustments to the minimum horizontal clearance will be made for any portion of the platform that is not located in tangent track.”



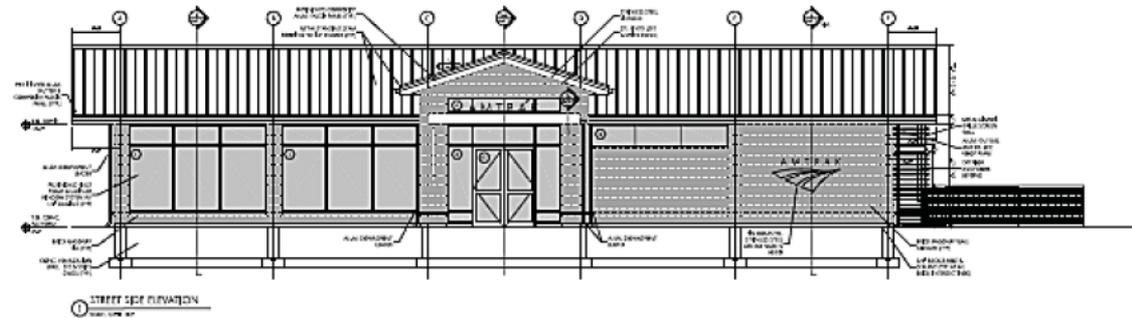
Amtrak Station Program and Planning Guidelines

- “Plan the station where tangent (straight) tracks are available to accommodate the full required platform lengths.”
- “Note, however, that most host railroads will only permit new platforms on tangent track.”

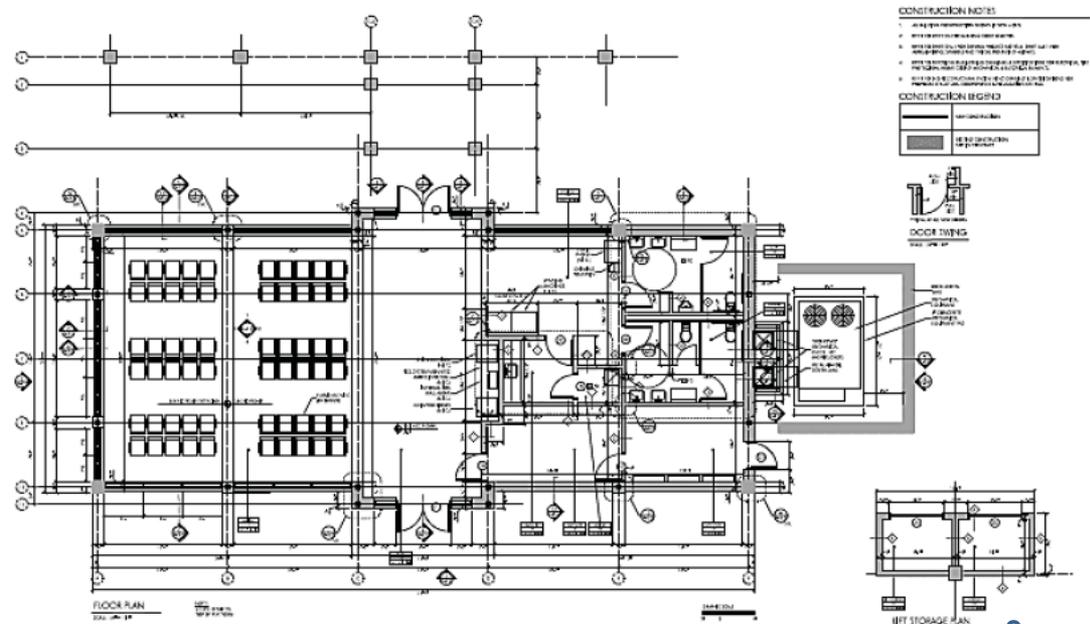


Site Programming

- Amtrak station size category 1st step in site selection
- “Caretaker Station” based on early projected ridership and growth



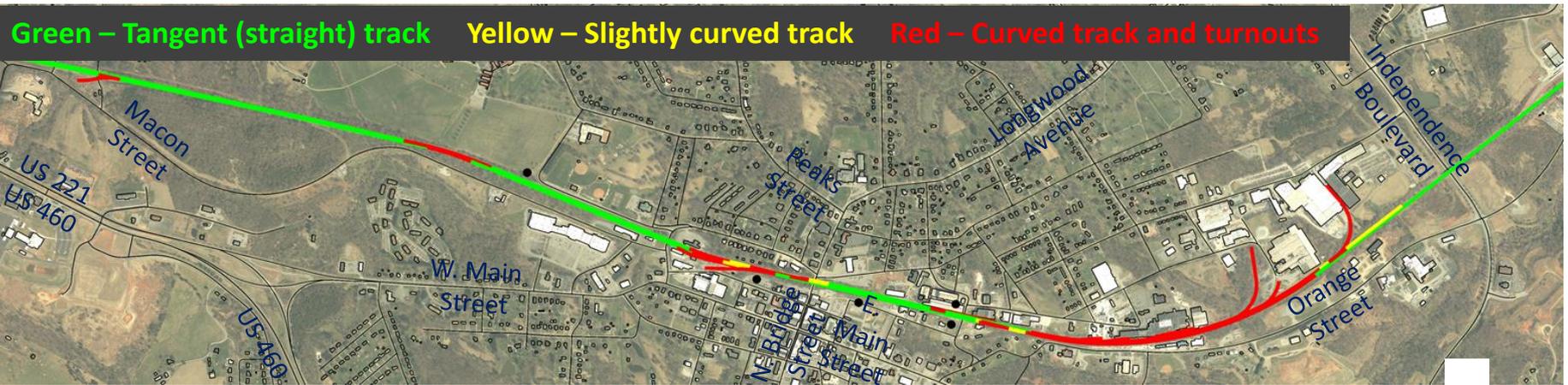
Street Side Elevation of the Caretaker Station prototype



Floor plan for the Caretaker Station Prototype

Site Alternatives

Study Limits



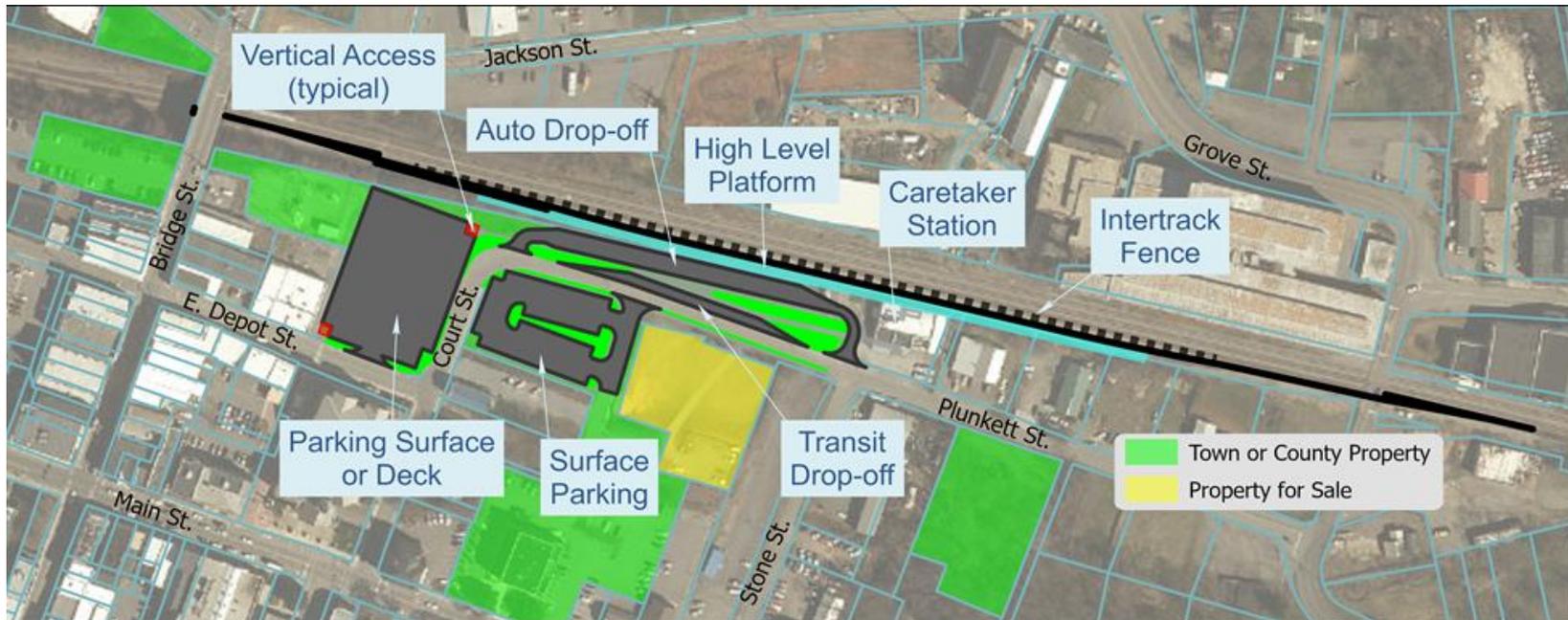
Site Alternatives



Site Alternatives Analysis Criteria

Amtrak Criteria		Other Criteria	
Available Multi-Modal Services	Safety and Security (Visibility)	Bus/Car Access	Zoning
Adequate Length Side Platforms	Sustainable Design	Access to Central Business District	Compatible Neighboring Land Uses
Parking	Universal Design (ADA Accessible)	Real Estate Cost	Time to US 460 Interchange
Adequate Space for Functional Requirements	Utilities	Construction Cost	Topography

Shortlisted Alternative – Courthouse



Intertrack fence to discourage trespassing between station & freight tracks

Station track to clear freight traffic and allow high-level platform

15' wide by 1000' long high-level platform to provide level boarding

Minimum 170 parking spaces

Auto drop-off lane with bypass

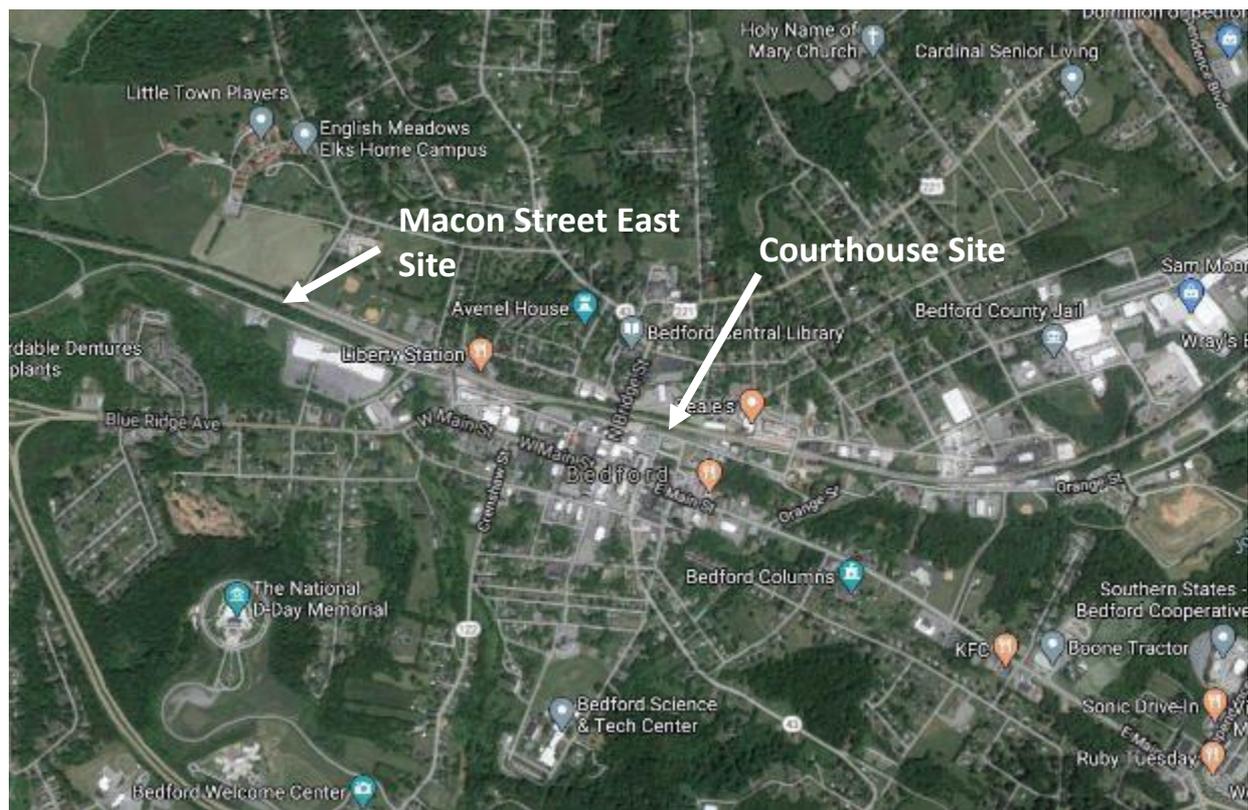
Bus drop-off

Ped/bike access

Potentially 7 affected parcels

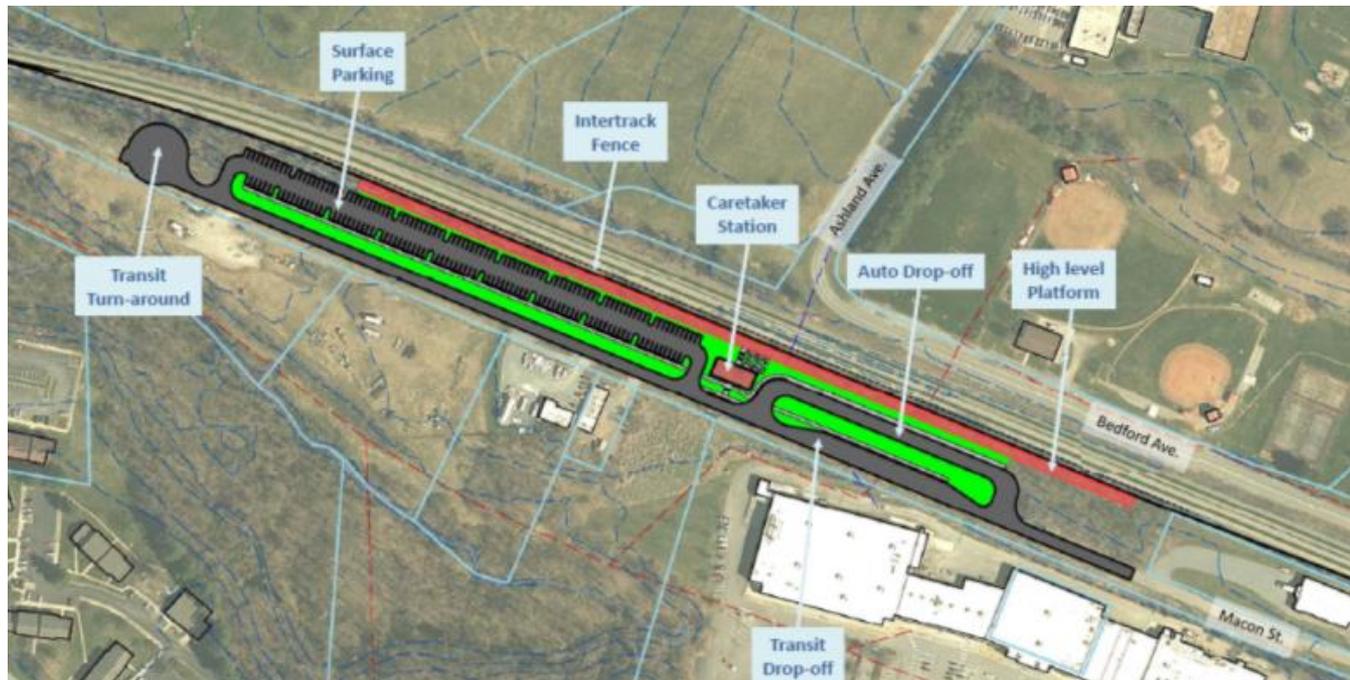
Bedford Preferred Sites

- Courthouse Site originally preferred by Bedford/Franklin Regional Rail Initiative.
- Macon Street East Site developed based on feedback from NS.
- Sites are less than 1 mile apart.



Macon Street East Site (aka Merchants Site)

- Alternate site is a combination of two sites considered in early screening.
- Located south of tracks on Macon Street ~ 1 mi. trip from CBD.
- Cost to Construct: \$10,946,000 in 2025, includes 40% contingency, and the cost of signals and communications (approx. \$400K).
- Site cost includes all station- and track-side improvements, but not property acquisition.



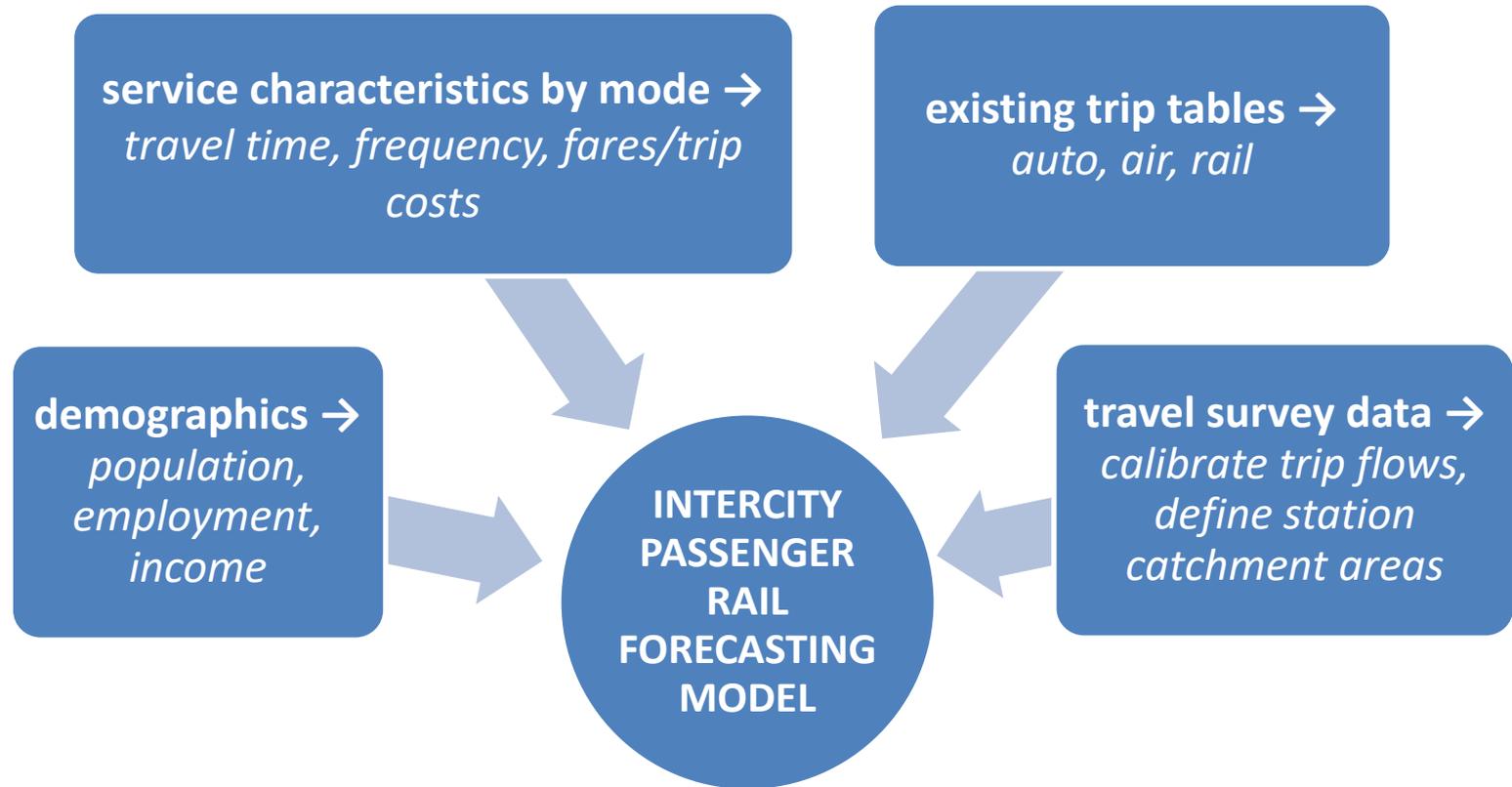
Macon Street
East Site

Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

Macon Street East Site (aka Merchants Site)

Station Systems	Construction Cost	Contingency (40%)	Total Construction Cost
Track Turnouts Fencing platform, signals building parking paving walls	\$7,818,000	\$3,128,000	\$10,946,000

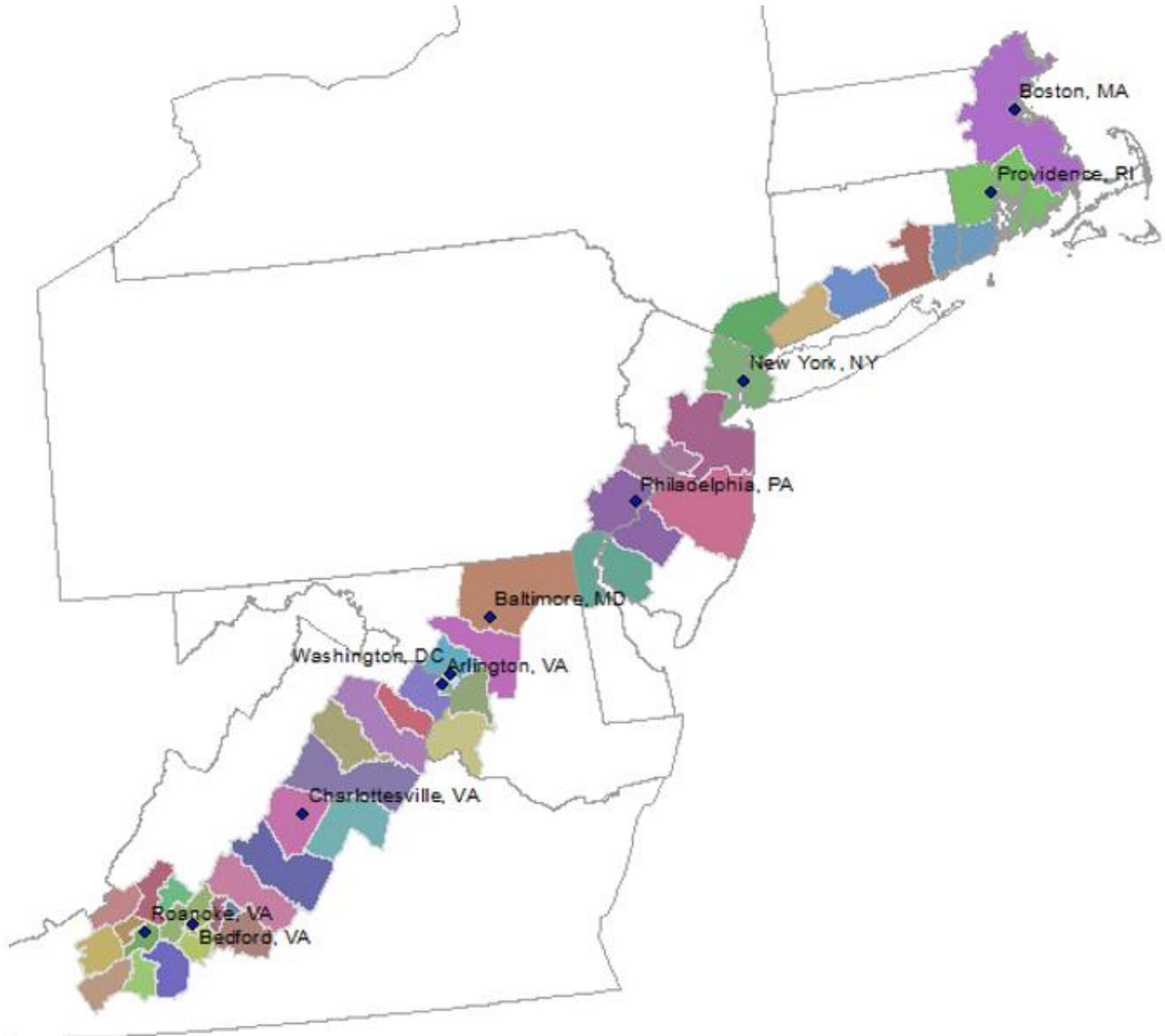
Ridership Forecasting Methodology



RESULTS

*Virginia station boardings/alightings
baseline + build scenario*

Ridership Study Area



Traveler Surveys



- Offered 10/29/2019 – 2/5/2020

- 1,318 respondents, 82% completion rate



- Residents, visitors, and rail riders (sample of Lynchburg/Roanoke station customers)

- Questions



- ✓ Home location

- ✓ Travel frequency

- ✓ Trip purpose

- ✓ Travel group size

- ✓ Typical mode

- ✓ Travel group make-up



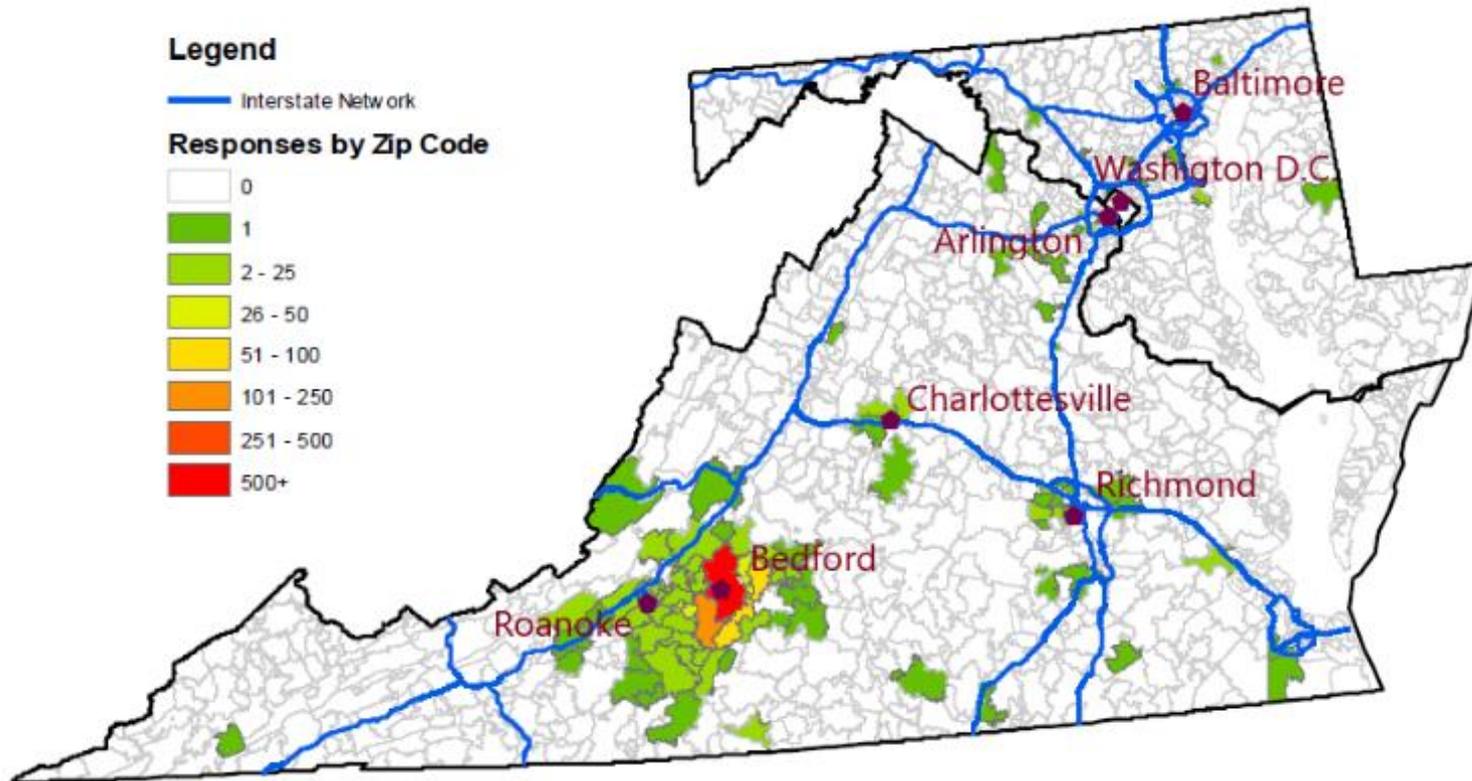
- ✓ If Amtrak, what were the boarding/alighting stations and access/egress modes?

- ✓ How likely they would be to use a new Bedford passenger rail stop?

- ✓ Top 3 factors influencing respondent to take the train?

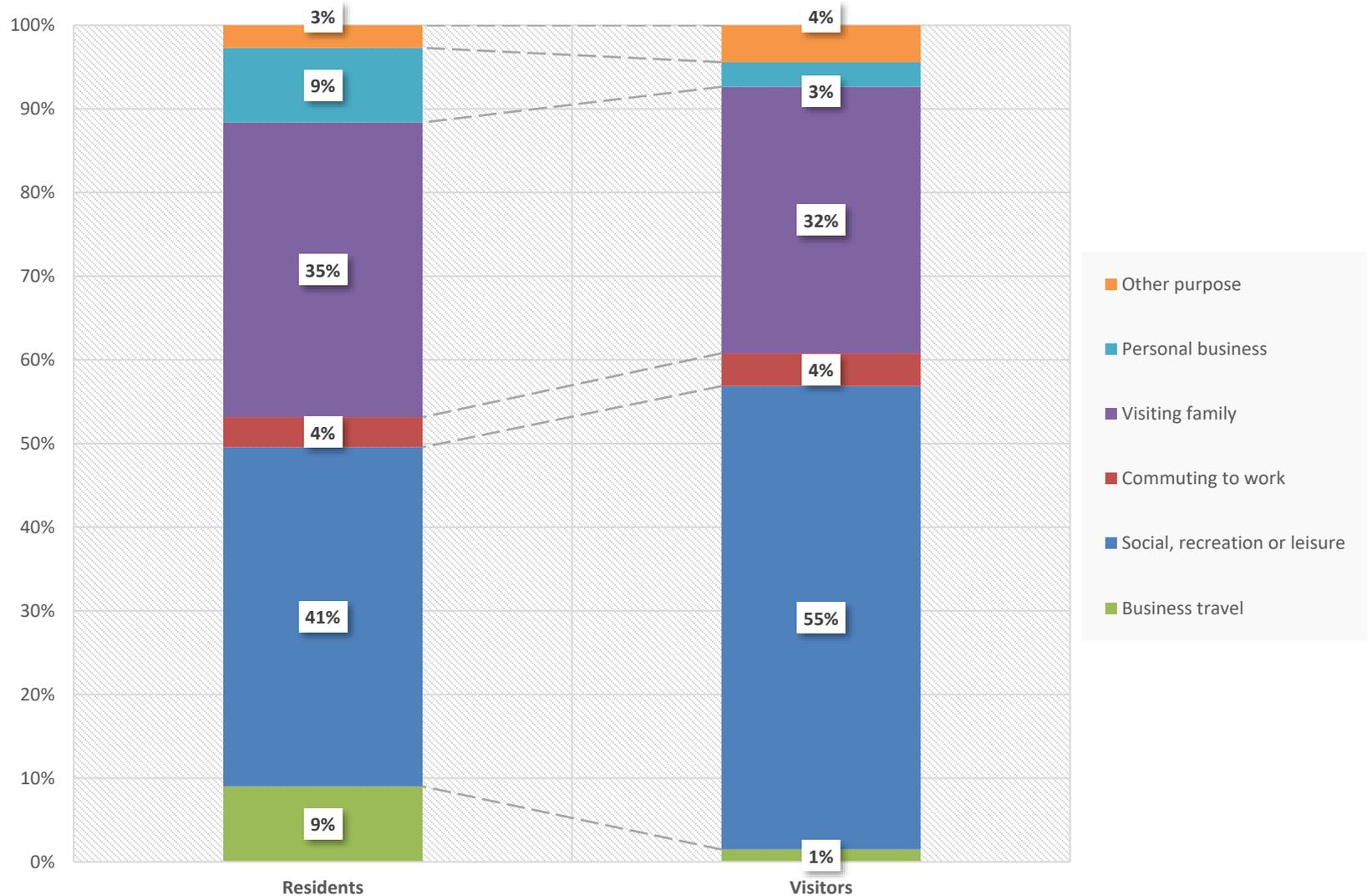
Traveler Survey Results

Responses by Zip Code



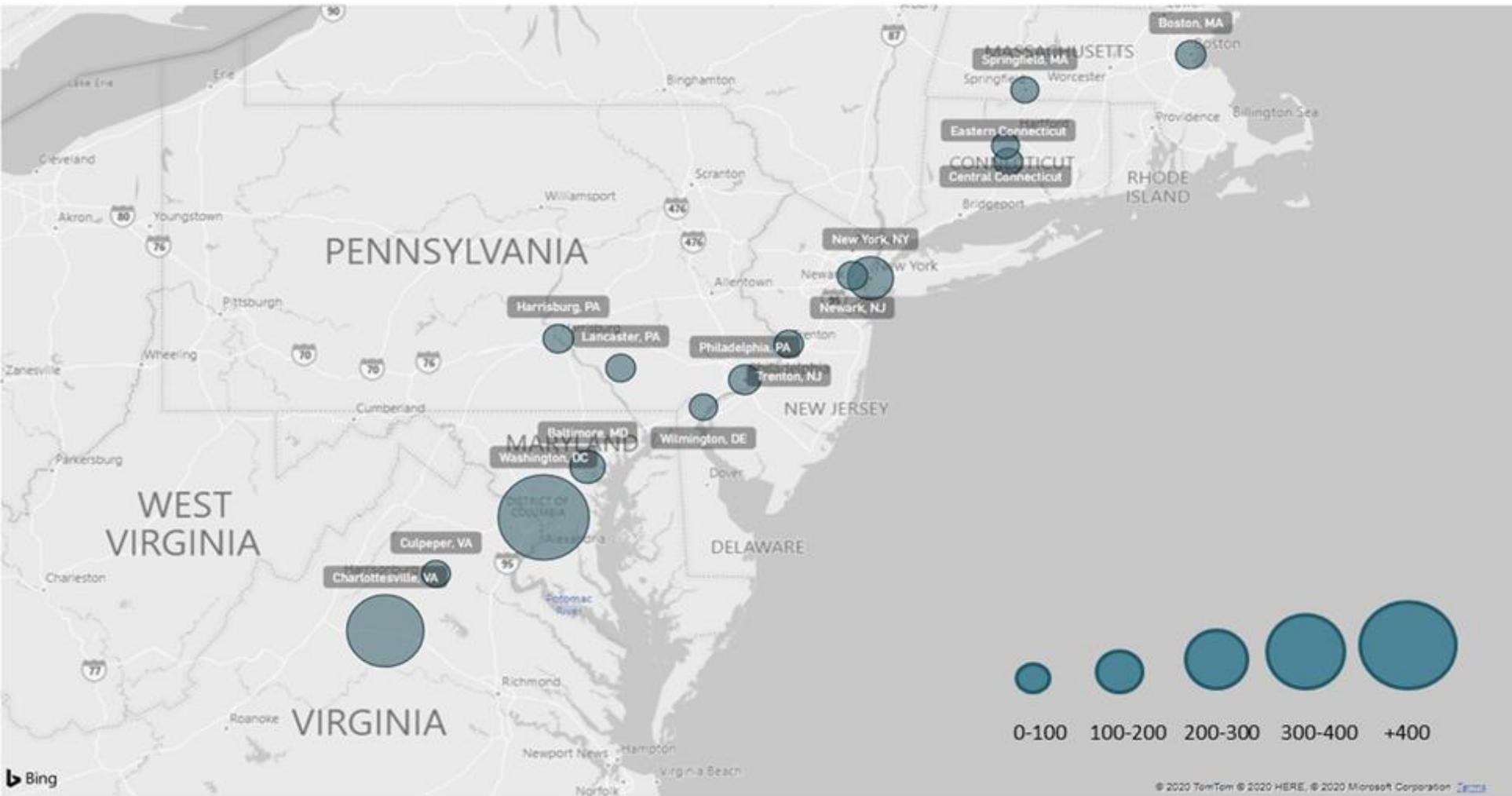
94% of zip codes provided were in Virginia or Maryland

Traveler Survey Results – Trip Purpose



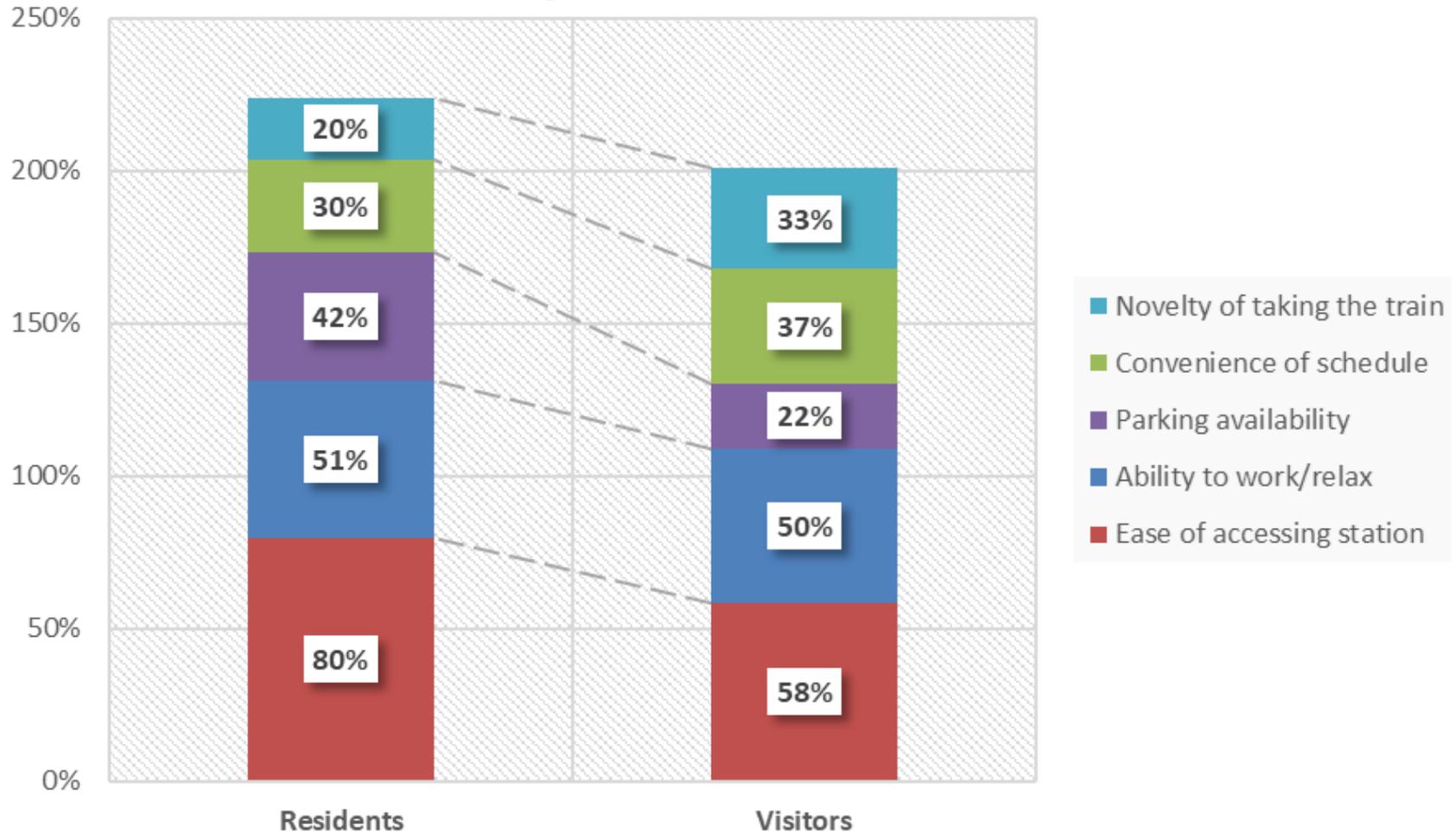
Traveler Survey Results

Frequent Destinations for Residents

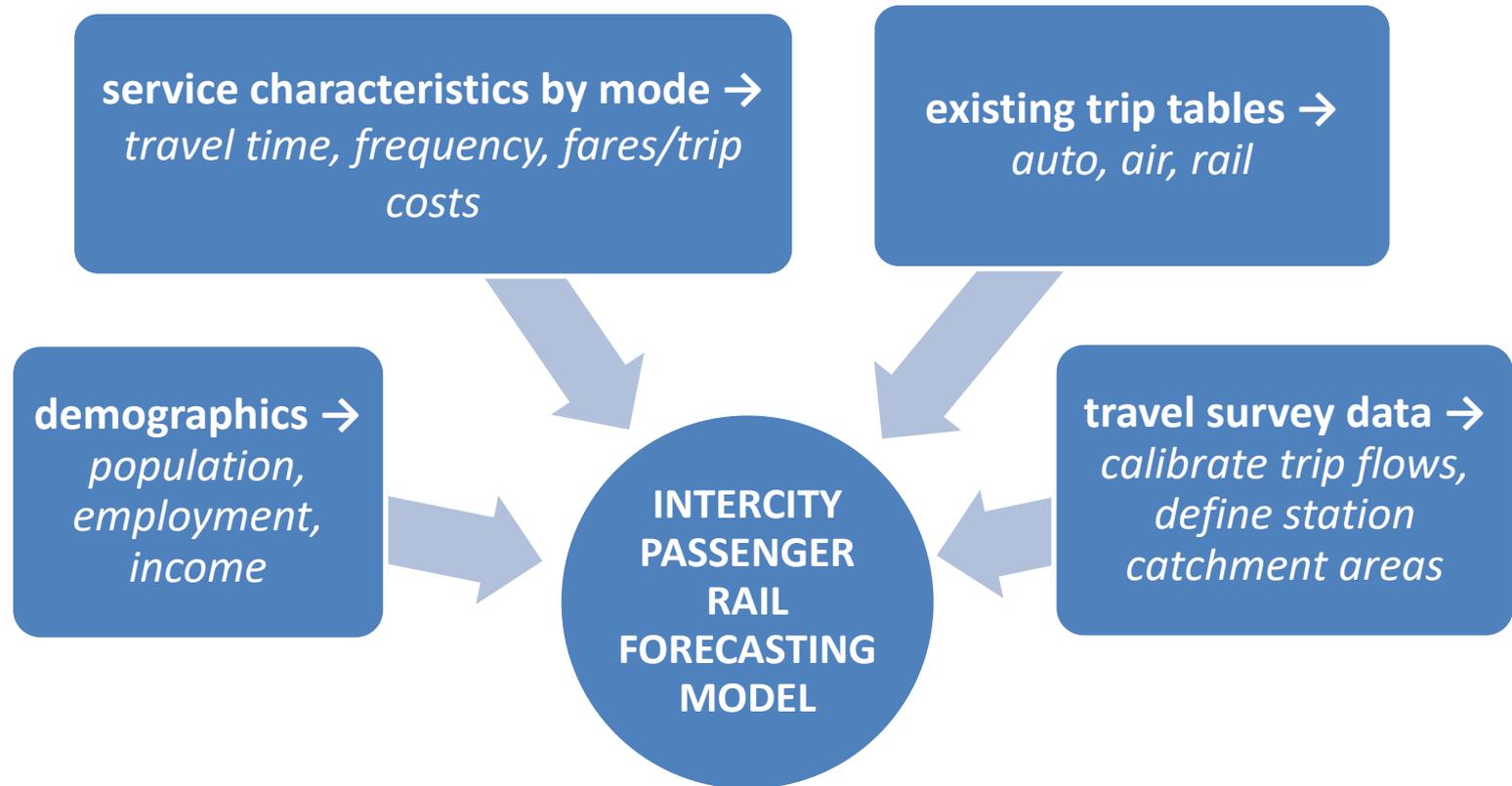


Traveler Survey Results

Top Factors Influencing Respondents to Take the Train



Ridership Forecasting Methodology



RESULTS

*Virginia station boardings/alightings
baseline + build scenario*

Final Ridership Model Results

Base Forecast – Annual Ons & Offs

	South of Washington (including to/from Washington)	Through Washington	Total
Lynchburg	35,800	8,700	44,500
Bedford	0	0	0
Roanoke	33,500	24,800	58,300
Total	69,300	33,500	102,800

Build Forecast – Annual Ons & Offs

	South of Washington (including to/from Washington)	Through Washington	Total
Lynchburg	40,600	8,700	49,300
Bedford	19,800	5,600	25,400
Roanoke	30,300	17,900	48,200
Total	90,700	32,200	122,900
Incremental Route Ridership = (build – base)/2			10,050

Final Ridership Model Results Comparison

FY 18 Virginia Station Boardings and Alightings

Station	State-Supported	Long-Distance	Total
Alexandria	141,000	46,000	187,000
Manassas	13,000	10,000	23,000
Culpeper	9,000	6,000	15,000
Charlottesville	79,000	52,000	131,000
Lynchburg	44,000	13,000	57,000
Roanoke	52,000	0	52,000

Bedford Forecast

	Bedford Riders	Total VA Riders	% of Total
FY 18 VA Riders on Route 46 State-Supported Service	-	169,125	
With Bedford Station - Incremental Riders	10,050	179,875	6%
With Bedford Station - Total Bedford Riders	25,400	179,875	14%

Rail Operations Modeling Scope

- Virginia Passenger Rail Authority and Norfolk Southern agreed to evaluate, for informational purposes only, collateral track and signal improvements that would enable the addition of an Amtrak station stop at Bedford, Virginia to its existing and proposed future 2nd roundtrip service between Washington, D.C. and Roanoke, VA.
- This evaluation does not constitute an offer or an agreement to permit the construction or institute new service.



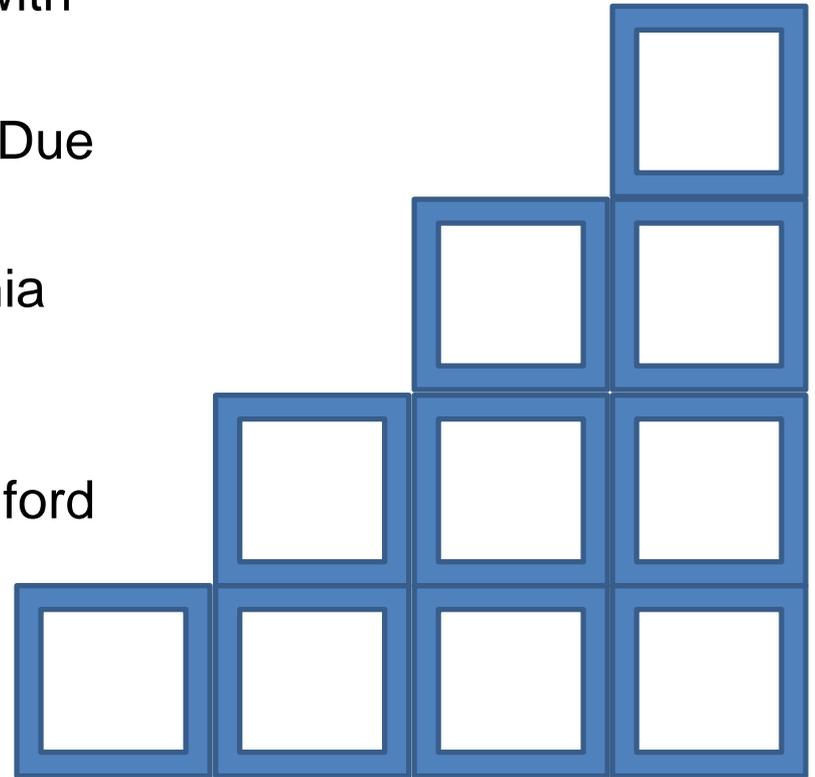
Rail Operations Modeling Conclusions

- Addition of Bedford Station stop creates non-material new delay to Norfolk Southern operations
- This assumes that Amtrak schedules do not deviate from those given in this study and that Amtrak does not add service on any part of the study area above what is included in this study
- No “Improved Case (year 2040)” scenario is needed for analysis as the assumed 2040 infrastructure (as defined in this document) results in no material increase in fluidity impairment.



Next Steps

- General Assembly Study Due 11/15/21
- Determine NEPA Class of Action with FRA
- CRISI Planning Grant Application Due 11/29/21
- Continued coordination with Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, BFRRI, Amtrak, and Norfolk Southern
- Amtrak Thruway Bus to serve Bedford in spring 2022



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