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# Virginia Breeze - Intercity Bus Expansion

July 16, 2019

Commonwealth Transportation Board

Jennifer DeBruhl, Chief of Public Transportation  
Grant Sparks, Manager of Transit Planning and  
Corridor Development



Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

# What is Intercity Bus?

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- Available to the general public
- Regularly scheduled fixed-route service
- Operates with limited stops between two or more urban areas not in close proximity
- Capable of carrying baggage
- Schedules coordinate with longer-route service, not commuter service
- Meaningful connections to national intercity bus network

## FTA Requirement

- States must assess unmet needs for intercity bus service
  - » *2013 assessment identified significant need across the Commonwealth*

# Goals of Intercity Bus Service

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- **Connect underserved communities to interregional bus, rail, and air travel**
  - » *Households without cars*
  - » *Students*
  - » *Elderly/disabled*
- **Fulfill the federal requirements associated with assessing and meeting rural transportation needs – established in ISTEA, minimum 15% set aside since SAFETEA-LU**
- **Provide travel options in corridors where alternatives to the personal vehicle are limited or do not exist**
- **Supplement service of private providers – fill gaps and make connections**

# The Virginia Breeze

- **First Virginia Breeze service launched December 1, 2017**
  - » *Blacksburg to Washington D.C.*
- **7 days a week**
- **Approx. 50 seats with luggage compartment, Wifi, in-seat power outlets, and a restroom**
- **Fares range from \$15 - \$50**
- **1<sup>st</sup> state to partner with MegaBus for interline ticketing**



# Performance and Cost

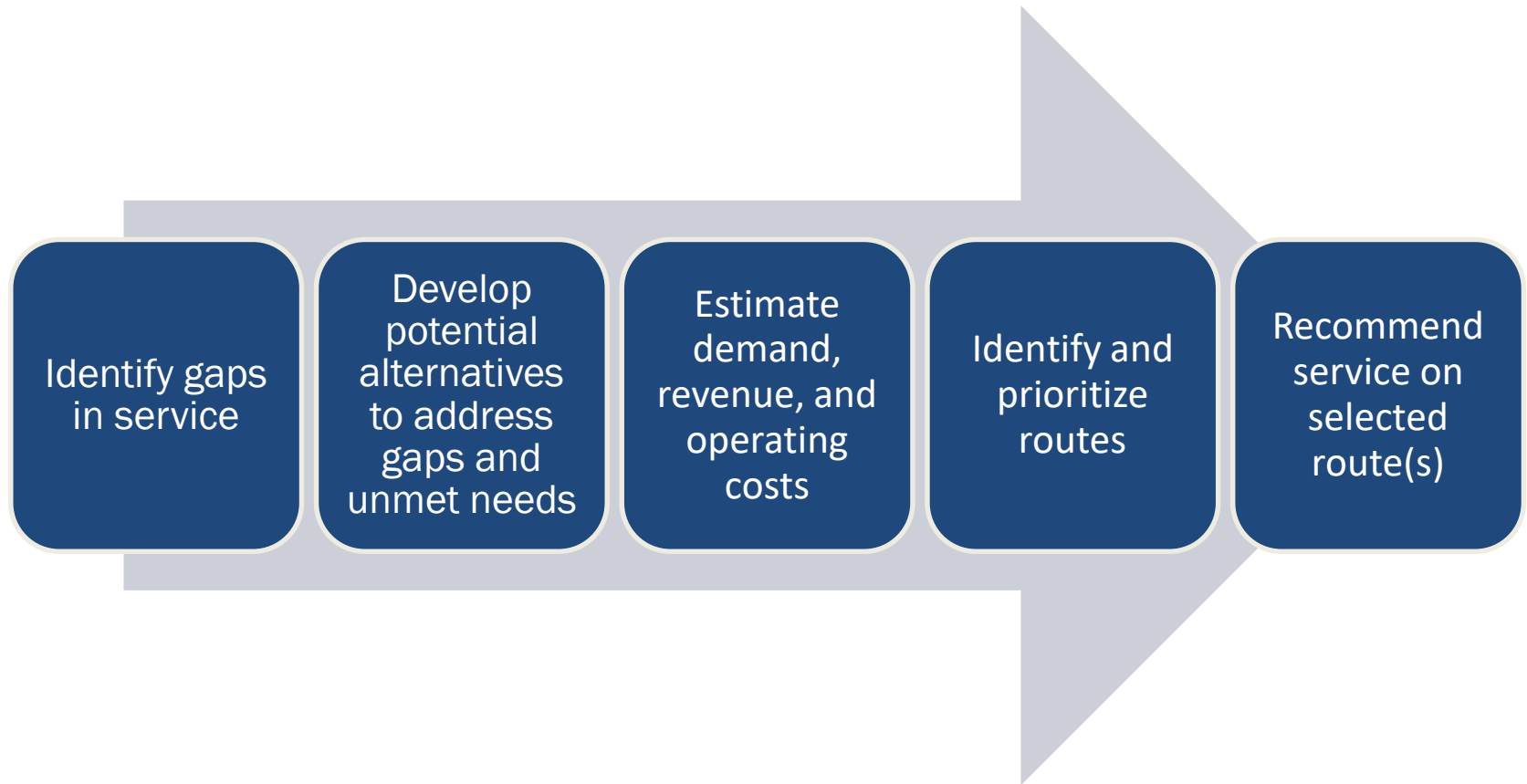


- **Projected Annual Ridership**
  - » 7,125
- **Actual Annual Ridership**
  - » 19,300 (+271% of estimate)
- **Farebox Recovery Rate**
  - » 81%
- **Annual Cost**
  - » \$1M
- **Annual Farebox Revenue**
  - » \$800K
- **Annual Net Cost**
  - » \$200K\*

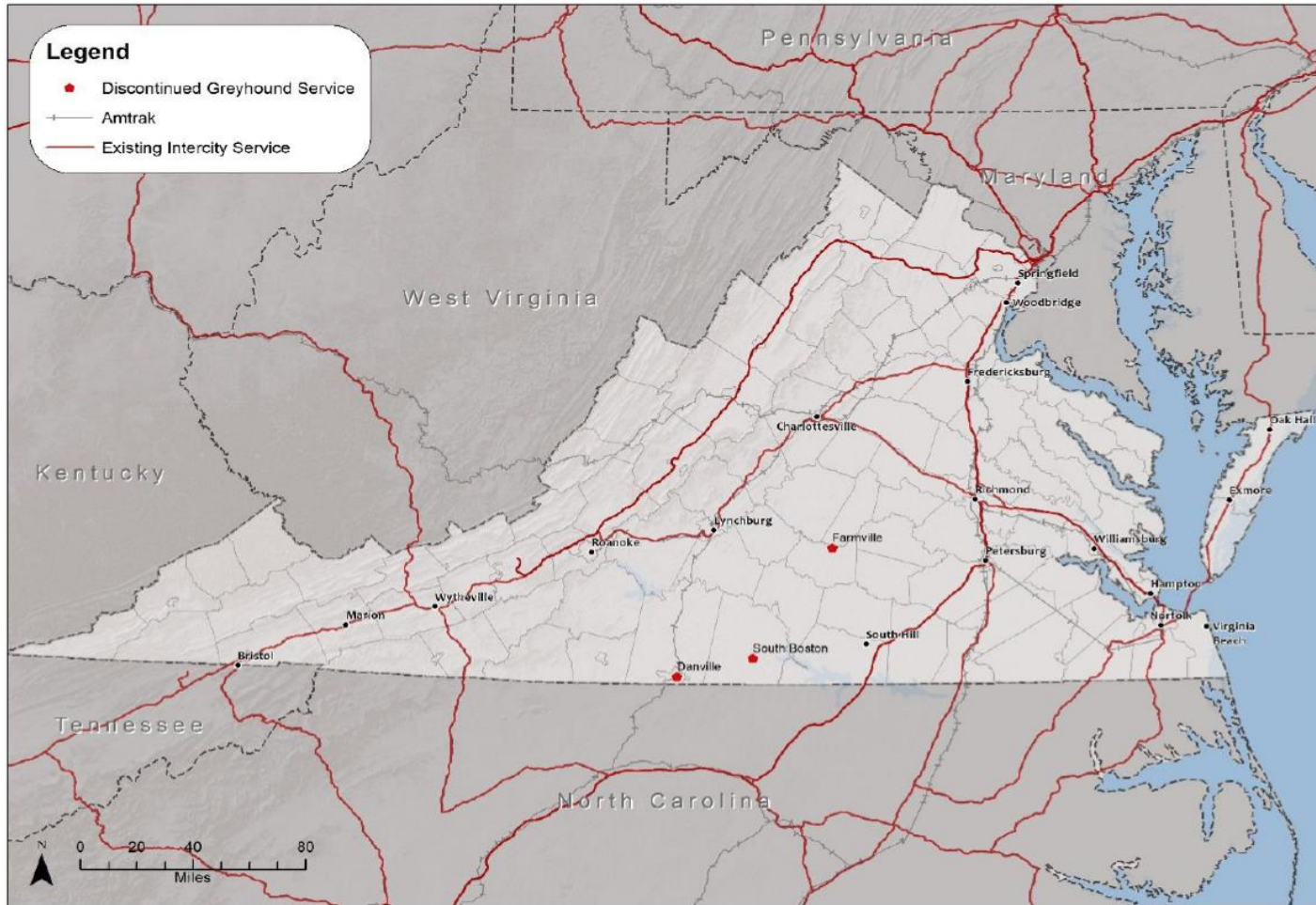
\*Funded through FTA 5311(f) funds

# Service Expansion Study

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# Existing Intercity Bus Service





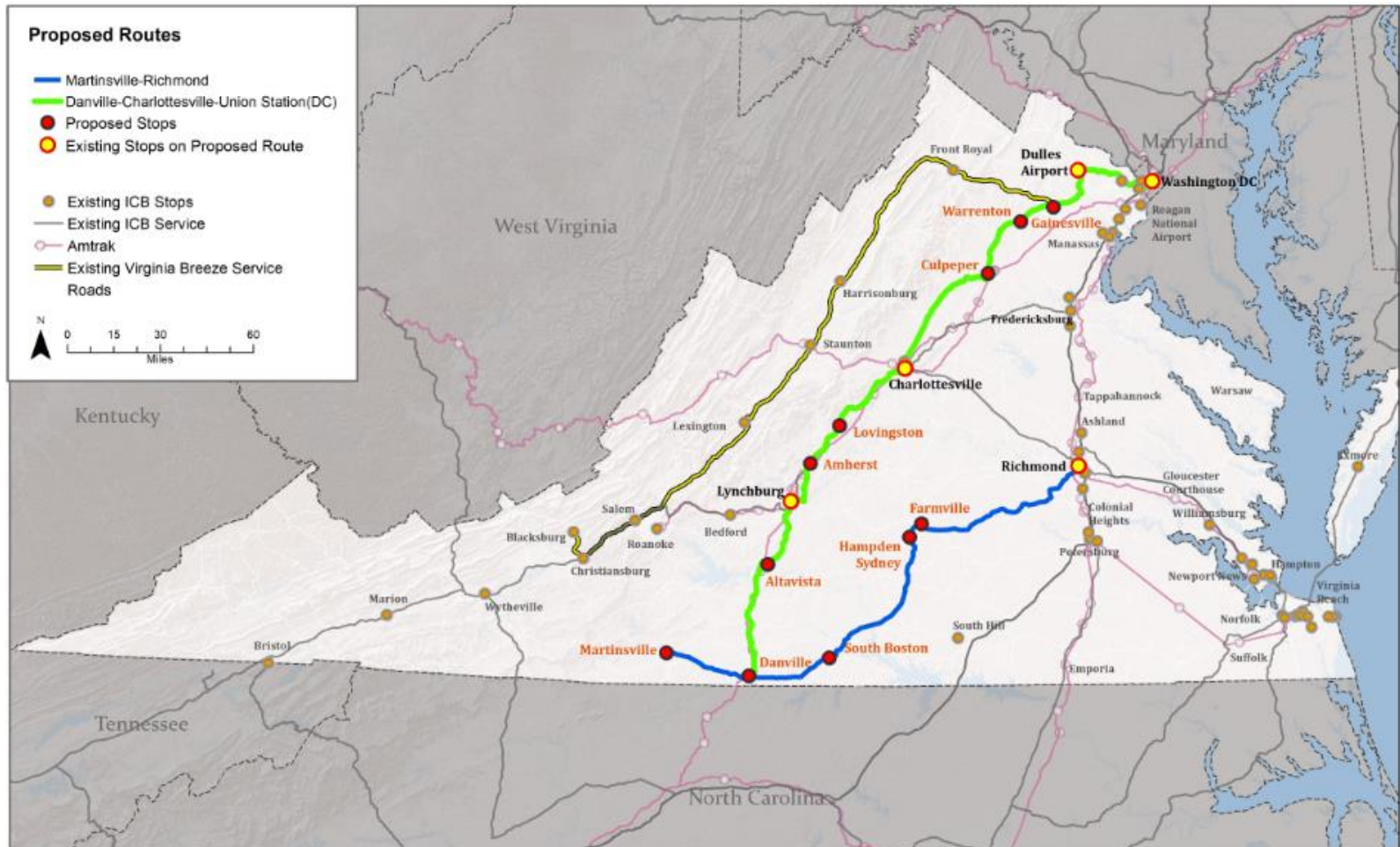


# Prioritization Criteria

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- Degree to which each route provides access to underserved populations
- Potential ridership
- Anticipated cost of operations
- Projected Fare Revenue
- Degree to which proposed service supplements existing service and fills service gaps

# Recommended Expansion



# Anticipated Ridership and Cost

- **Danville to Washington D.C.**
  - » *Projected Annual Ridership: 10,050*
  - » *Estimated Annual Cost: \$901,360*
  - » *Estimated Annual Revenue: \$364,001*
  - » *Estimated Annual Net Cost: \$537,358*
- **Martinsville to Richmond**
  - » *Projected Annual Ridership: 5,500*
  - » *Estimated Annual Cost: \$606,083*
  - » *Estimated Annual Revenue: \$178,596*
  - » *Estimated Annual Net Cost: \$427,487*
- **Net cost will be covered by FTA 5311(f) funds**



# Next Steps

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- Transportation provider procurement
- New branding
- New mobile app and ticketing synchronization
- Final stop selection
- Launch service in Spring/Summer 2020 (tentative)



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