



VA-NC Compact Administration and Southeast Rail Network Analysis Project Agreement

Commonwealth Transportation Board

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January 14, 2025



Purpose Recap

AGREEMENT PURPOSE

- **Defines DRPT and NCDOT responsibilities** for the \$400,000 FY22-23 Interstate Rail Compact Grant awarded by FRA

Funding Breakdown	
FRA	\$200,000
DRPT	\$100,000
NCDOT	\$100,000
Total	\$400,000

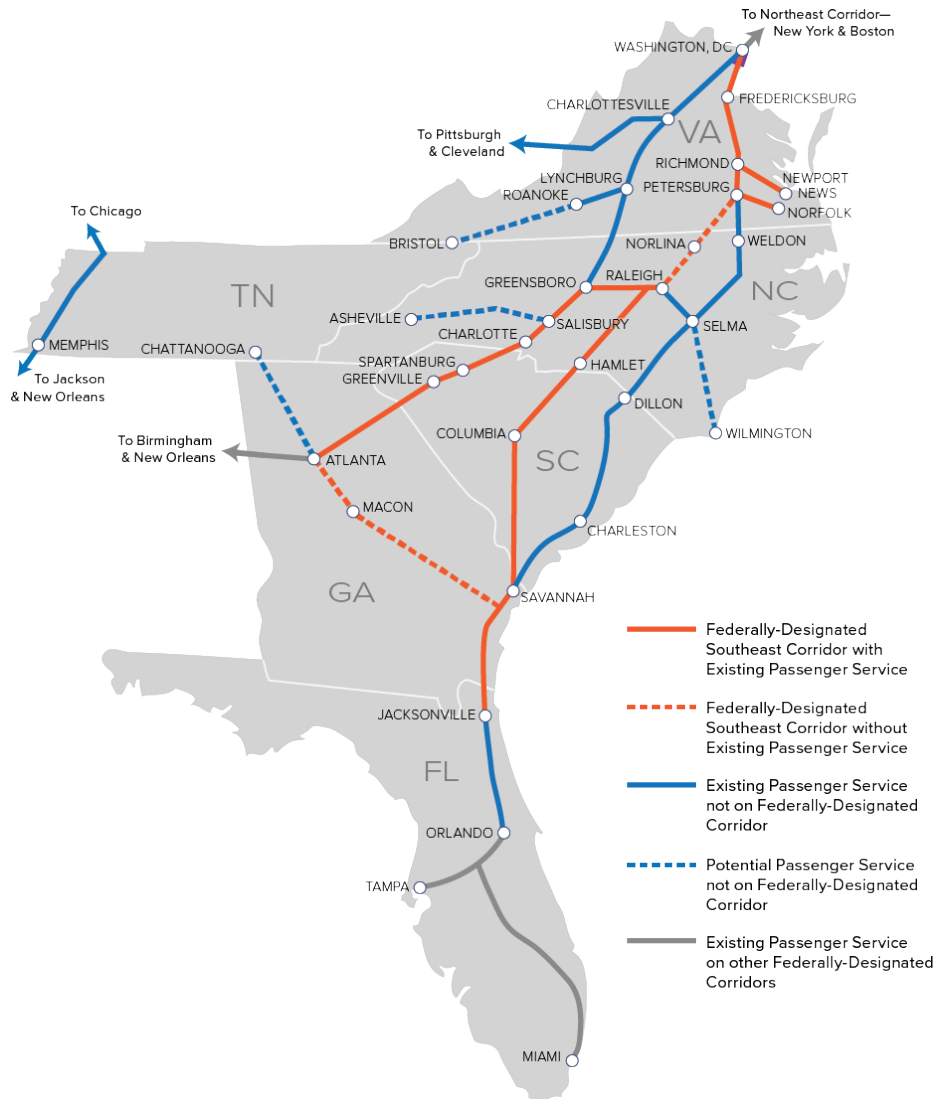
GRANT PURPOSE

- **Southeast Rail Network Analysis** to evaluate southeast rail network constraints and identify opportunities to improve the fluidity of the network for passenger and freight.
- **Administrative and operational expenses** related to VA-NC Compact and other technical coordination among states, Amtrak, FRA, and railroads to advance rail connections throughout the Southeast, including the Southeast Corridor Commission (SEC), which extends to TN, SC, GA and FL.

Timeline

2004	§ 33.2-1400 established the Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High-Speed* Rail Compact to develop and promote plans to finance, design, construct, and operate an interstate rail service through Virginia and North Carolina
2008-2018	DRPT and NCDOT secured federal funding to advance corridor studies and initiate rail improvements between Northern Virginia and Charlotte, including NEPA Clearance/PE from DC to Raleigh and Tier I NEPA for Richmond to Hampton Roads. Resulted in new state-sponsored service to Richmond, Newport News, and Norfolk with more round trips added in 2013.
2019	Southeast Corridor Commission (SEC) was formed by a decision of compact members to include the entire region, similar to the Northeast Corridor (NEC), to support rail projects of regional significance.
2019-2022	SEC partnered with FRA, Amtrak, and freight rail partners to establish and progress planning efforts for the Southeast rail network through the development of the Southeast Regional Rail Plan, Economic Benefits of High-Performance Rail in the Southeast, and the SEC Development Strategy for High-Performance Rail in the Southeast.
2023	FY22-23 Interstate Rail Compact Grant application for Virginia – North Carolina Compact Administration & Southeast Rail Network Analysis submitted to FRA by NCDOT on behalf of the Compact.
2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FRA announced Virginia-North Carolina Compact grant award. • CTB approved DRPT FY2025 SYIP, which included Virginia’s required state match. ➤ December CTB - DRPT presented an update on the Agreement to establish grant-related roles/responsibilities for states and the Compact. • DRPT/NCDOT developed draft agreement that defines two states’ <u>lead decision-making role</u> in grant administration and project development.
2025	➤ January CTB – DRPT reviewing draft agreement at CTB Workshop, presenting resolution for approval at CTB Action Meeting.

Interstate Rail Compact



Virginia-North Carolina Interstate Rail Compact evolved with passenger rail conditions. SEC formed to include entire region, similar to the Northeast Corridor (NEC), to support rail projects of regional significance.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

What does this do for Virginia?

- Participation in Southeast Corridor Commission (SEC) gives Virginia influence as multi-state rail plans and federal funding strategies are developed
 - Vehicle to advocate for Virginia's freight needs as the SEC produces a network analysis, including the needs of the Port of Virginia.
 - Builds support and awareness for the value of Virginia's Corridor Identification and Development (CID) rail corridors - Commonwealth, DC to Bristol, and DC to Charlotte.
- Past results
 - VPRA's Transforming Rail in Virginia projects, including Long Bridge, are priorities for the SEC and get support from member states.
 - Bristol to DC Corridor included in the SEC network map, opening doors to collaboration with fellow member state TN.



Agreement Details

- Agreement states that “NCDOT shall prepare and **DRPT shall provide review and approval**” for Southeast Rail Network Analysis elements, including:
 - Preparation, review, and approval of the Project work plan, budget, and schedule.
 - Preparation, review, and approval of an existing conditions review and analysis and screening results memoranda to evaluate and report on previous rail network analysis, document identified network capacity constraints and identify Project opportunities for passenger and freight rail growth.
 - Development and review of a report that summarizes the existing conditions review, analysis and screening results, and recommendations for next steps.
 - Submission to FRA of a final performance report describing the cumulative activities of the Project as required by the grant agreement.
- **Other southeastern states and stakeholders** (Amtrak and railroads) are referenced in the agreement as participants in project meetings only, not as decisionmakers or approvers.
- **NCDOT, as the applicant, is to serve as grant administrator** pursuant to this agreement. NCDOT will receive, manage, and disperse the Compact’s grant funds, and invoice DRPT for reimbursement of its portion of the grant match.

DRPT Recommendation



Recommending that the Board delegate to the DRPT Director the authority to enter into the Virginia-North Carolina Compact Administration & Southeast Rail Network Analysis Project Agreement with North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High-Speed Rail Compact.