

9. RAIL PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2003 - 2008

9.1. FRA Requirements

This Chapter of the Virginia Statewide Rail Plan (VSRP) presents information related to Virginia's Transportation Network in historical context. This is not a requirement of 49 CFR § 266.15

9.2. Major Legislative Accomplishments

In the past six years Virginia has made great strides in incorporating rail planning and improvements into an integrated multi-modal transportation corridor network. Creation of the Rail Enhancement Fund and Rail Advisory Board in 2005 with a dedicated annual revenue source for rail improvements was a major accomplishment, as well as targeted general funds added to the REF program to address critical needs in Virginia's I-95 and I-81 transportation corridors. The Governor's Commission on Rail Enhancement for the 21st Century Report (2004) highlighted rail needs at both the national and Commonwealth level as key components of Virginia's ability to successfully compete in the new global marketplace.

9.3. Major Projects Underway or Completed

Virginia has been one of the leading states in implementing publicly funded rail improvements to support rail access for businesses and to encourage that shortline railroads are maintained. Virginia has invested heavily in the I-95 and I-81 Corridors to relieve highway and rail congestion, to increase on-dock rail movements from the Ports of Hampton Roads, and to advance high speed rail.

Projects are funded through public-private partnerships through a variety of Commonwealth programs including the Rail Enhancement Fund, Rail Preservation Fund, Rail Industrial Access Fund, Rail Bonds, and VTA2000 funds.

9.4. Rail Enhancement Funds

The Rail Enhancement Fund was initiated in 2005 and is the first dedicated source of funding for passenger and freight rail improvements in Virginia history. The Fund supports improvements for passenger and freight rail transportation throughout Virginia. Grants through this new program were first made in 2006. Figure 9-1 summarizes grants made to date under this program:

Railroad or Organization	Commonwealth Grant Amount (\$)	Applicant Match Amount (\$)	Total Project Cost (\$)
Norfolk Southern	\$84,624,000	\$37,704,101	\$120,328,101
CSX Transportation	\$44,849,876	\$19,221,376	\$64,071,252
Virginia Railway Express	\$14,036,797	\$6,637,199	\$20,673,996
NCDOT (SEHSR Project)	\$2,281,750	\$1,828,250	\$4,110,000
Commonwealth Railway	\$7,520,000	\$3,940,000	\$11,460,000
APM / Maersk Terminal	\$9,300,000	\$9,300,000	\$18,600,000
Virginia Port Authority	\$825,000	\$1,336,714	\$2,161,714
Total	\$163,437,423	\$79,967,640	\$243,405,063

Figure 9 - 1 Rail Enhancement Fund Summary for FY2006 to FY2009

A brief description of some of the major projects completed or underway using public-private partnerships through the Rail Enhancement Fund are shown below.

- NS Heartland Corridor:** A federal “project of national significance”, this multi-state and federal partnership with NS constructing a double-stack container train corridor between the Ports of Hampton Roads and Columbus, Ohio (Figure 9-2, see previous page). Project includes raising 28 tunnels and miscellaneous rail improvements on existing NS right-of-way. The project also includes proposed new intermodal terminal facilities in Virginia (Roanoke Region), West Virginia (Pritchard) and a major expansion of the Rickenbacker Intermodal Terminal near Columbus, Ohio. Construction of the tunnel clearances and expansion of the intermodal terminal in Ohio will be completed by the end of 2009. Total project cost equaled \$31,936,373; Public/Private cost equaled \$22,350,000/\$9,586,673.
- APM Terminal Rail Yard Expansion, Portsmouth:** This project provided for expansion (doubling) of the on-dock rail yard to transfer containers to/from rail at the new APM Terminal marine facility at the Ports of Hampton Roads. Total project cost equaled \$18,600,000; Public/Private cost equaled \$9,300,000/\$9,300,000.
- Commonwealth Railway Mainline Safety Relocation Project, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, and Suffolk:** This project is the beginning of the Heartland Corridor, and consists of the relocation of approximately 4.5 miles of existing rail lines owned by the Commonwealth Railway shortline that currently run through urban neighborhoods in Portsmouth and Chesapeake, to the highway medians of the Western Freeway (Route 164) and I-664 through Portsmouth, Chesapeake and Suffolk. In the early 1980s, both Route 164 and I-664 were built to accommodate a dual set of rail tracks within their medians. This rail-ready corridor will be used to serve both the planned Craney Island Marine Terminal and the recently completed APM Marine Terminal. Project construction of the rail relocation will be completed by the end of 2009. Total project cost equaled \$4,800,000; Public/Private cost equaled \$2,380,000/\$1,440,000.



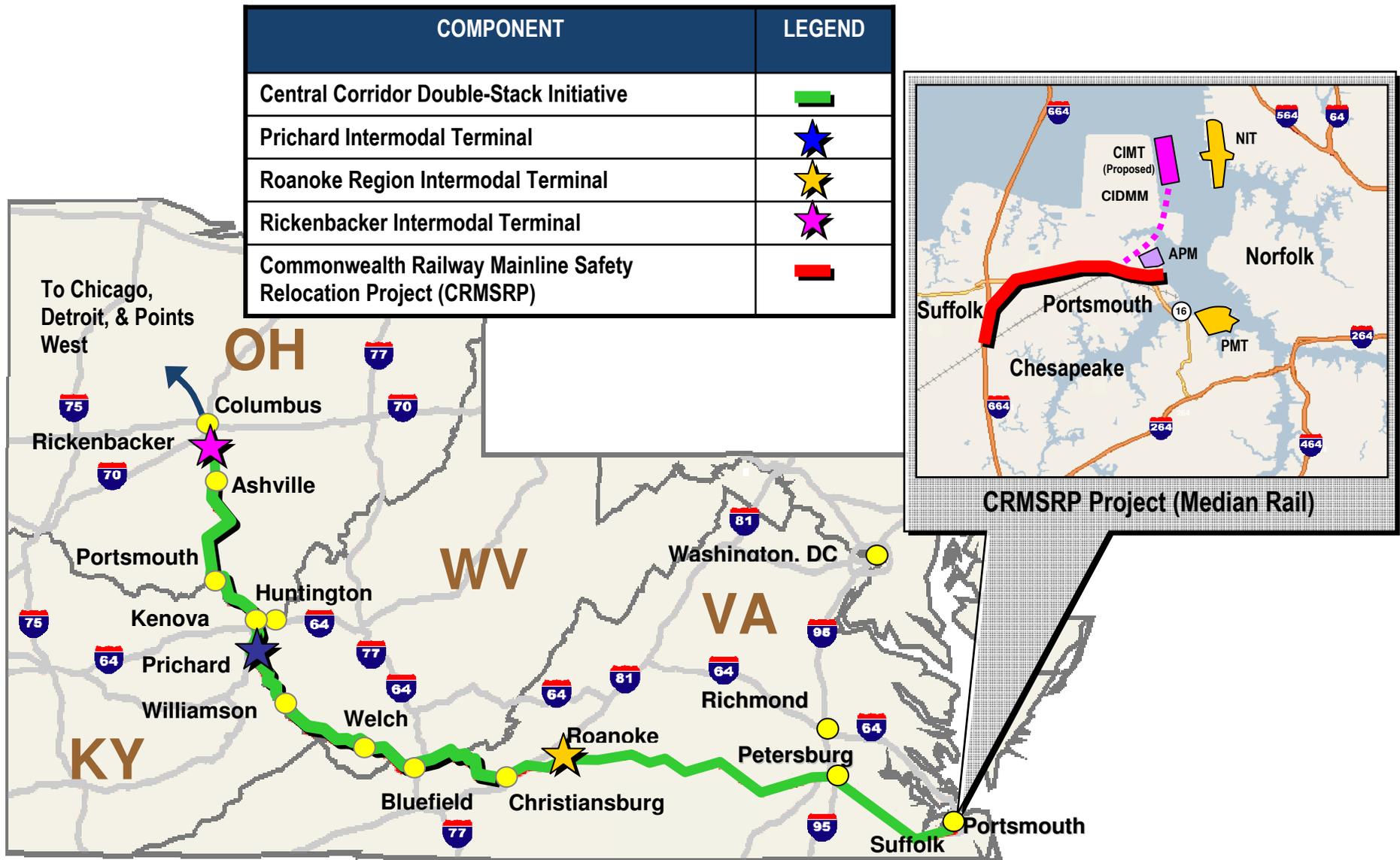


Figure 9 - 2 Heartland Corridor Double-Stack Initiative

9.5. Rail Preservation Fund

Since the fund was started in 1991, \$44,296,025 has been invested by the Commonwealth in the shortline railroad system in Virginia. A list of the shortline railroads and respective grants received during in the past seven-year period (FY2003 to FY2009) for passenger and freight rail improvements are shown in Figure 9-5. Annual RPA funding varied from \$2.9 to \$4.1 million per year, with an average of approximately \$3.5 million per year. A typical rail preservation project is shown in Figure 9-6. Major projects recently accomplished included improvements on portions of the Buckingham Branch railroad that handles Amtrak intercity passenger trains (the Crescent and Cardinal Amtrak routes); and improvements on the Commonwealth Railway to provide dual Class I access (NS and CSX) to major intermodal facilities at the new APM Terminal and the future Craney Island Marine Terminal.

Shortline Railroad	FY2003-FY2009 Grant Amount (\$)
Bay Coast Railway	\$967,496
Buckingham Branch	\$9,104,219
Chesapeake & Albemarle	\$75,541
Chesapeake & Western	\$0
Commonwealth Railway	\$5,506,511
Deepwater Terminal RR	\$391,657
Norfolk & Portsmouth Belt Line	\$2,827,000
North Carolina & Virginia	\$310,000
Shenandoah Valley	\$1,372,849
Virginia Southern Div. of BBRR	\$1,275,702
Winchester & Western	\$2,956,650
Total	\$24,787,625

Figure 9 - 3 Rail Preservation Fund Summary for FY2003 to FY2009.



Figure 9 - 4 Typical Rail Preservation Project (Before and After)

9.6. Rail Industrial Access Fund

Since the fund was started in 1986, \$38,844,663 has been invested by the Commonwealth in providing rail access to businesses in Virginia in conjunction with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, County and Municipal Economic Development Departments, railroads and private industry. The capital investment associated with these business equaled approximately \$4.9 billion dollars; generated 26,000 new jobs; and generated approximately 185,000 railcars – equivalent to taking 648,000 trucks per year off of the highway system.

For the past Seven-year period (FY2003 to FY2009), 60 grants were made totaling \$20,437,816. The location of these grants occurred throughout the Commonwealth as depicted in Figure 9-7. The capital investment associated with these business equaled approximately \$1.1 billion dollars; generated 8,500 new jobs; and generated approximately 44,000 railcars – equivalent to taking 154,000 trucks per year off of the highway system. A typical rail preservation project is depicted in Figure 9-8.

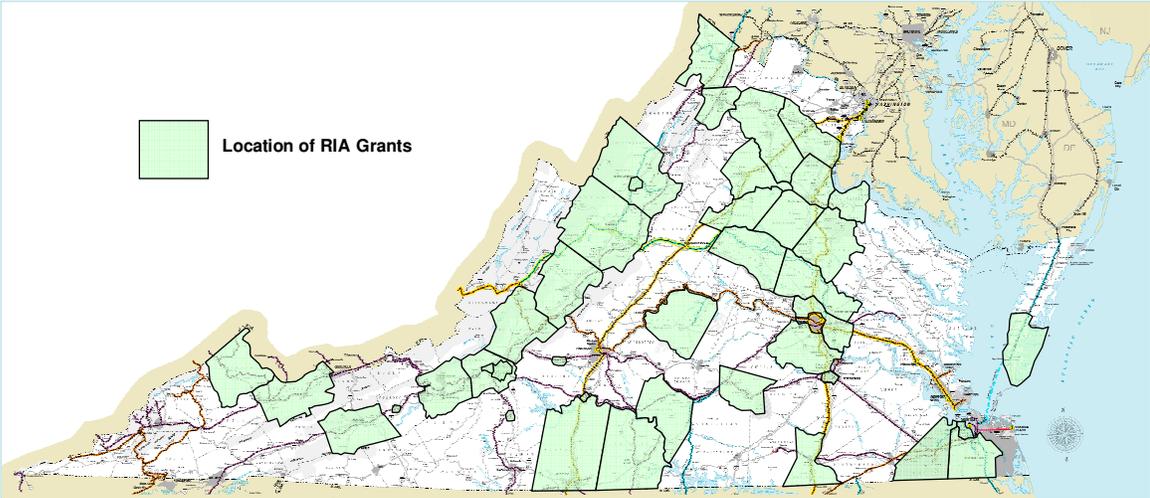


Figure 9 - 5 Location of RIA Grants (2003 – 2009)



Figure 9 - 6 Typical Rail Industrial Access Project

9.7. Other Rail Project Accomplishments

In addition to the above rail grant programs, Commonwealth VTA 2000 funds were used for the following special projects related to rail improvements in FY2003 to FY2008.

- **New Railroad Bridge over Quantico Creek, I-95 Corridor:** The 1,800-foot bridge was the only remaining single-track section of the entire 110-mile Washington, D.C. to Richmond corridor – which created a significant bottleneck. Construction of a second two-track bridge across Quantico Creek (which was managed by VRE) began in 2004 and was completed in 2007 at a cost of approximately \$26 million.

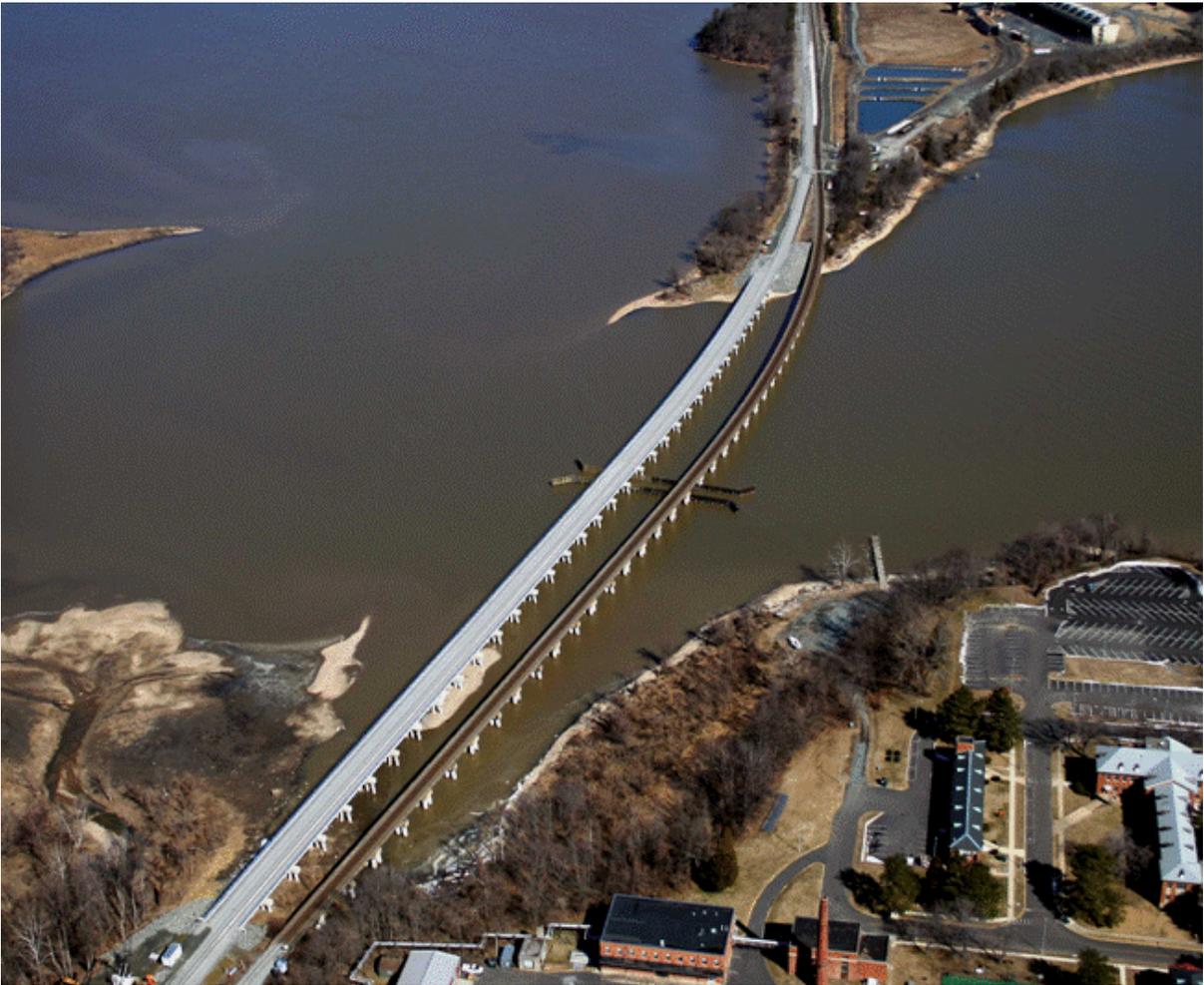


Figure 9 - 7 New and Existing Railroad Bridge over Quantico Creek

- **Renovation of Richmond's Main Street Station (Phase I):** Originally opened in 1901, Main Street Station's historic reopening in 2003 marked completion of Phase I renovations to this 102-year-old landmark, and the return of passenger train service to downtown Richmond (Figure 9-7). Phase II renovations will add additional passenger walkways and rail improvements to make Main Street Station the primary rail station in the Richmond Metropolitan area for all Amtrak corridor and long-distance passenger rail services (including all north-south trains). Future upgrades to the station will also integrate bus, trolley, airport shuttle, taxi, and limousine services. As Main Street Station is further transformed into a significant multi-modal transportation center, it will once again serve as the major rail gateway to the City of Richmond and the metropolitan region for business, tourist, and other travel services.

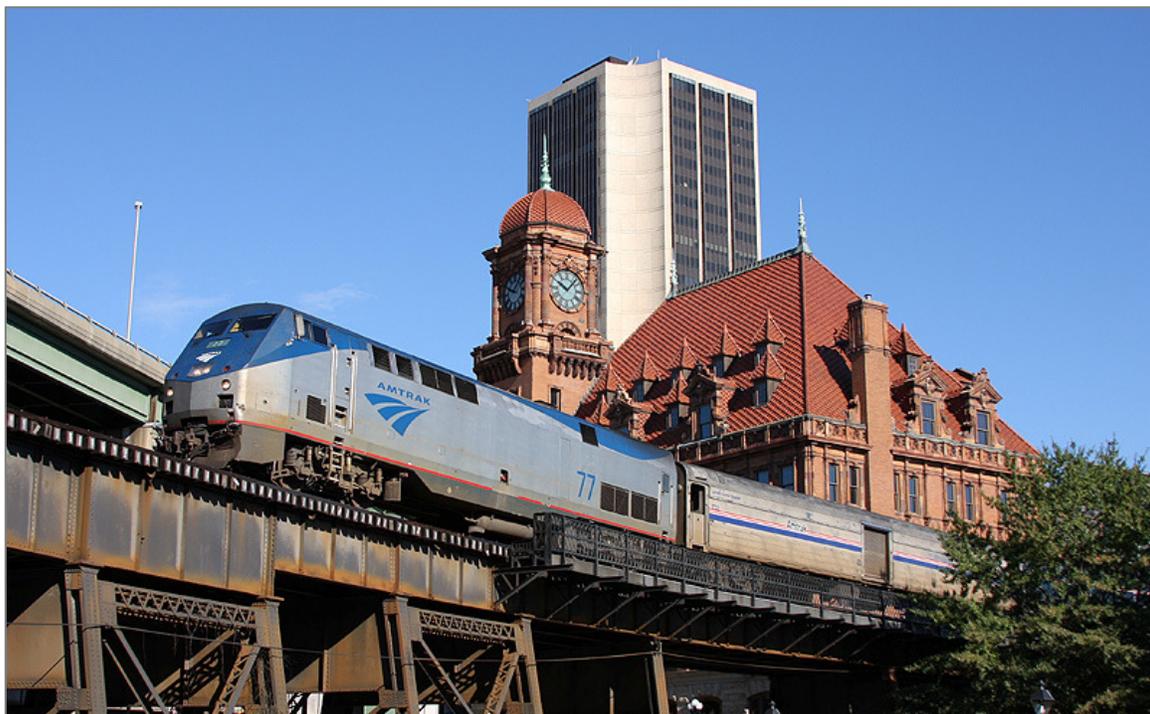


Figure 9 - 8 Richmond Main Street Station
(Photograph courtesy Jeff Hawkins)