Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility Site Search

Public Comment Report

February 2, 2007

Prepared by
The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

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1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Regional Freight Rail Improvements in Virginia

There are several strategic freight rail corridors in Virginia today, including the I-95 corridor, the I-81 corridor and the freight rail corridor along Route 460, known as the Heartland Corridor.

The volume of freight shipped within and through Virginia continues to grow, and with the expansion of the Port of Virginia, it will become more challenging to transport all freight by highway or any one mode of transportation. Additional options must be identified, and freight rail is part of the solution.

Through port developments planned and underway, cargo handled at the Port of Virginia will double by 2020, or even as early as 2015. It is anticipated that by 2040, there will be 300% more freight traffic moving through the Port than there is today. This growth is driven by the global economy and America's need to import and export more goods through major ports. The Port of Virginia is a leading East Coast port with sufficient capacity to accept the new, larger container ships that are becoming the international standard for freight shipping. In order to remain competitive in the global marketplace, Virginia must have the capacity to transport freight, both within and through the Commonwealth.

To help address this challenge, there are two multi-state freight rail initiatives underway in Virginia today: the I-81 Freight Rail Study and the Heartland Corridor initiative. Together, these projects are part of a multimodal corridor approach to improving freight transportation and managing truck traffic on highways. The I-81 Freight Rail Study involves a study area from Pennsylvania to Tennessee and will examine methods of maximizing freight rail capacity along the I-81 rail corridor, including the diversion of more truck traffic to rail. The Heartland Corridor initiative will improve freight rail shipping between the Port of Virginia and markets in the Midwest, with improvements between Virginia, West Virginia and Ohio. Tunnels will be cleared to allow for double-stacked freight trains between the Port of Virginia and Columbus, OH, instantly doubling the intermodal capacity of the freight line as it exists today. In addition, intermodal facilities are planned in each state along the way to allow for the efficient transfer of truck and rail freight to bring goods to market.

1.2 The Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility- Purpose and Need

An intermodal facility is designed to serve as a location where freight can be exchanged between rail and trucks. A new intermodal facility, as part of the Heartland Corridor initiative, needs to be strategically located in the Roanoke region. This location will

provide dual benefits to both the I-81 and Heartland corridors, helping to remove truck traffic from I-81 and Route 460.

It is anticipated that an intermodal facility in the Roanoke region will provide benefits comparable to those that Virginia has received through the Virginia Inland Port in Front Royal, VA. Since opening in 1989, 24 major companies have located near the Inland Port, with over $599 million in local investment and over 7,000 new jobs.

Many businesses will continue to seek attractive shipping options when they examine potential locations to site their facilities, and with sufficient freight rail capacity, Virginia can successfully compete for new businesses and jobs. Over the past 19 years, access to freight rail shipping has helped to bring $4.3 billion in local investment and over 21,000 jobs to localities across Virginia.

The construction of an intermodal facility has an impact on traffic volume. The traffic figures, as estimated by Norfolk Southern, are as follows: anticipated railcar containers shipped will average 60 per day from 2010-2020, and beyond 2020, the average will be 150 per day. The anticipated short haul truck traffic generated will be approximately 87 trucks per day from 2010-2020 and 235 trucks per day in 2020 and beyond. Short haul truck traffic is defined as trucks that are traveling less than 50 miles from the facility to their destinations. This schedule assumes a five-day work week and 260 working days per year. Through the Rail Enhancement Fund grant to Norfolk Southern for tunnel clearances and the construction of an intermodal facility, approximately 150,000 trucks will be removed from Virginia's roads each year.

Three states are scheduled to receive an intermodal facility as part of this multi-state freight rail initiative, including Virginia, West Virginia and Ohio. Without the Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility, Virginia will be a pass-through state for the Heartland Corridor initiative, leaving economic benefits and future jobs on the table for other states.

1.3 Summary of the Intermodal Facility Site Solicitation Process

On December 15, 2005, the Commonwealth Transportation Board approved the $31.9 million Heartland Corridor, Virginia Components project with $22.35 million in Rail Enhancement funds and $9.57 million in private investment by Norfolk Southern. As part of this grant, Norfolk Southern will construct an intermodal facility in the Roanoke region to serve as an exchange point for truck and freight rail traffic.

This funding was made available through the Rail Enhancement Fund, the first source of dedicated funding for rail in Virginia history. This fund is administered by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT).

DRPT has developed an Intermodal Facility Site Solicitation and Site Evaluation Process to evaluate proposed sites and determine the best location for the investment of public dollars. The Rail Enhancement Fund requires that all projects result in specific public benefits, and DRPT's evaluation is based on criteria that will help ensure that the public benefits related to the Heartland Corridor initiative are achieved.

The following minimum criteria were established for potential site locations:

- Must be close to Interstate I-81 with reasonable access and egress
- Must be located on the Heartland Corridor line between Walton on the west and the Shenandoah line connection on the east
- Must not create additional grade separations, particularly in congested urban areas
- Should be a minimum of 65 acres and flat topography
- Should seek to minimize associated roadway costs that might be engendered or necessitated
- Should seek to be well-configured into the rail-operating perspective to avoid degrading rail traffic, add to efficiency of intermodal operation, and result in relative facility development or facility delivery costs

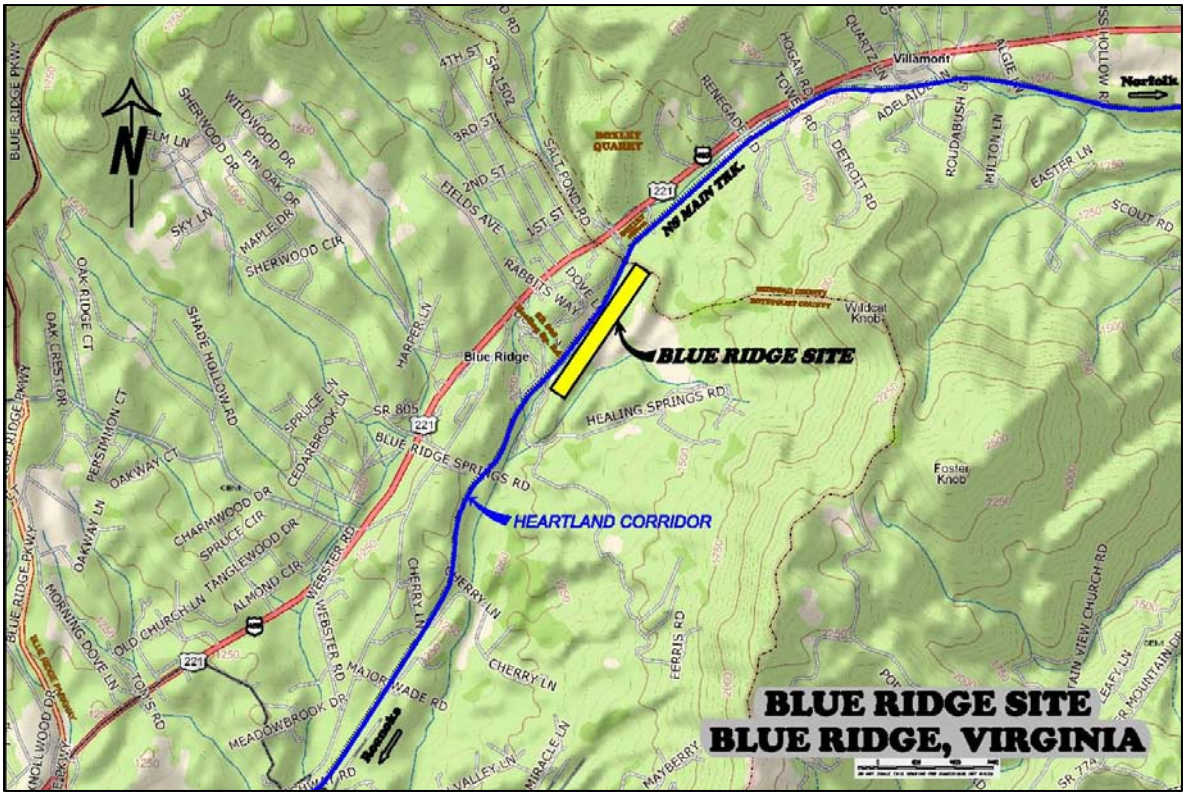
DRPT invited Norfolk Southern as the operating railway, all localities and all Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the search area to submit site proposals, including the following entities:

- City of Salem
- City of Roanoke
- Montgomery County
- Roanoke County
- New River Valley Economic Development Alliance
- Roanoke Valley Economic Development Partnership
- Blacksburg/Christiansburg/Montgomery County Area MPO
- Roanoke Valley Area MPO
- Town of Christiansburg

No proposals were received from localities; however Norfolk Southern submitted 10 site proposals for review.

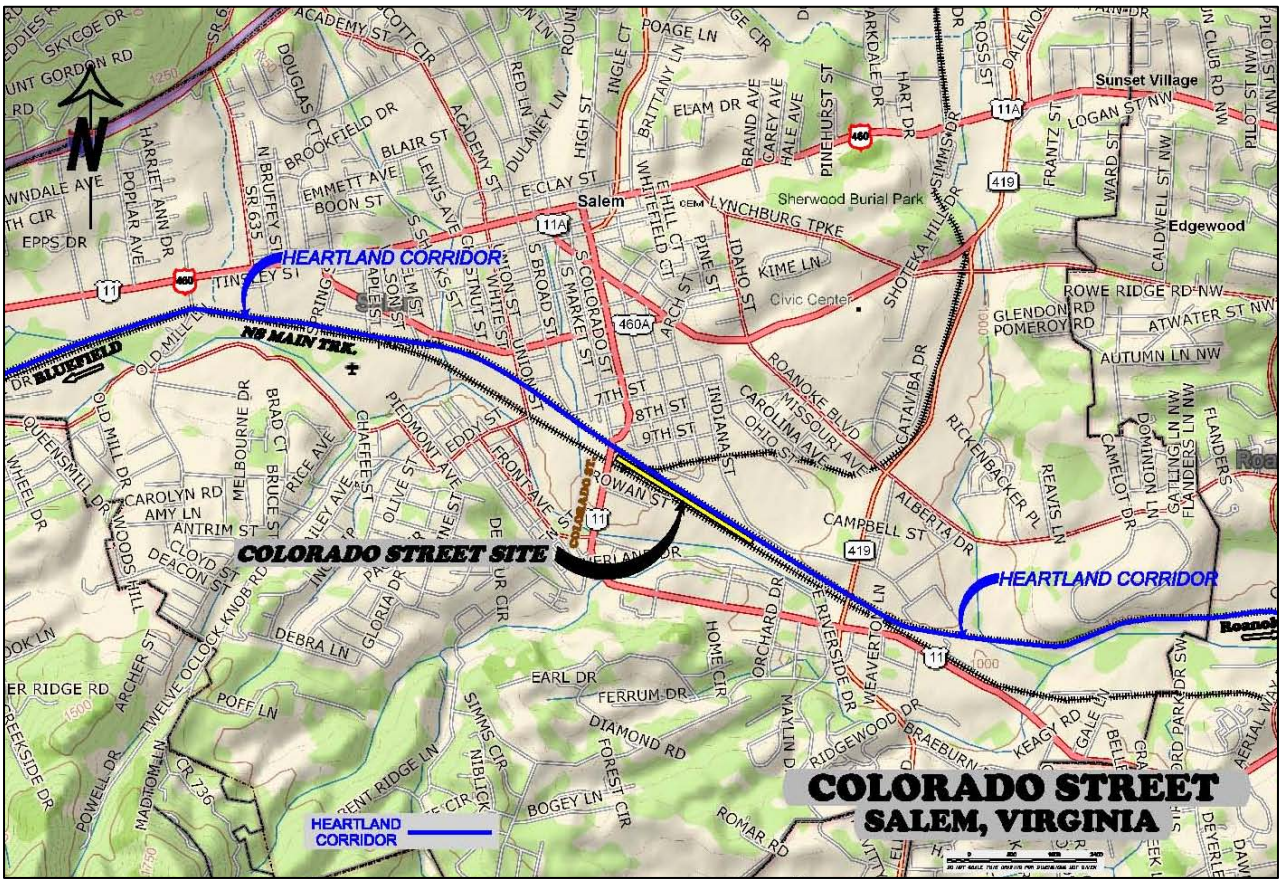
1.4 Summary of 10 Sites Reviewed

Pages 4-13 include maps and brief descriptions of each of the 10 sites submitted for review.



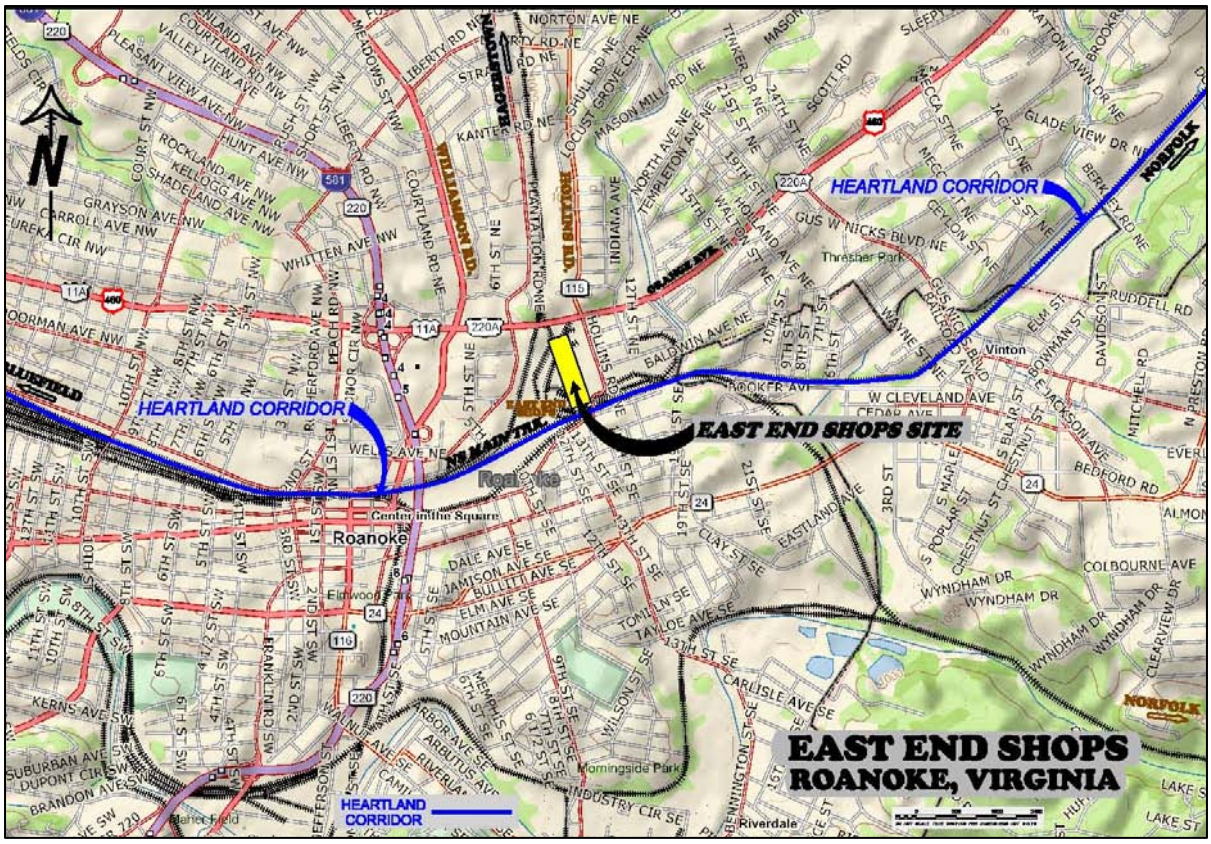
Blue Ridge Site

- ***Jurisdiction:*** Botetourt County
- ***General Description:*** South of tracks along former N&W mainline, approximately 12 rail miles east of downtown Roanoke. Immediately east of the SR 805 overpass.
- ***Proximity to I-81 and Road Access:*** Approximately 14 highway miles to I-81 via SR 805, US 460 and Alt 220.
- ***Access to the NS Heartland Corridor:*** On the Heartland Corridor. Not directly accessible to the NS Shenandoah Valley and Altavista lines.
- ***Need for Grade Separations:*** The existing SR 805 grade separation would have to be replaced to handle truck traffic.
- ***Size and Shape of Site and Ownership:*** Very roughly 50 acres, and permits double ended rail access. Private ownership, undeveloped.
- ***Topography:*** Hilly
- ***Site Railroad Operating Characteristics:*** On double track mainline track. Significant mainline grade and numerous curves.



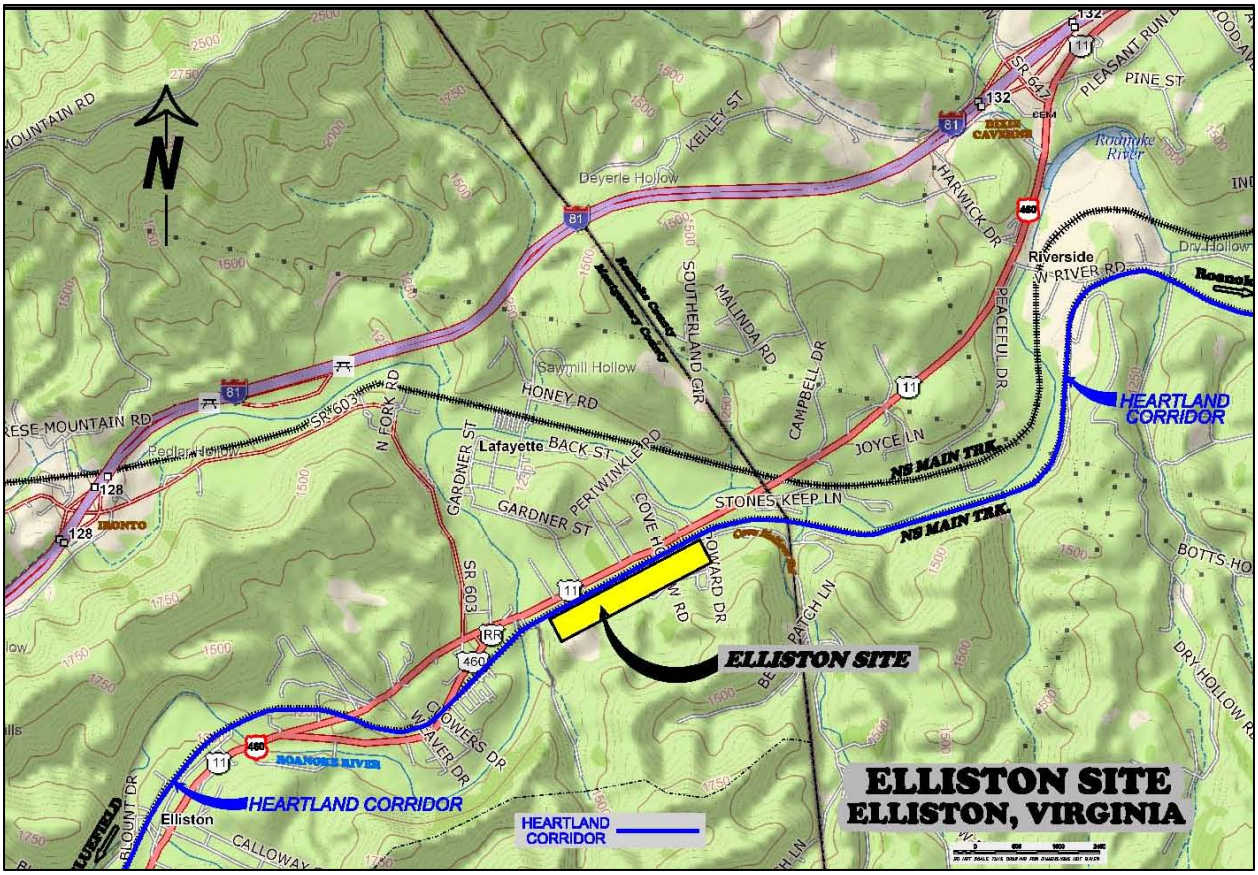
Colorado Street Site

- ***Jurisdiction:*** Salem City
- ***General Description:*** Between the former N&W and Virginian mainlines approximately seven rail miles west of downtown Roanoke. Immediately east of the US 11 overpass.
- ***Proximity to I-81 and Road Access:*** Approximately five miles to I-81 via 10th Street, Indiana Street, and SR 419.
- ***Access to the NS Heartland Corridor:*** Is on the Heartland Corridor and is directly accessible to the NS Shenandoah Valley and Altavista lines.
- ***Need for Grade Separations:*** The Union Street at-grade crossing might be blocked for long periods of time when trains are switching in and out of the facility. The facility access road would also be blocked at that time.
- ***Size and Shape of Site and Ownership:*** Roughly 10 acres, permits double ended rail access. Owned by NS except for access road property.
- ***Topography:*** Relatively flat
- ***Site Railroad Operating Characteristics:*** On double track mainline.



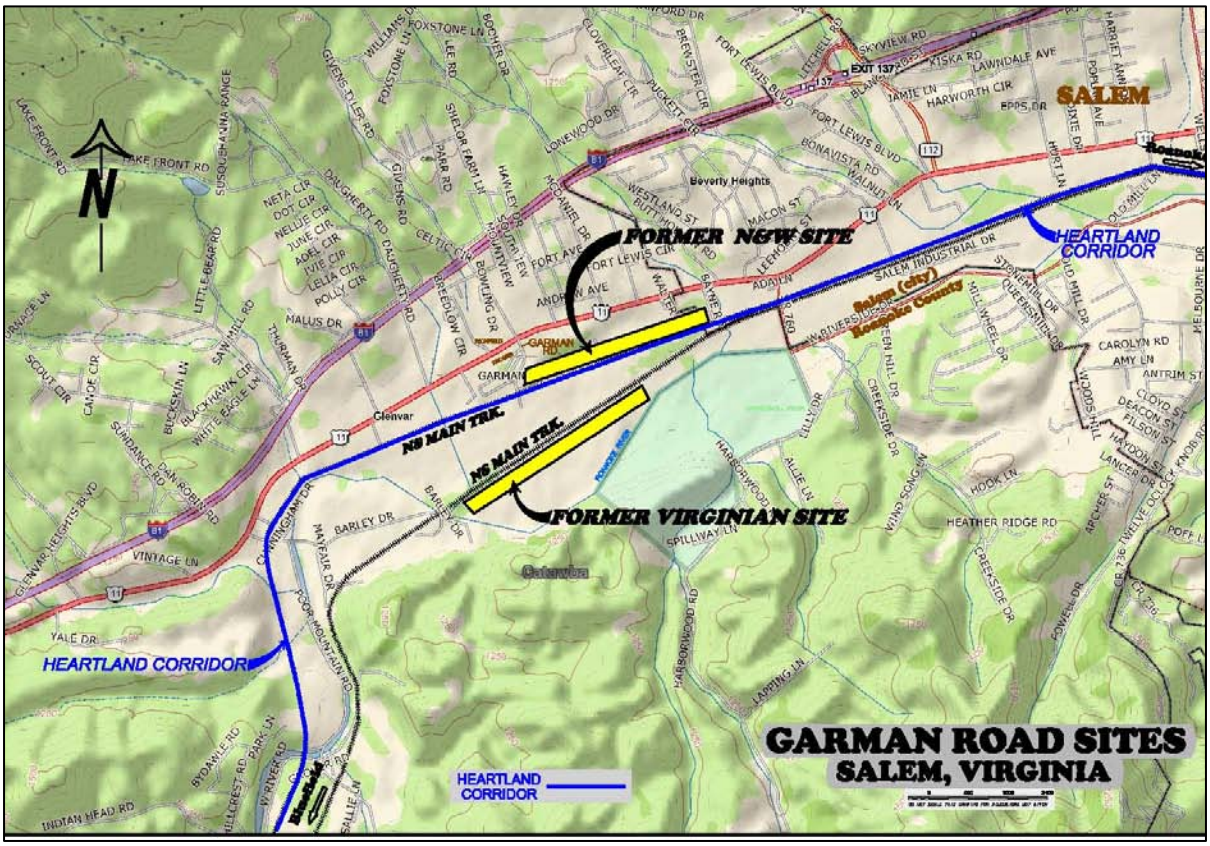
East End Shops Site

- ***Jurisdiction:*** Roanoke City
- ***General Description:*** North of tracks along the former N&W mainline in downtown Roanoke. Next to the Roanoke Valley waste transfer facility and immediately west of the Hollins Road crossing.
- ***Proximity to I-81 and Road Access:*** Approximately six highway miles to I-81 via Hollins Road, US 460 and I-581.
- ***Access to the NS Heartland Corridor:*** On the Heartland Corridor. Directly accessible to the NS Altavista line, but not the Shenandoah Valley line.
- ***Need for Grade Separations:*** The Hollins Road and 8th Street (in Vinton) crossings would be blocked for long periods of time when trains are switching in and out of the facility, unless grade separated.
- ***Size and Shape of Site and Ownership:*** Roughly six acres, but does not permit double ended rail access. Owned by NS, but part of site is now used by Johnstown America.
- ***Topography:*** Flat.
- ***Site Railroad Operating Characteristics:*** On double track mainline track.



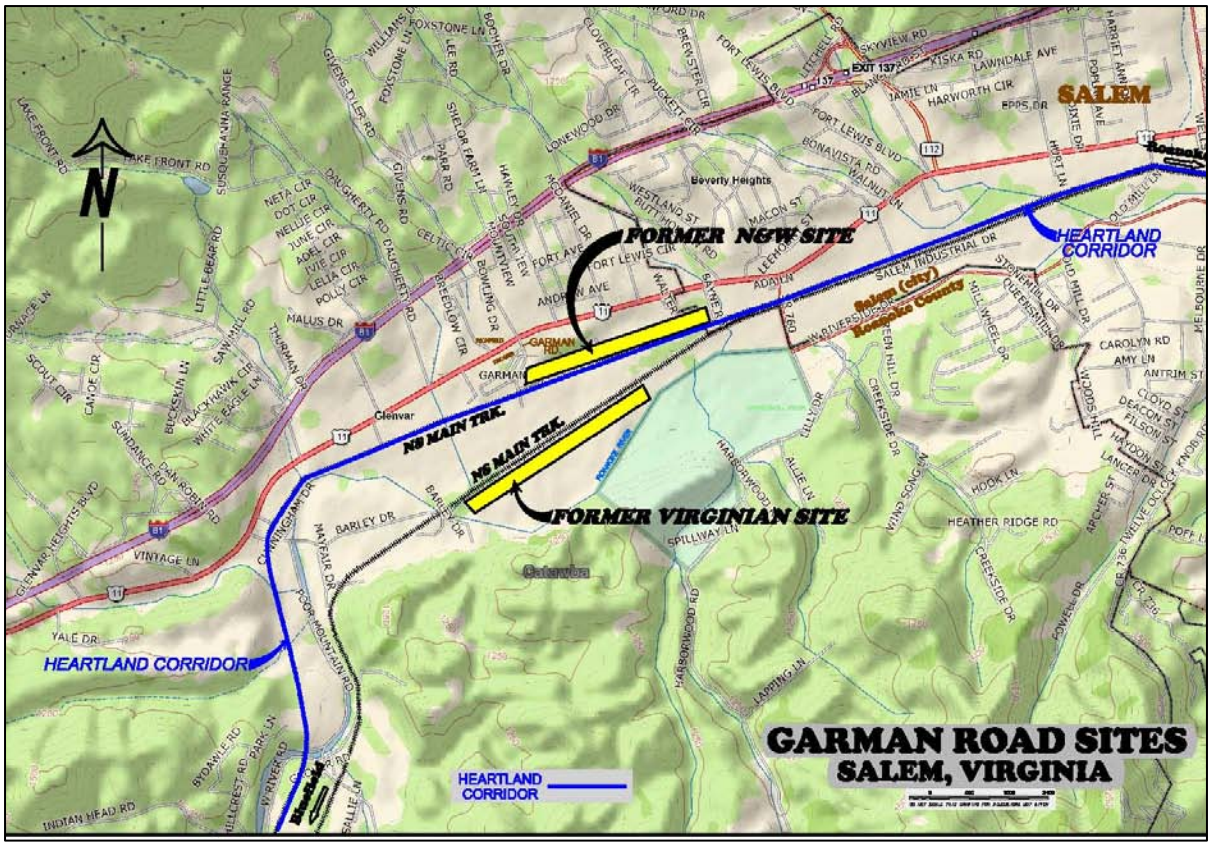
Elliston Site

- ***Jurisdiction:*** Montgomery County
- ***General Description:*** South of the tracks along the former N&W mainline approximately 18 rail miles west of downtown Roanoke. Straddles the SR 603 crossing.
- ***Proximity to I-81 and Road Access:*** Approximately three highway miles to I-81 via SR 603, US 460, and SR 647
- ***Access to the NS Heartland Corridor:*** On the Heartland Corridor, and is directly accessible to the NS Shenandoah Valley and Altavista lines.
- ***Need for Grade Separations:*** Approximately one mile of SR 603 would have to be relocated to pass beneath the existing rail bridge over the Roanoke River and a new highway bridge would be required to cross over the river. The existing SR 603 at-grade crossing would be eliminated. With relocation, no crossings would be blocked when trains are working the facility.
- ***Size and Shape of Site and Ownership:*** 65+ acres, and permits double ended rail access. Private ownership. Moderately developed, with at least six residences directly affected.
- ***Topography:*** Relatively flat, near mainline elevation.
- ***Site Railroad Operating Characteristics:*** On double track mainline.



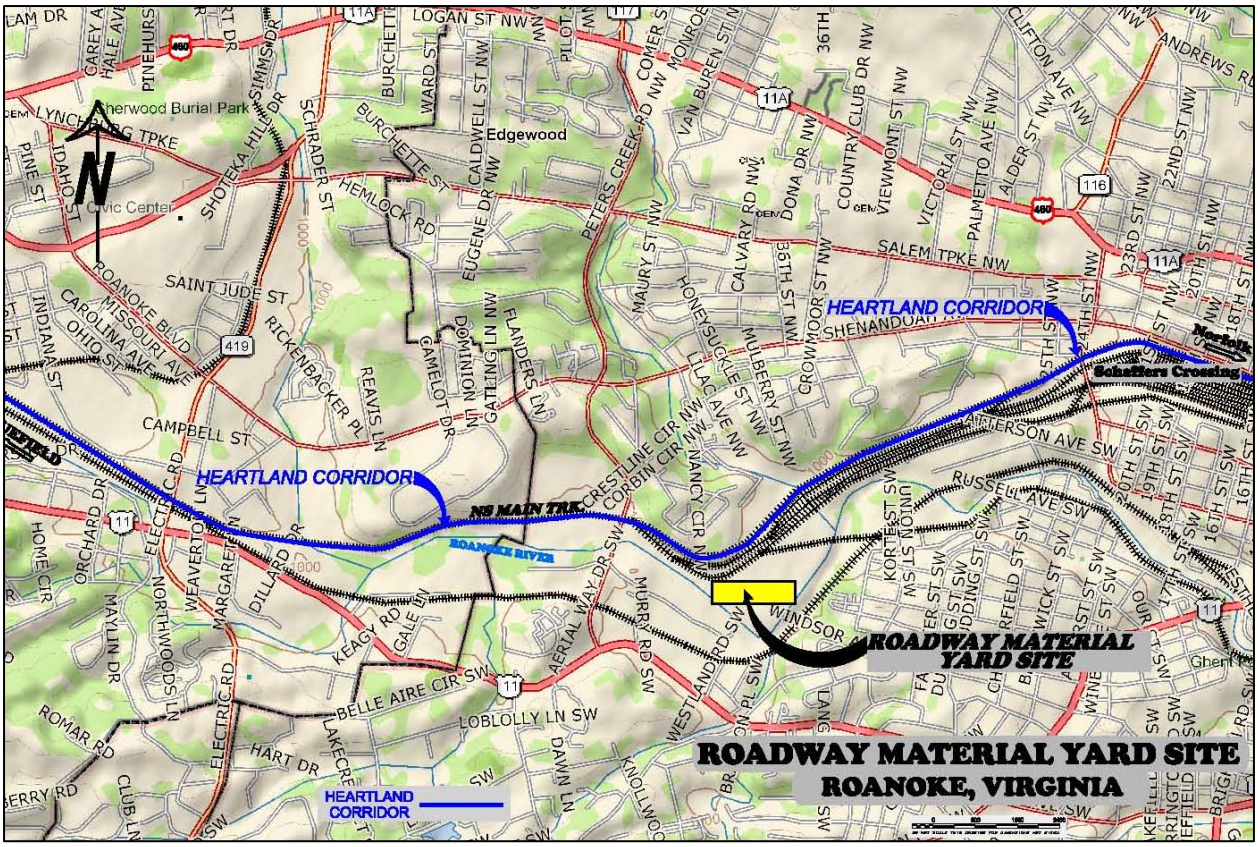
Garman Road (Former N&W) Site

- ***Jurisdiction:*** Roanoke County, small portion in Salem City
- ***General Description:*** North of the tracks along the former N&W mainline approximately 11 miles west of downtown Roanoke. Immediately east of Garman Road.
- ***Proximity to I-81 and Road Access:*** Approximately three road miles via Bayne Road, US 460, and SR 112.
- ***Access to the NS Heartland Corridor:*** Is on the Heartland Corridor and is directly accessible to the NS Shenandoah Valley lines and Altavista lines.
- ***Need for Grade Separations:*** The Garman and Diuguids Roads at-grade crossings would be blocked for long periods of time when trains are switching in and out of the facility, unless grade separated.
- ***Size and Shape of Site and Ownership:*** Roughly 50 acres, and permits double ended rail access. Privately owned. Partially developed, mixed commercial and industrial.
- ***Topography:*** Relatively flat
- ***Site Railroad Operating Characteristics:*** On double track mainline.



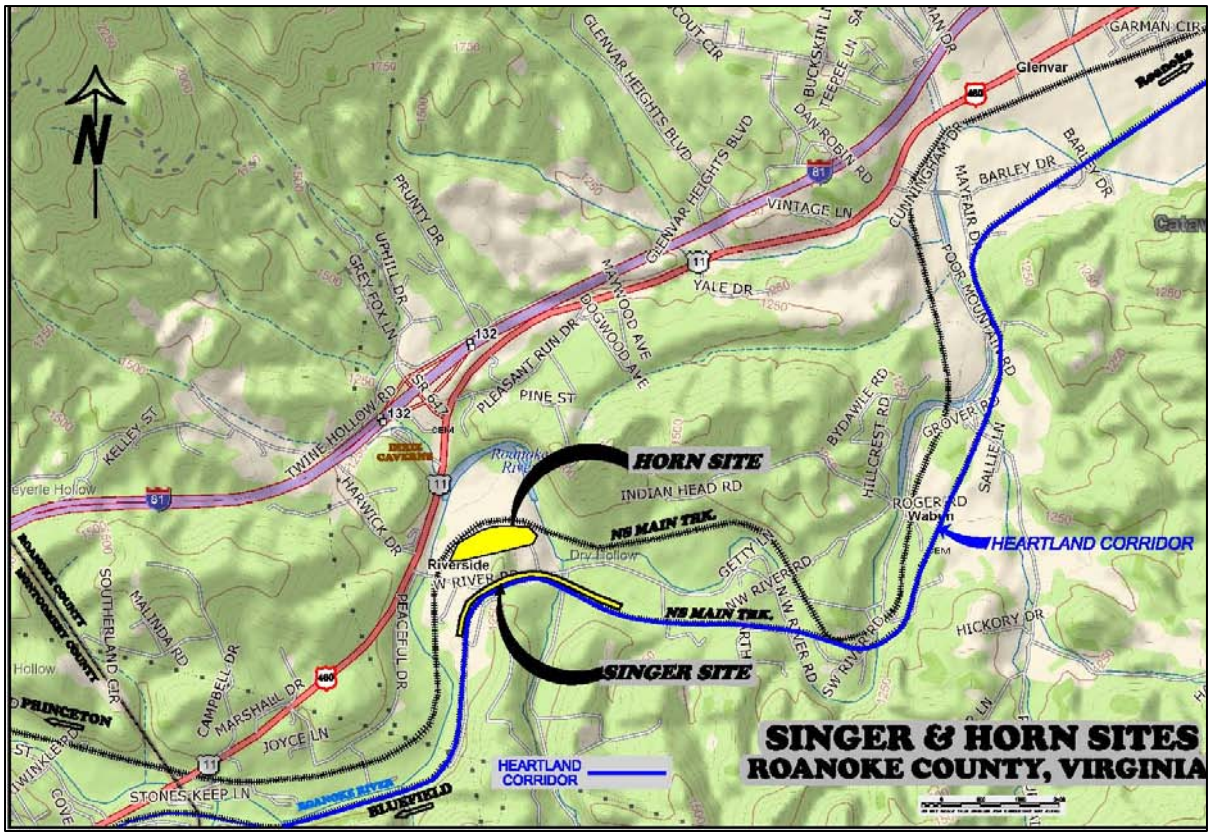
Garman Road (Former Virginian) Site

- ***Jurisdiction:*** Roanoke County
- ***General Description:*** South of the tracks along the former Virginian mainline approximately 11 miles west of downtown Roanoke. Immediately east of Garman Road.
- ***Proximity to I-81 and Road Access:*** Approximately three road miles via Garman Road, US 460, and SR 112.
- ***Access to the NS Heartland Corridor:*** New rail connection needed to access the Heartland Corridor. Site is directly accessible to the NS Shenandoah Valley lines and Altavista lines.
- ***Need for Grade Separations:*** The Diuguids Roads at-grade crossing might be blocked for long periods of time when trains are switching in and out of the facility, unless grade separated. The facility access road would also be blocked at that time.
- ***Size and Shape of Site and Ownership:*** Potentially 110 acres, and permits double ended rail access. Privately owned, mostly undeveloped. In Roanoke River flood plain.
- ***Topography:*** Flat
- ***Site Railroad Operating Characteristics:*** On a single track mainline track. Will require a switching lead and connection track to the Heartland Corridor.



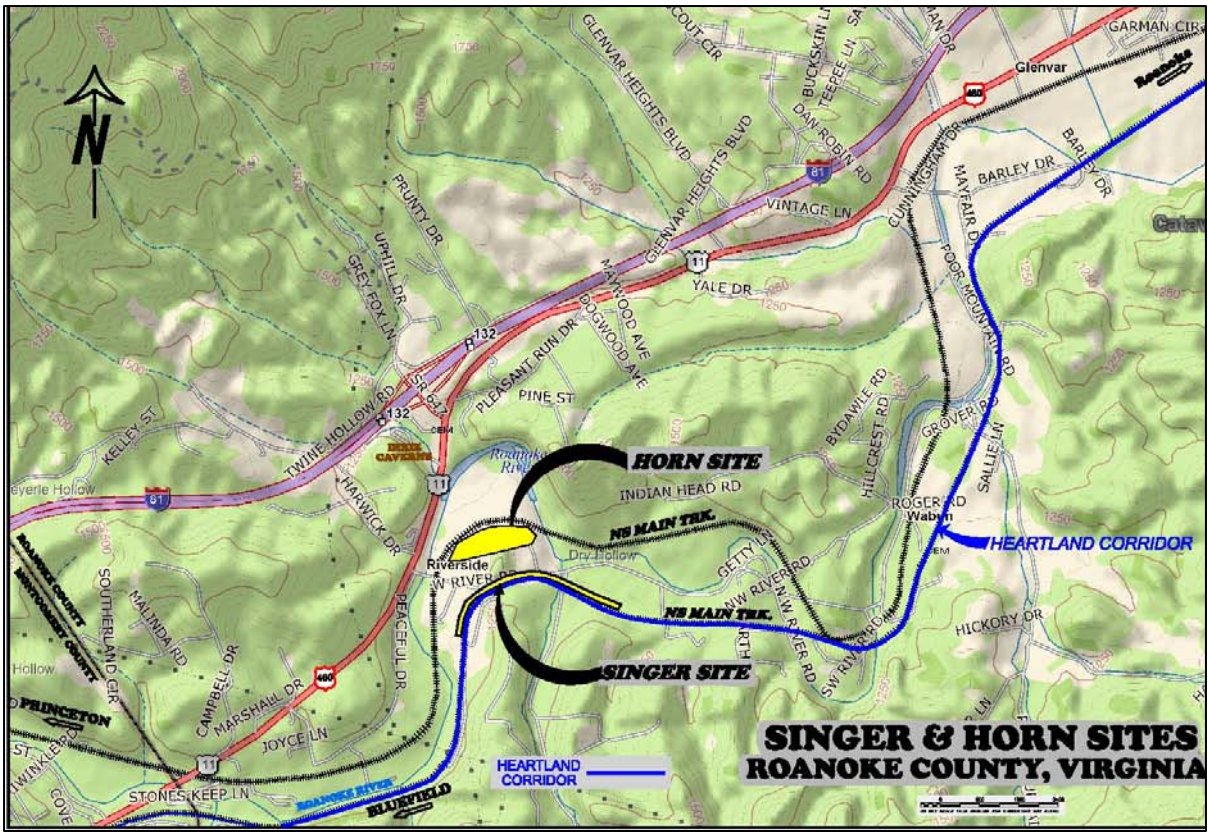
Roadway Material Yard Site

- ***Jurisdiction:*** Roanoke City
- ***General Description:*** South of the tracks along the former N&W mainline approximately four rail miles east of downtown Roanoke, adjacent to the NS track material storage yard. Immediately west of the SR 117 overpass.
- ***Proximity to I-81 and Road Access:*** Approximately five miles to I-81 via Blue Ridge Drive, SR 117 and I-581.
- ***Access to the NS Heartland Corridor:*** On the Heartland Corridor and is directly accessible to the NS Shenandoah Valley and Altavista lines.
- ***Need for Grade Separations:*** None. Highway access would require a new road and bridge crossing of the Roanoke River.
- ***Size and Shape of Site and Ownership:*** Roughly 10 acres and permits double ended rail access. Owned by NS, road access route privately owned.
- ***Topography:*** Relatively flat
- ***Site Railroad Operating Characteristics:*** On main track 1. Main track 2 is on the opposite side of Roanoke Yard leads.



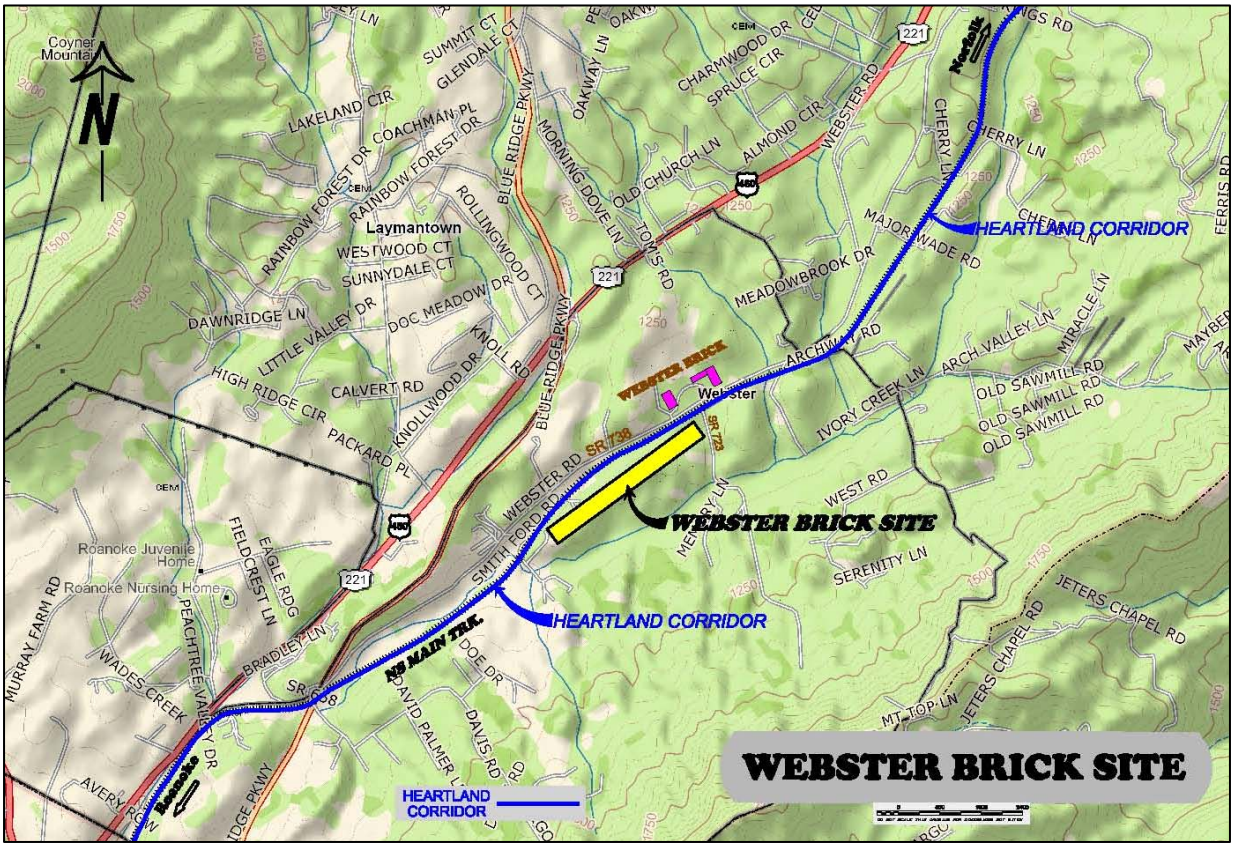
Singer Site

- ***Jurisdiction:*** Roanoke County
- ***General Description:*** North of the tracks along former N&W mainline approximately 16 rail miles west of downtown Roanoke. West of the SR 649 overpass.
- ***Proximity to I-81 and Road Access:*** Approximately one mile to I-81 via SR 639, US 460, and SR 647.
- ***Access to the NS Heartland Corridor:*** On the Heartland Corridor, and is directly accessible to the NS Shenandoah Valley and Altavista lines.
- ***Need for Grade Separations:*** None.
- ***Size and Shape of Site and Ownership:*** Roughly 30 acres, permits double ended rail access. Privately owned. Lightly developed.
- ***Topography:*** Relatively flat. Significant elevation difference between site and mainline. Lightly developed.
- ***Site Railroad Operating Characteristics:*** On double track mainline.



Horn Site

- ***Jurisdiction:*** Roanoke County
- ***General Description:*** South of the tracks along the former Virginian mainline approximately 16 rail miles west of downtown Roanoke. Immediately west of SR 639 crossing.
- ***Proximity to I-81 and Road Access:*** Approximately one mile to I-81 via SR 639, US 460, and SR 647.
- ***Access to the NS Heartland Corridor:*** New rail connection needed to access the Heartland Corridor. Site is directly accessible to the NS Shenandoah Valley lines and Altavista lines.
- ***Need for Grade Separations:*** Unless grade separated, SR 639 crossing would be blocked for long periods of time when trains are switching in and out of the facility.
- ***Size and Shape of Site and Ownership:*** Roughly 50 acres, permits double ended rail access. Privately owned. Lightly developed.
- ***Topography:*** Relatively flat
- ***Site Railroad Operating Characteristics:*** On single track mainline. Switching lead needed plus a rail connection to the Heartland Corridor.



Webster Brick Site

- ***Jurisdiction:*** Botetourt County
- ***General Description:*** South of tracks along the former N&W mainline approximately nine rail miles east of downtown Roanoke. Immediately west of the SR 723 crossing.
- ***Proximity to I-81 and Road Access:*** Approximately 11 highway miles to I-81 via Webster Road, US 460 and Alt 220.
- ***Access to the NS Heartland Corridor:*** On the Heartland Corridor. Not directly accessible to the NS Shenandoah Valley and Altavista lines.
- ***Need for Grade Separations:*** The SR 723 crossing would be blocked for long periods of time when trains are switching in and out of the facility, unless grade separated.
- ***Size and Shape of Site and Ownership:*** Very roughly 25 acres, and permits double ended rail access. Private ownership, lightly developed.
- ***Topography:*** Hilly.
- ***Site Railroad Operating Characteristics:*** On double track mainline track. Significant mainline grade and numerous curves.

1.5 Summary of the Site Evaluation Process

DRPT is working collectively with state agencies and Norfolk Southern to evaluate the sites submitted. The evaluation includes the following components:

- Initial site proposal review by DRPT for fatal flaws based on the minimum criteria outlined in Section 1.3 of this report
- Detailed site reviews with respective agencies as determined by DRPT, in coordination with the Office of the Attorney General
- Existing road impact evaluation, road need analysis and related environmental review as conducted by the Virginia Department of Transportation
- Site review for ancillary developable land for future distribution center growth opportunities as conducted by the Virginia Port Authority and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership
- Site review for practical application and rail interface as provided by Norfolk Southern

Note: the environmental review includes an assessment of the number of properties impacted with identification of businesses and residences, identification of any historic impact and other applicable environmental issues related to specific sites.

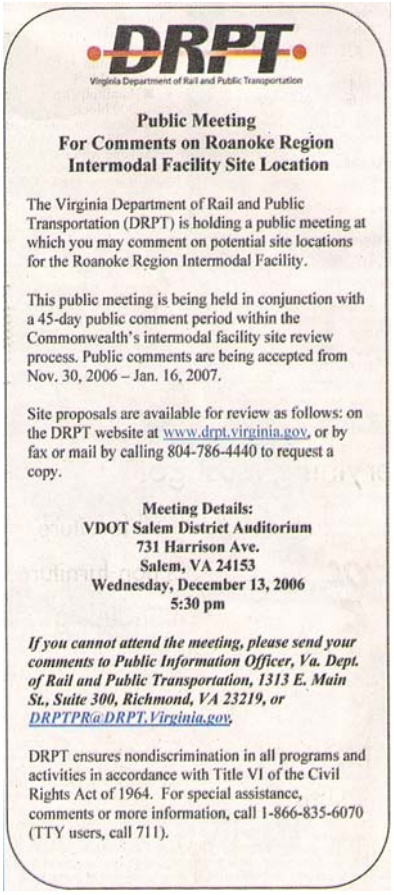
Full details of the evaluation results will be published upon completion of the site evaluation process.

1.6 Summary of the Public Involvement Process

DRPT announced the beginning of a 45-day public comment period on November 30, 2006 with a press release and advertisements in local newspapers including *The Roanoke Times*, *The Roanoke Tribune* and the Main Street Newspapers including the *Salem Times-Register*, the *Montgomery News Messenger* and other local affiliates. Advertisements appeared over the weekends of December 2-3 and December 9-10, 2006.

A sample advertisement is included at right. In addition, a public meeting was held at the VDOT Salem District Auditorium on December 13, 2006. A spotlight feature was placed on the home page of the DRPT website www.drpt.virginia.gov and information was made available at DRPT headquarters at 1313 E. Main St., Suite 300, Richmond, VA 23227.

Public comments were accepted from November 30, 2006 to January 16, 2007. Options for submitting comments included mail, e-mail, fax, comment form and delivering comments at the public meeting. All comments will be taken into consideration as part of the site evaluation process.



DRPT
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Public Meeting
For Comments on Roanoke Region
Intermodal Facility Site Location

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is holding a public meeting at which you may comment on potential site locations for the Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility.

This public meeting is being held in conjunction with a 45-day public comment period within the Commonwealth's intermodal facility site review process. Public comments are being accepted from Nov. 30, 2006 – Jan. 16, 2007.

Site proposals are available for review as follows: on the DRPT website at www.drpt.virginia.gov, or by fax or mail by calling 804-786-4440 to request a copy.

Meeting Details:
VDOT Salem District Auditorium
731 Harrison Ave.
Salem, VA 24153
Wednesday, December 13, 2006
5:30 pm

If you cannot attend the meeting, please send your comments to Public Information Officer, Va. Dept. of Rail and Public Transportation, 1313 E. Main St., Suite 300, Richmond, VA 23219, or DRPTPR@DRPT.Virginia.gov.

DRPT ensures nondiscrimination in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. For special assistance, comments or more information, call 1-866-835-6070 (TTY users, call 711).

2.0 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS

During the public comment period from November 30, 2006 to January 16, 2007, DRPT held a public meeting at the VDOT Salem District Auditorium in Salem, VA on December 13, 2006 at 5:30 pm.

2.1 Meeting Notification Process

Information regarding the public notification process for this public meeting is included in Section 1.6 of this report.

2.2 Open House

Exhibit boards were displayed at the open house and evaluation team members were available to explain the sites submitted for evaluation and the general steps involved in the evaluation process.

Materials made available during the open house included the following:

- Exhibit boards including large, color maps of each site location
- Handout sheets for each site location, including the individual site map and a general description of each site location
- A Frequently Asked Questions document with responses to general questions about the evaluation process
- Copies of the overview presentation given by DRPT
- The DRPT press release announcing the public involvement process for this project
- Public comment forms and a public comment drop box

2.3 Public Meeting

DRPT Director of Rail Transportation Kevin Page convened the public meeting at approximately 5:40 p.m. He introduced Mr. Dana Martin, Salem District representative on the Commonwealth Transportation Board and then introduced the following members of the evaluation team: Mr. Richard Caywood, Virginia Department of Transportation. Mr. Lee Cochran, Norfolk Southern Corporation and Mr. James Davis, Virginia Port Authority. Matthew Tucker, Agency Director for DRPT, delivered closing remarks.

Public attendance at the meeting was approximately 75 people, 22 people delivered comments and two comment sheets were received during the public meeting. Those commenters who registered in advance of the public meeting spoke first, followed by those registering at the public meeting. Attendees were encouraged to complete a comment sheet, submit a letter or send e-mail if they did not want to deliver comments in public. The attendees were advised that the public comment period would remain open until 5 p.m. on January 16, 2007.

After the introductions, Mr. Page delivered an overview presentation of the intermodal facility project and site selection process and provided an opportunity for attendees to ask questions related to the presentation.

2.4 Public Meeting Comments

Attendees delivered comments after the evaluation team presentation. A brief description of the comments provided during the meeting is provided below. The commenters included representatives from organizations and associations, business representatives, as well as private citizens from communities that lie within close proximity to the proposed site locations.

Of the 22 commenters, 6 supported the intermodal facility concept in general, 8 opposed the Elliston site, 1 supported the Elliston site and 5 provided comments but did not state a preference for a particular site location. In addition to opposing Elliston, one commenter also opposed the Horn and Singer sites.

Elected officials Wanda Wingo, Chairman of the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors and Jerry Burgess, County Administrator of Botetourt County were the first to comment and opposed the Botetourt County sites. Gary Creed of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors opposed the Elliston site. Joyce Waugh, Chairman of the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce expressed general support for the Heartland Corridor and the intermodal facility as integral parts of the transportation system and encouraged the Commonwealth to find a suitable location where the full economic benefits could be achieved. Benjamin Tripp, representing the City of Salem, expressed that while the City is not endorsing the Salem location, they are open to discussions. Clay Goodman, Chairman of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors, opposed the Elliston site and Brian Brown, representing the City of Roanoke, submitted Mayor Harris's letter of support for the intermodal facility in general and noted that the City looks forward to working with the evaluation team on the location of a specific site.

Additional commenters included representatives from (in order of appearance) Roanoke Gas, Anderson and Associates, Shawsville Elementary PTA, New River Land Trust and HSMM Consulting. The remaining commenters included property owners and residents living on or near the various site locations.

The majority of commenters expressed opposition to the Elliston Site, followed by those who supported the concept of the intermodal facility in general. Most indicated that they expect a full and careful review of site locations prior to determining a final site location. A few commenters raised the issue of ensuring that sufficient negotiation with the affected locality takes place to secure adequate measures to reduce the local impact, such as landscaping and highway improvements.

Summaries of comments delivered during the public meeting are included by topic area in Section 4.0 of this report.

3.0 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED FOR THE RECORD

During the public comment period from November 30, 2006 to January 16, 2007, 84 comments were received from citizens, public officials and businesses.

The 70 individual commenters and 84 comments are presented by jurisdiction below.

Table 3.1 indicates the number of commenters and comments received by jurisdiction.

Table 3.1: Number of Commenters and Comments Received by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Number of Commenters	Number of Comments
Botetourt Co.	5	7
City of Roanoke	3	2
City of Salem	7	9
Montgomery Co.	27	32
Roanoke Co.	9	14
Not available	12	12
Roanoke Valley MPO	1	1
Chesapeake, VA	1	2
Covington, VA	1	1
Danville, VA	1	1
Floyd, VA	1	1
Norfolk, VA	1	1
Richmond, VA	1	1
Total	**70**	**84**

All comments were categorized as follows:

Example of comment number: 0001, 01-E-1

0001 indicates the tracking number for the commenter
01 indicates that this is the first comment received from this commenter
E indicates that this comment was received as an e-mail
1 indicates the order in which this comment was entered into the system

The letter key is as follows: C= comment sheet, T= delivered comments at the public meeting, E= e-mail and L= letter.

3.1 Comments from Elected Officials, Public Bodies and Businesses

The following elected officials and representatives of public bodies submitted comments for the record:

- Botetourt County Board of Supervisors, Wanda Wingo, Chairman
- Botetourt County, Gerald Burgess, County Administrator
- City of Roanoke, C. Nelson Harris, Mayor
- City of Roanoke, Brian Brown

- City of Salem, Benjamin Tripp
- Montgomery County Board of Supervisors, Gary Creed
- Montgomery County, Clay Goodman, County Administrator
- Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce, Joyce Waugh, Chairman
- Roanoke Valley Area MPO, Don Davis, Chairman
- Senator John Edwards, 21st Senatorial District

The following businesses or other organizations submitted comments for the record:

- AEGIS Companies
- Anderson and Associates
- HSMM Consulting
- Integrated Textile Solutions, Inc.
- New River Land Trust
- Norfolk Southern Corporation
- O'Neal Steel, Inc.
- Roanoke Gas
- Shawsville Elementary PTA
- Swedwood Danville (IKEA Furniture)

4.0 LISTING OF COMMENTS RECEIVED FOR THE RECORD AND RESPONSES

Each statement received was reviewed to identify the comments made. These individual comments were entered into a common database and tracked by both a unique number given to each commenter and by subject matter.

On the following pages, the comments are listed by major category and responses to specific questions are included.

Copies of the original comments received are available by paper copy upon request through e-mail at drptpr@drpt.virginia.gov, by phone at 804-786-4440 or by fax at 804-225-3664.

4.1 Responses to Comments Received for the Public Record

4.11 For the Intermodal Facility (General)

Comment: (006, 1-T-6) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Steve Chapin of HSMM Consulting commented that people will benefit from this investment. He said that Norfolk Southern has done an excellent job of growing the intermodal market and he is glad that market conditions exist to support this project today. He stated that the team is striving to minimize the impacts of this facility on the community.

Comment: (007, 1-T-7) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Benjamin Tripp of the City of Salem expressed that while the City of Salem would not endorse any specific locations at this time, the City remains open to discussion.

Comment: (008, 1-T-8) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Ken Anderson of Anderson and Associates expressed general support for the intermodal facility, indicating that it needs to be developed in the right location. He stressed that Norfolk Southern should focus on good design elements that meet the needs of the community.

Comment: (009, 1-T-9) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, John Williamson of Roanoke Gas echoed Joyce Waugh's comments below in Comment (01, 1-T-10). He also noted that the region needs the economic benefits that this project could provide.

Comment: (010, 1-T-10) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Joyce Waugh, Chairman of the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce, expressed general support for the Heartland Corridor initiative and the intermodal facility. She stated that this is an integral part of the transportation system and encouraged the review team to find a suitable location that would achieve the most economic benefits.

Comment: (013, 1-L-13) The City of Roanoke writes to express its support for the Heartland Corridor Project and the Commonwealth of Virginia's commitment to this significant economic development project. This exciting addition to the transportation

needs of southwestern Virginia at a time when the world is shrinking due to globalization would be a boon, regardless of its location in our area.

The impacts of such a terminal would be advantageous to this region, and we should work together to assure the concept of the Heartland Corridor becomes reality. The success of this improvement crosses all jurisdictional boundaries and is crucial to the future of our region. It is anticipated that new companies will be attracted to the area based on the availability of direct shipment abroad. It is also our hope that the inland terminal will remove some traffic from Interstate 81, prolonging its viability in the region. The Heartland Corridor means jobs for our citizens, income for our education systems, a place in the world economy, and prosperity for years to come.

The City of Roanoke welcomes the opportunity to increase the economic activity of our region through this development and look forward to working with Norfolk Southern to complete their vision of an inland port in this area.

Comment: (033, 1-T-35) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Brian Brown of the City of Roanoke submitted Mayor Harris's letter of support for the facility in general. The facility will provide greater access to trade routes, and the City of Roanoke looks forward to working with VDOT, DRPT and Norfolk Southern as the site review process gets underway.

Comment: (043, 1-L-52) RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT For Location of the Heartland Corridor Intermodal Rail Facility in the Roanoke Valley Region. WHEREAS, the Roanoke Valley Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (RVAMPO) is the federally designated regional transportation planning policy board, which is responsible for managing the continuous, cooperative and comprehensive Transportation Planning process in the Roanoke urbanized area; and, WHEREAS, the RVAMPO Policy Board approved the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Freight Study in 2003 that identified significant freight movements between the Hampton Roads Intermodal Port and distribution centers in the Roanoke Valley Region; and, WHEREAS, the RVAMPO Policy Board approved the Roanoke Valley Area 2025 Long-Range Transportation Plan in February 2004 that recommended further study of "smaller-scale" intermodal transfer points for freight transportation; and, WHEREAS, an intermodal freight facility within the Roanoke Valley Region would add to the long-range freight transportation capacity of the region; and, WHEREAS, final site selection for the project should optimize linkages with existing industrial, commercial and transportation infrastructure in conformance with local Government land use plans and regulations; NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Roanoke Valley Area Metropolitan Planning Organization supports the location of the Heartland Corridor Intermodal Rail Facility, at an appropriate to-be-determined site, in the Roanoke Valley Region.

Comment: (045, 1-E-54) We are in favor of Norfolk Southern's proposal for a Roanoke Regional Intermodal Facility at the most feasible location. The economic benefits will extend far beyond the immediate intermodal site, and the Roanoke Valley needs the economic stimulus.

Comment: (047, 1-E-57) I just want y'all to know we are for this as well as others I am sure. It will bring good jobs to the area. How many all together? I think even along I-81 at the Ironto exit would be good. Truck already over flow down there. Plenty of land in that area too! Thanks and hope to see it come here to help with our area good paying jobs!

Response: *The specific number of jobs that will be brought to the area is undetermined since the majority of new jobs would be generated through businesses that locate near the facility. Using the example of the Virginia Inland Port, the Virginia Port Authority reports that approximately 70,000 jobs have been created in that area since the facility opened. The Roanoke intermodal facility itself will generate approximately 12 jobs.*

Comment: (049, 1-E-59) Please register my support for this facility. It is a wonderful opportunity for the Roanoke Valley/NewVA region to tap into the national Heartland Corridor initiative and the international import/export trade revenue. I was unavailable for the public meeting in Salem last night but will plan to attend all future meetings to support this critical regional opportunity.

Comment: (053, 1-E-64) I am writing in support of placing an intermodal facility in the Roanoke region and my belief that the process being used to evaluate all suggested sites to determine the best site is sound and the only way to take the emotion out of the selection process.

I have experienced life in two of the most economically challenged areas of the Commonwealth. I grew up in Danville and have lived in SW Virginia for eleven years. One thing I have learned is that the economies in these areas are always on a knife's edge between job creation and job loss. Often, there is an announcement of a new industry locating in the region and creating jobs. However, just as often there are closing announcements which wipe out any jobs previously created. Having facilities such as the intermodal is the only way to create an engine for long term job growth that can mitigate the job losses we will encounter from the closing of traditional and fading industry. As you know, the intermodal facility itself will not create many good paying jobs. But, taken in combination with our regional Customs port and Foreign Trade Zone, the intermodal facility will provide our region with strong attractiveness to a variety of domestic and foreign businesses that can create the types and quantities of jobs we need in the region. New industries attracted to the area don't have to locate at the intermodal facility but can be effectively served by it no matter where they locate in the region.

Having lived in Blacksburg for a number of years and having worked on public projects with localities in the region I have seen firsthand how emotional the debates are on public projects. The only thing that suffers in these "discussions," besides good will between neighbors and friends on opposite sides of the issues, is truth! The only way for proper decisions to be made is to take the emotion out of the process. The best way to achieve this goal is to put a process in place that will evaluate the project and all suggested sites around a set of common selection criteria. This has been provided in the case of the site selection for the intermodal facility in our region and I urge the DRPT to select the deemed best site solely on how it falls in the ranking when compared to the selection criteria. Any shortcomings in the selected site or its real impacts on the people and environment of the site can be properly mitigated through site design and adherence to the existing environmental rules and regulations.

Comment: (054, 1-E-65) While such a facility will in itself create a minimal number of new, quality job opportunities, I support the concept because of my belief it has the capacity to generate additional employment opportunities from other companies situating close to the facility.

Comment: (067, 1-E-81) On behalf of Norfolk Southern, I submit the attached letter for the record as pertains to the public outreach currently underway on the "Roanoke Regional Intermodal Facility Site Proposals and Public Comments."

This attached letter was received by my Chairman's office on June 28, 2006, and was signed by most of the political jurisdictions in the Roanoke and New River Valleys on the issue of an intermodal facility. We believe that it is relevant to the current consideration under way as pertains to the site location for the facility.

I am also submitting this cover letter and its attachment through the US mail.

Attachment

Mr. Charles W Moorman
Chief Executive Officer
Norfolk Southern
3 Commercial Place
Norfolk, Virginia 23510

Governor Tim M. Kaine
Office of the Governor
Patrick Henry Building, 3m Floor
11 11 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Sirs:
As the elected officials of the Roanoke and New River Valley, we want to express our support for the Heartland Corridor project and the Commonwealth of Virginia's commitment to this significant economic development project. This exciting addition to the transportation needs of southwestern Virginia at a time when the world is shrinking due to globalization would be a boon, regardless of its location in our area. Please know we are all committed to furthering Norfolk Southern's intention to build this type of facility.

The impacts of such a terminal would be so advantageous to this region, all officials have agreed to work together to assure the concept of the Heartland Corridor becomes reality. The success of this improvement crosses all jurisdictional boundaries and is crucial to the future of our two regions. It is anticipated that new companies will be attracted to the area based on the availability of direct shipment abroad. It is also our hope that the inland terminal will remove some traffic from Interstate 81, prolonging its viability in the region. The Heartland Corridor means jobs for our citizens, income for our education systems, a place in the world economy, and prosperity for years to come.

The jurisdictions of the Roanoke and New River Valleys welcome the opportunity to increase the economic activity of our regions through this exciting development and look forward to helping Norfolk Southern complete their vision of an inland port in this area.

[Signatures included from those listed below]

C. Nelson Harris,
Mayor City of Roanoke

Carl E. Tarpley, Jr,
Mayor City of Salem

W. Wayne Angell
Board of Supervisors, County of Franklin

Michael A. Wray, Chairman
Board of Supervisors, County of Roanoke

Wanda C. Wingo, Chairman
Board of Supervisors, County of Botetourt

Bradley E. Grose
Mayor Town of Vinton

Helen A. Looney, Chairman
Board of Supervisors, County of Craig

Thomas L. Starnes
Mayor City of Radford

David W. Ingram, Chairman
Board of Supervisors, County of Floyd

Joseph L. Sheffey, Chairman
Board of Supervisors, County of Pulaski

Robert K. Bennett
Mayor City of Covington

Roger E. Hedgepeth,
Mayor Town of Blacksburg

Steve L. Spradlin, Chairman
Board of Supervisors, County of Montgomery

Paul W. Baker, Chairman
Board of Supervisors, County of Giles

Barbara Stafford
Mayor Town of Pearisburg

4.12 Against Botetourt Co. Sites (Blue Ridge and Webster Brick Sites)

Comment: (021, 1-L-21) Botetourt Co. was not contacted nor given the opportunity to provide comment or input. We learned of this proposal through the media. Botetourt Co. is opposed to both of these potential sites. The impacts of such a facility on the community, our residents, and on the affected road system would be irreversible and unacceptable.

Implications on traffic safety and sound, prudent transportation and land use planning practices by Botetourt Co. would be unimaginable. The impacts of significant additional trucks utilizing Interstate 81 Exit 150, which would receive most of this traffic, would represent a true public safety issue.

Attached are some of the points of Botetourt County's opposition. I will recommend a resolution formally opposing the use of both sites at the December 19, 2006, meeting of the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors.

Attachment

Opposition Points to Potential Intermodal Facilities in Botetourt County, Virginia

Exit 150, I-81: Based on available information the two potential sites in Botetourt Co. would be accessed from Exit 150 on I-81. The additional truck traffic added to Exit 150 could be equivalent to the traffic if another truck stop were added to Exit 150. VDOT at this time does not have a plan or funding to correct current extensive deficiencies at Exit 150. Until such time as Exit 150 is redesigned and constructed to new standards, the addition of an intermodal facility should not be considered.

Secondary Route 738: Secondary Route 738 is a substandard two-lane roadway. There are two bridges on Rt. 738 that would have to be replaced and widened and the entire roadway from US 460 to the site on Rt. 723; a total of 2.2 miles would require significant reconstruction to the vertical and horizontal alignment. At the proposed access point to the Rt. 723 site there is significant vertical differential between Rt. 738 and the N&S Rail line, which crosses Rt. 723. Thus, trailers have bottomed out at the railroad crossing, requiring removal by tow trucks. This is an extremely dangerous intersection. According to DRPT requirements, this is not in keeping with "minimal roadway costs."

Secondary Route 805: Secondary Route 805 is two-lane from the intersection of US 460 to the existing cement and asphalt plant (approx. 0.1 mile). However, beyond this point is a one lane underpass under the existing N&S railroad tracks with height restrictions of 13'14". The underpass would have to be raised and widened to two lanes to meet all current VDOT environmental, design, drainage and construction standards to accommodate tractor-trailer traffic. According to DRPT requirements, they do not want to build new bridges.

Additional Concerns

- Route 738 contains a county recreation park and elementary school. The additional truck traffic on Rt. 738 would be a serious safety hazard for school buses and the public in general accessing these county facilities.
- Either one of the sites would be a significant impact to adjacent neighborhoods. The Blue Ridge District has a long-standing civic league which is concerned with safety, environmental, traffic and community development and compatibility issues.
- The Blue Ridge Parkway parallels Secondary Route 738 for approximately 1.33 miles and includes the Norfolk & Southern overlook within 100 yards of

the roadway. Both the Rt. 723 and Rt. 805 sites are within the Blue Ridge Parkway viewshed.

- Both sites lack public facilities and would have to be served by well and septic. Based on recent studies in these areas, the underlying soils are questionable due to shale and underlying karst.
- Approximately 1500' of Route 738 is located within the 100-yr. FEMA floodplain with significant floodplain adjacent to the road for approximately 4000'.
- Approximately one mile of the existing rail line adjacent to Rt. 738 is within the FEMA regulated floodplain.
- An intermodal facility operating 24 hours per day would have significant impacts on adjacent properties due to the traffic noise, loading, unloading operations, fumes and other noise associated with such a facility.
- When assessing potential impacts it is important to note that there are dual impacts to consider due to the round-trip nature of such a facility. Taking into consideration round-trips, the Rt. 723 site should be viewed as 22 miles in distance from 1-81 and the Rt. 805 site should be viewed as 28 miles from 1-81.
- Due to the addition of the amount of truck traffic and coupled with the proposed speed increase along US 460, Staff expects that the county's rescue squads would see a substantial increase in calls along the entire travelway, on and from 1-81 to the potential site.
- The county's current zoning/subdivision ordinance does not have a classification for an intermodal facility and this would require substantial research to determine site-specific impacts regarding truck, fire and rescue, road improvements and environmental issues.
- The Rt. 723 site contains only 32 acres. It is our understanding that 65 acres is the minimum requirement.

Botetourt County Comprehensive Plan Compatibility

Secondary Route 723 *Site*

- This site is within 1000 feet of the Blue Ridge Parkway and within the Parkway's view shed. The Botetourt County Comprehensive Plan designates the parkway as a Special Policy Area. The following policy recommendations, developed in coordination with staff of the BRP should be considered for any development;

Blue Ridge Parkway Policy Recommendations:

1. The County should work with the NPS staff to clearly identify the location of the priority viewsheds; *i.e.,* those areas along the Parkway that, if developed, have the greatest potential to impact the Parkway's scenic qualities.
2. New development in proximity to the Parkway should be evaluated partially on the basis of its visual impact on the Parkway. BRP staff should be consulted on such development proposals to obtain their opinion on the proposals impact on the Parkway's scenic quality.
3. Botetourt County should encourage the developers of property within priority viewsheds to minimize visual impacts on the Parkway. Impacts can potentially be

minimized through changes in site or building design, including grading, building locations, building height, building and roof colors, street locations, lighting, and landscaping and buffering.

4. Botetourt County and BRP staff should provide landowners within priority viewsheds information on conservation techniques and the economic benefits that can accrue to a landowner through conservation. These techniques are described in the Agriculture/Rural Preservation Special Policy Area.
5. Botetourt County should prepare a specific land use plan for future use of property in proximity to the Parkway's interchange with Route 460. This land use plan should consider the adoption of design guidelines for new development along the Route 460 corridor in proximity to the Parkway and Interchange. The Commonwealth of Virginia specifically authorizes such guidelines.

- The 2004 Comprehensive Plan indicates that the future land use in the Blue Ridge District should be limited to medium density residential or remain agricultural or forest conservation. No new industrial land use areas for the Blue Ridge District were projected in the long-range plan. The only areas designated as industrial in the Blue Ridge District are sites that existed as industrial at the time the 2004 comprehensive plan was adopted.

State Route 805 Site

- As stated previously, the industrial areas in the future land use map of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan in the Blue Ridge District indicate areas that existed as industrial sites at the time the plan was adopted, not areas of desired industrial development. The Comprehensive Plan indicates that the Blue Ridge District should either remain as agricultural or forest conservation lands, or be developed as medium density residential.

Comment: (021, 2-T-23) Report Note: During the public meeting on December 13, 2006, Wanda Wingo, Chairman of the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors, submitted the written statement outlined in Comment (021, 1-L-21) above.

Comment: (022, 1-T-22) Report Note: During the public meeting on December 13, 2006, Jerry Burgess, County Administrator for Botetourt County, echoed Chairman Wingo's comments above in Comment (021, 1-L-21) and indicated that the incoming trucks to the facility should be subtracted from the public benefit figure for the number of trucks off the road.

Comment: (038, 3-L-47) The deadline for the decision on the location of the intermodal facility is almost here. In fact, the decision may have already been made. In any case, I would like to express my summary of the situation.

1. When asked, no localities wanted the subject facility; so the areas which objected the least namely-Roanoke City, Salem and Roanoke County (not Botetourt or Montgomery Counties) should be candidates.
2. Even though NS has made it more than clear that Elliston is their preference; shouldn't another less obtrusive site be used-even if it is more costly?
3. With Montgomery & Botetourt Counties so violently opposed to the facility, wouldn't it be a travesty to force it on them with the use of so much state funds?

4. Regarding the Elliston site, even with the pollution/spill safeguards NS has mentioned, is it wise to put the facility upstream of the valley's main water supply?
5. The beautiful and scenic farmland at Elliston will most likely be developed in the future. But wouldn't an attractive subdivision or even a nicely developed factory (like Rowe Furniture) with hundreds of jobs be much better than an ugly and noisy facility with only 11 jobs?

I realize this is not an easy decision for you and the board. If a site in Botetourt or Montgomery is chosen, this facility along with the associated truck stops, warehouses and distribution centers will change a beautiful area into a hard core industrial/commercial venue. The citizens do not want this!!

At the meeting in Salem, you promised to look at all angles in the selection process and to make it transparent. Since then, I have carefully read the newspapers and watched the TV news, but have not seen or heard anything from your office.

We would appreciate knowing if the selection process is still on going and if the usable sites have been surveyed, etc. Are there some favorites? Believe me, a lot of people are anxious to hear from you!

Response: *There are many factors in addition to cost that are being examined through this review process, which includes input from DRPT, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Virginia Port Authority and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. DRPT is working to ensure that all sites are being evaluated based on several areas of criteria, including specific homes and businesses affected, safety concerns and highway traffic.*

The jobs created by the intermodal facility itself do not represent significant employment figures. However, the potential for ancillary economic development as businesses seek to locate near the intermodal facility will provide opportunities for many local jobs and additional local investment. For example, the Virginia Port Authority reports that the Virginia Inland Port in Front Royal, VA has generated over 7,000 jobs through the companies that have located nearby since the facility opened in 1989. These companies have invested over $559 million in the local economy.

The selection process for the site location is still underway. As of the issue date of this report, none of the 10 sites has been eliminated from consideration.

Comment: (042, 1-E-51) I am responding in regards to the two Blue Ridge sites. I am not in favor of either of the Blue Ridge sites because of the additional traffic impact it will have on US460 and exit 150. I hope the DRPT will listen to the board of supervisors and the county administrator when they have very good points on the same problems I have pointed out.

As a tax payer in this state I hope these sites will be dropped from the list ASAP. I can not see the state helping pay part of the cost for this facility with tax payer money and then add insult to injury by adding to the problems that already exist on US 460 and exit 150. From all the studies that have been done on the exit 150 problem I think that the state money that would be going to this project would easily need to be doubled or even tripled to help with upgrades to a problem that all ready exists at exit 150. From

everything that has been released on traffic studies to potential fixes at this exit it is going to be very expensive to fix the problems that already exist.

I'm not against the facility when it is put in the proper place. But please do not add to the traffic problems that all ready exist in southern Botetourt County. If anyone on the DRPT board likes the idea of these locations in Botetourt County please ride down here on a week morning and afternoon to get a better idea of the traffic problems on 460 and the exit 150 interchange before backing either one of these locations with state money. And also look at the current numbers VDOT has said it would cost to fix the problems at exit 150 before the additional truck traffic is added. Please do your homework before either of these sites are chosen.

Comment: (051, 1-L-62) I recently forwarded to you a copy of Botetourt County Board of Supervisors Chairman Wanda C. Wingo's December 13, 2006, correspondence expressing opposition to Norfolk and Southern Corporation's announcement of two sites in Botetourt County as potential locations for a future intermodal transportation facility.

At its December 19, 2006, meeting, the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors met and unanimously voted to approve the enclosed resolution formally opposing either site for such use.

Attachment

Resolution of Opposition to Potential Intermodal Transportation Facility Locations in Botetourt County

WHEREAS, Norfolk and Southern Corporation has announced two sites in Botetourt County informally known as the State Route 723 Webster Brick site, and the State Route 805 Blue Ridge site as potential locations for a future intermodal transportation facility; and,

WHEREAS, such intrusive heavy industrial operations have significant, widespread and irreversible impacts, including noise, air and water pollution, traffic problems, public safety issues, land use planning and compatibility conflicts, and general degradation of quality of life; and,

WHEREAS, these two potential locations are totally inappropriate due to hilly topography, recognized rail line curve problems, severe physical restrictions due to elevation differentials between road and rail at the point of access, and, the need for construction of a new railroad overpass; and,

WHEREAS, major road improvements tantamount to the construction of miles of new roadway would be required; and,

WHEREAS, the impacts of significant additional tractor trailer trucks utilizing already overburdened Interstate 81 Exit 150, which would receive most of this traffic, would represent a true public safety issue; and,

WHEREAS, such a high-impact industrial project would obviate thoughtful, sound transportation and land use planning efforts by Botetourt County, including its long-range Comprehensive Plan, which projects no new industrial uses in this area of Blue Ridge, rather, that growth be limited to residential or remain agriculture or forest conservation; and,

WHEREAS, the Blue Ridge Parkway has been designated as a Special Policy Area in the County's Comprehensive Plan, and intermodal sites would negate considerable County coordination efforts with the Blue Ridge Parkway on viewshed protection strategies regarding future development; and,

WHEREAS, the inappropriateness of these two sites and the overwhelming costs that their use would extract from the community and the public at large, and, the resulting irreversible degradation to the general quality of life render these locations unacceptable; and,

WHEREAS, additional detail of opposition is contained in a separate document entitled "Opposition Points to the Potential Intermodal Facilities in Botetourt County, Virginia,"

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors hereby formally opposes the use of locations referred to as the State Route 723 Webster Brick site, and, the State Route 805 Blue Ridge site as intermodal transportation locations, and directs the County Administrator to so notify the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, elected representatives, Norfolk and Southern Corporation, and other parties as appropriate.

A Copy Teste: Wanda C. Wingo, Chairman, Botetourt County Board of Supervisors
December 19, 2006

Comment: (055, 1-C-66; 055, 2-C-67) COMMENTS REFER TO THE BLUERIDGE AND WEBSTER BRICK SITES. I attended your Public Meeting in Salem, VA to hear comments regarding the proposed Intermodal Rail yard sites and am a current resident of Blue Ridge VA. Retired after 30 years of railroad service, working in the Transportation, Environmental (hazardous material) and Safety departments, evaluating the risks of class one railroads. (The major part of my career was spent in the intense rail freight terminals at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, but later performed inspections of Intermodal containers at major port facilities) I feel I have an "inside" view of the overall effects of a intermodal / rail yard located at the proposed BlueRidge and Webster Brick sites.

The following are reasons for my opposition: 1. The obvious increase in the volume of truck traffic would not only cause a rise in vehicle accidents and intimidate local residents accustomed to the rural life style but potentially threatens the lives of students riding school buses which make numerous stops along Rt. 6041 Rt. 220A and Rt. 460 (this would be the preferred route used by trucks to the two Blue Ridge proposed sites) traveling to and from, Colonial Elementary, Read Mt. Middle, and Lord Botetourt High Schools. Additionally, to all such increases in traffic would be the inevitable need of upgraded traffic lights at intersections along Rt 604 and Rt 460 and the traffic delays at Rt 460 & the "T" of Rt 604 may even demand an overpass to ensure a smooth traffic flow, as this intersection now has a Lowes, WalMart, Applebees, Sonic, and additional out parcels yet to be developed. 2. The quality of life all local residents have come to enjoy would be gone forever as the air pollution created by the large volume of trucks and locomotives would destroy the quiet countryside and diminish the level of clean fresh air currently admired, especially during the summer months when the combined diesel fumes would permeate the air in the valley humidity. 3. The Blue Ridge area of Botetourt County currently realizing a surge in residential building sites could suffer a significant decline in the attractiveness of future home building/ buyers and the supporting local businesses .4. Noise pollution from the potentially 500 trucks per day (150,000 trucks taken off 1-81 annually as stated by the DRPT would only be increased by the 24 / 7, construction, maintenance, police and support vehicles to operate such a facility. The vehicles would only be a small portion of the noise pollution in comparison to the locomotives running continuously, the loading and unloading of the truck containers along with the coupling and uncoupling of rail cars during the switching and make up of

trains. Increase in rail traffic would necessitate additional crossing notification (bell ringing and blowing of the horns) by the locomotive engineers on these trains moving in and out of the yards. 5. The potential danger looming within each container is one of the most underestimated concerns of our time. These containers can, and often do, carry HAZMAT (Hazardous Materials), although regulated the rate of inspections from foreign ports is considered low and shipment vulnerability is high. Many States have put this security issue on the very top of the list of things to be addressed in the immediate future. Vulnerable rail cars are a major concern, raising questions as to the proximity of rail terminals to major highways, schools, etc. America's war on terrorism in the Middle East is posing unforeseen additional acts of violence targeted directly at U.S. citizens and careful thought should be taken before sealing a community's fate.

In closing a proposal to ease the traffic on 1-81 and reduce highway fatalities through the expansion and segregation of automobile / commuter and truck / commercial traffic was an excellent plan and one that would be a win-win situation with careful comprehensive planning.

4.13 For Webster Brick Site

Comment: (014, 1-E-14) It is our opinion that the most appropriate site for the proposed Norfolk Southern Intermodal site is the site that is near Webster Rd., north and east of Roanoke. I feel that this sight will offer the most conducive environment, with regard to both traffic and neighborhood protection. We feel that the sight in Salem would be detrimental, since traffic is already such a problem in many areas.

4.14 Against Colorado St. Site

Comment: (014, 1-E-14) We feel that the sight in Salem would be detrimental, since traffic is already such a problem in many areas.

4.15 For Colorado St. Site

Comment: (001, 1-E-1) Please bring the intermodal facility site to Salem.

4.16 For East End Shops Site

Comment: (041, 1-E-50) In my opinion, the East End Shops would be a much better choice. It is not wise to mix industry with people's home life environments. I love the railroad and the business it brings to the Roanoke area; my job depends partly upon the railroad. From a business perspective, I love to see the success of Norfolk Southern and railroad companies such as Freight Car. However, everything has its place. I would not build a home near the East End shops, that is why I plan on building a home in Elliston come spring 2007. I do not want something that resembles the East End shops replacing the beautiful scenery located between Salem and Shawsville. Elliston is not zoned for the intermodal site. The East End shops are not zoned for agriculture or residential living. Keep the two separate. "Everything having its proper place and

everything in its proper place" is long revered motto applicable to this situation. Do not build the intermodal facility is Shawsville.

4.17 Against Elliston Site

Comment: (011, 1-T-11) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Mike Hawes, an Elliston resident, opposed the Elliston facility. He indicated that in 1987 the Virginia Inland Port proposed its facility for Clarke County and they didn't want it but the facility was then established in Warren County. Warren would have met few criteria on the minimum criteria list. The criteria was directly from Norfolk Southern. Dr. Martinez said that they wouldn't do this facility without public funds. They can't use eminent domain with public funds. The review team needs to evaluate the sites thoroughly to determine if public funds should be invested. DRPT and Norfolk Southern need to make this attractive to the community through compromise.

Comment: (015, 1-T-15) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Shireen Parsons opposed the Elliston site and commented that the Board of Supervisors did the right thing by opposing the facility. She represents a non-profit law firm and would like to meet with people to see how to stop this.

Comment: (016, 1-T-16) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Robert Apgar, a resident of Elliston, expressed concern about the Elliston site. He indicated that the site would be in front of his house. He commented on road and bridge improvements that would be required in addition to the school buses that use the road.

Comment: (017, 1-L-17) Thank you for the opportunity to express my views concerning the proposal for an intermodal trucking and train depot that is under consideration in Elliston, Montgomery County, near my residence. I must acknowledge a deep personal interest in the destruction of the beautiful environment where I live for the purpose of generating significantly more truck traffic on the highways of the Old Dominion. This alone would give one pause; I drive to work every day along I-81 and it is often dangerously overcrowded with trucks heading north and south; adding to the truck traffic on I-81 is simply not a wise decision and creating a depot that would purposely increase that amount of truck traffic just around the corner from my house is simply perverse. Since the interstate highway system is highly stressed at this point, and numerous suggestions under consideration for alleviating the burden of truck traffic on this section of I-81, the idea of adding more truck traffic without a provision for how they will be accommodated is irresponsible. This is particularly true in the pastoral area near Elliston where the impact of heavy industrial development like the one being proposed is likely to have numerous adverse consequences.

Please give your earnest consideration to matters of regional planning at this stage. It is remarkable to me that the zoning ordinances of a Virginia county can be simply overridden by crass commercial interests, simply because the land is cheap and the location is convenient for trains riding along the Roanoke River. This is also a potential flood zone and the access to the interstate via Dixie Caverns exit poses serious problems for the residents of Roanoke County who must enter the four lane road (US 460) before they can join the I-81 corridor. Here are some other considerations for the future of this region of Virginia, and some lessons we can learn from regional planning in other states and countries:

*in Europe, for example, this environmental degradation would never happen; strict laws concerning greenbelts and zoning for industrial uses require that industry locates in certain areas, clearly marked and set aside for that purpose; the idea is to concentrate industrial and commercial functions in areas where there is a network of support for those activities;

- logically, one would assume that trucks and trains would soon need other things; repair shops; gas stations, specially including diesel; fast food and convenience stores; places that specialize in forms of entertainment for truckers, highly transient audiences that are not anchored in socially responsible ways to neighborhoods and local governments; the growth of a fairly dense commercial district of ancillary support of this kind would do nothing for the quality of life of local residents in Elliston.
- other states and countries have made long term regional planning a matter of highest priority; residents can look ahead 20 years and know that their neighborhoods are governed by zoning laws and public support that assures the provision of relevant and adequate public services, focused on the predictable and continuous needs of that human community; sudden changes of direction are not permitted under this form of regional planning; there is a social contract, a covenant between citizens and government and business that is not easily violated
- ongoing supervision of the regional planning process allows for gradual change as the society matures and other needs become evident; however, the planning commission is required to take into full consideration the interests of the larger public good in every case; in other words, commercial interests do not and cannot override the public interest; the responsible use of public and private land is monitored carefully, so that quiet farms are not turned into centers for the burning of tires, for example

*in Roanoke and the surrounding communities, there are numerous industrial parks and business ventures that are well attuned to the needs of the train/trucking industries and that already provide an infrastructure of adequate support;

- Some industrial parks are notoriously under-utilized; some business districts have become virtual wastelands when businesses have departed; some industrial sites have become polluted and await Superfund cleanup; these are often blighted areas where a new industrial venture would restore the financial health of the zone, bring jobs to the center of Roanoke Valley (where the city is losing population and needs more public and private investment), and generate the income needed to improve infrastructure
- A synergy between public interest and private investment for the purpose of benefiting greater Roanoke would be met with enthusiasm in some quarters; certainly the intermodal trucking facility would be superior to huge vacant lots ; there is an opportunity to be creative and forward-looking here, designing an attractive urban space that takes advantage of some of the places where the railroad already owns property and using it in a manner that brings new prosperity and energy to the city; instead of locating industry in a tranquil *rural* setting that has no infrastructure whatever, seems the wiser choice
- Urban and regional planning would require that the facility move through several stages of development, gradually building up an impact statement and working with a diverse array of stakeholders; this is the responsible manner of going about basic changes, instead of seeking a rural tract that has few stakeholders whose voices can be easily overridden by commercial

interests and a willing sale of real estate; serving the larger community in this way would be complicated, of course!

The Roanoke Times today published an interesting story on the nature of contract law. The railroad may indeed have violated the terms of its agreement to respect the zoning laws of Virginia counties when determining land use. But even if this is not a breach of contract, it certainly violates the spirit of the agreement, which sought to provide for citizens of Virginia a guarantee that their wishes as expressed in zoning ordinances cannot be revoked by corporate greed. The railroad should give due consideration to its long range interests as a corporate citizen in this case, and not attempt to override the wishes of a small community. Surely when the governing body of a Virginia county goes on record in opposition to a business venture within their jurisdiction, only the most hardened capitalist adventurer would turn a blind eye to this reasonable exercise of stewardship by elected officials. Thanks again for the opportunity to express my views, and good luck with your deliberation.

Comment: (018, 1-T-18) Report Note: During the public meeting on December 13, 2006, Gary Creed of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors expressed opposition to the Elliston site. He opposed the concept of applying eminent domain when public dollars are used and indicated that this project is inconsistent with the Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan.

Comment: (019, 1-T-19) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Eileen Umberto, a resident of Elliston, opposed the Elliston site. Safety is a big issue. Route 460 is the only way in and out. If the facility will reduce trucks on the road, there shouldn't be more trucks in the community. Put the facility in an industrial area.

Comment: (020, 1-E-20) As I consider intermodal sites in Roanoke, it seems to me that the other sites besides Elliston are not being seriously considered. Since the traffic on the rail will primarily be going north, you should locate the intermodal north and east of Roanoke to minimize traffic impacts. It would make the project run much more smoothly to put the intermodal on a site that is already zoned for heavy industry use. Also, locating it east of Roanoke allows the increased rail traffic generated from the intermodal to not slow down existing grade crossings in Roanoke. It seems to me that while Elliston may have its perks, it is not the best option for the intermodal placement.

Comment: (034, 1-T-36; 034, 1-T-37) Report note: At the December 13, 2006 public meeting Richard Rittenhouse, a Shawsville resident, opposed the Elliston site, citing the increase in truck traffic on Route 460 and I-81, that there would not be many jobs and that the jobs created would be low paying jobs. He questioned the benefits of the project in view of the number of trucks that would serve the facility on a daily basis.

Comment: (034, 2-E-78) I am writing to state my opposition to the proposed intermodal facility at Elliston, Virginia. I am opposed to any such facility that would be proposed near US 11/460 for the following reasons: 1. An intermodal facility at or near Elliston would increase traffic to an unacceptable level on US 11/460, as well as at the I-81 entrance/exits. These are areas that are already overloaded with traffic. As you know, there is already a high accident rate (often with fatalities) along this stretch of I-81. Additional truck traffic entering and exiting this area would only exacerbate this problem. 2. This facility would not bring in many jobs, and few of those would be skilled. The citizens of Montgomery County have expressed a desire to seek economic development

through high-tech industry, and in such a way as to preserve the rural/scenic character of eastern Montgomery County. The proposed intermodal facility would bring in about as much economic development as five fast-food restaurants. Is this the kind of career opportunity that you would want for your family? 3. This facility would violate the wishes of Montgomery County residents to keep this area rural and scenic. Construction of this facility would bring more noise, light, and air pollution, and would likely attract the construction of additional warehouses and distribution centers, further eroding the rural/scenic character of this area. This would be an anti-democratic process, violating the will of the citizens of eastern Montgomery County. I ask you to consider siting this proposed project in a more appropriate location, such as Dublin industrial park, or the N&W facility in Roanoke, if indeed this project would truly benefit Virginia at all. However, if this is merely a taxpayer gift to the rail industry, I would oppose it in any location, unless it could be demonstrated unequivocally that it would be a significant step toward reducing highway traffic on I-81. I have not yet seen this demonstrated.

Comment: (035, 1-T-40) Report note: during the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Karen Waldron, a Shawsville Resident opposed the Elliston site. She cited the impact of the facility and distribution centers and noted that many developers and property owners have conservation easements on property in the area. She expressed concern about container security and inspections, and noted that the minimum criteria includes a minimum of 65 acres and that the Elliston site appears to be the only site with 65 acres.

Comment: (037, 1-T-44) Report note: during the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Clay Goodman, County Administrator for Montgomery County, opposed the Elliston site. He cited the October 23, 2006 Board action in this regard. He indicated that the site does not comply with the county’s 2025 Comprehensive Plan and that it would have a negative impact on the environment and the river, in addition to an increase in truck traffic.

Comment: (037, 2-L-69) Enclosed please find a certified copy of a resolution adopted by the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors on October 23, 2006 requesting the Governor and the Virginia General Assembly to oppose the Commonwealth of Virginia providing any state funding to Norfolk Southern for the development of an intermodal facility in the Elliston Community of Montgomery County, Virginia.

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors opposes this facility for the following reasons: 1) The proposed intermodal facility does not comply with the County's 2025 Comprehensive Plan; 2) The proposed intermodal facility will have a negative environmental impact on the Roanoke River and the surrounding rural environment; 3) Absent an upgraded North Fork Road (SR 603) taking truck traffic to and from the proposed intermodal facility site to 1-81, Exit 128, the proposed intermodal facility will increase truck traffic traveling through the rural villages of Shawsville, Elliston and Lafayette which is not compatible with the rural residential character of these villages; 4) The proposed intermodal facility is not the type of economic development the County is encouraging or seeking to locate within the County of Montgomery; and 5) The proposed intermodal facility will have a negative impact on the County's tourism initiatives by industrializing one of the County's most scenic landscapes.

I attended the public meeting on December 13, 2006 on behalf of the Board of Supervisors, and voiced their opposition to the proposed Intermodal Facility in the Elliston Community of Montgomery County.

Attachment

AT AN ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY, VIRGINIA HELD ON THE 23rd DAY OF OCTOBER, 2006 AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE BOARD CHAMBERS, MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, 755 ROANOKE STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VIRGINIA:

R-FY-07-62
RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR AND THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO OPPOSE THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA PROVIDING STATE FUNDING TO NORFOLK SOUTHERN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERMODAL FACILITY IN THE ELLISTON COMMUNITY OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA

On a motion by Gary D. Creed, seconded by John A. Muffo and carried unanimously,

WHEREAS, Norfolk Southern has identified a portion of land adjoining State Route 460 in the rural community of Elliston in the County of Montgomery as the preferred site for Norfolk Southern to locate an Intermodal Facility to serve Norfolk Southern's Heartland Corridor; and

WHEREAS, In order to mitigate truck traffic traveling through the rural villages of Shawsville, Elliston and Lafayette to and from the proposed Intermodal Facility, the Board of Supervisors asked the Virginia Department of Transportation ("VDOT") and Norfolk Southern if North Fork Road (State Route 603) could be upgraded from US 11/460 to 1-81 (Exit 128) to handle truck traffic; and to date VDOT and Norfolk Southern have stated there is no funding for the project; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors have gone on record opposing the proposed Norfolk Southern Intermodal Facility locating in the rural community of Elliston because (1) the proposed Intermodal Facility does not comply with the County's 2025 Comprehensive Plan; (2) the proposed Intermodal Facility will have a negative environmental impact on the Roanoke River and the surrounding rural environment; (3) absent an upgraded North Fork Road (State Route 603) taking truck traffic to and from the proposed Intermodal Facility site to the 1-81 Exit 128, the proposed Intermodal Facility will increase truck traffic traveling through the rural villages of Shawsville, Elliston and Lafayette which is not compatible with the rural residential character of these villages; (4) the proposed Intermodal Facility is not the type of economic development the County is encouraging or seeking to locate within the County of Montgomery; and (5) the proposed Intermodal Facility will have a negative impact on the County's tourism initiatives by industrializing one of the County's most scenic landscapes; and

WHEREAS, Norfolk Southern and the Commonwealth of Virginia have signed an agreement for Virginia to provide $12.8 million of tax payers money to Norfolk Southern to develop an intermodal site subject to the Commonwealth of Virginia approving the proposed site; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery requests that the Governor and the Virginia General Assembly oppose the Commonwealth of Virginia providing any state public funding to Norfolk Southern to develop an intermodal site in the Elliston Community of Montgomery County for the reasons stated by the Board of Supervisors on record.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery, Virginia, that the Board of Supervisors hereby requests the Governor and the Virginia General Assembly to oppose the Commonwealth of Virginia providing any state funding to Norfolk Southern for the development of an intermodal facility in the Elliston Community of Montgomery County, Virginia.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery hereby respectfully requests the Governor to consider this opposition by the Board of Supervisors and publicly announce to the Board of Supervisors and the residents of the Elliston Community as soon as possible but not later than ninety (90) days from the approval of this Resolution whether the Governor opposes the Commonwealth of Virginia funding the development of an intermodal facility in the Elliston Community of Montgomery County, Virginia.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery hereby respectfully requests the Governor to provide, to the Board of Supervisors and the citizens of Elliston when made available to the Governor or his staff, information as to the other sites that Norfolk Southern is considering now or may consider in the future for an intermodal site for the Heartland Corridor in addition to the Elliston site that the tax payers of Virginia may be asked to assist financially in developing.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows: AYE: James D. Politis, John A. Muffo, Doug Marrs, Mary W. Biggs, Annette S. Perkins, Gary D. Creed, Steve L. Spradlin. NAY: None. ATTEST: B. Clayton Goodman, III**,** County Administrator.

Comment: (038, 1-C-45) This seems like an exercise a futility since no site meets the state's criteria except Elliston. However, it is hard for me to believe that taxpayer funds would be used to build a heavy industrial facility where it is so violently opposed-my suggestion is to build the facility in western Roanoke County (Horne, Singer or other site) which is already zoned industrial. In fact, partnering with Roanoke County as they build the Regional Jail (including access roads/bridges) seems logical. The trucks could slide on and off I-81 at exit 132 with little effect on US 11/460. Don't put such a large ugly footprint in the beautiful Elliston area. As promised in the meeting, keep this process transparent. The initial actions of NS have made everyone suspicious. The meeting was too late in the process and the facilities were too cramped.

Comment: (038, 3-L-46) The deadline for the decision on the location of the intermodal facility is almost here. In fact, the decision may have already been made. In any case, I would like to express my summary of the situation.

1. When asked, no localities wanted the subject facility; so the areas which objected the least namely-Roanoke City, Salem and Roanoke County (not Botetourt or Montgomery Counties) should be candidates.
2. Even though NS has made it more than clear that Elliston is their preference; shouldn't another less obtrusive site be used-even if it is more costly?

3. With Montgomery & Botetourt Counties so violently opposed to the facility, wouldn't it be a travesty to force it on them with the use of so much state funds?
4. Regarding the Elliston site, even with the pollution/spill safeguards NS has mentioned, is it wise to put the facility upstream of the valley's main water supply?
5. The beautiful and scenic farmland at Elliston will most likely be developed in the future. But wouldn't an attractive subdivision or even a nicely developed factory (like Rowe Furniture) with hundreds of jobs be much better than an ugly and noisy facility with only 11 jobs?

I realize this is not an easy decision for you and the board. If a site in Botetourt or Montgomery is chosen, this facility along with the associated truck stops, warehouses and distribution centers will change a beautiful area into a hard core industrial/commercial venue. The citizens do not want this!!

At the meeting in Salem, you promised to look at all angles in the selection process and to make it transparent. Since then, I have carefully read the newspapers and watched the TV news, but have not seen or heard anything from your office.

We would appreciate knowing if the selection process is still on going and if the usable sites have been surveyed, etc. Are there some favorites? Believe me, a lot of people are anxious to hear from you!

Response: *There are many factors in addition to cost that are being examined through this review process, which includes input from DRPT, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Virginia Port Authority and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. DRPT is working to ensure that all sites are considered based on several areas of criteria, including specific homes and businesses affected, safety concerns and highway traffic.*

The jobs created by the intermodal facility itself do not represent significant employment figures. However, the potential for ancillary economic development as businesses seek to locate near the intermodal facility will provide opportunities for many local jobs and additional local investment. For example, the Virginia Port Authority reports that the Virginia Inland Port in Front Royal, VA has generated over 7,000 jobs through the companies that have located nearby since the facility opened in 1989. These companies have invested over $559 million in the local economy.

The selection process for the site location is still underway. As of the issue date of this report, none of the 10 sites has been eliminated from consideration.

Comment: (040, 1-E-49) I live in Elliston and am very concerned about the damage to our rural environment and safety issues related to locating the facility in a residential community such as ours. In reviewing the other sites, it seems counter intuitive that a residential area is being considered when the Garman Road Site is already industrial use. How can we justify displacing six homes when it is not necessary. This week USA Today did a feature story about Floyd County and their ability to maintain their rural, family friendly lifestyle. I commend them. Those of us who grew up in eastern Montgomery County have the same right to decide the fate of our lovely valley. We don't want this and should not have if forced upon us when the alternatives are available.

Comment: (041, 1-E-50) The Elliston site is not a good location for the intermodal railroad site. In my opinion, the East End Shops would be a much better choice. It is not wise to mix industry with people's home life environments. I love the railroad and the business it brings to the Roanoke area; my job depends partly upon the railroad. From a business perspective, I love to see the success of Norfolk Southern and railroad companies such as Freight Car. However, everything has its place. I would not build a home near the East End shops, that is why I plan on building a home in Elliston come spring 2007. I do not want something that resembles the East End shops replacing the beautiful scenery located between Salem and Shawsville. If the intermodal facility ends up in Elliston, I'll just build somewhere else. Somewhere where I can be excited about raising a family out in the country where I can teach my kids that respecting important aspects of our lives often means keeping those things separated from one another. Elliston is not zoned for the intermodal site. The East End shops are not zoned for agriculture or residential living. Keep the two separate. "Everything having its proper place and everything in its proper place" is long revered motto applicable to this situation. Do not build the intermodal facility is Shawsville. It is sometimes understood that a few people may have to adjust or even suffer when a community can benefit from certain decisions and actions; but never should an entire community have to suffer for the benefit of one entity, Norfolk Southern. In this case, the community does not support the decision to build the intermodal facility because it does not benefit the community in Elliston; therefore, there is no justification for such an action that will have direct negative affects upon individuals and the community as a whole. The railroad's interest in Elliston is not close to being altruistic or out of concern for the community. It is a decision that anyone can blatantly see as beneficial only to Norfolk Southern. Do not build the intermodal facility in Elliston.

Comment: (050, 1-E-60; 050, 2-E-61) As a property owner in the area I wish to state my very strong opposition to the proposed Norfolk Southern intermodal facility in Elliston, Virginia on the grounds of the risk it would pose to the watershed for the Roanoke River basin. As indicated in The Roanoke Times, this site is "…at the head of the Roanoke River and above the water supply for much of the Roanoke Valley." Additionally, this facility would destroy the pristine view of Poor Mountain as viewed from route 460. Common sense should prevail over all else…select another site.

Comment: (057, 1-L-70) I am responding to the solicitation of public comment on the selection of a site for the proposed Inland Port. I am well aware that Norfolk Southern's criteria, as stated, appear to favor Elliston as the preferred location. What I would like to know is: (1) When were these criteria established and by whom? Were the appropriate state agencies involved in the process? (2) What other unmentioned criteria, such as the price of land and the number and type of current owners, came into play? My understanding is that it is this portion of the project is the railroad's expense, so I assume money and ease of acquisition were also important considerations.
(3) Were environmental impacts ever explored? When a Norfolk Southern delegation finally addressed the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors, they left the distinct impression that they were uninformed in this area.

My opposition to the Elliston location is based on expanded criteria, those of local residents and of county planners and elected officials. These include: (1) Provisions of the Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan, which was arrived at through an exemplary process of citizen input over a period of three years. This plan provides for a mix of industrial, agricultural, and residential uses that also identifies the need for

preserving open space. Again, the Norfolk Southern officials did not seem to be aware of the plan. (2) An existing "public/private partnership" between the state and local landowners, which has led to establishment of the Pedlar Hills Natural Area Preserve and to the protection of over a thousand acres of private land now under conservation easements. This represents a compact between the state and its citizens, which could be rendered meaningless by introduction into the area of a large transfer facility and the inevitable development related to it. Indeed, the undermining of this compact can be expected to have a negative impact on other property owners who may be considering easements. This is not consistent with Governor Kaine's goals for preservation. (3) The pervasive effect this type of facility can be predicted to have on the future growth of the county. Proponents seem to base their support on the belief that the port will provide job opportunities. Clearly, the transfer station itself would do no such thing. Nor would it contribute to the county tax base. Jobs would have to come from spinoffs such as warehouses, distribution centers, truck stops, and the like. Those jobs would not become inaccessible merely by virtue of being over the county line, in areas already designated for similar operations. Montgomery County would then be free to proceed with its plans for attracting high tech enterprises related to the resources of Virginia Tech, without the threat of pollution and blight to discourage enterprises of this caliber.

Intermodal transfer is an environmentally sensible solution to a number of our transportation problems. This project is, I hope, only the beginning of a chain of such sites. It is therefore all the more important for the state to establish its own criteria at the outset-for both the process to be followed and the site qualifications to be considered--not simply to accept what the railroad wishes to offer. I think there is no dispute at this point about the bungling of the process in the current case. Presumably, that will be remedied in the future, now that the legislature is apprised of the problem. I am arguing that a broader range of factors need to be on the list.

The Commonwealth of Virginia desperately needs a comprehensive plan of its own, comparable to Montgomery County's, in which areas for industrial and residential development, agriculture, and open space are clearly designated. If Virginia is truly to be for lovers, then not every part of it can be up for grabs.

Response: *The minimum site location criteria were established by DRPT in consultation with Norfolk Southern, relative to the operating requirements of this intermodal facility. This process is part of DRPT's negotiations with Norfolk Southern on the location of the intermodal facility, within the Heartland Corridor (Virginia Components) project. DRPT also offered area localities the opportunity to submit site locations based on the same set of criteria. These minimum criteria were developed to ensure that the facility would be able to provide service to both the Heartland Corridor along Route 460 and the I-81 rail corridor, thereby helping to ensure the maximum diversion of truck traffic to rail. The facility must also provide sufficient access for trucks, therefore a requirement for proximity to I-81 was included. The additional requirements for grade separations and highway impacts are designed to minimize the related cost for this type of improvement. The acreage requirement is based on the following general assumptions: 35 acres for the facility with track, 15 acres for the support yard and leads, including a detention pond, and 15 acres of contingency for road relocation. Sites with less than 65 acres are acceptable if the functionality outlined in this breakdown of acreage usage is accommodated.*

The evaluation process includes input from the following state agencies: The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Virginia Port Authority and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. These agencies will evaluate sites in further detail, including ancillary costs such as the cost of property acquisition and the number/type of land owners affected. The land acquisition costs are included in the facility costs, and will be evaluated as part of DRPT's consideration of site proposals.

Environmental impacts are being explored by the state agencies involved in the evaluation process.

Comment: (062-1-C-75) I am writing concerning the placement of the Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility in Elliston. I am against this particular location for the inland port for many reasons.

1) Other locations such as Roanoke, Pulaski and Dublin want the facility in their respective region-it makes sense to place it where there is already an industrial base near a railroad line, rather than to create one at the expense of taxpayers' money.
2) The location of the port in Elliston would disrupt a peaceful community which is primarily residential. The impact of semis rushing through this area would be catastrophic, definitely not compatible with school bus schedules and the pace of life as it is now. 3) Besides congesting the Elliston area with more traffic, there would be more air pollution from the increased truck traffic and light pollution from the port itself. I am concerned about the water runoff into the river from the planned paved area required for this facility. 4) Some of the speakers at the 12/13/06 mtg. spoke in glowing terms of the port as a source of economic development. This reasoning goes against the comprehensive plan formulated by the Montgomery County Supervisors, our elected representatives. As citizens of Montgomery County we should be able to determine our economic future with something that will be an asset to the community. The port will not increase the economic base of the people in the community. Rather it will be an eyesore and will largely benefit the land speculators and corporations involved in its development. Low-paying jobs (most likely without health benefits) will only burden the surrounding community, rather than enrich it. The cost of this facility (in terms of what would be taken from the community) is too great. We live in a beautiful, peaceful area and we want to keep it that way.

Comment: (063, 1-L-76) I wanted you to be aware of concerns of the Western Virginia Water Authority regarding the siting of the proposed intermodal freight facility in Montgomery County and the potential effect of pollution in storm water run off on the Roanoke River.

According, I am enclosing a letter from Harwell M. Darby, Jr., counsel for the Authority, outlining these concerns.

Sincerely,
John S. Edwards
Enclosure

The Honorable John S. Edwards
Re: Western Virginia Water Authority

Attachment

Dear John,
As you are aware the Norfolk Southern Railroad is considering the placement of an intermodal freight facility in Montgomery County in the vicinity of Shawsville, Virginia. The facility will be very close to the Roanoke River which is one of the sources of raw water for treatment and distribution by the Western Virginia Water Authority in the Roanoke valley.

The Authority has asked Norfolk Southern to discuss pollution in potential storm water run off as well as possible catastrophe planning and has received a cordial but non-committal reception.

We want to make you aware of the concerns about protecting the raw water source. The Roanoke River in Montgomery County west of Salem, Virginia has been identified by the Authority in its Source Water Protection Plan under the Federal Safe Water Drinking Act as a source of water.

The intermodal facility will very likely have an impermeable surface which will inevitably carry petroleum byproducts as well as other materials (from brake linings, coupling hoses, brake discs, and other trace materials related to the operation of railroads, railroad cars and tractor trailers) into the Roanoke River. The Western Virginia Water Authority believes that attention to a collection method and application of best practices pretreatment mechanisms will prove vital in protecting its water source from point source contamination. In addition, the Authority would like to participate in designing protective measures in the event of an accident.

While the Authority is confident that Norfolk Southern will enter into a meaningful dialog and collaborative planning process, it would appreciate your being aware of its concerns as Norfolk Southern makes application for assistance from the General Assembly in establishing the intermodal facility.

By copy, we are also bringing this matter to the attention of Delegate Ware.

Comment: (064, 1-L-77) I am writing to you as a member of the Commonwealth Transportation Board to ask that you oppose the Norfolk Southern intermodal terminal site proposed for eastern Montgomery County.

As you are aware this $18 million terminal will be 70% funded by the Virginia taxpayers through your Board, yet NS was the only entity conducting the initial site search and provided no opportunity for the public input. When NS selected the site, landowners were threatened with eminent domain if they did not sell voluntarily. This was the first Board of Supervisors had heard of their plans-from the landowners and the newspapers.

NS then bluntly told the Board that the railroad operates under Federal statutes and did not need any local approval or input. Dr. Martinez stated to our Board that this project would not meet NS's internal rate of return for investments and would not be built without state funding. At the same time, without input, Montgomery County will be expected to provide substantial local government funding in support of this project for public safety, fire, and rescue services, and road improvements. Neither the Department of

Transportation nor NS has made plans or provisions to reimburse our locality for any of these costs.

Recently, in response to public opposition, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation announced a new site search. However, the site criteria specified in a letter from Mr. Tucker, Director of DRPT, were independently determined by DRPT and only mirror NS's criteria for Elliston. These were made public in a slide presentation by Dr. Martinez to our Board of Supervisors on October 9th. It is interesting to note that DRPT's site selection search will take only 45 days, but it took NS over six months of secretive searching to select Elliston. We are skeptical that DRPT has the real intention of conducting an actual "open and transparent process" that has any possibility of a different site selection.

Enclosed are two resolutions by the Board of Supervisors' opposing the siting of this project in Montgomery County. The first passed 4 to 0 and the second, after NS meet with the Board to describe the project, passed 7 to 0. This facility does not comply with the County's comprehensive plan, economic development plan, or zoning regulations. Because the only way to distribute the containers coming into the terminal highway, the Board also has serious concerns regarding increased truck traffic on local highways and with police, fire and rescue services and run-off into the Roanoke River. All these issues will have significant implications for quality of life and increased taxes for the citizens of Montgomery County.

Also enclosed is an article from the Winchester Star from June 13, 1987. At that time, the Secretary of Transportation refused to force Clark County to accept the Virginia Inland Port. The terminal then was located in Warren County which wanted the facility. Although Front Royal met virtually none of NS and/or DRPT current site criteria, both entities agree that it was a great success.

I can't believe that in the short span of 20 years the Commonwealth has come to a situation where it provides public funding for a project to a private corporation to then use eminent domain and ignores local approval, plans, and zoning, rather than have consideration for a subdivision of the Commonwealth. How can this situation be acceptable from a public policy standpoint for the Commonwealth of Virginia?

There are other localities in Southwest Virginia which want this project. At the public meeting in Salem on Dec. 13 both the Cities of Roanoke and Salem that they would like to work with DRPT on site selection. Neither had been contacted by NS or DRPT beyond the site criteria letter. Pulaski County is also interested in this project. By expanding the site search criteria to allow a more creative and participatory process, the Commonwealth of Transportation Board could align the economic development interest of both the Commonwealth and affected local governments. The outcome may not be the "perfect" site for Norfolk Southern, but it could result in the perfect site for the Commonwealth by providing a very viable alternative for all concerns.

The vast majority of projects for the Railroad Enhancement Act are for track and service improvements-not for a large new project such as this terminal. With the level of public funding involved in this project, it's time for Norfolk Southern to accept new modal and new responsibilities for public participation and governance. I ask that you require local government approval for siting this project and refuse projects that use eminent domain through your funding governance standards.

Comment: (065, 2-E-41) Anyone who has ever driven from Dixie Caverns to Christiansburg along Rt. 11/460 knows the beauty and value of this valley surrounded by mountains on both sides with the Roanoke River following you on one side. It is this river that acts as a water source for many towns and cities as well as the home to a number of threatened species of fish, birds, and wildlife of our region. Tourism in the fall with the foliage rivals that of New England and citizens of the Roanoke and New River valley take full advantage of that benefit. This is a section of road through the scenic villages of Lafayette, Elliston, and Shawsville. The residents of these communities are from a full range of socio-economic backgrounds many of which work here on the farms with others choosing to commute from Roanoke, Salem, Blacksburg, or Radford because we all cherish the beauty of this unique and irreplaceable section of Virginia.

If Governor Kaine has mandated that he wants 400,000 acres of Virginia off limits to development before he leaves office in 2010, this makes eastern Montgomery County even more questionable for the location of the inland port. In 2006, there were 70,652 acres put into conservation easements. Within the proposed Elliston site there are three such conservation easements that have been placed on Senator Madison Marye's farm, the Graham farm, and Pedlar Hills totaling over 1200 acres. Two other large farms in Elliston/Shawsville areas along Rt. 11/460 and the Roanoke River are close to putting lands under this program but are on hold due to the potential industrialization of the region.

Governor Kaine quoted in the January 9th, 2007 Roanoke Times: "We will not get 400,000 by just waiting for it to happen, even with a good tax credit. We have to go out and find parcels and arm-twist folks and encourage them and be creative." In the same article Rupert Cutler as a member of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation board said of Conservation easements "It protects open space and water quality, while keeping the land on the tax rolls and preserving working farms."

If these statements are truths then placement of an inland port with the services and distribution centers that will follow is the greatest injustice that your board, Norfolk Southern, and the Governor could bestow upon this area. What a loss to the conservation easements in place trying to preserve lands in the valley for generations to come.

There is enormous concern over the truck and automotive traffic that will be generated not just on this heavily traveled and accident prone section of 1-81 but more so through Rt. 11 /460 corridor of eastern Montgomery County. The rural, scenic villages of Lafayette, Elliston, and Shawsville all having schools and homes connected directly to Rt. 11/460 will be seriously impacted by the industrial development from both the port and then by the support services and distribution centers that will follow such a facility. I found it very interesting that the criteria that has been put out as the guidelines for the proposed site seem to have been written for the Elliston site as if Norfolk Southern chose the site and then proceeded to try and seal our fate. The requirement of 65 acres is surprising in that it is the exact amount on the Elliston site. Both Norfolk and Southern and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation have promised "transparency and openness" in the evaluation and selection of the site due to the most important fact that public dollars are involved. This has not happened. Not only have the landowners and residents of our region been left out of the process until the pressure was applied but the county and board of supervisors were not included at the onset.

The threat of "eminent domain" has been used against land owners not interested in selling their valuable property for industrialization, The law says that "eminent domain" is for public use only. With our tax dollars paying for a large portion of this development conferral of the ability for corporations to take private lands is illegal and will be challenged by many groups.

There is also an issue of homeland security concerning the inspection of the containers brought to this port from ports throughout the world. Before any inland port is placed Virginia citizens must know the percentage of containers that will be inspected at the port of origin, who will be in charge of security and checks of the containers at the new inter-modal port, and who is paying the bill.

I hope you re-evaluate the process that has been occurring around the siting of such a high impact facility. This is a residential, farming, and environmentally sensitive valley that must be preserved. As stated by Governor Kaine we must save our rural lands thus an inter-modal port is out of the question for this Elliston site.

Comment: (065, 1-E-79) I am writing to state my opposition to the proposed intermodal facility at Elliston, Virginia. I am opposed to any such facility that would be proposed near US 11/460 for the following reasons:

The county Board of Supervisors have expressed their opinion by unanimously voting against the proposed facility. The Montgomery County's Comprehensive Plan has made their intentions clear as to how this land should remain in the future as well.

The residents directly affected by this facility have expressed their opposition at public meetings. The state of Virginia should not contribute 70% of the proposed budget without local government/ citizen support. There is a major difference between providing state incentives for economic development and essentially funding private ventures with taxpayer's dollars.

The proposed facility is not wanted in the rural setting of Elliston, that so many area residents have enjoyed in the past and have taken steps to ensure that setting for future generations by means of land trusts. The surrounding environment and both public and private water supply for thousands depends on the relocation of this proposed facility. This should be in an industrial area, an area already zoned accordingly, and an area that already has a use such as a railroad station/facility.

The idea of locating this facility on a road that is home to so many schools, homes, bus stops, and on a road that is not equipped to handle the driving patterns of today is a recipe for disaster in the future. The surrounding residents do not want the proposed conceptual plan that has not been made available for review. And the residents do not want the growth, expansion, and other horrors that come along with this type of development.

I think the DRPT should focus their efforts on locating this facility where it makes sense; business sense, public relations sense, & environmental sense among others. I think the DRPT should take a closer look at their public presentations and chose their words more closely. Instead of using definitive words when speaking about a "proposed" site, the organization should gather all relevant information (i.e. public comments/opinions),

then make a decision based on all the factors. I believe at the public meeting held in Salem, VA, the DRPT had already focused their ideas, opinions, etc. on this Elliston site without the benefit of the comment period.

Comment: (066, 1-E-80) I am writing to express my sincere concern about and opposition to Elliston as the proposed site of a Norfolk Southern intermodal rail facility. Please understand that I am absolutely in favor of rail transportation and clearly understand that it is imperative that our society develop alternative modes for transporting both goods and people. My concerns about this project are specifically about this site and what the potential impact will be for both our community and those traveling interstate I-81. Why do I believe that this is an inappropriate site for this project? First and foremost, my objections have to do with the natural significance of this region of Montgomery County. Virginia's Department of Conservation and Recreation has worked diligently over approximately the past decade to assemble a large tract of land (about 600 acres, I believe) that is now known as the Pedlar Hills Nature Preserve and is situated less that one mile from some of the parcels identified for purchase by NS. It is my understanding that this area was purchased by the Commonwealth of Virginia because of its important plant, wildlife, and geologic features and is regarded as a signature preserve area. In addition to our state government's major financial investment in preserving Elliston's natural resources, there has been a significant private sector effort to do the same. In 2003, a joint committee of the New River Land Trust and the Western Virginia Land Trust began working in collaboration with the state agency the Virginia Outdoors Foundation in an effort to encourage private conservation easements along a farmland corridor that begins two miles from the proposed intermodal site. Since that time, two families have placed easements with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation on over 1200 acres of farmland and three other families are considering the same. The vast majority of the land that is being considered for preservation is vulnerable to industrial development pressures that would follow the construction of this facility and are risk from remaining active farm, forest, and protected natural areas as a result. Should this facility be located elsewhere, there is a strong likelihood that additional easements will be placed and that there is the potential to preserve in perpetuity a major scenic and environmentally significant corridor along Routes 11 and 460 between the communities of Elliston and Shawsville. No one who has ever traveled this road would think that would be anything other than wonderful. I am confident that there are other sites that can work and work well for the construction of an intermodal rail facility. I believe that this site may be the most cost effective in today's dollars. My concern is that a private industry not be allowed to save (mostly taxpayer) dollars today that leads to frittering away a priceless and irreplaceable environmental treasure, much of which is already in the Commonwealth of Virginia's care either through ownership or oversight responsibilities for conservation easements. I ask for your support in finding an alternative location for this project.

Comment: (068, 1-E-82) The beautiful and pristine Elliston/Shawsville Valley of Virginia is threatened with mammoth degradation by the Norfolk Southern Railroad's proposal to locate a 65 acre truck/train transfer site for containerized freight in the tiny and narrow Elliston Valley between Roanoke and Christiansburg. Although the building site is 65 acres, the attendant development which would be commenced by private industry to serve as bases and staging areas for transfers involving this transfer station would run into the 1000s of acres as over the years every available nook and cranny would likely be developed in this now pristine, rural valley. Areas that are not now zoned for this type of attendant development would, as time goes by, likely become the subject of intense

political pressure for rezoning to an industrial/commercial category. The projections are that this attendant development would run up and down the highway for miles. It would be a real mess. One can go to the Front Royal Inland Port to see what it would eventually look like.

If you have not yet been to see the Elliston site and the corridor from Dixie Caverns to the foot of Christiansburg Mountain on Route 11/460, I respectfully request and urge that you do so. This unique Valley and its gentle residents should not be subjected to this kind of industrialization of their property and neighborhoods. Most of the residents of this area have chosen to live in the area because it is unique, quiet, beautiful and rural. The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors in its Comprehensive Plan has said the area is primarily for rural farms and homes and they want to keep it that way with heavy industry directed to other parts of the County.

Although I live in Salem, about 20 miles from Elliston, I am one of legions of people who recognize the Elliston Valley as one of God's masterpieces of design and quiet beauty, a very special place, and becoming more so as the surrounding world speeds up and becomes more homogenized and frantic. In September of 2000, as a conservationist, I joined a group of landowners, conservationists, interested citizens and members of two local land trusts to form the Elliston Straightaway Steering Committee. Our goal was to pursue the possibility of preserving the large, beautiful farm land along the Elliston Straightaway through the use of conservation easements. Discussions with landowners followed which focused on Virginia's conservation easement program which encourages owners of land with high value for conservation and scenery to donate development rights to the land to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF), the State's official land trust, in exchange for state tax credits and other state and federal tax deductions. To date, we have assisted owners in two major donations of easements on prime farmland along the straightaway: one of 500 acres from Senator Madison Marye; and a second of 500 acres from sisters Joyce Graham and Annette David. The steering committee is continuing to discuss conservation easements with other landowners in the Elliston Valley to assist them in their consideration of possible conservation easement donations. I believe the State has a duty to landowners to preserve and protect easements which the State has helped to create through the VOF. Specifically, where the landowning easement donor has accepted the State's offer, through the VOF, to hold and enforce, in perpetuity, conservation easements limiting development in exchange for the landowners donation of the development rights, the State should refrain from funding industrialization projects on nearby acreage which would degrade the easements whose donation it encouraged and helped to create. Bear in mind that the landowner does not receive tax credits and deductions equal to the value of the development rights that he donates to the state. It's not an even trade. The property owner is still giving up substantial value in order to preserve the property for the enjoyment of Virginians and visitors for all the ages to come.

NS announced its intent to locate the new intermodal facility at the Elliston site prior to consultation with the Elliston Valley citizens who would be affected or with the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors. In response to strong objections to the Elliston site and to the absence of other possible sites, NS listed nine other possible sites. It appears that none of the other sites meet NS own criteria for an intermodal facility site. NS has stated that it will use the power of eminent domain to take the Elliston site if necessary.

The citizens of Elliston and Shawsville and other residents nearby as well as the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors have stated their strong opposition to building the heavy industrial facility in Elliston. These opponents are passionately united in their desire to protect and preserve the Elliston / Shawsville Valley which is widely recognized as one of the most beautiful areas in the state. For that matter one would be hard pressed to name an area in the entire United States that surpasses the Elliston / Shawsville Valley for beauty with its majestic open farmland, the fenced horse farm fields and the stately mansions. For example, the beauty, history, and architectural magnificence of the 800 plus acre Fotheringay Farm and mansion, home of early Congressman Col. Hancock, whose daughter married Mr. William Clark of the famous Lewis and Clark Expedition, is unsurpassed by any dwelling in our great Commonwealth. The beautiful adjoining farm of Senator Madison Marye and his family continues to be actively farmed. On over the hill along Rt. 11, one finds Karen Waldron's extensive, award winning horse farm in Shawsville which is as fine as any in Middleburg or Kentucky. These are all beautiful cultural treasures that need to be protected and preserved, not exposed to the degradation of torrid industrial development nearby.

Normally, I would think, the choice by your Agency of a site for a proposed Virginia Intermodal Transfer Station would simply require an analysis and comparison of the physical aspects of the proposed site and any designated alternate sites. However, in the present case, the feelings and passion of the citizens and the Board of Supervisors are so high, and the probability so great that the NS facility would profoundly upset the quiet and peaceful enjoyment of the Elliston Valley property forever, that I respectfully suggest the situation calls for and demands an extraordinary thorough and exhaustive search by your Honorable agency for all reasonable alternatives to the Elliston site, whether known now or uncovered in further exploration for potential suitable sites. There would seem to exist the possibility that there are still other suitable sites, either within or without the target area that NS has designated for the location of this facility. If there are such sites that your Department can identify, it would seem appropriate to extend the public comment period for such sites to be examined and addressed. Although I can't speak to the merits of the sites, I have heard mentioned site possibilities at the Commerce Park near Dublin, which is about a mile and a half from the rail line and about three miles from I-81, and a second possible site near Dublin, owned by the federal government, which has a rail connection and is about one and a half miles on a divided four lane highway to I-81.

Accordingly, I respectfully request: (1) that you visit the Elliston Valley, if you have not yet had an opportunity to do so, to see what a tragedy it would be to funnel all the train/ truck chaos into this beautiful, serene, narrow, rural valley; (2) that you examine all the alternate sites listed by NS for a possible suitable site; (3) that you examine the possibility that there are still other suitable sites, within or without the area that NS has designated as the target area, for this facility; (4) that you extend the comment period to allow comments on any other sites that you may add to the list.

4.18 <u>For Elliston Site</u>

Comment: (002, 1-L-2): I am writing to express my feelings as to the Intermodal Facility being planned for the Elliston area. I have lived here for over fifty years and I must say that I support this Facility 100%, as this area needs something to get this area out of the state we are in.

This facility could bring more commercial businesses, more jobs in the future, as well as more housing for this area. Being a Realtor, when Rowe Furniture located here there were no housing available, no land was available, therefore buyers had to go further east or west to find housing. The same opposition existed when Rowe planned to build But after it was all over, it was accepted and everything quieted down. The Lafayette community got a new road from 460 to Gardner Street, giving it a new entrance into Lafayette, when the main entrance into LAFAYETTE would flood.

Mr. Tucker, there has been a lot of opposition to this facility, but the question I have is why are they so upset when they live more than five miles west of 460 from the site, and the property owners involved are willing to work with NS?

At the Board of Supervisors meeting held in October when twenty people opposed and only three expressed wanting the facility, most of these people were those that would not be affected in any way by having this facility. Many were there, but due to the fact that the meeting with the board when NS officials as well as VDOT officials were there and said this site was the only one out of eight sites visited that would meet their criteria, this made the ones who would have spoke in favor of the project satisfied that this was a done deal, since NS would have the last say.

Mr. Tucker, I plan to be present at the meeting to be held on December 13, 2006 at 5:30 pm in Salem, and hope to get to meet you. I appreciate you listening and again I am looking forward to this INTERMODAL FACILITY to take place in Elliston, Virginia.

Comment: (003, 1-L-3) Since we (Ron and Peggy Morse) will be unable to attend the scheduled VDOT meeting this coming Wednesday (December 13, 2006) in Roanoke, we are writing a letter of support in favor of the proposed Inland Port in Elliston.

As is normally the situation, we were concerned and anxious upon receiving the letter from Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NS) this summer (June 20, 2006). Rumors abounded and our lives were "put on hold" wondering about our future. Eventually, an appointment was made and Mr. Bill Gorby and his associate (Lloyd Clingenpeel) met with us to explain the procedure for acquiring our property. We were promised a fair and equitable settlement; so we proceeded to work with Mr. Gorby and on July 27, we signed a contract with NS. Since signing, we have been both amazed and appreciative of the whole process:

The NS negotiated price for our property (house and 2.7 acres)-Our educational and religious training have taught us to be prepared. After talking with several city officials and people who are experienced in such matters, we wrote a statement or offer to N&S—in preparation for the meeting with Mr. Gorby-that explained what we felt would be a fair and equitable offer based on similar property settlements. To our amazement and delight, NS's original offer that day was only slightly less than the amount in our offer. Within days, a final settlement price equal to our request was determined and a contract was signed. Mr. Gorby was considerate and respectful and we are very pleased with all aspects of the settlement.

The American way. Peggy and I have traveled on most major U.S. interstates over the past decades and have been grateful that our leaders had the foresight and our constitution allowed such projects as the interstate highway system to be built. What is

the Point? In all cases, people lost either part or all their property and many were forced to relocate. However, they were treated fairly and overall it benefited everyone-including themselves and their posterity. We feel the same way concerning the Elliston Inland Port. We have not been treated unfairly; in fact, we have been richly blessed to have found a new home in nearby Vinton that we like very much. In time, the Inland Port facility in Elliston will bring greater employment opportunities and economic benefits to citizens of Montgomery and adjacent counties as it has in the Warren County Inland Port.

Elliston-the best alternate location. We are totally satisfied that the Elliston site is clearly the best and most logical location for the new Inland Port. WHY? Two major reasons: First, only eleven land owners were affected and only four families, including us, will need to relocate. Also, relatively little disruption will be required to build the Elliston Inland Port. In all other sites considered and explored, either many families would have been forced to relocate and/or considerable disruption of the landscape and existing facilities would have been required. Second, the proximity to 1-81 and existing manufacturing establishments such as Rowe Furniture is highly desirable, necessitating little new road construction. Many alternate sites have been considered, but none have even come close to matching the many natural land and convenience features of the Elliston site.

In summary, we are totally satisfied with the manner and fairness with which the NS has treated us. We understand and sustain their actions and acknowledge the change-for-the-better for us and the citizens of Montgomery and adjacent counties.

Comment: (004, 1-E-4) I am writing you in support of the proposed NS Intermodal Site at Elliston, VA. I have lived in this area for over fifty years and I know that our locality would ultimately benefit from this project. Despite the opposition that has been mounted, there is much local support. Unlike the others, we do not have ties to the Roanoke newspaper, nor are we in the land conservation business. We simply want to see this depressed area of aging trailer parks and vacant commercial buildings find a new identity and prosperity. The more scenic areas west of Elliston would not be affected by the intermodal yard and could continue as they are. The fears of pollution, etc. are unfounded, as these could be safeguarded in the planning process. I would expect the finished project to be a model for the intermodal industry.

Now that the Montgomery Co. Board of Supervisors has NS's attention, any details regarding true local interests could be agreed upon, with the Board's cooperation. Their premature opposition was based (rightly so) on frustration and fear, however these are hardly the best motives for decision making.

Mr. Tucker, I hope that you will pursue the Elliston site as originally planned by NS, and I also plan to attend the public meeting in Salem, VA on Dec. 13.

Comment: (004, 2-T-34) Report note: At the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Jerry Akers, a landowner directly affected by the Elliston site, expressed support for the Elliston site location, but said that truck traffic is an issue. He indicated that environmental issues could be resolved with planning and that this is a great opportunity for Elliston.

Comment: (004, 3-L-38) Thank you for the opportunity afforded to myself and others to comment on the NS Site Proposals at the public meeting held in Salem, VA on Dec. 13, 2006. It was a pleasure to meet you and to hear your comments on the matter. I hope that the review process is proceeding as intended.

I would like to once again voice my support for the Elliston, VA site, as originally planned by NS. The area surrounding the site has literally hundreds of acres of industry and commerce already in place, when Rowe Furniture, the Elliston-Lafayette Industrial Park, and the new Roanoke Regional Jail complex are taken into consideration. I was really surprised at the opposition that was voiced at the meeting in Salem, but after review, I realize that most of the folks weren't concerned about the actual location of the facility at all! The main objection from the Shawsville and western Elliston areas is about possible truck traffic that would travel westward on Route 11 instead of using the I -81 exits at Dixie Caverns or Ironto. I would venture that eighty percent or more of the opposition to the Elliston facility would DISAPPEAR if the possibility of local westward truck traffic were eliminated.

Comment: (005, 1-L-5) By this letter we would like to show our support for Norfolk Southern's efforts for a Elliston, VA Intermodal Ramp in connection with the Heartland Corridor Project.

As you might be aware of, Swedwood is building our first US manufacturing facility in Danville Virginia, where we are about to create close to 800 new jobs. One big facilitator for this project realization is if we could get a Intermodal Ramp and thereby could in a cost efficient manner supply our IKEA west coast stores.

Comment: (012, 1-T-12) Report note: At the December 13, 2006 public meeting Joseph Yenz, a resident of Elliston, commented that the railroad is the backbone of Elliston. He expressed an interest in learning more about funding and revenue for the facility in addition to what Norfolk Southern would provide to the community.

Comment: (048, 1-E-58) I own land within 3 miles of the proposed Elliston site.
I would like to go on record as supporting this site for several reasons. 1. Anything that takes trucks off Interstate 81 makes that road safer for all of the local residents. 2. Anything that takes trucks off Interstate 81 will make that road last longer and cost VA taxpayer's less to repair and maintain. 3. Every new job counts in Southwest Virginia. 4. If properly done, the site won't be an eyesore or pose a hazard to the Roanoke River or the environment. 5. Anything that brings more tax revenue to the county will help make up for the fact that Virginia Tech holds so much property out of the tax base, we local tax payers have to make up the difference.

Summary: I say let Norfolk Southern build here with strict and careful oversight by the county. A rail yard is hardly more of an eyesore or environmental threat than all the run-down trailer parks and abandon business buildings in that area.

Comment: (061, 1-E-74) As a resident of Montgomery County, Virginia, I FAVOR the Elliston site for the proposed intermodal rail facility. In addition, I support the project: it will be good for Montgomery County, and Virginia and the region. It will decrease truck traffic from I-81 and stimulate a great deal of economic development for Montgomery County and the surrounding areas.

I believe Governor Kaine has the right idea in providing funding to help this project. I TOTALLY SUPPORT IT - PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF I CAN HELP.

Comment: (070, 1-E-84) I am a resident of Montgomery County. I support locating Norfolk Southern intermodal facility in Elliston.

4.19 Against Garman N&W Site

Comment: (056, 1-C-68) This land occupies historic land known as the site of colonial Fort Lewis. It is also the site of a very historic mansion in which the motion picture star-John Payne lived in as a child, and where his ashes are scattered. There is a large bold spring on the property which never goes dry that is the reason the fort was built on this property in 1754. The fort was commanded by Capt. Andrew Lewis, who later became General Andrew Lewis for whom the portion of I-81 in Roanoke and Botetourt Counties is named. In October 1755 George Washington inspected that fort. It is the only site in Roanoke Valley where the fathers of our country spent the night. It would be a shame to destroy this historic site. As the owner of this historic land, I bitterly oppose the use of this land for a rail yard. My parents and I have owned this land since 1952.

4.20 For Garman Road Sites

Comment: (040, 1-E-49) In reviewing the other sites, it seems counter intuitive that a residential area [in Elliston] is being considered when the Garman Road Site is already industrial use.

Comment: (058, 1-E-71) I am a Roanoke County resident who has lived in the area of the proposed Garman Road sites for more than 13 years. I am a licensed Civil Engineer working for a non-related state agency.

I would like to make some recommendation in favor of the siting of the Heartland Corridor Intermodal Facility. My recommendation is to combine the 2 Garman Road sites (former N&W and Virginian) as the facility location. The following are my observations on the published selection criteria as I understand and the related information as applicable to the combined site:

- The former N&W parcel does not contain the desired total acreage at 50 acres versus 65 acres. The former Virginian parcel offers “potentially” 110 (but is in the Roanoke River floodplain. When combined with they would provide the potential to possibly mitigate the floodplain impact and provide alternative site development planning options that would not be available on other parcels being considered.
- As the fact sheets for the sites indicate they are directly on the Heartland corridor.
- They have favorable topography for the planned use.
- The land in the vicinity is currently used for industrial purposes and the intersection on US 460/Main Street is already signaled with a new visually activated controller.
- The proximity to I-81 without major intrusion to business and commercial areas make this combined site much more attractive than a site that was well within Elliston, in Salem, in Roanoke City or out US 460 in Montvale. The increased volume of traffic

could more reasonably be expected to be accommodated with fewer miles of truck traffic further from I-81.

- Regarding the "Need for Grade Separation" I have what I think is an unusual proposal. The concern is with the current at-grade crossing at Diuguids Road that is one of the few rail & Roanoke River crossing points in Salem. The impact of the potential blocking at Duiguids could be eliminated if another crossing site was added by extending Salem Industrial Drive and adding a new Roanoke River crossing to west Riverside Road as a "T-intersection". The intersection of W. Main/US 460 at Salem Industrial Drive is currently signaled. Although a river crossing would be costly, it is something the City of Salem has need of as well. The City of Salem only has a single above-grade rail crossing and that might potentially be addressed at Salem Industrial Drive. I have not talked with anyone with the City, but an additional river & rail crossing would also ease some traffic problems they experience in western Salem with the Mill Lane crossing. The criteria given by your agency notes that the proposed site should require "minimal roadway costs" which this clearly is not a "minimal cost". However, compared with some of the other sites being considered this a potential solution to the problem with the at-grade crossing at Duiguids. A problem I see with the crossing site I've proposed, the proximity of W. Riverside Road to the Roanoke River in front of the Riverside Nursery might make it difficult for siting an intersection that could handle traffic to and from the former Hancock Joist & Rack System properties. Trucks from those sites would also have difficulty turning onto W. Riverside Road from Duiguids after crossing the River at the existing crossing - unless an agreement could be reached to allow them access to Salem Industrial Drive across the Hanson Concrete property. Also, this proposal would involve the purchase of the R. L. Price property that is located in the bend of Salem Industrial Drive that would be in the alignment to cross the Roanoke River, but something to put into the consideration.
- The increase in traffic onto W. Main/460 to the west off of Wildwood Road should include an upgrade of the right turn lane at that intersection as trucks currently roll the curb in making the right turn. Should the proposal to use Salem Industrial Drive to address crossing issues with Duiguid be pursued it appears that the intersection of W. Main/460 and Salem Industrial might need some increases in turning radii.

Having recommended the "combined Garman Road Site" I want to add the following:

- Before this project can be reasonably be expected to be able to handle the increase in truck traffic on US 460/W. Main Street - the Wildwood Road to Dixie Caverns segment of the road must be upgraded. The plans for upgrading the 3-lane portion in Roanoke Co. by VDOT are underway, but must be expedited before the Garman Sites are developed. Those familiar with the area are very well aware of the impact any slow-down on I-81 has on the segment and this would be a logical step to take. The efficiency of the W. Main/US 460 segment in Salem could be improved by changing it from a 5-lane roadway with a center turn-lane to a 4-lane divided roadway with designated turn lanes.
- In addition, the existing traffic signals on W. Main/US 460 in the Salem <u>and</u> Roanoke County greatly need to be interconnected to more efficiently move traffic. In the timing alternate timing regimes should be anticipated for increased loads due to accidents on I-81 and when special events in the area create increased in loads. The utilization of traffic monitoring cameras and the new traffic management center on I-81 could help minimize delays in normal traffic flow resumption related to an incident. (If I might also add it would be helpful to have state police personnel

working an incident to simply wave slow moving vehicles along to reduce the effect of “rubber-necking drivers” and intentional slow downs by truckers who parallel each other compounding the impact of an incident.) With interconnecting of signals and better signal timing sequences I think the flows in this portion could be improved. Also, the high truck traffic load from the Roanoke Restaurant Service distribution site could benefit with the truck traffic stacking due to the very close proximity of their entrance off W. Main to the intersection of Wildwood Rd with W. Main.

- I am a supporter of limited sequenced upgrades to the I-81 corridor rather than attempting to upgrade the entire Virginia roadway. Rather than relying on the current “safety corridor” to reduce the volume of accidents, upgrading of this segment by adding a lane in each direction could greatly enhance the flow of traffic by reducing the volume per lane mile in this congested segment. Traffic counts in the area would support analysis of the best use of funds rather than a broad brush approach upgrade of the interstate.

4.21 Against Horn and Singer Sites

Comment: (039, 1-T-48) Report note: During the December 13, 2006 public meeting, JC Whitlock, Jr., a Roanoke County resident with land adjoining the Horn site, opposed the Horn site. The area is prone to flooding and the area already has enough traffic with Rowe Furniture and now the regional jail. The traffic on Route 460 is a concern and the Roanoke River is a water source.

Comment: (046, 1-E-55) First let me voice my objection to the time of the meeting on Dec. 13th. Most of us work jobs that do not allow attendance at a 5:30 meeting. How inconsiderate of you to plan a discussion of a topic that has life-altering implications for those of us so unfortunate to be impacted by this facility at a time when many cannot attend. This causes one to wonder if you REALLY want to take public opinion into consideration. We had to come late to the meeting and had no opportunity to view maps or ask questions.

Were questions appropriate at this meeting? If so, that was not made clear either.

Secondly, concerning the Singer Station site: Whose property will be impacted? My husband and I own the property at 5832 West River Rd., and we were shocked to see that this site might be US. The map provided is so poorly delineated that we cannot tell! We certainly have not been notified by NS or anyone else if our property is under consideration. Put yourself in our place! I know that other neighbors who may be impacted by this decision have not been notified. Is this common practice? Is this ethical? Just when will property owners be told what your plans are for what THEY own! WE WANT AN ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION IMMMEDIATELY. NOT KNOWING HAS PUT AN ENORMOUS EMOTIONAL STRAIN ON OUR FAMILY.

We found it interesting that no comment about the tremendous impact on traffic on West River Rd. was mentioned in your comments concerning this and the Horn site. Would not the bridge across the river need to be replaced? How will the current road handle the truck traffic this facility will generate without major restructuring? Whose land would be affected by this? Why wasn't this mentioned as a drawback, considering the criteria you have published? How much will this cost Virginia taxpayers?

We have a strong objection to public money being spent and private land being confiscated to enhance corporate gain! NS has land of their own that lies fallow. We feel that strong consideration be given to the sites they already own.

Response: *While questions were certainly welcome and noted for future reference at the public meeting, the review team did not have sufficient information to respond to detailed questions about site locations at that time. The purpose of the public meeting was to provide an additional venue for citizens to view the proposed site locations and to raise questions that could be addressed once more detailed information became available.*

This property would fall within the footprint of both the Singer and Horn site locations. Specific impacts are not available without more detailed analysis. If a site is selected to advance into construction at the end of this evaluation period, all property owners within the affected area will be contacted to discuss the specific impacts.

Comment: (046, 2-E-56) According to the map provided us at the meeting on Dec. 13, it seems that the site crosses Dry Hollow Road. Why wasn't this mentioned at the meeting? Won't changes have to be made there if you use this site?

We have looked at what seems to be the property in question (the map shows it bordering- or on- (who can tell by your map?) our property and running between West River Road and the tracks. There is a very steep embankment between the road and the tracks where the railroad cuts through a hillside. Is this really where you would put the facility? There is relatively flat land on the other side of the track. Is this the site?

Again, if our land has been considered by NS, we would like to be informed immediately, one way or the other. If your map is inaccurate, you certainly should correct the error. This situation has caused us a tremendous concern, and we can't get answers from anyone! How can you justify keeping us uninformed?

Response: *Specific highway improvements are being analyzed by the Virginia Department of Transportation. At the time of the public meeting, this information was not yet available.*

The site would run between West River Road and the railroad tracks, as indicated on the map. Topographical requirements are being considered as part of this analysis.

Report Note: DRPT exchanged e-mails with this constituent to provide more detailed information about the property impacted.

Comment: (046, 3-E-78) Thank you for attempting to get a specific answer from NS. However, we are thoroughly dissatisfied with this answer. We are intelligent enough to understand that we are "within the footprint" of these sites, but NS has chosen to hedge the issue! I know this is not your fault, but since you have their "ear", and those of us who may be directly affected by their choice because our land is either the land they plan to use, or we are adjacent to that land DO NOT have any way to contact them, I would appreciate you conveying our dissatisfaction and dismay at their reply.

We would like to reiterate our previous observation that the Singer Station site and the Horn site make no sense because they do not fit the criteria set by NS and the DRPT in the first place! Why consider sites that are so obviously inappropriate? This seems to be a gross waste of time and money. Is this just a way to appease citizens in Elliston by pretending to investigate other options? We have seen this tactic utilized before.

The DRPT should know that West River Road and the bridge crossing the Roanoke River is note adequate to handle the kind of traffic this project would generate without MAJOR road reconstruction. This would be a foolish expenditure, based on the shortage of money VDOT has for road construction and maintenance. Wouldn't that kind of money be better spent on other road projects?

The lives of the residents on West River Road could be drastically impacted by this project. Just because we are "rural" doesn't negate our right to know what your plans entail. Land owners in Elliston whose property might be taken for this project were at least notified (eventually). Don't you think that the rest of us have the right to know what you might do to our lives? IF, as NS and DRPT has stated, the Elliston site is not a "done deal", then why have those land owners been contacted and others have not? We are appalled and disgusted with this process!

Since we do not know how to contact NS about these concerns, would you please forward this email to them. Good public relations would seem to dictate a reply from them to us. Knowing whether our land is the land penciled in for the Singer site is vitally important to us. We will consider their silence in this matter an indication of SHAMEFUL negligence and insensitivity.

Response: *DRPT is considering each of the 10 sites submitted for review. While each site may not meet the criteria established for the facility, DRPT is providing a fair assessment of each property against the minimum criteria. Only those sites that most closely correspond to the minimum criteria will be evaluated in detail.*

The highway impact analysis by the Virginia Department of Transportation will include information and recommendations on the level of highway investment that would be required for specific site locations. Significant highway costs could be a factor in eliminating some sites from further consideration.

The notifications received by landowners near the Ellison site were not sent by the Commonwealth and do not represent official state correspondence. This information was provided by Norfolk Southern, according to their own business practices, based on their preference for the Ellison site. While Norfolk Southern may pursue the Elliston site autonomously, in order for state funding to be applied to the intermodal facility, DRPT must confirm that the cost and public benefits to be achieved are in compliance with state program requirements through the Rail Enhancement Fund. DRPT will make this determination based on a full review of the 10 sites submitted for evaluation.

Report Note: DRPT forwarded this e-mail to Norfolk Southern and provided a point of contact at Norfolk Southern for this constituent.

4.22 <u>For Horn and Singer Sites</u>

Comment: (038, 1-C-45) My suggestion is to build the facility in western Roanoke County (Horne, Singer or other site) which is already zoned industrial. In fact, partnering with Roanoke County as they build the Regional Jail (including access roads/bridges) seems logical. The trucks could slide on and off I-81 at exit 132 with little effect on US 11/460.

4.23 For Sites at North and East of Roanoke

Comment: (020, 1-E-20) Since the traffic on the rail will primarily be going north, you should locate the intermodal north and east of Roanoke to minimize traffic impacts. It would make the project run much more smoothly to put the intermodal on a site that is already zoned for heavy industry use. Also, locating it east of Roanoke allows the increased rail traffic generated from the intermodal to not slow down existing grade crossings in Roanoke.

Comment: (025, 1-E-26) Putting the intermodal site west will only generate more traffic for downtown Roanoke. So as not to create even longer wait times in already heavily traffic areas, this site needs to be east. It would also make more sense that the site be somewhere that is already zoned for heavy industry.

Comment: (027, 1-E-28) I think that in any consideration of the NS Intermodal site consideration should be given to a number of factors. Sites should be considered which are already zoned industrial and do not have to go through the rezoning process. A location, perhaps east of the Roanoke urban area would not cause the traffic interference from parked trains that one in the urban area would do.

Comment: (029, 1-E-30) Just a note to express an opinion about the new intermodal site. It seems to me that the most logical site would be one that is already zoned for heavy industry such as the site that is in the northeast end of town. I would also think that the traffic impact would be minimized in that area. Slow downs for drivers in critical areas can be detrimental for small businesses and I feel the northeast site would be more suitable in that regard.

Comment: (029, 2-E-79) I would like to express an opinion regarding possible site selection. I am in favor of the site at the northeast end of Roanoke. With regard to traffic impact, I feel this site is the least intrusive, and the neighborhood has already accepted heavy industry.

Comment: (030, 1-E-31) As a member of the Roanoke community, I feel it important to note that the traffic that will be caused by the intermodal placement could be minimized by choosing one location over another. By placing the intermodal north and east of Roanoke, you will be able to decrease the amount of traffic. Consider the issue of grade separations as well; the capability for the location to handle grade separations could also decrease the traffic flow significantly. The site you choose will inevitably need to be zoned for the right purpose; it would be much easier to choose a site that is already zoned for your use.

Comment: (031, 1-C-32) I cannot understand why sites are being considered that would increase traffic at grade crossings in Roanoke. This facility should be located east of Roanoke if the cargo will travel north. That leaves only two sites, site 9 and site 10. Site

9 is already zoned for heavy industry. Put an access road off of US 460 to site 9. It would improve the entire Blue Ridge area.

Comment: (032, 1-E-33) If you are seriously considering any other sites besides Elliston, it seems to me you should choose a site that has already been zoned properly. Based on the information I have seen, you may have some options. Moreover, you should consider sites that minimize that amount of traffic in the more populated areas of Roanoke. Consider the sites located north and east of Roanoke.

4.24 Other Site Location Suggestions

Comment: (044, 1-E-53) Has anyone looked at Dublin, Va. the place where Radford Army Ammunition Plant gave the site to Dublin for a Industrial Site? It has a rail line going to Bristol Va. close by also close to Interstate 81 all 4 lane roads to it.

Response: *The general location indicated would not provide access to the Heartland Corridor along Route 460, as indicated in the minimum search criteria.*

Comment: (052, 1-E-63) I would like to make a public comment about the sites. I think one site that really needs to be considered for this rail traffic is Clifton Forge Va. Once a main line on the CSX and the C & O Clifton Forge has the area already in place and it 40 minutes from Roanoke's I 81 or Lexington via Interstate 64. This interstate is grossly under traveled and Clifton Forge is a perfect gate way to the Ohio valley. Why go west or south to go north east with other sites? Botetourt is growing and pretty soon Clifton Forge will be the bedroom community if it is not already of the Roanoke Valley, the area is there, the interstate is right there and the people of this area need a shot in the arm for functions such as this. I ask that it please be considered a site.

Response: *The general location indicated would not provide access to the NS Heartland and I-81 rail corridors, as indicated in the minimum search criteria.*

4.25 Locate in Area Already Zoned for This Use

Comment: (023, 1-E-24) Locate the intermodal on a site already zoned for this use, in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan of the County in which it is located. There are two of the ten sites that meet this criteria.

Comment: (024, 1-T-25) Report note: At the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Michael Hemphill, a resident of Elliston, said that the site should be placed in an industrial park, not in a residential area. He noted the increase in truck traffic on Route 460 and that there are several bus stops along Route 460.

Comment: (025, 1-E-26) Putting the intermodal site west will only generate more traffic for downtown Roanoke. So as not to create even longer wait times in already heavily traffic areas, this site needs to be east. It would also make more sense that the site be somewhere that is already zoned for heavy industry.

Comment: (026, 1-E-27) Put the intermodal on a site that is already zoned heavy industry to handle it. It's the only fair thing to do. And why are sites being proposed that

are going to generate more at grade delays in Roanoke? Put in a location that minimizes that problem. This can be a good thing, but only if you handle it right.

Response: *DRPT is considering each of the 10 sites submitted for evaluation. The highway impact analysis by the Virginia Department of Transportation will include information and recommendations on the level of highway investment that would be required for specific site locations, including grade separation. Significant highway costs could be a factor in eliminating some sites from further consideration.*

Comment: (027, 1-E-28) I think that in any consideration of the NS Intermodal site consideration should be given to a number of factors. Sites should be considered which are already zoned industrial and do not have to go through the rezoning process. A location, perhaps east of the Roanoke urban area would not cause the traffic interference from parked trains that one in the urban area would do.

Comment: (028, 1-T-29) Report note: At the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Beth Obenshain of the New River Land Trust indicated that they have no official stance on the location of the intermodal facility. They support the concept of moving freight to rail and support those who have land conservation easements. She asked that the review team seek a site that can support this facility and one that is zoned for industrial use.

Comment: (029, 1-E-30) Just a note to express an opinion about the new intermodal site. It seems to me that the most logical site would be one that is already zoned for heavy industry such as the site that is in the northeast end of town. I would also think that the traffic impact would be minimized in that area. Slow downs for drivers in critical areas can be detrimental for small businesses and I feel the northeast site would be more suitable in that regard.

Comment: (029, 2-E-79) I would like to express an opinion regarding possible site selection. I am in favor of the site at the northeast end of Roanoke. With regard to traffic impact, I feel this site is the least intrusive, and the neighborhood has already accepted heavy industry.

Comment: (030, 1-E-31) As a member of the Roanoke community, I feel it important to note that the traffic that will be caused by the intermodal placement could be minimized by choosing one location over another. By placing the intermodal north and east of Roanoke, you will be able to decrease the amount of traffic. Consider the issue of grade separations as well; the capability for the location to handle grade separations could also decrease the traffic flow significantly. The site you choose will inevitably need to be zoned for the right purpose; it would be much easier to choose a site that is already zoned for your use.

Comment: (032, 1-E-33) If you are seriously considering any other sites besides Elliston, it seems to me you should choose a site that has already been zoned properly. Based on the information I have seen, you may have some options. Moreover, you should consider sites that minimize that amount of traffic in the more populated areas of Roanoke. Consider the sites located north and east of Roanoke.

4.26 Encouraging Rails With Trails

Comment: (036, 1-T-42) Report note: at the December 13, 2006 public meeting, Barbara Duerk asked that rails with trails be considered as an option.

Comment: (036, 2-C-43) Connect the Commonwealth. Plans include connecting the New River Trail to the Huckleberry Trail. Connect the Huckleberry Trail in Blacksburg to the Roanoke River Greenway. Rails to trails and rails with trail will allow alternative transportation corridors to connect our communities. Why? Reduce traffic congestion, Improve air quality, and positively affects quality of life.

4.27 For Specific Highway Improvements (General)

Comment: (054, 1-E-65) Regarding the proposed NS Intermodal rail yard in SW Virginia, please ensure any state funding be directed towards upgrading public roads impacted by such a facility.

As an example, the preferred site in Elliston has access from Route 11. However, going towards Salem, there are no decel / turn lanes into the many other access points. This is a particular problem for left hand turns, when heading towards Salem. From the I-81 / Ironto exit, the road is narrow and winding, and the Christiansburg Mountain incline is a tremendously steep grade which already is the site of many accidents.

Any state funds allocated to this project should be earmarked for improvements to I-81, such as additional truck lanes, between I-77 and I-64; instead of being used by NS to upgrade their rail lines or tunnels. Given that current VDOT maintenance funding is inadequate, requiring shifting funds from construction accounts, it is imperative any public roads impacted by this project be addressed in the overall planning and approval process.

I do not want to see the financial burden of such a facility shifted from the corporation or state onto the locality and its citizens.

Comment: (060, 1-E-73) The siting process for the Roanoke Regional Intermodal Facility Site is fundamentally flawed by completely failing to incorporate I-73 into the planning process. Regional transportation plans for improved access to the intermodal access site, wherever it is, should be done in coordination with I-73. Smart siting of the rail facility may require redesign or realignment of I-73. Norfolk Western corporate funds and federal funds should be used to make this an intelligent systemic process and outcome.

Looking at the general site map with the Heartland Corridor and other major rail lines, plus I-81 and I-581/US220, I am struck by the absence of the proposed I-73 route(s). I-73 might open up more sites west of Elliston, west of downtown Roanoke, or in Franklin County. Perhaps the alignment of I-73 should be moved to provide a bypass west of VA 419, thereby reducing all traffic--trucks and cars--on I-81, I-581, VA 419, and other surface arteries in the whole region.

National and state policy require integrated planning and integrated transportation planning--hence the "intermodal" in the acts' names and this project. Without I-73 in the

plans and hearings, the intermodal considerations are seriously flawed, perhaps fatally flawed. If I-73 is for real, and if intermodal rail is for real, then neither should go ahead without accounting for and integrating with the other.

4.28 Eminent Domain

Comment: (054, 1-E-65) The fact that railroads continue to benefit from the power of eminent domain is out of date, and should be addressed appropriately. State and local governments utilize this legal tool minimally, and should be the only entity provided such. This would require any railroad company to work closely with government in obtaining additional land and minimize the unfair advantage over property owners and local land use plans.

4.29 Technology Suggestions

Comment: (069, 1-E-83) Virginia Association of Railway Patrons comments on a Western Virginia Heartland Corridor intermodal terminal- The proposed Elliston, Virginia, site for a Roanoke area Heartland Corridor intermodal terminal is controversial to the local citizens because it would occupy fairly pristine agricultural land. Considering the increased truck traffic to and from I-81, this quiet community would be turned into a hub of activity. If the precedent of the Front Royal Inland Port is followed, a distribution-warehouse park may spring up around the intermodal facility.

The initial impetus for the Roanoke intermodal facility appears to be Norfolk Southern's desire to get the export business of Mead-Westvaco's Covington plant. The products destined for overseas are currently shipped by truck to the ports of Hampton Roads via I-64 (which overlaps portions of I-81); presumably already in containers that are hauled on road chassis and crane lifted onto ships at dockside. Wherever a Roanoke intermodal facility is located, the loaded containers would arrive from Covington on trucks, via portions of I-64, US 220, I-81, US 11 and US 460.

Norfolk Southern is predisposing the selection of a high-acreage site by it's specification to use conventional intermodal technology. That selection is in turn driven by the rail industry's prevailing business model to offer services that take advantage of its existing infrastructure, which has not been re-engineered or substantially expanded since the downsizing brought about by the construction of the Interstate Highway System.

Railroads experimented with open intermodal technologies such as *RoadRailer* and *Iron Highway* in the 1980s when they had excess capacity. Now there is no excess capacity and railroads are restructuring service offerings to maximize profits from their existing infrastructure. For intermodal service, this translates to traditional crane-loaded, double-stack container trains that are long and travel at low average speeds. The service Norfolk Southern proposes for the Roanoke intermodal facility would not be flexible or time-competitive enough, and therefore inappropriate, to handle I-81 domestic-market shipments originating from or destined to that region. There are international precedents for offering multiple types of intermodal services at a single facility but the land requirements would be even greater than the specifications for the Roanoke-region terminal.

If public investment can lower Norfolk Southern's overhead costs and expand track capacity, there is the possibility of developing a Roanoke-area intermodal terminal that uses *only* open technology, which can economically serve both the Heartland Corridor —between Southwest Virginia and Hampton Roads—and the I-81 Corridor, in a more compact and satisfactory location. *Progressive Railroading* just reported a project in Minnesota that uses *RailRunner* open technology to carry agricultural products in containers from the heartland to the seaports without double-stacking or crane loading at the originating terminal. If open technology intermodal economics work for the short line and Class 1 railroads in Minnesota, perhaps this could work for the even shorter shipment lane in Virginia.

Here is a link for a video that describes the *RailRunner* intermodal system: http://www.railrunner.com/video/rr_video.wmv

The use of open technology intermodal at the Port of Virginia would work very nicely for accessing mid-range markets where conventional crane facilities do not exist. Currently, containers are moved between trains and ships on road chassis, requiring two "lifts" at the port. Containers on road chassis could be drayed to dockside after arrival by train, for their containers to be crane lifted only once, between the ship and the chassis.

4.30 Public Involvement Process Comments

Comment: (069, 1-E-83) Comments on incorporating meaningful public involvement in Commonwealth-private railroad partnerships- Our experience from the site selection process for the Roanoke area intermodal terminal offers a lesson: It is important for the acceptance of rail expansion, that there be a good public process, good environmental reviews, and context sensitive designs. All of the same things we insist on for highways. This same process must be followed where public money is used to provide public benefits from the rail mode.

As the public increasingly enters into partnerships with private railroads, what procedures are being followed to assure that public expenditures for rail improvements are *really* in the public interest? The Commonwealth and Norfolk Southern have entered into a joint examination and feasibility study of the I-81 corridor, to identify the public's rail investment share to maximize truck diversions onto trains. Yet, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and Norfolk Southern have already moved forward with investments in the Heartland Corridor without similar public examination and feedback. Will Rail Enhancement Funds for the Roanoke-area intermodal facility merely lower the investment costs (and risks) for railroad shareholders, or indirectly subsidize the transportation costs of a small number of shippers, or will the public broadly benefit?

The unintended consequence of an approach that does not incorporate meaningful public involvement from inception is that negative public reaction to siting issues may spread to rail development in general. Rail advocates have spent years trying to educate the citizens and public officials on the public benefits of developing high-performance rail corridors that can supplement Interstate Highway System expansion. "Our way, or the highway," is not the message that the public should be hearing from Norfolk Southern and DRPT. Local governments and residents should be utilized as a resource rather than seen an obstacle. An appropriate planning process involves the public at the front-

end of a project, rather than after the fact. Generally, local objections can be satisfactorily dealt with, or site-impact problems effectively mitigated, if the public is afforded the opportunity to be a real part of the planning process and if public investments in rail truly accrue public benefits.

Response: *Thank you for these suggestions for public involvement improvements related to the Rail Enhancement Fund. DRPT will take these into consideration.*