

Impacts of Passenger Rail Business Survey

Background: Passenger rail is an often-mentioned topic at a wide variety of public forums or public participation in planning events. The idea of re-establishing passenger rail is supported by citizen input received by the Roanoke Valley Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (RVAMPO). The RVAMPO is responsible for the “Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan” (CLRTP) for the Roanoke Valley Area. RVAMPO staff members have two primary approaches to gather public input in the planning process:

- ***Electronic Touch Screen Kiosk***, which has been housed at various locations including the Higher Education Center, VEC’s Workforce One Center, Roanoke Regional Airport, Virginia Western Community College, DMV and Tanglewood Mall.
- ***Neighborhood Association/ Civic League Focus Groups***

Both of these methods have garnered numerous responses concerning the re-establishment of passenger rail service in the Roanoke Area.

Purpose: This study is not designed to redo, supercede or otherwise “reinvent the wheel” of previous studies and statewide efforts concerning passenger rail. The purpose of this study is to investigate the possible impact that passenger rail, should it be established, would have on the Roanoke Valley. One way of proceeding is to investigate any overlooked or niche markets that were not considered in the previous studies. Business conference/ meeting travel may represent one such “underestimated” passenger rail market that is significant to Roanoke businesses. Your participation in this survey will help us quantify if any “underestimated” or niche markets exist in business conference travel using passenger rail.

Instructions: Please respond to the following questions in the context of your entire business or organization’s operations in the Roanoke Valley. All responses will be used for the purposes of this study only and will not be sold, transferred or used for purposes outside of the regional transportation planning process.

1) How many times do employees of your organization travel for business related purposes to each of the following destinations per year:

to Richmond? ___ one trip/year ___two trips/year ___three trips/year ___four or more ___
to Washington D.C.? ___ one trip/year ___two trips/year ___three trips/ year ___four or more _____ (please fill in)

2) Are these trips (to Richmond and/or Washington D.C.) reimbursed by the company?

___yes ___we have travel advances ___other arrangement
___no ___employees deduct expenses on personal taxes

3) Do employees: (for trips to Richmond or Washington D.C.)

_____ take their own personal vehicle? _____ carpool with another employee?
_____ take a company vehicle? _____ take bus service?
_____ fly?

4) If employees take their own personal vehicle, can you estimate the average per trip reimbursement:

to Richmond? \$ _____/trip or \$ _____/mile
to Washington D.C.? \$ _____/trip or \$ _____/mile

5) If employees take a company vehicle, what is the average cost per trip to the company factoring fuel, maintenance, insurance and upkeep:

to Richmond \$ _____
to Washington D.C.? \$ _____

6) If employees fly, can you estimate the average ticket price:

to Richmond? \$ _____
to Washington D.C.? \$ _____

7) If passenger rail service existed between Roanoke and Richmond and/or Washington D.C., at what price would you make it a company policy that employees use passenger rail for business travel purposes:

round-trip ticket price to Richmond? \$ _____
round-trip ticket price to Washington D.C.? \$ _____
We would reimburse for a personal vehicle trip regardless. _____
We would provide a travel allowance of \$ _____ and allow the employee to chose.
Other: _____

8) At the price you listed for question #7, how many business trips (round trips) do you think your organization would produce in a year (number of employees TIMES trips per employee):

to Richmond? _____
to Washington D.C.? _____
Not Applicable _____

9) At the price you listed for question #7, what percentage of all business trips for your organization would be represented by passenger rail:

to Richmond? _____
to Washington D.C.? _____
Not Applicable _____

10) How many round trips per day should be offered in order for you to use passenger rail for business trips at the price you listed in Question #7 (assume one round trip would depart Roanoke in the morning and return in the evening at a minimum):

to Richmond? _____

to Washington D.C.? _____
We would not use passenger rail. _____

11) How many employees do you have based in the Roanoke Valley?

12) Do you bring in business travelers for meetings to the Roanoke Valley:
from Richmond? How many per year?
from Washington D.C.? How many per year?

13) Our business/ organization would benefit from passenger rail for other reasons (check all that apply):

Our employees could do work on the train (i.e. with a laptop)
 Our employees could rest on the train
 The train avoids highway accidents
 Other reasons _____

14) How fast would a one-way trip have to be for you to use the service at the price you indicated:

-to Richmond 3 ½ hours 4 hours 5 hours 6 hours or less
-to Washington D.C. 4 ½ hours 5 hours 6 hours 7 hours or less

15) At what time would you need to arrive?

-in Richmond before 8:00 am 8:00 am 9:00am 10:00am
-in Washington D.C. before 8:00 am 8:00 am 9:00am 10:00am

16) At what time would you need to arrive in the Roanoke Area (return trip)?

before 4:00pm 4:00 am 5:00pm 6:00pm 7:00pm or later

17) Would you require transit at the station in _____ Richmond? _____ Washington D.C.? If so what frequency of transit at a minimum?

every 5 min every 10 min every 30 min every hour

18) Additional input concerning passenger rail (please provide below):

Name of Company _____

Primary Contact Person _____

Approximate # of Employees in Roanoke Area _____

Please Return Completed Surveys to:

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