

New River Valley

2015 Passenger Rail Study

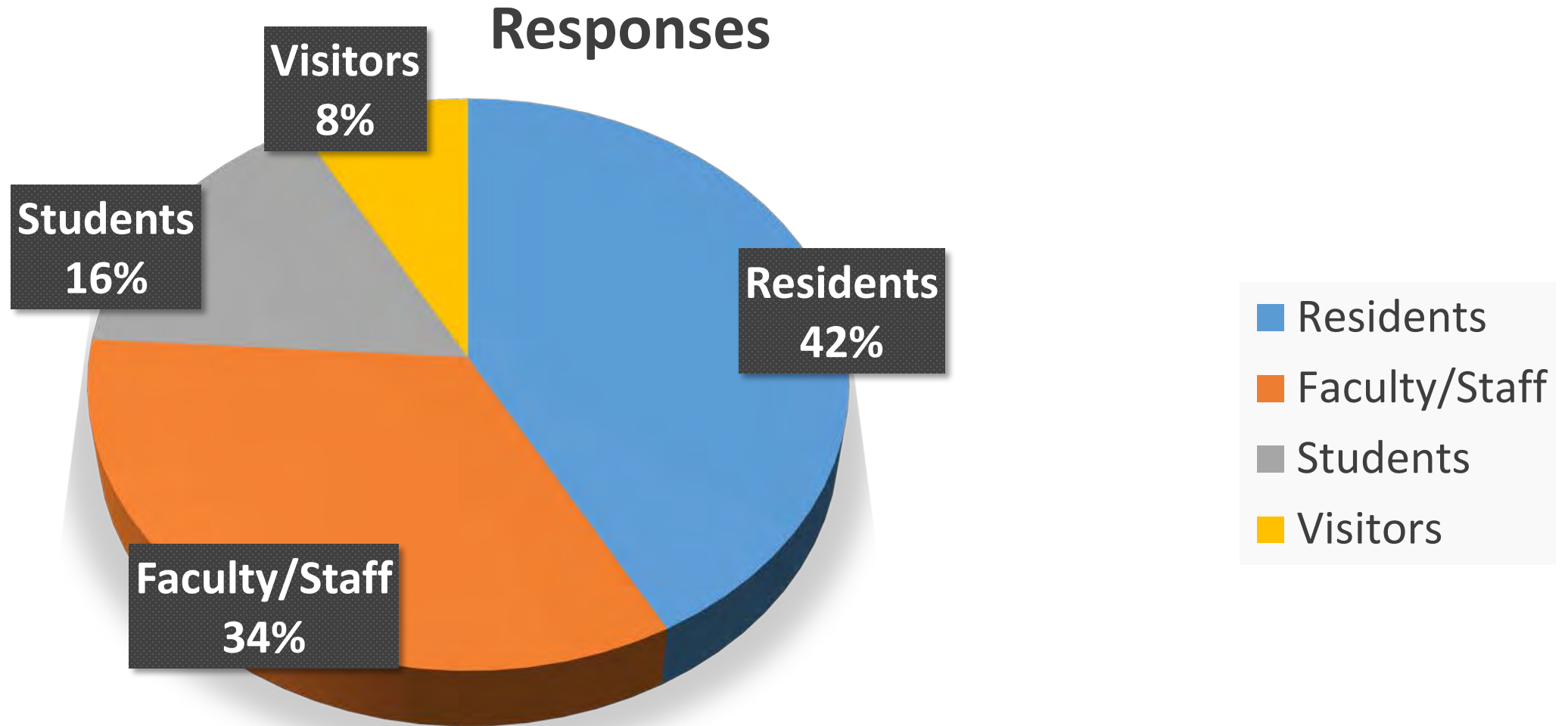


Project Update

- Surveys
 - Launched April 14, 2015
 - 4,324 responses as of July 9, 2015
 - www.NRVPassengerRail.org/



Online Survey



Online Survey

- Students = visit family
- Most folks travel by car
- 20% = work trips > once a month
- 50% = fly at least once per year
- 70% = never take Megabus



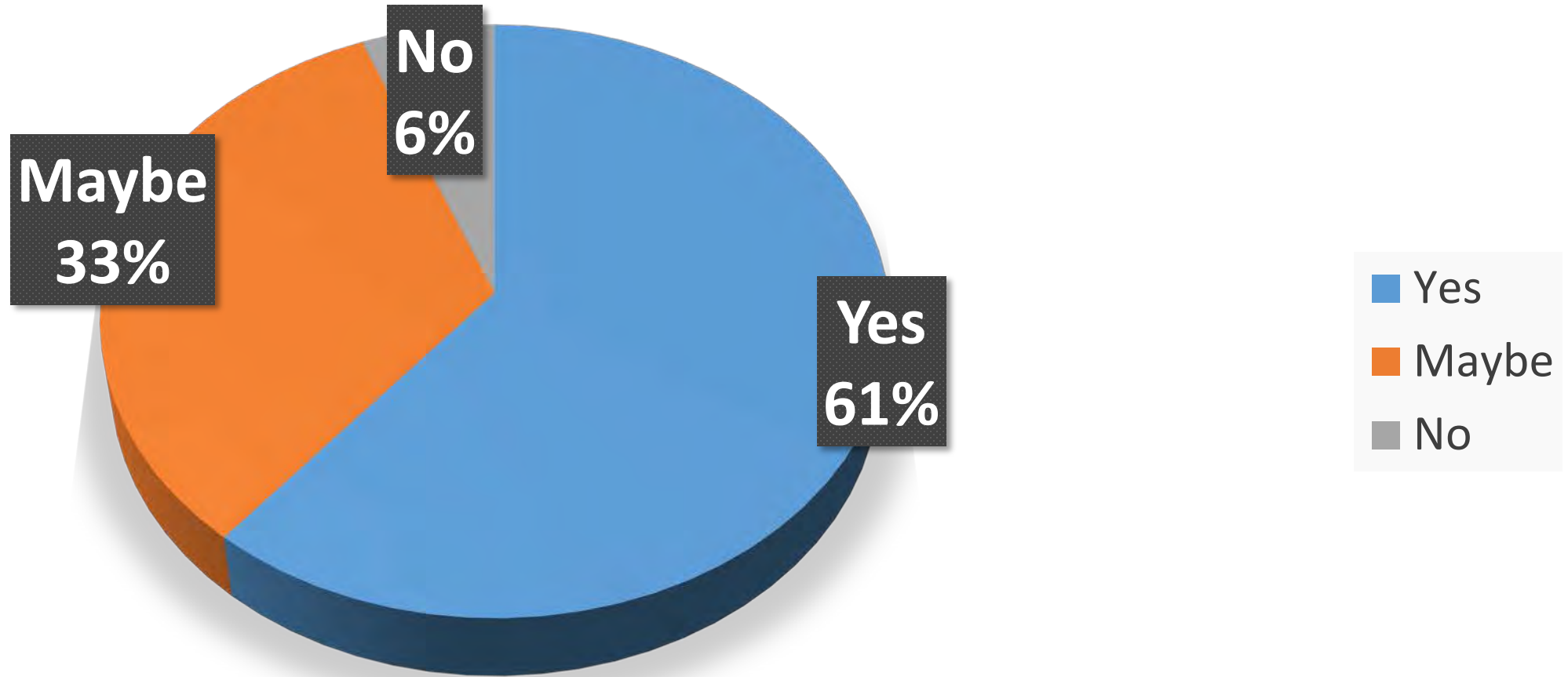
Online Survey

- When traveling outside region:
 - 2x more likely to fly or carpool
 - 3x more likely to use Amtrak
- Less than 5% would be somewhat or very unlikely to use new service



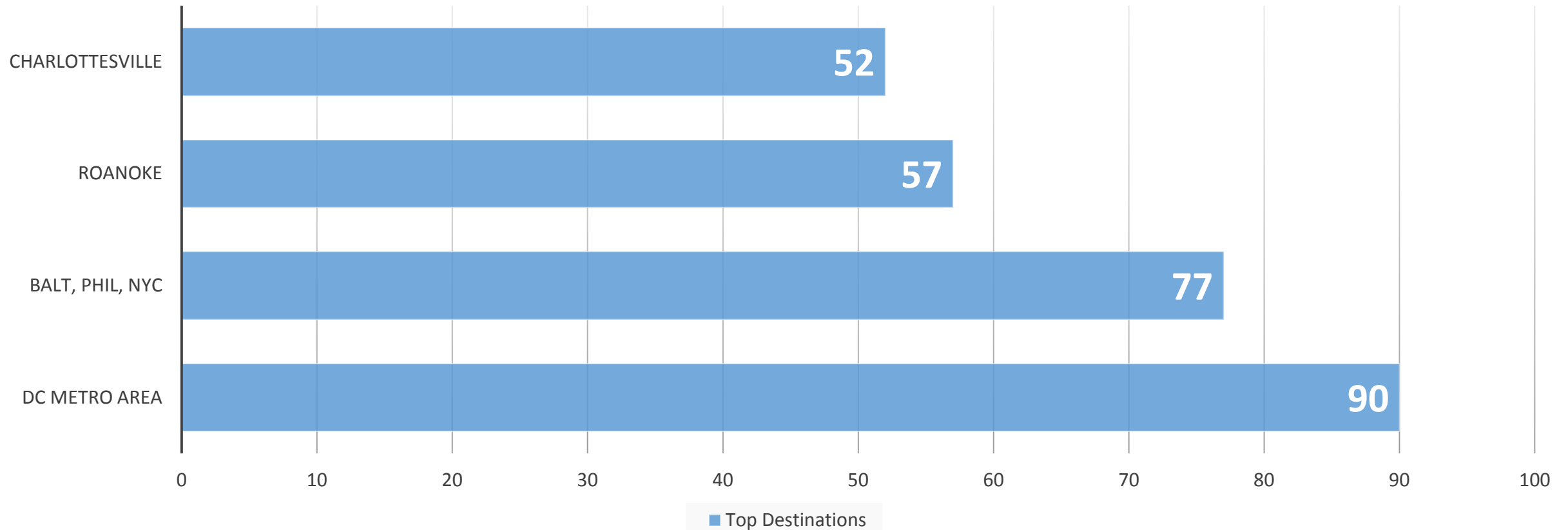
Online Survey

Would your friends/family visit more often?



Online Survey

Top Destinations



Online Survey

- Top amenities:
 - Rest rooms
 - Long-term parking
 - On site staff/ticketing
 - Maps/visitor information
- Preferred departure = early/late morning
- Preferred arrival = afternoon/evening



Online Survey- verbal comments

- For those like me in far southwest VA, train travel to NYC and those more northern locations would be valuable. Currently driving takes too long and flying is expensive and inconvenient (have to fly to a hub airport before destination). **Please consider those potential users that may live outside NRV.**
- I would mostly like to see rail service to/from NRV & Roanoke Valley. I would use the services to visit NYC, Washington, & Baltimore too, but **daily travel to/from work is much more important to me.**



Online Survey- verbal comments

- There are a large number of people like me who work at Virginia Tech's northern Virginia campus and need to travel to Blacksburg multiple times each year. We would be making the reverse commute to the New River Valley. I would also consider taking the train for family vacation trips to Roanoke or Charlottesville.
- This is a must to bring the area into a viable transportation hub. The continuing inconvenience of I-81 and air travel services make this even more important. For Blacksburg, this removes traffic and congestion from the area as student populations increase at Virginia Tech. Then there is my lifelong dream to take a train from home across the country on vacation. A local connection would be ideal.



Online Survey- verbal comments

- I am tired of driving on overcrowded and somewhat unsafe interstate highways. In Europe, I ride on trains, sit and read, and arrive refreshed. I want that same service available here.
- I believe bringing the passenger rail service to the NRV would boost the economy and increase the quality of life for many residents.
- I would like there to be rail service to and from Washington D.C. in order to utilize **airports in that region.**
- Hope the market exists for this service and that it can be implemented. Thanks for thinking about it!
- Would really, really like to be able to take a train from NRV to NYC! **Overnight train is even ok.**



Online Survey- verbal comments

- The length of the trip is not feasible for college students departing on a Friday to return on a Sunday. The trip by car is approximately 4 hours to the DC region. Most students are able to get a ride with someone traveling to this area. Cost would have to be equal to or less than the bus.
- Personally I DONT think rail service is needed to/from NRV ***as long as we get it in Roanoke! No reason to increase budget for this, especially if Smart Bus connection would be available in both directions btw station and Blacksburg. BUT WE DO NEED AMTRACK IN ROANOKE FOR SURE!!



Zimride Data 2012 - 2015

City origin or destination	Need a ride TO the NRV	Need a ride FROM the NRV
Total, all locations	1,316	5,095
DC metro area	44%	36%
Richmond area	6%	11%
Hampton Roads	6%	7%
Harrisonburg	5%	7%
Charlottesville	3%	6%

Data Analysis

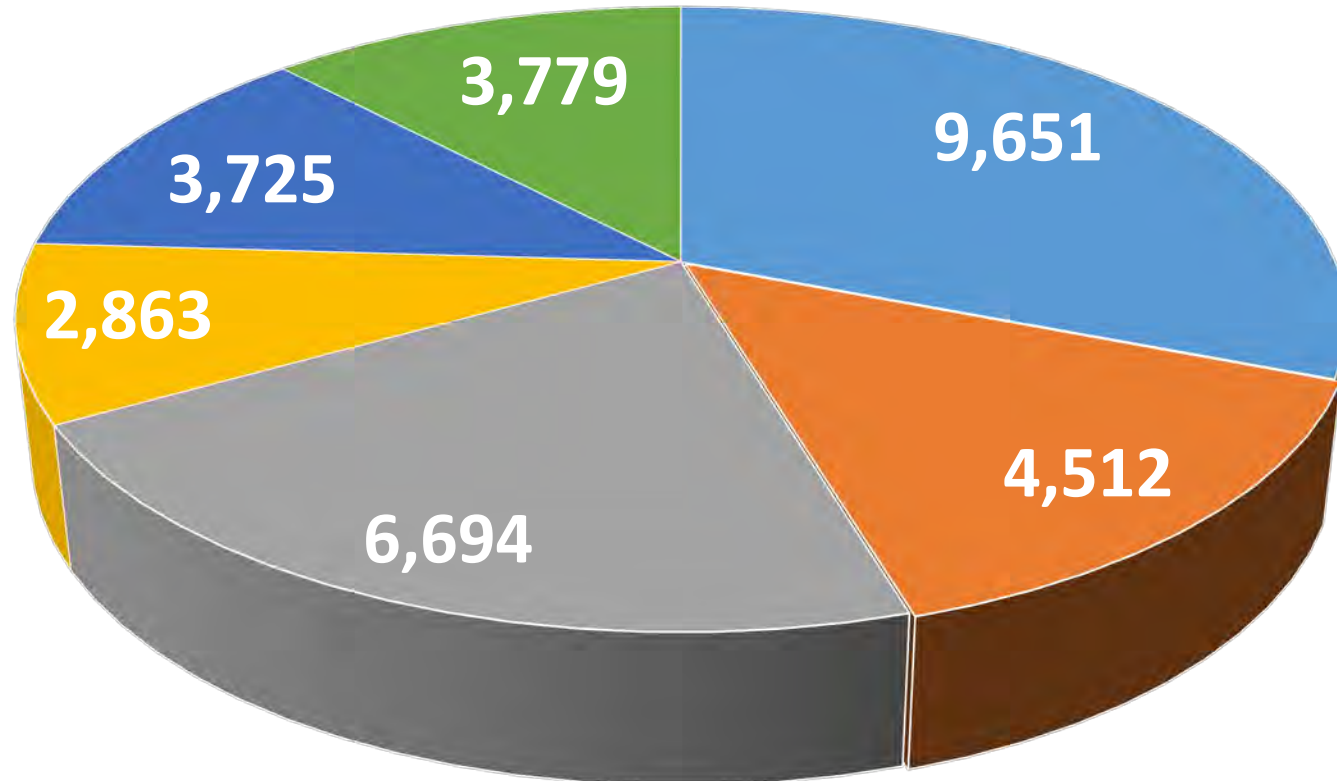
- Zimride:
 - Numerous requests in PA, NJ, NY, NC
- Home Ride
 - Buses leave Friday afternoon
 - Buses return Sunday afternoon
 - Tickets = \$70-\$126 round trip
 - Highest ridership in fall semester



Home Ride Data 2013 - 2014

Destination	Riders from RU	Riders from VT	TOTAL
Northern Virginia	624	2,297	2,921
Hampton Roads	189	371	560
Charlottesville	106	357	463
Richmond	144	256	400
Harrisonburg	93	210	303
Total	1,156	3,491	4,647

VT student zip codes 2014



- NOVA/DC/MD
- Other VA zip codes
- All other zip codes

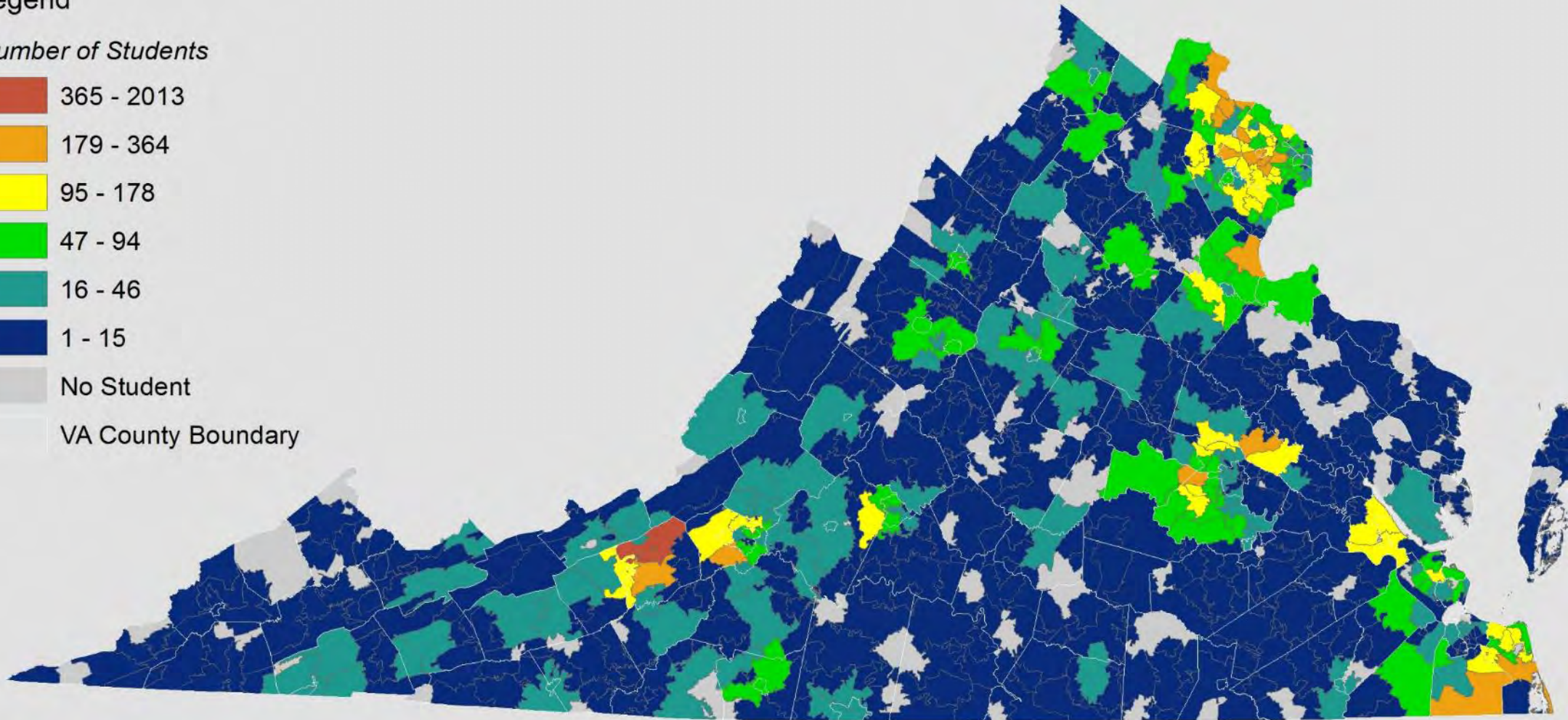
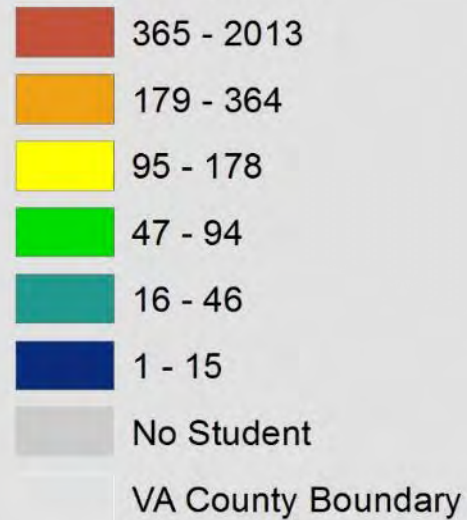
- Hampton Roads/Richmond
- "Points north" (zip code <20000)
- No zip code listed



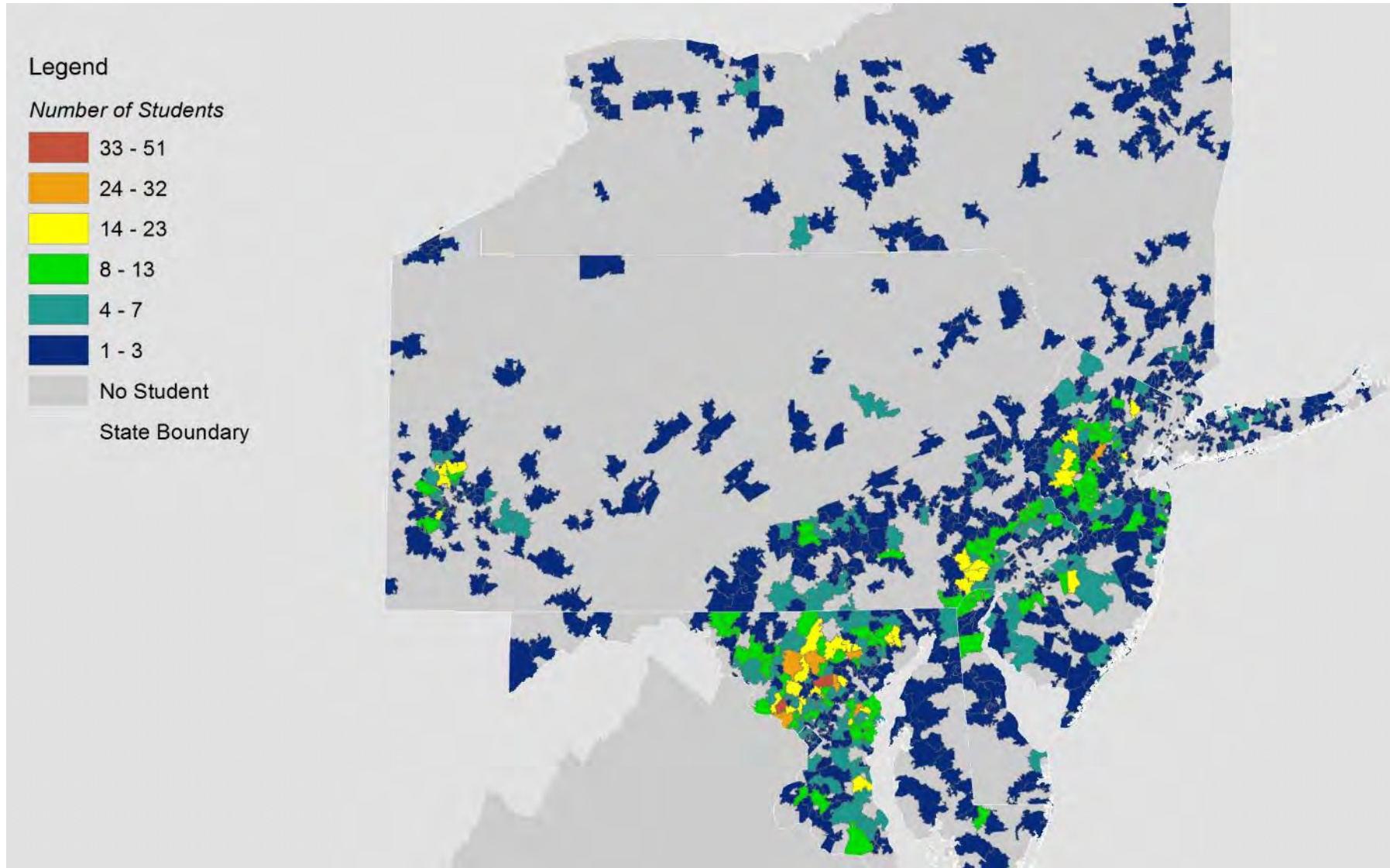
VT student 'home' zip codes

Legend

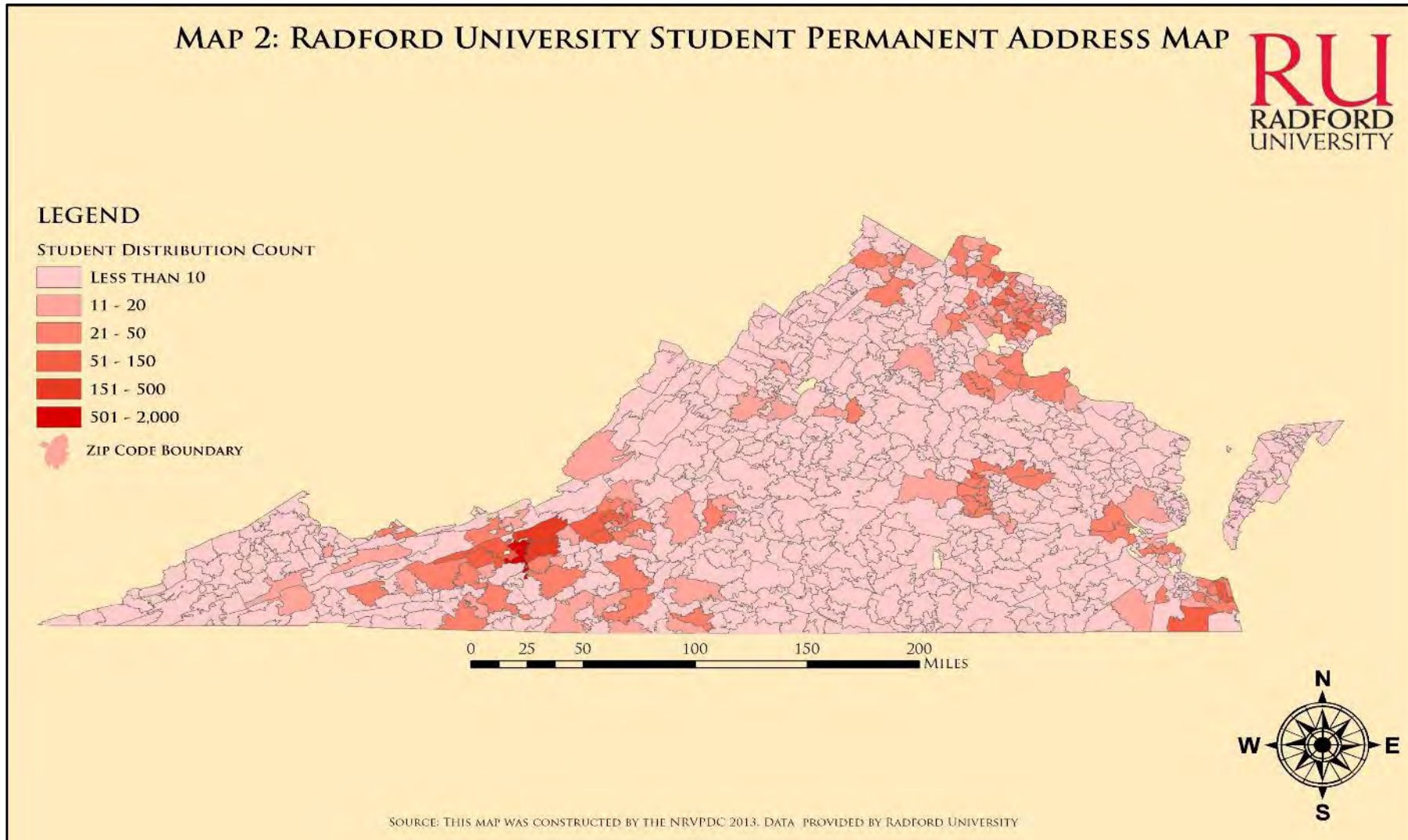
Number of Students



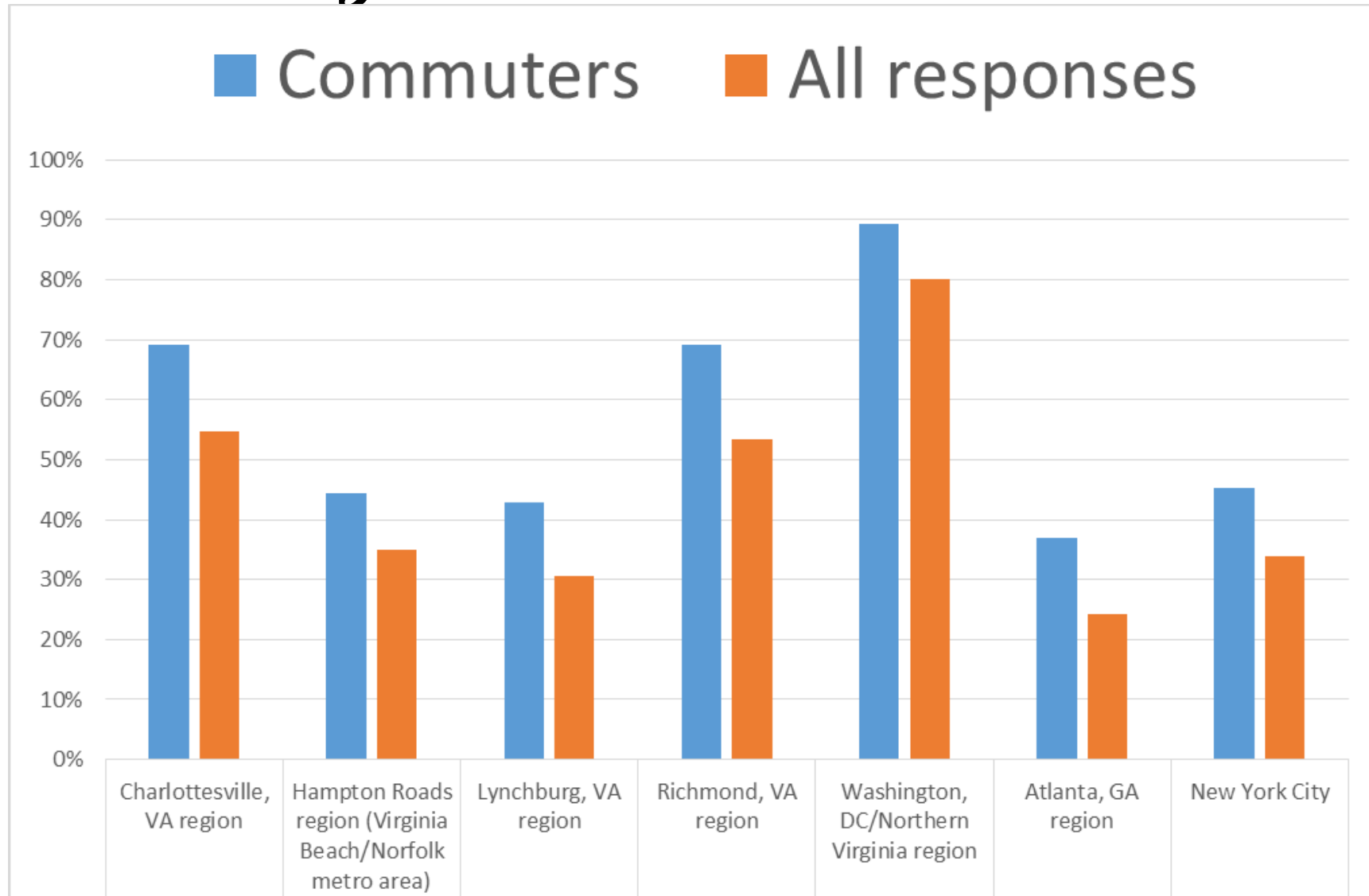
VT student 'home' zip codes



Radford student zip codes



Market segments

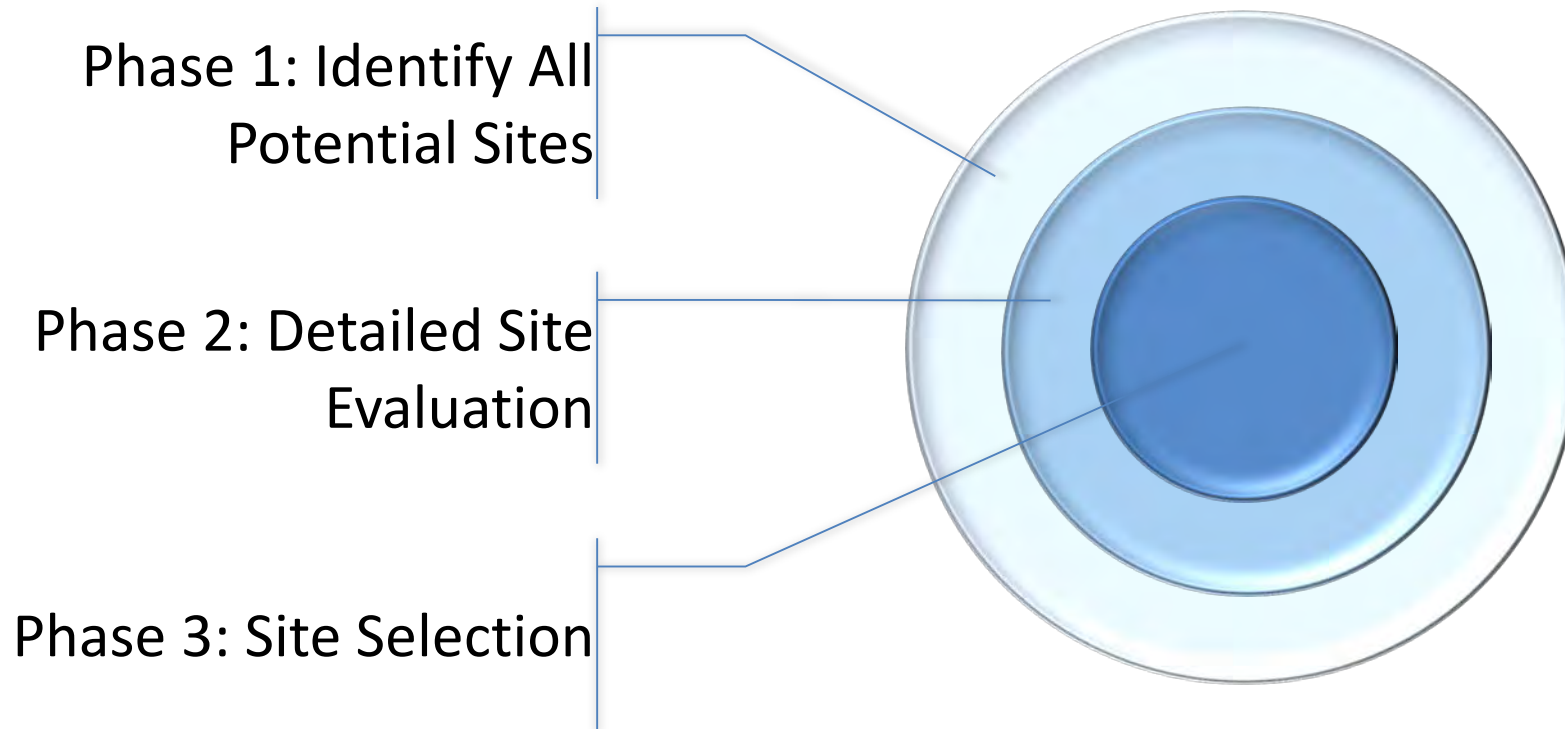


More to come...

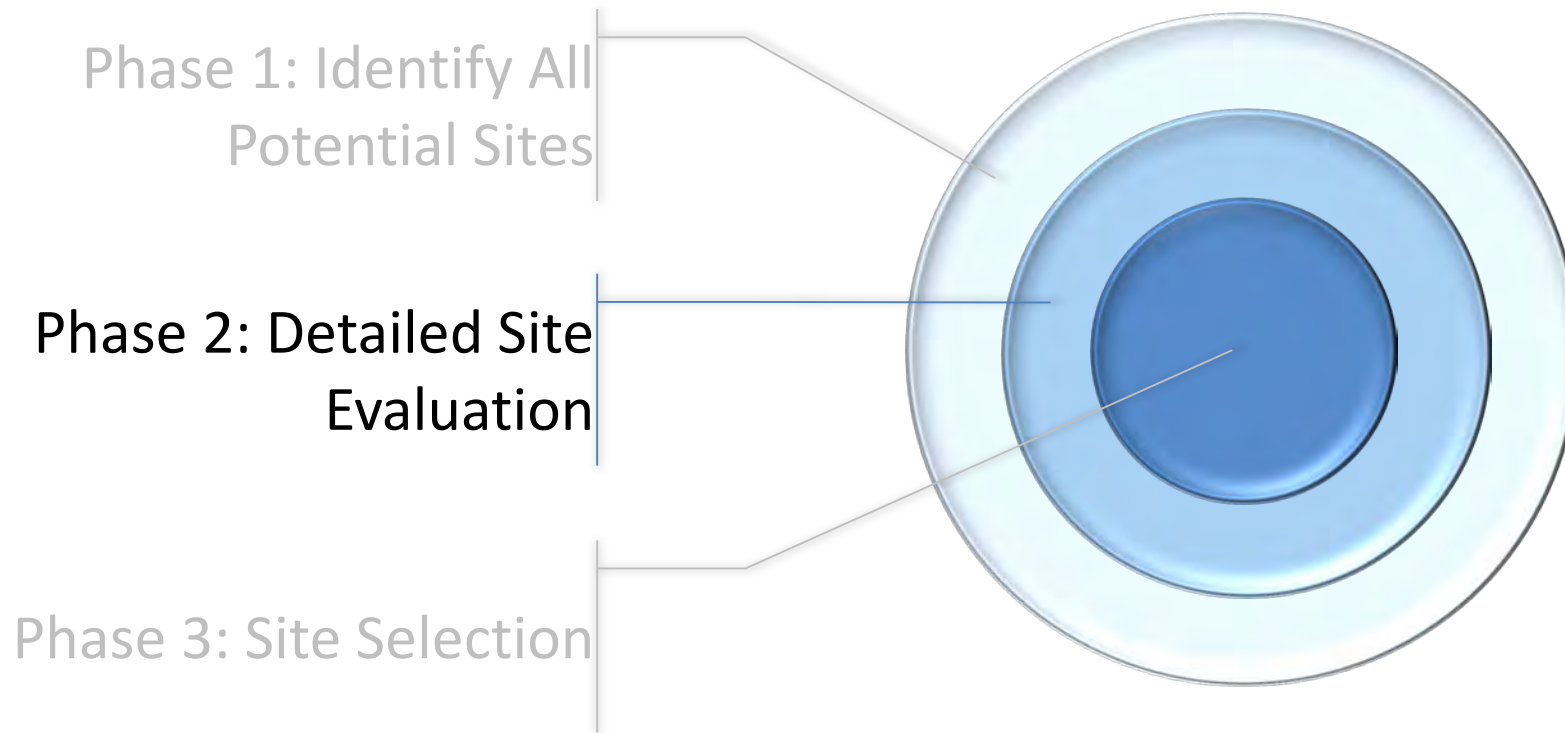
- Amtrak intercept surveys
 - Lynchburg station
 - Bus connector
- Megabus ridership data + intercept surveys
- In-depth survey analysis
 - By type of user (commuters, students, etc.)
- Estimate of total annual trips



Site Selection Process



Site Selection Process



Scoring

Phase 1 Criteria

Site Capacity/Flexibility

Environment

Phase 1 Criteria:

This Phase will incorporate all known locations along the Crescent Corridor. Initial criteria will include, but not be limited to:

- Proximity to rail corridor
- Proximity to primary road network
- Space for station + platform + pick-up/drop-off (1.5 acres)
- Space for parking (2 acres, 250 spaces/40,000* Boardings + Alightings)
- Space for transit (1.5 acres, Gateway loop for buses & vans)
- Availability/Ownership
- Potential business/residential displacement
- Known cultural/historical resources
- Proximity to habitat, natural resources, and floodplain

*Boardings & Alightings based on *Amtrak Station Program and Planning Guidelines* and interpolating 2014 VA/NC data: Greensboro/134,191, Charlottesville/132,410, Lynchburg/86,302, Durham/83,090, High Point/38,573, Ashland/27,077.

Phase 2 Criteria

Landuse + Accessibility

Potential Ridership/Performance

Concept Cost Estimate

Phase 2 Criteria:

This Phase of criteria will be applied to three locations, selected by the MPOTAC. The criteria shall include, but not be limited to:

- Landuse consistency with local planning
- Existing transportation system and connectivity to activity centers
- Existing accessibility to utilities
- Site capacity and flexibility
- Concept-level cost estimates
- Potential ridership and financial performance
- Organizational structure options
- Implementation timeline
- Amtrak operations
- Economic impacts
- Tourism opportunities

Site Evaluations

Score assigned for each criteria:

35 points: Site Capacity/Flexibility

24 points: Environment

31 points: Landuse + Accessibility

30 points: Potential Ridership/Performance

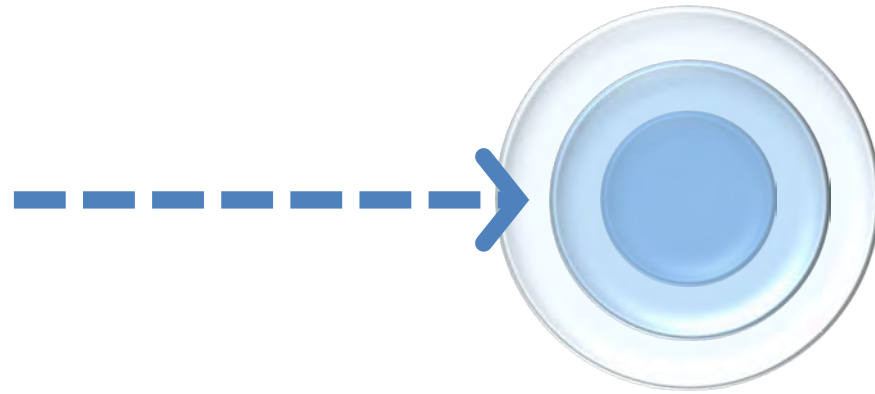
10 points: Concept Cost Estimate

130 Total Points

Phase 1 Criteria
Phase 2 Criteria



Phase 1 Criteria



Site Capacity/Flexibility

5 points: Proximity to Primary Rail

5 points: Proximity to Primary Road (I-81)

10 points: Space (5 acres min.)

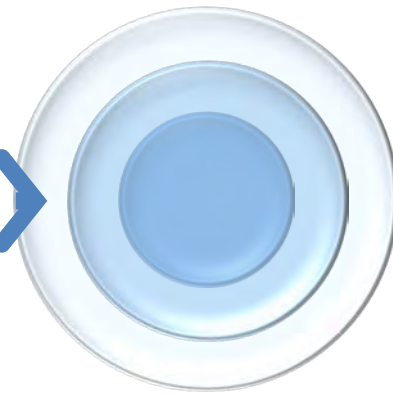
10 points: Track frontage (1000 ft. min.)

5 points: Availability/Ownership

35 Total Points



Phase 1 Criteria



Environment

3 points: Potential Displacement

3 points: Floodplain

3 points: Migratory Birds

3 points: Threatened or Endangered Species

3 points: Historical Resources

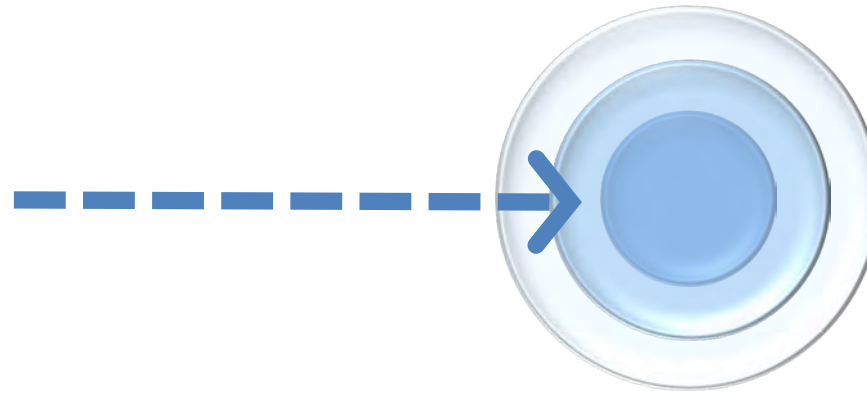
3 points: Open Space/Conservation Ease.

3 points: Agriculture District

3 points: Hazardous Materials

24 Total Points

Phase 2 Criteria



Landuse + Accessibility

10 points: Local Comprehensive Plans

9 points: Transit, Bike, Pedestrian

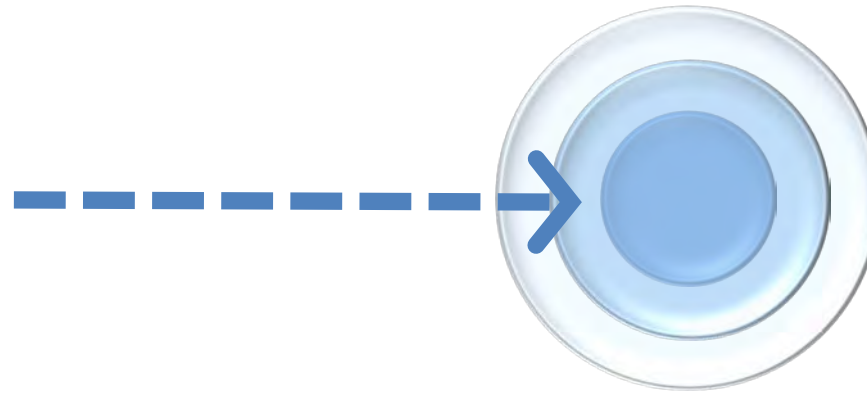
12 points: Water, Sewer, Power, Internet

31 Total Points

Note: Reviewed Comprehensive Plans available on jurisdictional websites to determine potential conflicts with local planning. Landuse/Zoning business/commercial/industrial.



Phase 2 Criteria



Potential Ridership/Performance

10 points: Housing Units

10 points: Employment

10 points: Population + Employment

30 Total Points

Note: 2009-2013 ACS data for housing; 2011 Census On the Map data for employment. Measured “as the crow flies” 2 mile and 10 mile radius to intersecting Block Groups.



Site Selection – Next Steps

1. Wrap-up Incomplete Analysis Areas:
 - Open space or conservation easement
 - Agriculture district or prime farmland
 - Hazardous materials
 - Utility Connectivity (water, sewer, power, internet)
2. Review & Narrow Down
3. Concept-level development
 - Cost
 - Organizational structure & implementation
 - Economic impacts & tourism opportunities



Site Selection - Discussion



Working Group Meeting Schedule

