



Virginia Transit Equity and Modernization Study (HJ 542)

Commonwealth Transportation Board

December 7, 2021

Grant Sparks

Director of Transit Planning, DRPT

How Did We Get Here?

HJ 542 (2021)

- Requires DRPT to explore a variety of topics that will create recommendations to advance transit equity and modernization efforts
- Emphasis on engagement opportunities for underrepresented communities

Transit
Accessibility

Adequacy of
Infrastructure

Emerging
Technologies

Transit
Electrification

Transit Safety

System
Engagement &
Governance

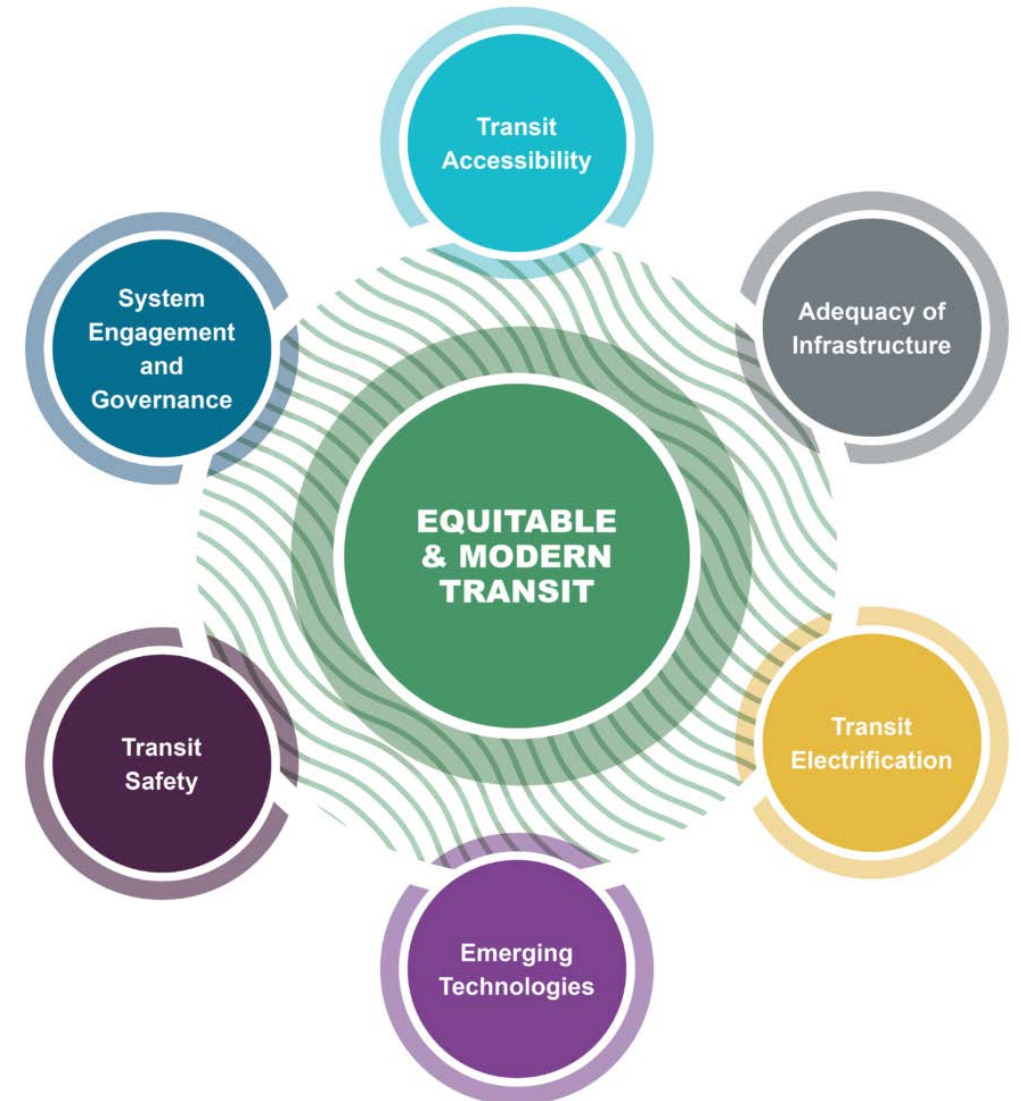
Study Goals

What will this study accomplish?

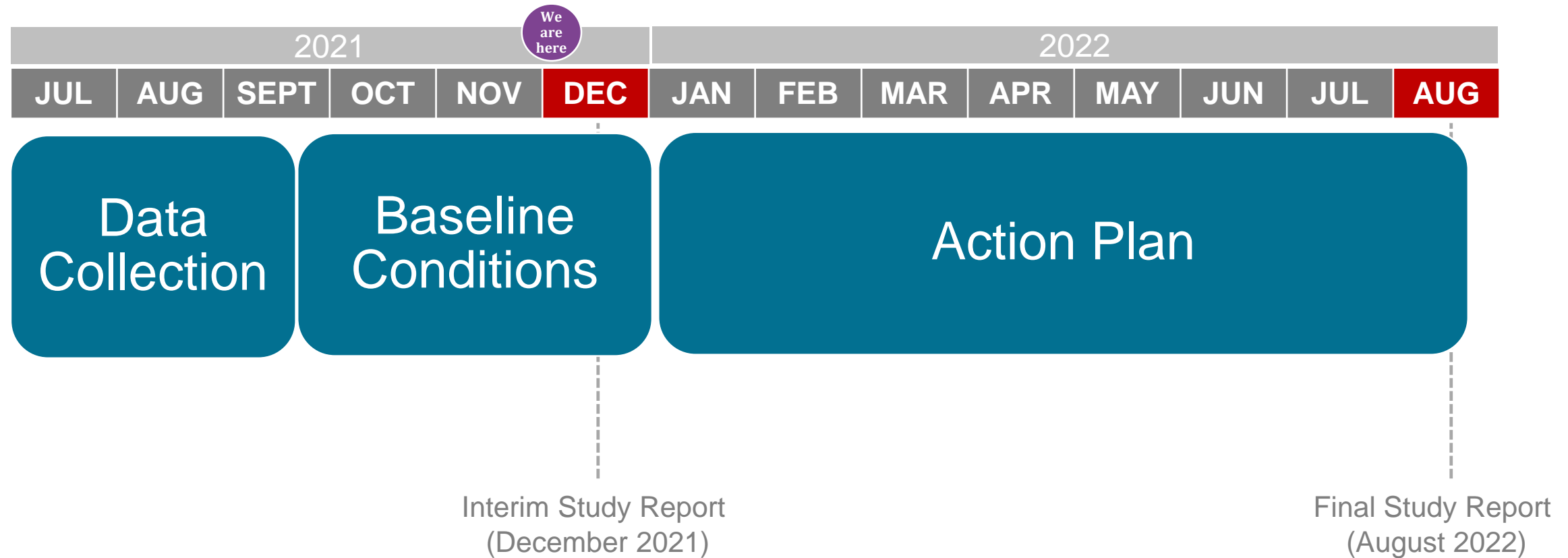
- ✓ Identify transit agency, rider, and stakeholder needs
- ✓ Develop an action plan to address those needs
- ✓ Define underrepresented and underserved communities

The study will address:

- Opportunities/Gap Assessment of transit service and accessibility
- Needs and barriers to improve transit infrastructure
- Opportunities to reduce carbon footprint through bus electrification
- Strategies to inform priorities of implementing emerging technologies
- Opportunities to enhance passenger and transit employee safety
- Framework for identifying and engaging disadvantaged populations and underserved communities



Study Process & Timeline



Key Study Activities

	Completed	In Progress	Upcoming
Study Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Data Collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Baseline Conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action Plan
Study Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review Plans, Policies, and Data ✓ Transit Agency Survey ✓ Rider Focus Groups ✓ Transit Agency Outreach Kits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transit Equity Committee (TEC) ○ Technical Working Groups (TWGs) ○ Stakeholder Meetings ○ Agency Briefings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interim Study Report ○ Virtual Transit Forum ○ Final Study Report

Key Study Activities

	Completed	In Progress	Upcoming
Study Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Data Collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Baseline Conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action Plan
Study Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review Plans, Policies, and Data ✓ Transit Agency Survey ✓ Rider Focus Groups ✓ Transit Agency Outreach Kits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transit Equity Committee (TEC) ○ Technical Working Groups (TWGs) ○ Stakeholder Meetings ○ Agency Briefings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interim Study Report ○ Virtual Transit Forum ○ Final Study Report

Key Study Activities

	Completed	In Progress	Upcoming
Study Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Data Collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Baseline Conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action Plan
Study Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review Plans, Policies, and Data ✓ Transit Agency Survey ✓ Rider Focus Groups ✓ Transit Agency Outreach Kits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transit Equity Committee (TEC) ○ Technical Working Groups (TWGs) ○ Stakeholder Meetings ○ Agency Briefings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interim Study Report ○ Virtual Transit Forum ○ Final Study Report

Baseline Conditions: Initial Themes

- Many bus stops are poorly placed and not well-connected to sidewalks
- Basic transit infrastructure (shelters, benches, lighting, etc.) is lacking
- There is a significant interest from Virginia's transit agencies to electrify fleets and adopt newer transit technologies, but additional resources are required (funding, skilled workforce, training, technical assistance, etc.)
- Many transit agencies are interested in piloting zero-fare service to overcome barriers to transit access
- Most transit agencies do not have rider advisory boards or committees
- Equity and modernization can be incorporated more in state guidance, requirements and funding programs for public transit

Study Action Plan

- The Study Action Plan will include recommendations and strategies that address barriers by topic area and will describe specific actions, next steps, coordination required, timeline for implementation and responsible agencies.
- DRPT anticipates that the Study Action Plan will advise changes to transit funding programs and policies, and the development of future plans.
- Potential policy changes may include modification to:
 - *MERIT Capital Prioritization*
 - *MERIT Operating Assistance Formula*
 - *Innovation and Technology Enhancements*

Spread the word to sign up for our
email list at:

www.vatransitequity.com



Questions?

Grant Sparks | Grant.Sparks@drpt.virginia.gov