Agenda Item 9-E
Action Item

To: Chairman Skinner and the VRE Operations Board
From: Doug Allen
Date: July 15, 2016
Re: Recommend Authorization to Submit VRE Projects to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for Evaluation Under Smart Scale

Recommendation:

The VRE Operations Board is asked to recommend the Commissions authorize the VRE Chief Executive Officer to submit, on behalf of the Commissions, the Gainesville-Haymarket Extension Project and the Fredericksburg Line Capacity Expansion Project to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) for evaluation under the Smart Scale scoring process and funding consideration in the FY 2022-2023 Program, make any necessary corrections to project amounts or descriptions in the applications, and execute all project funding agreements that may result from consideration of the projects.

Background:

Smart Scale (formerly known as HB2) is the prioritization process that was signed into law in 2014. Projects must meet the capacity and operations needs of VTrans2040, Virginia’s long-range multimodal transportation plan, and go through the Smart Scale process to receive state funding under the Construction District Grant Program (CDGP) and the High-Priority Projects Program (HPPP). These two grant programs were established in 2015 under House Bill 1887. The CDGP is open only to localities. Transit agencies may apply for HPPP funding with a resolution of support from the relevant regional agency, i.e. Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, Transportation Planning Board, or Fredericksburg Area
Metropolitan Planning Organization. A project applying for funds from the HPPP is prioritized with projects statewide. The CTB then makes a final decision on which projects to fund.

For the current round of Smart Scale evaluations, candidate projects must be submitted between August 1 and September 30, 2016. VRE has identified two candidate projects for submittal: VRE Gainesville-Haymarket Extension Project and VRE Fredericksburg Line Capacity Expansion Project. Both projects are capacity expansion projects located in Corridors of Statewide Significance (COSS) as well as on Regional Networks, and qualify for funding through the High-Priority Projects Program.

The VRE Gainesville-Haymarket Extension Project was submitted for the last round of evaluations and scored well, but was not selected for funding. The project will be resubmitted with updated information, including ridership and capital needs, developed through the ongoing study. The estimated total cost of the project is $540 million and the Smart Scale grant request will be $270 million.

The Fredericksburg Line Capacity Expansion Project combines several currently unfunded or underfunded projects in the VRE CIP and will include necessary station, parking, and storage yard expansions along the Line as well as rolling stock to complete implementation of Phase I of the System Plan 2040, including operating longer trains. The estimated total cost of the project is $136 million and the Smart Scale grant request will be $99 million.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The submission of a project list has no fiscal impact. If selected for funding, the funds would allow the VRE Projects to be completed on an accelerated schedule.
Virginia Railway Express
Operations Board

Resolution
9E-07-2016

Recommend Authorization to Submit VRE Project to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for Evaluation Under Smart Scale

WHEREAS, VRE has identified two candidate projects for evaluation under the Smart Scale prioritization process; and,

WHEREAS, projects must go through the Smart Scale prioritization process to receive funding under the High-Priority Projects Program; and,

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) will use the Smart Scale scoring along with other information to inform their funding decisions;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the VRE Operations Board does hereby recommend the Commissions authorize the Chief Executive Officer to submit, on behalf of the Commissions, the Gainesville-Haymarket Extension Project and the Fredericksburg Line Capacity Expansion Project to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for evaluation under the Smart Scale scoring process and funding consideration in the FY 2022-2023 Program, make necessary corrections to project amounts or descriptions, and execute all project funding agreements that may result from consideration of the projects.

Approved this 15th day of July, 2016

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Gary Skinner
Chairman

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Maureen Caddigan
Secretary