To: Chairman Skinner and the VRE Operations Board

From: Doug Allen

Date: September 16, 2016

Re: Gainesville-Haymarket Extension Update

The VRE Gainesville-Haymarket Extension (GHX) study was initiated in July 2015. The study is divided in two phases: Phase A includes the evaluation of service, station, and railroad alignment alternatives while Phase B includes preparation of a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document and preliminary engineering (PE) design.

Phase A of the GHX study is examining two build alternatives; the extension to Haymarket and the relocation of Broad Run Station east of the existing station site. This phase is scheduled to be completed in October 2016. The VRE Operations Board will be briefed on the technical evaluation and staff recommendations for advancing the GHX study at the October Operations Board meeting. The schedule for Phase B (NEPA/PE) of the GHX study will be revised following the completion of Phase A.

Phase A was estimated to take 12 months to complete, while Phase B was estimated at 14 months, overlapping Phase A by several months. VRE is being assisted by AECOM, a planning and engineering consultant. The Operations Board authorized up to $4.4 million for the AECOM contract and contingency in March 2015. In addition to AECOM's efforts, Norfolk Southern has been evaluating the real estate requirements to support adding up to two additional tracks to the B Line to accommodate shared VRE and freight use of the GHX railroad corridor. The VRE Operations Board authorized $450,000 in July 2015 from the VRE capital planning/reserve fund to cover NS costs for this study. The results of the NS study are expected to be received in September 2016 and will be used by AECOM in refining their analyses for the GHX study.
The evaluation of a larger number of service plans, multiple extension termini, multiple track alignments and multiple equipment storage and maintenance facility alternatives have required greater technical analyses and additional time to complete. As a result, Phase A costs for the AECOM contract have exceeded the $1.2 million Phase A budget (of the total $4.4 million authorized by the Operations Board) established at the initiation of the study. To address this situation, approximately $600,000 from the Phase B contract budget has been reallocated to supplement the Phase A budget. Once Phase A is complete in October, and the VRE expansion alternative(s) being carried forward for NEPA and PE are confirmed with the Operations Board, a revised budget will be developed for Phase B. If that budget exceeds the contract authorization limit, a contract amendment will be requested from the Operations Board.