To: Chairman Skinner and the VRE Operations Board  
From: Rich Dalton  
Date: July 17, 2020  
Re: Authorization to Withdraw from Standard Project Agreements with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority for Lorton and Rippon Stations

 Recommendation:  
The VRE Operations Board is asked to authorize the Acting Chief Executive Officer to formally withdraw from the existing Standard Project Agreements (SPAs) with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) for the Lorton and Rippon station projects.

Summary:  
As a result of the Commonwealth’s Transforming Rail in Virginia program, VRE’s planned station expansions at Lorton and Rippon have changed substantially, and the NVTA funding originally committed to these two projects is no longer needed. In order to unencumber the remaining funding and make those funds available to other important congestion-reducing projects in the region, VRE and NVTA have jointly agreed that VRE should voluntarily withdraw from the existing project agreements.

Background:  
The planned station expansions at Lorton and Rippon were among the earliest projects funded by the NVTA, with $7.9 million for construction of the Lorton second platform approved in 2013 and $10.0 million for construction of the Rippon station expansion and second platform approved in 2015. Engineering and design work has been proceeding on these projects since their approval.
In late 2019, the Commonwealth announced its plan to purchase railroad right of way from CSX Transportation (CSXT) in the RF&P corridor (where VRE’s Fredericksburg Line operates), to fund the construction of a second Potomac River crossing at the Long Bridge, and to make other capacity investments that will transform passenger rail in the corridor and throughout the state. A new operating plan is also part of this program, and the plan will largely separate passenger and freight traffic onto different sides of the corridor.

This separation will have significant positive impacts on capacity and reliability, but it also eliminates the need for planned second platforms at a number of VRE stations in the corridor. After reviewing the future capital investments and new operating plan with representatives of DRPT and CSXT, it was determined that no additional platform investments will be needed at the Lorton Station until after 2030, and that only a limited set of investments – to rehabilitate and extend the existing platform and rehabilitate the existing overhead pedestrian bridge – will be needed at Rippon Station by 2030.

With these changes confirmed, the remaining NVTA funding on both projects is no longer needed. (The limited investments at Rippon can be completed with existing federal CMAQ and 5337/State of Good Repair funds.) NVTA’s FY 2020-2025 update to the Six Year Program is already heavily oversubscribed, and VRE’s withdrawal from the funding agreements would release the remaining funds to be available to other important congestion-reducing projects in the region. Approximately $7.0 million of the original $7.9 million of funding for Lorton and $9.9 million of the original $10.0 million funding for Rippon will be unencumbered by withdrawal.

With the concurrence of VRE, the NVTA has already acted at its July 9, 2020, meeting to cancel the project agreements for Lorton and Rippon in order to make the unencumbered funding available for allocation in a timely fashion. However, with the Operations Board’s approval of this item, NVTA will instead record the action as a voluntary withdrawal.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The planned Lorton Station second platform will be formally removed from VRE’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as part of the FY 2022 budget adoption process. The Rippon Station project will be modified to reflect the more limited expansion and rehabilitation investments described above, and existing federal CMAQ and 5337/State of Good Repair funds are expected to be sufficient to complete those investments.
Virginia Railway Express
Operations Board

Resolution
9G-07-2020

Authorization to Withdraw from Standard Project Agreements
with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
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WHEREAS, VRE has entered into Standard Project Agreements with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority for funding to construct second platforms at the Lorton and Rippon VRE stations; and,

WHEREAS, in December 2019, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation announced its Transforming Rail in Virginia program, which in addition to major capital investments in track and bridge capacity also includes a new operating plan in the RF&P corridor where VRE’s Fredericksburg Line trains operate that will largely separate passenger and freight rail traffic; and,

WHEREAS, this new operating plan eliminates the need for second platforms at Lorton and Rippon stations, and the remaining Northern Virginia Transportation Authority funding on these projects is no longer needed; and,

WHEREAS, the withdrawal of the two project agreements will unencumber approximately $16.9 million of remaining funding and make those funds available for allocation to other important congestion-reducing projects in the region;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the VRE Operations Board does hereby find that, in accordance with amendments adopted April 22, 2020 to budget bills HB 29 and 30, meeting by electronic means is authorized because the nature of the declared emergency makes it both impracticable and unsafe for the Operations Board to assemble in a single location on July 17, 2020, and that meeting by electronic means is authorized because the items on the July 17, 2020 Operations Board Meeting Agenda are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the Operations Board and the discharge of the Operations Board’s lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities; and further find that meeting by electronic means is authorized because the items on the July 17, 2020 Operations Board Meeting Agenda are encompassed within the continuity of operations ordinances adopted by member localities of the Virginia Railway Express Operations Board to assure the continued operation of the government during the disaster posed by the public health emergency resulting from COVID-19; and,
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the VRE Operations Board does hereby authorize the Acting Chief Executive Officer to formally withdraw from the existing Standard Project Agreements with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority for the Lorton and Rippon station projects.

Approved this 17th day of July 2020

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Gary Skinner
Chairman

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Jeanine Lawson
Secretary