To: Chairman Skinner and the VRE Operations Board  
From: Rich Dalton  
Date: March 20, 2020  
Re: VRE Coordination with the Transforming Rail in Virginia Plan

Since VRE began operations in 1992, the number of “slots” available to run commuter trains has been based on agreements with VRE’s primary host railroad, CSX Transportation (CSXT). These agreements dictate both Fredericksburg and Manassas Line service levels, since all VRE trains must travel on CSXT right of way between Alexandria and L’Enfant. Due to system capacity constraints, there is virtually no ability to add additional slots for increased passenger service.

The pending agreement between DRPT and CSXT to purchase a portion of the CSXT corridor and allow a separation of freight and passenger service, along with an additional span of the Long Bridge over the Potomac River, will allow a substantial increase in VRE and state sponsored Amtrak intercity service. VRE has been coordinating with DRPT on the development of a proposed program of projects, part of the Transforming Rail in Virginia Plan, that must be completed to separate passenger and freight operations. Below are key elements of the Transforming Rail in Virginia Plan and how they differ from VRE’s current program known as System Plan 2040.

**Key Elements of the Transforming Rail in Virginia Plan**

1. The plan maintains interoperability on all three (four where available) tracks but will operate in a manner that generally places freight trains on one side of the corridor and passenger trains on the other side.

2. The plan is predicated on a comprehensive operations modeling analysis with information from all operations stakeholders, which identified locations for the proposed track(s) and confirmed the benefits of separated service with interoperability.

3. Interoperability gives passenger service additional options to recover during service disruptions.
4. The program of projects incorporates existing plans to construct segments of a new third track south of Franconia-Springfield and a new fourth track from Alexandria north.

5. The program of projects also includes the construction of an overhead bypass bridge between Lorton and Franconia-Springfield stations allowing passenger service to transition from the west side of the corridor north of the bypass to the east side of the corridor south of the bypass (and vice versa).

6. The cornerstone of the program of projects is the construction of an additional two-track span of the Long Bridge.

### Major Differences between the Improving Rail in Virginia Plan and current VRE System Plan 2040

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System Plan 2040</th>
<th>Transforming Rail in Virginia Plan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intermingled freight and passenger trains</td>
<td>Separated freight and passenger trains with interoperability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Large scale platform improvement projects to provide one side platform and one center platform at most stations</td>
<td>Near term: current side platforms will be lengthened and serve the predominately passenger service track</td>
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<td>Longer term: side platforms will be improved to center platforms serving two tracks when the future fourth track is built</td>
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<td>Near term service capacity increases achieved by lengthening current trains</td>
<td>Near term service capacity increases achieved by lengthening some trains and adding new trains</td>
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**Passenger Rail Benefits of the Transforming Rail in Virginia Plan**

Separated service with interoperability increases overall capacity and reliability. Near term improvements constructed over the initial 10-year period can be accomplished with little or no disruption to current operations and decrease VRE capital costs. Increased rail system capacity will give VRE and the Commonwealth the ability to increase commuter and passenger rail service.