



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS
OPERATIONS BOARD

Agenda Item 10-C
Action Item

To: Chair Bohmke and the VRE Operations Board

From: Rich Dalton

Date: July 19, 2024

**Re: Authorization to Provide a Letter of Support for Amtrak's
Application for FFY24 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity
Passenger Rail Program Funding**

Recommendation:

The VRE Operations Board is asked to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to provide a letter of support for Amtrak's application to the Federal Fiscal Year 2024 (FFY24) Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program (FSP).

Summary:

Amtrak has requested VRE provide a letter of support for its application to the FFY24 FSP to fund two Washington Union Station (WUS): Near Term Rail Program (Program) projects: Substation 25A Relocation and Replacement, Digital Technology Communications Hut construction, and Crew Base Renovations. They have also requested VRE provide a portion of the non-federal funding match.

Background:

Amtrak, in partnership with the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA), the State of Maryland, and VRE, is undertaking the Program to expand and modernize WUS, the National Capital Region's principal intermodal transportation hub.

WUS is one of the busiest passenger transportation facilities in the United States and accommodates seven transportation modes. Between intercity passenger and commuter rail, the station accommodated approximately 50,000 passenger trips per day prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in FY2023, ridership nearly made a full recovery.



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The scope of this grant application is for Final Design and Construction activities for Substation 25A and the Digital Technology Communications Hut; and a Crew Base/Amtrak Police Department project is seeking funding for Final Design and NEPA activities. Once deployed, the Program will address the challenges of outdated infrastructure to ensure station reliability and safety; expand current insufficient space for operational needs and crew members; support advanced digital technology capabilities for future growth and expansion projects; comply with safety codes and ADA compliance; and create more efficient and cost-effective designs. The Program is needed to improve rail station capacity, reliability, safety, efficiency, customer and employee satisfaction, accessibility, and security, for current and future long-term railroad operations at the historic WUS. An FSP Grant award would allow Amtrak to continue progressing the Program through milestones and ensure the benefits of this critical Program accrue as soon as possible.

Amtrak has asked VRE to consider making a \$1.2 million contribution to the projects. In light of the projects' benefits to VRE, this request will be brought back to the Operations Board at a later time in FY 2026 after staff has had an opportunity to analyze it further.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no direct fiscal impact to this action.

**Virginia Railway Express
Operations Board Resolution**

10C-7-2024

**Authorization to Provide a Letter of Support for Amtrak’s Application for
FFY24 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program
Funding**

WHEREAS, Amtrak has requested VRE provide a letter of support for its application to the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program; and,

WHEREAS, Amtrak, in partnership with the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, the State of Maryland and VRE, is undertaking the Washington Union Station: Near Term Rail Program to expand and modernize WUS, the National Capital Region’s principal intermodal transportation hub; and,

WHEREAS, if awarded, the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program funds will be used for Final Design and Construction activities for Substation 25A and the Digital Technology Communications Hut and Final Design and NEPA activities for a Crew Base/Amtrak Police Department project, which are vital parts of the Washington Union Station: Near Term Rail Program; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the VRE Operations Board does hereby authorize the Chief Executive Officer to provide a letter of support for Amtrak’s application to the Federal Fiscal Year 2024 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program for funding of the Washington Union Station: Near Term Rail Program - Substation 25A Relocation and Replacement, Digital Technology Communications Hut construction, and Crew Base Renovations; and,

Approved this 19th day of July 2024

Meg Bohmke
Chair

Ralph Smith
Secretary