

### MEMORANDUM

Date: June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
To: Red Line Task Force  
From: Mayor John Woods, Chairman  
Subject: Red Line White Paper on the Norfolk Southern O-Line

The report is attached for your information. If you remember, this White Paper came about as a result of Norfolk Southern's (NS) newly adopted passenger rail policies, which conflict with our request to use the O-Line corridor for the LYNX Red Line commuter rail service.

It is apparent, based on the newly provided policies, that NS has the intent of preserving the O-Line corridor for future rail use and believes that the fundamental assumption of sharing the track with commuter rail operations would no longer be feasible. The O-Line corridor represents a potential alternative freight alignment to the current main line corridor owned by the North Carolina Railroad (NCRR) and leased by Norfolk Southern. Until Norfolk Southern obtains a permanent solution to the NCRR corridor, the O-Line will continue to be held as a strategic reserve.

The attached white paper is intended to evaluate and present the potential cost implications that would result from complying with the changes to Norfolk Southern policies, which now precludes the joint-use of the track of both freight and passenger rail service. If a permanent solution is found, their position can perhaps change. However, the MTC is not in a position to provide that solution.

Even though the relationship with NS and their willingness to allow the O-Line to be used as a passenger line remains an issue, passenger use on the O-Line would spark considerable development and thus is worth pursuing. Any new build scenario in the O-Line right-of-way acceptable to Norfolk Southern represents a major change in the scope and magnitude of the original project and significantly increases the impacts to the jurisdictions along the corridor. Before proceeding, a thorough discussion of the implications to the Transit System and the 2030 Transit Plan is necessary. That discussion should include the various stakeholders along the corridor, NCDOT, CATS and the MTC, and discuss a path forward for implementing a rail project in the North Corridor.