



Board Report

File #: 2021-0685, File Type: Program

Agenda Number: 17.

**FINANCE, AUDIT AND BUDGET COMMITTEE  
NOVEMBER 17, 2021**

**SUBJECT: PROGRAM FUNDS FOR METROLINK SERVICE RESTORATION**

**ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

APPROVE up to \$1,526,932 in additional funding to the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) FY-2021-22 budget to pay for Metro’s share to partially restore Metrolink commuter rail service, effective December 2021.

**ISSUE**

Due to a steady increase in Metrolink commuter rail ridership, SCRRA wishes to restore 22 additional weekday trains in December 2021. The SCRRA has proposed a Metrolink service restoration package which will increase service from 108 weekday trains today to 130 weekday trains. The staff recommended action will provide the additional funding needed for Metrolink’s service restoration.

**BACKGROUND**

Prior to COVID, SCRRA ran 175 weekday trains on the Metrolink commuter rail service. On March 26, 2020, SCRRA reduced service by more than 30% and is currently operating 108 trains per weekday. Since then, ridership has gradually increased from 5,000 passengers per weekday in April 2020 to 12,000 passengers per weekday in October 2021. This is a 140% increase in ridership since the COVID pandemic began. However, ridership is still considerably less than the 40,000 per weekday ridership pre-COVID.

**DISCUSSION**

Staff is recommending approval of up to \$1,526,932 for Metro’s share of the Metrolink’s service restoration that will take effect in December 2021. Refer to Attachment A- SCRRA Service Restoration Board Report dated October 15, 2021.

Change in Budget	METRO	OCTA	RCTC	SBCTA	VCTC	Total
Revenue <i>(estimated)</i>	710,121	28,674	96,641	127,907	93,776	1,057,119
Expense	2,237,053	(416,513)	293,719	510,112	328,766	2,953,138
Funding Required <i>(estimated)</i>	1,526,932	(445,187)	197,078	382,205	234,990	1,896,018

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In the Summer of 2021, as Metrolink ridership started to increase, SCRRA began to plan for service restoration. When SCRRA built the service restoration proposal, special consideration was given to the following:

- 1) Customer comments and closing gaps in service.
- 2) Restoring slots that had best opportunity to build ridership or provide new service options.
- 3) A scalable restoration that can be completed in one or multiple phases.
- 4) Best use of available resources with minimal impact to the budget.
- 5) Use of existing on duty crews, and more efficient use of existing equipment.

In October 2021, SCRRA approved a mid-year budget amendment to add funds to their FY 2021-22 budget to support service restoration (Attachment A). The item was approved unanimously by the SCRRA Board and the other four SCRRA member agencies are supportive of the service restoration. Approval of the staff recommended action will provide sufficient funding to restore additional 22 weekday Metrolink trains as early as December 6, 2021.

### **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

This Board action will have no direct impact to safety standards for Metro. The restored Metrolink service will be implemented by SCRRA in accordance with Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and class 1 railroad safety regulations.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Up to \$1,526,932 in additional LA Metro member agency subsidy is required to restore service with an additional 22 weekday trains. Metro will utilize SCRRA surplus funds, Measure M 1% and/or Proposition C 10% commuter rail funds, which are available to fund Metrolink operations.

### **EQUITY PLATFORM**

The Metrolink service restoration of 22 weekday trips is a 20% increase in commuter rail service and will provide better transit options for Metrolink riders. More frequent service will make it easier for riders to get to jobs, housing, appointments and access the greater LA Metro public transportation system at Los Angeles Union Station. The majority of the Metrolink service restoration, 12 out of the 22 trips, will occur on the more ethnically diverse Antelope Valley and San Bernardino lines. Annual household income, automobile availability, and employment levels are lowest on the Antelope Valley and San Bernardino lines. It is anticipated that service restoration on these lines specifically will serve Metrolink customers with the greatest needs.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The recommendation to restore 22 Metrolink weekday trains is consistent with the following Metro Vision 2028 Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1: Provide high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling

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Goal 2: Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system

Goal 3: Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

An alternative is to not restore the Metrolink service at this time. This is not recommended since Metrolink ridership has steadily increased and the restored service will generate a 12% growth in additional projected ridership. The restored service will also fill in service gaps and give riders greater commuter service options, including highly desirable peak hour commute service on the Antelope Valley, Riverside and Ventura County lines.

### **NEXT STEPS**

With Metro Board approval of the recommendation, SCRRA will proceed forward with plans to restore the 22 weekday trains, effective as early as December 6, 2021.

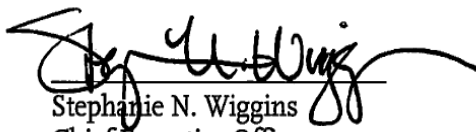
### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - SCRRA Service Restoration Board Report

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