



ITEM ID: 2026-185-0

TRANSMITTAL DATE: April 17, 2026

MEETING DATE: April 24, 2026

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

SUBJECT: World Cup and LA28 Quarterly Update

Issue

This report provides an update on Metrolink's ongoing planning efforts for the 2026 World Cup and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Recommendation

Receive and file.

Strategic Commitment

This report aligns with the following Strategic Business Plan commitments of:

- **Customers are Our Business:** We respect and value our customers, putting them at the heart of all we do, and work hard to attract and retain new customers by understanding their needs and finding new and innovative ways to delight them. Metrolink will fulfill critical regional transportation needs for both existing and new riders when Los Angeles and the Southern California region host upcoming mega events, including the 2026 World Cup and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- **Connecting and Leveraging Partnerships:** We will forge new and enhanced relationships with our public and private partners to integrate and coordinate connecting services, providing residents throughout Southern California with better, seamless, sustainable alternatives to driving. Partnerships with transportation providers in the region, as well as with the LA28 Olympic organizing committee, will be key to providing a reliable, seamless transportation experience during upcoming mega events.

Background

Metrolink's regional rail system will play a key role in transporting spectators and workforce during upcoming mega events in Southern California, including the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games (Games). The World Cup is expected to draw approximately 78,000 spectators to each of the eight matches at SoFi Stadium in June and July 2026, including 25,000 expected to arrive via public transit. The Games in summer 2028 include more than 1,100 event sessions spread across 49 competition venues with 15 million tickets expected to be sold. Parking at or near event venues during the World Cup and Games will be extremely limited due to security and operational perimeters, and many spectators and workforce will need to take public transit to reach venues.

Discussion

Metrolink has been working in close coordination with its partner agencies throughout Southern California to prepare for upcoming mega events, as detailed below.

2026 FIFA World Cup

The 2026 FIFA World Cup will take place in 16 cities across North America between June 11 and July 19, 2026. Eight of the planned World Cup matches will take place at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California, on the following dates and times:

- Friday, June 12 @ 6 p.m. (USA team)
- Monday, June 15 @ 6 p.m.
- Thursday, June 18 @ noon
- Sunday, June 21 @ noon
- Thursday, June 25 @ 7 p.m. (USA team)
- Sunday, June 28 @ noon
- Thursday, July 2 @ noon
- Friday, July 10 @ noon (quarterfinal)

Metro is leading regional transportation planning efforts for the World Cup and hosts a monthly World Cup Regional Task Force meeting that includes representatives from Metrolink and other local transportation partners. Metro will offer supplemental bus service serving SoFi Stadium from multiple mobility hubs, including park & ride lots, Los Angeles Union Station and the Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center. Due to parking restrictions around SoFi Stadium and daily parking prices averaging between \$250 and \$300, it is expected that approximately 25,000 spectators will take some form of public transit to reach the venue during each match.

In addition to the ticketed matches at SoFi Stadium, multiple official Fan Fests and Fan Zones are planned throughout Southern California that will attract additional spectators. Fan Zones at the Los Angeles Coliseum, Union Station, Pomona Fairplex and downtown Burbank are likely to attract the highest Metrolink ridership.

Metrolink staff has worked with Metro to develop a service plan that allows Metrolink passengers to connect with Metro's supplemental bus system operating between Union Station and SoFi Stadium. The proposed service plan uses a combination of regularly scheduled Metrolink trains and special trains. It provides access to and from the eight World

Cup matches and the Union Station Fan Zone on the 91/Perris Valley, Orange County, San Bernardino, Antelope Valley and Ventura County lines over a 10-day period. The latest return trips will depart Union Station between 11 p.m. and 12:15 a.m., and schedules will vary based on event end times.

Over the past several months, Metrolink staff has actively pursued federal funding to support the agency's operations and security needs during the World Cup. In late March 2026, the Los Angeles region was allocated \$9.6 million in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding to support expanded World Cup transit service, and \$54 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding to support expanded security during the World Cup. The \$9.6 million in FTA funding is being distributed by Metro, and the \$54 million in FEMA funding is being distributed by the Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment Commission (LASEC), which serves as the host committee for the World Cup in Los Angeles. Metrolink has requested \$260,000 in FTA funds through Metro to support expanded World Cup operations, and \$967,000 from LASEC for additional private security and law enforcement services during the World Cup. Metrolink is still awaiting confirmation of the availability of these two funding sources.

2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games

The Olympic Games include 16 days of competition from July 14 to 30, 2028, followed by the Paralympic Games, with 13 days of competition from August 15 to 27, 2028. Olympic events will take place at 49 venues across Southern California, with the majority of the venues located in Los Angeles County. Metrolink and its regional transit partners will offer transportation for spectators and workforce, while LA28 is responsible for transportation of the "Games Family," including athletes, media and Olympic officials.

Several venues will be easily reached from Metrolink stations, including:

- Honda Center (Anaheim) - Volleyball
- Trestles Beach (San Clemente) - Surfing
- Fairplex (Pomona) - Cricket
- DTLA Zone (Los Angeles) -- Multiple venues serving baseball, basketball, gymnastics, fencing, boxing, table tennis, judo, weightlifting and wrestling.

Up to 67 event sessions will take place on the busiest day of the Games, with most competition days including more than 50 individual event sessions. Events will begin as early as 7 a.m. and end as late as 11:30 p.m. LA28 states that this level of activity is equivalent to the region hosting seven Super Bowls a day for the duration of the Games. In addition to ticketed events, watch parties and cultural events will be hosted throughout the region which will generate additional Metrolink ridership demand during the Games.

Metrolink staff have been actively participating in the 15 Games Mobility Executives (GME) subcommittees, which are multi-agency working groups covering issues such as wayfinding, mapping, demand modeling, communications and outreach, transportation demand management, accessibility and mobility hubs. Metrolink serves as the lead agency for the Regional Rail subcommittee, which is responsible for ensuring that the passenger rail services offered by Metrolink, Amtrak Pacific Surfliner and the North County Transit District (COASTER) are coordinated and help support Games-related travel demand.

Metrolink staff continues to work with its consultant team at Jacobs Engineering, as well as Metro and SCAG, to update ridership demand modeling and projected service needs based

on the most recent information provided by LA28. Staff has developed a series of service scenarios that seek to increase the frequency, capacity and span of Metrolink service during the Games based on available funding, while maintaining reliable service for regular riders.

Other ongoing Games planning activities include:

- Finalizing a term sheet for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Metrolink and LA28 that outlines the roles and responsibilities of each agency, including provisions that Metrolink and its member agencies will not be expected to fund projects or deliver expanded services during the Games beyond the baseline services that would otherwise be provided if the Games were not occurring. A final MOU will be brought to the Board of Directors for review and approval at a future meeting
- Drafting a crowd management and operating plan for Union Station in coordination with other transportation partners
- Working with Metro on travel demand modeling to determine expected ridership demand and geographic distribution on the Metrolink system during the Games
- Developing a fare collection strategy and technology roadmap, including opportunities to implement contactless payment systemwide before the Games
- Reviewing opportunities for revenue enhancement through third-party advertising
- Pursuing funding for security upgrades and expanded operations during the Games

Metrolink and its regional transportation partners recognize the urgent need to secure external funding to support expanded transit service during upcoming mega events in order to minimize reliance on local funds. Congress and the Administration provided significant financial support for transportation-related needs in each of the five fiscal years leading up to the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games. To that end, Metrolink has submitted a request for, and is actively advocating to secure federal and/or state funding to support capital, operating and security costs related to the Games.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations act included \$94.3 million for transportation assistance during the Games. On April 10, 2026, FTA released the funding and allocated \$90.7 million for Games-related capital, operating and planning activities for transportation systems in Southern California. The Southern California Association of Governments will be responsible for suballocating the funding to individual transit agencies.

Separately, the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” signed into law on July 4, 2025, includes \$1 billion in federal funding to pay for security and planning for the 2028 Games. Unfortunately, President Donald Trump's draft FY 2027 budget, which was released on April 3, 2026, did not include any funding to support the nearly \$2 billion in Games-related transportation needs that have been identified in the region, including funding for expanded Metrolink service and Metro's Games Enhanced Transit Service linking mobility hubs to event venues.

In addition, at the local level, the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee (MSRC) made a total of \$16 million available through a County Transportation Commission (CTC) Partnership Program for Transportation Demand Management (TDM) projects that will help reduce motor vehicle emissions during upcoming major sporting events in southern California. Metrolink staff worked with Metro to prepare a proposal to utilize \$4 million in MSRC funding to support expanded Metrolink service within Los Angeles County during the Games. In addition, staff coordinated with the Riverside County Transportation Commission, which has proposed to reserve \$3 million of its \$4 million share of MSRC funding for flexible

implementation of “high-impact TDM projects,” which could include expanded bus/shuttle services, as well as additional Metrolink service to Riverside County during the Games. The San Bernardino County Transportation Authority has allocated \$1 million of MSRC funding to offer free Metrolink fares during the Games for trips originating in San Bernardino County.

In coordination with its GME partners, Metrolink staff will continue to strongly advocate for the state and federal resources necessary to support expanded transit service during the Games, including Metrolink's capital, operating and safety/security needs.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to participate in World Cup and GME subcommittees, and coordinate with relevant stakeholders, including member agencies, station cities, and state and federal officials. Staff will return to the Board of Directors with quarterly updates on the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games as planning efforts continue to evolve.

Prepared by: Michael Litschi, Director of Special Projects

Approved by: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

Attachment(s)

[Presentation - World Cup LA28 Update](#)