



ITEM ID: 2024-296-0

TRANSMITTAL DATE: October 18, 2024

MEETING DATE: October 25, 2024

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

SUBJECT: October Legislative Update

Issue

Staff provides a regular monthly update on current legislative affairs.

Recommendation

Receive and file.

Strategic Commitment

This report aligns with the Strategic Business Plan commitments of:

- **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. This commitment is met by sharing news, information and the Authority’s legislative priorities with elected officials.
- **Advancing Key Regional Goals:** We will grow the role of regional rail in addressing climate change, air quality, and other pressing issues by advancing toward zero emissions, making rail a compelling alternative to single-occupant automobiles and advancing equity-focused opportunities for all communities throughout Southern California. This commitment is met by encouraging federal, state and local support for Authority priorities.

Background

Staff continues to engage with community, local, state, and federal stakeholders concerning Metrolink service and relevant policy initiatives.

Discussion

Local

The outreach effort to identify and build community support for future grant applications for Tier 4 locomotives was launched on August 26, 2024 and will conclude on Clean Air Day on October 2. Metrolink's posting to the Nextdoor portal resulted in 23 written comments after receiving approximately 145,000 views. We also received about 50 support cards at the first of a series of pop-up events in September. Additional efforts to solicit feedback were made via direct emails sent to Metrolink riders, letters to station cities, paid advertising and notices on station customer information boards.

An informational letter was distributed to residents in Elysian Valley and Cypress Park regarding the change in train servicing schedules at Central Maintenance Facility (CMF) resulting from the "Metrolink Reimagined" October schedule change. The letter highlighted Metrolink's continued commitment to working with the local neighborhoods. As part of this effort, we also reached out to the offices of Councilmembers Hugo Soto-Martinez (CD 13) and Eunisses Hernandez (CD 1). Metrolink will continuously update and address community issues and concerns that may arise from the implementation of new schedule.

State

Senate Bill 1098 (Blakespear), the Southern California Rail Revitalization Act, was passed by the California Legislature and enacted by the Governor. The legislation seeks to revitalize and transform the LOSSAN Corridor by requiring the California Secretary of Transportation to issue a report that identifies corridor priorities, strategies to improve existing service and increase ridership, and methods to support resiliency planning, among other provisions. To develop the report, a working group will advise the Secretary, made up of LOSSAN corridor track owners, rail operators (including Metrolink), county transportation commissions (including all five Metrolink member agencies), MPOs, business and community groups, the California Coastal Commission, and the Caltrans Division of Rail and Mass Transportation. Finally, SB 1098 calls for a biennial report that includes metrics on LOSSAN corridor performance, including performance, ridership, and usage data, as well as updates to capital improvement planning.

The Transit Transformation Task Force held its fifth meeting in the Los Angeles area on August 29. Members started their day with a tour of the Burbank Metrolink station and a ride along the Ventura County Line to Los Angeles Union Station. The Transit Transformation Task Force, convened under SB 125, tasks a group of select public and private sector stakeholders with developing policy recommendations to grow ridership and improve the transit ridership experience. Recommendations are due by October 31, 2025. Staff of Riverside County Transportation Commission and LA Metro are among the representatives serving on the task force.

Federal

In September, a tour of Metrolink's Central Maintenance Facility focusing on Metrolink's

transition to renewable fuels was provided to staff from 14 House and Senate offices who were visiting from Washington D.C. as part of a program organized by the Clean Fuels Alliance. Discussion also highlighted the need for federal support for Metrolink's procurement of Tier 4 and zero emission vehicles as well as Metrolink's Olympics service plans and capital needs.

Metrolink staff participated in the California Transit Association's Washington D.C. advocacy trip in mid-September. Metrolink staff emphasized the importance of maintaining and increasing federal funding available for capital and rolling stock needs, including Tier 4 locomotives, and regional LA Olympics preparedness needs.

Government Relations staff is consulting with member agency staff in developing Metrolink's 2025 Local, State, and Federal Legislative Program to be presented to the Board later this year. The document is developed after internal and external consultation with stakeholders.

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Attachment(s)

[Appendix A - October 2024 Bill Matrix.docx](#)