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TRANSMITTAL DATE: September 19, 2025

MEETING DATE: September 26, 2025

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

SUBJECT: World Cup and Olympics Readiness Update

Issue

This receive and file 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 providing public transit service for millions of 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 70,000 spectators to each of the eight matches scheduled at SoFi Stadium in June and July 2026, including 30,000 expected to arrive via public transit. The Games in summer 2028 will include more than 800 ticketed events spread across more than 30 venues in the Southern California region, with between 12 million and 15 million tickets expected to be sold. Parking at or near event venues will be extremely limited due to security and operational perimeters, and most spectators and workforce will not be able to park vehicles near the venues. The 2028 Games have been designated a National Special Security Event by the Department of Homeland Security. As a result, the U.S. Secret Service will lead the design and implementation of operational security plans for the Games, in coordination with other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

To ensure continued coordination and collaboration among major mobility partners in the region, LA28 has organized the Games Mobility Executives (GME) group to coordinate transportation needs for the Games, including executives from:

- LA28
- City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office
- Los Angeles Department of Transportation
- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
- Southern California Regional Rail Authority (Metrolink).

In addition, Metrolink staff have been actively participating in the 12 GME subcommittees, which are multi-agency working groups covering issues such as wayfinding, 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.

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 host 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:

- Friday, June 12 (USA team)
- Monday, June 15
- Thursday, June 18

- Sunday, June 21
- Thursday, June 25 (USA team)
- Sunday, June 28
- Thursday, July 2
- Friday, July 10 (quarterfinal)

Match times are not expected to be released by FIFA until December 2025, which will influence Metrolink's proposed service plan and budget, including potential special trains.

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 transportation partners. Metro plans to operate approximately 300 additional buses to provide a direct shuttle service between SoFi Stadium and multiple mobility hubs, including park & ride lots and Los Angeles Union Station. Due to parking restrictions around SoFi Stadium, it is expected that nearly half of the 70,000 spectators expected at each match will take public transit to reach the venue.

In addition to the ticketed matches at SoFi Stadium, multiple fan fests and watch parties will be held throughout the region that could attract a significant number of spectators; however, the locations of those events have not yet been finalized.

Metrolink staff is working closely with Metro to develop a service plan that will allow Metrolink passengers to connect with the Metro shuttle system operating between Los Angeles Union Station and SoFi Stadium. Staff is still working to assess potential ridership demand, equipment and crew availability, and budget required to operate special trains to serve the eight World Cup matches. Staff expects to finalize a proposed service plan in January 2026, after the times of the eight matches are released.

2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games

The Olympic Games will 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. Events will take place at more than 30 venues across Southern California, with the majority of venues located in Los Angeles County. Metrolink and its regional transit partners are expected to offer transportation for Olympic spectators and workforce, while LA28 is responsible for transportation of the "Games Family," including athletes, media and Olympic officials.

In mid-April 2025, LA28 released an updated list of Olympic venues that included several new venues with connectivity to Metrolink stations, in addition to the venues previously announced in the City of Los Angeles, including:

- Honda Center (Anaheim) - Volleyball
- Trestles Beach (San Clemente) - Surfing
- Fairplex (Pomona) - Cricket
- Dodger Stadium (Los Angeles) - Baseball

In July 2025, LA28 published preliminary venue and event schedules for the Games. Though these schedules are still subject to change, they provide useful data to inform Metrolink's service planning efforts. A few key takeaways from the draft schedules include:

- 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 at the Honda Center in Anaheim are expected all 16 days, with matches

beginning as early as 9 a.m. and ending as late as 11:30 p.m.

- The surfing competition at Trestles Beach will be held for four days over an eight-day period, dependent on surf conditions, with competition expected from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Events at Pomona Fairplex will take place over a 16-day period, with matches planned as early as 9 a.m. and ending as late as 10:30 p.m.
- Concurrent events will take place at multiple venues served by Los Angeles Union Station, with events beginning as early as 8 a.m. and ending as late as midnight.

Staff previously presented to the Board a proposed Games service plan that includes 30-minute frequencies on the Antelope Valley, San Bernardino and Orange County lines. Metrolink staff is working 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, while identifying opportunities to increase frequency and capacity of Metrolink service, as well as offer later-night special trains, while maintaining service levels for existing riders. In addition to ticketed events, watch parties and other cultural events will likely be held throughout the region, which will generate additional Metrolink ridership demand during the Games.

Metro plans to utilize its Games Enhanced Transit Service (GETS) and a network of mobility hubs and park & ride sites to supplement existing transit services in order to efficiently move spectators and workforce during the Games and minimize traffic congestion. The GETS system could include up to 2,700 additional buses in addition to Metro's existing bus and rail network, with the goal of securing a fully zero or near-zero emission GETS fleet. Metro is currently working to source these additional vehicles, as well as mechanics, bus operators, and temporary storage and maintenance facilities. The GETS system will provide an important first- and last-mile connection to Metrolink stations for Games spectators and workforce. Metro expects peak demand of up to 1.2 million daily trips during the Games.

Over the next several months, staff will continue to refine proposed service plans with the goal of developing several financially constrained alternatives that can be presented to the Board and implemented based on expected funding availability and ridership demand.

Metrolink Goals for the Games

Staff has developed a strategic vision for Metrolink's role during the Games for the Board's review, including four overarching goals:

1. Build Metrolink's Legacy: Establish Metrolink as a regional transportation provider of "first choice".
2. Enhance Customer Experience: Deliver a safe, reliable, comfortable and convenient experience for all riders - existing and new.
3. Capitalize on Resources: Identify and secure resources to realize Metrolink's vision for the Games.
4. Make Metrolink Accessible to All: Ensure the Metrolink system is accessible to customers of all abilities.

Funding Availability

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, \$252 million in federal and/or state funding to support capital and operating costs related to the Games, including \$107 million for expanded operations, as well as funding for rolling stock repair and refurbishment, and enhanced safety and security measures.

Recently, there has been some progress related to potential federal support for transportation and security needs during the World Cup and Games. The Fiscal Year 2026 Senate Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill would allocate \$68 million to surface, commuter and public transportation systems to support mobility needs for the 2028 Games. In addition, \$78 million would be available to support supplemental public transportation services in U.S. host cities during the 2026 FIFA World Cup, including Los Angeles. A final agreement between the House and Senate on THUD funding levels has not yet been reached. Congress is locked in a larger fight about the FY26 federal budget, and until they establish a path forward, policy and funding decisions related to THUD will remain unresolved. Separately, the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” signed into law on July 4, also includes \$1 billion in federal funding to pay for security and planning for the Olympics, plus \$625 million for World Cup security.

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 Olympic and Paralympic 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.

Staff is also discussing options to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with LA28 to more clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each agency related to regional transportation during the Games, including funding requirements. On September 16, 2025, Metrolink Olympics Ad Hoc Committee representative, Second Vice Chair Tony Trembley, met with Bill Panos, Senior Vice President of Transportation at LA28, to discuss funding, advocacy and other coordination issues.

Federal Coordination

On August 5, 2025, President Donald J. Trump signed an Executive Order establishing a White House Task Force on the 2028 Olympics to oversee federal coordination for the Games, specifically related to transportation and security issues. President Trump is chair and Vice President JD Vance is vice chair of the task force. The task force also includes members of President Trump’s cabinet and representatives from key federal agencies, including the Department of Transportation and Department of Homeland Security. Per the Executive Order, the specific functions of the task force include:

- a. coordinate federal planning and response related to the security, transportation, and entry/exit processes for the Games;

- b. support interagency cooperation and information-sharing with state and local partners;
- c. identify legal, logistical, or regulatory barriers that could impede effective Federal support for the Games and recommend timely solutions;
- d. assist in the planning and implementation of visa processing and credentialing programs for foreign athletes, coaches, officials, and media personnel; and
- e. ensure operational readiness across law enforcement, counterterrorism, transportation, and emergency response functions.

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

Next Steps

Staff will continue to review venue plans and schedules for both the World Cup and Games to develop updated Metrolink service and staffing plans, including several fiscally constrained alternatives. In addition, 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 intends to return to the Board of Directors with regular updates on the 2026 World Cup and 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games as planning efforts continue to evolve.

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Attachment(s)

[Presentation - World Cup and Olympics Readiness Update](#)