



ITEM ID: 2024-186-0

TRANSMITTAL DATE: May 17, 2024

MEETING DATE: May 24, 2024

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

SUBJECT: Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) Resolution

Issue

The State of California's Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) requires that the Board adopt a resolution to provide required certifications and assurances and delegate authority for execution of any actions necessary under this grant. An annual resolution is required to receive LCTOP funds.

Recommendation

Audit and Finance Committee recommended (4-0) that the Board approve Resolution 24-144 Authorization for the Execution of the Resolution, Certifications and Assurances, and Authorized Agent Forms for the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) for the Metrolink Student Adventure Pass.

Strategic Commitment

This report aligns with the 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. Continuation of the Student Adventure Pass makes the option of transit more accessible to students who would otherwise not be able to afford it.
- **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. The Student Adventure Pass encourages new and continued student ridership focused on serving low-income households and disadvantaged communities, addressing both emissions reduction and equity.

Background

The Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) is part of the California Climate Investments, a statewide initiative that uses Cap-and-Trade dollars to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, strengthen the economy, and improve public health and the environment, particularly in Disadvantaged Communities (DACs). LCTOP funds may be used for operational expenditures that increase transit mode share.

Metrolink has been receiving LCTOP funds since fiscal year 2015 for a variety of operations and capital projects including: optical readers, Tier-4 locomotives, ticket vending devices, fare vouchers, low-emissions equipment, service restoration, a low-income fare discount program, and to support the Student Adventure Pass.

For FY 2025, Metrolink was allocated \$5,087,466 in LCTOP funds and intends to continue the Student Adventure Pass program, offering free travel anywhere on the Metrolink system to secondary, college, and university students with a valid student ID. The program aims to further equity on the system as well as develop new lifetime riders.

Metrolink's member agencies are providing supplemental funding to allow the Student Adventure Pass to continue through the upcoming academic year or until funds are exhausted.

Discussion

Staff will continue administering the Student Adventure Pass Program working with schools to market the program to gain more student riders. The goals of the program align with the Board-adopted Fare Policy Goals and Guiding Principles to:

1. Recover and grow ridership
2. Enable financial sustainability
3. Ensure Equity Use
4. Enhance the customer experience

The program will also support student success and promote sustainability by reducing the environmental impact of transportation. Many public transportation agencies across the nation offer university pass programs including CTA in Chicago, RTD in Denver, MARTA in Atlanta, and DART in Dallas. Metrolink member agencies also offering student pass programs include VCTC, OCTA and LA Metro.

Use of LCTOP funds and member agency contributions would make the agency financially "whole" on all discounted fares sold. This project would be launched subject to LCTOP's approval of our proposal.

By approving Resolution 24-144, the Board will:

- Authorize the submittal of the project nomination and allocation request to the State for FY2023-2024 LCTOP funds to continue the Student Adventure Pass Program allowing students free travel throughout the Metrolink service area until the funds are exhausted.
- Agree to comply with all conditions and requirements set forth in the Certification and Assurances and the Authorized Agent documents and applicable statutes, regulations and guidelines for all LCTOP funded transit projects.
- Authorize CEO Darren M. Kettle, CSO Paul Hubler, and CFO Arnold Hackett to execute all required documents of the LCTOP program.

Budget Impact

There is no budget impact as a result of this report.

Next Steps

Staff will execute all agreements necessary to receive LCTOP funds for the Student Adventure Pass.

Prepared by: Jennifer Farinas, Manager, Grants

Approved by: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

Attachment(s)

[Attachment A - Resolution No. 24-144](#)
[Attachment B - Authorized Agent Form](#)
[Attachment C - Certifications and Assurances](#)
[Presentation - LCTOP Resolution](#)