



ITEM ID: 2026-149-0

TRANSMITTAL DATE: February 20, 2026

MEETING DATE: February 27, 2026

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

SUBJECT: Service Growth Development Plan

Issue

This item presents the Final Report for the Service Growth Development Plan (SGDP). The SGDP seeks to establish a consensus plan, developed with input from Member Agencies, for Metrolink growth and service transformation.

Recommendation

Receive and file.

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. The service plans being developed as a part of the Service Growth Development Plan are being crafted to make it simpler and easier for passengers to choose to ride Metrolink. These customer-centric endeavors will connect more passengers to more places in a way that is intuitive and easy for new riders to navigate the system.
- **Modernizing Business Practices:** We will improve our operational efficiency, through transparency, objective metrics, and streamlined governance, reducing reliance on subsidy while bringing our system into a state of good repair and investing in the development of our employees. The service plans being developed as a part of the Service Growth Development Plan are carefully fashioned to unlock economies of scale

and provide cost-effective service (and ridership) growth.

Background

The 2020 Strategic Business Plan called for serving a broader set of markets such as leisure travelers and non-office commuters, service in the opposite direction of peak travel patterns, operating more cost-effective service, and leveraging targeted capital investment. Since then, as the region has recovered from the pandemic, the Authority has observed stronger recovery among these new target markets than in its traditional office commuter base. Prior work in service planning has been completed to support the Southern California Optimized Rail Expansion (SCORE) Program, including the 2020 SCORE Cost/Benefit Operations Analysis (CBOA).

The SGDP builds on these strategic objectives by adapting them to the lasting impacts of the COVID pandemic, incorporating feedback from member agencies and other partners, and refining operational and fiscal modeling. The SGDP does this with the goal of setting a concrete and actionable program for service transformation and growth. The "Metrolink Reimagined" schedules launched last year, with their focus on more midday and evening service structured to serve two directions of travel and pulsed time-transfer connections, were developed consistent with the SGDP.

With that first step now implemented, the SGDP project continues with a focus on more distant future schedules with higher frequencies of trains (up to two trains per hour per direction), both for weekdays and weekends.

The last update to the Board was on July 26, 2024. Based on feedback received from member agency staff since then, the project has pivoted from producing a "living document" of planned service growth to be adopted by the Board to a final report articulating two scenarios for growth.

Discussion

The SGDP Final Report summarizes the findings of the market research and operational assessments undertaken by this project, and presents the strategies developed to future service growth. It then presents two scenarios of service growth projected over the next 10-15 years: one more aspirational and the other more constrained based on the feedback received.

Both represent considerable growth versus a no-growth baseline and would require additional funding sources to achieve. If implemented, they would position Metrolink as the backbone provider of regional mobility service in Southern California.

Next Steps

The Board approved the last Metrolink Strategic Business Plan in January 2021, which led in turn to the development of the SGDP. The SGDP outlines strategies for future service expansion and sets out a target program of growth over the next 15 years. This objective raises strategic questions on how to implement such growth. The Authority has recently initiated work on a Metrolink Reimagined Strategic Business Plan to explore and propose

strategies for implementing the SGDP objectives.

Prepared by: Rory Vaughn, Director, Railroad Services

Approved by: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

Attachment(s)

[Attachment A - Metrolink SGDP Final Report
Presentation - Service Growth Development Plan](#)