



ITEM ID: 2025-171-0

TRANSMITTAL DATE: April 18, 2025

MEETING DATE: April 25, 2025

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

SUBJECT: Title VI Public Hearing for October 2024 Schedule Change

Issue

In October 2024, the Authority launched a systemwide schedule change which offers increased frequency, better connections, and more service during weekdays. In January 2025, the Authority adjusted the schedules for the San Bernardino, Ventura, and Arrow Lines to address on-time performance challenges and align services across multiple lines. Federal Title VI requirements require transit agencies to conduct a service equity analysis and public outreach effort for a major service change which remains in effect for more than six months.

Recommendation

It is recommended the Board:

1. Receive public feedback and the results of the Title VI Equity Analysis for the October 2024 schedule change;
2. Hold a Public Hearing; and
3. Adopt the findings of the Title VI Analysis and approve the schedule change, as modified in January 2025.

Strategic Commitment

This report aligns with the Strategic Business Plan commitment of:

- **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 public outreach and equity analysis ensure that the schedule change

launched in October 2024, as adjusted in January 2025, meet Title VI equity requirements.

Background

As a recipient of Federal funding, the Authority is required to conduct public outreach for all major service changes. During the public outreach, staff will seek public feedback on the continuation of the schedule change launched in October 2024, as adjusted in January 2025.

On October 21, 2024, the Authority launched a systemwide schedule change which resulted in 32 new weekday trains, for a new total of 178 weekday trains spread across the day, providing more mid-day options and service into the evening. All 178 trains also operate five car-sets.

The new schedule focused on service growth in the current markets Metrolink serves by:

- Leveling train schedules to serve off-peak markets, thus enabling Metrolink to serve customers throughout the day; and
- Improving transfer opportunities between lines at L.A. Union Station.

On January 27, 2025, the Authority adjusted its train schedules on the San Bernardino, Ventura, and Arrow Lines to improve service reliability and align services across multiple lines. These adjustments ensure better operational flow and more dependable service across our network, enhancing customer experience for Metrolink riders.

Taken together, the new schedule promotes optimized transfer opportunities through “pulse” scheduling across the system. The number of connections available throughout the day has increased by more than 300%, with more than 225 daily connections (up from 67) through L.A. Union Station, and most transfers available within no more than 10-20 minutes.

Discussion

On February 28, 2025, the Board approved the initiation of the Title VI public comment process for the continuation of the systemwide schedule change launched in October 2024, as adjusted in January 2025.

Equity Analysis

The Authority is required to conduct a service equity analysis for the October schedule change in compliance with Federal Title VI requirements (FTA C 4702.1B). The equity analysis is intended to determine if the schedule change will result in any disparate impacts for minority populations or pose any disproportionate burden for low-income populations. Because the schedule change will utilize Metrolink’s existing fare structure with no change in fares proposed, no fare equity analysis is required.

Based on Metrolink’s Title VI policies, service change proposals are determined to have a Disparate Impact or Disproportionate Burden if the adverse impacts experienced by minority or low-income riders are at least 5% higher than the adverse impacts experienced by nonminority or non-low-income riders. Conversely, if the cumulative benefits associated with the service change that accrue to non-minority or non-low-income riders are 5% greater than

the cumulative benefits that accrue to minority or low-income riders, then that change would be determined to have a Disparate Impact or Disproportionate Burden.

Results of the October Schedule Change Title VI Equity Analysis (Attachment A) find that there is neither a Disparate Impact on minority riders nor a Disproportionate Burden on low-income riders. The service change results in a higher share of beneficial impacts for both minority riders and particularly for low-income riders. Because the service change is determined not to have a Disparate Impact on minority riders or a Disproportionate Burden on low-income riders, no mitigations are required.

Public Outreach Conducted

Federal Title VI requirements mandate a public outreach effort to ensure that our schedule change does not create a disparate impact on Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and identified disadvantaged communities. On February 28, 2025, the Board authorized the beginning of the public outreach period under Title VI.

The activities identified below were implemented to encourage public participation and input. Additional details of these outreach efforts are provided in Attachment B.

- The creation of a survey for e-comments which includes a comment and survey component was launched on February 28, 2025 and was active through April 15, 2025. The Metrolink website was updated to highlight this information on the home page.
- Changeable message boards were updated at Metrolink stations to promote the public meeting from March 11, 2025 to March 26, 2025.
- Two posts were made on Metrolink's Nextdoor page on March 11 and March 19 advertising the public meeting and online survey, attracting over 83,000 views as of April 10.
- Meeting and public comment notices were sent to 700 Community Based Organizations.
- An email to 96,605 customers was distributed on Wednesday, April 9 and included a link to the public meeting presentation, e-comment form, and public hearing information.
- A notice regarding the public hearing was submitted on March 24, 2025, and published in approved LEP newspapers. Notices were printed in five adjudicated general circulation papers (one for each county) and 11 foreign language papers.
- The English/Spanish virtual public meeting was completed on March 26, 2025, with 61 participants joining the meeting. At the meeting, 12 verbal comments were received and 25 written comments. The presentation from the meeting is available on our website.

E-Comments

An online survey to collect comments was active from February 28, 2025 to April 15, 2025. During this time, 1,771 responses were received. The survey results and e-comments received are available in Attachment C.

The majority of respondents (72%) ride Metrolink every week and half (55%) responded that they usually ride Metrolink for work. In summary, the key themes from the comments received included:

- Some riders strongly opposed removing specific early morning and late afternoon commuter trains, especially on the OC, IEOC, and San Bernardino lines.
- With fewer trains during commuting hours as compared to pre-pandemic service levels, some riders reported more crowded trains during peak times and the need to adjust their schedules and commute times.
- Some riders missed connections to connecting transit services, since not all transit providers adjusted schedules at the same time.
- Some riders feel service is less reliable than prior to the schedule change due to service delays and mechanical issues.
- Some riders felt their input was not considered before the schedule was changed and want more opportunities to provide feedback.
- Some customers expressed that late evening and weekend service remains limited and want expanded service for events and leisure travel.
- The Student Adventure Pass is widely appreciated and cited as essential for student riders.
- Some riders praised the midday and late-night train additions and noted improved on-time performance since January 2025.
- Some riders request added service and increased stops at Commerce Station.
- Additional suggestions included improving train cleanliness, onboard safety, and increasing frequency to every 30 minutes during peak periods.

Budget Impact

Title VI study and outreach costs are included in the Adopted Operating Budget for FY2024-25.

Prepared by: Brian Jacob, Planning Manager II
 Julie Nieto, Management Analyst II
 Grayson Hahn, Business Analyst I
 Jeffrey Dunn, Director, Government and Community Relations
 Henning Eichler, Senior Manager, Market Insights and Analytics

Approved by: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

Attachment(s)

[Attachment A - Title VI Equity Analysis - Oct 2024 Schedule Change](#)
[Attachment B - Summary of Public Outreach](#)
[Attachment C - Survey and Comments Received](#)
[Presentation - Title VI October Schedule Change Public Hearing](#)