



Metrolink Board Approves Additional 1 Percent Increase in Fares

On May 13, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority's (SCRRA) governing board approved an additional 1 percent increase in Metrolink fares that will take effect on July 1, 2005, to help offset higher fuel prices. This is in addition to a 3.5 percent increase in fares scheduled for July 1 that was approved in 2004.

"Everyone is feeling the pain of higher fuel prices," said Metrolink board chairman and Buena Park city councilmember Art Brown. "But we are committed to passing along as little as possible of those higher costs to our loyal passengers."

At the same time, the Metrolink board also approved the elimination of weekday non-rush hour fares. Discounted fares for seniors and the disabled are not affected and discounts for weekend travel will also remain.

The combination of the additional 1 percent average annual increase in fares and the elimination of weekday off-peak fares will together generate approximately \$800,000 in projected additional revenue over the next year.

Over the past year, the cost of the ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel used by Metrolink trains has increased by 30 percent. With fuel prices predicted to remain high, the additional cost could be nearly \$1.7 million over the next year. Every \$.05 increase in the price of diesel fuel translates into an additional expense of \$280,000 annually for Metrolink.

Metrolink had previously approved a plan for average annual increases in fares of 3.5 percent, along with a restructuring of its fare policy over a 10-year period beginning July 1, 2005. Under the restructuring plan, all fares will be based on a measurement of the driving distance between stations, rather than the current zone-based system. This new system will be implemented over a 10-year period. The board of directors previously approved an overall annual cap of 8 percent on fare increases due to the implementation of this system. That cap would rise to a maximum of 9 percent as a result of the May 13 decision.

Metrolink held a series of public workshops to provide information about the proposed fare increase and to encourage our riders and members of the public to voice their questions and comments. We received nearly 200 comments on the three different fare-increase scenarios. We appreciate all of the comments we received and we thank you for riding Metrolink.



Inside



Sharing the Tracks



As a Metrolink rider, you know that we share Southern California's rail network with the freight railroads. When building the Metrolink system, the five transportation commissions in Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties purchased the rights-of-way for a large portion of the system you ride today. There are still areas where Southern California's two major freight railroads own the track and dispatch the trains. A portion of the Ventura County Line (Moorpark to Montalvo) and the entire Riverside Line are controlled by the Union Pacific Railroad. The length of track used by the Orange County Line from Los

Angeles to Fullerton and the entire 91 Line are owned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway. Also, the Inland Empire-Orange County Line from San Bernardino to Orange is owned by the BNSF.

These lines are vital not only to Metrolink and its customers,

but to the nation as a whole. Union Pacific and BNSF transport approximately 45 percent of the nation's imports and exports that flow through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. As this international traffic grows, we see its effects daily on our freeways and on the railroad in the form of delays. The management of this complex network of rail traffic at any particular point is the responsibility of the railroad owning and/or dispatching trains on that track.

Metrolink works closely with the freight railroads to minimize delays, but our region's rail network is reaching a critical congestion point. Capacity-enhancing projects such as adding tracks or addressing specific "chokepoints" are needed to ensure that our region can accommodate both freight and passenger operations. At the same time, traffic-mitigation and safety-enhancing projects such as creating over or underpasses to separate the tracks from streets (grade separations) compete for scarce resources. In the nationwide context, our projects must compete with others from all over the country for the same resources.

The need for a partnership between the public sector and two competing private railroads is becoming more apparent each day. Metrolink and its five member county transportation commissions are working closely with the two freight railroads to create a strategy for public and private investment in our region's rail infrastructure. Meanwhile, Congress is working on reauthorization of the nation's transportation-funding legislation. Public support for rail projects in our region will be critical to our success. We'll keep you updated as this effort progresses.

The Key to Running Metrolink Train Lines...

Did you ever wonder how the "ballet" of so many different Metrolink trains using more than 500 miles of tracks is kept moving smoothly? It may seem like a spaghetti plate of tracks, but Metrolink has it all under control. In Pomona, not too far from the train station on the San Bernardino Line, Metrolink dispatchers work diligently to ensure that all trains stay on schedule for the convenience and safety of our riders.

Surrounded by status monitors and communications equipment, dispatchers at the Metrolink Operations Center (MOC) work 24 hours a day to keep nearly three hundred trains a day moving. The MOC is the central control point for all of the tracks owned by the member agencies that make up Metrolink (METRO, OCTA, VCTC, RCTC, and SANBAG.) Once Metrolink trains leave those tracks, they fall under the control of either the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) or Union Pacific (UP). The BNSF and UP operate a joint dispatch center in San Bernardino and are responsible for the lion's share of the freight traffic coming into, and leaving, the Southern California area.

"The key to ensuring that Metrolink trains and BNSF and Union Pacific trains run smoothly is the constant communication between all three rail lines. We are always working together and monitoring each other's activities via computer to ensure that all trains are running perfectly," said Gary Lettengarver, Metrolink's manager of dispatching, who has been with the agency since 1992.

Metrolink, BNSF, and Union Pacific are consistently monitoring and moving each other's trains across the three company's routes. By working with BNSF and Union Pacific, Metrolink is able to dispatch trains and provide service to riders in four large territories. Dispatchers constantly look for any train-signal problem or any freight- or passenger-train breakdowns. It is imperative that the tracks have 24-hour monitoring, because if something goes unnoticed with one train, a domino effect occurs on all three rail lines, which can ultimately disrupt Metrolink passengers' scheduled train stops. Metrolink continues to work to ensure that riders have the most reliable and safest mode of transportation available!

Passenger Quality Service Pledge: Going that Extra Mile

On Friday, May 13, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority's governing board approved a revision of the Quality Service Pledge Program of the Metrolink Rider Compensation Policy. This program established criteria under which passengers would be compensated for chronic delays to commuter trains.



The Quality Service Pledge Program was approved by the Metrolink board in late 2001 and provided two thresholds for calculating when compensation is warranted for delayed trains:

The May 13 action replaces those two thresholds with one to make the policy more responsive to actual deficiencies in the on-time performance of trains. The new policy is as follows:

When average on-time performance of a line falls below 80 percent for a calendar month, Metrolink will sell a line-restricted (usable on only one line) monthly pass at a discount of 25 percent valid in a month after the average monthly on-time performance was below 80 percent. If monthly passes on the affected line can normally be used on multiple lines, full-price passes retaining that benefit will also be sold. A train is defined as on time if it arrives at its final destination within five minutes of its scheduled arrival time.

While this new policy takes effect immediately, Metrolink is already offering a 25 percent discount on a June Riverside Line-only monthly pass as compensation for ongoing delays to trains on that route.

"I am working closely with the Union Pacific Railroad to address the chronic delays to our passenger trains," said Metrolink Chief Executive Officer David Solow. "Metrolink riders expect and deserve a reliable service and we are looking at every option to ensure that we can deliver it."

For more information on the revised Quality Service Pledge, visit www.metrolinktrains.com or call (800) 371-LINK (5465).

"On March 23, Corona resident and 91 Line rider Denise Fields was surprised with an impromptu birthday party by her friends and fellow commuters. Metrolink, too, wishes her a happy birthday!"



Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs to Charge for Parking

Beginning Tuesday, July 5, 2005, Metrolink riders parking at the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Metrolink Station will be charged a fee of \$1.00 per day or \$20.00 per month. Residents of Norwalk or Santa Fe Springs will be charged only \$10.00 per month.

The station, maintained by the cities of Norwalk and Santa Fe Springs, regrets the necessity of charging for parking, but the scarcity of funding sources to maintain and operate the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center requires the implementation of parking fees.

Norwalk Transit System (NTS) will continue to provide shuttle service for Metrolink patrons utilizing free, off-site parking at the Norwalk City Hall parking structure.

Questions concerning this matter may be directed to Marina Sueiro, Director of Intergovernmental Relations for the City of Santa Fe Springs, at (562) 868-0511, or Michelle Tortuya, Coordinator of Customer Services for the City of Norwalk, at (562) 929-5533.



Safety Matters

Do you know the difference between a suspicious package and an unattended package?

A SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE IS...

- One that matches something described in a threat or that has a threatening message attached
- An out-of-place bag, box, or abandoned container
- An unattended package that is put in an out-of-the-way place such as next to a fueling station, under or behind a vending machine, in or behind trash containers, behind restroom fixtures, or behind phone booths



AN UNATTENDED PACKAGE IS...

- An unattended package that is often left
 - On or next to a seat in a vehicle or waiting area
 - Next to a phone booth or vending machine
 - On or next to a vending machine
 - In a restroom
 - On a station platform

If something does not look right, bring it to the attention of a station security guard, law enforcement official, conductor, or call Metrolink at (800) 371-LINK (5465).



Station City News



City of Burbank—The Outdoor Picture Show returns Wednesday, June 22, for its fourth engagement as one of downtown Burbank's most popular outdoor events. The fun begins nightly at 6:30 p.m., with features rolling at 8:30 p.m. It's as close as you can get to a good old-fashioned drive-in movie experience, and it happens on IKEA Plaza, 600 N. San Fernando Boulevard, adjacent to the Burbank Town Center.

The Outdoor Picture Show's featured films are family-friendly and have been selected for their broad appeal. June's movies are *Freaky Friday*, on June 22, and *Spider-Man*, on June 29.



For further information, please call the Burbank Town Center at (818) 566-8556.

City of Palmdale—The City of Palmdale presents "Thursday Night on the Square" at Poncitlán Square for 10 Thursday nights, June 30 through September 1, 2005, 5:30-9:00 p.m.

Enjoy an open-air farmers' market featuring fresh fruits and vegetables, baked goods, live entertainment, and unique arts and crafts. There will be many free activities for children, including the Bubble Garden, Barnes & Noble Storytelling, Petunia's Puppet Palooza, face painting, a bounce tent, and Riki Tiki the Clown with his friends Li'l Squirt and Hugsy.

Thursday Night on the Square is held at Poncitlán Square, 38315 9th Street East, Palmdale.

For more information, please call (661) 267-5611, or visit www.cityofpalmdale.org

City of Fullerton—On Thursday, June 23, the Fullerton Museum Center will host a reception for its new exhibit celebrating wine in art. "Pressing Matters: 500 Years of Wine in Art from the Sterling Vineyards Print Portfolio," will feature art selected from the extensive collection of the Sterling Vineyards Portfolio.

The reception will be held from 6-8 p.m. on June 23, and will include live entertainment and a presentation on the exhibit, in addition to wine tasting. Admission is \$10 per person.

The exhibit, which opens to the public on June 11 and runs through August 14, includes work by fifteenth- and sixteenth-century European masters as well as by later artists such as Pablo Picasso.

The award-winning Fullerton Museum Center is located at 301 N. Pomona Avenue, east of Harbor Boulevard, in downtown Fullerton.

Hours are noon to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, and noon to 8 p.m. on Thursdays. Admission is \$4 for adults, \$3 for students (with student identification) and senior citizens 65 and older, \$1 for children 6 to 12, and free to children under 5 and to members of the Fullerton Museum Center. Admission is \$1 for all visitors from 6-8 p.m. the first Thursday of each month.

For more information, call the Fullerton Museum Center at (714) 738-6545. Persons requiring special accommodations to view the exhibit are asked to notify museum staff prior to arrival.



Someone's in the Kitchen with Metrolink

Did you know that the depot at Rialto's John Longville Metrolink Station houses a restaurant? In December 1999, as part of the Regional Occupational Program (ROP), the Rialto Unified School District's Alternative Education Center, in conjunction with the City of Rialto, set up a classroom/café right at the station. High-school students and adults are learning how to cook, bake, and perform many other service competencies.

The depot's menus include breakfast burritos, deli sandwiches, and soups all made

fresh daily. Lunch specials are offered Tuesday through Friday and include items such as Chicken Cordon Bleu, savory barbeque ribs, and many more. Students also prepare scrumptious cheesecakes and freshly baked cinnamon rolls.

Over the years, students continue on to advanced culinary education. A few have even been accepted into the prestigious Pasadena Cordon Bleu Culinary Academy. Local businesses such as the Cardenas Market Bakery and Zendejas Restaurant have also hired ROP graduates.

New classes are forming soon! Summer classes are scheduled for June 27 through August 12, 2005. There are three sessions to choose from: 7:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., or 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. For more information, call Ms. Lori Pilarcik at (909) 421-0167.

When in Rialto, be sure to stop and grab a bite at the John Longville Metrolink Station!

The John Longville Metrolink Café is open for business Tuesday through Friday, 7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Daily lunch specials can be ordered one day in advance and are also available to go.



METROLINK MATTERS

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