



January 21, 2026

The Honorable Doug Chaffee
Chair
Metrolink Board of Directors
P.O. Box 812060
Los Angeles, CA 90081-0018

Re: Agenda Item 11K, January 23, 2026 Metrolink Board Meeting

Dear Chair Chaffee and board members,

Californians for Electric Rail is a statewide, all-volunteer association with members in all of SCRRRA's constituent counties dedicated to improving lives via fast, frequent, zero emissions electric rail. We write to provide comment on the SCORE Program Phase 1 as part of the Capital Program Status Report.

The SCORE Program represents a critical service expansion through capacity improvements. It unlocks 30 minute bi-directional all-day regional rail service for Southern California. SCORE, when implemented, can transform mobility in Southern California.

For this reason we are concerned with the \$300m budget gap detailed in the staff report. Additionally, we believe this news merits discussion by the Board and we ask that you lift the item from the consent calendar for a more detailed review of the issue.

We note the following:

- SCORE has relied on a diverse set of member counties and other project leads to advance the Program from concept to final design. This means SCORE proceeds at the pace of its slowest actor.
- Due to the dearth of regional or state planning, design and engineering resources for State Rail Plan programs like SCORE the constituent projects of SCORE have taken far longer to advance to preliminary and final design than is necessary.
- Member counties and other project leads have sought and accepted discretionary grants for construction funding at 0% design when scope, schedule and risks are largely undefined. Rather than setting a ceiling, this practice creates a floor for third parties to extract further value from projects thereby driving scope creep and increased cost and schedule.

It is clear that some of the drivers of these actions are beyond the control of Metrolink or its member counties. In the short-term we suggest that Metrolink and its member counties prioritize fully funding the highest value projects within the SCORE Program rather than piece-mealing capital stacks.

In the long-term, we recommend Metrolink and member counties support the following program and policy changes:

- An independent Southern California rail infrastructure manager to maintain and improve public or leased ROW in order to plan and deliver service plans like SCORE.
- Develop capacity within Caltrans to design and manage these projects. This would include development of rail design and engineering standards and policies by Caltrans to streamline design and bidding processes.
- A shift in state funding for transit and rail from discretionary, competitive grants to multi-year funding framework agreements that provide the certainty of full funding after design is complete.

Thank you for your attention. We look forward to working with the board to further develop and implement these plans, which will transform Southern California transportation, grow Metrolink ridership, and improve air quality and quality of life throughout the region.

Sincerely,
Adriana Rizzo
Californians for Electric Rail