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October 22, 2026

VIA EMAIL TO THE METRO BOARD CLERK

The Honorable Karen Bass, Chair
and Members of the Board of Directors
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Fully Fund Metrolink Operations, Maintain Current Rail Service at Sylmar, and Deliver the Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project

Dear Chair Bass and Directors:

We write to you, Mayor Bass, both as Chair of the Metro Board and as the Mayor of our city. The Sylmar Neighborhood Council asks Metro to treat the preservation of Metrolink service as a core obligation to the communities it serves. For Sylmar, Metrolink is the only rail service we have, and the only rail service we are now likely to get.

Why This Is Urgent for Sylmar

In December 2025, the Board approved Metro staff's recommendation to end the East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Project at Van Nuys Boulevard and San Fernando Road, to add an infill Metrolink station there, and to set aside the Phase 2 extension to the Sylmar/San Fernando Station. As we understand Metro's rationale, Metrolink's Antelope Valley Line already serves that corridor, and that service was expected to improve through Metrolink's SCORE program, including the Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project. The City Council has since described the Phase 2 connection to Sylmar as a transfer to Metrolink (Council File 26-0046). Metrolink is now the plan for Sylmar.

That plan is at risk:

- Metrolink cut weekday service by about 20 percent in March 2026 and made the cut indefinite in April. Weekday ridership fell about 4 percent afterward.
- Metrolink projects a FY 2026–27 operating deficit of roughly \$35 million. Its ridership forecast for the year was revised down by 27 percent, and two member agencies reduced their support.
- Fares rose about 15 percent on October 5.
- Metrolink's "Scenario 8" service plan, which its Board is now scheduled to consider on November 13, would cut the Antelope Valley Line from 30 to 22 weekday trains (a 27 percent reduction) and from 24 to 8 weekend trains (a 67 percent reduction) compared with the current "Optimized" schedule. Systemwide, it would cut weekday trains by 29 percent and weekend trains by 40 percent. In the draft timetable, no weekday train leaves Sylmar toward Union Station between 9:43 a.m. and 2:24 p.m.

- Metro's adopted FY 2026–27 budget reduced its regional rail contribution from \$181.4 million to \$175.3 million.

We understand that Metro's reduction is a small share of the overall gap, and that equipment reliability, ridership forecasts, and another member agency's cuts account for the rest. That is why Metro's leadership matters. Cuts of this size set off a familiar cycle: less service, fewer riders, less fare revenue, and then further cuts. Transit advocates described this risk to your Board at the May 21 budget hearing. Sylmar's only rail link should not be what is lost when that cycle starts.

The Timing Is Backwards

Gas prices in California averaged above \$6 a gallon this spring, and Metrolink itself reported ridership gains after prices spiked. Caltrain's FY 2026 ridership report credits increased gas prices, along with its electrified, more frequent service, for a 38 percent ridership increase. Caltrain more than doubled its weekend service after electrification, and weekend ridership has passed pre-pandemic levels. Caltrain also reports that fare revenue alone does not cover its costs, which is exactly our point: frequency attracts riders, and operating support is what makes frequency possible. Riders are looking for alternatives to the pump. This is the moment to add service, not remove it.

What We Respectfully Request

1. **Fund Metrolink in full.** Restore Metro's FY 2026–27 contribution to at least the prior-year level, and commit to a multi-year funding path that keeps service at or above current levels. We also ask Metro to lead a regional effort, with OCTA and the other member agencies, to close the remaining gap. We care about the whole Metrolink system, not only our line.
2. **Maintain, at minimum, current service at Sylmar.** Metrolink connects Sylmar to Burbank, Glendale, Downtown Los Angeles, and destinations beyond. The East San Fernando Valley line, when it opens, will connect Pacoima and Northeast Valley riders to Van Nuys and other parts of the Valley, and that matters. But the two services are not equivalent, and one cannot stand in for the other. That is why we opposed ending Phase 2 short of Sylmar. Because Metrolink replaced Phase 2 as Sylmar's rail connection, we ask the Board to adopt a minimum service standard of current levels at the Sylmar/San Fernando Station, and to publish the Metrolink service levels it assumed in the December 2025 decision. If that standard cannot be sustained, staff should report to the Board on options for restoring rail investment in the corridor, including Phase 2.
3. **Deliver Brighton to Roxford and the SCORE promise.** Metro's project page lists Brighton to Roxford as in the design phase. The project would add a second track along about 11 miles between Burbank and Sylmar, upgrade 16 crossings to Quiet Zone-ready standards, and consider added platforms at Sylmar/San Fernando. SCORE's stated goal is 30-minute service between Union Station and the Santa Clarita Valley, with 15-minute service as a longer-term aim on parts of the line. Metro certified the environmental review for the Antelope Valley Line improvements in 2021. Please provide a public schedule, a full funding plan, and the status of coordination with Metrolink on SCORE, including the Balboa Double Track Extension.
4. **Invest in Sylmar's station.** Please commit to the station improvements and Quiet Zone work that make rail a reliable, safe, and pleasant choice for our residents.

We would welcome a written response and the opportunity to meet with Metro staff and Board offices, including Supervisor Horvath's office. We would also be glad to host a community discussion in Sylmar.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt Cabrera Miller', written over a horizontal line.

Kurt Cabrera Miller
President, Sylmar Neighborhood Council

Approved by the Sylmar Neighborhood Council at its regular meeting on October 22, 2026.

cc: The Honorable Lindsey P. Horvath, Supervisor, Third District, County of Los Angeles
The Honorable Monica Rodriguez, Councilmember, Seventh District, City of Los Angeles
Stephanie Wiggins, Chief Executive Officer, Metro