



MAY '05

## Metrolink Fare Changes

Rising fuel costs over the past few years have affected everyone in Southern California, including Metrolink. Although as a public agency Metrolink depends on subsidies from tax revenue contributed by the five county transportation agencies that fund the service, a large portion of Metrolink's operating budget comes from the fares our riders pay for tickets and passes.

In April 2004, the board of directors of the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA, the agency that operates Metrolink) approved a July 1, 2005, fare increase averaging 3.5 percent for all Metrolink tickets. Given the extraordinary jump in fuel costs in the year since approval, the board is considering three options for increasing fares by 4.5 to 9.5 percent.

Also approved by the board in 2004 is a new fare structure that, over a period of 10 years, will make all fares between "station pairs" consistent. The new formula, which will be effective July 1, 2005, will use the number of driving miles between stations as the pricing basis (the current system uses fare zones to calculate fares).

Because the restructuring process will result in significant changes in fares for some station pairs, the board, in April 2004, limited the maximum increase for any single station pair to 8 percent based on a 3.5 percent average increase. The proposed additional increase for higher-than-expected fuel increases would bring the average increase to between 4.5 and 9.5 percent, with a maximum individual-station-pair cap of 8.9 to 14 percent.



Also being considered is the elimination of weekday off-peak fares (current weekday off-peak hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and after 6:55 p.m.). The 50 percent discount for senior/disabled passengers and reduced weekend fares will not change.

Riders can access detailed information and provide input about the changes by visiting Metrolink online at [www.metrolinktrains.com](http://www.metrolinktrains.com). The Web site will have up-to-date information on the fare restructuring, downloadable files showing all new fares, as well as an online fare-calculator application that allows users to see what their new fare will be beginning July 1, 2005.

### Inside



### Public Comments Welcome

#### We'd Like to Hear Your Views on Metrolink's Proposed Fare Increase

You can comment about this proposal in several ways:

- ▶ Attend a public workshop
- ▶ Send written comments via e-mail to [MetrolinkFares@scrra.net](mailto:MetrolinkFares@scrra.net)
- ▶ Fax comments to (213) 452-0421

▶ Mail comments to Metrolink Fares, 700 S. Flower Street, 26th Floor, Los Angeles, California 90017

#### Public Workshops

Wednesday, May 4, 2005, 6:00 p.m.  
City of Ontario  
Council Chamber  
303 E. "B" Street  
Ontario, CA 91764

Thursday, May 5, 2005, 6:00pm  
Fullerton Senior Center  
340 W. Commonwealth Avenue  
Fullerton, CA 92832

Friday, May 13, 2005, 10:00 a.m.  
SCRRA Board of Directors Meeting  
SCAG Offices  
818 W. 7th Street, 12th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Comments will be presented to the board as part of its public hearing on Friday, May 13, at 10:00 a.m., held in the San Bernardino Conference Room of Southern California Associated Governments (SCAG), 818 W. 7th Street, 12th Floor, Los Angeles, California 90017.





## Spark Time

### The Nightly Grind

As the days get longer and the weather gets warmer, a young man's fancy turns to...rail-grinding! Think of it as a tune-up for the rails you ride on. Rail is manufactured with a curved shape on top, where the wheel meets the rail. Over time, the heavy weight of trains gradually flattens the top

surface of the beam. Once flattened, the rail can only steer wheels around curves by deflecting the flanges of the wheels, which causes friction and wear to both the wheels and the rail. The purpose of grinding rail is to return the curved profile on the top of the rail so

that it helps to steer the wheels around curves. By restoring an optimum profile to rails through grinding, flange contact is reduced or eliminated, extending the life of both wheels and rail.

Metrolink's rail-grinding is done at night and the process creates a "fireworks" display. Sixteen electric motors spin, grinding wheels against the rail as the grinder creeps along the track at five to ten miles per hour. While there are metal spark shields hung loosely beside the grinding wheels, a very dense swarm of orange sparks flies out from under the machine.

**Although the sparks create quite a sight there is no cause for alarm.**

The grinder sprays water on the track area before and after grinding and a maintenance crew follows to attack any flare-ups of smoldering wood or debris. This year, grinding will begin on the San Bernardino Line and will move on to the Antelope Valley, Ventura and Riverside lines.

## New Transit Center for Cal State LA

The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) has completed construction of the new Cal State Los Angeles Transit Center, which is now open and fully accessible to Metrolink riders. The center is part of the Northeast Transit Centers effort, a three-part project funded by Metro in 1997. Two centers, one in El Sereno and another in Highland Park, opened in 2001.

The new transit center provides improved passenger pick up/drop off facilities for connecting services that converge at the transit center, including the LA County Children's Court shuttle, East Los Angeles El Sol shuttles, Metro bus lines, Alhambra's ACT Blue Line, and Monterey Park's Spirit Bus Line 5.

The design phase of the Cal State LA Transit Center project began in 1998; however, during the site investigation, designers discovered that the adjacent hillside was unstable and would require major remedial work before construction could proceed. The project was redesigned and reengineered so that the hillside above the Metrolink station is now supported by 43 drilled piles ranging from 27 to 42 feet deep.

The center is improved with decorative, stamped concrete crosswalks, a pedestrian island that serves as the boarding



station for bus riders, security lighting, benches, landscaping, and a new traffic signal. The ticket vending equipment was moved to the island for ease of access and convenience.

This project was supported through funding from Metro, the City of Los Angeles, the State of California, the U.S. Department of Transportation under the federally funded hazard-elimination safety program, Los Angeles County, and California State University at Los Angeles.

## Travel Free to Santa Barbara— The American Riviera

As an exclusive benefit to the Rail2Rail program, Metrolink and Amtrak Pacific Surfliner monthly-pass holders can enjoy free weekend travel to Santa Barbara on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through June 26, 2005.\* This is a golden opportunity to sit back, relax, forget about traffic, and enjoy a car-free weekend at one of the most beautiful destinations in California.

The historic Amtrak station is located in beautiful downtown Santa Barbara within walking distance of hotels, the beach, and all the exciting shops and restaurants along State Street. For car-free and carefree discounts on hotels, restaurants, and other fun activities in Santa Barbara, visit [www.santabarbaracarfree.org](http://www.santabarbaracarfree.org) or call 805-696-1100.

If a visit to Santa Barbara isn't enough, choose another destination the following weekend, as this special offer is available for travel on any Pacific Surfliner train or Pacific Surfliner Thruway motor-coach destination between Los Angeles Union Station and Paso Robles. On the weekend of May 14 and 15, enjoy the California Strawberry Festival in Oxnard ([www.strawberry-fest.org](http://www.strawberry-fest.org)). If wine is your pleasure, try the Paso Robles Wine Festival ([www.pasowine.com](http://www.pasowine.com)) May 20–22.

Want more? As an added bonus, Metrolink monthly-pass holders may travel free, regardless of zone, on the San Bernardino Line's Saturday and Sunday service to connect with the Pacific Surfliner at LA Union Station. For complete details and more Pacific Surfliner weekend destinations and links, please visit [www.metrolinktrains.com/weekend](http://www.metrolinktrains.com/weekend).

Remember, this exclusive offer applies to one passenger per monthly pass. Friends or family who do not have Metrolink or Amtrak monthly passes will need to pre-purchase Amtrak tickets to travel. Tickets may be purchased at any staffed station, online at [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com), or by calling (800) USA-RAIL. Plan ahead, as Amtrak assesses a nine-dollar surcharge for tickets purchased on board.

*\* This offer is not valid on Amtrak Coast Starlight trains. This offer is not valid on Amtrak Pacific Surfliner trains on Memorial Day weekend, May 27–30, 2005.*

## Calling All Riders: Be on the Lookout!

Since the beginning of February 2005, Metrolink Sheriff's deputies, conductors, and law-enforcement technicians (LETs) have been confiscating counterfeit tickets from Metrolink riders. Fare inspectors have found that the counterfeit tickets have been created in the form of daily and 10-trip tickets and monthly passes.

Metrolink operates upon the honor system, which means that tickets are not checked every time you board a train. We know that the vast majority of our riders respect the system and pay for their rides. Any time someone abuses or cheats the system, it creates a larger burden on those who pay their fair share. Metrolink's conductors, Sheriff's deputies, and LETs conduct random fare inspections to ensure that everyone on the train has the appropriate ticket. During March, the fare inspectors performed verification checks on more than 40,000 individuals. It was during these inspections that the counterfeit tickets were discovered.

Upon discovery of the first counterfeit ticket, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department booked the individual holding it and obtained a search warrant. Deputies later confiscated multiple computers and scanning equipment at a printing shop where illegal tickets were being made.

"We are not sure how long the counterfeit tickets have been in production, but we are putting the systems in place to make sure that these fake tickets stop being produced," explained Edward Pederson, manager of safety and security. "To deal with the current situation, we are putting more LETs on the trains to increase random ticket searches. We are also training conductors to spot forgeries."

Metrolink will be increasing the number of fare inspectors on each train. Fare inspectors will be asking riders to remove their tickets from plastic holders for close inspection. Finally, Metrolink is also asking riders to keep a sharp eye out for people displaying tickets or passes that look strange and to inform a conductor or Metrolink Sheriff's deputy if offered Metrolink tickets that may be counterfeit.

Metrolink is also considering additional changes to its tickets to make counterfeiting more difficult.

For further information on counterfeit tickets, please contact Metrolink at (800) 371-LINK (5465).



### Safety Matters

Metrolink's Safety Division provided a unique opportunity for attendees of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Commuter Rail Conference held this past month in Los Angeles. More than 65 transportation professionals from agencies located throughout the United States visited the Metrolink Central Maintenance Facility in Los Angeles to engage in role-play exercises and observe a mass-casualty incident (MCI) exercise.

MCI drills are simulations of accidents in which Metrolink trains, stations, and surrounding communities are affected. Holding mock emergencies is a vital training tool to prepare response personnel for actual emergencies.

Battalion Chief Vidovich and a team of first responders from the Los Angeles City Fire Department participated in the MCI exercise and answered questions about their experience. Since 2004, Metrolink has conducted 37 first-responders classes attended by 1,191 fire fighters, SWAT teams, and other law-enforcement officers.



Station City News

Oxnard—THE 22nd Annual California Strawberry Festival—summer fun for the weekend of May 14 and 15 (10:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m) at picturesque Strawberry Meadows of College Park, 3250 South Rose Avenue, Oxnard. Presented by the all-volunteer California Strawberry Festival Executive Board, the nationally top-ranked celebration serves up a menu of delectable strawberry delights, along with non-stop entertainment—and don't forget Strawberryland. Proceeds from this event will benefit more than 20 local non-profit organizations and scholarships to help brighten futures.

From north of Oxnard, travel southbound on the Ventura Freeway (101) exit Victoria, turn right/south, proceed to Channel Islands Blvd., turn left/east, follow Channel Islands to the Festival.

From south of Oxnard, travel northbound on the Ventura Freeway (101) from Los Angeles, exit Las Posas Road (Camarillo), turn left/south, proceed to Pleasant Valley, turn right/west, follow Pleasant Valley to Rice Avenue, proceed over the overpass at Highway 1 heading west to the festival.

Admission is \$12 per adult, \$5 per youth (5-12), \$8 for seniors, and \$8 for active military and dependents with ID. Children 4 and under are FREE. For further information, contact the California Strawberry Festival Office at (805) 385-4739 or the information hotline at (888) 288-9242. You can also visit [www.strawberry-fest.org](http://www.strawberry-fest.org).

Simi Valley—*Peter Pan* soars into the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center, May 17 – June 15. *Peter Pan* kicks off the 10th anniversary celebration for the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center. How do you get to Neverland?



Second star to the right and straight on till morning. Or you can simply get off the Sycamore exit of the 118 Freeway and head down to the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center located at 3050 East Los Angeles Avenue.

Performances are at 8:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday Evenings and at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday afternoons. Special Saturday matinees are at 2:00 p.m. on May 28, June 4, and June 11. Tickets for *Peter Pan* are \$18 for adults, \$15 for seniors & students, \$12 for children 12 and under. Tickets can be reserved by calling (805) 583-7900. Visit [www.simi-arts.org](http://www.simi-arts.org) for more information.

San Bernardino—The International Chili Society presents the 32nd Annual California State Chili Championship, Saturday, May 7, at Perris Hill Park. Open chili, salsa, and menudo contests will be featured. There will be live music, an open karaoke contest for all ages, PT Cruiser cars, and kids' games and rides. Take the I-10 east or west to the 215 north to the 30 east, exit at Waterman Avenue, turn right on Highland Avenue, and go past St. Bernadine's Hospital. Perris Hill Park is located at 1001 East Highland Avenue, two blocks east of Waterman. For more information on this event, contact the San Bernardino Parks and Recreation Department at (909) 384-5031.



Bike to Work Week

Join the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) to kick off California Bike Commute Week (May 16–20) with a special media event. Pedal over to the Irvine Transportation Center on Monday, May 16, at 9:00 a.m. and you'll be treated to food, prizes, and giveaways. There will also be special speakers and bike-club representatives on hand to offer tips on safe bicycle commuting.

Help OCTA create awareness about bicycle commuting as a healthy, fun, and non-polluting alternative to the solo drive. Make sure you let your employer know about Orange County's Bike Commute Week.

Register online at [www.octa.net](http://www.octa.net) to pledge to bike to work any time during the week to be eligible for prizes such as Southwest Airlines tickets, golf outings, bike gear, and more!

The Irvine Transportation Center is Metrolink's Irvine Station, located at 15215 Barranca Parkway. For information, please call OCTA at (714) 560-5588 or visit [www.octa.net](http://www.octa.net).

Win Tickets to *Peter Pan*

Experience the magic of *Peter Pan*! Join Peter, Captain Hook, Tinkerbell, Wendy, and all the Lost Boys as Sir James Barrie's timeless tale of the boy who wouldn't grow up comes to life on stage at the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center located at 3050 East Los Angeles Avenue in Simi Valley.

For your chance to win one of four pairs of free tickets to *Peter Pan* (May 7–June 12), please fill out the entry form below and mail it to *Metrolink Matters*, *Peter Pan* Contest, 700 S. Flower Street, Suite 2600, Los Angeles, CA 90017 by May 16.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
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*All winners will be contacted by phone.  
 One entry per person and household.*

METROLINK MATTERS

Editor-in-Chief: Paul Sitkoff

Writers: Tracy Berge, Jennifer Cohl-Becerra, Mike McGinley, Helene Jacobs, Carolyn Ortman, Francisco Oaxaca and Lupe Valdez

Designer: Harlan West/HWDS

Writing Consultants: Rogers & Associates

C.E.O.: David Solow

Director, Communications and Development: Steve Lantz

Manager, External Communications: Francisco Oaxaca

Send comments or story ideas to

[metrolinkmatters@scrra.net](mailto:metrolinkmatters@scrra.net) or to

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