



September 27, 2021

To: Members of the Board of Directors

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer 

Subject: Cooperative Agreement with the Southern California Regional Rail Authority for Railroad Track Stabilization in the City of San Clemente

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority owns over 40 miles of active rail line in Orange County that extends from the City of Fullerton to the San Diego County Line in the City of San Clemente. Metrolink is responsible for regional rail operations and maintenance along the corridor. Tidal surges, along with a failing slope, have severely degraded the railroad track structure in the City of San Clemente for the past several weeks. Staff is requesting approval to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Southern California Regional Rail Authority for costs associated with stabilizing the railroad track structure, in an area owned by the Orange County Transportation Authority.

Recommendation

Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute Cooperative Agreement No. C-1-3749 with the Southern California Regional Rail Authority in the amount up to \$3 million, to stabilize railroad track structure in the City of San Clemente.

Discussion

Tidal surges and a recent slope failure have severely degraded the railroad track structure on the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA)-owned railroad right-of-way (ROW) in the City of San Clemente (City). The ROW is operated and maintained by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) through an agreement with OCTA. After a site analysis by SCRRA geotechnical engineers, it was determined that rail service must be suspended to allow for stabilization work to occur safely and efficiently.

On September 16, 2021, SCRRA suspended Metrolink rail service in south Orange County in order to effect efforts to stabilize railroad track structure in the

City. The stabilization work began on September 16, 2021, and is expected to occur through October 4, 2021. As a result, Metrolink and Amtrak Pacific Surfliner passenger trains are unable to operate south of the Irvine and Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo stations.

Emergency repair is needed to stabilize the railroad tracks from further shifting due to a failing slope originating at the westerly coastal slope and extending below the railroad ROW to the west of the tracks at the beach. The failing slope has resulted in severe cracks and separation in pavement and house foundations at the top of the slope and has caused severe deflection in the railroad tracks, requiring the rail service to be suspended.

The current scope and level of effort for this repair work is estimated to cost up to \$3 million and is the responsibility of OCTA as the ROW owner. Metrolink is performing this work with contract forces on behalf of OCTA. With Board of Directors' approval, staff will finalize the cooperative agreement with Metrolink for the funding of this repair work that is currently underway.

SCRRA is procuring 11,500 tons of 'riprap', large rocks that hold up the track structure, and has contracted with the BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) to assist with the repairs. BNSF is using their trains to transport, load, and unload the riprap, while SCRRA is procuring their on-call engineering team to provide geotechnical services. Assistance is also required to realign the track that was altered by the strong tidal surges. The repair work scope also includes the following work:

- Procurement of riprap – blasting rock
- BNSF trains to transport riprap
- Train crews to operate those trains
- Maintenance-of-way contractor resources for temporary mitigation and coordination of unloading riprap and realignment of the track
- On-call engineering services for geotechnical assessments
- Equipment and materials to use the El Toro siding for servicing Metrolink trains while operating a shortened route

Fiscal Impact

This cooperative agreement can be accommodated in the Commuter Rail Fund of the OCTA Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget, Account No. 0018-7519-A0001-DS2.

Summary

Staff requests Board of Directors' approval for the Chief Executive Director to negotiate and execute Cooperative Agreement No. C-1-3749 with the Southern California Regional Rail Authority in the amount up to \$3 million to stabilize railroad track structure on the Orange Subdivision in the City of San Clemente.

Attachment

None.

Prepared by:



Dinah Minter
Department Manager, Regional Rail
(714) 560-5740

Approved by:



Jennifer L. Bergener
Deputy Chief Executive Officer/Chief
Operating Officer, Operations
(714) 560-5462