




November 11, 2021

To: Transit Committee

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. In September, tidal surges, along with a failing slope, severely degraded the railroad track structure in the City of San Clemente. 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

- A. 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 \$5,000,000, to stabilize the railroad track structure in the City of San Clemente.
- B. Amend the Orange County Transportation Authority's Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget by \$5,000,000, to accommodate Cooperative Agreement No. C-1-3749 for the railroad track stabilization work.

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 was completed the first week of October. Passenger rail service resumed on October 4, 2021.

Emergency repair was undertaken by SCRRA 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 passenger rail service to be suspended for the roughly two-and-a-half-week period from September 16 through October 4, 2021.

The current scope and level of effort for this repair work is estimated to cost up to \$5 million and is the responsibility of OCTA as the ROW owner. SCRRA has performed the majority of this work with contract forces on behalf of OCTA. With Board of Directors' approval, staff will finalize the cooperative agreement with SCRRA for the funding of this repair work.

SCRRA procured 12,000 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 used their trains to transport, load, and unload the riprap, while SCRRA engaged their on-call engineering team to provide geotechnical services. Assistance was 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
- Daily monitoring and surveying of the track
- Equipment and materials to use the El Toro siding for servicing Metrolink trains while operating a shortened route

SCRRA continues to monitor the stability of the slope and track. A slope monitoring system using inclinometers was recently installed, which will perform the monitoring once it is operational.

Fiscal Impact

The cooperative agreement with Metrolink can be funded with local commuter rail funds; however, staff continues to work with Metrolink to identify portions of the work that may be eligible for Federal Transit Administration funds. An amendment to the OCTA Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget, commuter rail fund, Account No. 0018-7831-A0001-DS2, in the amount of \$5,000,000, is being requested to accommodate Agreement No. C-1-3749.

Summary

Staff requests Board of Directors' approval for 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 \$5 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