



Legislation Text

File #: 19-106, Version: 1

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

ACTION REQUESTED:

Adopt a resolution in support of a State of Illinois Capital Bill

DEPARTMENT: Transportation, Engineering and Development

SUBMITTED BY: Jennifer Loudon, Deputy Director

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

As the Commuter Rail Division of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), Metra provides commuter service between Chicago and the six-county region along 11 rail lines. The RTA was created by voters in the six-county region in 1974 as a way to improve failing, private transit systems throughout the Chicago area. The RTA sales tax provides public funding to Metra, CTA and Pace.

DISCUSSION:

Metra's operations are funded through system-generated revenues, which are primarily fares paid by passengers, and the RTA sales tax. Metra's capital funding is derived from a number of sources including federal, state and local programs and a small amount of fare revenue. This model was determined over 40 years ago and is no longer sustainable due to declining sales tax growth, increased costs to provide service and unfunded federal mandates, such as Positive Train Control. Metra's capital needs far exceed the available capital funding.

Due to the continued financial challenges and capital funding shortfall, Metra has increased fares each year from 2015 through 2018. Metra did not raise fares in 2019 as the additional revenue would provide only a fraction of what is needed and would continue to add burden to the riders. Metra is instead focusing on encouraging the state to provide dedicated transportation funding through a Capital Bill. The State of Illinois has not had a Capital Bill since FY2010; and therefore, Metra currently has no state source of capital funding. Metra is asking the communities they serve to support their request for state capital funding by adopting the attached resolution.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A