



## Board Report

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Agenda Number: 25.

### OPERATIONS, SAFETY AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE OCTOBER 17, 2019

**SUBJECT: EXPO LINE SERVICE AND OVERCROWDING UPDATE**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE update regarding the Metro Expo Line service and overcrowding issues as a result of FY20 frequency adjustments.

#### **ISSUE**

At the September 2019 Operations, Safety and Customer Experience Committee meeting, Directors Bonin and Garcia requested staff to return to the board with additional information regarding Expo Line service adjustments in response to recent customer overcrowding issues and ridership levels.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The FY20 Adopted Budget was developed in pursuit of realizing long-term congestion solutions and providing transportation services for current and potential riders throughout Los Angeles, while maintaining responsible and accountable governance at Metro. In terms of service delivery, the comprehensive budget process resulted in a rail revenue service hour (RSH) decrease of 68,278 or 5.7% due to service modifications on the Blue, Gold and Expo Lines. The budget also included a 79,770 increase in bus RSH in support of special service for special events as well a bus bridges necessary for construction projects, such as the New Blue Improvements Project.

#### **DISCUSSION**

The changes to frequencies in rail RSH included weekend morning peak time adjustments, peak headway changes from 6 to 8-minutes for the Expo Line and 7 to 8-minutes for the Gold Line, along with reduced off-peak vehicle deployments. These redeployment strategies were aimed to make schedules and train lengths more consistent, improve on-time performance, allow more time for light rail vehicle maintenance. In addition, the 8-minute peak frequency was intended to ensure better availability of full platform, 3-car trains for every peak hour trip and to improve service reliability attributed to train congestion within at-grade, street running segments.

Expo and Gold Line analysis (Attachment A) used to develop the budget, illustrate the theory that 8-

minute peak service max load ratios met the majority of ridership demand. Once implemented, however, the operational reality proved that at-grade, street running segments of the Expo Line resulted in reliability issues causing uneven train spacing which translated to uneven crowding. In addition, all instances of observed overcrowding have followed when trains were several minutes off schedule, likely due to external factors in the operating environment. While the Gold Line has not experienced similar issues as a result of the FY20 optimization efforts, and the Blue Line has not yet fully reopened, recent customer feedback proves that the intended benefits have not been realized on the Expo Line. In response to Expo Line customer feedback and observations, Metro has committed to:

- Immediately add 3 additional trains, providing a 6-minute frequency and capacity to mitigate the peak-of-the-peak periods on the Expo Line (completed as of Thursday, September 24, 2019)
- Will continue to use available sample data to further analyze restored Expo Line service and capacity in relation to load standards and ridership
- Will further explore Expo weekend service and capacity scenarios, particularly early in the weekend mornings, as an opportunity to achieve additional track maintenance activities which is critical for the reliability of rail infrastructure, positively affecting service
- Will continue to closely monitor Expo and Gold service, customer feedback and implement practical service adjustments as necessary
- As mentioned at the September 2019 board meeting, Metro, in coordination with city partners, such as LADOT, will jointly explore additional signal priority and preemption opportunities to keep Expo and Blue Line trains moving from station-to-station, uninterrupted and improve travel times for customers

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

All costs relative to restoring Expo Line frequency levels will be made in accordance with Metro's approved FY20 adopted budget. The Operations Departmental will be responsible for reviewing and budgeting expenses related to this effort. The source of funds for these efforts will come from state and local funds including fares that are eligible for Bus and Rail Operating Projects.

### **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

Approval of this item will have a positive impact on the safety of our customers. Metro is committed to delivering service that is safe and reliable for all customers.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

Approval of this recommendation supports the following Metro Strategic Plan Goals: 2) Provide outstanding trip experiences for all and 2) Outstanding trip experiences for all.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Metro will continue to monitor all service level changes implemented in FY20, maximize opportunities to deliver and maintain service that is safe and reliable, listen to customer feedback, and make

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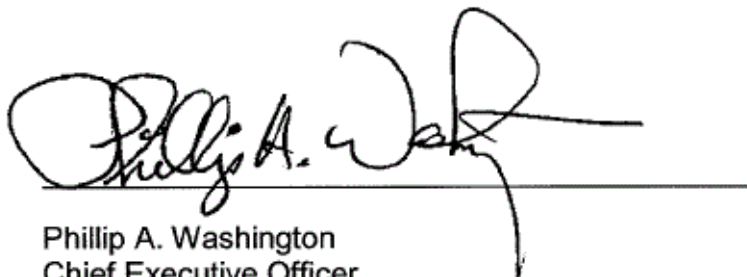
adjustments and improvements that are responsive to customer needs and operationally practical and feasible. Also, as Metro prepares to re-open the Blue Line (A Line) during the week of October 28, 2019, staff will ensure that A Line service is coordinated systemwide and strategically integrated with recent Expo Line service changes.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - FY18 Metro Weekday Expo and Gold Line Max Load Analysis

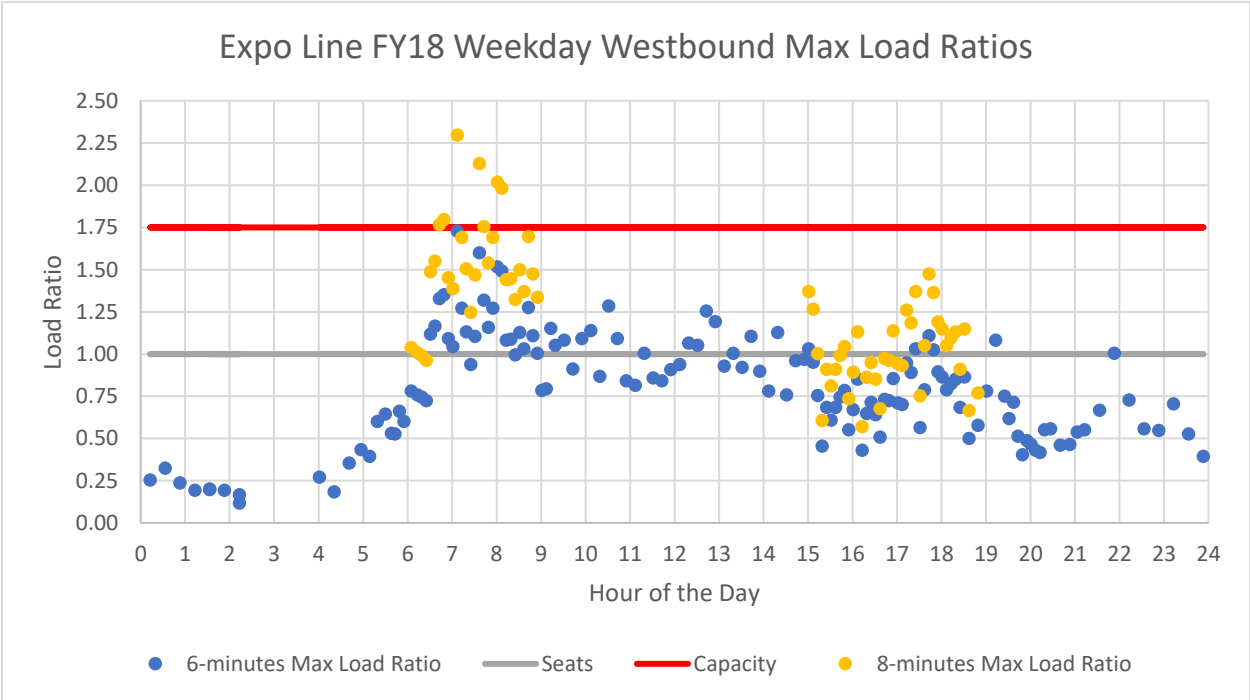
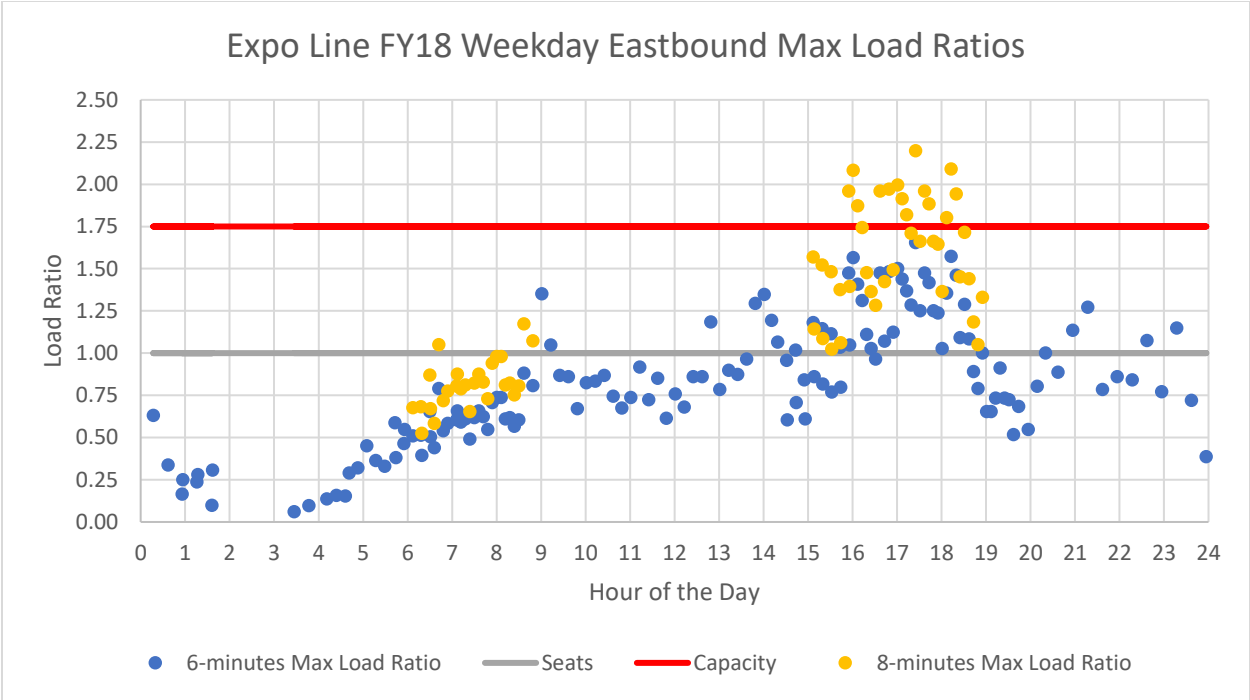
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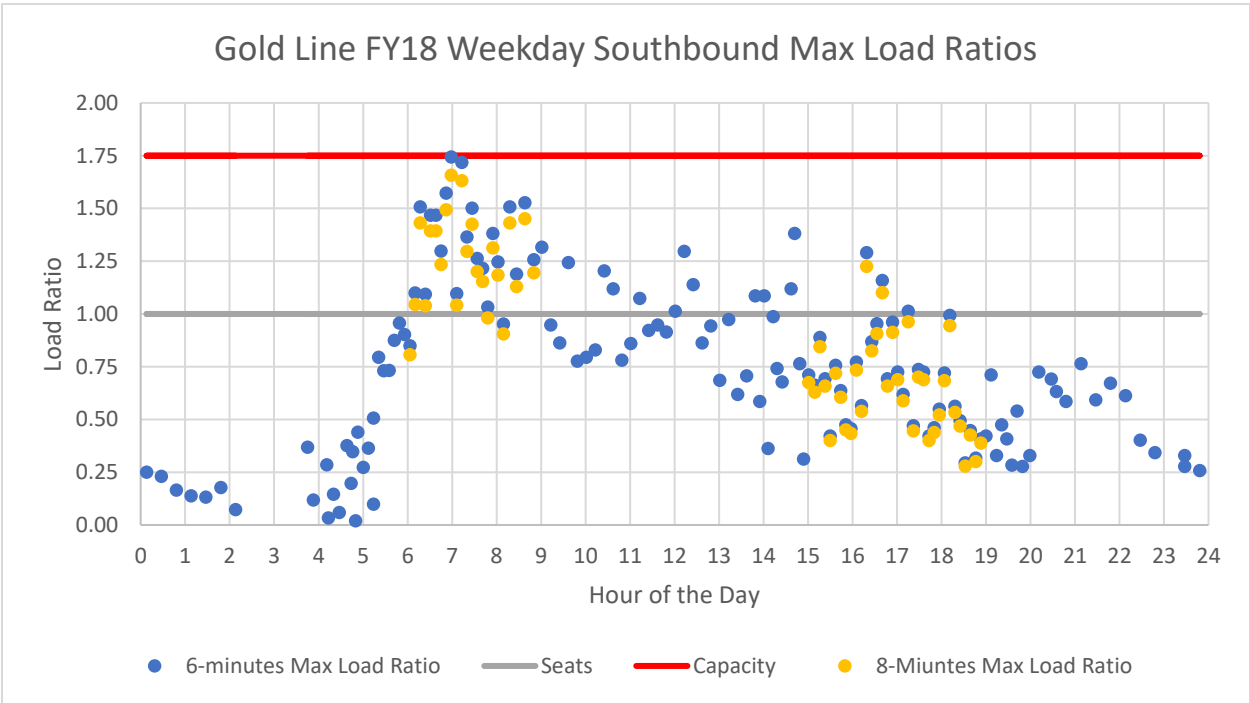
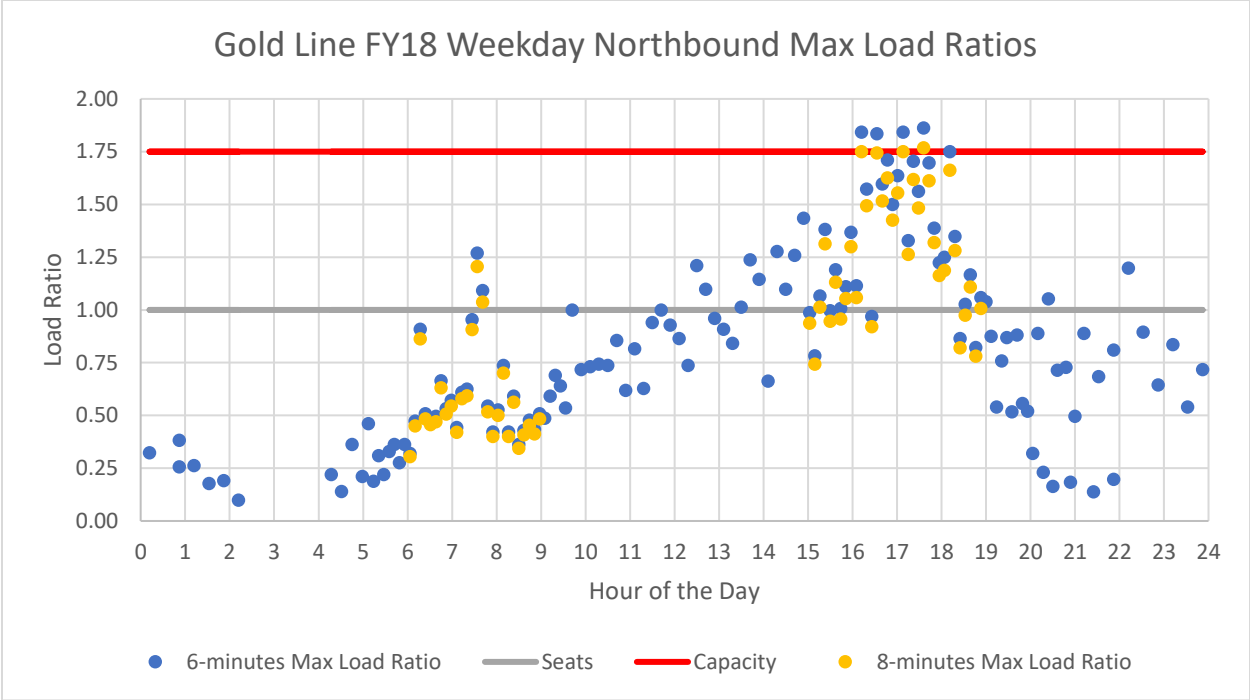
Reviewed by: James T. Gallagher, Chief Operations Officer (213) 418-3108



Phillip A. Washington  
Chief Executive Officer

Expo & Gold Line FY18 Weekday Max Load Information





**Note**

- Gold Line trains with 6-minute headways (blue dots) includes use of 2 and 3-car trains.
- Gold Line trains with 8-minute headways (yellow dots) includes use of 3-car trains, increasing capacity.