



## MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #III.H

---

DATE: SEPTEMBER 22, 2025

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: SFRPC RESOLUTION #25-03 FUNDING FOR SFRTA

---

Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties currently provide operation and maintenance funding in the combined amount of \$11.7 million for Tri-Trail. On June 30, 2025, Governor Desantis signed into law HB 7031, approving a \$1.3 billion tax package that includes significant changes impacting state and local funding for transit that revises the distribution from documentary stamp tax revenues to eliminate the Florida Rail Enterprise programs. This funding reduction will have a significant financial impact on the SFRTA's operations and threaten the long-term stability and continuity of the SFRTA.

SFRPC Resolution # 25-03 urges the Florida Legislature to take appropriate action to restore funding eliminated in the 2025 Legislative Session to ensure the continuity of Tri- Rail operations and echoes similar resolutions adopted on September 3, 2025 by Miami-Dade County, and on September 16, 2025 by Broward and Palm Beach counties.

Recommendation: Adopt SFRPC Resolution # 25-03



South Florida Regional Planning Council  
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, Florida 33020  
954-924-3653 Phone, 954-924-3654 FAX  
[www.sfrationalcouncil.org](http://www.sfrationalcouncil.org)



## **RESOLUTION #25-03**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL REPRESENTING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OF MONROE, MIAMI-DADE, AND BROWARD COUNTIES, FLORIDA; URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO APPROPRIATE FUNDING FOR THE FLORIDA RAIL ENTERPRISE PROGRAM TO FUND THE SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY'S TRI-RAIL OPERATIONS TO MAINTAIN TRI-RAIL'S LEVEL OF SERVICE; URGING THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (FDOT) TO INCLUDE SUCH FUNDING, AS MAY BE NECESSARY, IN THE APPROPRIATE CURRENT AND FUTURE FDOT FIVE-YEAR WORK PROGRAMS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, the South Florida Regional Planning Council's three-county region is comprised of Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward counties, 70 municipalities contained therein, with an estimated 4.9 million residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council is a multi-purpose regional governmental entity with policy responsibilities which include the areas of affordable housing, economic development, emergency preparedness, military installation readiness, data research and analysis, intergovernmental coordination and collaboration, and regional transportation; and

**WHEREAS**, a safe, efficient, and connected public transportation system is a cornerstone of a successful metropolitan region, supporting economic growth and job creation, enhanced mobility, the creation of affordable and workforce housing, and increased opportunities and quality of life for residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach MSA with an estimated population of 6.2 million in 2023 has made progress toward becoming a competitive global metropolitan area, with planned investments in regional mobility playing a key role in achieving that progress; and

**WHEREAS**, the Southeast Florida region continues to grow in population, increasing the need for improved passenger rail transit options; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 30, 2025, Governor DeSantis signed HB 7031 into law (Chapter 2025-208), approving a \$1.3 billion tax package that includes significant changes impacting state and local funding for transit; and

**WHEREAS**, HB 7031 includes a provision that revises the distribution from documentary stamp tax revenues to eliminate the Florida Rail Enterprise Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the elimination of the funding distribution for the Florida Rail Enterprise Program has a significant negative financial impact on the operation of the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (“SFRTA”) commuter rail service known as Tri-Rail; and

**WHEREAS**, Tri-Rail operates along 72 miles of the South Florida Rail Corridor (“SFRC”) and eight miles of the Florida East Coast Railway (“FECR”) in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties; and

**WHEREAS**, the SFRTA plays a critical role in serving the public by providing a safe, affordable, and accessible regional transportation option that thousands of residents, workers, and visitors rely on each day to commute across Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties; and

**WHEREAS**, the SFRTA has reported that Tri-Rail achieved an all-time ridership record in Fiscal Year 2024-2025, carrying over 4.5 million passengers, demonstrating strong demand and the critical role of commuter rail in South Florida’s transportation network; and

**WHEREAS**, despite record ridership, the SFRTA faces significant financial challenges resulting from recent reductions in state operational funding, which threatens the long-term stability and continuity of its Tri-Rail service; and

**WHEREAS**, these changes create funding uncertainties for the SFRTA and may affect its ability to engage in long-term planning and make contractual commitments necessary to support reliable commuter rail service; and

**WHEREAS**, the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach MSA has the Nation’s # 6 highest rate of traffic congestion with congested driving time in South Florida representing 1.8 times the National Average increasing travel time and expense, stress, time away from families and communities, and increased likelihood of traffic accidents for motorists; and

**WHEREAS**, traffic congestion and extended commute times are compounded by a critical shortage of attainable, affordable and workforce housing near employment centers; and

**WHEREAS**, the recent study “The Business Case for Affordable and Workforce Housing” undertaken by the South Florida Regional Planning Council in its role as the Economic Development District for South Florida, as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration in 1996, found in an economic impact analysis of increased labor access in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach MSA that every 1% increase in jobs within a commutable distance of Southeast Florida employment

opportunities represents an average of \$1.7 billion dollars added annually in personal income over the period of 2025 to 2029; and

**WHEREAS**, since 2019 the 20 – 34 year-old resident population has declined 5.3%; a decrease of approximately 62,500 residents, and the 45 – 59 year-old resident population has declined by 3.5%; a decrease of approximately 45,700 residents, representing a loss of critical workforce in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach MSA; and

**WHEREAS**, the potential inability of SFRTA to engage in long-term planning and make contractual commitments threatens the availability and reliability of a vital regional transportation system, and may force thousands of commuters to shift to personal vehicles which could significantly increase traffic congestion on Interstate 95 (I-95) and the Florida Turnpike exacerbating commute delays; and

**WHEREAS**, the reduction in state funding may also create challenges in identifying a sustainable long-term funding solution that meets the financial and operational needs of the SFRTA's regional rail network; and

**WHEREAS**, changes to state funding structures may also have secondary impacts on related transit initiatives where coordination is required around shared assets such as rolling stock, infrastructure, and service planning; and

**WHEREAS**, without sustained and predictable investment it will become more difficult for the SFRTA to maintain current service levels, pursue future improvements, and/or meet certain federal program requirements, which may negatively impact the broader stability of the regional transit system; and

**WHEREAS**, the SFRTA has utilized reserves and implemented operational efficiencies, including lowering administrative costs below state averages, but these measures are insufficient to close an existing budget deficit of at least \$30 million emphasizing the need for dedicated, sustainable funding sources; and

**WHEREAS**, the state's recent actions recede from the commitments made in prior years to invest in regional mobility solutions; and

**WHEREAS**, the SFRTA has engaged in long-term efforts and multiple studies with state and local partners for nearly two decades to secure a stable funding mechanism, underscoring the urgency of legislative and fiscal action to preserve and grow this vital regional transit service; and

**WHEREAS**, even if Tri-Rail service were discontinued, the State of Florida remains financially responsible for infrastructure costs to keep the rail line open for use by Amtrak and CSX, with costs estimated to be in excess of \$40 million per year.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL THAT:**

**Section 1.** The South Florida Regional Planning Council urges the Florida Legislature to appropriate funding for the Florida Rail Enterprise Program to fund the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority's Tri-Rail operations to maintain Tri-Rail's level of service, and further urges the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to include such funding, as may be necessary, in the appropriate current and future FDOT Five-Year Work Programs.

**Section 2.** The South Florida Regional Planning Council directs the Executive Director to transmit a copy of this resolution to the Governor, the Senate President, the House Speaker, the Chair and members of the Miami-Dade, Broward, and Monroe counties State Legislative Delegations, the Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation, the District Four and Six Secretaries of the Florida Department of Transportation, and the Executive Directors of the Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization and Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization.

**Section 3.** This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption hereof.

**DULY ADOPTED** by the South Florida Regional Planning Council this 22nd day of September 2025.

---

Michelle Lincoln  
Chair

---

Isabel Cosio Carballo, MPA  
Executive Director

## **SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL COUNCILMEMBERS, EX OFFICIOS**

**SEPTEMBER 2025**

Michelle Lincoln, *(Chair), Mayor Pro Tem, Monroe County*

Senator René García, *(First Vice Chair), Commissioner, Miami-Dade County*

Cary Goldberg, *(Second Vice Chair), Governor's Appointee Broward County*

Denise Horland, *(Treasurer), Councilmember, City of Plantation*

Frank H. Caplan, *(Secretary), Councilmember, Village of Key Biscayne*

Senator Steve Geller, *(Immediate Past Chair), Commissioner, Broward County*

Craig Cates, *Commissioner, Monroe County*

Joseph Corradino, *Mayor, Village of Pinecrest*

Quentin "Beam" Furr, *Mayor, Broward County*

Oliver G. Gilbert, III, *Commissioner, Miami-Dade County*

Samuel Kaufman, *Commissioner, City Key West*

Kionne McGhee, *Vice Chair and Commissioner, Miami-Dade County*

Maria Rodriguez, *Commissioner, City of Pembroke Pines*

Michael Udine, *Commissioner, Broward County*

-----

Isabel Cosio Carballo, *MPA, Executive Director*

Samuel Goren, *Esq., Legal Counsel*

-----

### **Ex Officio Members**

Sirena Davila, *Florida Department of Environmental Protection*

Dat Huynh, *Florida Department of Transportation, District Six*

Armando L. Vilaboy, *South Florida Water Management District*