



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro Preparing for the “New Blue” Metro’s \$350-million investment in modernizing the Blue Line will begin January 26, 2019

The Metro Blue Line will undergo a comprehensive \$350-million modernization beginning January 26, 2019, to improve reliability, upgrade safety and enhance the customer experience, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) reminded riders today. Work to modernize the Blue Line — which opened in 1990 and is Metro’s oldest rail line — has been ongoing since 2014 with a series of safety and operational improvements.

“The Blue Line is Metro’s first and oldest service line and it is critical that we update and improve service for Blue Line riders. These improvements certainly will cause some short-term pain but will also net important long-term gain—more convenience, easier connections, and safety and security upgrades for our Metro customers,” said Metro Board Chair and L.A. County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl.

The upcoming improvement project will require two extended four-month closures. Work on the southern segment of the line begins at 4 a.m. on Saturday, January 26. In addition, Blue Line service to Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station will be closed for eight months while the station is rebuilt with more capacity, a new customer service center and community plaza, easier connections to local buses and surrounding communities, and upgrades to safety and security systems. During the closure, Green Line service will operate normally at Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station.

“Long Beach residents rely every day on the Blue Line to access jobs and services throughout LA County,” said Long Beach Mayor and Metro Board Member Robert

Garcia. "This project will ensure the Blue Line can operate for years to come as the important transit connection we know it to be. The closure will be difficult for many of us, but Metro will offer a variety of bus shuttles to minimize the inconvenience to Blue Line customers."

Work on the Blue Line will include improvements to the signaling, tracks and overhead wires that delivers the electricity to power the trains. Four new crossover tracks will be built to reduce service interruptions. There will also be numerous station improvements, including new interactive digital map displays for all stations, which will display train arrival and departure times, service alerts, and maps of the system and nearby area. Other visible amenities will include new signage and landscaping.

"For decades, the Blue Line has been the work horse of Metro's rail system," said Supervisor Janice Hahn. "Not only is it our oldest line, it is also the busiest and is in dire need of improvements. These upgrades and repairs are going to inconvenience a lot of people but when the Blue Line reopens riders are going to get a more reliable and more comfortable commute."

The Metro Board of Directors recently approved the naming of rail lines with letters and colors to accommodate a growing system and make our rail and bus rapid transit network easier to understand and more custom friendly. Upon completion of the entire New Blue Improvement Project, the new name for the Blue Line will be the "A" Line with the color blue.

"We have implemented a comprehensive public outreach program to notify the public of Blue Line rail service interruptions, construction and the bus shuttle service," said Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington. "Metro is committed to improving reliability, upgrading safety and enhancing the customer experience on the Blue Line."

The closures are as follows:

Southern segment:

- January 26 to late May 2019: rail service will be suspended from the Blue Line 103rd St/Watts Towers Station to the Downtown Long Beach Station and replaced by expanded shuttle bus service. The Blue Line will continue running

between 7th St/Metro Center in downtown Los Angeles and 103rd St/Watts Towers Station.

Northern segment:

- Late May to September 2019: rail service will be suspended from the Blue Line Compton Station to 7th St/Metro Center and replaced by expanded shuttle bus service. The Blue Line will continue running between Compton Station and Downtown Long Beach Station. Red and Purple Line service will operate normally at 7th St/Metro Center.
- During the northern segment closure, Expo Line rail service will be suspended for 45 days at 7th St/Metro Center and Pico Station with train service in that segment replaced by bus shuttles. Expo Line trains will continue to run between LATTTC/Ortho Institute Station and Downtown Santa Monica.

Metro will offer three types of Blue Line Bus Shuttle Service during the closures:

- Blue Line Local Bus Shuttle Service will be free with buses serving all closed Blue Line stations and 103rd St/Watts Towers, where customers can transfer to the trains heading to/from downtown Los Angeles. The shuttles will run the same hours as the Blue Line, seven days a week.
- Blue Line Select Bus Shuttle Service will have a \$1.75 fare and serve busier stations during the morning and afternoon rush hours. Customers with a valid TAP card can transfer for free to the Blue Line or other lines within two hours of starting a trip. Select bus shuttles will run Monday through Friday from 5:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. During the closure between Downtown Long Beach and 103rd Street Station, the Select Bus Shuttles will serve the following stations: Pacific, 1st Street/Downtown Long Beach, 5th Street, Anaheim, Pacific Coast Highway, Willow, Wardlow, Willowbrook/Rosa Parks, and 103rd/Watts Towers. During the closure between Compton and 7th St/Metro, the Select Bus Shuttles will service 7th St/Metro, Pico, Grand/LATTTC, Willowbrook/Rosa Parks and Compton.

- Blue Line Express Shuttle Service will have a \$1.75 fare with limited stops between Long Beach and Downtown Los Angeles during morning and afternoon rush hours. Customers with a valid TAP card can transfer for free to other lines within two hours of starting a trip. The Express Bus Service will run Monday through Friday from 5:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Stations served will be Pacific Ave, Downtown Long Beach/1st St, 5th St, Anaheim St, Pacific Coast Hwy, Willow St, Wardlow, LATTC/Ortho Institute, Grand/LATTC, Pico and 7th St/Metro Center.

Metro is launching a robust outreach campaign to Metro customers, cities, communities, stakeholders and the public about the New Blue. The New Blue website at <http://www.metro.net/newblue> includes a fact sheet and map with the three bus shuttle services.

About Metro

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is unique among the nation's transportation agencies. Created in 1993, Metro is a multimodal transportation agency that transports about 1.3 million passengers daily on a fleet of 2,200 clean air buses and six rail lines. The agency also oversees bus, rail, highway and other mobility-related building projects and leads transportation planning and programming for Los Angeles County.

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