



NEWS

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Contact:

Andrea Greene/Jim Smart
MTA Media Relations
(213) 922-2702/922-2700
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MTA TO BEGIN NEW FLEXIBLE SERVICE AROUND BUSY VERMONT LINE

Beginning June 29, the MTA will enhance service around its busiest line, Vermont Avenue, by offering patrons special shuttle rides to destinations several blocks away. Called the Southside Smart Shuttle, the experimental service will operate between Slauson Avenue and the Green Line's Vermont Station seven days a week, and provide patrons direct access to neighborhood shopping areas, medical facilities and regional transit services.

"The Southside Smart Shuttle will make neighborhood trip-taking easy," said MTA Board Chairman Larry Zarian. "Not only will patrons be able to travel to and from already designated destinations, they also will have curb-to-curb service available to them throughout the day."

Running every half hour for 12 hours on weekdays and 10 hours on weekends, the Southside Smart Shuttle will stop to pick up and drop off passengers at five stops along the corridor. Drivers will, however, be able to deviate from their routes to pick up and drop off passengers in the immediate vicinity of the corridor between Normandie Avenue on the west, the 110 freeway on the east and 120th Street on the south. Those wanting such service must call ahead to a dispatcher at a toll-free number, 1-213-35-SMART.

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The demonstration project consists of four 15-passenger mini-buses operating in adjacent areas from Slauson Avenue on the north end of the route to the Vermont Green Line Station on the south. There will be a transfer point between the north and south segments of the shuttle service at Manchester Avenue.

"This project is designed to give access to a community that has long needed it," said Mel Wilson, MTA board member and chairman of the agency's Operations Committee, which spearheaded the project. "This program is the first of its kind for the MTA and won't be the last."

Cost will be free for the first month of service. After July 29, an MTA fare token with a value of 90 cents will be charged and a second token will be charged for pick up and drop off at destinations other than the designated stops. This is a cashless system, so tokens are required for all shuttle trips. MTA tokens are available from MTA customer service centers and selected grocery stores. MTA passes may be honored in the future.

The service will be operated on a day-to-day basis by the Watts Labor Community Action Committee. Hours of operation are from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. weekdays and 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. weekends. Estimated cost of the service from July through September is \$174,000.

The Southside Smart Shuttle is the first of four Smart Shuttle demonstration projects underway in the city of Los Angeles. The others are located in MacArthur Park and the west and northeast San Fernando Valley. These projects are co-funded by the MTA and LADOT.

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