



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

News

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Metro Red Line Subway Celebrates 25 Years of Service

Elected officials and community stakeholders joined Los Angeles Mayor and Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Metro) Board Chair Eric Garcetti today to celebrate the Metro Red Line's 25th birthday. The popularity of the subway system sparked a renaissance of rail planning and construction in L.A. County that now spans 105 miles of Metro Rail, with four new projects currently under construction.

"Twenty-five years ago, the Red Line transformed how we connect our communities — and today, it is the backbone of our Metro network and a blueprint for our transportation future," said Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chair Eric Garcetti. "I'm proud to celebrate the progress we've made, and excited to continue this historic journey in the years to come."

Over the last 25 years, the Red Line has carried an estimated 817 million passengers while traveling approximately 3.6 billion miles. The Red Line currently has more than 140,000 boardings on an average weekday.

"I am excited to be celebrating this major milestone representing a quarter-century of reliable transportation services by the Metro Red Line," said Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Board Member Hilda L. Solis. "Hundreds of millions of commuters have benefitted from the Red Line, and I'm equally excited that Measure M allows us to serve even more riders to Westwood via the Purple Line and to Montclair on the Gold Line. There's never been a better time to Go Metro!"

Planning for the Metro Red Line began in earnest in 1975, when Metro's predecessor agency, the Southern California Rapid Transit District (RTD), established a Rapid Transit Advisory Committee to evaluate a series of transportation corridors in Los Angeles County.

These corridors were within the densely-populated "regional core," an area of 55 square miles that included the Central Business District, the Mid-Wilshire and Miracle Mile areas along Wilshire Boulevard, Hollywood and Universal City and North Hollywood in the San Fernando Valley.

Groundbreaking for the Metro Red Line occurred in September 1986, near the future home of the Civic Center Station. The first 4.4-mile segment opened in 1993 and included five stations between Union Station and MacArthur Park, as well as a rail maintenance yard and shop.

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In July 1996, the line was extended from MacArthur Park to Wilshire/Western. In December 1999, the next segment opened from Wilshire/Vermont to Hollywood/Vine. The final three stations opened in June 2000, pushing the subway to Hollywood/Highland, Universal City and North Hollywood in the San Fernando Valley. In 2006, the Wilshire “spur” portion of the Red Line from Union Station to Wilshire/Western was renamed the Purple Line.

Over the last quarter century, 10 joint developments with a value of more than \$1.3 billion have been built along the Red and Purple Lines, including mixed-use buildings with residences and retail, schools and hotels. These include developments at stations, including Hollywood/Highland, Hollywood/Vine, Hollywood/Western, Wilshire/Vermont and Westlake/MacArthur Park. In total, 379 of the residential units developed are affordable. Joint development projects at the North Hollywood Red Line Station and the Vermont/Santa Monica Station are currently in progress.

Expanding the subway is also underway with the Purple Line to be extended to the VA Hospital in Westwood in three phases. The first segment from Wilshire/Western to Wilshire/La Cienega is under construction and a groundbreaking date for the next segment to downtown Beverly Hills and Century will be soon announced. Metro is forecasting the entire project to the VA Hospital will be complete by 2026, two years prior to the 2028 Summer Olympics and Paralympics that are to be held in the L.A. region.

“As we celebrate the Red Line’s 25th birthday we also look toward expanding not only our subway system but transportation in general across the entire region for many decades to come,” said Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington.

Growth of the Metro Rail system continues with four additional lines now under construction. In addition to the subway, these include the Regional Connector Transit Project, the Crenshaw/LAX Line, and the Gold Line Extension from Azusa to Claremont.

As part of today’s celebration, Mayor Garcetti and other elected officials and dignitaries rode the Red Line from the Civic Center Station to Union Station and handed out complimentary 25th Birthday Metro Red Line TAP Cards and lapel pins.

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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