

MTA Expands Bike Access on Metro Rail, Effective Oct. 29

By RICK JAGER

(Sept. 26, 2002) The MTA Board of Directors has approved a plan to expand bicycle access on Metro Rail trains to aid patrons who are bike commuters. The policy takes effect, Oct. 29.

"Linking bicycle transportation to transit is beneficial to the region and adds flexibility to longer trips taken," said Board Chairman Hal Bernson. "MTA remains committed to providing transportation choices that replace automobile trips and create a more bike-friendly system."

Under the revised MTA Bike on Rail Policy adopted by the Board, patrons using bicycles will no longer need a permit to board Metro Rail trains.

In addition, the hours of bike restrictions on Metro Rail trains will be reduced by one hour in the morning peak periods and two hours in the afternoon peak periods.

The new hours during which patrons may not take bikes on Metro Rail trains are 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Current hours are 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Bikes OK during reverse commute

Also under the new policy, MTA will allow bikes on Metro Blue and Green Line trains during the reverse peak-hour commute when trains are moving in a direction opposite the majority flow of commuter traffic. The policy also will apply to the Metro Gold Line when it opens in mid-2003.

"This is a big step in the right direction for MTA that will help make Los Angeles County an even better place to bicycle," said Ron Milam, executive director of the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition.

Bicycles will be allowed on the Metro Red Line at all times between Wilshire/Vermont and North Hollywood, or between Wilshire/Vermont and Wilshire Western. But, they will not be permitted on the subway between Wilshire/Vermont and Union Station during peak hours of operation.

"A significant step has been made by MTA in fulfilling one of the agency's Long Range Plan goals to increase bicycle ridership by improving the connections between bikes and transit," said MTA Bikeway Project Manager Lynn Goldsmith. "This is something we want to encourage more and more in our future planning."

MTA in the past has required patrons boarding Metro Rail trains to have a permit. Some 8,500 bikers hold MTA Cycle Express permits. The agency receives between 1,500 and 2,000 applications for bike permits a year.

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