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## Resources

► [Safety](#)

► [Pressroom](#) (web)

► [CEO Hotline](#)

► [Metro Projects](#)

► [Facts at a Glance](#)  
(web)

► [Archives](#)

► [Events Calendar](#)

► [Research Center/  
Library](#)

► [Metro Cafe](#) (pdf)

► [Metro Classifieds](#)

► [Retirement  
Round-up](#)

## Metro Info

► [Strategic Plan](#) (pdf)

► [Org Chart](#) (pdf)

► [Policies](#)

► [Training](#)

► [Help Desk](#)

► [Intranet Policy](#)

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Metro Orange Line Construction Manager Mark Van Gessel shows reporter Kim Sim the transitway's route through the San Fernando Valley.



## Orange Line Pulling Out All Stops for Passengers

By KIM SIM

### Metro Orange Line Special Report

- [Picking Up the Pace of Construction to Meet Completion Date](#)
- [Two-Lane Roadway is Orange Line's Centerpiece](#)
- Orange Line Pulling Out All Stops for Passengers

(May 18, 2004) Metro Orange Line is pulling out all the stops when it comes to passenger amenities.

An exclusive bus transitway in the San Fernando Valley that will run from the North Hollywood Metro Rail station to Warner Center, the Metro Orange Line is being outfitted with the passengers in mind.

Like light-rail stations, the stations for this Bus Rapid Transit system will feature covered waiting areas, ticket vending machines, bike lockers, artwork and landscaping. The Orange Line will also have electronic message boards for passenger information.



- The buses themselves are low-floor for easier boarding and will be articulated, or jointed, so that they can be longer (60 feet compared to the typical 40 feet) and carry more passengers.

As Senior Community Relations Officer Devon Brown says, "The Orange Line is going to be a lot more like a rail project than a bus project."

## Traveling faster on Orange

Passengers will purchase their ticket in advance from ticket vending machines — the same way they do for subway fares.

"You don't have to show your ticket to the driver, you don't have to pay the driver," Brown says. "It just makes it go a lot faster."



Artist's rendering of Tampa Station.

There are three entrances to the new buses, and passengers can enter at any one of them — speeding up boarding times. Unlike conventional bus routes, the Orange Line is a dedicated bus line. There is no competing traffic.

Stations will have bike lockers and all buses will be equipped with bike racks. For passengers who plan to drive to the stations, there will be five parking areas, at the Van Nuys, Sepulveda, Balboa, Reseda and Winnetka stations.

### **New technology adds convenience**

Passengers will be able to monitor the arrival time of the next bus by watching one of three double-sided electronic message boards mounted on each platform.

The message boards "will provide information (about) when the next bus will arrive at the station, if there's any delay, any important messages," says Systems Manager Leon Bukhin.

On an aesthetic level, the floor of each station will have a pattern of linking ellipses, made of terrazzo paving.

A 4-foot by 5-foot artwork displayed on porcelain enamel steel will greet passengers at the entrance to each of the 13 stations. Artworks will "bring a sense of place" to the stations, says Erik Qvale, public arts officer for Metro Art.

The Metro Orange Line landscaping will add 800,000 plants, 5,000 trees and art presentation gardens.



In addition, the project will be an extensive landscaping endeavor, adding 800,000 plants, 5,000 trees and art presentation gardens.

### **For the community**

The Orange Line will also benefit the community as a whole.

A bikeway and pedestrian path will run alongside almost the entire 14-mile stretch of the Orange Line. Metro has also granted easements to the city to create left-turn pockets at certain intersections, such as Chandler and Laurel Canyon boulevards, to reduce traffic buildup.

Resident Phillip Vo welcomes the Orange Line, which will sit just yards from his house in a cul-de-sac off Bessemer Street.

Vo says the old rail right-of-way has been a "desert area." The new transitway and the daily activities it will bring will make the area cleaner and safer from crime.

But on a wider level, he says, "It's good because they can solve the traffic problem. It's convenient for people."



A bikeway and pedestrian path will run alongside almost the entire 14-mile stretch of the Orange Line.