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'InfoWalls' Provide Customer Information at Three Stations

By SHANTAY IOSIA

Customers at three Metro Rail stations are finding much more information on fares, bus connections, safety and security and other facts about the Metro system as a result of a new "information wall" program.

The stations – Union Station, Chinatown, and Norwalk – are the first of six to receive the "Infowalls," in late June as part of a prototype program to better assist customers in their travels.

The Infowall is 20 feet of maps, notices, destinations, safety and timetable information.

"What we are aiming for is giving the customers essential information at one central point in each station," Neil Sadler, graphic design supervisor, says.

The first case displays temporary notices and times for last trips. The second offers instructions and other helpful tips while riding the Metro System; at Norwalk and Union Station both of these displays are printed in English and Spanish. At Chinatown, the information is in English and Chinese.

Illustrates Metro Rail system

The remaining three showcase maps with varying detail. The first illustrates the Metro Rail system, with the stops and routes of the Metro Red, Blue, Green and Gold Lines. The second, a neighborhood connections map unique to each station, offers routes to various destinations near the particular station.

The third details a portion of the agency's overall bus and rail system map, allowing passengers to determine options to navigate through LA County.

Travelers Fred and Donna Martindale recently found this map most convenient to help find their way to the Financial District.

"We're from Newport Beach and we don't get down here very often," says Martindale, who relies on railways when traveling to LA. "I'm a map person and this helps ensure we know where we're going."



Travelers Fred and Donna Martindale use the infowall at Union Station.

Other than providing last train trip information, the walls do not show specific times due to the volume of information that would be necessary.

More information available

However, Sadler says the Infowalls offer much more information than was available before. The current information displays vary from rail maps to Metro promotional ads. The new Infowalls contain only traveling information and cost about \$35,000 per station.

The next three walls, expected to go up by Labor Day, will be at the Imperial/Wilmington Blue/Green Line station and 7th and Metro's Red/Blue Line station at the Figueroa entrance. The third site is being determined but will be consistent with agency goals to make the customer's travels smoother and more efficient.

The biggest challenge will be installing the Infowalls on the Metro Blue Line. Most of the stops run between streets and the platforms are narrow with little space to accommodate a 20-foot-long Infowall, Mike Barnes, communications manager, says.

"Every entrance is different and has particular concerns that need consideration before installation," he says. "We have to consider the space, flow of traffic and future goals of the agency."

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