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The new Pico/Rimpau bus terminal – a Metro Connections facility prototype – includes a number of amenities for patrons and bus operators. It will be integrated into a retail development scheduled to open in mid-2007.



Photo by Donna Lafont

Metro Opens New Bus Terminal, Wednesday, at Pico/Rimpau

- New terminal will offer passenger, employee amenities
- Terminal is prototype of Metro Connections facility

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Jan. 10, 2006) For perhaps 70 years, buses serving downtown LA, mid-city and Santa Monica dropped off and picked up passengers at an on-street transfer point at the intersection of Pico and Rimpau.

The hub, which sat just east of where Venice and San Vicente boulevards meet, was hardly more than a bus parking lot that offered minimal passenger or employee amenities.

On Wednesday, with the opening of a sleek, new bus terminal just across the street from the old site, that will change.

The new facility features a row of six stainless steel bus shelters with benches, lighting, phones, trash receptacles, security and restrooms for male and female bus operators. Stately palm trees accent the terminal's 11 bus bays. Metro will share the facility with Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus.

"This gives us more room for layovers and road supervisor vehicles, more opportunity for pedestrian movement than before," says Westside/Central General Manager David Armijo.

Built as a prototype of a Metro Connections passenger facility, the terminal has places for ticket vending machines and spaces for system signage and map display cases.

New retail center

Behind the bus terminal, developer CIM Group of Hollywood is constructing Mid-Town Plaza, a mixed-use retail center with a Target store, a Home Depot and several other retail outlets. The complex is expected to open in mid-2007.

On Tuesday, Metro closed a \$700,000 sale of its Pico/Rimpau property to the developer, who will now integrate the site into the retail development, according to Velma Marshall, director of Real Estate. CIM built the new bus terminal at no cost to Metro.

The facility is the western terminus of Metro Lines 30/31 and 330, which serve some 2,000 passengers a day, and the eastern terminus of Big Blue Bus Lines 12, 13, 5, 7, and Rapid 7, which also serves about 2,000 passengers daily.

Once Mid-Town Plaza is open, Armijo expects ridership to and from the new terminal to increase on both Metro and Big Blue Bus.

"When people feel comfortable and can see that the service is more accessible, that will bode well for ridership," he says. "We've made an investment in the community and in the service network."

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