

[Home](#)[CEO Hotline](#)[Viewpoint](#)[Classified Ads](#)[Archives](#)[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

[Safety](#)[Pressroom](#) (web)[Ask the CEO](#)[CEO Forum](#)[Employee Recognition](#)[Employee Activities](#)[Metro Projects](#)[Facts at a Glance](#)
(web)[Archives](#)[Events Calendar](#)[Research Center/
Library](#)[Metro Classifieds](#)[Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

[30/10 Initiative](#)[Policies](#)[Training](#)[Help Desk](#)[Intranet Policy](#)

Need e-Help?

Call the Help Desk
at 2-4357

[Contact myMetro.net](#)

Tapping into technology: Blue TAP cards get the green light at Metro Customer Service Centers.



TAP Cards Go Public at Metro Customer Service Centers

- MILESTONE: Blue TAP cards are replacing paper monthly, weekly and Zones 1, 2 Metro passes.
- [Cake Art](#) - Blue TAP card is inspiration for Bus Operator Erica Boyd's custom-designed confectionary masterpiece.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 8, 2007) With a smile and a handy "how-to" brochure, customer service agents handed out the Transit Access Pass (TAP) cards to customers lining up at Metro Customer Service Centers to buy February passes.

The transition of paper monthly, weekly, and Zones 1 and 2 passes to the plastic blue TAP card on sale to the general public marks another milestone in the progression of the Universal Fare System (UFS), said Jane Matsumoto, deputy executive officer, who directs the UFS transition.

The TAP card enables a customer to travel the Metro system, switching seamlessly between rail and bus and ultimately other transit systems. After purchasing the Metro pass, the only thing a patron must do to "Go Metro" is tap the TAP card on the stand-alone validators (SAVs), ticket vending machines (TVMs) or bus fareboxes carrying



Customer Service Agent Jackie Fields hands customers a blue TAP card when they ask for a monthly or weekly pass.

the blue circular Transit Access Pass smart card reader.

Valid on Metro Rail and Metro buses, TAP is a regional program to be implemented for all participating operators, which now includes Antelope Valley, Culver City, Foothill Transit, Gardena, LADOT, Long Beach, Montebello, Norwalk, Santa Clarita, Torrance Transit, and Metrolink commuter rail.

Reaching another major milestone, Culver City Bus will introduce TAP cards on Feb. 11, making regional “seamless” travel possible. For example, a customer who boards the Culver City Line 6 to the Metro Green Line and beyond will be able to TAP all the way to his or her destination.

When employee badges were enabled with TAP capabilities in late 2005, employees became the first to test the system. Next on board came UCLA, a successful pilot program where some 600 motivated faculty members, students and employees were issued I-TAP passes. Currently, I-TAP pass holders at UCLA number around 1,600.



Joe Bruin shows off his I-TAP pass Oct. 6, 2005, as Metro and UCLA Transportation Services announce a partnership to offer discounted transit passes to UCLA students, staff and faculty.

Following UCLA’s lead, the sale of Metro’s employer annual passes now surpasses \$1 million in revenue sales, said David Sutton, Metro Commute Services director.

“Over 5,600 employees at 225 worksites in Los Angeles County are enjoying the commute more now by going Metro,” he said. Participating businesses include: the American Lung Association, Boeing, Center Theatre Group, El Cholo Restaurants, Erewhon Natural Foods, McDonalds, Mondrian Hotel, Omni Hotel, Raytheon and Westlake Financial Services. The program began in August of 2005 and is growing rapidly now with about 15-20 new accounts added monthly, said Sutton.

In the pilot program launched last October, Metro monthly pass users opted to try TAP cards when buying regular paper passes, adding some 1,000 TAP cardholders to the system.

The gradual transition from paper passes to TAP cards has provided valuable lessons to ease the growing pains of UFS.

Lessons learned, said Matsumoto, include advancing detailed information for many Metro departments, including the Customer Center personnel, BOC, ROC, and bus operators. Lessons on card replacement for lost, stolen, broken cards and how to anticipate and address questions from customers

are many of the details associated with introducing a new, automated fare media.



Customers line up for new TAP card passes at Wilshire Customer Center. February passes went on sale Jan. 25.

Customer comments, for the most part, have been very complimentary," said Matsumoto. "They really like the convenience and novelty of the technology."

With all five Foothill Transit stores, LADOT Transit store and four Metro Customer Service Centers now selling TAP card Metro passes, the TAP staff is doubling efforts to reinforce TAP information for bus operators at Metro divisions as well as municipalities.

Ultimately, the TAP system will relieve bus operators from the need to visually inspect each pass "flashed" by patrons to determine fare – a task that the on-board equipment can handily track, said Matsumoto.

Employees remain as role models in the progression to seamless travel.

"It's not a test run anymore for employee badges," said Matsumoto. Metro requires employees to tap ID badges to establish fare validity on both bus and rail systems. Soon, LASD Fare Inspectors will be enabled with hand-held validators that can read the card's data to account for valid passage.

The stepped-up program will be evaluated in the next few months before some 600 vendors can be equipped with the new technology to sell the TAP cards to an anticipated 350,000 pass holders.

Until then, the Universal Fare System is progressing towards full regional implementation and a future when seamless travel is as simple as tapping a card.



CAKE ART - The giant blue TAP card with



raspberry filling looked good enough to eat and it was! South Bay Division Bus Operator Erica Boyd, at left, a cake maker extraordinaire, was tapped by TAP Operations Manager Vanessa Smith to make a confectionary reward for the hard-working TAP team. The team had traversed the Metro bus divisions to present information on the TAP program to bus operators who were bracing for a new surge of first-time TAP users. "TAP will definitely make my job easier," said Boyd, echoing the voices of many operators who joined forces in multipurpose rooms across the system to learn about TAP operations. The TAP representatives who toured the divisions in the information campaign are Everett Wilson, David Coffey, Michael Lopez, Augusto Lopez, Mark Simpson of the Metro Revenue department, and Vanessa Smith and Mauro Arteaga of TAP Operations.

Photos by Augusto Lopez



Those who had their cake and got to eat it, too, are pictured here: from left, Augusto Lopez, Erica Boyd, Michael Lopez, Vanessa Smith, Regina Chan, Kelly Hines and Cynthia Chin-Pak. Foreground: Alicia Carnero and Jane Matsumoto.