

Expo Line extension opens Friday — here's what you should know

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FILE: An Expo Line test train runs through downtown Santa Monica. The train is expected to open to the public in spring 2016.

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority



Service on the Expo Line light rail extension starts at noon Friday, and whether you're a seasoned rider or a Metro newbie, we've got a rundown of the key things you'll want to know.

[Video: Buying a TAP card](#) | [Expo route](#) | [Parking/ biking](#) | [Things to do](#) | [Playlist](#)

Ticketing/how to get a TAP card

First thing first: If you don't already have a TAP card, it's time to get one. You can pick one up for \$1 at any Metro Rail station, or you can buy one online at taptogo.net. You can also order one by calling 866.TAPTOGO (866–827–8646) or buy visiting one of [more than 400 vendors](#) that sell them.

The regular fare is \$1.75 and includes transfers for up to two hours using your TAP card. Seniors ride for 35 cents during the off-peak hours from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 5 a.m.

Once you have a card, you can fill up on the go at a station, or plan ahead and refill at the TapToGo website.

Your TAP card can be used on trains or buses, and for a small extra fee you can use it to make transfers between Metro and Santa Monica's bus system. But it's not always straight forward, which [Take Two's Leo Duran discovered the hard way](#) in a friendly race pitting public transit against cars and bikes. Metro offers [more details here](#) on how to transfer between Metro, Culver CityBus and Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus systems.

Oops, we couldn't find that track.

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How to use your TAP card

KPCC transportation reporter Meghan McCarty walks through the process of buying a Metro TAP card for single or multiple uses

The route

There are seven new stations spread out from Culver City to downtown Santa Monica:

- Palms
- Westwood/Rancho Park
- Expo/Sepulveda
- Expo/Bundy
- 26th St/Bergamot
- 17th/Santa Monica College
- Downtown Santa Monica



Los Angeles Metro

A Metro map shows the course of the Expo Line Phase 2, expected to open in 2016.

How long will my ride take?

You should be able to ride from downtown L.A. to downtown Santa Monica in about 48 minutes. The trains run every 12 minutes during the day.

Parking/getting there and away

Parking is currently fairly limited along the Expo Line. Only three of the seven new stations will offer it. They are:

- Expo/Sepulveda: 260 spaces
- Expo/Bundy: 217 spaces
- 17th St/SMC: 67 spaces

Daily parking costs \$2. You may also still be able to buy a monthly permit for \$39. Those spaces are otherwise reserved in the mornings.

Bikes

Metro has been promoting alternative forms of transportation for getting to and from the stations, and that includes cycling, if you have a bike. While racks and lockers are still fairly limited, you may have an easier time locking up your bike than finding a parking space for your car.

Here's what each station has to offer:

- Palms Station: 6 bike racks, 8 bike lockers
- Westwood/Rancho Park Station: 6 bike racks, 8 lockers
- Expo/Sepulveda Station: 10 bike racks, 16 lockers
- Expo/Bundy Station: 10 bike racks, 16 lockers
- 26th St/Bergamot Station: 6 bike racks, 8 lockers
- 17th St/SMC Station: 10 bike racks, 32 lockers
- Downtown Santa Monica Station: 10 bike racks

Note that each bike rack can take two bikes and a locker can hold one. If you're going to leave your bike, be sure you have a good lock. Metro recommends a U-lock and not cables, which are easier to break.

Near the downtown station, there's also the Santa Monica Bike Center, at 1555 2nd Street, where there will be 360 secure bicycle parking spaces, along with showers, lockers, self-service repairs, vending machines and restrooms (for members).

Can I take my bike on the train?

If you want to take your bike with you, just make sure you don't crowd the aisles. Instead, look for the designated open spaces. Metro suggests that if there's no room in the open area, you should wait for the next train.

Take the new bike path

Metro is also unveiling a new exclusive bike path that runs along the rail line between Culver City and Palms stations and between Overland and 17th Street/SMC Station in Santa Monica.

Metro says riders will be able to easily connect between this new path, the Ballona Creek Bike Path and Santa Monica’s bike lane network.

More info for cyclists at metro.net/bikes.

Things to eat, see and do

If you’re looking for a bite to eat or something fun to do at each stop, [Take Two’s Leo Duran](#) has you covered:

Metro Expo Line ☆

This map was made with Google My Maps. [Create your own.](#)



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Opening weekend extravaganza

For the first weekend, Metro’s treating everyone to free rides all day Friday and Saturday, and there will be community events at six stations on Saturday.


The festivities, which include children’s activities, food trucks, information booths and entertainment, will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the following stations:

- Downtown Santa Monica


- 26th St/Bergamot
- Expo/Bundy
- Palms
- Culver City Station


Expo tunes



As a parting gift, we've put together a playlist of songs that might go well on your ride to the beach, or just to get you psyched up for the possibility. Take a listen below:



Expo Line
Mike Roe





1	Santa Monica Everclear	3:11
2	Morning Train (Nine to Five) Sheena Easton	3:20
3	Metro - Re-Recorded Berlin	4:19
4	Cake By The Ocean DNCE	3:39
5	V. 3005 - Beach Picnic Version Childish Gambino	3:45
6	Ride Twenty One Pilots	3:34



Mike Roe

I cover arts and entertainment, from diversity issues to the latest theme park attractions. That means finding what's worth your precious free time and introducing you to your fellow creative Angelenos. I also host LAist's TV Pilot Club, where we discuss both what's great and what's problematic about our favorite shows.

See stories by Mike Roe



I'm a journalist with a product mindset, combining data, automation, and storytelling to engage and inform the community. I help to oversee our daily and breaking news coverage while shepherding some of our larger initiatives, including the development of interactive tools that have allowed readers to explore the health of our bridges, track wildfires, and navigate elections.

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