



NEWS

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(*** Special to Transit California ***)

It's a newcomer as the nation's transit systems go, but the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Metro Blue Line light rail system could already be called a seasoned veteran.

The sleek Blue Line trains have quietly and efficiently become one of Southern California's most impressive success stories. The Blue Line arrived on the scene four years ago this month, bringing back public rail transit to Los Angeles County after a nearly 30-year hiatus. Some 42 million passengers and two sizable earthquakes later, the Blue Line is a young monument to the future of public transportation in Southern California.

The reason for the success is clear: the Blue Line provides a convenient north-south route between downtown Los Angeles and downtown Long Beach. Trains hum along at 55 mph, stopping at 22 stations en route, giving about 38,000 passengers each weekday a chance to relax and avoid freeway driving.

Beginning Jan. 30, 1993, northbound Blue Line passengers were presented with another rail alternative when they reach downtown Los Angeles: the Red Line subway system. The first segment serves five stations beneath the central business district; when the next two segments are completed in 2000, riders will be able to travel from Long Beach to the San Fernando Valley on rails.

The east-west Green Line, to run along the median of the recently opened I-105 Century Freeway, is scheduled to open in May, 1995, providing yet another connection in the blossoming Southern California transit network. The Green Line will travel between LAX at its westernmost point to the city of Norwalk to the east.

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