



# NEWS

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## **MTA TRANSIT POLICE BRING CHRISTMAS TO SOUTH CENTRAL WITH 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL CELEBRATION ON IMPERIAL**

Santa Claus comes to town on the Metro Blue Line Tuesday, December 24 at 10 a.m. at the Wilmington/Imperial Metro Rail Station, to kick off the MTA Transit Police's third annual Celebration on Imperial. An estimated 5,000 people will receive \$60,000 of food and toys in South Central L.A. between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Last year's event provided food and gifts to 3000 persons, and over 5000 are expected this year, according to MTA Transit Police Chief Sharon Papa.

"Our guardian angel this year is K-Mart, which donated toys worth \$20,000," she added. "We've also enjoyed outstanding response from community businesses, including Costco, Sara Lee Foods, Rykoff Foods, and over 20 grocery, toy and drug stores. Their generosity allows us to bring Christmas cheer to many families."

"Because of the depressed economy and unemployment, some folks would be without food, except for programs like this," said Reverend Leroy Sheppard, a referral specialist at the Estelle Van Meter Community Center in South Central Los Angeles. "This is a good chance to build community relationships and provide a needed service."

Accompanying Santa Claus will be Mrs. Claus, clowns, and MTA's Travis the Owl and bus mascots. Once Santa arrives, food baskets and toys will be distributed to families, and children will get a free photo with Santa.

The Celebration on Imperial takes place at the Wilmington/Imperial Metro Rail station, located at 2000 E. Imperial Highway, Los Angeles.

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