

August 13 , 2008

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Metro Rail, Metro Orange Line Set Ridership Records in July

All Metro Rail lines and the Metro Orange Line set ridership records in July and the Metro Bus system attracted more riders as commuters and others scrambled to avoid \$4-a-gallon gas.

"As gas prices passed the \$4-a-gallon range, more and more people began looking for options and many of them turned to Metro for their transportation needs," said Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chair Antonio Villaraigosa. "The challenge for us now is to meet those growing needs."

The Metro Red and Purple subway lines and the Metro Gold, Blue, Green and Orange Lines all set weekday ridership records in July 2008 over July 2007 as riders abandoned their cars and opted for cheap and fast service. And Metro Bus ridership also was up compared to a year earlier.

Last month 319,582 passengers boarded Metro Rail trains on an average weekday, up 20 percent over a year earlier. Nearly half those riders (159,439) rode the subway, which connects downtown Los Angeles to Universal City and North Hollywood via Hollywood on the Red Line with a Purple Line spur to Wilshire and Western. Ridership on the Metro Red and Purple subway lines was up 20 percent over July 2007 when trains carried 132,049 boarding passengers.

The Metro Gold Line from downtown Los Angeles to Pasadena continued to set new ridership records, rising from 19,400 average weekday riders in July 2007 to 27,019 in July 2008, a growth of 39 percent.

The Metro Green Line connecting Norwalk and El Segundo also set a record with 46,527 boardings, up 19 percent over July 2007, and the Metro Blue Line, which travels from downtown Los Angeles to Long Beach, rose 15 percent over last year with 86,596 average weekday boardings.

The popular Metro Orange Line, the 14-mile busway from North Hollywood to Woodland Hills in the San Fernando Valley, boosted weekday ridership by nearly 8 percent over last year to 26,907 boardings.

And Metro bus ridership rose, from 1,152,653 in July 2007 to 1,227,752 -- a growth of 6.5 percent.

According to a new analysis by the American Public Transportation Association, it is possible to save more than \$8,000 per year, based on a gas price of \$3.909, by taking public transportation instead of driving. In Southern California that number is higher, due to higher gas prices.

Go to Metro.net to access the 24/7 Metro Trip Planner and to learn more about Metro rideshare programs or call 1-800-COMMUTE for information.

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