



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

News

May 31, 2016

Rick Jager/Joni Goheen

Metro Media Relations

213.922.2707/213.922.6931

metro.net/press/pressroom

mediarelations@metro.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro's Initial Quality of Life Report Shows 480,000 L.A. County Residents Gained Access to New Rail or Bus Rapid Transit Services Since Passage of Measure R

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) today released a new report that shows dramatic improvements in the quality of life for the region between 2008 — when Los Angeles County voters approved Measure R — and 2015.

More than 480,000 L.A. County residents live within a half mile of several projects that have opened since 2009: the Expo Line's first phase to Culver City, Gold Line extensions to East Los Angeles and Azusa and the Orange Line extension to Chatsworth. More than 22 percent of the county's population now lives near Metro Rail, a Metro bus rapid transit line or Metrolink commuter rail.

"In the eight years since Measure R was passed, Metro and the voters of Los Angeles County have made the impossible, possible," said Metro Board Chair and L.A. County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. "Measure R has been the catalyst for a transportation revolution that is improving lives, creating jobs and enhancing the quality of life for Angelenos across the region. We should all be proud to be a part of that."

The report shows that new rail and BRT services provided access to more than 300,000 jobs in the region. Buses and trains arrive on-time more frequently than before and transit travel times are faster than or similar to driving times along many rail and BRT routes.

"Today, residents across the county are experiencing a better quality of life by using rail and BRT services in significantly higher numbers and enjoying improved transit access to more jobs," said Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington. "Thanks to Measure R, Metro can leverage local dollars to complete and win larger amounts of state and federal grants."

Highlights from the initial Quality of Life study show that since 2008, Metro has made great strides to improve customer service by providing a more reliable travel experience for its customers with buses arriving at their stops on time 13 percent more often with fewer equipment breakdowns.

More...

Metro customers today now have better ways to communicate and connect over a variety of technology and social media platforms. Riders can now load transit fare onto their TAP cards via the internet and use their TAP cards to ride almost every transit service in Los Angeles County. They can access real time transit information using multiple apps for smart phones and they can interact with Metro on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and the agency's blog. The report shows customer satisfaction is up five percent from 83 percent in 2008 to 88 percent in 2015.

Measure R has resulted in \$3.9 billion in funding collected between 2008 and 2014. The Measure R funds help explain why the amount of state and federal grants received by Metro has increased from \$112.9 million in 2008 to \$522.9 million in 2014.

The study also shows that Metro services support many of the county's most disadvantaged communities, providing low-cost transportation choices to help residents get to work, school, parks and other important destinations. A total of 31 new transit stations have opened with more than 60 percent of the population around those new stations being disadvantaged.

Each year in L.A. County, transit operators provide about 600 million rides, with the lion's share on Metro buses and trains. While Metro bus ridership has slipped recently (which is consistent with national transit ridership trends), Metro rail ridership has increased 27 percent since 2008 — far above national averages. The report also notes that Silver Line ridership is up 295 percent with Gold Line ridership up 113 percent.

Metro also provides alternative transportation choices beyond transit including running the nation's largest vanpool program and organizing carpools through an employer-based ride-matching program. The report shows that since 2008 annual vanpool trips have increased from 2.2 million to more than four million in 2014. Metro also funds door-to-door paratransit services for people with disabilities through Access Services with usage up 77 percent over the last four years. Wheelchair boardings on Metro's regular bus service has increased from 489,850 boardings to more than one million in 2014.

Metro continues to work to ease traffic through high-quality transit and freeway improvements, including the building of 34 new miles of carpool lanes and attracting 14 percent more carpoolers to the Metro ExpressLanes since 2013.

Metro has provided funding to vital bicycle and pedestrian facilities, connecting L.A. County to jobs, housing and transit. The county has 1,600 miles of bike lanes and bike paths, of which 930 miles have been built since 2008. The report also shows that 68 percent of Metro rail riders walk to trains with four percent riding bikes to rail stations. On the bus side, 83 percent of riders walk to bus stops with five percent using their bike. In Los Angeles County, 99 percent of the residents live near a bus stop — with 80 percent of residents living near a Metro bus stop.

More...

Air quality is improving in Los Angeles County and Metro is part of the reason as the operator of the nation's largest clean fuel bus fleet. Metro emits nearly 300,000 fewer pounds of greenhouse gases per day since completely switching from diesel to compressed natural gas buses. Metro continues to reduce emissions across all areas of operations. The agency is building LEED-certified facilities, installing solar panels on existing buildings, implementing programs to cut water use and planting drought-resistant plants on Metro properties.

Metro continues to work with developers to deliver more housing — including affordable housing units — near transit to help increase the housing supply in the county. On average, housing costs aren't increasing any more quickly near transit stations than in surrounding communities and 30 percent of the affordable housing units built in the county are near transit stations.

Looking ahead, the report notes that thanks to the passage of Measure R, Metro has the tools to transform transportation in Los Angeles County with projects expected to create more than 425,000 construction jobs and labor income in excess of \$27 billion. That is expected to benefit the local economy with \$51 billion in direct spending on construction projects over a 30-year period, resulting in more than \$80 billion in economic output.

Data for this initial study was compiled by Metro and was analyzed by an outside consultant team. A more expansive Quality of Life Report will follow in late 2016, with expanded metrics that will set the framework for future updates and help monitor the agency's progress. Please visit metro.net to view Metro's initial Quality of Life Report.

About Metro

Metro is a multimodal transportation agency that is really three companies in one: a major operator that transports about 1.4 million boarding passengers on an average weekday on a fleet of 2,000 clean air buses and six rail lines, a major construction agency that oversees many bus, rail, highway and other mobility related building projects, and it is the lead transportation planning and programming agency for Los Angeles County. Overseeing one of the largest public works programs in America, Metro is, literally, changing the urban landscape of the Los Angeles region. Dozens of transit, highway and other mobility projects largely funded by Measure R are under construction or in the planning stages. These include three new rail lines, the I-5 widening and other major projects.

Stay informed by following Metro on The Source and El Pasajero at metro.net, facebook.com/losangelesmetro, twitter.com/metrolosangeles and twitter.com/metroLAalerts and instagram.com/metrolosangeles.

###