



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

News

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Improving the Bus Rider Experience

L.A. Metro to Open New Union Station Patsaouras Bus Plaza

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) will officially open its new Union Station Patsaouras Bus Plaza on Sunday, November 1. The new busway will make it easier and safer for J Line (Metro Silver Line) and other Metro and Foothill Transit bus riders to access Los Angeles Union Station in making their regionwide transit connections.

The \$51-million transit project contains \$12.1 million in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding and is a vast improvement compared to the existing bus stop at the terminus of the El Monte Busway on Alameda Street, and the new bus station features full Metro station amenities, including a shade canopy, TAP vending machines, seating, lighting, closed-circuit TV surveillance, electronic message signs, ADA-compliant elevators, stairs and a pedestrian bridge between the platform and Patsaouras Plaza.

Importantly, the new busway station is approximately 300 feet closer to Union Station's L Line (Gold) and 600 feet closer to its B (Red) and D (Purple) Line subway than the existing bus stop on Alameda Street. Riders will benefit from a safer, more secure and pleasant pedestrian environment, improved wayfinding signage and a shorter walk that no longer includes crossing El Monte Busway traffic lanes to reach Union Station. Riders have had to backtrack from the edge of the Union Station property to reach their Metro, Metrolink, Amtrak and other municipally operated bus and rail services.

“Our bus network is the heart of our system, and Angelenos deserve to move around their city in state-of-the-art facilities,” said Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chair Eric Garcetti. “The new Patsaouras Bus Plaza station builds on our historic investments in public transit by making it easier and more enjoyable for riders to switch between lines at Union Station -- transforming our most popular transit hub into a model of convenience and sustainability.”

A notable project improvement is the new pedestrian bridge that directly connects the busway station to Patsaouras Plaza. California artist Ned Kahn’s design for the 750- foot-long Wind Bridge utilizes hinged perforated stainless-steel panels that move with the wind and reveal subtle, rippling patterns of light and shade. Lighting at night reveals patterns as silhouettes against illuminated surfaces inside the bridge.

The Union Station Patsaouras Bus Plaza is also consistent with Metro’s NextGen Bus Plan, which seeks to reimagine county bus services to better meet the needs of current and future riders. Metro has identified projects totaling \$123 million in its current budget for an array of important bus improvements. Specific to Union Station, this plan includes the new, recently opened bus pavilion at the corner of Caesar Chavez and Vignes Street to better accommodate the large number of riders who board and exit buses at this intersection.

Project improvements also align with Metro’s Vision 2028 Strategic Plan which seeks to deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the county’s transportation system. The new bus stop also meets agency goals to improve rider safety, security and efficiency by providing a more direct path to Union Station than the existing stop.

“We are making a number of major investments in our bus system to greatly improve our customers’ transit experience,” said Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington. “These improvements will help bring our bus system into the 21st century and will live well beyond COVID-19. Our new Patsaouras Busway Station is just the beginning as we continue to build a world-class transportation system for both bus and rail riders and other travelers in our county.”

Project construction started in early 2017. Station work was halted temporarily in 2018 to mitigate archaeological and Native American artifacts discovered at the site.

The Metro J Line is operated with a fleet of dedicated NABI Metro "CompoBus" vehicles. Each 45-foot long bus is powered by compressed natural gas. In yet another improvement for this express bus line, Metro plans to transition the J Line to zero-emission electric buses by the end of 2021.

The J Line provides express service for faster travel between San Pedro, Downtown LA and El Monte. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in February 2020, there were more than 19,000 average weekday boardings on the bus line. Ridership systemwide is expected to recover over time. The J Line express fare is \$2.50.

Other bus lines operating on the El Monte Busway include Metro Bus Lines 487 and 489 and the Foothill Transit Silver Streak and Foothill Transit 495, 493, 497, 499, 498 and 699.

For more information on this project or other planned Metro Bus improvements, visit www.metro.net.

About Metro

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is currently providing lifeline service for essential trips and frontline workers. Metro continues building the most ambitious transportation infrastructure program in the United States and is working to greatly improve mobility through its [Vision 2028 Plan](#).

Metro has proudly pledged to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Health and Safety Commitment Program to help ensure the safe return of transit riders as the U.S. recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.

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