

LA Metro's 2024 Ridership Soars to More Than 311 Million Marking Significant Growth

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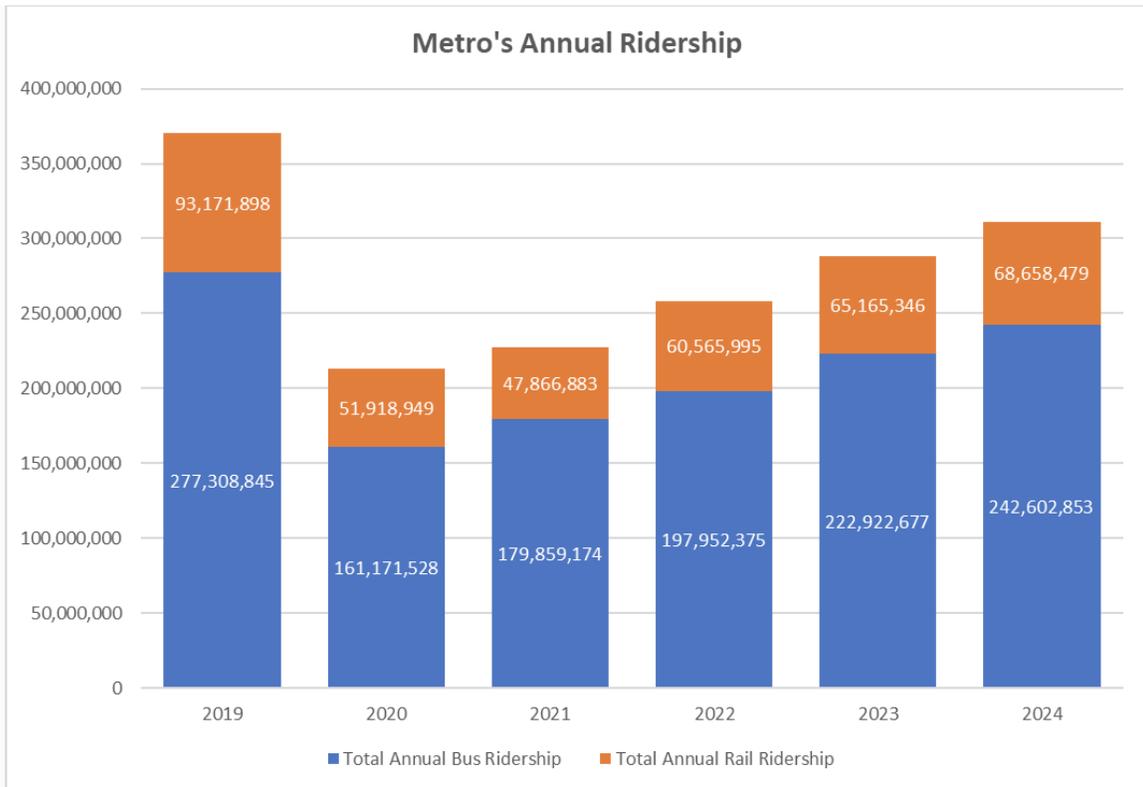
Tracy Smith February 21, 2025

Increased Safety, Improved Service, Increased Leisure Riders Driving Growth

L.A. County residents are increasingly choosing to Go Metro as they travel to work, school, services and weekend activities. The Los Angeles County Transportation Authority (Metro) announced today that it saw more than 311 million boardings (311,261,332) in 2024, an 8% increase over 2023 annual ridership numbers and the first time the agency has reached this level of ridership since before Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2024, Metro surpassed one million average weekday boardings in September and October. Weekend ridership has surpassed pre-pandemic ridership levels for the past 25 months. Overall weekday ridership on Metro grew 8.7% year over year, while weekend ridership grew 5.8%.

"As more and more people put their trust in Metro to get where they're going, making our system safe, clean, and reliable has to remain our absolute priority," said Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Board Chair Janice Hahn. "Our buses, trains, and stations have to serve hundreds of thousands of people every day all year round, and those numbers are increasing."



"I'm proud of the Metro team for putting people first and for prioritizing what matters most to our riders: safety, cleanliness, reliability, comfort, and ease, and insisting on quality from the beginning of the customer journey to the end," said Stephanie Wiggins, CEO of Metro. "For more than two years, transit ridership has been growing in L.A. County. To me, that speaks to the fact that our efforts are making positive differences. We're excited to welcome more riders in 2025, as we expand our system to LAX Airport, the San Gabriel Foothills and the Wilshire Boulevard Corridor."

Factors Influencing Ridership

Improved Service

Throughout the year, Metro improved reliability and frequency of bus service to improve customers' travel experience on multiple routes and to better meet the needs of today's riders. Bus service changes included more trips on some lines to provide added capacity, the transfer of two lines to Pasadena Transit as the new service provider, and the reconfiguring of some of the bus lines to improve regional connectivity to Metro rail. Bus ridership in 2024 increased 8.8% over 2023.

Improvements were also seen on Metro Rail. The reconfigured A and E Lines marked their first full year of operation in June and combined saw a 33.4% ridership increase in December 2024 over December 2023.

Metro's Aviation/Century Station that opened last year is now the transfer point for those on the C Line to transfer to the K Line providing service to the west side line stations including Mariposa, El Segundo and Douglas, and Redondo Beach Station.

These stations are now serviced exclusively by the K Line. Overall rail ridership grew 5.4% in 2024 over 2023.

Increased Leisure Ridership

Reflecting the evolution of ridership patterns, Metro's weekend ridership continues to lead overall ridership growth. Leisure riders are using the service for weekend events and throughout the year activities such as the Hard Summer Music Festival, college football and Rams and Chargers games, Dodgers games and the celebratory championship parade plus holiday celebrations like Grand Park's NYELA Countdown to 2025, and Christmas Eve and Christmas Day celebrations.

For many of these special events the agency provided additional late-night service and shuttle buses. This year Metro provided extended free service on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Increased Safety

In 2024, Metro made significant progress in its efforts to provide a safer, cleaner and more comfortable rider experience by focusing on its three-pronged public safety strategy:

- Working to ensure an **engaged and visible presence of uniformed personnel on Metro buses and trains**, including law enforcement, Metro Transit Security, and Metro Ambassadors.
- **Enhancing access control** by stepping up TAP inspections and trespasser checks and ensuring, to the greatest extent possible, that our system is only used for its intended purpose: transportation.
- **Strengthening our partnerships to address societal issues** that affect Metro, like homelessness, untreated mental illness and addiction.

Metro's law enforcement partners, Metro Transit Security Officers, private security, Metro Ambassadors and care teams collaborate closely to provide a more visible presence on the system, address and prevent crime, provide enhanced customer experience and connect people to the appropriate services.

The Metro Ambassador program has been so successful and popular with Metro riders that Metro is bringing the currently contracted program in-house as full-time Metro employees.

In June 2024, the Metro Board authorized the agency to launch a new in-house law enforcement agency, the Transit Community Public Safety Department (TCPSD). The TCPSD will be staffed by more than 600 sworn police officers, homeless and crisis

intervention specialists, and others to deliver a safe transit system for our customers and employees. The TCPSD will feature transit-specific training, allowing Metro to enforce consistent policy and rule implementation across the system.

Ensuring the Metro system is being used for the purpose of transit contributes to a safer transit system, and one new enforcement strategy deployed in 2024 was the TAP-to-Exit program that confirmed everyone paid their fare. Fare gates were locked at both ends of the journey so if passengers did not pay when they entered the system, fare was deducted from their TAP card when they exited.

The program is currently implemented at the North Hollywood Station on the B Line, the Downtown Santa Monica Station on the E Line and the A Line end-of-line rail stations, Azusa Pacific University (APU)/Citrus College and Downtown Long Beach. Since TAP-to-Exit was implemented less than one year ago at North Hollywood, the program has captured nearly 120,000 unpaid passenger exits, translating to over \$130,000 in fares recuperated. More stations are expected to be added to this successful program in 2025, beginning with Union Station this month.

A few of the other safety improvements and initiatives that began last year include:

- The testing of various weapons detection systems to prevent riders from carrying weapons on Metro.
- Keeping the train doors at end-of-line stations closed until one minute before the train is set to depart to ensure the trains are properly offloaded and cleared. It ensures people are leaving the station/platform at the end of the line, helping to ensure only people on the system are those using it for the purposes of transit.
- The roll-out of an enhanced Transit Watch App that supports communication in 14 languages, in-app messaging and video and location sharing so riders can share what they observe with Metro security 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Improved lighting on buses, trains and at stations, and the installation of upgraded CCTV cameras to make our system safer.
- The retrofitting of 100% of Metro's active bus fleet with new, expanded barriers made of shatterproof, tempered glass that fully enclose drivers – the first and only transit system in the country to have done so with its active fleet. This important improvement has led to an 18.5% decrease in assaults on Metro's bus operators per one million boardings.

As a result of these efforts, Metro has made great strides in improving safety and cleanliness on the system with violent crime decreasing 15.5% per 1 million boardings in 2024 compared to the previous year.

A More Affordable Metro

Metro has several programs that support making it more affordable for all riders. Reduced-price transit passes, such as the student GoPass, which offers free transit passes to K-12 and community college students, and the LIFE program, which provides free rides and reduced fares to low-income customers, are increasingly helping these qualified riders.

In 2024, the GoPass Program saw 19,665,051 total boardings versus 17,720,181 in 2023, an 11% increase. The LIFE Program observed a 27% increase in ridership in 2024 with 20,873,250 boardings over 16,411,583 boardings in 2023.

Metro continues to offer a fare capping program under which riders who pay with a TAP card pay no more \$5 a day or \$18 over seven days. Once they've reached those limits, they ride free for the remainder of the day or seven-day period.

And Metro's Mobility Wallet Pilot Program gives in-need Angelenos the freedom to choose the mode that best suits their needs by providing a debit card with \$150 per month to spend on transportation. The card can be used to take the bus, ride the train, use bike share, take Metro-Micro and more.

Information on all Metro's reduced fare programs, including discounts for seniors, persons with disabilities and college students can be found at: metro.net/riding/fares/

About Metro

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is building the most ambitious transportation infrastructure program in the United States and is working to greatly improve mobility through its Vision 2028 Plan. Metro is the lead transportation planning and funding agency for L.A. County and carries 1 million boardings daily on a fleet of 2,000 low-emission buses and six electric rail lines.

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