



Metro

News

THE BLOC

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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Dave Sotero/Joni Goheen
Metro Media Relations
213.922.3007/213.922.2700
metro.net/press/pressroom
mediarelations@metro.net

Megan MacEachern/Shiny Object Co.
The Bloc Media Relations
323.646.0877
pr@shinyobjectco.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Portal to Downtown L.A.'s Future

Metro and The Bloc Open New Pedestrian Passageway at Busy 7th Street/Metro Center Station in Downtown Los Angeles

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), in partnership with The Bloc, has opened a much needed \$9.3-million pedestrian passageway at the 7th Street/Metro Center Station that will greatly improve pedestrian access to and from the busy downtown L.A. rail hub.

The passageway connects the station's mezzanine with The Bloc (formerly Macy's Plaza) on the southern side of 7th Street in the Financial District. The portal opening represents the first time Metro has created a direct connection from a station into a private building and is a precursor to additional opportunities for future direct connections elsewhere on the Metro system.

Acquired by The Ratkovich Company with partners National Real Estate Advisors and Blue Vista Capital in June 2013, The Bloc inhabits a full city block and is in the final stages of a \$180-million renovation with unique shops, premier retailers and restaurants serving the Sheraton Grand Los Angeles hotel, office tower and downtown neighbors.

The 25-foot-long passageway is anticipated to better meet rider demand to and from the station. The 7th Street/Metro Center Station serves the Metro Red, Purple, Blue and Expo Lines. These lines together carry nearly 50,000 average weekday boardings, making it one of the busiest transit stations on the Metro Rail system. Passengers will no longer have to cross congested 7th Street at street-level to reach The Bloc. This will reduce pedestrian exposure to vehicles while accessing the station.

Congestion at both the street level and in existing station portals will be reduced as well. The passageway will also create needed capacity for thousands of new riders when the Regional Connector Transit Project connects the Metro Blue, Gold and Expo Lines in 2021.

“This new portal will make access to this heavily used rail station safer and more efficient for our customers,” said John Fasana, Metro Board Chair and Duarte City Council Member. “We were able to partner with The Bloc to build it, which provides the public with a new amenity at a significantly reduced cost.”

Metro contributed \$4.65 million of the \$9.3-million project cost to build the passageway. The Bloc contributed \$4.6 million for the vertical access to connect the passageway to the street. It was built at a much lower cost than the typical construction cost for an additional station portal. The station, built in 1991, was designed with ‘knock out panels’ that could be removed to connect with adjacent properties.

“We are proud to have the first truly urban Metro Portal open into The Bloc’s dynamic square at the heart of DTLA,” said Wayne Ratkovich, president of The Ratkovich Company. “The power of The Bloc and its mixed uses will now be fully realized. People from all parts of the region will be able to take Metro and walk through this portal into what will be the future of Los Angeles.”

“The Bloc passageway is an excellent example for how a successful public-private partnership can bring tremendous benefits to our transit customers,” said Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington. “By bringing private sector resources to the table, we can keep our infrastructure projects moving forward. Look for more such partnerships in the future as Metro continues to transform transportation in our county.”

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About Metro

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is unique among the nation’s transportation agencies. Created in 1993, Metro is a multimodal transportation agency that transports about 1.3 million passengers daily on a fleet of 2,200 clean air buses and six rail lines. The agency also oversees bus, rail, highway and other mobility-related building projects and leads transportation planning and programming for Los Angeles County.

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About The Bloc

An urbane property at the heart of downtown Los Angeles, The Bloc brings Angelenos together in a vibrant, open-air, truly urban center. Acquired by The Ratkovich Company with partners National Real Estate Advisors and Blue Vista Capital in June 2013, The Bloc inhabits a full city block and is in the final stages of a \$180 million renovation to create an experiential activation of unique shops, premier retailers and restaurants serving the newly flagged Sheraton Grand Los Angeles hotel, office tower and downtown neighbors. Originally built in 1973 by architect Charles Luckman, the development will be the single largest mixed-use property in Los Angeles where consumers can work, sleep, shop and eat. It is anchored by a fully renovated Macy’s Flagship store, the completely reimagined Sheraton Grand Los Angeles, and a 722,000 square foot creative-leaning office tower. The Bloc is both LEED certified, WELL certified and known for

its connectivity, curating a favored DTLA destination. For more information, please visit www.theblocla.com or follow us at <https://twitter.com/TheBlocLA> and <https://www.instagram.com/theblocla/>.

About The Ratkovich Company

The Ratkovich Company is a Los Angeles development company that engages in both new development and the imaginative reuse of existing buildings. The company has completed, or has under development, nearly 18 million square feet of commercial space in Los Angeles County, including The Bloc, a 1.8 million square foot, mixed-use property at the heart of downtown Los Angeles that will become the premier urban retail, office and hospitality destination. The company has also redeveloped The Alhambra, a 45-acre mixed-use urban community in the city of Alhambra, and The Hercules Campus at Playa Vista, a landmark property comprised of 11 historic buildings, including the hangar where Howard Hughes' legendary Spruce Goose was built. The Hercules Campus is home to Google/YouTube, Konami and 72andSunny. The Ratkovich Company has won numerous awards for its restoration of Los Angeles landmarks, including the art deco Wiltern Theatre and adjacent Pellissier building; the iconic 31-story 5900 Wilshire in Miracle Mile; the Chapman Market and the city of Glendale's Alex Theatre. The James Oviatt and Fine Arts buildings were also both awarded national landmark status after successful renovations by The Ratkovich Company. For more information, visit <http://www.ratkovich.com>.

About National Real Estate Advisors

National Real Estate Advisors is a leading investment manager, specializing in build-to-core—developing and owning large-scale, urban commercial and multifamily projects for its institutional client accounts. National constructs investment portfolios of stabilized modern property assets—apartment, office, mixed-use, industrial, data center and hotel—with design features, technological enhancements, and amenities that can drive high tenant demand and create value for investors. The firm is a subsidiary of the National Electrical Benefit Fund. For more information visit, www.natadvisors.com

About Blue Vista

Blue Vista Capital Management, LLC, founded in 2002 and headquartered in Chicago, has raised in excess of \$1.1 billion of institutional equity, and currently manages four closed-end funds, two separate accounts and one joint venture relationship with approximately \$5.25 billion of assets under management. The firm's clients include institutional investors, pension plans, insurance companies, the world's largest university endowment and select family offices and high net worth investors. For more information on the firm, please visit www.bluevistallc.com.

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