



## Board Report

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**Agenda Number:** 28.

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### OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 16, 2023

**SUBJECT: DECEMBER 2023 SERVICE CHANGE**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE a status report on the December 2023 bus and rail service changes effective Sunday December 10, 2023.

#### **ISSUE**

Metro annually makes service changes each June and December to improve service for our riders. These service changes are also coordinated with bus and rail operator assignment changes required by the labor contract. December 2023 service change will focus on enhancements to routes and schedules to help customers more conveniently and reliably travel where and when they need.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Metro full bus service levels have been restored as of December 2022 and are being delivered reliably. Metro has therefore resumed the usual practice of twice-annual (June and December) service changes to improve the customer experience through revised transit routes and schedules.

The previous service change was implemented in June 2023. There were no issues encountered with implementation. Ridership continues to increase, with latest data from September 2023 showing year over year growth of 12.8 percent for bus weekday and 6.9 percent for rail weekday, with similar growth weekends. Average weekly bus on time performance has also improved from 70.7 percent (June -October 2022) to 72.8 (June to October 2023), likely in response to the many revised bus schedules for improved reliability that were implemented in June 2023 service change.

#### **DISCUSSION**

##### Rail Service:

Rail service ridership continues to recover, with September 2023 average weekday rail ridership at 69.5 percent, average Saturday rail ridership at 87.6 percent, and average Sunday rail ridership at 91 percent of pre-COVID levels, compared with 60.0 percent weekday 79.3 percent Saturday, and 85.0 percent Sunday ridership recovery in September 2022. In order to continue to support rail ridership

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recovery and reduce average wait times for customers, rail service frequencies will be improved as follows:

- A Line (Long Beach - Downtown LA - Azusa) and E Line (Santa Monica - Downtown LA - East LA) service will increase from every 10 minutes to every 8 minutes weekday morning and afternoon peak hours (6-9 am, 3-6 pm) and from every 12 minutes to every 10 minutes midday weekday and daytime weekends.
- C Line (Norwalk - Redondo Beach) will maintain 10-minute peak service weekday but will increase from 15 minutes to every 10 minutes midday weekday and daytime weekends
- K Line (Expo/Crenshaw - Westchester/Veterans) will maintain 10-minute peak service weekday but will increase from 12 minutes to every 10 minutes midday weekday. Weekend service will operate every 20 minutes to allow work to continue in preparation for the linking of the C Line and K Line and the opening of the LAX/Metro Transit Center by the end of 2024

Two additional late-night trips in each direction will be added to the end of the day for the A and E Lines to respond to customer requests for later last trips on rail.

The B and D Line subway services between North Hollywood, Wilshire/Western, and Union Station will continue to operate every 12-minutes daytime weekdays and weekends, which was implemented in September 2023.

#### Bus Service:

The December 2023 bus service changes will include a range of customer experience improvements, with enhancements to routes and schedules to help people more conveniently and reliably travel where and when they need to.

Operator and customer feedback and system data reports on ridership and on-time performance are reviewed to identify lines with ongoing low on-time performance or crowding. On time performance has averaged 72.0 percent in 2023, below the goal of 78.5 percent. Of Metro's total of 120 bus lines, 37 weekday, 29 Saturday, and 24 Sunday bus schedules have been reviewed and adjusted to better match current traffic levels and travel times in support of improved on time performance and to ensure operators have enough time to take rest breaks at the end of each trip.

Trips will be added or extended on ten bus lines (Lines 14 (Beverly BI), 28 (W. Olympic BI), 33 (Venice BI), 45 (Broadway), 48 (Main/San Pedro), 55 (Compton Av), 251 (Soto St), 460 (Downtown LA-Norwalk-Disneyland), 487 and 489 (Downtown LA-San Gabriel/Temple City) to provide enough weekday service to accommodate all riders without crowding.

The following late evening service improvements will be made:

- Improve Line 240 (Universal City Station - Northridge via Ventura BI and Reseda BI) frequency from every 30 to every 20 minutes to match B Line subway service to improve passenger connections between these two lines.
- Adding one extra late-night trip for Line 910 leaving El Monte Station 10:49 p.m. to Downtown LA and Harbor Gateway Transit Center weekdays to extend the period of 20-minute service evenings to help customers travelling after special events.

#### Improved Connectivity:

To improve regional connectivity, the Slauson Av Line 108 bus service will be extended further east into the City of Pico Rivera to make a much-requested connection with Rosemead BI Line 266 bus service, as well as creating a branch of the Slauson Av Line 108 bus service to Eastern Av for improved access to the Richard L Slawson Occupational Center of Los Angeles Unified School District at Rickenbacker Rd.

Other bus route or stop changes in response to customer requests or operational issues include:

- Line 51 (Avalon BI - CSU Dominguez Hills): add bus stop at Central Av at Victoria St Carson for improved local access.
- Line 53 (Central Av - CSU Dominguez Hills): at Willowbrook modify the route to travel via Imperial Highway and 120<sup>th</sup> St to/from Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station rather than using the often congested I-105 freeway, to ensure more reliable service for customers.
- Line 66 (E. Olympic BI/8<sup>th</sup> St): add new stop on Whittier BI for more convenient access to Commerce Center.

Line 90 (Foothill BI): reroute to terminate at the Historic Broadway A/E Line light rail station in downtown LA

- Line 152 (West Hills to North Hollywood via Roscoe BI): reroute eastbound via Roscoe BI to Lankershim BI to match the westbound route to simplify service and improve local access for customers.
- Line 167 (Chatsworth - Studio City): will not deviate into Sepulveda VA Clinic after 7 pm nightly due to low ridership evenings when the clinic is closed, to avoid delaying other riders.
- Line 180 (Hollywood- Glendale-Pasadena): reroute via Central Av rather than Brand BI in downtown Glendale to improve customer access to key destinations.
- Line 602 (Sunset BI Pacific Palisades): alter to travel via Kinross Av/Veteran Av at Westwood instead of Westwood BI/Wilshire BI due to Purple Line Extension construction.
- LAC-USC Medical Center I-10 Busway Station: rename to “LA General Hospital” station, reflecting the recent renaming of the LA County Medical Center.

#### Customer Information:

As is the practice for all service changes, printed materials on the changes will be distributed starting two weeks ahead of the service change (summary brochure, service change notices, and updated schedules for each impacted line) on buses, a dedicated service change section on Metro.net, social media and Source posts, and on signage installed at all impacted bus stops informing riders of the changes. In addition, implementation will be supported by staff assigned to stops with more significant changes as well as Metro Ambassadors throughout the system during the week leading up to the change to inform riders of route changes.

#### **EQUITY PLATFORM**

The December 2023 service change focuses on improving customer experience with revised bus

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schedules to improve service reliability (on-time performance), extra bus trips for added capacity, and rerouted bus services for improved connectivity for our riders. The Metro light rail network will also see increased peak and off peak/weekend service frequencies to reduce customer wait times.

Of the 37 weekday, 29 Saturday, and 24 Sunday bus lines with revised schedules for improved reliability, 17 weekday, 16 Saturday, and 10 Sunday lines have over 50% of their route miles operating in Equity Focus Communities (EFCs). Overall service cancellations are low and should continue to remain very low (< 1.0 percent) as additional new bus operators are hired to achieve and maintain full operator staffing levels. Four of the nine lines with extra trips added for more capacity are lines with over 50 percent of their line located in EFCs.

The continued operation of the full 7 million revenue hours of service based on the NextGen Bus Plan allocates the highest service levels to EFCs where high-quality transit is a key to enhanced mobility for residents. Metro will continue to receive feedback on the changes directly from riders at bus stops, from Metro Ambassadors, through the Metro Customer Service call center, the Metro website, social media blog (The Source), and at the five Metro Regional Service Council meetings each month.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

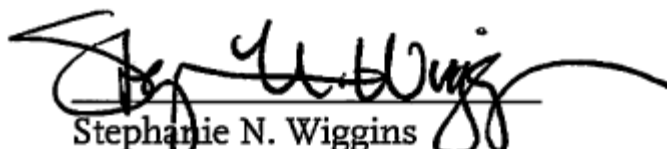
These service changes support strategic plan goal #1: Provide high quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling. The service changes also respond to the sub-goal of investing in a world class bus system that is reliable, convenient, safe, and attractive to more users for more trips.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will implement the December 2023 service change on Sunday, December 10, 2023. with the marketing of the changes occurring beginning Monday November 27, and continuing up to and beyond the implementation date.

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Stephanie N. Wiggins  
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**December 2023**

**Bus and Rail Service  
Improvements**

**Effective Sunday 12/10/23**

Operations, Safety, and Customer  
Experience

November 16, 2023



**Metro**<sup>®</sup>

# December 2023 Service Change Themes

Service Quality	Valuing Our Employees	NextGen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved Rail Service Frequencies</li><li>• Continued operation of full NextGen Bus Plan Service Level (7M Revenue Service Hours)</li><li>• Adjust services for improved reliability (on time performance)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Match schedules to increased traffic conditions</li><li>• Extra trips to spread out loads</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small number of route changes to improve local access and connections for our riders</li><li>• Improved frequencies and added trips for shorter wait times</li><li>• Other minor changes due to construction impacts</li></ul>



# Rail Service Frequency Improvements

A Line (Long Beach – Azusa) and E Line (Santa Monica – East LA) frequency and span improvements:

- Weekday peak hour trains every 8 minutes instead of 10 minutes.
- Weekday midday & Saturday/Sunday 9am-7pm trains every 10 minutes instead of 12 minutes.
- Two additional trains will be added at the end of the nightly schedule each direction, extending service by an extra 40 minutes each night, weekdays and weekends.

C Line (Norwalk – Redondo Beach) frequency improvements:

- Weekday midday, Saturday/Sunday 9am-7pm trains every 10 minutes instead of 15 minutes.
- Weekday peak hour frequency remains at every 10 minutes.

K Line (Expo/Crenshaw – Westchester/Veterans) frequency improvements:

- Weekday midday trains every 10 minutes instead of 12 minutes.
- Weekday peak hour frequency remains at every 10 minutes.
- Note: K Line trains every 20 minutes all day Saturday & Sunday due to construction/testing to connect the C & K Lines and open new LAX/Metro Transit Center Station by end of 2024.



# Bus Service Reliability

- The December 2023 service change will continue the operation of the full NextGen Bus Plan frequencies with 7.0 million revenue service hours
- Service is being delivered more reliably thanks to bus operator numbers reaching full requirements since August
- Revised schedules for 37 weekday, 29 Saturday, 24 Sunday bus lines to ensure times are realistic and improve reliability (on time performance)
- Extra or extended trips on eleven lines to accommodate more riders/avoid crowding, and help riders make connections more reliably



# Bus Route Changes

- Line 53 (Central Av) reroute on 120<sup>th</sup> St, Imperial Hwy at Willowbrook to avoid delays for riders on I-105 freeway
- Line 90 (Foothill Bl) modified in Downtown LA to help riders connect with Regional Connector light rail services
- Extend Slauson Av Line 108 east to Rosemead Bl at Pico Rivera and north to Commerce for improved local access and connections to other bus lines for riders
- Line 180 (Hollywood – Pasadena) rerouted back to Central Av through downtown Glendale to help riders access key destinations
- Line 602 (Westwood – Pacific Palisades) rerouted in Westwood to avoid delays for riders due to Purple Line Extension construction at Westwood Bl/Wilshire Bl

# Implementation

- Internal coordination through implementation team
- Staff will support customers in areas with significant changes
- Informational signs will be installed at all bus stops impacted by route changes.
- Updated bus stop blades will be installed by service change date
- Customer information released beginning 11/27, including digital alert signs, brochures on buses & at customer service centers.
- Updates to online “MyBus” information portal
- Social media, blog post, email blasts beginning 11/27
- Printed schedules will be available on buses and at usual outlets



# Thank You!