

What is Light Rail Transit?

WEST SANTA ANA BRANCH TRANSIT CORRIDOR
Light Rail Transit Fact Sheet



Metro



What is Light Rail Transit (LRT)?

LRT is designed to provide residents and businesses with safe, affordable and efficient transportation options. LRT can run throughout cities to connect pedestrians with storefronts, sidewalk cafes, parks and promenades. LRT rail cars run relatively quietly on electricity with three cars typically connected. LRT functions best as a local service with station stops typically one mile apart.

LRT provides communities with a transportation option that reduces congestion and is dependable. Unlike automobiles and buses, LRT systems enjoy traffic signal prioritizing, dedicated routes, and can carry up to three times the passenger capacity of a bus. LRT riders can reach their destination faster without the stress of driving and, in turn, motorists may experience a smoother commute due to the reduced number of automobiles on the road.

LRT technology isn't new. Used extensively around the world and throughout the U.S., LRT has a proven track record. For example, in LA County, the old street car and electric interurban railways provided service from the 1890s through World War II. Today, newer and more environmentally-friendly LRT cars are providing service again throughout LA County. Active Metro LRT lines include the Gold Line, Blue Line, Green Line, and the newest lines opened – Expo Line to Santa Monica and Gold Line to Azusa. System expansion continues with the current construction of the Crenshaw/LAX Line, to connect the Expo Line to the Green Line, and the Regional Connector, which will provide a direct connection between Azusa and Long Beach, and between East Los Angeles and Santa Monica. Planning efforts continue for the extension of the Eastside (Gold Line) Phase 2 and West Santa Ana Branch (WSAB) Transit Corridor. (See map on back).

LRT is safe.

LRT is a proven safe and reliable mode of travel. Metro uses federal and state standards, as well as accepted industry standards for LRT designs and operations. When traveling within local streets, trains follow posted speed limits and traffic signals, and have synchronized signal timing to allow them to quickly pass through intersections. When the LRT is within separate railroad right-of-way adjacent to local streets, there are vehicular and pedestrian gates, fencing, lights and signage to indicate when to safely cross the tracks. Stations are designed with platforms that have large loading areas for people entering and exiting the trains, including pedestrian walkways that connect to the nearest public sidewalks. Elevated and underground stations provide elevators and stairs that can handle both persons with disabilities and/or special emergency needs.



Light Rail vs. Heavy Rail vs. Commuter Rail

It is common for people to think rail projects are all the same. However, nothing could be further from the truth.

Heavy rail is larger and longer than LRT, and can handle more passengers. It also travels faster than LRT, operates over exclusive right-of-ways (either underground or on elevated tracks), and utilizes an electrified third rail below the train to propel its cars. Active Metro heavy rail lines include the Red Line and the Purple Line.

LRT service is also different from “commuter rail,” which includes Metrolink and Amtrak. Though both modes usually use standard gauge tracks, commuter rail generally involves larger trains with regional stations spaced several miles apart. Commuter rail trains are designed for faster speeds and longer distance commuter service between counties. Another operational difference involves frequency of service. While LRT and commuter rail both provide high frequency service during peak morning and evening hours, only LRT maintains 15- to 20-minute intervals throughout the entire day.



Light Rail – Metro Gold Line



Commuter Rail – Metrolink



Heavy Rail – Metro Red Line

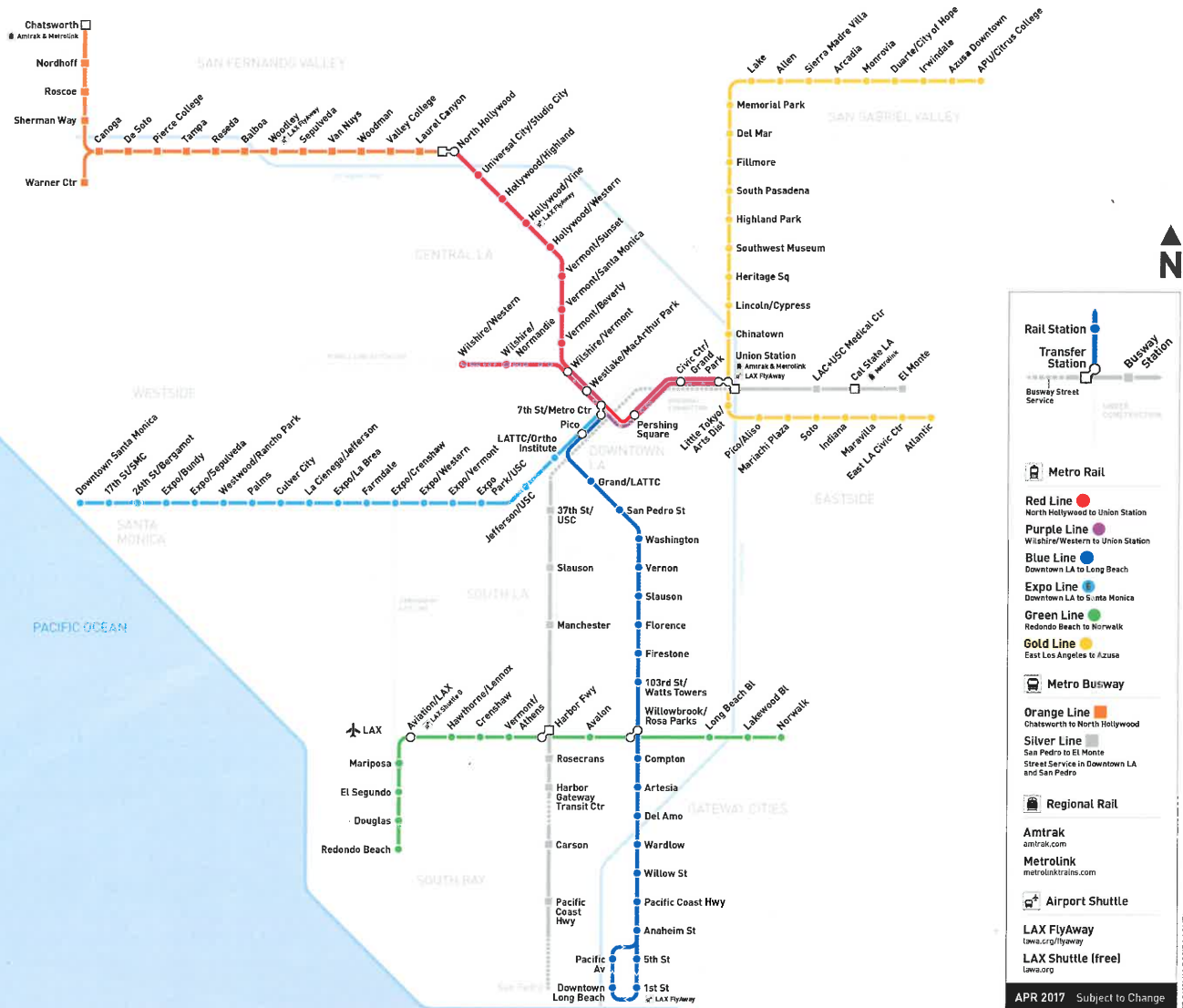
About West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project

The West Santa Ana Branch (WSAB) Transit Corridor Project is a 20-mile corridor being evaluated by Metro as a new LRT line to provide reliable transit service to meet the future mobility needs of residents, employees and visitors who travel within the study area. The new LRT line would connect downtown Los Angeles to southeast LA County, serving the cities and communities of Arts District, Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, unincorporated Florence-Graham community of LA County, Vernon, Huntington Park, Bell, Cudahy, South Gate, Downey, Paramount, Bellflower, Cerritos and Artesia. WSAB is currently undergoing environmental analysis, in compliance with federal and state requirements, to prepare the corridor for LRT use.

This rail corridor is anticipated to serve commuters in a high travel demand corridor, providing relief to the constrained transportation systems currently available to these communities. In addition, the project is expected to provide a direct connection to the Metro Green Line and the LA County regional transit network. The project is anticipated to break ground in 2022.


For more information, please visit metro.net/wsab.


Metro Rail & Busway Map




Contact Us

Please use the following contact tools to access additional project information, ask questions or provide comments.

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