

Station Experience Updates (September 2025)

Elevator Attendant Program Expands to Cal State LA Station

During the last semester, the Cal State LA Busway Station encountered difficult issues in maintaining stairway and elevator access from the bus platform to the campus. This 1970s-era station was built without redundant pathways, so there is only a single elevator and stairwell to exit. During last year's rainstorm, the persistent water runoff eventually damaged the stairwell and elevator. Facilities Maintenance and Vertical Transportation have been working around the clock to complete repairs during the quieter summer break, restoring this critical service for the thousands of college students and staff who use the Metro J Line and Foothill Transit services to Cal State LA.

With these teams completing the critical repairs in time for the Fall Semester, the Transitional Duty team has also expanded the popular elevator attendant program to this station, welcoming the Cal State LA family off Metro buses and onto campus, and ensuring that the single elevator is operating well. Elevator attendants will be scheduled on school days from 6 am to 3 pm, providing a helpful presence across most class hours.

This marks the fourth station where Transitional Duty has supplemented the Metro system presence in key areas. They are now providing elevator attendant coverage at the following stations:

- Pershing Square (DTLA)
- Hollywood/Vine
- Lake (Pasadena)
- Cal State LA

Safety Improvements at Slauson/I-110 Transitway Station Platforms Complete

Previous work to improve natural surveillance through environmental design strategies helped transform the "Northbound to Downtown LA" boarding platform. Recent CCTV footage confirms the positive feedback from Metro Ambassadors and riders that there has been a substantial improvement on the recently improved northbound platform. However, staff observed that the issues have shifted to the southbound platform.

As a result, staff mirrored the strategies on the southbound platform (towards Harbor Gateway and San Pedro).

- Median benches were removed
- Map cases were relocated
- New standard benches and trash receptacles were installed
- Platform bollards and other station elements were repainted
- The station canopy was power-washed

Both platforms now have improved lighting, visibility, and natural surveillance. There has been a significant improvement in the appropriate activity, with Metro riders waiting in safer and cleaner conditions for both northbound and southbound travel.

In August, Station Experience staff returned to Slauson/I-110 Transitway Station to conduct a multilingual survey of over 100 riders on how the mini-makeover has impacted their journey. As a result, riders shared a unanimous and near-unanimous sentiment on how these improvements are making them feel safer and cleaner. Below are some highlights about how riders felt about the upgraded platform reconfiguration:

- 98% said they feel *safer or much safer*
- 99% said the station feels *cleaner or much cleaner*
- 78% have noticed *reduced loitering* at the station
- 98% said they *want these improvements at more Metro stations*
- 99% said the Throne restroom:
 - Feels safer or much safer compared to a traditional public restroom
 - It makes their experience using Metro better or much better
 - They want Throne restrooms installed at more stations, and would ride more if there were
- 9 out of 10 surveyed use the Slauson J Line Station at least several times per week, reinforcing that these upgrades are improving the experience for the most frequent and loyal riders
- 94% respondents are BIPOC, including two out of three riders as Hispanic / Latinx
- 5% identified as a person with disability

37th St/USC Transitway Station Gets a Mini Makeover

Staff have reached the completion mark for the mini makeover at 37th St/USC Transitway Station. Crews from various departments across Operations and Customer Experience took full advantage of the temporary closures of the platforms to surge resources and complete major overhaul work, improving safety, cleanliness, and customer-facing information. Updates at this station include:

- Median benches were removed
- Map cases were relocated
- Upgraded to LED lighting under the canopy
- Platform bollards and other station elements were repainted
- Canopy, platform, lighting fixtures, and stairs were deep-cleaned

Premium Bus Stop Beacon Pilot Begins at Metro J Line Stops

Just in time for the Anime Expo, which attracted thousands of visitors to Downtown LA, Metro's Stops & Zones Department completed the installation of a targeted bus stop beacon upgrade pilot inspired by Metro's larger, Rail & Bus Rapid Transit station pylons, at four locations:

1. Northbound at Figueroa & Pico (Convention Center)
2. Northbound at Figueroa & Olympic (LA LIVE)

3. Southbound at Flower & Olympic (LA LIVE)
4. Southbound at Flower & Pico (Convention Center)

Staff have been working to identify scalable solutions for enhancing our on-street visibility on the most frequently used and popular bus rapid transit lines, starting with the Metro J Line. These lines are prominent on larger Metro system maps, but they currently use the same signage dimensions as our local bus lines. This can lead to mismatched expectations, as a rider planning their trip may have expected more prominent amenities while navigating their way to the boarding location.

At the same time, it's essential to balance the maintenance and resiliency requirements for these bus stops, as Metro oversees over 12,000 bus stops. In previous projects, upgraded bus stop signage had required custom poles and foundations, leading to permitting delays, non-standard maintenance issues, and additional costs. By contrast, this pilot seeks to use the same standard poles as the 12,000+ existing ones, the same aluminum material from the same sign shop, and the same brackets to attach the signs, thereby striking a balance between respecting the need for standardization while also achieving an elevated look and feel for Metro's current and potential riders.

As Crypto.com Arena attracts 250+ events per year, which is an event roughly two out of three days per week, staff expects these prominent beacons to help basketball and hockey fans to seamlessly find their way back to the boarding stop during the crowded, postgame evenings, and to remind potential riders of the convenience of using the Metro J Line to the doorstep of LA's busiest sports and entertainment district.

Graffiti Abatement Pilot Improves Appearance Along I-110 Harbor Transitway

While staff recently completed improvements to the Slauson/I-110 Transitway Station, which have helped make the station safer, cleaner, and brighter, one difficult area to address has been graffiti tagging along the transparent sound walls that help reduce freeway noise for Metro J Line and other bus riders. Unfortunately, these transparent sound walls are sandwiched between the outer freeway lanes and the inner busway stations, inviting vandals to tag the outer, freeway-facing side of the glass, which creates difficulty for staff in removing it because it is unreachable beyond the busway station boundaries.

If Metro were to address this under a traditional approach, staff would need to retain a traffic control contractor to design and implement a freeway lane closure plan, secure necessary permits from Caltrans to enter their jurisdiction, assemble and disassemble cone patterns and work area, coordinate with California Highway Patrol, along with many other responsibilities that would take months and cost thousands of dollars for each occurrence. Furthermore, because Caltrans does not issue recurring permits, staff would have to go through this step-by-step process each time a graffiti cleanup was required, starting from the beginning.

Fortuitously, during an LA28 interagency planning meeting, staff was introduced to the Caltrans District 7 Maintenance Superintendent, who shared that their team routinely

conducts a freeway sweeping operation on a bi-weekly basis. During a sidebar discussion, after listening to Metro's challenge, the Superintendent generously offered to have his team be on the lookout for the removal of graffiti on these freeway-facing partitions when it is safe to do so during their routine sweeping operations every other week.

Staff are pleased to share promising results on major appearance improvements to the transparent sound walls at both Manchester and Slauson Transitway stations. Their team will continue to address the sound wall graffiti facing the freeway lanes during their routine sweeping operations, when safe to do so. Metro staff are grateful that they can lean on the experienced crews at Caltrans, who are familiar with conducting roadside maintenance under freeway traffic conditions, ensuring that all users of the corridor (whether motorists or transit users) experience a safe and clean facility.

Major Reduction in Trespassing Intrusions along the A Line Foothill Extension

In preparation for the Grand Opening of the A Line Foothill 2B Extension to Pomona on September 19, staff have been working with the project team to share best practices for restoring safe and secure conditions along the new railway. Specifically, the project team has experienced persistent trespassing, vandalism, and encampments in certain hotspots that have been repeatedly breached, posing safety and security concerns as Metro begins full, pre-revenue train testing with up to 55 MPH train movement every few minutes.

To address these persistent safety and security issues along this new alignment, Metro staff shared best practices used on the existing Metro system and recommended the potential placement of technology advancements in hotspot segments. The project team procured several of the successful devices along the two key hotspots where Metro's tracks run underneath major freeways. Since the installation was completed, staff have now reported a major reduction in track intrusions, with zero instances of trespassing, tampering with wayside equipment, vandalism, or encampments. This also provides a secondary benefit for Metro's Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) neighbors, who operate a daily freight train along the third track.

Parking Lot User Safety (PLUS) Improvements Installed at Willow Station

In recent inspection periods, Willow St A Line Station in Long Beach has received a No Pass score, primarily attributed to cleanliness issues within the multilevel parking structure. While this parking structure had higher utilization pre-pandemic, today's utilization remains below previous highs, which has also invited unwanted activity around the unused parking levels. Fortunately, the elevators within the parking structure remain in good condition, as the open-door upgrade was configured for these units.

In July, staff held a virtual kickoff with Metro's Parking Management, Facilities Maintenance, Facilities Contracted Maintenance, and SSLE departments to discuss securing underutilized areas of the parking structure and installing an ambient sound device identical to what has been installed in the parking structures at APU/Citrus College, Fillmore, and the authorized area at 37th St/USC.

In early August, a safety technology was installed, and access to the upper floors of the parking structure was restricted to authorized vehicles only. The parking garage was monitored to assess the effectiveness of the interventions, and adjustments will be made as needed.

Later in the month, staff returned to evaluate these changes and have seen a dramatic improvement in safety, cleanliness, and reports from frontline staff assigned to this station. There has been a significant decrease in loitering and related issues since the installation of open elevator doors, the technology device, and traffic control devices on the top floors.

PLUS Improvements & New Daily Parking Added to Azusa Station

In partnership with Parking Management, Foothill Transit, and the City of Azusa, staff have been working to provide improved parking options for Foothill riders at Azusa Downtown A Line Station, which is currently the second-to-last stop on the A Line North. Since the Foothill Extension opened in 2007, this parking structure has been jointly maintained and operated across these three entities.

Although there is parking at the adjacent APU/Citrus College end-of-line station, which has consistently reached capacity, utilization at Azusa Downtown is very low. Much of this is because there has been no daily parking option, as the pre-pandemic commute demand was to offer monthly commuter parking permits instead. With telework and hybrid schedules, the number of monthly permits purchased is very low. As a result, the Azusa Downtown parking structure typically remains empty and an invitation for illicit activity.

Rather than allow the structure to remain empty, staff learned that increasing activity can help to naturally deter unwanted activity. Therefore, staff reached an agreement to introduce daily paid parking at this station, effective August 18, 2025. With the introduction of daily parking, Metro is providing an attractive overflow option for APU/Citrus College users who currently have no alternative daily parking option, and the expanded parking capacity will also enhance natural surveillance within the structure.

Although the parking structure elevator is maintained by Foothill Transit, staff worked together to upgrade it to an “open door” elevator in August, which has proven successful in other Metro stations in deterring illicit activity, as well as loitering and vandalism. In addition, the City of Azusa also has speakers inside the parking stairwells, which they plan to use to play Metro’s classical music soundtrack to help maintain a safe environment as Metro riders walk between the station and their vehicles.

Since the beginning of these improvements, preliminary reports from Metro custodians have indicated a downward trend in vandalism, loitering, trash, and biohazard clean-ups.

Safety And Wayfinding Improvements Coming to Patsaouras Busway Platform

Patsaouras Busway Station at Union Station East recently opened several years ago to improve multimodal connections at Union Station and serves prominent Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) services like the Metro J Line and Foothill Transit Silver Streak, among many other commuter express routes. For many years before this station opened, buses instead serviced a noisy and congested island bus stop at the Alameda St interchange.

As much of the modern Union Station wayfinding was designed and implemented in 2013, it pre-dates the opening of this new busway station, and the Station Experience team continually receives requests to improve wayfinding to the station entrance, which resides tucked away on the southernmost tip of the existing Patsaouras Bus Plaza, which serves many local bus lines, Greyhound, and the LAX FlyAway. Given the myriad bus routes and dizzying bus bay numbering schemes, in addition to Metrolink and Amtrak track numbers, riders often have a difficult time finding the Metro J Line and other key express lines, even when they intuitively see local buses circulating within the Patsaouras Bus Plaza in front of them.

As Metro remains committed to applying world-class innovation to address these opportunities, staff are starting a targeted pilot to install international pictogram graphics on the underutilized stair-step entrance to dramatically increase visibility to the Metro J Line that would be visible from the Union Station East Portal, which is virtually impossible to see from a distance today. Installation was completed in late August. If successful, staff are looking to expand this strategy to other key locations with documented customer confusion in complex environments, such as the transfer confusion between the A, B, D, E, and J Lines at 7th Street/Metro Center.

In recent months, staff have also received requests to investigate persistent break-ins of the emergency exit pathway underneath the new Patsaouras Busway Station at Union Station East along the I-10 ExpressLanes. Because platform emergency exits must always remain unlocked, destination-less individuals have created a hazardous environment directly beneath the elevated station, leaving behind evidence of illegal fires and drug paraphernalia. The disproportionate number of issues here unnecessarily pulls security resources away from patrolling other critical areas of Union Station, where riders may look for a uniformed presence.

As a result, staff recently conducted a site visit with Building Services to investigate this area and identify potential solutions to this challenge. The site visit confirmed a substantial presence of inconspicuous encampments in the shadows beneath the I-10 ExpressLanes. In the coming weeks, we will be working to coordinate a multipronged approach that includes HOME Outreach, fencing repairs, and technology to restore safe conditions in this passageway, which is designated for emergencies only.