

Station Experience Updates (January 2026)

Enhanced Cleaning & Fare Compliance Pilot on A Line Trains at Union Station

With the opening of the Regional Connector, the Metro A Line has become the longest, one-seat ride on light rail in North America, scheduled at 2 hours and 12 minutes one-way, or nearly 4 hours and 30 minutes round-trip between Long Beach and Pomona.

Rider and community feedback indicate that the extraordinarily long trip also presents unique challenges, such as a gradual accumulation of trash and spills on board and the presence of individuals who may remain on board for hours without exiting the train.

As other rail lines take only 30 minutes to an hour to reach their terminals, Metro's standard procedure of "resetting" the train at the end of the line works well, with frequent cleaning and security checks at the terminals, as seen at North Hollywood. However, the unprecedented length of the Metro A Line means staff need to rethink how to maintain safe, clean conditions throughout the entire trip, not just at its far-flung terminals.

Therefore, in February, staff launched a pilot collaboration across the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Rail Operations on the A Line platform at Union Station, the midpoint of the line where train operators switch off to continue the trip in both directions. Conducting a midline "wellness check" during a train operator swap is also a common operational strategy in Latin American transit systems. This builds off last year's demonstration over two nights, where DPS was able to remove over 130 individuals on the A Line without a valid fare at Union Station, resulting in several days of reduced incidents upstream to Pasadena and Azusa.

During the momentary hold when train operators switch off at Union Station, the following duties would be conducted:

- **Service Attendants** from Rail Fleet Services will conduct an "express clean" of the train, which includes sweeping up trash and mopping up onboard spills as time permits
- **Transit Security Officers, Contract Security and Law Enforcement partners** from DPS will visibly walk through the trains, ensuring Code of Conduct compliance, and fare inspections as time permits
- **HOME Outreach** will have dedicated teams to engage with individuals and offer services to those willing to accept, where services and connectivity are substantially more available in Downtown LA compared with Pomona

When comparing the week before to the week after pit stop cleaning (January 26 to February 1, 2026, vs. February 2 to February 8, 2026), preliminary data indicate:

- Rider-reported cleanliness issues dropped -17% for the entire A Line (from Pomona to Long Beach)
- Rider-reported cleanliness issues dropped -63% for the ten A Line stations surrounding Union Station (from Highland Park to Pico/LA LIVE), which means

Metro is delivering noticeable and lasting improvements to the core of the A Line where trains are most ridden.

Staff will continue to evaluate how different departments work together in a shared environment and plan to make fine-tuned adjustments as needed. They will also evaluate upstream/downstream effects to determine whether this targeted effort serves as a force multiplier to improve safety and cleanliness across the entire line.

Interagency Walkthrough at Downtown Santa Monica Brings Renewed Coordination to Improve Safety & Cleanliness

On January 29, Local Government Relations convened an interdepartmental visit with representatives from the Santa Monica Business Improvement District (BID) and the City's Housing & Human Services Division to review key challenges and opportunities at Downtown Santa Monica (E) Station. The engagement included a station walkthrough and focused discussions on the TAP-to-Exit program, station access configurations, and Throne Restroom operations.

Participants also received updates on Metro's upcoming TAP Plus Contactless Credit and Debit Payment launch, discussed strengthening partnerships for outreach and services to unhoused individuals, and reviewed recent developments within Metro's DPS. Next steps include extending additional invitations and creating opportunities for continued engagement on regional transit initiatives.

The engagement reinforced interagency coordination and a shared commitment to ongoing collaboration, aligning resources and joint problem-solving efforts to enhance station access, safety, and the overall customer experience.

Wayfinding Improvements at Metro J Line's Patsaouras Busway Skybridge

This week, the Station Experience team worked with Facilities Maintenance and SEG D to implement helpful wayfinding for J Line riders boarding at Union Station. J Line riders have historically experienced confusion because busway traffic typically travels on the left-hand side, leading unfamiliar riders to board J Line buses in the wrong direction. Previously, riders would walk along an extensive skybridge and not know which side to board until they arrived on the platform, where they found individual bus signs.

This advanced approach to wayfinding takes advantage of the opportunity to inform riders along the extensive walk across the skybridge, so they can prepare and digest information before arriving on the busy, noisy boarding platform that coexists with freeway traffic. Staff know from previous efforts that these tactical signs help reduce customer anxiety and mental gymnastics by providing timely signage for key decision-making.

On-The-Move Travel Buddies Affirm Impact of Station Experience

At the February quarterly, hands-on training for Metro's On the Move Riders Program Travel Buddies, Station Experience provided updates on recent station interventions,

including enhanced signage and wayfinding, new faregate designs, accelerated Throne restroom expansion, and the Union Station Pit Stop Pilot Project.

Travel Buddies shared positive feedback on Throne restrooms and recent cleanliness and safety improvements—including at Fillmore (A) Station in Pasadena—and expressed support for new faregates and appreciation for Metro staff presence at major events. As older adults who lead Metro trips and teach their peers how to ride, Travel Buddies provide trusted, frontline insight. Their strong awareness of these interventions highlights the meaningful impact Station Experience efforts are having on senior riders across LA County.

Key feedback included:

- **Fillmore Station** - One Travel Buddy from the Pasadena area has noticed a significant decrease in loitering following recent Station Experience improvements here
- **Rose Bowl Game** - One Travel Buddy rode Metro and was extremely impressed with Metro staff support, signage, and Rose distribution on New Year's Day
- **Throne Restrooms** - Most Travel Buddies have now used a Throne and strongly support them when riding Metro
- **A Line Pit Stop Pilot at Union Station & Taller Faregates** - Travel Buddies were extremely supportive of both efforts