



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

213.922.2000 Tel
metro.net

68

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 13, 2014**

SUBJECT: PROMOTION OF NEW VALLEY-WESTSIDE EXPRESS

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE REPORT ON PROMOTIONAL PLANS FOR THE
NEW VALLEY-WESTSIDE EXPRESS**

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file this report on Metro's plans to advertise and promote the new Valley-Westside Express bus service which launches on Monday, December 15, 2014.

ISSUE

At the October 2, 2014 Regular Board meeting, a Motion by Directors Yaroslavsky, Krekorian and O'Connor (Attachment A) asked staff to develop and report back on plans to market a new bus service using the name Valley-Westside Express. This report summarizes Metro's upcoming marketing efforts for the line.

DISCUSSION

The new Valley-Westside Express gives commuters a highly desirable means of traveling between institutions, businesses and residential areas in the San Fernando Valley and the Westside. Among the key target audiences are riders of the current line 761, students commuting to UCLA, CSUN, Pierce College and Valley College, and all those commuting between the Valley and the Westside.

The new line offers several distinct advantages:

- Customers can save up to 20 minutes each way over current trips between the Valley and the Westside.
- Free park and ride lots are available to customers at the Sepulveda and Van Nuys Orange Line stations.
- Trips between the Valley and the Westside will require fewer transfers.
- Trips can be made using Metro's 1-Way Fare, with transfers included when paid with a TAP card.

Communications is launching an extensive campaign to promote the new Valley-Westside Express to potential customers. Early promotion of the line begins in November, with Social Media posts on Facebook and Twitter, as well as information on Metro's website and mention in an electronic newsletter for Employee Transportation Coordinators. The campaign launches in full in December, with print, radio and bus bench advertising, on-board promotional materials, station posters at Orange Line stations, a media event and outreach to college students. The campaign will continue through March 2015.

A timeline of all campaign elements is shown in Attachment B. Key items include:

- Social Media - Posts on Facebook, Twitter, The Source and El Pasajero promoting the new line, starting in November and continuing through March.
- Employee Transportation Coordinators Newsletter – Information on the Valley-Westside Express included in an electronic publication targeted to Employee Transportation Coordinators at companies in the Valley and on the Westside in November, December and January.
- Station Posters – Banners, Static Displays and Scrolling Message Signs at select Orange Line stations (Reseda, Sepulveda, Valley College, Van Nuys and Pierce College), building awareness of the Valley-Westside Express and new connection options, starting December 8.
- On-site Ambassadors – Ambassadors from Metro, on duty at key stops and transfer points for two weeks in December and two weeks in January, assisting and advising customers on using the Valley-Westside Express and other new Valley lines.
- College Kiosk Ads – Targeted ads on informational kiosks at UCLA, Pierce College and Valley College, promoting the Valley-Westside Express and its connectivity with other lines, starting December 1 through February 22.
- College Outreach - Targeted flyers, eblasts and pocket guides for students at UCLA, CSUN, Valley College and Pierce College starting December 1.
- King Ads - 100 King Ads on buses in Divisions 8, 15 and 98 promoting the new line, starting December 1 to January 25.
- Bus Bench Ads - 50 Bus Bench Ads, along and nearby the Valley-Westside Express route and connecting lines, promoting the new service, starting December 1 to January 25
- Radio Spots – 15-second spots on seven radio stations promoting the new service during the weeks of December 8, December 15, January 5 and January 26.
- Web Module – Electronic promotional banners on metro.net website, linking to page promoting the Valley-Westside Express and its connectivity with other lines, starting the week of November 17.
- On-Board Materials – Brochures and posters, with information and maps of new the route, placed on all buses at Divisions 6, 7, 8, 10, 15 and 98 starting November 24.

- Newspaper Ads – Ads in 12 publications, including three Spanish language publications, targeted at residents in the areas where the route travels, starting December 11 through mid-January; also in four school newspapers in December, February and March.
- Media Event – Introduction of the new Valley-Westside Express to the press at a media event just prior to the start of service, during the week of December 8.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will implement the promotional plan for the Valley-Westside Express as described above and monitor ridership for additional needs.

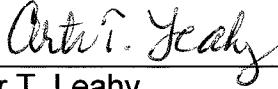
ATTACHMENTS

- A. Motion by Directors Yaroslavsky, Krekorian and O'Connor
- B. Marketing Timeline for Valley-Westside Express

Prepared by: Warren Morse, Deputy Executive Officer, Communications, (213) 922-5661



Noelia Rodriguez
Chief Communications Officer



Arthur T. Leahy
Chief Executive Officer

**Motion by Directors Yaroslavsky, Krekorian and O'Connor
MTA Executive Management Committee Meeting**

September 18, 2014

Valley-Westside Express Bus

On December 15, Metro will launch Line 788, an express bus connecting the Westside to the San Fernando Valley and serving the Van Nuys corridor as far north as Panorama City.

Using the High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes built by the 405 Project, the line will give Metro riders a non-stop trip between Westwood and the Orange Line—with a time savings of at least 20 minutes in each direction over current service. The express bus will offer patrons a one-transfer connection to places including Woodland Hills, Chatsworth and North Hollywood.

This new service will create a critical north-south linkage to existing transit lines while plans for a more extensive Sepulveda Pass Project move forward. When Expo Line Phase 2 opens, the line will extend south to the future Sepulveda Station, providing access to destinations such as downtown Los Angeles, Culver City and Santa Monica. In April, the Board of Directors also requested that staff prepare plans to extend the line to the South Bay region.

The express bus has already garnered support from transit riders and stakeholders on both sides of the Santa Monica Mountains. To maximize its success, Metro should rebrand Line 788 as the "Valley-Westside Express" and promote it to the communities and economic centers it will serve, including UCLA, Warner Center and other institutions, businesses and residential neighborhoods in the Valley and on the Westside.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board direct staff to:

1. Rename Metro Express Bus Line 788 as the "Valley-Westside Express";
2. Develop a strategy to promote and advertise the line in coordination with the communities, businesses and institutions that will be affected by the service, using Metro's traditional methods and also taking advantage of social media outlets, on-site advertising and other creative methods of branding and public outreach; and
3. Report back with plans and a timetable for promoting the line at the November, 2014 full Board meeting.

