

## MTA Rail Service Removal Program Strikes Secretly

What MTA is doing without a Public Hearing or Due Process: *Removing One Hour of Rail Service* on Red, Green and Gold Lines effective June 26, 2005.

What the Community Proposes: **Leave the Span-of-Service Alone.** If necessary to save operating costs, increase the time between trains or increase length of trains.

### Help us! Do something! Action Steps:

- A. **Speak at the MTA Regular Board Meeting Thursday, May 26, 2005, 9:30 a.m.** @ MTA Headquarters, One Gateway Plaza, (back of Union Station) Downtown Los Angeles.
- B. **Comment to MTA Board before May 26:** MTA Board of Directors, Attn: Budget Hearing Rail Service Reductions, One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952
- C. **Phone MTA Headquarters: (213) 922-6000 Press 3;** Politely register your concern!
- D. **Further Details:** Check out frequent updates @ Transit Coalition Website for other ways you can help us save transit in Los Angeles. [www.transitcoalition.org](http://www.transitcoalition.org)

Los Angeles Times  
**latimes.com**

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California Section

Wednesday, May 12, 2005

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-mta12may12,1,443676.story?coll=la-headlines-california>

# MTA to End Some Midnight Runs

## Planned cuts in rail and subway service on the Green, Gold and Red lines would save money, officials say. The changes are to begin June 26.

By Sharon Bernstein, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer (983 words---Article)

Late-night travelers beware: Planned transit agency cutbacks would end midnight light-rail and subway service in Los Angeles County beginning next month. In a switch from previously announced cost-saving measures, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority now intends to drop the last hour of service from its Gold and Green light-rail lines, as well as the Wilshire-Western leg of the Red Line subway. The last runs on some trains would start as early as 11:30 p.m.

The MTA also plans to reduce the number of cars during off-peak hours to save money on electricity and maintenance. The cutbacks are scheduled to begin June 26, said spokesman Ed Scannell. They do not require the approval of the MTA board, but that panel will review them this month as part of the agency's overall \$2.8-billion proposed 2005-06 budget, which takes effect July 1.

John Catoe, MTA director of operations, said the reductions are needed to make up for shortfalls in state funding and to maintain the agency's bus operations, which are protected by a court order. Altogether, he said, the proposed budget calls for a 6.1% reduction in rail service, in order to save \$9.4 million.

The plan drew harsh criticism from transit advocates, who said that eliminating the last hour of service would make it harder for transit-dependent workers to get home from late-night jobs. Riders who rely on a complicated patchwork of trains and buses could miss connections if a train is eliminated or if they miss a train because it is too

**crowded, said Bart Reed, director of the Transit Coalition, a Sylmar-based advocacy organization. "Removing an hour of service takes the safety net away," Reed said. "It harms the system integrity."**

Last week Catoe told reporters that the agency planned to save money by slightly increasing the time between trains on several routes. At the time, Catoe said that most riders would not notice the changes, which were supposed to amount to "a minute or two longer" between trains. But this week, Catoe said the agency would instead cut back daily late-night service. Top administrators changed their minds over the last few days, deciding it would be better to eliminate some late-night service than rework scheduling throughout the day, Scannel said. Losing an hour of service would mean cutting three trips in each direction on each of the three affected lines, he said. He said he "could not get" ridership figures for those late-night trains, but said there were few passengers on some.

Under the new plan:

- The last Green Line train to Norwalk from Redondo Beach would leave at 11:55 p.m., an hour earlier than currently; in the other direction, the last train would leave at 12:50 a.m.
- On the Gold Line, the last trip from Los Angeles to Pasadena would begin at 11:52 p.m.; in the other direction, the last trip would begin at 12:31 a.m.
- From Los Angeles to the station at Wilshire Boulevard and Western Avenue, the final train would depart at 11:27 p.m.; the last trip heading toward Union Station on that line would leave at 11:42 p.m.


Service on the Red Line between Union Station and North Hollywood, and on the Blue Line between Long Beach and the 7th and Metro station in downtown Los Angeles would not be changed. Some of those trains run as late as about 1 a.m. The transit agency also plans to reduce the number of cars on the Red, Green and Gold lines during the afternoon and late at night. For example, the agency would run four cars on every Red Line train during off-peak hours instead of the current six, Catoe said. The Green Line trains would be reduced to one car late at night, from two or three, and to one or two during off-peak hours during the day. The Gold Line trains would drop to one car during off-peak hours, from two or three, depending on time of day. Catoe said he is also considering cutting the number of cars on Blue Line trains on weekends.

Annette Soodhalter, who stopped driving last year because of eye problems, said the reductions would prevent her from socializing late at night. "It's terrible," Soodhalter, 74, said. The downtown resident has begun to explore the light-rail system at night, going with friends on the Red Line to dine out in Hollywood, and had hoped to soon begin using the Gold Line to Pasadena. The MTA, she said, should be improving the system, not cutting it back. "I realize their ridership in some places is not what they want," Soodhalter said. But "they need to be patient."

Catoe said that people who need to travel late at night would be able to take buses if the trains they typically take shut down early. But Jerard Wright, 23, a transit advocate who lives in South Los Angeles and says he cannot afford a car, said buses at that hour run too infrequently. "If there was actually decent service on the bus lines I wouldn't feel as bad," he said. A project manager who takes a network of buses and trains to his job with the Alhambra Unified School District, Wright said that many of his fellow late-night passengers on the Green Line are coming home from jobs at Los Angeles International Airport.

Manuel Criollo, lead organizer with the Bus Riders Union, criticized the cutbacks, saying that instead of reducing service, the MTA should delay constructing the planned Exposition Light Rail service, and use the money to shore up bus and rail routes. Nancy Brakensiek, who lives downtown and uses the subways and light rails frequently, said the cutbacks would make her more likely to use a car instead. "In a city that's trying to say that they are a 24-hour town, where they're trying to say you can be out and about, to cut service for late night is foolish," Brakensiek said.

**Ever wonder why transportation is so poor and the roads are so gridlocked and prone to congestion and delays? Los Angeles citizens need a strong consumer voice to push forth improvements to favor our bus and rail transportation network. You too can take action:**

 <p><b>The Transit Coalition</b></p> <p><b>Annual Membership / Support Donation</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Income \$ 20 To subscribe to our free e-mail list which provides details about volunteering, funding, transit meetings, projects and other key information, go to The Transit Coalition website: <a href="http://www.transitcoalition.org">www.transitcoalition.org</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$ 75</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Family \$ 125</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partner \$ 250</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Organization \$ 500</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Corporation \$ 1,000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$ 2,500</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$ 5,000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$ 10,000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____</p> <p>Click on <b>CONTACT US</b> to register to receive our regular e-mail updates.</p>	<p>Dedicated to improving and expanding all modes of transit in Los Angeles and throughout Southern California.</p> <p>I want to make Southern California more livable by joining The Transit Coalition which allows us to maintain and expand our valuable activities.</p> <p>Please Print</p> <p>Name (First, Last) _____</p> <p>Organization / Affiliation _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Mailing Address _____ Suite / Apt. # _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____</p>	<p>Mail this completed form with your tax deductible contribution payable to:</p> <p><b>SEE / The Transit Coalition</b>          12463 Telfair Avenue          Sylmar, CA 91342-3736</p> <p><a href="http://www.transitcoalition.org">www.transitcoalition.org</a>  <a href="mailto:transitcoalition@earthlink.net">transitcoalition@earthlink.net</a></p> <p>E-Mail Address _____</p> <p>Home Phone _____</p> <p>Work Phone _____</p> <p>Cell Phone _____</p> <p>Fax Number _____</p>
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