

CommuteSmart News

November 2012

GET TO WORK FASTER, CHEAPER AND WITH LESS STRESS



El Monte Station

3 New Ways to Relieve Your Commute

Check out these new services that make getting to work even easier:

1. Southern California is now home to the largest bus facility west of Chicago with last month's unveiling of the revamped El Monte Station. It boasts 29 bus bays, a bike hub with 30 bike lockers, digitized bus arrival/directional displays and a transit store. A bonus: The new Silver 2 Silver Service, which allows riders to transfer free between the San Gabriel Valley's Foothill Silver Streak and the Metro Silver Line to downtown Los Angeles with a valid pass from either.

2. Orange County's busiest Metrolink station is no longer a parking nightmare, thanks to a recent expansion of the Fullerton station's lot. It now has an 800-space parking structure (added to the 500 existing), ensuring that riders of the Metrolink Orange County and 91 Metrolink lines can find a parking spot and catch their trains on time.



3. Metro ExpressLanes on the 110 Freeway will open on Nov. 10, allowing solo drivers access to carpool lanes for a fee (and carpoolers continued free access, provided they have a transponder and meet passenger requirements).

More Roads or More Transit?

When asked what would solve traffic problems in their community, 42% of Americans say "more transit"—twice that of the 20% who said "more roads." That's the result of a poll released last month by the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Of the respondents, only about a third had actually taken transit any time in the last month, and only two thirds had ever done so—but even they support local investment in transit by more than a two-to-one margin.



A Side Benefit to Carmageddon

It's true that during "Carmageddon II"—the weekend last month when a portion of the I-405 shut down for demolition—motorists avoiding the area helped reduce traffic on surrounding roads and freeways (although not as much as the year prior). Another interesting benefit that wasn't so widely reported: clean air.

A UCLA study found that, within minutes of the closure, air quality drastically improved up to 83% in the immediate area. In nearby Santa Monica and West Los Angeles, it improved by 75%.

The whole Los Angeles region saw a 25% improvement in air quality, which begs the question: If this can happen in the short term, what could be accomplished through reducing traffic on a long-term basis?

