

# San Diego upgrades Blue Line with low-floor trolley cars

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San Diego MTS low-floor Blue Line Trolley

The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) introduced its new low-floor Trolley cars on the Blue Line providing more than 50,000 weekday passengers with faster trips, easier boarding and more comfortable rides.

Running from the U.S.-Mexico border through Downtown San Diego, the Blue Line is the busiest transit line in the San Diego region, providing more than 15 million passenger trips in FY 2014.

To mark the start of low-floor service on the Blue Line, the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) along with local dignitaries, community members and contractors held a celebration at the 8th Street Station in National City on Tuesday, Jan. 27.

“This is a significant milestone for our region’s Trolley network,” said MTS Board Chairman Harry Mathis. “The low-floor design will make our entire transit system more efficient. Additionally,

upgrades at Blue Line stations – such as 8th Street and 24th Street – will vastly improve bus and Trolley connections.”

The new Siemens-built low-floor Trolleys will improve operational efficiency by eliminating steps and mechanical lifts for people with disabilities. Trolley platforms are now nearly level with the floor of the Trolley, making boarding and deboarding much easier for all passengers. An integrated access ramp for people with mobility devices also deploys easily. This new feature eliminates the need for mechanical lifts that slowed boarding and caused delays.

Other amenities include larger windows, higher ceilings, improved lighting, dedicated seating access for special needs passengers, and more room for standing passengers. MTS now operates 76 low-floor trolley cars throughout the entire system and up to 28 will be dedicated to operations on the Blue Line daily.

Trolley Renewal began in fall 2010. All the station improvements are on track to be completed this spring. Additional track and signal work is expected to be finished later this year.

The launch of low-floor service on the Blue Line is part of a \$660 million effort to modernize the entire Trolley system. Trolley Renewal is funded primarily by California Proposition 1B bond funds and TransNet, the regional half-cent sales tax for transportation administered by SANDAG. In addition to low-floor cars, Trolley Renewal included new station platforms, next-arrival electronic signs, signaling systems, overhead catenary wires, larger shelters and track replacement.