



[The Source](#), the [Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority's](#) in-house blog, [proudly links](#) to an article on the ten-year anniversary of the opening of Red Line subway service to the San Fernando Valley from Hollywood. Blogger Fred Camino notes that ridership on the route is well below initial projections (153,000 daily boardings compared to a hoped for 200,000). But he expresses belief that “we still have yet to see its true impact on the region.... I’m really excited to see what the next decade brings.” A quick tour of the subway station areas, however, will dash any hopes. After a decade that saw one of the biggest building booms in the nation’s history, most station areas lack the thriving, high-density, mixed-use neighborhoods needed to boost ridership on the train. To be sure, there are noteworthy projects, particularly in [downtown Hollywood](#) (on a segment of the subway that was completed before the San Fernando extension). But in each case, you had proactive leadership from local elected officials and the business community to change the land use status quo, which is typically “build nothing anywhere.” Otherwise, the kind of neighborhoods that Camino and other rail enthusiasts hope to see spring up are mostly illegal under local land use laws. These expensive trains then end up with weak ridership and severe operating deficits, and an opportunity to reduce traffic and give residents diverse housing options is once again lost.