

Dulles Metro is Coming

August 2014



Silver Line Opens to Great Fanfare; Ridership Numbers Strong

Thousands of riders are now getting to and from Tysons Corner aboard the Silver Line.

After waiting through years of planning, construction, and delays in opening, Metro began service along the Silver Line on July 26, connecting Reston and Tysons Corner directly to downtown Washington without transferring.

People stood in long lines in Reston to ride the first train open to the public. While dignitaries and political leaders praised those who had worked on the project and thanked themselves over and over again, the smiles on the faces of those first passengers best told the story of the excitement of those who caught that first train.

With opening day when ridership numbers passed most expectations, Metro reported that nearly 220,000 trips were taken to or from the five new Silver Line stations during the first week of operations. At mid-August, Metro said 15,942 passengers were boarding at new Silver Line stations daily. That's two-thirds of the long term goal of having 25,000 boardings after a year of service.

Those numbers are expected to grow as residents adjust to the new system and the ways to get to and from the stations.

Finding commuter parking at the private McLean Station parking lot and at the county's parking garage at the Wiehle-Reston Station has been smooth but those spaces are going to be harder to find.



FARE GATES OPENING: The Tysons Corner Station is now open for business. Photo courtesy of Macerich/TimeLine Media, LLC

Gridlock) said, "No planner's document, no artist's rendering matches the understanding conveyed by taking transit through Tysons Corner, out to the western suburbs and back to the middle of the D.C. region. Creating train access for shoppers to



SILVER LINE NOW OPEN: MWAA CEO Jack Potter (far right) cuts the ribbon at the Silver Line opening day ceremony. Photo by Rob Yingling, MWAA

gigantic malls at Tysons is like telling 16th century European merchants that they have a sea route to the Spice Islands. They'll figure out the rest. For commuters, there's new, car-free access to job centers."

U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R- Va.'s 10th District) at the time of the opening said, "The Silver Line is going to be good for transportation. The Silver Line is going to be good for economic development. The Silver Line is going to be good for Dulles Airport. Just think where this region would be if we didn't have Metro."

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority President and CEO Jack Potter said, "Silver Line service to Wiehle Avenue, and the launch of the new Silver Line Express bus with direct service to Dulles International Airport, it's a game changer for travelers to and from Washington, D.C., as well. Dulles International Airport, the region's gateway to the world, is now closer than ever."

"We've had to overcome challenges with feasibility and environmental studies, negotiating the finance agreements with the local, state, and federal partners, the creation of not one but two local business tax districts, splitting the project into two phases, fending off multiple law suits, debating whether to put tracks and stations "under not over", replanning Tysons and Reston, bureaucratic hurdles, and, most important, keeping the project safe and containing the project costs and the burden on toll road users," said U.S. Rep. Gerald Connolly (D- Va.'s 11th District) at opening celebrations at the Wiehle-Reston East Station.

For general information on the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, please visit our website at www.dullesmetro.com or call (703) 572-0506.

“This is the vision, this is what we have been talking about...”

Plaza at Tysons Corner Mall Epitomizes the Dream of Urban Tysons

For those who prefer a visual experience to help them understand what is happening, they must visit the plaza area at Tysons Corner Center, the delightful outdoor area that is encircled by a new office tower, Tysons Tower, a 22-story office building that is home to Intelsat and DeLoitte; The Vita, a luxury residential tower with 429 luxury apartments and several penthouses; and the Hyatt Regency, a 300-plus room hotel (opening early next year).



FUN TIMES: Hula hooping during the Plaza dedication weekend from July. *Photo courtesy of Macerich/TimeLine Media, LLC*

The plaza, about the same size as a football field, sets the tone for the incubating urban Tysons that is now so evident. It is a gathering place for the young and old, a surprising place to sit, relax and people watch, with a new entrance way into Lord & Taylor, a playground, a life-sized chess set, movies, music, fire pits, ping-pong tables and a fountain. Come Christmas, there will be a towering Christmas tree, destined to become a community tradition. Macerich, the owners of the mall, refer to the plaza as “the heart of Tysons Corner.”

The plaza includes a special public art project named Early Bird. Created by a group of local artists called the Workingman Collective led by two George Mason University professors, Early Bird includes more than 60 individual life-size birds representing



THE PLAZA IS OPEN: Crowds gather during the Plaza dedication weekend. *Photo courtesy of Macerich/TimeLine Media, LLC*



SUNNY DAYS AHEAD: Tysons Corner Center's new plaza near the new Tysons Corner Metrorail Station opened in late July to great fanfare. *Photo courtesy of Macerich/TimeLine Media, LLC*

many birds that are native to this area. According to Macerich, Early Bird is named for the first communications satellite, launched into space in 1965 by Intelsat, the anchor tenant in the new office tower adjacent to the plaza.

There is a bridge connection between the plaza, which is suspended about 32 feet above ground, and the new Tysons Corner Silver Line Station but it is not open. The plaza and the office building are open; the apartment building and the hotel are not yet complete. Several new restaurants are coming. Shake Shack has opened.

More than 22 million shoppers come to Tysons Corner each year for the Mall's more than 330 shops, restaurants and entertainment attractions, including a 16-screen IMAX movie complex, The American Girl Store, Microsoft, and Disney Store.

As a lawyer from Alabama walked the plaza on a recent Sunday afternoon with his young daughters and looked at the nearby Tysons Corner rail station and the construction around it, he simply said, “This is amazing.” Indeed a far cry from the days when he stood in line at the old Tysons movie theaters that used to be in that general area when he was growing up at the edge of Tysons. He says he plans to come back to see the 50-foot Christmas tree that is planned for the plaza later this year.



WAITING FOR THE TRAIN: Some of the first passengers arrive at the Tysons Corner Station on opening day. *Photo courtesy of Macerich/TimeLine Media, LLC*