

CONNECT

Improving Our
Land Transport System
For All



Land Transport Initiatives

Coming Your Way

A slew of upcoming land transport initiatives were unveiled at the recent Committee of Supply debate in March. Here is what anyone who needs to get around in Singapore can look forward to in future.

Take the train?

More stations, more trains and more tracks.



Highlights:

- Shorter waiting times and less crowding with 590 more MRT train trips per week from March 2011.
 - Punggol East LRT system will operate in both directions throughout the day from 20 June 2011, significantly improving the travel times for many commuters.
 - Opening of Woodleigh MRT station & Damai LRT station on 20 June 2011.
 - Opening of a new train platform & train track to the existing Jurong East MRT station in May 2011.
 - Progressive addition of 22 new trains to North-South-East-West Line from May 2011.
 - 16 more trains will be added to the Circle Line by 2015.
- More travel options with a section of rail to be opened every year for the next six years:
 - o Circle Line from Marymount to HarbourFront in October 2011.
 - o Circle Line extension from Promenade to Marina Bay in 2012.
 - o Downtown Line Stage 1 from Bugis to Chinatown in 2013.
 - o North South Line extension from Marina Bay to Marina Pier in 2014.
 - o Downtown Line Stage 2 from Bugis to Bukit Panjang in 2015
 - o Tuas Extension in 2016.
 - o Downtown Line Stage 3 from Chinatown to Expo in 2017.

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Take the bus?

More bus trips, more higher capacity buses and more priority for buses on the road. Bus travel remains a priority and bus commuters have much to look forward to.

Highlights:

- Central Bus Planning route changes will be implemented progressively to benefit as many commuters as possible.
- About 400 new buses, including double-deck buses, will be added to the fleet for more comfortable rides on new buses.
- More than 30 major bus stops will be upgraded to “bus hubs” with extended bus bay facilities and installed with real-time bus arrival information panels.
- New Integrated Transport Hubs planned for Bukit Panjang Hougang Central and Yishun in the medium term. These locations are in addition to the 10 announced in the Land Transport Masterplan.

Take the taxi?

Keeping a closer eye on service standards and enhancing information on taxis to benefit taxi commuters.

Highlights:

- Higher taxi call booking service standards from October 2011.
- Enhanced provision of information on taxi service and fares, and signage at taxi stands.
- Publication of the results of taxi companies monthly Quality of Service standards and quarterly Mystery Customer Audits on the LTA website.



Are you elderly or less mobile?

Barrier-free access for those who are wheelchair-bound, safer pedestrian crossings and lifts at overhead bridges. Those who need some help getting around will not be left behind.

Highlights:

- Lifts will be provided at pedestrian overhead bridges near MRT stations at Aljunied, Bishan, Khatib, Kranji, Sengkang and Yew Tee.
- The Green Man Plus Scheme will be extended to 500 more pedestrian crossings island-wide.
- 95 percent of bus shelters are now barrier-free, with the remainder to be upgraded together with re-development works or when they are due for replacement.
- Two in five buses are now wheelchair-accessible.
- All new bus interchanges are barrier-free.
- All our MRT stations are already wheelchair accessible with at least one barrier free route and wheelchair accessible toilets.



Cycle to get around?

Cyclists can look forward to more bicycle parking facilities and steadily growing dedicated cycling tracks around Singapore.

Highlights:

- New cycling paths to be launched in Yishun, Sembawang and Pasir Ris in the coming months.
- At least 50 km of cycling paths in cycling towns island-wide and 16 km in the Marina Bay area by 2014.
- Additional bicycle parking racks at 10 MRT stations – Admiralty, Aljunied, Boon Lay, Chinese Garden, Khatib, Lakeside, Sembawang, Sengkang, Simei & Yishun.
- Enhanced bicycle parking facilities at key amenities for pilot cycling towns such as Taman Jurong, Yishun, Pasir Ris and Tampines (works to progressively commence from end of 2011).
- Public education to promote safe cycling behaviours will be enhanced and intensified via community engagement efforts.

A Safer Night Crossing

For motorists driving at night - especially elderly drivers who may have some difficulty with night vision - it is sometimes difficult to make out zebra crossing stripes on the road.

To ensure that pedestrian safety is not compromised, the LTA is embedding solar-powered lights in the road at selected zebra crossings, called flushed LED road studs, which will emit flashes of light at night so these motorists will see and stop at the crossing.

These lights are also safe for motorists as it protrudes less than 4 mm from the road surface.

The flushed LED road studs are currently on trial until October this year at zebra crossings at Marine Terrace and Bukit Merah View, where there is a higher proportion of elderly residents.



Safer Pedestrian Crossings Island-wide

A pilot scheme allowing senior citizens to prolong the Green Man sign when they are crossing the road has proven so successful, it will be extended island-wide to over 500 pedestrian crossings.



About 25 times a day at a particular traffic light located at the junction of Toa Payoh Central and Toa Payoh Lorong 4, the Green Man sign will flash for five seconds longer than usual.

This is because a senior citizen had tapped his CEPAS-compliant senior citizen concession card on a special card reader mounted on the traffic light, which gives him a longer time to cross the road safely.

The pilot scheme to prolong the Green Man sign for the safety of elderly pedestrians, called Green Man Plus, has been so successful it will be extended to over 500 pedestrian crossings island-wide by 2014.

These will be located at selected pedestrian crossings where a high proportion of the elderly can be found, including Ang Mo Kio, Bedok, Bukit Merah, Chinatown, Hougang, Kallang, Outram, Marine Parade, Queenstown, Rochor, Tampines and Toa Payoh.

1-2 Flushed LED road studs installed at zebra crossings to improve pedestrian safety.

3 Senior citizens are given up to five seconds more when crossing the road with the Green Man Plus scheme.

CCL Series Part 1: In the Beginning

The Birth of the Circle Line



The 33 km-long Circle Line, which has already made a difference to Singaporeans island-wide, will be completed in October 2011. Connect flips through the history books and recalls how the idea for the Circle Line was seeded.

Since 1967, the Singapore Government had wrestled with the idea of spending billions of dollars on an island-wide train network.

Buses, cars and taxis would do nicely, some argued.



Consultants were hired, there was much soul-searching, and the decision was made in 1982 to proceed with what would be Singapore's largest public works project.

It was a good thing: The North-South Line and the East-West Line have become an indispensable part of the Singaporean transport fabric, and the planners realised in the 1980s that as Singapore's population grows, more lines were needed.

We ask Ms Lina Lim, LTA's Deputy Group Director of Policy & Planning, to share with us how the Circle Line (CCL) came into the picture:

Why did the Government build the Circle Line?

With numerous radial Rapid Transit System lines running into the city, there was a need to have a line that can provide island-wide connectivity from one radial line to another. As there were plans to develop sub-regional centres in Bishan, Serangoon, Paya Lebar and Buona Vista, the LTA saw the advantage of running such a line in an orbital manner through these sub-regional centres.

Also, the heavily loaded radial lines, especially in the city area like Raffles Place, Dhoby Ghaut and City Hall stations, will have some relieve with CCL as commuters whose destinations are not in the city need not make transfers in these stations.

Why is the entire Circle Line underground?

As there was no defined road corridor that fully mirrors the CCL, an elevated option may not be suitable because it would be too close to the existing developments. It also frees up land above for future developments, such as the retail-commercial development above the Serangoon CCL station.

How does the Circle Line benefit people?

Commuters will be able to cut down their travelling time and bring people closer to their jobs, closer to their family, closer to each other, and enhance connections in our vibrant city.

Did you know?

- The Circle line was first known as the Marina Line.
- The Circle Line is not actually a full circle. There is no through service on the section between Harbourfront and Marina Bay or Dhoby Ghaut.
- The entire line is underground and fully automated.
- Circle Line trains can travel up to 80km/h and take up to 931 passengers.
- The completed Circle Line will be 33km long and has 29 stations.

Project PLANET:

An Award-Winning Planning Tool

When it comes to land transport planning in Singapore, the planners behind-the-scenes base their decisions on tons of data. The LTA has come up with a new award-winning tool called PLANET which helps make sense of all that data in a fraction of the time.

Imagine: A query which used to take 18 hours now takes 15 minutes.

That is a 99 percent time-saving!

The remarkable enterprise IT system is a data analysis tool, PLANET (Planning for Land Transport Network), which the LTA came up with in 2008 and implemented in July 2010.

It is targeted to help the planners at LTA, who have to analyse tons of data on areas like public transport ridership and journey times in order to make their recommendations.

The number of records they would have to analyse could easily go up to 100 million records or more.

Before PLANET, existing business intelligence systems were limited in processing power and could not crunch the data efficiently or effectively.

So a project team, led by LTA's Group Director, Innovation and Infocomm Technology, Mrs Rosina Howe, and comprising policy analysts, transport planners, research analysts, bus and transit regulators, business intelligence / data warehouse technologists and project management officers, met and came up with the PLANET solution which has changed the face of planning in LTA.



Currently, PLANET transforms over 12 million daily public transport records and supports queries on more than 3.7 billion records.

Not only is it quick, it can analyse data in different business dimensions, supports data-mining and effectively captures all the data in a knowledge repository which enables collaboration.

Within the first three months of PLANET's implementation, more than 70 new analytical reports were generated for policy review, post-analysis of schemes introduced and trend patterns to optimize resource planning.

In the short space of six months, it has also won a string of prestigious accolades, including:

- 8 Mar 2011** – CIO Asia Awards
- 23 Feb 2011** – Gartner Business Intelligence Excellence Awards, Sydney
- 26 Oct 2010** – Computerworld Enterprise Intelligence Awards, San Diego (Government and Non-Profit)

Global Public Transport Photo Competition: Singapore's Winners

Two Singaporeans took top honours in an international photo competition on public transport organized by Youth for Public Transport (Y4PT), a group of young people from all over the world interested in urban issues related to mobility. With entries for six categories received from over 30 countries, we speak to the two LTA staff who won with their local takes on public transport.



Photo: The Future is in our Hands



“ This photo was taken during the Youth For Transport Art Competition Award Ceremony in July 2010. It was not easy trying to cajole the girls to pose for a photograph as they were very shy. After some coaxing, they agreed to pose with their winning entries. It is meaningful because their winning art pieces are their unique expressions of how they perceive Singapore's public transport system. And the young holds the key to the future of public transport. ”

Noor Farihah

LTA Executive Assistant, Corporate Marketing



“ You can always take shots of a passing MRT. My challenge was trying to capture the shot with no other vehicle on the road. The meaning of the photo? That you can beat the traffic by taking the MRT! I took the shot at the Jurong East MRT and in order to get a better-elevated shot, I had to go all the way up to the 12th storey. Thank God for elevators! ”

Mohamad Hadi Ali

LTA Senior Admin Assistant, Project Communications



Photo: Train-sitions



Opening Their Ears to the Public

Christie Lutz's job is to respond to members of the public who have transport-related feedback.

She is part of a LTA's Feedback Division, a team of 15 who provide a listening ear whenever someone has anything to say about the land transport system in Singapore. The listeners-turned-problem-solvers are the front line to the rest of LTA and other government agencies when it comes to answering the public's questions and comments.

With years of experience among them, they pick up phone calls and sieve through the thousands of e-mails people send in every week asking about land transport issues. Then, they do the detective work to find solutions to problems and homes for new ideas among LTA staff, combing the network of LTA expertise.

Thankfully, the Feedback Division can tap on the input and expertise of hundreds of LTA staff who help to find answers using a customised feedback management system that takes in their contributions and comments

that result in answers. Despite extensive legwork, there are times when answers are not clear-cut and staff have to explain this to the writer or caller.

For instance, Christie a senior administrative assistant with the Feedback Division, was once asked: Where was the first traffic light in Singapore set up?

She quickly forwarded the query to the relevant division to get the answer. With her colleague's quick reference, Christie could tell the writer that the first traffic lights in Singapore were installed at the junction of Bukit Timah and Serangoon Roads 63 years ago, in 1948.

For her earnest attention to queries big and small, Christie received the LTA Star Award for the months of October – December last year.

"To know that my service is recognized is indeed encouraging!" said Christie.

1 LTA Feedback team, (from left to right) Amanda Tan, Rebecca Tan, Christie Lutz, Michael Yap, Lillian Yeo, Aminah Bujang, Hermanjit Singh, Katherine Ann Krummert, Tan Pek Sze, Jacintha Mano and Nor Aishah. Absent from the photo are: Chen Shan Shan, Teo Kok Guan, Lai Moh Sim, and Jacintha Naleya.



New Barrier-free Overhead Bridge at Woodlands

In response to the needs of the community, the LTA has built a new pedestrian overhead bridge along Woodlands Avenue 7 which not only makes it more convenient for residents to cross the road safely, it is also barrier-free.

This means that instead of steps, those who are wheelchair-bound, elderly or have prams in tow, can go up the ramp which has been built to accommodate them.

During the opening ceremony of the bridge on March 26,

over 200 residents turned up to watch Health Minister and Adviser to Sembawang GRO as well as Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Ministry of National Development and Adviser to Admiralty GRO Dr Maliki Osman cut the ribbon and walk across the bridge.

Residents said that the bridge would make life easier for them, and they also appreciated that the bus stops are located conveniently near the bridge.



1 (Front row, left to right) Guests of Honour, Dr Mohamad Maliki Osman, Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Ministry of National Development and Adviser to Admiralty GRO and Mr Khaw Boon Wan, Minister of Health and Adviser to Sembawang GRO at the opening ceremony with LTA's Deputy Chief Executive (Infrastructure & Development), Mr Lim Bok Ngam.

2 Residents show their support at the event.

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Simply be a fan of our new Facebook page, We Keep Your World Moving.

Here's a preview of what the page contains:

- Economics videos on the land transport system of Singapore;
- Latest happenings of the land transport system;
- Exclusive coverage of LTA events and project milestones;
- Basic land transport information, like the operational hours for bus lanes; and
- Other useful tips for public transport and road users.

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