

SEES 327 PASSENGERS PER TRIP, APMC-MOTERA ONLY 133; G'NAGAR TRAFFIC TO RISE AFTER LINE IS FULLY EXTENDED

# It's all about connections: Thaltej-Vastral line most used

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**Ahmedabad:** A lowdown on passenger numbers on the city's metro lines says much about whether or not the public transport service has helped better commuter experience and reduce traffic on the roads. Factors like connectivity, number of stops and commute time have led citizens towards or away from the metro.

A comparison of commuter numbers on different lines shows that the APMC-Motera (north-south) line is the least preferred and at just 133 per trip, has the lowest passenger numbers. The Ahmedabad-Gandhinagar metro, which halts at Sector 1, averages 150 passengers per trip while the most used is the service between Thaltej and Vastral Gam (east-west corri-

dor), with around 327 passengers.

Officials said that the metro, on average, caters to nearly 90,000 passengers daily. Of these, 66,120 commute on the east-west corridor and 23,500 on the north-south corridor. The newly launched stretch from Motera to Sector-1 and from GNLU to GIFT City is being used by an average of 2,500 passengers a day. There are eight trips each between Motera and Sector-1 and vice versa.

Officials mentioned that passenger traffic from Thaltej to Vastral was higher as this stretch connects important destinations like Commerce College, Kalpur railway station, Kankaria, and the industrial belt in Vastral. The north-south corridor, however, has only one important station, Gandhinagar, close to Gujarat College.



SS Rathore, managing director, Gujarat Metro Rail Corporation (GMRC), said,

“We were expecting less footfall on this stretch. The many roads parallel to the north-south corridor do not have much vehicular traffic. This metro line will see more passengers once traffic on these roads increases.” He added, “The Gandhinagar stretch will be a success once fully

launched.”

An officer requesting anonymity said that as the Sabarmati station, connected with the north-south corridor, is yet to be inaugurated, those wanting to catch a train from Sabarmati have to either take a rickshaw or a bus.

Officials said a metro to and from Gandhinagar runs every 80 minutes, and during this wait time one can travel

to the capital and back even on a motorcycle. A senior GMRC official said that the corporation expects the Gandhinagar stretch to be a major success once the entire network till Mahatma Mandir, which connects Old Secretariat, Akshardham, Police Bhavan, among others, is completed.

At present, authorities are monitoring the demand. Frequency will be increased once that improves.

A similar strategy was adopted when the metro was launched in Ahmedabad city, and now there is a train available every 12 minutes, the official said.

To prevent confusion among commuters, GMRC has displayed the timing till which tickets will be issued for Gandhinagar. “The last train to Sector 1 leaves Motera station at 6pm and returns

at 6.40pm. We have put up timings at each station after which no ticket is issued. For example, at the Old Gujarat High Court station tickets to Gandhinagar are only issued until 5.33pm.”

According to an estimate, less than 7 lakh commuters use city transport, including the Ahmedabad Municipal Transport Service (AMTS), Bus Rapid Transit System and the metro service.

Despite the city boasting three public transport systems, the number of citizens using them has reduced by 17.6% in 14 years. More pertinently, the population of two-wheelers and cars in the city has risen by 86% in the same period, according to data. In Oct 2009, AMTS alone boated an average of 8.25 lakh passengers every day in over 900 trips. BRTS was launched in 2009.