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*Zoo visitors encouraged to avoid traffic and parking hassles by taking public transit*

**San Diego** – After eight long years, pandas are finally making their return to the San Diego Zoo. Don't let "Panda-monium" become parking pandemonium – the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) runs direct, frequent service to the Zoo from downtown and central San Diego.

"The debut of Yun Chuan and Xin Bao has become the talk of the town among panda lovers in San Diego and Southern California, and MTS is ready to take visitors right to the doorstep of the San Diego Zoo," said Stephen Whitburn, MTS Board Chair and San Diego City Councilmember, District 3. "With thousands of visitors expected to flock to the zoo over the course of the next few weeks, the easiest and quickest way to get to Panda Ridge is by taking public transit."

The transit agency encourages zoo visitors to avoid the hassle of parking by taking *Rapid 215* and Route 7 from downtown to the Zoo Place stop, directly across from the zoo entrance. Riders can connect to *Rapid 215* and Route 7 from any Trolley line and get to the Zoo in 15 minutes or less from downtown, with buses running every 15 minutes or better, daily. The two bus routes also serve Uptown, Mid-City and San Diego State neighborhoods, making travel easy for zoo visitors traveling from eastern parts of the city and county.

### **Getting to San Diego Zoo**

Visitors can skip the stress and ride with MTS to make your visit smooth and enjoyable. Free Park & Ride lots are available throughout the MTS system and can help cut down travel time. View the full list of [Park & Ride](#) lots on the MTS website. To help visitors get to the Zoo quicker, MTS shares valuable transit tips:

- Connecting to Rapid 215:
  - From Downtown San Diego: Take the Trolley to Santa Fe Depot or City College stations
  - South County: Take the UC San Diego Blue Line Trolley or Rapid 225 to City College
  - From North County: Take the UC San Diego Blue Line south to Santa Fe Depot, or Rapid 235 to Boulevard Transit Plaza (I-15 and El Cajon Blvd), or City College
  - From East County: Take the Green Line Trolley to SDSU Transit Center
- Connecting to Route 7:
  - From Downtown San Diego: Take the Trolley to City College
  - From North County: Take Rapid 235 to City Heights Transit Plaza (I-15 and University Ave)
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#### Key Travel Times:

- Santa Fe Depot to the Zoo: 14 minutes
- City College to the Zoo: 6 minutes
- Boulevard Transit Plaza to the Zoo: 17 minutes
- SDSU to the Zoo: 34 minutes

For more information on how to get to the Zoo, visit [the MTS website](#) or [the City of San Diego's website](#).

#### **Paying for Your Fare**

To help expedite the boarding process, zoo visitors should [download the PRONTO app](#) in advance. Load at least \$5 on your app, which covers a round-trip fare for adult riders. Riders also now have the option to simply tap a credit card or other [contactless payment options](#), such as a smartphone or smartwatch, on the validators to pay for a one-way ride (\$2.50, includes free transfers for two hours).

All riders must tap or scan on validators to activate their pass or fare prior to boarding. Every person needs their own PRONTO app or card, you cannot buy fares for multiple people on the same device, card or payment method. If you have a PRONTO card, you can load your card in advance online at [ridepronto.com](#).

#### **Kids ride free!**

Families going to San Diego Zoo on weekends can save big by taking MTS Trolleys and buses. On weekends, two children 12 and under [ride for free](#), no pass required, with every paying adult. Additionally, youth ages 18 and under with a registered Youth PRONTO card or app account can ride free with the [Youth Opportunity Pass](#).

#### **About MTS**

The Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) operates 92 bus routes and three Trolley lines in 10 cities and unincorporated areas of San Diego. MTS is a leader in advancing initiatives to create a greener, cleaner and better-connected transit system in San Diego. Each weekday more than 250,000 passenger trips are taken throughout the MTS system taking people to work, school, health appointments and other essential trips. In FY 2023, MTS served more than 68 million riders. For service schedule updates, news, alerts and more information on how you can use public transportation, go to [www.sdmts.com](#).

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