

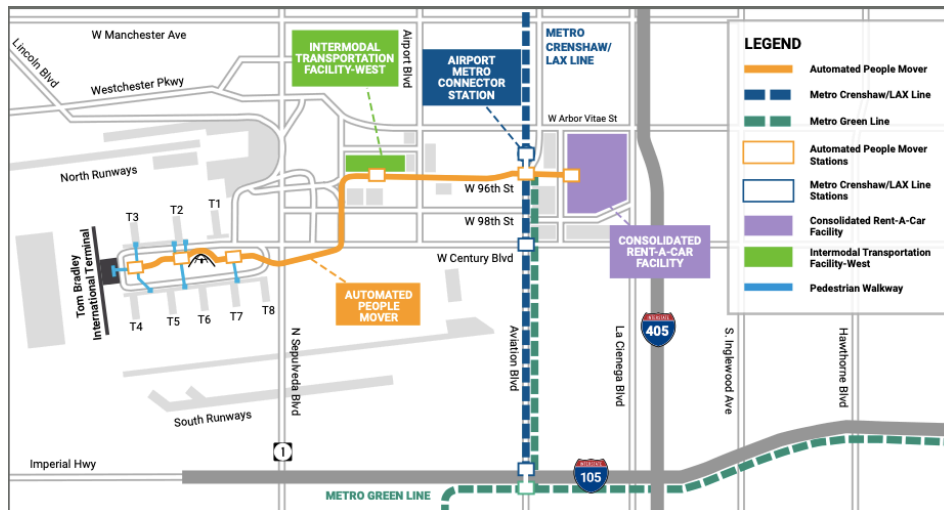


**Justin Erbacci, CEO of Los Angeles World Airports.**

**One of many mockups for the new LAX people mover train to be built in the next two years.**



**A route map shows the exact location of the new train.**



## **LAX CEO Justin Erbacci Discusses Airport Plans Ahead of the 2028 Olympics**

**By Kiersten Vannest**

Tired of LAX traffic congestion? CEO of Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) Justin Erbacci shares plans for a streamlined LAX ahead of the 2028 Olympics, as well as his experience managing an airport during a global pandemic.

Erbacci's days are long and filled with everything from Covid related upkeep to ground communication with flights to construction projects underway and in development.

"[The day] starts early and goes long," he laughs, trying to explain his day-to-day work. Erbacci was appointed interim CEO of LAWA in January of 2020, just before California went into lockdown because of the virus. Before that, he worked as the Chief Operations Officer, and he was officially appointed full-time CEO status in June of last year.

LAWA encompasses LAX, Van Nuys airport, and an aviation-related property in Palmdale. In order to operate a major airport, there are three major entities involved: the airport operator (in this case, LAWA), commercial air carriers and aviation businesses,

and federal agencies like the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Transportation.

With one of the largest metropolitan hubs in the world, including travel from around the globe, stepping into this leadership role would prove a challenge at any time for anyone. But for Erbacci, he took over leadership with all that entails in the wake of travel and airports becoming a significant point of focus associated with medical risks.

With the threat of Covid looming large, Erbacci didn't miss a beat. Taking federal guidance and safety precautions into consideration, he created a Covid task force to handle everything from implementing new touchless technologies all over the facility to implementing new cleaning standards and training to keep every employee up to date and on the same page. This includes things like new UV light sterilized handrails on escalators and buttons on elevators. Many normal airport functions moved over to a format usable on a mobile phone. Erbacci worked in his office every day of the pandemic to ensure the safety of all essential workers still required to go to the airport and begin working on a health and recovery plan for the future.

As for what's going on as we begin to exit the pandemic, some exciting new projects are underway. Erbacci explains some of the new plans he's approved and is developing with the LAWA team.

"We have a \$14.5 billion improvement program going on," he says. The project he is most excited about is the construction of a people mover train that will transport travelers to and from the airport and all terminals, effectively mitigating the need for cars to be in the center of the airport.

The new people mover train will have three stations within the airport: a west stop near the Bradley International Terminal, a Central Terminal stop, and the third stop between terminals 1 and 7. From here, the train will continue eastward to a stop at an intermodal

transportation facility. This will be a remote parking lot with about 4,300 spaces that will allow for parking, as well as ride pickups and drop-offs.

Continuing east, the people mover train will intersect with the Crenshaw metro line, allowing access by metro to the airport. Finally, the last station will be at the largest consolidated rental car facility in the United States.

“It will be the second-largest cement structure in the United States, second only to the Pentagon,” says Erbacci. The idea with all of this is that all rental car transactions will happen at this final station, residents will have an easier time accessing the airport sans car via the metro, and all cars and hotel shuttles can mostly use the remote parking lot, where guests can then enter the airport by train. With all of these measures, the flow of travel through LAX will be much more ergonomic for a city of this size.

In addition to the train, Erbacci is working on the renovation of terminals, improvements to the airfield to alleviate congestion experienced on the ground, and adding more gates and a new concourse. A new elevated roadway system is also underway to replace the current system of how cars enter the central terminal, easing traffic on nearby streets and improving circulation in and out of the airport.

As Erbacci looks to the future, these projects are anticipated to be completed in total by 2023. Though he says these changes would have happened regardless of the upcoming Olympics, he says that he does want to make a good impression as athletes from all over the globe enter our city, which these new airport modifications will help provide. His team has set forth an ambitious sustainability plan with the goal of being carbon neutral by 2045. Through all of these goals, Erbacci makes it clear that inclusion is a priority, making sure that diverse groups and companies have the chance to participate in these ongoing plans.

With participation in mind, Erbacci relates his desire to be a good neighbor to El Segundo. With all these plans being set forth, he is making sure the community has time

to review them and reach out with any questions, concerns, or suggestions. Feedback to local elected representatives will make it on his desk, and he encourages all local residents to be informed.

Erbacci describes a sense of honor and privilege in his role and focuses on serving travelers the best experience possible.

“My personal goals are those for the airport... We want to make sure that we are providing a world-class airport for the citizens of Los Angeles and those who are coming to Los Angeles.”•