



PRINTER FRIENDLY

[\[Print\]](#) [\[Close\]](#)

## **New MetroLink line goes to work today**

By ***Aisha Sultan*** and ***Elisa Crouch***

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Monday, Aug. 28 2006

Mike Triplett's commute from Belleville to his job in St. Louis County just got a bit cheaper and a lot less frustrating.

Today marks the first day of weekday service on MetroLink's new Shrewsbury line. On Sunday, Triplett, 47, joined thousands of other riders taking a free test run on the line. For more than 20 years, Triplett has endured a 45-minute commute each way on a good day. He was excited at the prospect of taking the train to work.

"I'm looking forward to this as a way to save money," he said. Not having to deal with gridlock or bridge traffic is an added bonus.

There were signs, however, that the expanded rail service will take some getting used to. Riders tried to get their bearings and figure out how they would get from the station stops to work, shopping or restaurants.

Adding to potential confusion today are changes to 58 Metro bus routes.

And fares increase today for the third time in three years. Regular bus fares go up a dime, to \$1.75. A one-way ticket on MetroLink increases a quarter, to \$2. The transit agency has publicized the changes for weeks. It's distributed 50,000 free copies of its 216-page guidebook filled with new schedules and fielded thousands of calls from confused riders.

Still, it expects some disorder.

Metro ambassadors will be at every MetroLink platform to answer questions. And the transit agency recommends that riders plan routes using the trip finder feature on its website, [metrostl.org](http://metrostl.org).

The new line adds eight miles to MetroLink's now 46-mile system. It makes Clayton and downtown easier lunch destinations for people who don't have time to hunt for parking.

The excitement level was high this weekend, as families brought youngsters for a ride, locals snapped pictures and commuters plotted new routes to work.

One rider hopped out of her seat and remarked to a friend: "This is very historic. I think it's like the Panama Canal."

**[asultan@post-dispatch.com](mailto:asultan@post-dispatch.com)**

**314-340-8300**

**[ecrouch@post-dispatch.com](mailto:ecrouch@post-dispatch.com)**

**314-340-8119**