

Japan's 311 mph super maglev train takes passengers for run

November 19 2014, by Nancy Owano



Japan's magnetically levitating maglev train, faster than Japan's bullet train, is doing test runs with passengers, members of the public, in central Japan. The world's fastest maglev train, the 311 mph (500 km/h) Series L0 (pronounced "L zero") prototype, made its first public run.

The trains will enter service between Tokyo and Nagoya in 2027, barring any setbacks, [said](#) Gizmodo. One hundred passengers traveled a 27-mile route between the cities of Uenohara and Fuefuki on the Shinkansen train earlier this month, reaching speeds of up to 311 miles per hour. The train's use of maglev technology reduces friction. The Central Japan

Railway Company is running eight days of testing for the experimental maglev. The Daily Mail said selection of those lucky enough to experience the trial runs will be by lottery. A total of 2,400 people will take the high-speed ride over eight days. Almost 300,000 people had applied for the passes, said the Daily Mail. As the video of a recent trial run indicated, guests saw the stats on monitoring screens and snapped away with their cameras.

When completed in 2027, said Katie Amey in the Daily Mail, "their exceptional speed capacity will cut the travel [time](#) by half, linking Tokyo's Shinagawa Station with Nagoya in about 40 minutes, a journey which currently takes approximately 80 minutes." The [maglev trains](#) are expected to eventually consist of 16 carriages and carry up to 1,000 passengers at a time, she said.

As for the recent trial run, a number of maglev train-watching stories in the U.S. expressed admiration but also reminded readers that there is a gap in quality of rail systems between the U.S. and Japan. Referring to the BBC News video showing the delighted train passengers young and old, Emily Badger of the Washington Post said, "That scene is both a testament to Japan's commitment to high-speed [rail](#), and a reminder of how far the U.S. lags." If a train on the East Coast traveled the speed of Japan's new maglev, she noted, a person could commute from D.C. to New York in under 60 minutes. She also noted that fast trains have the potential to further knit together economies of nearby cities just too far apart for commuting today.

Still, it may just be a matter of time before the U.S. catches up to having maglev train technology in place. Northeast Maglev, reported Bloomberg last month, is a company seeking to bring a \$10 billion Japanese magnetic-levitation train line to the 40-mile (64 kilometer) Washington-Baltimore corridor for 15-minute [trips](#). The company site said that "The Northeast Maglev (TNEM) is a U.S.-owned company based in

Washington, DC. We are committed to bringing the Superconducting Maglev technology to the United States' Northeast Corridor, the most congested transportation region in the country. TNEM is [working](#) closely with JR Central to utilize this technology in the United States."

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Citation: Japan's 311 mph super maglev train takes passengers for run (2014, November 19)
retrieved 25 April 2024 from
<https://techxplore.com/news/2014-11-japan-super-maglev-passengers.html>

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