



## **Eagles, city tell fans to take train to game**

PHILADELPHIA -- Get an early start and leave your car at home. That's the advice offered in this report by Angela Couloumbis that appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer.

That is the advice city officials are doling out to the thousands of fans expected to converge on Lincoln Financial Field this Sunday for the showdown between the Eagles and the Green Bay Packers.

With a little less than 20,000 parking spaces available to accommodate a stadium that can seat 68,000 people -- including reserved spaces and pay-as-you-park spots -- "our message is, quite simply: 'Take public transportation,'" city Managing Director Philip Goldsmith said yesterday.

Faye Moore, SEPTA's general manger, put it this way: "Take our seat to your seat at the Linc."

Moore said special "sports express" trains would be in service -- in addition to regularly-scheduled trains -- and would run approximately every 10 minutes between 1:30 p.m and 3:40 p.m.

Gates to the seating areas at the stadium will open at 2:45 p.m., and kickoff is scheduled for 4:45 p.m.

The express trains will begin at the Fern Rock station and will stop only at the Olney Transportation Center, Erie, Girard, Spring Garden, Race-Vine, City Hall and Walnut-Locust stations en route to the Pattison Avenue Station next to the Linc.

Local Broad Street trains will also be in service, running every 12 minutes or so, officials said.

As for fans traveling from the suburbs, city transportation officials are hoping to entice them to hop the subway as well.

Those coming from New Jersey, for instance, can take the PATCO High-Speed Line and connect with SEPTA at the Walnut Street Station. Those coming from some Pennsylvania suburbs can take Regional Rail to Suburban Station, then walk to City Hall Station to transfer to the Broad Street Line.

"It is the way to come to the game," Eagles president Joe Banner said yesterday.

Banner and city officials noted that there would be about 1,000 fewer parking spaces available Sunday because of demolition activities at Veterans Stadium.

In all, there will be about 19,700 parking spaces in the vicinity of the Linc.

So if, despite the odds, fans decide to drive to South Philadelphia on Sunday, they should at least carpool -- and plan on leaving their homes early.

Along with other Eagles fans, drivers will have to contend with traffic from a Kixx soccer game at the Wachovia Spectrum, scheduled to start at 1 p.m. and end about 3:30 p.m.

So when you find a paid parking lot, pull into it, said Capt. Thomas Helker of the Philadelphia Police Department's Traffic Division. Don't try to find a space closer to the stadium, because chances are you won't.

And forget parking in the residential neighborhoods surrounding the stadium: It's strictly off limits. City officials plan to have tow trucks on hand in case fans decide not to honor the ban, said Shawn Jalosinski, executive director for the **Sports Complex Special Services District**.

(The preceding report by Angela Coulombis appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer Thursday, Jan. 8, 2004.)

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