



# NEWS

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## MTA BOARD APPROVES ACCELERATED PURCHASE OF NEW BUSES THROUGH FY 2004

The MTA Board of Directors today gave approval to CEO Julian Burke's recommendation to purchase 2,095 buses between FY 1998 and FY 2004 subject to the availability of funding. Burke will present details of the available funding to both the MTA Board's Operations and Finance & Budget Committees, and to the full Board in October.

The new schedule will add nearly 800 buses to the scheduled purchase of 1,313 buses outlined in a previously approved six-year plan.

As part of the accelerated plan, the Board also gave Burke the authority to exercise an option with Neoplan U.S.A. for an additional 100 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses, the delivery of which could begin as early as January 1999.

"This is great news for the hundreds of thousands of people in Los Angeles County who depend on Metro buses to get them to jobs, schools, medical facilities and other destinations," said MTA CEO Julian Burke. "Speeding up bus purchases will help lower the average age of our fleet from more than nine years old to below six years old by the end of calendar year 2000, and it will do it seven years earlier than the last plan."

"A younger fleet means a more reliable fleet," added Burke. "Improving fleet reliability will improve on-time performance and help lessen overcrowding on Metro buses."

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The Board also gave Burke authority today to negotiate a change order in a 222-bus contract with New Flyer of America so that the buses would be manufactured as low-floor coaches instead of high-floor buses. In the future, the MTA would buy only low-floor buses which will benefit senior citizens and people in wheelchairs.

Burke postponed a request to modify the existing Alternative Fuel Initiative (AFI) to allow the MTA to maintain a 50/50 alternative fuel/clean diesel fleet mix pending completion of a study on this option and discussions with the Clean Air Coalition and other environmental groups.

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