

# December Board Actions

## **New Year's Revelers to get Free Rides; Board Wants Accident Follow-up Report**

(Dec. 2) New Year's Eve revelers can get a free ride on Metro Buses and Metro Rail, compliments of the MTA and a motion approved during the December Board meeting.

The Board also approved a motion by Supervisor Yvonne Burke directing the MTA staff to provide a report within 60 days as a follow-up to last week's Metro Blue Line accident in Compton. The report will cover the status of safety programs and other possible safety efforts, along with projected costs and needed legislation, and a review of other rail properties' experiences with at-grade crossings.

Among the items approved were:

**Free Rides.** The motion by Mayor Richard Riordan offers free rides on New Year's Eve aboard Metro Buses and Metro Rail trains. The free service would begin at 11 a.m., Friday, Dec. 31, and continue until 5 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 1.

All regular Metro Bus lines will provide some level of service to five city-sponsored Millennium sites at Baldwin Hills/Crenshaw Plaza, California Plaza at Grand Avenue, Olvera Street, San Pedro/Los Angeles Harbor and at the Van Nuys Airport.

On Christmas Eve, the MTA also will offer free rides from 9 p.m. until 5 a.m., but Metro Rail service will not be extended past its normal operating hours.

**Extend Rail Service.** The Board approved a motion by Director Zev Yaroslavsky directing the MTA to provide in 30 days a financing and operational plan to immediately extend rail hours to serve the Staples Center and Music Center.

The action also directs the staff to provide within 60 days a cost and operational plan to extend rail service when the Metro Red Line opens to North Hollywood in mid-2000.

**Radio System.** The Board authorized the CEO to contract for consulting and technical support of the Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS). The ATMS will replace the existing Transit Radio system (TRS), which is obsolete and does not meet the MTA's operational needs.

ATMS is expected to improve communications between Metro Buses and the Bus Operations Control Center, provide real time information on bus location, improve safety, quality and fleet management. It also will be capable of integrating with the Universal Fare and be compatible with existing operational systems.

**Bicycle Racks.** The Board approved, unanimously, a motion to purchase 550 fold-up bicycle racks to be mounted on Metro Buses. The single-source, \$291,407 contract required a two-thirds vote of the full Board.

Bike racks already are mounted on 1,400 of the MTA's 2,200 buses. If approved, the additional 550 racks will be installed beginning in January – a possible seven-month project. The agency is aiming at

equipping 100 percent of the fleet with bike racks. All new buses delivered from the factory will come equipped with bike racks.

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