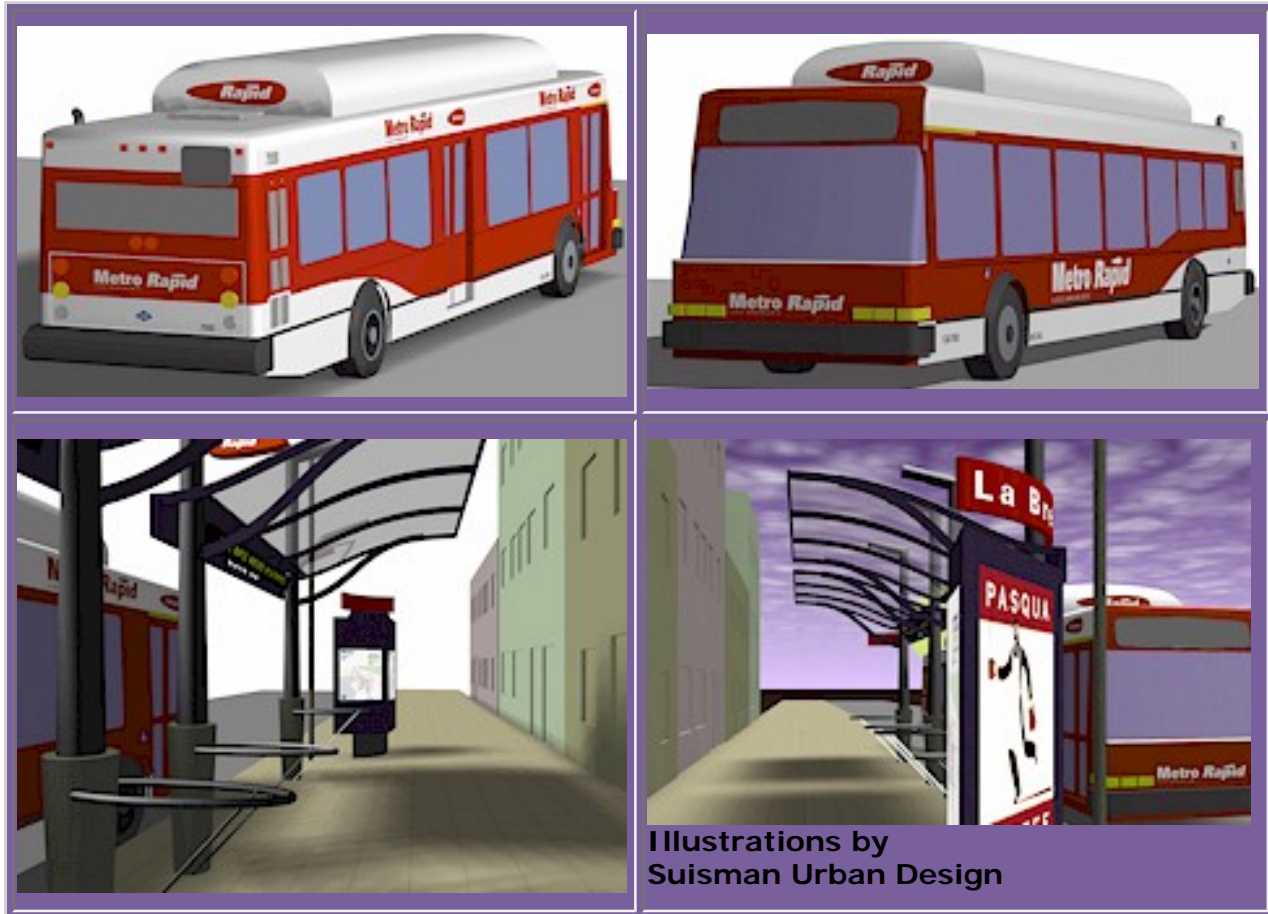


## Rapid Bus Project Shifts into Top Gear to Meet North Hollywood Opening Date



**(Jan. 7)** Work on the Metro Rapid Bus system is accelerating. The MTA is targeting the start of the innovative demonstration project to match the opening of the Metro Red Line's North Hollywood Extension in mid-year.

One hundred low-floor CNG vehicles, painted in a red and white design, will be assigned to Metro Rapid Bus service. The demonstration project will cover the 24-mile Whittier/Wilshire corridor from Montebello to Santa Monica and the 16-mile Ventura Boulevard corridor from Universal City Station to Warner Center.

### 'Rubber-tired railway'

Functioning like a "rubber-tired railway," Metro Rapid Buses will have signal priority at intersections. They will stop for passengers at specially designed bus stops spaced as much as a mile apart.

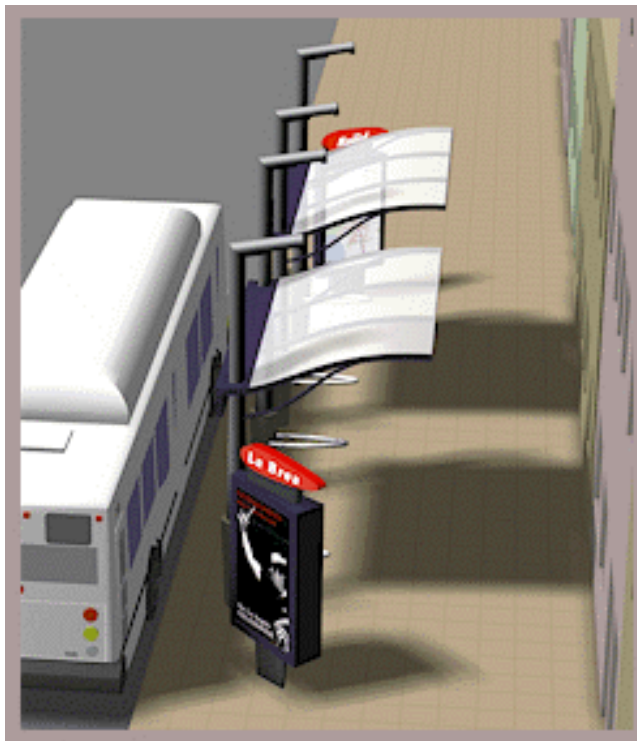
Tests conducted on Ventura Boulevard last June and in the Whittier/Wilshire corridor in July indicated that Metro Rapid Buses provide measurable time savings even over the MTA's limited bus service.

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According to project manager Rex Gephart, about half the devices needed to provide signal priority have been installed near intersections along the two routes. A contractor also has been found to design and fabricate some 60 modernistic bus shelters, as well as signage and information kiosks for other stops along the Metro Rapid Bus routes.

### Will train operators soon

The MTA will begin training operators soon for the new bus service. Gephart expects several hundred will be needed to drive two routes. A third, 12-mile demonstration line serving the Pico/Rimpau to Downtown to East LA corridor is expected to open in July.



Metro Rapid Bus service will differ from the MTA's current bus service, which operates on a "time point-based" schedule that requires operators to arrive at and depart stops according to a strict schedule.

"The new service will operate on an 'interval-based' schedule that is aimed at maintaining the distance between buses and moving buses from one end of the route to the other as quickly as possible," Gephart explained.

### 3- to 5-minute service

The buses must maintain service intervals of three-to-five minutes, depending upon time of day. Monitoring personnel in a control center at the MTA will track the movement of buses along the routes. They will be able to communicate with operators, directing them, when necessary, to close up an interval or even pass the bus ahead to keep service moving.

Special signal lights installed along the routes will help operators maintain their intervals. The MTA will assign extra transit operations supervisors to the Metro Rapid Bus program to ensure the system operates efficiently.

**The MTA and LADOT have formed a partnership to develop the development of the Metro Rapid Bus program. LADOT is responsible for design and installation of the bus signal priority system.**

**LADOT also is assisting in locating a satellite of its Automated Traffic Surveillance and Control (ATSAC) system in the MTA's Bus Operations Control Center. Some 130 ATSAC TV cameras, located at strategic intersections, monitor the flow of traffic throughout the city. With access to ATSAC, the MTA will be able to track and direct Metro Rapid Bus service.**

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