

MTA to Set Record for Most Bus Service in Fiscal Year 2001

By MARC LITTMAN

The MTA and its contract bus lines will offer a record amount of bus service in Fiscal Year 2001, eclipsing the previous record set in the mid-1980's by MTA's predecessor agency, the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD).

The proposed MTA budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1, 2000 calls for deploying at least 2,012 buses during weekday rush hours and 7,271,125 annual bus revenue service hours between MTA and its contract carriers.

Foothill Transit Lines not Included

This compares to 2,009 peak hour buses deployed by SCRTD in Fiscal Year 1985 and 7,257,000 annual bus revenue service hours in Fiscal Year 1987. The MTA record stands out in sharp relief considering that 20 of the San Gabriel Valley bus lines operated by SCRTD in the 1980's are now operated by independent Foothill Transit and are not counted in the MTA service totals. Likewise, some other former SCRTD bus lines have been assumed by the 15 other municipal bus operators in Los Angeles County.

Moreover, Metro Rail service didn't start until the Metro Blue Line debuted in July 1990. MTA will expand Metro Rail service in Fiscal year 2001 with the opening of the North Hollywood subway extension next month. In addition, the MTA will run more service on the Metro Blue and Green Lines. Altogether, MTA will operate 500,000 hours of Metro Rail revenue service in the next fiscal year.

"I look forward to better service and less overcrowding than ever before for our customers, especially for those who depend on Metro buses to get where they're going," said Los Angeles County Supervisor and MTA Board Chair Yvonne Brathwaite Burke.

1,000 New Buses

Burke noted that, in the last four years, MTA has taken delivery of 1,000 new buses to completely overhaul its fleet. More than 500 should be delivered next year.

The draft Fiscal year 2001 MTA budget calls for spending \$1.161 billion, or 46 percent of the total MTA budget, on MTA bus operating and capital and municipal bus operator subsidies compared to \$1.119 billion or 44 percent this year.

Public Hearing on Budget Thursday

A public hearing on the MTA draft Fiscal year 2001 budget will be held at 9 a.m. Thursday, May 18, in the third floor Board room at MTA headquarters at Gateway Plaza next to Union Station in downtown Los Angeles.

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