

## **MTA Goes to Head of Line for Bus Rapid Transit Funding**

(Jan. 29) The MTA just got a boost from the Federal Transit Administration that now ranks the agency at the head of the line for funding of Bus Rapid Transit projects.

As a “first tier member” of the FTA’s Bus Rapid Transit Consortium, the MTA is numbered among only 11 local agencies nationwide whose projects will be the first to receive federal funding for travel, research and project development.

[Read about Bus Rapid Transit programs on the FTA web site.](#)

The success of the Metro Rapid Bus demonstration impressed the FTA and was the primary factor in winning a place on the consortium for the MTA, says Rex Gephart, project manager. As a result, the agency will receive an initial grant of \$50,000, with more expected in the near future.

“The FTA sees very positive results from what we’re doing,” he says. “In fact, they’re taking our results to the federal budget committees to suggest that bus rapid transit programs are actually working.”

### **Metro Rapid Bus won admiration**

The MTA was excluded from the consortium at first, Gephart says, because the FTA considered dedicated rights-of-way to be a key factor in any bus rapid transit plan. But, the 25 percent reduction in travel times and the 26 percent increase in ridership achieved by the Metro Rapid Bus demonstration won the FTA’s admiration.

“The initiation of rapid bus service on Wilshire and Ventura Boulevards is already generating positive results,” wrote Nuria Fernandez, acting FTA administrator. “Bus riders are experiencing higher levels and more reliable service. These improvements are already generating tangible mobility benefits.”

In the months ahead, Gephart expects more interest in bus rapid transit projects and an increase in the MTA’s interaction with the FTA and other “first tier” agencies as funding becomes available for research.

In fact, he’s already been named to a technical advisory committee for a transit vehicle design competition.

[Back to MTA Report](#)