

Subway Ridership Marks Record as Gas Prices Spiral

By MARC LITTMAN

(May 16, 2001) Spiraling gas prices helped boost ridership on Metro Buses and Metro Rail in April. Ridership on the Metro Red Line subway is at an all-time high and the subway is carrying nearly twice as many riders as it did a year ago.

Average weekday boardings on Metro Buses in April were 1,196,042. That's up almost 100,000 boardings compared with April 2000 (1,100,492).

MTA officials credit the gain to a record amount of bus service and many new buses on the road, including the Metro Rapid Buses. A still strong economy in Los Angeles is a factor, but steep gas prices also are attracting riders.

Weekday boardings on the 59-mile Metro Rail system in April averaged 216,400. That compared with 149,850 boardings in April 2000.

Metro Red Line record

Of the Metro Rail total, the Metro Red Line recorded 125,050 average weekday boardings in April, a record, and just about double the 63,325 boardings in April 2000.

MTA officials are encouraging tourists and their local hosts to take advantage of Metro Rail this summer to visit dozens of major entertainment and cultural attractions.

Universal Studios, for example, has a special promotion for Metro riders going through July. The theme park will deduct the cost of a round-trip fare from the full price of studio tour admission.

MTA publishes a brochure that shows how to visit numerous attractions from the Long Beach Aquarium to the Watts Towers, Olvera Street, Mann's Chinese Theater, Universal City and the NoHo Arts District via Metro Rail.

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