

**EDITOR'S NOTE**-This is the first in a series of articles about the MTA's new transit services sector concept. Reorganizing agency operations to improve customer service was discussed during CEO Roger Snoble's all-staff meeting shortly after he joined the MTA in October. Deputy CEO John Catoe described the concept in his first interview with *MTA Report*.

Future articles will include an interview with Snoble, while others will describe the planning, development and implementation process and the work of an employee service sector task force. An all-staff meeting to discuss service sectors is scheduled at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 10, in the Board Room.



CEO Roger Snoble and Deputy CEO John Catoe present MTA's new service sector concept to the Valley's Transportation Zone board in Glendale.

### Fast Track: Service Sector Could Open in July 2002

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Dec. 6, 2001) The MTA's new service sector concept is on a fast track and the first one could be in place to serve the San Fernando Valley by July 2002.

That was the message CEO Roger Snoble and Deputy CEO John Catoe had for the Valley's Transportation Zone board during a presentation, Dec. 3, in Glendale. It was a message that appeared to gain a favorable reception from Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Los Angeles City Council President Alex Padilla and other board members.

Although Yaroslavsky said the concept "has a lot of promise" and urged the MTA to move ahead "with the utmost speed," the Valley transit zone will continue on a parallel path of development for the time being.

Snoble emphasized during the presentation that sectors will be more responsive to customers' transit needs and will give local officials more control over transportation services. He said as many as four or five sectors are being considered for major portions of the MTA's countywide service area. Rail operations would be a separate sector.

"The cleanest one from our perspective, because of the geography involved, would be the San Fernando Valley," which, Snoble noted, has only two operating divisions – Division 8 and Division 15 – and only a few bus lines that are shared by another division.

### Sector concept still evolving



Deputy CEO John Catoe and CEO Roger Snoble speak

Snoble and Catoe have indicated that the sector concept is still evolving as details of its structure, administration and operational aspects are worked out. MTA employees will be heavily involved in this process, with some serving on a task force or its sub-committees and others participating in focus groups to provide ideas about the organization's structure.

Elements of the plan – particularly those relating to community involvement and sector governance – must be approved by the MTA Board.

**More:**  
[Snoble Discusses Transit Topics on KPCC's 'Talk of the City'](#)

before the Valley's  
Transportation Zone board.

Under the sector concept, the MTA would have sole responsibility for operating such regional transit services as Metro Rail, Metro Rapid and express bus service. A sector board might contract for shuttle, paratransit, dial-a-ride and other such services.

Sectors would operate as semi-independent units of the MTA, Snoble said, with capabilities similar to a municipal operator. In addition to the staff assigned to bus operations, a sector would have administrative and community outreach employees, service planners and scheduling, security and other support personnel.

"The personnel will be assigned within a sector," Catoe explained. He indicated that union members would retain their seniority rights under the collective bargaining agreements.

Following the meeting in Glendale, Catoe told *MTA Report* that a task force made up of employees representing a number of departments is involved in sector planning.

The result, he said, will be a higher level of transit services that "will make a real difference in this county and, I think, will set a standard for the country."

[Back to MTA Report](#)