

***UPDATE: Jan. 16, 2002**

This item has been postponed until February

MTA Plans Expansion of Metro Rapid Lines in Six Areas

(Jan. 16, 2002) With the overwhelming success of the Metro Rapid bus lines on Wilshire/Whittier and Ventura Boulevard, the MTA wants to expand the program to six other transit corridors over the next three years.

The plan calls for new Metro Rapid lines in the downtown area and South Central LA, East LA, West LA and the San Fernando Valley. Seventeen other lines – for a total of 23 – are to be implemented throughout the county in future years. The Planning and Programming Committee will consider the request at its 1 p.m. meeting, Thursday.

Metro Rapid lines scheduled in the first expansion phase are a 10.1-mile north-south line on South Broadway in downtown LA, a 12.7-mile north-south line on Vermont Avenue, a 29.5-mile east-west line on Pico/Venice through central LA, a 16.2-mile east-west line on Florence Avenue in South Central, an 11.7-mile north-south line on Soto Street in East LA, and a 12.4-mile north-south line on Van Nuys Boulevard in the Valley.

Metro Rapid bus service has reduced passenger travel times by about 24 percent, according to a Board report prepared by project manager Rex Gephart. Ridership has increased by nearly 35 percent, with a third of the increase attributed to first-time transit riders.

The proposed service expansion should permit an increase of 12 to 15 percent in the level of bus service in the transit corridors where it is implemented, with no increase in operating costs. An additional increase of 10 percent in Metro Rapid service will be made by reorganizing local and Metro Rapid service within each corridor.

Future Metro Rapid expansion plans include new lines in the MTA's major service areas. When complete, Gephart says the program will offer 400 new miles of Metro Rapid service throughout the county, "ten times the number of miles offered in the two demonstration routes."

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