

Metro Rapid Bus Earns Downtown Breakfast Club's Rose Award

(April 12, 2002) The MTA's successful Metro Rapid Bus program was honored, Thursday, during the Downtown Breakfast Club's annual Roses and Lemons Awards presentation.

The Metro Rapid Bus program was among 11 Roses presented during the event. Others receiving awards included the restoration of City Hall, the Chinatown Gateway Monument, the new Hope Village community and Wilshire Union Center.

MTA Board Chairman John Fasana, CEO Roger Snoble and Rex Gephart, Metro Rapid program manager, represented the agency at the awards presentation.

The Metro Rapid Bus demonstration opened in June 2000 with 75 peak hour buses deployed on the 26-mile Line 720, serving Wilshire/Whittier, and the 16-mile Line 750, serving Ventura Boulevard. Service has since been expanded to a total of 105 peak hour buses – 83 on Wilshire/Whittier and 22 on Ventura Boulevard.

Ridership up by 40 percent

Ridership in the two transit corridors has increased by a total of 40 percent since the introduction of Metro Rapid. Some 90,000 patrons now use either the Metro Rapid or local service on Wilshire/Whittier, while about 18,000 ride the Ventura bus lines.

Metro Rapid buses have improved travel times in their corridors by 29 percent along Wilshire/Whittier and 23 percent along Ventura Boulevard, according to Gephart, the project manager.

Within three months, he expects another improvement in travel times along the Wilshire/Whittier line when the City of Beverly Hills and Los Angeles County install signal priority equipment within their jurisdictions.

The MTA also will meet with Santa Monica officials to discuss the installation of signal priority equipment along that portion of the Wilshire/Whittier line.

Meanwhile, the MTA has plans to phase in Metro Rapid service in six more transit corridors over the next two to three years. That will give the agency four east-west and four north-south Metro Rapid bus lines.

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^ A Rose is a Rose: CEO Roger Snoble, center, displays Downtown trophy awarded to MTA for the Metro Rapid Bus program. Savoring the moment are Countywide Planning Chief Jim de la Losa, left, and Metro Rapid program manager Rex Gephart.

