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Metro Rapid Services Begins, Feb. 2, on Crenshaw Boulevard

By ED SCANNELL

(Jan. 28, 2004) A seventh Metro Rapid bus line goes into operation on Monday, Feb. 2, when the big red and white buses begin rolling down Crenshaw Boulevard.

MTA officials, joined by Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, City Councilman Bernard Parks and LADOT General Manager Wayne Tanda, will take an inaugural ride on the new Line 710 during a media event, Thursday.

Line 710 will operate weekdays from 5:30 a.m. to approximately 7:30 p.m. from the Hollywood/Vine Metro Red Line Station to the South Bay Galleria in Redondo Beach via Vine Street, Rossmore Avenue, Crenshaw and Redondo Beach boulevards.

Six Metro Rapid bus lines are already in operation on Wilshire/Whittier Boulevard, Ventura Boulevard, Vermont Avenue, S. Broadway, Florence Avenue and Van Nuys Boulevard.

'Quick and reliable alternative'

"Metro Rapid has been so successful elsewhere because it offers commuters a quick and reliable alternative...on some of LA County's most congested corridors," says Yaroslavsky. "We're confident Metro Rapid service on Crenshaw Boulevard will be an equally popular choice for thousands of additional commuters."

Metro Rapid has succeeded in reducing passenger commute times by up to 25 percent, thanks in part to a transit signal priority system developed by LADOT. The Crenshaw Metro Rapid marks the first time that signal priority has been implemented outside the City of Los Angeles.

As a result of this and other advantages such as less frequent stops, Metro Rapid has generated significant gains in ridership on the six existing corridors, even attracting discretionary riders.

"While ridership on many transit systems in the United States remains flat, Metro Rapid has acted like a magnet, luring thousands of people new to transit and serving existing transit users more efficiently," says CEO Roger Snoble. "In a survey a few years ago, our customers said their biggest wish was to get to their destinations more quickly. Metro Rapid clearly has answered the call."