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Metro hosts the 39th Annual California Transit Association Conference and Expo in Universal City, attended by more than 700 transit professionals.



PHOTO: JUAN OCAMPO

Red, White and Transit

- **Metro Hosts 39th Annual California Transit Association Conference**



John Catoe, CTA Executive Committee Chairman and Metro's Deputy CEO, address conference attendees.

BY DAVE SOTERO

Metro hosted the 39th Annual California Transit Association Conference and Expo this week in Universal City, drawing more than 700 transit professionals from throughout California for three days of meetings, conference sessions, exhibits and networking.

Metro brought together a statewide panel of transit experts at this year's conference, themed "Red, White and Transit," to discuss issues critical to today's transit environment. Topics included transportation security, California regulations, universal fare systems, smart card technologies, transit-oriented development, public/private partnerships, procurement streamlining, bus operator recruitment and more.

Howard Putnam, Former CEO of Southwest Airlines, kicked off the conference with a keynote speech addressing leadership



Howard Putnam talks leadership.

principles in transportation. His insights into how Southwest became an innovator in providing mass transit services within the airline industry were well received by conference attendees.

The conference expo gave many industry suppliers an opportunity to meet directly with transit agency executives to showcase their products and technologies. Several bus manufacturers and their partners also provided demonstration buses outside the hotel for attendee viewing.



Metro's Jane Matsumoto and David Sutton show off ticket vending machine model with universal fare system functionality.

Wednesday evening's offsite reception at B.B. Kings Blues Club at Universal City Walk was successful, with more than 300 conference attendees joining in for music, drinks and fun.

APTA President William Millar closed the conference with an analysis of the national elections and their implications for public transit funding. Millar said that, across the country, 23 out of 31 public transit propositions were approved by voters. That represented \$40 billion in funding to improve America's public transit systems. He said that obtaining the proper level of funding will remain a challenge for the transit industry in 2005, and urged California's transit industry to redouble efforts to contact their members of congress to communicate the importance of transportation funding.



APTA President William Millar briefs attendees on the results of the elections for California's transit industry.

Metro provided shuttles to/from the Universal City Metro Red Line Station and



the Sheraton Hotel for the CTA conference.

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