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## Gateway Cities Sheriff's Substation is Making a Difference

By DAVID HERSHENSON

(Feb. 18, 2005) The recent location of a Transit Services Bureau (TSB) substation and some 17 Sheriff's deputies at the Gateway Cities Service Sector office in Downey already is producing positive results.

Perhaps the biggest benefit is improved communication between the TSB detail assigned to work the Gateway Cities area and the sector staff, including management and bus operators at Central City Division 1 and Crossroads Depot Division 2.

The improved communication also has resulted in a crackdown on criminal activity in the area.

Sgt. Paul Takeshita's team of 10 deputies asked 50 operators to complete a survey identifying bus lines, line segments and the time of day when they experienced problems. The deputies then conducted undercover operations on Lines 18 and 270 on Whittier Boulevard and Line 260 on Atlantic Boulevard.

### Made three arrests

The team made three arrests for unauthorized selling of Metro tokens; possession of marijuana; and possession of a syringe. Citations also were issued to a minor in possession of alcohol, for smoking, eating and drinking on a bus, and for loud and unruly behavior.

During a second undercover operation, deputies boarded 15 buses serving lines in Downey, Bell, Huntington Park, South Gate, Lynwood and Walnut Park. One suspect was arrested for vandalizing a bus and others were cited for unauthorized use of a discount ticket, drinking on a bus, and smoking on a bus.

After completing a bus ride, the deputies identified themselves so the operators would know they were monitoring the buses for criminal and unacceptable behavior.

Lt. Leo Norton, who heads the Gateway Cities TSB unit, said operators were pleasantly surprised to see the results of the operation.

"We all understand that we are here to serve Metro, including patrons and the employees," said Norton. "With the help of our operators, we are able to do a better job. Their input is critical to help us focus law



General Manager Alex Clifford and Sheriff's Lt. Leo Norton have a look at the Gateway Cities area now covered by the new Transit Services Bureau substation.

enforcement assets on the lines where help is most needed."

### **A successful investigation**

The Special Problems Unit assigned to the Gateway Cities sector also completed a successful investigation in January. Deputies arrested a prolific tagger suspected of vandalism damage estimated in excess of \$5,000.

General Manager Alex Clifford is happy with the benefits he has seen with the addition of the TSB substation. "I am pleased with the pride and dedication exhibited by Lt. Norton and his team. They have truly embraced the concept of transit community policing in the Gateway Cities Service Sector."

Norton is proud of the efforts of everyone involved in the recent operations, and is confident more progress will be made with the cooperation of Metro staff and Sheriff's personnel.

"The combination of operator input, plain clothes operations by patrol personnel, and good investigative work by the Special Problems Unit," said Norton, "goes a long way towards a better quality of life for the entire transit community."

PHOTO: DAVID HERSHENSON

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