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June 27 >

Metro Rapid Program Marks Halfway Point



- Three new Rapid lines to debut ; Santa Monica's Rapid 3 is a first for the program

By ED SCANNELL

(June 16, 2005) Five years after it opened its first two lines, Metro will mark the half-way point of the planned 28-line Metro Rapid program with the debut, June 27, of three new lines.

The start of service on Fairfax Metro Rapid Line 717, Beverly Metro Rapid Line 714 and Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus Rapid 3 line on Lincoln Boulevard will bring the total number of Rapid lines to 14 and expand Rapid service to 205 route miles.

"From the moment the red Metro Rapid buses began rolling down Wilshire, Whittier and Ventura Boulevards in 2000, Los Angeles had a hit on its hands," said Board Chairman Frank Roberts. "Metro Rapid delivered on the promise to significantly reduce bus commute times and the public responded by flocking to this great new service."

New Rapid Blue

Santa Monica's new Rapid Blue bus service marks the first time a Rapid line has been operated by a municipal operator. The newly designed buses will travel from Wilshire and 4th Street in Santa Monica along a densely populated 10-mile stretch of Lincoln Boulevard to the Metro Green Line's Aviation station near LAX.

Rapid 3 will serve Santa Monica, Venice, Playa Vista, Marina del Rey and Westchester. It will provide service every 15 minutes, Monday through Friday, from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Rapid 3 also will connect with Wilshire/Whittier Metro Rapid Line 720 and will serve the LAX Transit Center, Westchester Recreation Center, and the Third Street Promenade.

Rapid Blue buses feature a new color scheme of dark metallic blue with yellow lettering to differentiate them from regular Big Blue Bus service.

The buses have luggage racks, reading lights, low floors for faster boarding, and transit signal priority technology. Bus stations with the Rapid Blue color scheme will be placed along the Rapid 3 route.

Metro programmed \$736,000 for the installation of the transit signal priority system on the Lincoln Boulevard portion of Rapid 3 and \$1,278,160 for construction of the line's station stops on Lincoln Boulevard.

Metro Rapid Line 717

The 6.7-mile Fairfax Metro Rapid Line 717 will operate Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Los Angeles and West Hollywood.

It will serve such landmarks as the Farmer's Market, The Grove, Museum Row, and the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The line will operate every 10 minutes during peak periods and every 18 minutes during off-peak hours.

Metro Rapid Line 714

Beverly Metro Rapid Line 714 will operate every 15 minutes Monday through Friday during peak hours only, 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The 11.6-mile line will provide connections to the Metro Blue and Red Lines and to several Metro Rapid and local service bus lines.

Line 714 will serve Los Angeles, West Hollywood and Beverly Hills, and landmarks including the Beverly Center and the Beverly Hills Civic Center area.

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