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From left, County Supervisor Don Knabe, Dr. Susan Angell, VA Long Beach associate director; Long Beach City Councilwoman Bonnie Lowenthal, Gateway Cities Governance Council Vice-chairman Wally Shidler, Metro Gateway Cities General Manager Alex Clifford, and Metro San Gabriel Valley General Manager Jack Gabig launch Metro's new express bus service, 577X.



## Board Members Help Celebrate Line 577X Grand Opening

By DAVE HERSHENSON

(Dec. 27, 2005) Supervisor Don Knabe and Long Beach City Councilwoman Bonnie Lowenthal helped celebrate the opening of Metro's newest express service, Line 577X, at a ceremony, Dec. 16, at the Long Beach Veterans Administration Medical Center.

Line 577X began service, Dec. 19, transporting riders between four stops – the El Monte Transit Center, the Norwalk Metro Green Line Station, Cal State University Long Beach and the VA Medical Center.

Knabe said the new line will provide a quicker commute for many who now drive alone between the cities of Long Beach, Norwalk and El Monte because most of the 28-mile route is on the I-605 HOV lanes.

Lowenthal said that, in addition to giving current customers a faster and a more direct transit option, the 577X Line should also attract new discretionary riders as a low cost alternative to driving.

Knabe and Lowenthal were joined by Gateway Cities General Manager Alex Clifford, Gateway Cities Governance Council Vice Chairman Wally Shidler and Dr. Susan Angell, acting director of the Medical Center to highlight the new line's benefits.

Angell said she and the VA appreciated having a line that provides direct service to the VA Medical Center for employees of the facility and for the many veterans who depend on public transportation to take them to and from their medical appointments or to visit patients in the hospital.

“This is a corridor we’ve never had service on before,” said Clifford. “To be able to serve it with this new express service, and to provide direct connections to major transit hubs like the El Monte Transit Center, Norwalk Green Line Station, Cal State Long Beach and the Long Beach VA, makes it even better.”

Also attending the event were various Gateway Cities elected officials, city staff members, Council of Governments staff, Governance Council members, VA staff and others. San Gabriel Valley General Manager Jack Gabig also participated.