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Increase in LA Transit Ridership Beats National Averages

BY JIMMY STROUP

(Jan. 19, 2006) In an American Public Transportation Association (APTA) report on transit ridership in 2005's third quarter, Los Angeles bested the national average—almost doubling the rate of change versus the third quarter of 2004.

Light rail ridership increased at a rate of 8.8 percent nationally, while Los Angeles increased its light rail ridership by 15.9 percent. Only Minneapolis, Tampa and Sacramento showed higher increases.

In subway ridership, only Cleveland beat out Los Angeles' 7.7 percent increase on the Metro Red Line over last year's figures. The national average stood at 4.4 percent.

Bus ridership increased the most dramatically: the national average increase of 2.5 percent was admirable, but not in the same league as LA's increase of 5.5 percent.

5 million more passengers

For LA, the increase means that the third quarter of 2005 saw 5 million more passengers than the same period in 2004.

"Transit ridership was on the move in 2005 and I fully expect that it will continue to grow as more people discover the convenience and affordability of public transportation," said William Millar, APTA president.

When compared to November 2004, November 2005 showed similar growth across the Metro spectrum. Ridership on the Metro Blue, Gold and Green Lines increased by 12 percent, while the Red Line showed an 8.1 percent increase.

Bus ridership continued its rise, climbing to a 7.7 percent increase—a jump of 2 million riders in November 2005 over riders in November 2004.