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Taking part in the Metro tour were, from left, FTA Regional Administrator Leslie Rogers, CEO Roger Snoble, TOS Mark Solomon, FTA Deputy Administrator Sandy Bushue, Metro Director Pam O'Connor, Deputy CEO John Catoe and Metro Director John Fasana.



Photos by Bill Heard

FTA Official Briefed on Metro's Transit Plans, Funding Needs

- Federal funds needed for Expo Phase Two and Metro Rapid expansion, Metro officials note

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 30, 2006) Visiting Los Angeles on Tuesday to see some of "California's great transit projects" for herself, Federal Transit Administration Deputy Administrator Sandy Bushue got a thorough briefing on Metro's transit plans and funding needs.

Bushue learned that, although local and state dollars are funding the first phase of the Exposition Line, Metro plans to request federal funds for the project's \$700 million second phase. FTA would play an important role in recommending that funding from Congress.

Metro also hopes for FTA support in Congress when it seeks \$50 million in "Small Starts" funding to expand Metro Rapid to the 28 planned lines, Bushue was told.

Starting the morning with CEO Roger Snoble's backgrounder on the overall Metro System, Bushue then moved on to the Bus Operations Center and then to the Eastside Extension project to ride a muck train through the newly dug tunnels.



TOS Mark Solomon, far right, explains the Bus Operations Center's monitoring system for the Metro Orange Line to FTA Deputy Administrator Sandy Bushue and FTA Regional Administrator Leslie Rogers. Joining them for the demonstration were, from left, Metro Directors Pam O'Connor and John Fasana, Deputy CEO John Catoe.

Rode the Metro System

She closed out her day with a ride on the Metro Orange Line, Metro Red Line and Metro Rapid Line 720 down Wilshire Boulevard.

Bushue was joined on her tour by FTA Regional Administrator Leslie Rogers, based in San Francisco, and Ray Tellis, team leader for FTA's Los Angeles Metro Office.

"This was a tremendous opportunity to highlight the features of the Metro Rail system to one of the highest-ranking federal transportation officials," said David Kim, Metro's director of Federal Advocacy.

Although Bushue described herself as "amazed and surprised" by the transit projects she saw in LA and, earlier, in San Diego, she noted that Metro's requests would compete with projects in other parts of the country for funding.

Bushue, who has been with the FTA for the past year, served as the agency's acting administrator until earlier this month when James Simpson was sworn into office as the new administrator following his confirmation by the U.S. Senate.