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Metro officials dedicate the artfully designed Wilshire Customer Center. From left, CEO Roger Snoble, Board members Pam O'Connor, Yvonne Burke and David Fleming, and Metro Art and Design Manager Jorge Pardo. Below, element of building's exterior illustrates work of artist Jim Isermann, who brings the renovation to life with more than 500 folded aluminum sun screens coated in shades of blue, a combination which creates an illusion of cubes in three dimensions. Photos by Dave Sotero.



## Metro's Wilshire Customer Center Undergoes 'Extreme Makeover'

By HELEN ORTIZ

(Jan. 10, 2007) Metro officials today dedicated Metro's newly renovated Wilshire Customer Center, which has undergone an extreme makeover to make it as easy as possible for Metro customers to find the location, purchase transit fares and recover items left on Metro buses and trains.

The center is located along the famed Miracle Mile on Wilshire Boulevard, one of the busiest corridors in Los Angeles County that is used by over 80,000 Metro patrons each weekday.



From left, Metro Art and Design Manager Jorge Pardo, environmental specialist Tom Kefalas, artist Jim Isermann, Metro Design Studio environmental designer Neil Sadler and Facilities Maintenance Director Brady Branstetter take a bow at the renovation dedication. Photo by Ned Racine.

"The Wilshire Customer Center is the latest example of Metro's ongoing commitment to serving its customers," said Roger Snoble, Metro CEO. "This fully upgraded facility will make it easier for our patrons to fulfill their transit requirements, from getting a monthly pass to picking up a bicycle they may have mistakenly left on a Metro vehicle."

The Wilshire Center serves as the centralized home to Metro's renovated Lost and Found Department. Over 2,500 people per month visit this location searching for lost items. On any given day, there are approximately 100 unclaimed bicycles in the facility. Other unclaimed articles include cell phones, laptop computers, clothing, umbrellas and hand tools.

Items may be recovered here within 30 days before they are sold at auction. Proceeds from the auction are estimated at \$11,000 a year and go into Metro's general fund. All unclaimed clothing items are given to the downtown Union Mission.



Metro Customer Programs and Services Director April McKay gives Board member David Fleming and CEO Roger Snoble a tour of Metro's Lost & Found Department. Photos: Ned Racine

At one time, transit passes were only sold at bus divisions. To provide better service, customer centers were opened in four L.A. area locations. Combined, these customer centers serve more than 50,000 patrons per month and sell more than 600,000 passes a year, totaling \$18 million.

The Metro center is the original site of "Tilfords" Restaurant and Lounge, a well-touted mid-century eatery designed by famed Los Angeles architect Welton Beckett.

The customer center first opened on August 25, 1987 when the exterior was stucco and painted gray. Metro Art commissioned artist Jim Isermann, an artist known for his decorative, bold patterns and colors, to transform the façade and promote Metro awareness of the building. Isermann's eye-popping artwork consists of over 500 folded aluminum sun screen panels coated in shades of blue, a combination which creates an illusion of cubes in three dimensions.