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The Regional Rebuild Center has a new name: the Metro Support Services Center. This sign at the corner of Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Lyon Street heralds the facility's new designation. Kneeling before the sign are Mike Bottone, Vehicle Technology, and Dieter Hemsing, Inventory Management. Standing, from left, are Woody Yee, Stops & Zones; Forrest Adams, Facility Services; Michael Singer, Central Maintenance Shops; Patrick Astredo, Fleet Management; Ted Montoya, Material Management; Mike Stange, Quality Assurance, Non-Revenue, Radio & Farebox Repairs; and Frank Cecere, Operations Central Instruction.



Photo by Ned Racine

RRC Sports New Name—Metro Support Services Center—and New Responsibility

- **Central Maintenance Shops will host a \$29.5-million bus midlife overhaul project for FY 2008**

By NED RACINE

(June 15, 2007) Renamed to better describe its functions, the Regional Rebuild Center has become the Metro Support Services Center (MSSC) in time to host a major bus maintenance program.

The MSSC's largest department, the Central Maintenance Shops (CMS), refurbishes buses and rebuilds bus components that are used by the operating divisions. With the Operations Committee's March approval of a \$29.5-million Bus Midlife Overhaul Program for FY 2008, CMS' refurbishing efforts will grow.

The new overhaul program will add 20 full-time employees, 19 in Central Maintenance, cost centers 3441, 3442 and 3443, and one in Logistics, cost center 6350.

Initiated in FY 2004 to improve the performance and reliability of Metro

buses, the Bus Midlife Program targets a series of buses each year for preventive, midlife maintenance. This maintenance includes engine package replacements, fuel cylinder replacements, suspension work, body repair, painting, interior refurbishment (including graffiti abatement) and wheelchair lift maintenance.

Four goals

One bus midlife overhaul takes approximately 514 hours to complete and was designed to accomplish four goals:

- Enhance the overall appearance of buses,
- Increase the Mean Distance Between Failures,
- Reduce road calls, and
- Lower overall maintenance costs.

The improved condition of the midlife program's vehicles contribute to reduced maintenance costs at Metro's bus operating divisions, according to Cary Stevens, equipment maintenance manager. "The program promotes efficient use of CMS resources by working proactively, rather than reacting inefficiently to unplanned bus performance problems."

CMS has just completed two major overhaul projects: the FY07 Mid-Life Program, which completed refurbishments to 200 Neoplan buses, and repowering 41 Neoplan 6700 series buses, replacing the aging Series 50 Detroit Diesel CNG engine with a Cummins 8.9 CNG engine.

These two programs were designed to enhance the safety, performance and reliability of the aging Neoplan fleet by addressing their most critical mechanical performance areas.

The CMS formerly replaced failed engines with engines rebuilt by the powerplant department at the CMS facility. In FY 2007, however, Metro decided to replace the original CNG engines manufactured by Detroit Diesel Corporation with a totally different CNG engine manufactured by Cummins.

"Repowering" the Neoplan 6700 fleet involved hundreds of hours of planning and considerable technical development by CMS staff.