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## Metro Sponsors Commuter Organization's Sustainability Conference

By JIMMY STROUP

(May 14, 2008) Supporting sustainability efforts is one thing, but ideas need to come from somewhere. To that end, the Southern California chapter of the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) held a conference, May 8 and 9, to try to drum up new and inventive ways to get people interested in making transportation issues number one.

Photos: Jimmy Stroup



Metro Director of Commute Services pulled emcee duty at the Southern California Chapter of the Association for Commuter Transportation's (ACT) two-day conference in Long Beach, May 8-9. Sutton is on the regional board for ACT, which is a group dedicated to improving transit in multiple areas.

Metro sponsored the two-day conference, titled "Go For the Green: Sustainable Commutes." The topics of discussion from transportation pundits were varied. Some spoke on strategies for getting employers involved, while others argued for practicing what you preach – getting *everyone* out of their cars and onto transit.

The event was held in the stunning Queen's Salon at the Queen Mary and was well-attended at nearly 100 transit professionals from near and far.

David Sutton, Metro director of Commute Services and an ACT chapter board member, moderated the event, guiding the space in between the speakers.

"We're gladly supporting this event," Sutton said. "One of [ACT's] primary goals is to entice business to embrace strategies to get their employees to work in ways that use transit."

Although Metro is a leader in getting employers involved in transit, no one knows it all and most of the agency's Commute Service staff – who are on the streets daily showing business how it can work with Metro – were on hand for the event to soak in new ideas and practices.



Some of Metro's Commute Services team attended ACT's "Go For the Green: Sustainable Communities" conference to pick up on new ideas to help them convince employers that transit is a solution businesses can profit from. From left: Sarah Zadok, Valerie Rader, Jocelyn Feliciano, Helena Morad and Rickey Walker.

In an effort to lead by example, ACT contracted Vanpool services for the conference attendees to use when traveling off-site during their stay.

"ACT is looking for new solutions," Sutton said. "They want to encourage people to abandon their solo commutes. That could be through incentives or transit benefits. We're trying to do all we can."

To reduce pollution and congestion, a recurring message at the conference was the tangible benefits of using public transit.

"There's no better time for this than now, really," Sutton said. "With the gas prices looking to reach \$4 a gallon this summer, transit can be a solution on lots of different fronts."