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Metro staff distributes public hearing brochures, new schedules, maps and information on fares and more at one of the agency's recent public outreach tours.

## Outreach Efforts on Proposed Service Changes

(Aug. 31, 2010) When Metro Service Planning Manager Scott Page and his staff set out to inform Metro customers and operators about proposed bus service changes for December, they didn't know what kind of response they would receive.

But they were certain they would get useful information first-hand from the people actually using the service.

"We wanted to reach out to people who were too busy to go to the public hearings," said Page, who led the public outreach effort. He selected locations along bus lines in the proposal with the highest concentration of customers getting on and off the buses. "Most people were going to and from their work, school, shopping or home."

Reaching an estimated 1,000 patrons at 12 different locations including major transit hubs, stations, divisions and on-board buses, the two-week public outreach blitz in July led up to the five public hearings in August on proposed service changes for December 12.

"People really appreciated that we were out there. They were glad to have their questions answered on the spot," said transportation planner Stephen Tu.

At each of the 12 locations on the public outreach tour, staff distributed public hearing brochures, new schedules, maps and information on fares and TAP. Special displays showed patrons how specific service proposals might impact their commute.

Metro staff also rode lines such as the 220, 607 and 608 to get first-hand experience of how customers may be affected by the upcoming changes.

In addition, surveys were conducted for Line 220 and for the Orange Line Van Nuys Station. The survey results helped identify travel patterns to determine impacts, especially for patrons of Lines 233, 761 and 902 at the Orange Line transfer location.

Public comment cards were available at each location for patrons who were unable to attend a public hearing. Comments also are being accepted at [servicechanges@metro.net](mailto:servicechanges@metro.net) until midnight on August 31.

"I thought we were going to get a lot of negative reactions, but they understood why we needed to make certain changes and they were glad to hear they still had a lot of transit access when we explained all the alternative options available to them," said Tu.

In the past, direct interaction with Metro staff has been available only to those attending the public hearings. Given the significant changes being proposed, Service Development DEO Conan Cheung wanted a more grassroots and proactive approach to ensure that the opinions of Metro customers who ride the buses were heard.

"A lot of times the people who are the most impacted aren't able to make it to the public hearings, so taking the show on the road gives them the opportunity to voice their opinions and to be part of the public process," Cheung said. "It's an important step in evaluating service changes that I'd like to see continue as we move forward in restructuring the bus system."

— *Service Planning & Development Staff*