



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE EXPANSION OF POPULAR METRO RAPID BUS LINES

The MTA Board of Directors has approved the implementation of the Metro Rapid Expansion Program that calls for the development of six additional Metro Rapid Bus Lines that could begin service within 12 to 18 months.

"The popularity of two existing Metro Rapid bus lines that have been in operation since June, 2000 has shown us that more Metro Rapid bus lines are needed throughout the region," said MTA Board Chairman John Fasana. "Operating speeds, service quality, and customer response to Metro Rapid have all exceeded MTA objectives."

The success of the Metro Rapid Demonstration Program has reduced passenger travel time by 25 percent. Ridership has increased nearly 35 percent with one-third of those riders using Metro Rapid being new riders to the system.

In approving the Metro Rapid Expansion Program, a total of 23 corridors have been identified for inclusion and have been prioritized into four implementation phases. It is estimated that each phase of the program will take three years to implement between 5 and 6 Metro Rapid bus lines. A total of 23 Metro Rapid lines are scheduled for implementation.

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Metro Rapid Expansion

Phase one of the program targets six transit corridors, encompassing 92.6 miles that include lines 45/345 on South Broadway, lines 204/354 on Vermont Avenue, lines 30/31/33/Santa Monica line 7 on Pico-Pico-Venice, lines 111/311 on Florence Avenue, lines 251/252 on Soto Street and lines 233/561 on Van Nuys Boulevard.

Three Metro Rapid bus lines on South Broadway, Vermont and Van Nuys are planned to be operational within 12 to 18 months. The remainder of the phase one lines should be completed within three years. Estimated cost for implementation of six Metro Rapid Bus lines in the first phase is \$24.6 million.

MTA launched the successful Metro Rapid Bus service in June 2000 with Metro Rapid Line 720 along a 26-mile route through the Wilshire/Whittier corridor from Santa Monica to Montebello as well as Metro Rapid Line 750 on a 16-mile route along Ventura Boulevard between Warner Center and the Universal City Metro Red Line Station.

Equipped with specially painted red and white state-of-the-art compressed natural gas (CNG) buses, the system functions like a "rubber tire railway." Each bus is equipped with a loop detector which can turn a red signal to green and also lengthen green signals up to 10 seconds to allow a Metro Rapid bus to continue through intersections without stopping.

In addition, Metro Rapid buses board passengers at specially designed stations spaced approximately 0.8 miles apart, operate on an "interval-based" schedule unlike a "time-point-based" schedule, and many of the stops feature a display which lets passengers know when the next Metro Rapid bus will arrive.

More...

The Metro Rapid Bus Program is the result of a partnership between the MTA and LADOT. LADOT's role is to design and install the bus signal priority system.

MTA developed a conceptual plan for expanding the Metro Rapid Demonstration Program as part of last year's adoption of the FY 2001 Long Range Transportation Plan. A selection process was then developed to identify both MTA and municipal operator corridors where the Metro Rapid Program goals and objectives would best meet the needs of transit patrons.

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