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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MTA Moves Forward with the Purchase of 200 High-capacity Buses and a Major Design/Build Contract for the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway

- **MTA CEO Roger Snoble Gives Green Light to Major Transportation Contracts**

With a funding agreement from the California Transportation Commission (CTC) in hand, MTA's CEO Roger Snoble today awarded two major contracts that will add 200 state-of-the-art 60-foot articulated buses to MTA's fleet and initiate a major design and construction contract for the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway.

MTA's Board of Directors previously approved both contracts but award of them was contingent on funding issues being resolved by the CTC in Sacramento. Funding for both projects come from the State's Traffic Congestion Relief Program (TCRP), which had been temporarily suspended due to the state's budget crisis.

To keep the transportation projects going, MTA submitted a plan to the CTC today that called for the MTA to advance itself the state's funding share (\$332.2 million) for these projects by borrowing the money against future sales tax revenue in return for guarantees that the CTC would repay the money in future years. The CTC voted 7-0 to approve the plan.

"We are grateful for the action taken by the CTC today," said MTA CEO Roger Snoble. "These are vital transportation projects for the region in reducing traffic congestion and relieving overcrowding on our buses."

The bus procurement contract awarded today will bring 200 low floor compressed natural gas articulated buses to the region. Each bus seats 50 percent more passengers than a standard 40-foot bus. Each bus costs \$632,914 and will be manufactured by North American Bus Industries in Anniston, Alabama. Total value of the contract is \$138.9 million. Buses will begin arriving in the summer of 2005.

The design/build contract was awarded today to Shimmick/Obayashi Joint Venture for the design and construction of the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway, a planned 14-mile landscaped transitway that will run between the North Hollywood Metro Red Line Station and Warner Center in the West Valley. Total value of the design/build contract is \$150.4 million.

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MTA CEO Roger Snoble signs a document authorizing MTA to proceed with the award of major contract for construction of the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway and the purchase of 200 state-of-the-art articulated buses. Pictured with Snoble are, from left front, Dennis Mori, executive officer, Construction Project Management and Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky. Back row: David Yale, director, MTA Regional Planning and Michael Turner, manager, MTA Government Relations. PHOTO: LACMTA/Bill Heard

The San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway project is the first of its kind in Southern California, and represents an innovative solution whereby transit buses operate on mostly exclusive guideways unimpeded by surrounding traffic. The transitway, comprised of 13 busway stations spaced approximately one mile apart, is scheduled to open in Summer 2005.

Total cost of the project is \$329.5 million, with an additional \$8.1 million for a bikeway project built in parallel with the transitway.

The state's funding share approved today by the CTC for the purchase of the articulated buses is \$27.8 million. State funding for the bus transitway approved is \$98 million. Also approved today by the CTC are funding requests for the purchase of additional light rail vehicles for the Pasadena Metro Gold Line (\$15.4 million) and for the Eastside extension of the Metro Gold Line (\$191 million).

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