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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Revised Environmental Report for Metro Orange Line Corridor Released; Study Examines Rapid Bus Alternative**

- Study notes several advantages of Metro Orange Line over Rapid Bus

Metro today released a Revised Final Environmental Impact Report (Revised FEIR) for the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor for a 30-day public review. The draft report includes a court-ordered study of a Rapid Bus alternative to the current 14-mile Metro Orange Line transitway project now under construction from North Hollywood to Warner Center.

The Revised FEIR was prepared at the direction of the California Court of Appeal, which ruled July 19, 2004 that the east-west corridor's Final EIR, previously acted on by the Metro Board, also should have considered multiple Rapid Bus routes as an alternative to the Metro Orange Line project. The Final EIR evaluated three project alternatives: a No Build Alternative, a Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative (enhancement of the existing bus system), and a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative (three variations including the Metro Orange Line Full BRT).

Based on the court's decision, Metro and its consultants studied three Rapid Bus alternatives for the Revised FEIR including:

- Three East-West Rapid Bus Routes Alternative (Sherman Way, Vanowen Street and Victory Boulevard)
- Five East-West Rapid Bus Routes Alternative (Sherman Way, Victory Boulevard, Oxnard Street, Burbank Boulevard, and Chandler Boulevard)
- Rapid Bus Network Alternative (as submitted by Citizens Organized for Smart Transit, this network of nine Rapid Bus routes would consist of three east-west routes and six north-south routes)

The Revised FEIR examined the environmental impacts and the costs and benefits of each Rapid Bus alternative and the Metro Orange Line and reached the following conclusions:

- The Metro Orange Line would attract substantially more new riders than any of the Rapid Bus alternatives.
- The Metro Orange Line would result in the greatest system-wide travel time savings.
- The Metro Orange Line would have the most consistent improved travel time, which would not be compromised over time as the result of increasing traffic congestion.
- The Rapid Bus alternatives would all have lower capital costs than the Metro Orange Line because of their minimal construction requirements. However, because the Rapid Bus alternatives would attract fewer new riders than the Metro Orange Line, the Rapid Bus alternatives exhibit poor cost-effectiveness measured on a per-new-rider basis.
- The exclusive transitway operation of the Metro Orange Line has distinct land use benefits that would encourage transit oriented development at/around stations and is consistent with adopted local planning documents.

- Operating costs for the Rapid Bus Network Alternative would be up to \$10 million more each year than the cost to operate the Metro Orange Line.

The Revised FEIR analyzes the Rapid Bus alternatives and is available for public review on Metro's website at [www.metro.net/projects\\_plans/](http://www.metro.net/projects_plans/) and at Metro's Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library (One Gateway Plaza, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor, Los Angeles 90012) and at the following public libraries:

- Canoga Park Branch Library, 7260 Owensmouth Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91303
- Mid-Valley Regional Branch Library, 16244 Nordhoff St., North Hills, CA 91343
- North Hollywood (Amelia Earhart) Library, 5211 Tujunga Ave. North Hollywood, CA 91601
- Northridge Branch Library, 9051 Darby Avenue, Northridge, CA 91325
- Panorama City Branch Library, 14345 Roscoe Boulevard, Panorama City, CA 91340
- Sherman Oaks Branch Library, 14245 Moorpark Street, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423
- Superior Court Law Library, 6230 Sylmar Avenue, #107, Van Nuys, CA 91401
- Valley Plaza Library, 12311 Vanowen Street, North Hollywood, CA 91605
- Van Nuys Branch Library, 6250 Sylmar Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91401
- West Valley Regional Library, 19036 Vanowen Street, Reseda, CA 91335

The public review period for the Revised FEIR is 30 days pursuant to approval from the Office of Planning and Research. It commences on October 23, 2004 and ends on November 22, 2004. Currently, no public hearings on the contents of the document are scheduled to be held.

Pursuant to Guidelines Section 15088.5(f)(2), Metro asks that reviewers limit their comments to the Revised FEIR. Comments on the draft Revised FEIR may be submitted, in writing, on or before November 22, 2004 to:

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Once the public comment period has expired, Metro will evaluate and respond to the environmental issues raised in comments. The comments and responses will be incorporated into the Revised FEIR. Upon completion, the Revised FEIR will be presented to the Metro Board December 13, 2004 for consideration of certification and approval of a San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor project.

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