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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro to present contracting opportunities to local businesses at 12th Annual Greater L.A. Vendor Fair

Businesses interested in contracting with Metro, the county's lead transportation agency, should not miss the 12th Annual Greater Los Angeles Vendor Fair April 27 at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

That's where Metro will join other major city and county agencies to provide all of the "how-to" information needed for business to compete for agency contracts collectively worth billions of dollars.

Fair organizers will present contract opportunities, introduce business leaders to agency procurement personnel, and provide networking opportunities during the day-long event. The fair also will include a trade show comprising a variety of vendors that provide specialized products and services for businesses working with public agencies.

Metro, the third largest transit agency in the nation, has millions of dollars of contract opportunities for businesses as it works to improve and expand Los Angeles County's transportation system. Since last year's vendor fair, for example, Metro has awarded over 20,000 purchase orders and contracts worth in excess of \$500 million, and for the current year will again have a significant impact on the local economy.

With this year's fair theme, "Your Key to Business Opportunities," Metro aims to work closely with businesses both large and small.

"Metro has many resources and services to help businesses take advantage of contract opportunities," said Lonnie Mitchell, Executive Officer of Metro's Procurement and Material Management Department. "We're always available to help companies get registered as vendors to compete for contracts. And our Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department provides services to help small, disadvantaged, woman or minority-owned businesses participate in the contracting process."

Metro is working to include more disadvantaged businesses (DBEs). In the 2003 fiscal year alone, Metro awarded \$74.6 million in contracts to DBE firms.

Since May 2003, the agency has hosted 15 small business orientation and certification workshops, educating more than 140 small business owners on "How to Do Business With Metro." Metro regularly participates in small business technical, trade and business development events, and convenes a Transportation Business Advisory Council for companies interested in learning more about the agency's departmental procurement needs.

Admission to the Greater Los Angeles Vendor Fair is \$65 (\$55 before March 26) and includes entry to all exhibit areas, admission to all workshops, luncheon and buyers guide that includes a staff directory of all sponsoring agencies' procurement departments. A \$15 ticket includes all of the above but does not include the luncheon.

Vendor fair sponsors include Metro, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, L.A. Unified School District, and the City and County of Los Angeles.

For more information about the Greater Los Angeles Vendor Fair or to obtain a schedule of workshops, visit www.lavendorfair.com. To Learn more about Metro's contract opportunities, visit www.metro.net.

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