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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New, High-capacity Metro Rapid Line 757 to Open on Western Avenue Beginning Dec. 18

- Western and Vermont Avenue Metro Rapid Lines to utilize new 60-foot, 57-passenger articulated buses

Metro will launch its newest Metro Rapid Line beginning Sunday, Dec. 18, which will serve the dense urban corridor along Western Avenue in Los Angeles.

Metro Rapid Line 757 will span approximately 13 miles and connect with two Metro Rail and several Metro Rapid lines. Service will operate seven days a week from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays and 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends. Buses will operate approximately every nine minutes during peak periods, and every 12 minutes during off-peak times.

The service also will mark the very first deployment of red-colored, 60-foot Metro Liner buses on a Metro Rapid Line. Metro has ordered 200 of these advanced design compressed natural gas buses from North American Bus Industries, Inc. (NABI), which will be phased into Metro's bus fleet by mid-2006. Silver-colored versions of this bus were first seen on the San Fernando Valley's Metro Orange Line, which opened Oct. 29.

In addition to Western Avenue, Metro's articulated buses will be deployed on Metro Rapid Line 754 which runs along Vermont Avenue.

"The Metro Rapid program is one of Metro's great successes," said City of Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chair, Antonio Villaraigosa. "Metro Rapid provides bus riders with quick and easy travel through some of the most jam-packed corridors in Los Angeles. Overall, I applaud Metro, an agency that continues to make major improvements to the bus system, and I welcome the Western Rapid Line, a much anticipated addition to the Metro Rapid family."

Metro Rapid Line 757 will connect to both branches of the Metro Red Line subway beginning at Hollywood/Western. It will then travel south on Western Avenue and connect to the Wilshire/Western Metro Red Line Station. As it travels south and ultimately connects with the Crenshaw Metro Green Line Station, the line conveniently intersects several other Metro Rapid Lines, including: Line 780 (Hollywood/Pasadena); Line 714 (Beverly); Line 720 (Wilshire); Line 705 (La Cienega/Vernon); Line 711 (Florence); Line 740 (Hawthorne).

"Western Avenue already receives more than 38,000 daily boardings on the local Metro Bus system," said Bernard Parks, Los Angeles City Councilman and Metro Board member, whose district is served by the new Metro Rapid Line. "With room for 57 seated passengers, these new extra-long buses will provide 43 percent more seating capacity than Metro's

standard 40-passenger, 40-foot buses. And the community of South Los Angeles will be among the first in the area to ride them.”

In addition to Hawthorne, Metro Rapid Line 757 will provide transit access to the communities of Hollywood, Wilshire Center, Koreatown and South Los Angeles. Local destinations and landmarks available on the line include businesses, schools, hospitals and parks as well as Southwest College.

Metro Rapid has succeeded in reducing passenger commute times on its existing lines an average of 25 percent as the result of several key system attributes including a transit signal priority system developed by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), less frequent stops (approximately every 0.8 miles versus 0.2 miles for local service), and the buses’ low floor design that allows for faster and easier boarding and alighting.

LADOT’s transit signal priority system tracks the movement of each Metro Rapid bus and determines its approximate speed via loop detectors embedded in the pavement along the route. Depending on the proximity of a Metro Rapid bus to a signalized intersection, the system will extend green signal time up to 10 seconds or activate a green signal up to 10 seconds sooner to reduce the amount of waiting time at intersections.

As a result of its competitive advantage over local and limited-stop bus service, Metro Rapid has attracted large numbers of discretionary riders as well as people who depend on public transit. Metro Rapid’s 14 existing lines have generated total average weekday boardings of 140,000.

The Metro Rapid Program debuted on Wilshire-Whittier and Ventura Boulevards in June 2000. Twelve other lines were added on Vermont Avenue and South Broadway (Vermont Metro Rapid Line 754 and South Broadway Metro Rapid Line 745, December 2002); Florence Avenue and Van Nuys Boulevard (Florence Metro Rapid Line 711 and Van Nuys Metro Rapid Line 761, June 2003); Crenshaw Boulevard (Crenshaw Metro Rapid Line 710, February 2004); Vernon-La Cienega and Soto Street (Vernon-LaCienega Metro Rapid Line 705 and Soto Metro Rapid Line 751, June 2004); Hollywood-Pasadena and Hawthorne Boulevard (Hollywood-Pasadena Metro Rapid Line 780 and Hawthorne Metro Rapid Line 740, December 2004); Fairfax, Beverly and Lincoln Boulevards (Fairfax Metro Rapid Line 717, Beverly Metro Rapid Line 714 and Santa Monica’s Big Blue Bus Rapid 3 line, June 2005).

For more information on Metro Rapid Line 757 or to download a timetable, visit www.metro.net or call 1-800-COMMUTE.

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