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Metro News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Electrification of Valley's Bus Rapid Transit Line Begins **Metro, U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman Announce \$4.3 Million Federal Grant to Buy Electric Buses, Charging Stations for the Metro Orange Line**

In its ongoing commitment to deploy the cleanest, most energy-efficient transit vehicles in Los Angeles County, Metro will purchase five new 60-foot electric buses and eight new charging stations for the San Fernando Valley's Metro Orange Line thanks to a \$4.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, the agency announced today.

Combined with Metro's \$5.8 million match utilizing Measure R sales tax funds approved by voters in 2008, \$10.1 million will be invested to jumpstart the Orange Line's planned transition to all electric buses. New Flyer Xcelsior XE40 electric buses will begin operation by the end of next year.

The groundbreaking announcement represents the first deployment of 60-foot articulated electric buses for transit use in the United States. The Orange Line will be the highest ridership transit service ever tested for all-electric operation. The project is expected to demonstrate the durability and reliability of lithium ion battery technology for high ridership transit lines. Averaging 27,000 boardings per day, the Orange Line travels 18 miles between North Hollywood and Chatsworth. It is one of the nation's most successful BRT systems, accommodating 74 million boardings in its first decade of service.

"You will not find another Metro bus line in our county more ideally suited to transition from compressed natural gas to electric power than the Valley's Metro Orange Line," said John Fasana, Metro Board Chair and Duarte City Council Member. "With its rail-like amenities, dedicated right-of-way and fast, frequent and high-capacity service, the Orange Line will be the test bed for catapulting our agency into a new era of next-generation, clean-air transit buses."

The funding announcement was also heralded by U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman, who helped secure federal funds for the project.

More...

Metro, U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman Announce \$4.3 Million Grant for Electric Buses

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“I am pleased to have helped Metro’s Orange Line secure federal funding for new buses and charging stations,” Sherman said. “Commuters in the San Fernando Valley will benefit greatly from an addition to the fleet that can help alleviate crowded buses and waiting times. And with the zero-emission technology, these new buses will help reduce smog and other harmful greenhouse gases.”

Buses will replace 60-foot compressed natural gas (CNG) articulated buses that are now reaching the end of their normal service life. Metro Liner CNG buses have a 500,000-mile, 12 year lifespan. The Orange Line originally began operating exactly 11 years ago this month. There are currently 43 60-foot buses running on the Orange Line today.

“The Federal Government is at its best when it supports practical, innovative projects that really make a difference for local communities,” said U.S. Congressman Tony Cardenas. “The Federal Low or No Emission Vehicle Deployment Program Funds do exactly that for LA County. The Federal funds help us get that much closer to the finish line, which in turn helps our community, our nation, and our planet. I am proud that Los Angeles is helping to set the standard for the country on sustainable transportation through zero-emission buses.”

Buses will be capable of en route rapid charging and serving the Orange Line’s entire 22-hour daily schedule without having to return to the division for a recharge. Batteries can be fully charged in about seven minutes during scheduled bus layovers using a 450 kW rapid charger to be installed at terminus stations. The batteries are expected to provide a range of 66 miles between charges – enough for a minimum of four one-way trips. Additional charging systems will be installed at Metro’s Division 8 in Chatsworth for any off-peak charging needs.

“Metro’s commitment to deploying only the cleanest available buses made in the United States has always been ahead of mandates and regulation,” said Phillip A. Washington, Metro CEO. “These truly zero-emission buses will help us reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and help fight climate change. But we are not stopping here. We plan to continue efforts to transform transportation on the Orange Line and other major San Fernando Valley corridors in the years ahead.”

About Metro

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is unique among the nation’s transportation agencies. Created in 1993, Metro is a multimodal transportation agency that transports about 1.3 million passengers daily on a fleet of 2,200 clean air buses and six rail lines. The agency also oversees bus, rail, highway and other mobility-related building projects and leads transportation planning and programming for Los Angeles County.

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