MYMETRO.NET

Something *news* every day!

Home   **CEO Hotline**   **Viewpoint**   **Classified Ads**   **Archives**

Metro

Metro.net (web)

Resources

▸ Safety

▸ Pressroom (web)

▸ CEO Hotline

▸ Metro Projects

▸ Facts at a Glance (web)

▸ Archives

▸ Events Calendar

▸ Research Center/ Library

▸ Metro Cafe (pdf)

▸ Metro Classifieds

▸ Retirement Round-up

Metro Info

▸ Strategic Plan (pdf)

▸ Org Chart (pdf)

▸ Policies

▸ Training

▸ Help Desk

▸ Intranet Policy

Need e-Help?

Call the Help Desk at 2-4357

E-Mail Webmaster

Record Number of Angelinos Use Metro Online Trip Planner

CHECK IT OUT> Metro Trip Planner

By DAVE SOTERO

(March 1, 2005) New features, county-to-county functionality make online transit planning an invaluable tool for getting around Southern California by bus and/or rail.

A record number of Angelinos are using Metro's online Trip Planner at metro.net to chart their public transit trips in Los Angeles County and beyond.

Online transit trip planning has grown exponentially in the last five years, from 3,100 requests per day in 2000 to more than 35,000 per day in 2005.

That growth is due in part to the growing number of Los Angeles residents who now have access to the Internet, according to a 2004 Metro customer survey. The survey found that approximately 76% of all L.A. County residents have Internet access, which constitutes more than a two-fold increase from 36% in 1996.

Easy to follow

Metro Trip Planner's easy to follow, point-by-point transit plans are another reason for the system's strong usage. The web site contains many of the useful features found on popular automobile trip planning web sites such as Mapquest®.

The strong public demand for online transit information and trip planning has led Metro to build and operate its own, robust trip planning system, enabling the transit authority to save $200,000 a year in third-party software licensing fees. It also enables the agency to make ongoing improvements more easily.

"When we first introduced the Metro Trip Planner on our web site in 1999, it was a proprietary, third-party software that was, at the time, the best transit trip planning technology we could find," said Warren Morse, Metro's Deputy Executive Officer of Marketing. "Advances in technology and investment in our own system has enabled us, today, to offer a far more robust transit planning tool that not only saves money but provides flexibility to residents and out-of-town visitors alike who want to avoid the hassles of driving by using the region's extensive public transit network."

Step by step

The Metro Trip Planner, available from the metro.net homepage, allows users to enter their starting and ending destinations, date and time of travel and fare type. The site then returns step-by-step transit itinerary information, including bus and rail line numbers, departure times, costs, and estimated travel times.

Users can zoom in and out of all travel points using an interactive map generated by Thomas Bros. data. An advanced search feature allows users to select destination landmarks including beaches, airports, parks and shopping centers, and indicate their preference for a particular mode of transit such as rail service. Users can easily get reverse trip directions with the touch of a button.

County to county

Search results are not limited to Los Angeles County. The database has been updated to include transit information for all five counties of Southern California, making county-to-county transit planning easy.

The system utilizes the same trip planning database that Metro's telephone operators use to field 1-800-COMMUTE inquires. Members of the public with special transit itinerary needs should, however, call 1-800-COMMUTE and speak with a live operator.

Metro Trip Planner is also a key function of the recently announced www.commutesmart.info rideshare web site, sponsored by the region's five transportation agencies, and experiencela.com, the region's cultural destinations and transit web site.