



NEWS

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MTA JOINS LOCAL OFFICIALS IN OPENING FIRST OF ITS KIND "TELEVILLAGE" CENTER NEAR METRO BLUE LINE

MTA joined local elected officials today in the opening of the Metro Blue Line TeleVillage, a community-based computing, teleconferencing, information and service center located at the Compton Transit Center adjacent to the Metro Blue Line.

"The opening of this facility brings much needed computer technology to the inner city by providing South Central Los Angeles residents with access to information technologies to meet critical community needs," said MTA Chairman Larry Zarian.

The Metro Blue Line TeleVillage is the first of its kind development facility that combines rail and bus public transit with telecommunications and information technologies.

"This center is a prototype development that will bring mobility and economic benefits to inner city communities as well as throughout the entire county," said Los Angeles County Supervisor and MTA Board Member Yvonne Brathwaite Burke. "This TeleVillage center is a public-transit-accessible access point not only to the Internet but also to electronic transactions and commerce of all sorts."

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The TeleVillage center offers a number of computing alternatives to area residents including a computer center equipped with 12 Pentium computers. Applications include courses for adults and children in basic computer skills as well as proficiency training in specific software packages.

Additionally, Internet applications will be offered and will focus on employment and job training opportunities. All TeleVillage members will receive an e-mail address and have the opportunity to create their own home page on the Internet.

The center will be operated by the Drew Economic Development Corporation, a non-profit, community development corporation. Usage of the facility will be free through May 31, 1996. Paid membership to the TeleVillage center will be required beginning June 1, 1996. Cost of an annual membership will range from \$5 to \$50 depending on the individual and/or organization.

Open six days a week, the hours of operation will be 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday. On Friday the center will be open from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. On Saturday the center will open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

"It is our hope that we can bring telecommuting, computing and teleconferencing opportunities to the inner city by offering valuable resources and training through this vital TeleVillage center," said Alex Pratt, president of the Drew Economic Development Corporation.

Cost of the Metro Blue Line TeleVillage center is \$559,000. Funding for the project comes from local tax revenue generated by Proposition C as well as federal ISTEA funding.

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The Metro Blue Line TeleVillage also consists of a distance education and video conferencing center; a telework center, equipped with two work stations that include a computer for desk top video conferencing; and a community meeting room.

The center also features various information kiosks, including on-line access to the County Housing Authority's data base on housing availability, jobs and consultant contracts; the Caltrans Smart Traveler kiosk; a self-guided AIDS information kiosk provided by the County Museum of Science and Technology and a full service bank automated teller machine.

"This project will show the power of linking bus and rail transit centers, so that the rail station becomes a destination in and of itself," said MTA Chief Executive Officer Joseph E. Drew. "We believe this project provides an ideal opportunity to use computing and telecommunications to improve the daily lives of our citizens."

For membership information call the Metro Blue Line TeleVillage center at (310) 604-7717.

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