

APPENDIX J

WMATA HISTORY

Capsule History of WMATA

Metro has earned a worldwide reputation for reliability, cleanliness, safety, security and architectural beauty.

Metrorail, with 75 stations and 92.4 miles of line, offers service 5:30 a.m. to midnight weekdays and 8 a.m. to midnight weekends with a fleet of 764 rail cars.

Metrobus serves the nation's capital 24 hours a day, seven days a week with 1,299 buses.

More than four decades of planning and building went into creating the transit system that now serves the metropolitan Washington region. Here are some historical highlights.

1952

July 10: Congress passes National Capital Planning Act mandating preparation of plans for movement of people and goods in the region.

1954

March: Maryland and Virginia general assemblies approve joint commission, including representatives from Maryland, Virginia and District of Columbia, to study passenger transportation in Washington area.

1959

July 1: Congressionally funded Mass Transportation Survey presented to President Eisenhower calls for \$500 million rapid rail system by 1980.

1960

July 14: President Eisenhower signs National Capital Transportation Act creating National Capital Transportation Agency (NCTA) to develop rapid rail system.

1962

November 3: NCTA submits Transit Development Program to President Kennedy proposing an 83-mile, 65-station rapid rail system.

1965

September 8: President Johnson signs legislation he had sought authorizing 25-mile, \$431 million rapid

transit system capable of future expansion.

1966

November 6: President Johnson signs bill creating Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. Governors of Maryland and Virginia sign November 17 and commissioners of District of Columbia sign November 22.

1967

February 20: WMATA is officially born, coexisting with NCTA for seven months. NCTA expires September 30.

1968

March 1: WMATA Board unanimously approves 97.2-mile Adopted Regional System (ARS). System includes 38.4 miles in District of Columbia, 29.7 in Maryland and 29.1 in Virginia.

October 1: Original groundbreaking date is postponed pending release of District of Columbia Metro funds. Congressman William Natcher (D-Ky.), who chairs House Subcommittee on Appropriation for District of Columbia, withholds Metro funds in effort to ensure funding for federal highway projects in District of Columbia.

November 5: Voters decisively commit to Metro in Arlington County, Fairfax City, Fairfax County, City of Falls Church and Prince George's County through bond referendums to help finance local shares of Metro costs. Voters say yes by 71.4 percent.

1969

February 7: WMATA adopts revised Rapid Rail Plan and Program including relocation of three stations. System size grows to nearly 98 miles. By September 29, 1969 all jurisdictions have approved.

August 9: Council of District of Columbia approves construction of highway projects, meeting a condition of Congressman Natcher for release of District of Columbia Metro funds.

December 9: Metro breaks ground at Judiciary Square with high-ranking federal, state and local officials

participating and an estimated audience of 1,500.

1970

June 11: WMATA Board realigns approximately 2.5 miles of mid-city route to improve service for inner city.

1972

May 3: WMATA awards \$91.6 million contract to Rohr Corp. for first 300 Metro cars.

October 21: President Nixon signs bill authorizing WMATA acquisition of metropolitan area's four privately owned bus companies.

1973

January 14: WMATA buys D.C. Transit, Inc. and WV&M Coach Co. for \$38.2 million.

February 4: WMATA buys AB&W Transit Co. for \$10.7 million and WMA Transit Co. for \$4.5 million, creating Metrobus system. WMATA drops transfer charges, extends senior citizen discounts region-wide and begins selected fare reductions on routes formerly served by different carriers at different rates. WMATA also unifies bus appearance with red, white and blue paint scheme and purchases 620 buses.

August 13: President Nixon signs Federal Aid Highway Act of 1973, authorizing up to \$65 million for construction of facilities to make Metrorail accessible for persons with disabilities.

August 16: President Nixon signs bill enabling U.S. Department of Transportation to pay WMATA \$90.4 million for fiscal 1974, \$7.5 million covering (1) design and construction of Arlington Cemetery station and (2) National Mall entrance to Smithsonian station.

1974

July 24: WMATA installs its first bus passenger shelter. Through 1986, it installed 828 shelters throughout the region.

September 1: Metrobus places last of 620 buses ordered from AM General into service.

November 26: President Ford signs amendment to 1974 Urban Mass Transportation Act providing first operating subsidies for transit from Highway Trust Fund.

1975

July 10: WMATA Board simplifies Metrobus fare structure in suburban areas effective September 1.

July 24: WMATA Board approves addition of Shady Grove station and 2.7 miles of line to Rockville route subject to federal and local funding. Later when Franconia and Springfield stations are combined, total planned system increases to 99.8 miles.

October 10: District of Columbia begins six-year transfer of \$2.2 billion of interstate highway funds for Metro construction.

1976

March 27: Six years, three months and 23 days after groundbreaking, Metrorail has its opening day. More than 51,000 persons ride free over the 4.2 miles of Metro's Phase 1. Five stations open on Red Line from Rhode Island Ave to Farragut North.

March 29: On first day of revenue service, 19,913 passengers ride on 188 train trips. System is open 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekdays and closed on weekends.

June 4: President Ford signs bill authorizing creation of Metro Transit Police.

1977

January 17: Dupont Circle station opens.

January 20: Jimmy Carter's Inaugural Committee charters \$170,000 worth of Metrobus service and rents rail system for 2.5 hours to move crowds.

July 1: Blue Line opens from National Airport to Stadium-Armory—18 stations and 12 miles of line. Fare collection switches from exact change fareboxes to Automatic Fare Collection System (AFCS).

1978

February 6: On snowy day, Red Line begins service to Silver Spring, adding four stations and 5.7 miles of line.

April 20: WMATA Board approves federally mandated alternatives analysis. Completed by WMATA working with local jurisdictions and the federal government, analysis reconfirms need to finish rail system. Total planned system mileage is now 101 miles.

August 16: WMATA, at request of U.S. DOT, presents financial plan for completing and operating Metrorail system to Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams. Adams says, "The federal government agrees with the goal of completing the 100-mile system over the next several years."

September 25: Metrorail extends weekday hours from 8 p.m. to midnight.

September 27, 1978: Metrobus Operator Frank Spadaro wins third annual International Bus Rodeo in Toronto.

September 30: Metrorail begins Saturday service 8 a.m. to midnight. Service also includes three federal holidays in addition to July 4—Columbus Day, Veterans Day and Washington's Birthday.

November 20: Orange Line opening to New Carrollton begins Metrorail service to Prince George's County. Segment includes Deanwood and Minnesota Ave stations in District of Columbia and Cheverly, Landover and New Carrollton in Prince George's County.

1979

February 19: Blizzard on Washington's Birthday causes three-day shutdown of Metrorail. Metrobuses unable to move on first day but provide partial service on second and third days. Full service, rail and bus, restored on fourth day.

April 2: Metrobus tests lift-equipped, accessible buses on seven routes.

June 17: Forty-three articulated (bend-in-the-middle) buses begin Metrobus service on Benning Road line in District of Columbia.

July 1: Metrobus begins regular route lift-equipped accessible service on 12 lines.

July 12: WMATA announces award of \$75.3 million contract to Italian firm of Breda Costruzioni Ferroviarie for 94 rail cars with option for additional 200.

September 2: Metrorail begins Sunday service from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

December 1: Orange Line begins service to Ballston adding four stations—Court House, Clarendon, Virginia Sq-GMU and Ballston—and 2.63 miles to system.

1980

January 3: President Carter signs Stark-Harris bill authorizing \$1.7 billion in federal funds to finish Metrorail construction.

November 22: Benning Road, Capitol Heights and Addison Road stations open, adding 3.5 miles to Blue Line.

1981

June 25: WMATA orders additional 200 rail cars from Breda Costruzioni Ferroviarie for about \$200 million.

November 12: WMATA Board decides to rebuild more than 600 Metrobuses. Metrobus carries its one-billionth passenger.

December 5: Van Ness-UDC, Cleveland Park and Woodley Park-Zoo stations open, adding 2.07 miles to Red Line.

1982

January 13: First Metrorail passenger fatalities occur when rail car derailed at a crossover switch south of Federal Triangle and is pulled sideways into abutment separating inbound and outbound tunnels. Three are dead, 25 injured. Investigations identify human error as primary cause. Crash is preceded by a major snowstorm, early release of federal employees and crash of airliner into 14th Street Bridge and Potomac River.

October 11: WMATA dedicates Montgomery Division, its first new Metrobus garage since 1973 bus acquisition.

1983

April 30: Yellow Line begins operating from Gallery Pl-Chinatown to National Airport, crossing Potomac on Metro's Charles R. Fenwick Bridge. Segment includes new station, Archives-Navy Mem'l, and opens second platform level at both Gallery Pl-Chinatown and L'Enfant Plaza transfer stations.

May: First of new Breda Metrorail cars arrive.

October 30: Amtrak opens its New Carrollton rail station with direct interface with Metro's New Carrollton station.

December 17: Yellow Line opens from National Airport to Huntington, adding Braddock Road, King Street,

Eisenhower Ave and Huntington stations and 4.3 miles to rail system. Huntington is first station in Fairfax County.

1984

August 25: Red Line begins operating 6.81-mile segment to Grosvenor including Tenleytown-AU, Friendship Heights, Bethesda and Medical Center stations.

September 13: WMATA Board adopts plan to complete 89.5 miles of 101-mile system using Stark-Harris federal funding and local matching grants.

December 13: WMATA Board selects Branch Ave terminus and St. Elizabeths Alignment for southern portion of Green Line, increasing system mileage to 103.

December 15: Red Line opens 6.98-mile extension, including four stations—White Flint, Twinbrook, Rockville and Shady Grove.

1985

April 11: Board approves 2.5-mile alignment of Green Line between Columbia Heights and Fort Totten stations in District of Columbia.

July 17: WMATA modifies safety plan to include passenger-activated escape doors in the event of a fire emergency aboard train. Employees from all departments trained in proper evacuation procedures.

December 9: Metro sales facility opens at Metro Center station.

1986

June 7: Orange Line grows by 9.11 miles with opening of East Falls Church, West Falls Church, Dunn Loring and Vienna stations in Fairfax County.

July 16: WMATA and Urban Mass Transportation Administration sign full-funding agreement releasing fiscal 1985 and 1986 capital funds needed to continue building 89.5-mile system funded under Stark-Harris authorization.

October 7: WMATA receives APTA Management Innovation Award for its Construction Safety Awareness Program.

October 18: For second year in a row, WMATA mechanics from Southeastern Division win International Bus Maintenance Roadeo. MTA in Baltimore is host.

1987

January 22 and 25: Two major snowstorms dump total of 25 inches of snow on region, shutting down everything including Metrorail surface operations. Within next two months, WMATA undertakes major winterization program to improve performance of rail and bus during extreme snow and ice conditions. Bulk of program is complete by year's end.

June 19: At 4:27 a.m. on a Friday, 21 CSXT freight cars derail into Metro's right-of-way north of Takoma station. Metrorail is not operating at this hour. Although no injuries result, Metro suffers demolished track, ties, ballast, fencing, automatic train control equipment and communications lines. Extraordinary Metro repair efforts restore service by Monday morning, June 22.

September 5: It happens again, only this time 14 derailling CSXT cars tear up Metrorail right-of-way between Takoma and Fort Totten stations at 11:23 p.m. Metro restores service Wednesday afternoon, September 9. Incident leads to intensive safety precautions and studies by WMATA and CSXT.

1988

January 8: A 10-inch snowfall challenges transit system which is operating under full emergency snow plan mobilization. Buses and trains run without major problems.

February 3: Metrorail sets ridership record of 564,265 trips on day Washingtonians welcome Redskins home from Super Bowl victory with parade.

March 17: CSXT and WMATA announce joint recommendations to improve safety along shared rail corridors.

April 28: For fifth consecutive year, WMATA Board adopts budget with no fare increase.

June 22: Metrobus carries two billionth rider.

August 24: Metrorail carries one-billionth rider.

October 4: American Public Transit Association awards WMATA its top honor, the *Public Transportation System Outstanding Achievement Award*. Metro dubbed *America's Subway*.

1989

January 20: Metrorail sets ridership record of 604,000 during inauguration of President Bush. Rail operations extended until 2 a.m.

February 26: Metrobus opens Landover Division bus garage to replace Prince George's Division. Latter becomes Southern Avenue Annex to support service in southern Prince George's County.

November 23 through New Year: Winterization program proves its effectiveness in series of snowfalls and record-low temperatures in late fall, early winter. Rail and bus systems operate with minimal disruption.

October: General Manager Carmen E. Turner receives APTA's *Jesse L. Haugh Award*. The award goes annually to the transit manager "who has done the most to advance the urban transit industry in the U. S. and Canada."

1990

April 18: WMATA establishes newspaper recycling program at all rail stations.

May 18: Metro awards \$6.3 million contract to Cubic Western Data to upgrade 275 of the 407 farecard vendors and 100 of the 164 addfare machines. Upgrade enables machines to accept \$10 and \$20 bills in addition to \$1 and \$5 bills.

June 21: WMATA Board approves installation of pay telephones on station platforms.

September 22: Red Line begins operating north of Silver Spring to Forest Glen and Wheaton stations, adding 3.2 miles to system.

October 1: Metro adds four-story garage with 1,300 spaces on north side of Vienna station.

October 2: Robert L. Miles, Metrobus operator, earns second in field of 111 in 1990 International Bus Roadeo in Houston, missing first place by one point.

October 27: Congress gives final approval to legislation providing additional \$1.3 billion in federal funding over eight years for construction of rail system.

1991

April 16: Wheaton station parking garage is fully opened, adding 500 parking spaces to previous 450.

May 11: First Green Line stations open—U Street-Cardozo, Shaw-Howard Univ and Mt Vernon Sq-UDC—in 1.66 mile segment north of Gallery Pl-Chinatown.

June 7 and 8 (Friday and Saturday): Desert Storm victory celebration on Mall generates two ridership records for Metrorail—highest ridership on a Saturday - 786,300 trips, and highest weekday ridership - 577,800 trips.

June 15: Blue Line opens from King Street to Van Dorn Street in Alexandria, 3.57-mile extension bringing system to 79 miles and 67 stations.

August 17-18: Metrobus maintenance team—Leonard Makowski, Eugene Medley and Kent Harrison—takes second among 34 teams in International Bus Maintenance Roadeo in Chicago.

October 1: Metrobus Operator Robert Miles earns second place in International Bus Roadeo in Toronto.

October 22: U.S. Department of Transportation is first cabinet-level federal agency to join MetroPool program. MetroPool offers tax-free employer subsidy to people who commute by Metrobus or Metrorail.

December 19: WMATA Board approves financial plan that sets schedule and funding for *Fast Track* program for finishing 103-mile Metrorail system by 2001. *Fast Track* allows Metro to build remaining 13.5 miles faster and within \$2.07 billion approved by Congress and local governments.

December 28: Metrorail opens 2.88-mile Green Line segment serving Waterfront, Navy Yard and Anacostia stations.

1992

April 26: Metrorail begins earlier Sunday hours, opening at 8 a.m. instead of 10 a.m.

August 1: Local neighbors join Northern Division in celebrating garage's conversion from turn-of-the-century trolley barn to modern bus garage.

1993

January 20: Metrorail sets new ridership record, 811,000 trips, during President Clinton's Inauguration Day.

February 2: WMATA launches Metrochek, voucher system that allows participants to redeem Metro fares for service on 29 Washington-area transit systems. Metrochek is available through MetroPool program.

March 4: EPA holds press conference at newly renovated Northern Division announcing latest clean air standards for bus exhaust. Metro announces plan to buy 600 buses with cleaner-burning engines.

May 10: Metrobus earns APTA's *Most Improved Safety Award* for transit systems in North America.

August 28: Metrobus maintenance team takes second in APTA's International Maintenance Roadeo in Denver. Team includes Leonard Makowski, Eugene Medley and Kent Harrison.

October 5: Metrobus Operator Robert Miles ranks third in APTA International Bus Roadeo in New Orleans.

December 11: Metrorail begins service on 7.96-mile Green Line segment that includes West Hyattsville, Prince George's Plaza, College Park-U of Md and Greenbelt stations. It connects with Red Line at Fort Totten. This completes 89.5 miles of the 103-mile system.

December 31: Metro completes its safest year of heavy construction. Injury rate, 0.8, is fraction of industry average, 5.8. One sprained ankle and two pulled shoulders were only injuries during 794,000 hours of Metro construction in 1993.

1994

May 3: Metro Station Manager Steven Morrison receives *Gold Award for Hospitality* from Washington, D.C. Convention and Visitors Association.

May 16: Metro begins *MetroAccess*—curb-to-curb service for people whose impairments keep them from using Metrorail, Metrobus or fixed-route local bus service.

Also: Metrobus receives top safety award, APTA's *Alan S. Boyd Silver Award*, for its low accident rate and innovative safety program.

1995

February 6: WMATA begins smart-card technology demonstration with its GO CARD program at 19 Metrorail stations, five parking lots and three Metrobus lines.

May 15: WMATA and Montgomery County open *Kidstop*, the first child care center at a Metrorail station, at Shady Grove.

May 22: Metrorail carries two billionth rider.

June 6: Prototype of *American Ikarus*, Metrobus' newest articulated bus, debuts at White House. President Clinton and Hungarian Prime Minister Gyula Horn give it a tour. Bus is American-Hungarian joint venture.

September 27: Metro unveils Passes/Farecard vendors at Metro Center. The machines dispense all rail fares, including passes and multiple farecards, accepts and updates GO CARDS and uses synthesized voice to guide sight-impaired through steps in using machine. Metro schedules installation of the machines on all station mezzanines over several years.

October 16: *Million Man March* yields second highest ridership in Metro's history—804,000 trips. Highest ridership day remains January 20, 1993 inauguration of President Clinton.

November 3: Metrobus carries its three billionth rider.

November 16: WMATA and RF&P Corporation formally sign an agreement to build Potomac Yard station with RF&P funds. It will be first Metro station built with private funds. Station is between National Airport and Braddock Road on Blue/Yellow Line.

1996

March 28 and 29: Some 500 experts in planning, architecture, engineering, development, financing and federal policy-making gather for first Metro-sponsored *Symposium for Transit-Oriented Development and Livable Communities*.

March 29: WMATA celebrates 20 years of providing efficient, reliable transit.

May 9: WMATA Board approves purchase of 262 new Metrobuses.

September 13: WMATA seeks thoughts and opinions of its riders. Employees in stations hand out *Dear Fellow Rider* brochures that encourage rider suggestions on an attached mail-in card.

October 27: WMATA begins Request-A-Stop demonstration program. Metrobus riders on designated routes

may ask operators to let them off at other than Metrobus stops weekends, holidays and weekdays after 7 p.m.

1997

January 1: Commuter rail riders from Maryland and Virginia can buy monthly pass that offers unlimited MARC-Metrorail or VRE-Metrorail travel. It is part of one-year demonstration program.

January 10: WMATA conducts *Regional Mobility Investment Conference* as call to action for region to develop mobility plan for 21st century.

January 20: President Bill Clinton's second inaugural draws 620,000 passenger trips to Metrorail and Metrobus. Rail system remains open until 2 a.m. the following morning.

January 27: Green Line Shortcut begins as six-month experiment. Passengers during peak periods can ride between Greenbelt on Green Line and Farragut North on Red Line without transferring between trains. Later, shortcut is continued because of its success in drawing new riders.

February 27: Metro Board adopts Blue Line extension into the ARS (Adopted Regional System) contingent on the successful completion of the Final Environmental Impact Statement and a financing plan. The three-mile extension from Addison Road to Largo Town Center includes an intermediate station at Summerfield.

April 1: Maryland General Assembly budgets \$4.7 million in FY '98 for preliminary engineering and environmental impact study on extension of Blue Line by three miles and two stations to Largo Town Center.

June 7: *Race for the Cure* is first beneficiary of new Metro policy to open early, on request, to support large community events. Sponsoring organization pays hourly rate to Metro and is reimbursed from revenues collected.

June 26: WMATA Board approves White Flint East, Metro's largest joint development project to date. To be phased in over 11 years, the 32.42-acre project includes 1.2-million sq. ft. of office space, 100,000 sq. ft. of retail space and 1,338 residences.

June 29: Service begins to Franconia-Springfield, adding 3.3 miles to Blue Line and increasing Metrorail to 75-station, 92.4-mile system.

September 11: Station Manager Tyrone Jefferson Sr. wins the *1997 Capital Star Award*, the Washington Convention and Visitor Association's highest award for a frontline employee.

September 23: American Public Transit Association awards WMATA its *Outstanding Achievement Award*.

October 4: Metrorail registers fourth highest ridership, 725,900 trips, during *Promise Keepers* assembly on National Mall. System opens at 4 a.m.

Also: Single-engine plane crashes into Metro right-of-way west of College Park airport injuring its six occupants and damaging Metro fence and railing.

October 9: WMATA Board approves recommendations of Regional Mobility Panel (see January 10) to plan, fund and operate Metrobus in manner similar to Metrorail. Regional routes, 75 percent of current service, will be operated by Metrobus. Metro will compete to operate 25 percent designated as local routes. U.S. Congress must approve plan.

November 16: Metro opens new Gallery Pl-Chinatown entrance on northeast corner of 7th and F Streets N.W. in alcove of MCI Center, which opens December 2.

1998

February 20: Metro celebrates the 25th anniversary of Metrobus with 25 cent bus fares all day, a photo exhibit at the Capitol and *The Silver Anniversary Bus*. The bus, unveiled at Northern Division, gives free rides. The silver bus is rotated among the bus divisions for regular route service. When it serves their route, passengers pay only 25 cents and receive a free transfer.

May 14: Metro sponsors its first *Clean Commute Fair and Concert* as a part of *Try Transit Week*. The event at Freedom Plaza in Washington features entertainment and displays by Metro and others on commuting alternatives and clean air considerations and attractions. The week begins with free Metro rides on Sunday, May 10. Riders also can compete for a year of free rides by going on a *Metro Trivia Quest*, which involves answering a written quiz about details on the surroundings of specific Metro stations.

July 6: Metro begins its first assignment as outside contractor for bus service and maintenance. Under

contract to the Potomac and Rapahannock Transit Commission, Metro runs and maintains 53 buses and 22 smaller vehicles for OmniRide and OmniLink service in Prince William County. The buses serve 22 routes in the county and the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park.

July 13: Metro finishes the first of 45 *bumpy-tile* station modifications at L'Enfant Plaza. The 24-inch strip of bumpy paver tiles combined with the existing 18-inch strip of granite creates a 42-inch wide warning strip. The modification is a federal requirement.

July 25: Montgomery County's final Metro station, Glenmont, opens on schedule and \$40 million under the \$290.9 million budget. The celebration and free rides draw some 5,000 people. The station, accessible from Georgia Avenue at Glenallen Road, features improved lighting and coverings over the outside escalators.

September 28: WMATA begins SmartMover—an experimental express bus service between Tysons Corner-Westpark and key points in Montgomery County. Free fares offered through December 31.

1999

January 1-15: SmartMover experiment proves successful as 90 percent of the riders continue using it after the end of the free ride promotion.

March 1: WMATA begins selling fares, passes and merchandise online. SmartLink allows people to use Visa, MasterCard or Discover at the Web site, www.wmata.com, and receive their purchase by mail in five days.

May 18: WMATA launches *SmartTrip*, the permanent, rechargeable plastic farecard that is good for Metrorail trips and Metro parking. The new card is faster, since it can be touched to a target to open faregates. It is also lose-proof when registered by the owner, because it can be replaced with the remaining value for a \$5 administrative fee.

June 20: WMATA launches *SmartDeals*, fare simplification for Metrobus riders. The new system offers a single fare, \$1.10 to ride any regular route Metrobus at any time of day; a free transfer between buses and a 25-cent transfer from Metrorail. Express route riders pay \$2. SmartDeals also includes a variety of passes, including an all-day Metrobus pass for \$2.50.

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June 23: Mayor Anthony A. Williams announces a financing plan for a New York Avenue station on the Red Line between Union Station and Rhode Island Ave station.

September 7: Metro begins operating five new Ride On routes under contract with Montgomery County. These routes include two free shuttles—one between Silver Spring station and downtown Silver Spring and the other between Bethesda station and downtown Bethesda. It also includes three new routes from the Shady Grove station.

September 18: Metro begins revenue service on the Mid City Green Line segment that includes Columbia Heights and Georgia Ave-Petworth stations in northwest Washington. Green Line now offers seamless travel between Greenbelt and Anacostia stations by way of downtown Washington, D.C.

November 5: Metrorail extends hours to 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday nights as part of an eight-month experiment.

2000

January 1: Metro's long preparation for the Y2K roll-over pays off with an uneventful day carrying passengers to and from the millennium celebrations on the Mall and elsewhere. Metrorail hours are extended to 3 a.m.. The 21.5-hour day, which begins 5:30 a.m. December 31, generates 415,000 rail trips. As a precaution against Y2K glitches, Metro stages 300 buses near rail stations and stops all trains at station platforms for a five-minute pause before and after midnight.

January 25-28: Metrorail keeps operating as major snowstorm shuts down federal government, all schools and most businesses for two days (25th and 26th). As transit demand returns to normal on the 26th, 100 snow-damaged rail cars are removed from service for repairs, leading to overcrowding and delays. Most cars are back in service the morning of

the 28th and all are back by the afternoon.

January 31: Metro moves customer service operations to its new Call Center near Silver Spring station.

February 4: Director of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget announces \$25 million for the New York Avenue station in the proposed fiscal year 2001 federal budget. The sum matches the \$25 million committed separately by the city and the business community.

Same Day: U.S. DOT Secretary Rodney Slater pledges \$259 million in federal funds to build the extension of the Blue Line from Addison Road to Largo. Governor Parris Glendening had already pledged \$175 million as the state's share for the project.

February 10: WMATA Board approves purchase of former Hechinger Distribution Center in Landover as a multipurpose WMATA building. The property is Metro's largest, with 647,000 square feet of floor space on 28 acres of land at 2500 Pennsy Drive, directly opposite Landover Metrobus Division.

July 1: Metrorail extends hours until 2 a.m. Friday and Saturday nights as a one-year experiment.

July 31: Average weekday ridership for the month of July hits record 616,233 making it the highest daily ridership month in Metro's history. The count is 40,000 higher than July 1999. Runner-up months were also in the calendar year, 611,000 in June and 585,000 in March.

September: First order of 100 full-size, low-floor buses enter service. The Orion low floor buses are part of a larger order that includes 132 regular sized buses and two, small low-floor buses for the District of Columbia.

September 14: SmartBenefits, a Web-based program that allows an employer to load the Metrochek benefit directly into an employee's registered *SmartTrip* card, is launched with a ceremony at L'Enfant Plaza.

October 2: Federal executive order becomes effective requiring that all federal agencies make full Metrochek benefits (\$65 per month) available to all federal employees in the region. Metrochek offers a tax-free benefit to employees who use public transit. General Manager Richard A. White joins federal and state officials at Crystal City station to launch the executive order.

October 16: Metrorail has its third highest ridership day as a result of the Million Family March. The Metrorail tally was 688,467, about 110,000 more than an average October Monday. That total was exceeded only by the 1993 Inaugural (811,257 riders) and the 1995 Million Man March (804,146 riders). Metrobus experiences a ridership surge, especially in the District of Columbia where the 353,496 riders represent a 21 percent increase over a normal weekday. Overall bus ridership is 594,687, up 17 percent.

October 17 and 19: Metrorail records 629,709 on the 17th and 627,170 trips on the 19th, respectively, making these the 16th and 19th highest ridership days in Metro's history.

October 26: Metro Board adds New York Avenue station to the Adopted Regional System (ARS), contingent on final approval of a financing plan to build and operate it. In the meantime, a House-Senate Conference Committee has approved \$25 million in federal funding for the station. The same legislation also appropriates the \$25 million that is in the city's budget for the project. The legislation must be ratified by the full House and Senate and be signed by the President in order to become effective. The District of Columbia has transferred an additional \$9 million to Metro for preliminary engineering and environmental assessment. The remaining \$25 million for the station will be raised through a special assessment district covering commercial properties that benefit directly from the new station.

October 28: Metro lifts a 160-foot long, 85-ton bridge truss onto a pair of towers for a pedestrian span above East-West Highway connecting Prince George's Plaza station with the shopping center.

Also: Metro Board expands Transit Zone to include Charles County, Maryland. Purpose of the expansion is to provide Metrobus service along the Indian Head Highway corridor serving Branch Avenue station when it opens January 13, 2001. The service is fully subsidized by Maryland. Service will require seven buses and 15 new positions.

October 31: Metrorail records the highest October ridership in its history. Total ridership of 15.2 million is more than 12 percent higher than the previous October. Weekday average is 610,116 trips.

November 23 (Thanksgiving Day): Metrorail returns to automatic train control after 624 days of manual operation. The rail system was operated manually while Metro ordered, inspected and installed new relays after several of the original relays were found to be defective in the spring of 1999.

December 4: Metrobus begins reverse commute service between L'Enfant Plaza station and Dulles airport with stops at Rosslyn station and the Herndon/Monroe Transit Center. The new service is designed to reduce transportation barriers for the working poor, help welfare recipients and low-income earners gain access to work opportunities and help all workers reach suburban jobs.

December 16: Metrorail breaks ground for New York Avenue in-fill station, the first to be added to the 103-mile, 83-station system. Scheduled for completion in late 2004, it is to be the centerpiece of an initiative to transform an area of abandoned warehouses into a high-tech urban center that will create new jobs for city residents. It is located on the existing Red Line between Union Station and Rhode Island Ave stations.

December 14: Metro Board approves purchase of 100 low-floor compressed natural gas buses for \$35 million and another \$8 million for a CNG fueling station and other modifications at Bladensburg garage to service the buses.

Also: Metro awards the largest contract in its history, \$361 million, to ALSTOM Transportation Inc. to begin the overhaul and rehabilitation of 364 Breda-manufactured rail cars.

Also: Metro announces a \$60 million contract to Motorola that will make it the first U.S. transit agency to have an integrated radio communications system for police, bus, rail and maintenance employees.

Also: Metro Board approves a \$20 million contract with Cubic Transportation Systems to install a new farebox system in all 1,543 Metrobuses by the end of the fall of 2002.

January 13: Metro opens the five-station, 6.5-mile segment to Branch Ave, completing the 103-mile, 83 station Metrorail System. Two opening ceremonies are held; one each at Congress Heights and Branch Ave stations. The segment was built in slightly more than five years at a savings of \$139 million under the \$900 million budget.

January 18: Metro opens second multilevel parking facility at Vienna/Fairfax-GMU station. The 2,200-space six-level garage opens ahead of the original schedule and less than two years after award of the contract, Metro's first design-build agreement with a contractor.

January 20: Visitors from across the nation and the world come to Washington for the Inauguration of President George W. Bush and Vice President Richard Cheney. They help generate Metrorail ridership that is the third highest for a Saturday, 601,839 trips. The rail system opens 5:30 a.m. Saturday and closes 3 a.m. Sunday.

2001

January 7: Metro kicks off new *Metro Opens Doors* campaign with TV commercial during the Giants vs. Eagles playoff football game on Channel 5.