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NEWS RELEASE

DATE: April 5, 2002
RELEASE DATE: Immediate Release
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BIG BLUS BUS GETS A LITTLE GREENER WITH NEW LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS (LNG) BUSES

SANTA MONICA, CA--Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus is adding 37 liquefied natural gas (LNG) buses to the fleet, the first such vehicles to be operated for public transportation in the city of Santa Monica. The first LNG buses were delivered mid-March and should all be in service by the end of June.

"The new LNG buses are a critical component for making our city a cleaner, healthier, more livable place," said Stephanie Negriff, Acting Director of Transportation Services for the City of Santa Monica. "This environmentally-friendly addition to our fleet gives our passengers another great reason to ride the Big Blue Bus instead of driving."

In parallel, the City is expanding its bus facilities to include new LNG and compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling stations, as well as a new bus wash center with a water reclamation system that will cut water use by up to 50 percent.

The moves are part of a larger push under the Sustainable City Program, an 8-year-old initiative that encourages the community to “Conserve Today, Preserve Tomorrow.” Under the program, every department in the City of Santa Monica must reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, use more sources of renewable energy, and reduce waste and pollution, among other objectives.

With a fleet of 183 vehicles that transport more than 80,000 passengers daily, the Big Blue Bus continues to do its part to contribute to the goals of the Sustainable City Program. According to measurements made in July 2001, ridership of the Big Blue Bus increased 17 percent between 1990 and 2000. Average vehicle ridership for employees of companies in Santa Monica with more than 50 employees increased 1.38 persons per vehicle in 1999 from only 1.13 persons in 1993. And the percentage of City fleet vehicles operating on reduced emission fuels (natural gas and electricity) increased to 70 percent in 2000 from just 10 percent in 1993.

And the addition of LNG buses will further contribute to the Sustainable City Program. “Operating a natural gas bus instead of a new diesel bus is equivalent to eliminating smog and soot from 17-33 passenger cars,” said Tim Carmichael, executive director of the Coalition For Clean Air. Diesel engines produce nearly 20 percent of the total nitrogen oxides in outdoor air, and are a major contributor to ozone production and smog, the Coalition reports.

LNG fuel is about 30 percent cheaper per gallon than diesel, even though it takes more LNG fuel to travel the same distance than with diesel. But maintenance on the LNG buses should be cheaper since the exhaust is cleaner, meaning less residue from exhaust and lubricants and less time required for maintenance.

The Natural Gas Vehicle Coalition reports there are more than 100,000 natural gas vehicles on the road today in the U.S. and that nearly 25 percent of all new orders for transit vehicles are for natural gas buses.

Natural gas can reduce exhaust emissions across many categories, according to the NGVC. Dedicated natural gas vehicles can lower carbon monoxide emissions by 70 percent, non-methane organic gas and

nitrogen oxides by 87 percent; and CO₂ by almost 20 percent below those of gasoline-powered vehicles.

For more information about the new LNG buses, the LNG/CNG fueling stations, the water-conserving bus wash, or any Big Blue Bus services, call (310) 451-5444 or visit our website at www.bigbluebus.com.

Photos and electronic images available upon request.

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