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NEWS RELEASE

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BIG BLUE BUS FARE INCREASE BEGINS JULY 7.

New Fares Will Improve Service and Customer Amenities

SANTA MONICA, CA-- The Big Blue Bus announced that effective July 7, 2002, the new fare structure approved by City Council will go into effect system wide. The base-fare increase is the first for Big Blue Bus riders in 19 years and is required to meet increasing costs of operations and to continue to offer customers improved and expanded services. "With almost two decades of increasing operating costs like fuel prices, parts, and labor a fare adjustment was needed to maintain our service levels," says Janeene de Martinez, General Manager, Transit Finance & Business Services.

"The fare increase helps to maintain the service improvements that have been implemented in the past few years and will help us bring an even higher level of service in the coming years," says Joe Stitcher, Customer Service Manager, Big Blue Bus. Since 1997 the Big Blue Bus has increased service hours by 46%, has recently added more buses per route to reduce overcrowding, and extended routes to make traveling around Los Angeles easier.

The fare increase will enable the Big Blue Bus to continue its efforts to improve on-time performance and extend service hours. In the near future, riders will enjoy improvements such as improved comfortable bus stops, new amenities for senior and disabled riders, new on-board technology, real-time route information, and trip planning tools available on-line.

The staff recommended \$0.25 increase was the result of an exhaustive study by staff and outside consultants on how to administer a fare that would be long lasting and equitable to consumers. The City Council adopted the recommended \$0.25 increase with minor adjustments, mandating that the disabled, student, and senior fares remain at existing levels. "We understand the sensitivity to the special needs of these groups," says de Martinez, "We estimate that the new fare structure should be enable us to operate for at least the next five years without the need for an additional increase."

Even with the fare increase most riders attending recent community meetings feel comfortable with the new fares. The Big Blue Bus fare is still cheaper than a cup of coffee, the lowest fare in the region, and one of the least expensive in the country.

New Fare Structure

Fare Type	Current	New
Regular	\$.50	\$.75
Tokens (10)/Little Blue Card	\$.45	\$.70
Student/Little Blue Card	\$.25	no change
Senior & Disabled	\$.25	no change
College Card	\$.40	no change
Line 10 Express Regular	\$1.25	\$1.75
Line 10 Express Senior and Medicare Card	\$.60	no change
Line 10 Express Disabled	\$.25	no change
InterAgency Transfers	\$.25	no change

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