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METRO TRANSIT REACHES CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION LOCAL 1005

MINNEAPOLIS -- (Jan. 30) – Metro Transit and its largest union – Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1005 – have reached agreement on a new three-year labor contract.

Union members concluded two days of voting on the contract proposal today. The union ratified the contract by a 67% to 33% margin.

The agreement, which extends through July 31, 2008, includes a 1 percent pay increase effective Wednesday (Feb. 1). Another 1.5 percent pay hike will be implemented on Feb. 1, 2007, and a final 2.25 percent increase is effective a year later on Feb. 1, 2008. In addition, each union member will receive a \$475 lump sum payment.

Under terms of the agreement, the Metropolitan Council, Metro Transit's parent organization, will continue to pay the full health care premium for ATU members who elect single coverage. Those who select family coverage will continue to pay a monthly premium in 2006 of \$259 or \$100 depending on the type of health plan they choose.

The new contract includes language covering ATU members in Metro Transit's rail division. Previously, many of the work rules for those employees were contained in a separate implementation agreement created in advance of the June 2004 opening of the Hiawatha light-rail line.

"We compliment the union and Council negotiators for reaching a fair and comprehensive settlement," said Peter Bell, Council chair. "The fact that a new contract emerged just two weeks after an initial offer was rejected by members indicates that both sides were motivated to reach an agreement that is fair to employees and responsive to the economic realities faced by the Council."

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb said, "The contract is the product of about two dozen bargaining sessions, many of them day long and several with the help of the

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state's Bureau of Mediation Services. More importantly, the agreement is the result of productive and thoughtful bargaining over dozens of issues that impact the efficiency of the transit system and the quality of work life for our employees.”

ATU Local 1005 represents about 2,200 of the 2,600 employees of Metro Transit, including bus and train operators and mechanics.

Metro Transit, a service of the Metropolitan Council, is the nation's 11th largest bus system and operates the Hiawatha light-rail transit line. Customers board its buses and trains more than 240,000 times each weekday.

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(Editors: For information call Bob Gibbons, director of customer services, 612-349-7509)

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