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The first light rail car to run the full length of the six-mile Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension alignment left Union Station this morning, but not under its own power.

*Photos: Gary Leonard*

### Metro Rail tests first train car on Metro Gold Line Eastside alignment

- Testing to verify proper clearance between the rail car and surrounding equipment and facilities, including 1.8-mile-long twin tunnels under Boyle Heights.

By JOSÉ UBALDO  
*Media Relations*

(Jan. 27, 2009) The first light rail car to run the full length of the six-mile Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension alignment -- another major milestone leading up to the opening this summer -- left Union Station Tuesday morning heading east toward the line's terminus at Atlantic Boulevard and Pomona Street.

The Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, which will feature eight stations (two underground), will span six miles from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles via the Arts District/Little Tokyo and Boyle Heights to Atlantic/Pomona Boulevards in East Los Angeles.



It's been nearly 46 years since the last trolley ran on First Street. Train shown here is departing the Little Tokyo Arts District Station.

The trip was part of a clearance test in which the train car was towed, rather than self-powered, at approximately 5 m.p.h. so that it could easily stop on short notice. The test was done to verify proper clearance between the rail car and surrounding equipment and facilities, including 1.8-mile-long twin tunnels under Boyle Heights. On platforms, clearance was carefully measured where doors will open at eight stations -- two of them underground -- along the route. Towing was done by a small truck on rails.

The test was not open to the public because of safety concerns. The Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension has posted an exemplary safety record: more than 3.7 million construction working hours without a single lost-time injury -- a record unparalleled by any major public works project in the country. The project is also under budget and projected for early completion.

The last streetcar ran on First Street just after midnight on March 31, 1963.

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