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**MTA MOVES AHEAD TO LANDSCAPE
METROLINK'S SANTA CLARITA CORRIDOR**

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) on Wednesday, September 21, approved a funding agreement with the non-profit Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC) to plant trees, native grasses and wild flowers along Metrolink's Santa Clarita route between Sylmar and Burbank.

There is no impact on the MTA budget, since the agreement is fully funded by state and federal grants; one from the State of California Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation Program (EEMP) in the amount of \$183,000; and the other one from the federal Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) program for \$250,000.

Known as the Northeast San Fernando Valley Greenway Project, this demonstration project has been a coordinated effort between the MTA, Metrolink and local cities along the Santa Clarita right of way.

"This project is a boon to both Metrolink riders and the businesses and residents along the route," said Edmund D. Edelman, the MTA's chairman and a Los Angeles County Supervisor. "We'll be able to beautify the environment without obstructing the view for Metrolink locomotives and vehicle traffic on San Fernando Road."

Nick Patsaouras, MTA Board Alternate for Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, who has supported the effort from the start, said "I'm happy to see the greenway project become a reality at last. This will be the MTA's first large-scale greenway project on a right of way."

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"There is quite a ripple-effect here," said Patsaouras. "For example, the planting and seeding work will provide job training and experience to local youth, as well as involvement opportunities for community volunteers. This project also allows for future developments along the Santa Clarita to Burbank corridor."

The total awarded under both grants is \$433,000, including \$12,000 for conceptual planning and design, \$292,000 for construction, \$14,500 for construction management, and \$114,500 for truck watering (using recycled water). The LACC will receive the \$292,000 amount for the planting and landscaping.

"One thing that impressed me about the LACC is their commitment to obtain its planting materials through a formal bid process to ensure that minority vendors have an opportunity to participate in this project," said Franklin White, the MTA's chief executive officer. "As a non-profit organization, they're not required to do that," he added.

Earlier this year, MTA staff began working with the communities along the corridor to obtain their input and suggestions. The conceptual landscape plans were completed by students and professors at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona, and are currently being reviewed by MTA and Metrolink staffs.

The project was first brought to the former Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) board in 1992. At that time, approval was given to apply for the EEMP funds. Then, in 1993, after the LACTC and Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCR TD) merged to become the MTA, the MTA board approved the application for TEA monies.

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