



# NEWS

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## **GOVERNOR OF JALISCO, MEXICO HONORS MTA WITH GIFT OF AUTHENTIC GAZEBO, FUTURE CENTERPIECE OF METRO RED LINE'S EAST L.A. MARIACHI PLAZA**

The blueprints for an authentic Mexican gazebo to be built as the centerpiece for Mariachi Plaza – the capstone of the MTA's Metro Red Line First and Boyle Street Station – were presented to MTA officials this week during a ceremony April 29.

Licenciado Manuel Arroyo Zepeda, the foreign affairs officer for the governor of the state of Jalisco, Mexico, made the presentation on behalf of governor Alberto Cárdenas Jimenez. The gift honors the Latino community in Los Angeles and the musicians who, since the 1930's, have kept the Mariachi music tradition alive in East Los Angeles. The blueprints will be used to construct a gazebo atop one of four Metro Red Line subway stations to be built along the East Side extension, with work scheduled to start later this year.

"Mariachi music is at the heart of the Mexican culture," explained Arroyo Zepeda, "and the gazebo is the heart of any outdoor 'plaza.' The musicians play inside it and the public comes to listen and even dance. These gazebos are usually round and domed, with beautiful iron and stone-work along the sides.

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"In Mexico City, we have the famous Plaza Garibaldi. This is where people go when they want to hire Mariachis for a party," Zepeda explained. "With this gift, East Los Angeles will have its own Plaza Garibaldi, and it will bring beauty to the area, and dignity to the musicians who have kept this tradition alive."

The gazebo was designed by award-winning Mexican sculptor Pablo Salas of Guadalajara. Its support structure will be built first here in Los Angeles. The outer coating of the gazebo, to be made from a rose colored volcanic rock called "cantera," will be then sculpted in Mexico, in separate numbered sections, and shipped to Los Angeles for assembly work. Design of the gazebo will begin in August/September of this year and installation is planned for early 1998.

"Our government is very pleased that the gazebo will allow us to have an architectural presence in this community," said Arroyo Zepeda. "We feel it will provide a worthy, permanent place for our music and culture."

"We consider this gazebo to be an architectural jewel," explained Alfonso Rodriguez, Deputy Executive Officer/Project Manager for the Metro Red Line East Side extension. "We're very excited that it will be such an important focal point for the Metro Red Line subway station we're constructing at First and Boyle. Mariachi Plaza actually forms part of a much larger landscape, 360 feet long by 100 feet wide, which will include tree-lined walkways, seating areas, sculptures and even a pyramid-shaped skylight. Once finished, it will upgrade the entire community."

This Metro Red Line station at First and Boyle is projected to be in operation by the year 2004. MTA officials predict approximately 16,000 people will use the station each day.

"Every person who comes to the U.S. comes looking for hope," says Arroyo Zepeda. "We're proud to be part of an area which will revitalize the Latino community in Los Angeles. Mariachi Plaza will be a place where little miracles will happen."