

## **MTA Chief of Staff Balian to Join Pasadena Metro Blue Line Staff**

(Dec. 7) Chief of Staff Habib Balian will leave the MTA, Thursday, Dec. 9, to join the recently formed Pasadena Metro Blue Line Authority as Chief Administrative Officer.



In his new position, Balian, 38, will be responsible for the PMBLA's administrative functions, including procurement, media, government and community relations, and real estate. Scheduled to begin his new job, Dec. 15, he will be one of three senior executives reporting to CEO Rick Thorpe.

**Habib Balian**

### **Looking forward**

"There are community issues and budgetary issues I hope will be solved while I'm there," Balian said. "It's a four-year project and management's focus is to build the first 14 miles of rail and get the line up and running within the time and budget allotted."

Balian joined the MTA in November, 1997, as deputy assistant CEO. He was named chief of staff in spring, 1998.

"I wish Habib the best of luck," said CEO Julian Burke. "For someone as dedicated to Pasadena as he is, this new position certainly fits his background and particular interests."

### **Biggest regret**

"My biggest regret is not having daily contact with Julian Burke," Balian said. "I've enjoyed working with him, with Allan Lipsky and all the dedicated staff I've come in contact with. They've had to weather a lot of hard times and have gone through, I would hope, the hardest times they'll have to experience."

Prior to joining the MTA, Balian was a deputy to LA County Supervisor Michael Antonovich, with a special focus on transportation issues.

Balian earned a bachelor's degree in international relations from the University of Southern California. He and his wife, Toni, have a son, Frederick, 4.

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