

## Board Agrees to let MTA Staff Start Transit Corridor Environmental Studies

**UPDATE** (Feb. 24) The MTA Board agreed at its February meeting, Thursday, to take the next step toward development of major transit projects to serve East Los Angeles, the Mid-City/Westside areas and the San Fernando Valley.

The MTA staff now may begin work on draft Environmental Impact Statements/Reports for alternative projects in each of the transit corridors. When completed, the documents will be forwarded to the Federal Transit Administration for review. The recommended alternatives are:

### Eastside



This alternative proposes a light-rail transit line from Union Station east to Atlantic Boulevard. The proposal includes an tunnel segment between First and Boyle and First and Lorena that could be used either by a light-rail system or rapid transit buses. It would cost half the estimated cost of the suspended Metro Red Line project, while improving transit in the area.

### Mid-City/Westside:

This area has three alternatives.

- A Metro Rapid Transit Bus line on Wilshire Boulevard from Vermont Avenue to San Vicente Boulevard to provide high-speed, low-cost transportation.
- A Metro Rapid Transit Bus line along the Exposition right-of-way from Figueroa Street to downtown Santa Monica to provide service to downtown LA, USC and the Harbor Freeway Transitway at less cost than a light-rail line.
- A Light-Rail Transit line along the Exposition right-of-way from the Metro Blue Line station at Washington Boulevard to downtown Santa Monica to provide service to downtown LA, USC and the Harbor Freeway Transitway with fewer disruptions at intersections than rapid bus service.

### San Fernando Valley:

- A Metro Rapid Transit Bus line along the exclusive, landscaped Burbank-Chandler right-of-way from the Metro Red Line North Hollywood station to Warner Center to provide faster, more cost-effective service then either local or rapid bus service on city streets.

Last June, the Board directed the staff to prepare studies of the Eastside, Mid-City/Westside and San Fernando Valley corridors. The studies, budgeted at \$5.5 million, were intended to evaluate more cost-effective alternatives to the suspended Metro Red Line project on the Eastside and in the Mid-City/Westside areas. In the Valley, the study restarted environmental work suspended in 1998.

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