

(Jan. 29) Big blue cranes and yellow front-end loaders can be viewed

Pasadena Blue Line Making Progress on Aerial Guideway to Chinatown

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from the north windows of MTA Headquarters busily constructing an elevated guideway that in 2003 will be the first leg in a 13.7-mile light-rail line to Pasadena.

Concrete pillars are being erected alongside the tracks leading north from Union Station. Piles of lumber, giant re-bar cylinders and stacks of 80-foot rail sections placed at construction sites just downhill from Chinatown are waiting to be assembled into a railroad bed.

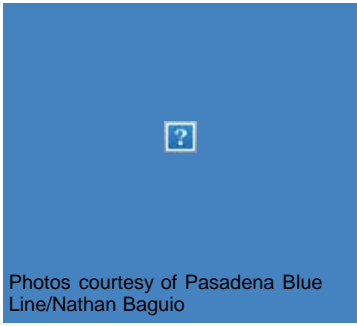
The 2,766-foot aerial guideway will begin at the Union Station train platform, run along Vignes to Main Street, then curve north at Alameda and cross Bruno and College. It will end just north of the future site of the Chinatown Station. The guideway will carry both north and southbound tracks and will rise some 24 feet above street level.

In Old Pasadena, meanwhile, contractors are building the "Colorado Box," a complex cut-and-cover project that will take the railroad beneath historic buildings from Del Mar Avenue north to Walnut Street and the Memorial Park station in Pasadena. The foundations of a dozen buildings must be strengthened to stabilize them during construction.

Once completed, the MTA will operate the Pasadena Blue Line, which in its first phase, will serve the communities of Los Angeles, Chinatown, Lincoln Heights, Highland Park, South Pasadena and Pasadena.

Phase II of the project will extend 24 miles east from Pasadena to Claremont through the eight communities along the rail right-of-way.

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Photos courtesy of Pasadena Blue Line/Nathan Baguio