

MTA Will Break Ground on 5.2-Mile Whittier Bike Path

By GARY WOSK

(Feb. 6, 2002) The MTA will break ground, Saturday, on the Whittier Greenway Trail, a 5.2-mile bicycle path that is the latest of more than 100 such projects the agency has funded over the past nine years.

Since 1993, the MTA has provided \$82 million in funding through its Call for Projects program for 108 bikeway projects totaling 200 miles of bike paths and bike lanes in Los Angeles County.

The Whittier Greenway Trail, to be built on an abandoned railroad right-of-way, should be completed within three years. A bicycle and pedestrian path, it will begin in Whittier's northwest corner near the 605 Freeway and follow the right-of-way to Mills Avenue.

The MTA provided \$8.5 million in funding for the \$12.9 million trail, with the balance provided by the City of Whittier and the state.

"Bicycle paths...play an important role in alleviating traffic congestion, improving air quality, and offering an option to people who either do not like driving or do not have access to a car," said Board Chairman John Fasana. "This trail will provide access to many destinations along the way including jobs, hospitals and schools and is a wise use of taxpayers' money."

Make cycling an alternative

"Our population is expected to grow by more than 25 percent during the next 20 years," Fasana added. "Our goal is to make cycling a viable alternative that is safe and easy."

Another \$10 million in Call for Projects funding has been provided for bike lockers and racks at Metro Rail stations, the bike station in Long Beach, bicycle education programs, and bicycle maps.

The MTA also has allocated \$32 million in funding through the year 2007 for new bikeways. MTA contributes 80 percent of the total project cost while individual cities kick in 20 percent.

Some of the major bike paths to be completed or built in the future are alongside major transit corridors, including the planned San Fernando Valley East-West busway, the Exposition Boulevard light rail project and the San Fernando Road Metrolink right-of-way, as well as the Los Angeles River.

Since 1993, MTA has allocated an average of \$6.5 million each year toward bikeway projects, however, the MTA's Long Range Transportation Plan calls for increasing that amount to at least \$10 million annually.

Bicyclists account for 2.4 percent of all daily trips made in Los Angeles



Riders who must dodge traffic to commute favor the clear roadways of dedicated bike paths.



County, or approximately 720,000 out of 30 million total daily trips. The goal of the LRTP is to increase the total number of bicycle trips in the year 2025 to 2 million, or 5 percent of total trips.

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