

Eastside Light Rail Project Reaches Milestone with FTA Action

By ED SCANNELL

(June 27, 2002) The MTA's Eastside Light Rail Project reached another milestone, last week, when the Federal Transit Administration signed a Record of Decision (ROD).

The FTA action certifies that the project has satisfied all federal environmental guidelines and signals the expected near-term approval for MTA to begin final design of the light rail extension.

This six-mile extension of the Metro Gold Line through East Los Angeles will serve one of the most densely populated areas of Los Angeles County.

"The MTA could not have reached this milestone without the tireless support of the people of the Eastside," said Board Chairman John Fasana. "When this extension of the Metro Gold Line opens in 2008, it will greatly improve Eastside residents' access to jobs, schools, medical facilities, places of recreation and many other destinations."

The Record of Decision paves the way for FTA authorization for the MTA to begin final design of the project, which would be followed by signing of a federal Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA).

The MTA estimates construction of the 1.7-mile tunnel portion of the Eastside project will begin in mid-2003 and construction of the at-grade portion would get underway in late 2004 or early 2005.

"The steady progress of the project and this latest milestone are testimony to the ongoing efforts of our project team," said Jim de la Loza, MTA executive officer for planning. "They are committed to delivering a first-class project to an area whose residents have waited patiently for several years for easier access to the growing Metro Rail system."

The Metro Gold Line, now under construction between Union Station and Pasadena, is expected to begin operations in mid-2003. The Eastside extension would operate from Union Station to Pomona Blvd./Atlantic Blvd. along 1st Street, then transition to 3rd Street via Indiana Street and proceed east along 3rd Street to Atlantic Boulevard.

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