



Artist's rendering illustrates new, five-span bridge that will spirit high-capacity, clean-fuel Metro Rapid buses across the Los Angeles River.

MTA Kicks Off Transitway Project in San Fernando Valley

By DAVE SOTERO

- When it opens in 2005, the Transitway will provide quicker, more efficient bus service to Valley commuters and easier access to Metro Rail.

(Jan. 17, 2003) MTA kicked off the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway project, Friday, at a construction site in Van Nuys during a media event that drew a number of local, state and federal officials.

The 14-mile landscaped Transitway, with 13 stations spaced about a mile apart, will run between the North Hollywood Metro Rail station and Warner Center. When opened in 2005, it will provide quicker, more efficient bus service to Valley commuters and easier access to Metro Rail.

The project will cost \$329.5 million, with an additional \$10.9 million for a bikeway project to be built in parallel with the Transitway. MTA has awarded Fontana-based Brutoco Engineering & Construction Company a \$3.8 million contract for construction of the first phase of the project.

Under the fixed-price contract, Brutoco will build the first and largest of three bridges located along the Transitway. The new, five-span bridge over the LA River will be capable of spiriting high-capacity, clean-fuel Metro Rapid buses across the Los Angeles River. The overall Transitway project has the potential to create up to 9,500 full-time jobs in the area, according to MTA project estimates.

Transitway a reality

"The San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway project, after years of planning, is now a reality with the award of this first major contract to begin construction," said MTA Board Chairman Hal Bernson.

"The construction of the Transitway is what the transit-dependent in the San Fernando Valley need. This innovative project would be like a Metro Rail system on rubber wheels that will allow riders to cut travel time substantially," said LA Mayor James Hahn. "The project is good for the environment and will help keep Los Angeles moving."

Trips made between Warner Center and North Hollywood now will take about 35-40 minutes using Metro Rapid buses, compared to 50 minutes for the same trip using current on-street buses.

"The Valley has waited a long time for this hugely important regional transportation improvement project," said CEO Roger Snoble. "In light of the state's current budget crisis, the need for public works projects that spur economic development and create jobs for Californians is critical. This project is ready to go."

Confident of completion

"Along with the Eastside Light Rail Project to extend the Metro Gold Line, the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway project is a top MTA priority," Snoble said. "We are confident that it will receive the necessary state funds to complete it."

The Transitway will pass through communities that include North Hollywood, Valley Glen, Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks, Encino, Tarzana and Woodland Hills. It will link such activity centers as Pierce College, the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area, the Van Nuys Government Center, Valley College and North Hollywood.

As part of the project, MTA plans to build bike and pedestrian paths along the route to give residents more transportation options when using the Transitway.

Project planners also have factored beautification into the Transitway plans and will landscape 80 acres, planting 7,000 trees and 900,000 drought-tolerant shrubs. Park-and-ride lots will be built at five stations, providing 3,300 new parking spaces.

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