


[Home](#)
[CEO Hotline](#)
[Viewpoint](#)
[Classified Ads](#)
[Archives](#)
[Metro.net](#) (web)

## Resources

[Safety](#)
[Pressroom](#) (web)

[CEO Hotline](#)
[Metro Projects](#)
[Facts at a Glance](#)  
(web)

[Archives](#)
[Events Calendar](#)
[Research Center/  
Library](#)
[Metro Cafe](#) (pdf)

[Metro Classifieds](#)
[Retirement  
Round-up](#)

## Metro Info

[Strategic Plan](#) (pdf)

[Org Chart](#) (pdf)

[Policies](#)
[Training](#)
[Help Desk](#)
[Intranet Policy](#)

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## Board Approves Exposition Light Rail Line Funding Plan

- Project on accelerated schedule for June 2010 completion

By ED SCANNELL

(April 28, 2005) The Board of Directors approved a \$640 million full funding plan, Thursday, for construction of the Exposition Light Rail Transit Project, which would operate from downtown Los Angeles to Venice/Robertson Boulevards in Culver City.

The plan includes the use of local funding instead of federal New Starts funding, thereby keeping the project on an accelerated schedule for a June 2010 completion.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) environmental clearance is needed to enable the Exposition Construction Authority to award a contract for design and construction of the project beginning in early 2006.

"The Expo project will have great significance for LA's westside and the region," said Board Chairman Frank Roberts. "In addition to providing an east-west commuting option through the heart of Los Angeles, this line will link users to the rest of the Metro Rail System and aid Los Angeles County in its ongoing efforts to meet some of the nation's most stringent air quality requirements."

## Share track with Metro Blue Line

The 9.6-mile Exposition light rail line will share common track and two stations (7th St./Metro Center and Pico/Chick Hearn) with the Metro Blue Line as it leaves downtown Los Angeles.

Just south of Downtown, the line will proceed west on the Metro-owned rail right-of-way on Exposition Boulevard, which parallels the heavily congested I-10 Freeway, with a terminus at Venice/Robertson.

Approximately eight new stations will be constructed between Downtown LA and Culver City. A future second phase would extend the Exposition line to the City of Santa Monica.

The funding plan anticipates the use of:

- \$127.5 million in federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) funds,
- \$90.3 million in Proposition C 25 percent funds,
- \$9.8 million in federal Transportation Enhancements Activities (TEA) funds,
- \$15 million in other federal discretionary funds, and up to

- \$50 million in local contributions from cities and private stakeholders along the route.

### **Augmented funding**

These proposed new funding sources will augment existing funding commitments, including:

- \$87.5 million in CMAQ funds;
- \$240.9 million in Proposition C 25 percent transit-related highway funds;
- \$3.8 million in federal TEA funds;
- \$4.2 million in Proposition C 10 percent funds (commuter rail/transit centers); and
- \$11.0 million in state funds from the Traffic Congestion Relief Program (TCRP).

"In recent years the nationwide competition for federal New Starts funding has grown considerably and the Federal Transit Administration's evaluation process for this funding has become very time consuming," said Metro Construction Chief Rick Thorpe. "This new funding plan allows us to complete the project and bring relief to one of the county's most congested corridors three to five years sooner."

Next steps include issuance of a Final Environmental Impact Statement/Report (FEIS/FEIR), followed by the receipt of a Record of Decision (ROD) for the project from the FTA.