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Metro and Union Negotiators to Attend Joint 'Interest-Based' Workshops

(Feb. 15, 2006) As this year's labor negotiations get underway, leaders of Metro's three largest unions and the agency's negotiating teams will attend "interest-based negotiations" workshops this month.

A workshop for ATU and Metro negotiators is scheduled Thursday and Friday, Feb. 16-17. TCU and Metro negotiators are to attend a workshop Feb. 22-23, while a workshop for UTU officials and Metro negotiators is scheduled Feb. 27-28.

Deputy CEO John Catoe is leading the Metro team negotiating with UTU and ATU. Brenda Diederichs, executive officer, Labor and Employee Relations, heads the Metro team negotiating with the TCU. Rhonda Hilyer, an independent neutral facilitator, will conduct the workshops.

The workshops are the beginning of this year's negotiations. Their purpose is to outline the process for negotiations, help identify common interests and develop a genuine relationship of trust between the management and labor teams.

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Metro Seeking \$523 Million in State Funding for Expo Line

(Feb. 15, 2006) Metro is seeking \$523 million in state funding for the Exposition Light Rail project – a sum it hopes to receive from the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and from the state's 2006 budget.

Metro is asking the CTC to program \$315 million in Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funds for the Expo Line project as part of the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Governor Schwarzenegger's budget proposal to fully fund the Traffic Congestion Relief Program (TCRP) from gasoline sales tax funds gives Metro an opportunity to secure another \$208 million in state funds for the Expo Line project as early as March 16, 2006.

The CTC's approval of the state's RIP and TCRP funds also would enable LA County to move forward with other transportation capital improvements.

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Mobility 21 Resolution Supports Transportation Bond Initiative

(Feb. 15, 2006) Officials attending a Mobility 21 Coalition meeting, Feb. 10, passed a resolution supporting a state bond initiative to provide funding for transportation infrastructure that would be proportional to Southern California's needs.

The resolution seeks funding for transportation projects that improve the regional movement of goods while improving the environment, air quality and safety, and providing congestion relief. The resolution also urges the governor and legislature to ensure that the bond provides sufficient funding for new inner and inter-city rail projects.

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City Councilman Herb Wesson Named to Expo Line Board

(Feb. 15, 2006) Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa has named LA City Councilman Herb Wesson as Metro's appointee to the Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority Board.

Wesson will replace Martha Welborne, who now will serve as the mayor's alternate member. Wesson previously served on the Board as the alternate for City Councilman Bernard Parks.

Meanwhile, the Board of Supervisors has appointed Vivian Rescalvo as the alternate for Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky on the Construction Authority Board. She replaces Samantha Bricker, who now serves as chief operations officer of the Construction Authority.

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