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FTA Issues Record of Decision for Expo Light Rail Project

(March 1, 2006) The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) signed a Record of Decision (ROD), Monday, for the Exposition Light Rail Transit Project.

A major milestone for the project, the ROD indicates that the project has satisfied all requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act thereby completing the environmental clearance of the project.

The FTA's action clears the way for the award of a design/build construction contract and the use of federal grant funds for the project.

The Metro Expo Line Construction Authority is scheduled to consider the award of a design/build contract at its March 2 meeting.

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Bill to Restructure Metro's Board Introduced in Sacramento

(March 1, 2006) State Sen. Bob Margett (29-R) has introduced SB 1507, a bill to restructure the LACMTA Board of Directors.

Under Margett's measure, introduced Feb. 23, the 13-member Board would include the five LA County supervisors, the mayor of Los Angeles, a public member and member of the LA City Council appointed by the mayor.

The remaining five members would be elected official members selected by the LA County City Selection Committee (excluding the City of LA). Those five members would represent Metro's five service sectors.

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Pedestrian Safety Action Plan Workshops Scheduled

(March 1, 2006) Metro will host three "Designing for Pedestrian Safety" workshops in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration, Caltrans and the U.S. DOT's Highway Safety Research Center.

The goal of the workshops, scheduled March 6-8, is the development of local and statewide pedestrian safety action plans. The reliance of Metro patrons on pedestrian connections to the transit system makes pedestrian safety a high priority for the agency.

For more information about the pedestrian safety workshops, contact Robin Blair at 922-3074.

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Arthur Winston 100th Birthday Events Scheduled

(March 1, 2006) A number of events have been scheduled, this month, to celebrate Arthur Winston's 100th birthday. He hits the century mark on March 22.

Friday, March 17

Los Angeles City Council Meeting

- The Los Angeles City Council will honor Winston at 10 a.m. in the John Ferraro Council Chamber, Room 340, of Los Angeles City Hall. The City Council will proclaim Wednesday, March 22, 2006 as Arthur Winston Day throughout the City of Los Angeles.

Tuesday, March 21

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Meeting

- The Board of Supervisors will honor Winston with a scroll presentation at 9:30 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors Meeting in Room 381 in the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration , 500 W. Temple Street. The Board of Supervisors will proclaim Wednesday, March 22 as Arthur Winston Day throughout the County of Los Angeles.

Wednesday, March 22

Arthur Winston Division Maintenance Shops

- A celebration and media event on the day of Winston's 100th birthday and retirement will be held at 11:30 a.m., at Arthur Winston Division 5, 5425 Van Ness Ave.

Thursday, March 23

Board of Directors Meeting

- The Board of Directors will present Winston with a resolution at 9:30 a.m. during the Board Meeting.

Thursday, March 23

Reception at Metro Headquarters, Plaza Level

- Following the Board Meeting, Metro will host a reception for Winston on the Plaza Level from 12 noon to 1 p.m. There will be a short program and employees can stop by wish him well and sign his retirement scroll.

Saturday, March 25

Dinner at Renaissance L.A. Airport Hotel

- A dinner to celebrate Winston's 100th birthday and retirement

will be held from 6 p.m. until midnight at the Renaissance LA Airport Hotel, 9620 Airport Boulevard.

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[Metro History Fact]

Metro's Steam Turbine Bus Hit the Road in 1972



The steam turbine-powered bus, on the left, is one of four delivered to Metro, on this day in 1972, for a one-year demonstration project. Photo courtesy of Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library

(March 1, 2006) On this day in 1972, Crossroads Depot Division 2 took delivery of one of four steam turbine-powered buses for a one-year, \$7.9-million alternative power and clean-air demonstration project.

The project was sponsored by the Urban Mass Transit Administration (now FTA) and the California Air Resources Board. The San Diego, Sacramento and San Francisco transit agencies also took delivery of steam-powered coaches with propulsion systems designed by William Lear (of Lear Jet fame).

None of the buses survive. The steam engines proved somewhat troublesome and did not yield the expected fuel savings (diesel fuel was used to heat the boilers).

However, the project sparked private-sector interest in clean-air and alternative fuel technologies for transit buses. William Lear later reused the buses' steam propulsion system in a race car that set a world speed record.

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