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## Expo Line Construction Authority Board Approves Design/Build Contract

- Board's action is official start of the project. FTA issues environmental clearance.

By RICK JAGER

(March 3, 2006) Having reached one major milestone, earlier this week, the Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority's Board of Directors voted, Thursday, to approve a \$420.2 million design/build contract.

The action, which marks the official start of the project, came following the announcement, Monday, that the Federal Transit Administration had issued the Record of Decision for the Exposition Light Rail Transit Project.

In issuing the Record of Decision, the federal government has determined that the project satisfies all requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, thereby completing the environmental clearance for the light rail project.

With its Thursday vote, the Construction Authority Board authorized its CEO Rick Thorpe to execute a \$420.2 million design/build contract with the joint venture construction and design group of FCI/Fluor/Parsons. Construction on the \$640 million line is expected to start this summer.

"We believe that we truly have brought on board the best joint venture construction and design team that will ensure that this transportation project is built on time and within budget," said Thorpe. "We look forward to officially breaking ground on the Expo Light Rail Transit Project and getting this important project started."

## Notice to Proceed

In addition, the Board gave Thorpe authority to issue a Notice to Proceed for the \$77.8 million design and professional services scope of work, once plans have been submitted and approved.

"This is a vital transportation project that will help increase mobility and reduce congestion along this corridor," said Construction Authority Chair Yvonne Burke. "The Record of Decision and the Board's action to authorize the award of this contract are important milestones in moving forward with this much-needed project."

Metro, which was responsible for planning and preparing the environmental impact report on the project, now will hand off construction of the project to the Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority. The Authority will be responsible for the final design and construction of the light rail line.

The 8.5-mile light rail line, which will begin in downtown Los Angeles, will share two stations – 7th Street/Metro Center and Pico/Chick Hearn – with the existing Metro Blue Line. Eight other stations will be constructed.

Just south of downtown the line will proceed west on the Metro-owned right-of-way on Exposition Boulevard and terminate at Venice/Robertson in Culver City. A future second phase would extend the Exposition line to the City of Santa Monica.