


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

Resources

[Safety](#)
[Pressroom \(web\)](#)
[Ask the CEO](#)
[CEO Forum](#)
[Employee Recognition](#)
[Employee Activities](#)
[Metro Projects](#)
[Facts at a Glance \(web\)](#)
[Archives](#)
[Events Calendar](#)
[Research Center/Library](#)
[Metro Classifieds](#)
[Bazaar](#)

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[30/10 Initiative](#)
[Policies](#)
[Training](#)
[Help Desk](#)
[Intranet Policy](#)

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Board Approves \$5 Mill. for Solar Panel Project at Division 18

- Agency directed to develop plan for solar at all Metro facilities

By DAVE SOTERO

(Nov. 1, 2006) The Board of Directors has approved \$5 million for a new solar generation project at Division 18 in Carson and has directed the agency to start a comprehensive three-year plan to install solar panels at every bus and rail facility.

The Division 18 solar panels will be installed on the maintenance building rooftop and erected as "shading structures" in the employee parking lot. Some 1,600 solar panels together will generate 417 kilowatts of electricity, enough power to save Metro about \$25,000 per month, or \$300,000 per year.

Scheduled to be completed in September 2007, the system is expected to pay for itself in 10 to 11 years.

A motion by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks directs Metro to concurrently develop a three-year plan to install solar panels on every feasible Metro facility.

Board to see plan

The plan will detail a schedule, staffing, costs, rebate availability and other project requirements and benefits for future Board consideration. The agency would work in cooperation with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, The Gas Company and Southern California Edison.

"Metro has already proven that it can harness the power of the sun to demonstrate its environmental stewardship and, at the same time, lower its operating costs," said Villaraigosa. "I want to see that commitment extended agencywide, so that Metro can achieve responsible energy management throughout its offices and divisions wherever it is cost-effective."

Metro already has two successful solar panel installations in operator at East Valley Division 15 in Sun Valley and at West Valley Division 8 in Chatsworth. Outfitted last year with a total of 1,648 solar panels, the two divisions are now realizing a savings of about \$160,000 per year in electricity costs.

The project, the largest solar power installation of its kind in the transit industry, produces a combined AC 425 kilowatts of clean, renewable electricity — enough electricity to provide up to 20 percent of each bus division's total energy requirements.

Other Board actions:

- [Item 9, Lankershim Depot Restoration](#)
- [Item 10, Westlake/MacArthur Park Development](#)
- [Item 11, Victory Boulevard Development](#)

The Board also took the following actions during its October meeting:

Item 9, Lankershim Depot Restoration. The Board approved a “life of project” budget of \$3.6 million for restoration of the Lankershim Depot Transit Center in North Hollywood.

The historic train depot will be restored for potential future use as a customer service center, a small café or concession stand, restroom facilities for Metro staff and bike racks. The Lankershim Depot Transit Center would link the Metro Orange and Red Lines, local bus service, the Chandler Bikeway and the neighboring NoHo Arts District.

Item 10, Westlake/MacArthur Park Development. The Board approved a motion authorizing the CEO to enter into a joint development agreement and ground lease for the development of a residential and retail complex on 2.75 acres at the Westlake/MacArthur Park Metro station.

The agreement calls for construction over two phases of 199 affordable apartments, 53,200 square feet of commercial space and a 186-space parking structure with a minimum of 100 spaces for use by Metro riders, employees and contractors during normal service hours.

Under the agreement, the number of apartments eventually could reach 210 and the parking structure could include between 370 and 495 spaces.

Item 11, Victory Boulevard Development. The Board also authorized the CEO to enter a joint development and ground lease agreement with a developer who is proposing to build a 31,000 square foot office building on a 1.9-acre Metro-owned parcel near the Metro Orange Line’s Balboa station.

The property is located along Victory Boulevard, west of Balboa Boulevard and about a half-block from the Orange Line station.