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Computer-generated view of the planned "Union Division" shows a perspective looking northeast from Metro Headquarters. Note the third-story parking lot covered by solar panels and the automobile bridge that crosses over Cesar Chavez Avenue on the right side of the picture. The Regional Rebuild Center is in the right background and the Twin Towers jail on the left.

## Metro to Build New 200-Bus 'Union Division' Adjacent to RRC

- Construction begins in May 2008, opening in November 2009
- Should relieve pressure on divisions now over-capacity

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Nov. 7, 2006) With every one of its 11 bus divisions now at or above capacity, Metro is moving forward with plans to build a new operating facility – currently named the Union Division – across from the Gateway Building, adjacent to the Regional Rebuild Center.

The environmental clearance phase already has begun, according to Facilities Operations Project Manager Tim Lindholm, and a design contract should be awarded next May. Pending Board approval of the project budget in early 2007, construction of the \$95 million project would begin in May 2008, with completion expected in November, 2009.

Once opened, the Union Division is expected to relieve overcrowding at the downtown bus operating divisions – 1, 2, 3 and 10 – and even at Division 9 in the San Gabriel Valley.

"Once we open the Union Division and free up space at the other divisions," says Lindholm, "they'll work better and more efficiently, and that will lead to cost savings."

The Union Division construction site will encompass Terminal 31, now an OCI training facility and parking lot at the corner of Vignes Street and Cesar Chavez Avenue, and RRC Parking Lot A, also being used as a layover zone. Lyon Street, which runs between the two layover zones,

will be closed and folded into the construction site.

**Will accommodate 200 buses**

A three-story, 113,361-square foot building will be constructed to accommodate up to 200 buses – 120 40-foot buses, 48 articulated coaches and 32 buses in a layover zone – and some 500 employees.

The Union Division also will occupy part of the second floor of RRC Building 1, which will be used for transportation offices. Employees in those offices, many of whom work in Vehicle Technology and Support, probably would be relocated to the Gateway Building, says Lindholm. Offices for RRC managers and others will remain at that building.

A 20-bay maintenance facility capable of handling both standard 40-foot buses and articulated buses, will be located on the ground floor of the new Union Division building. That level also will have two bus washers, along with CNG fueling and vaulting facilities.

The second level of the building will be devoted to bus storage, while the third level will provide parking for about 450 employee, visitor and non-revenue vehicles. The third level also will be covered by solar panels that will provide a large portion of the division’s electrical needs.

Division 1 Transportation Manager Sonja Owens and Maintenance Manager Hector Rojas, Crossroads Depot Division 2 Transportation Manager Thom Pelk and Maintenance Manager Donell Harris, along with staff members from the RRC, the Gateway and San Gabriel Valley service sectors, and Facilities Engineering participated in the project planning.



View of the “Union Division” looks southwest and shows the new building connected to division offices on the second floor of the Regional Rebuild Center just out of view on the left. Also pictured are solar panels and, in the background, the automobile bridge and circular ramp.

**An automobile bridge**

A major architectural feature of the Union Division development will be an automobile bridge that will connect the building’s third-level parking lot with a circular ramp across Cesar Chavez Avenue. Employees and visitors will drive up to the parking level by using the circular ramp entrance on the Lyon Street extension.

“Keeping cars and buses from using the same entrance and exit will be

safer for employees and will help avoid traffic congestion on Cesar Chavez,” says Lindholm.

Locating the Union Division adjacent to the RRC will permit some sharing of facilities. The RRC’s CNG fueling station will be expanded and upgraded from slow-fill to fast-fill to handle the division’s 200 buses. The division won’t have a paint booth, Lindholm says, but will send its buses to the RRC for painting.

Lindholm expects the new building to qualify for an LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – Silver designation by meeting strict water conservation, energy efficiency, recycling and environmental standards.

“Since we’re going to be making the investment in sustainability as we construct these facilities,” he says, “we should make the investment in things that have a return on our investment. You have to look at sustainability and energy efficiency in economic terms; that’s the only way we can really do what’s best for the environment and for Metro’s operations.”