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## Feds Direct \$235 mil in stimulus funds to Metro projects



Federal stimulus funds will help pay for the replacement of all 20 transit power substations that power the Metro Blue Line trains and passenger stations. The \$50-million project, currently in bidding phase, is estimated to take about three years to complete. The substations convert 34,500 volts a/c power from utility companies to 750 volts d/c to power rail vehicles and passenger stations. Cost analysis favored replacing the existing substations, which are becoming obsolete and inefficient. Difficulty in obtaining spare parts makes a major overhaul impractical, said Michael Harris-Gifford, DEO, Wayside Systems & Rail Vehicle Acquisition.

The transit power substation at Imperial Station sits near the alignment. Below, the interior houses the power conversion system.



By GAYLE ANDERSON

(June 11, 2009) Metro will receive nearly \$235 million in federal stimulus funds to help pay for Metro projects in line for the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 (ARRA) consideration, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced Wednesday.

"By reinvesting in our nation's transit infrastructure, we are making our communities more livable, invigorating the local economy and putting America back to work," U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said in announcing the grants.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 includes \$8.4 billion for transit capital improvements.

When the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 was signed into law on Feb. 17, it set off a chain reaction across the nation as local

transportation agencies scrambled to identify shovel-ready projects that would meet ARRA criteria, which required, generally, that the projects were needed and ready to be implemented. The process was intensified by a very tight timeline: Complete grant applications must be submitted by July 1. The federal funding must be obligated by Sept. 1.

The organized effort of the planning staff paid off nicely. All the projects submitted were quickly approved.

Projects are designated for funding in three separate grants:

A \$225.1 million grant, submitted May 14, was approved in less than 30 days, a record-breaking turnaround. Approved for funding are:

- Upgrades for Metro Rail and Metro Bus facilities and equipment, including the replacement of approximately ninety 45-foot buses and fifty 32-foot buses, and the overhaul of 400 buses over five years old.
- The widening of staircases for emergency egress and improved pedestrian access at the 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center station
- The replacement of fiber optic equipment for the Metro Rail system
- The replacement of 18 aging Metro Blue Line traction power substations
- Modifications of CNG fueling facilities.

A \$8.2 million grant was submitted March 25 to:

- The replacement of two traction power substations and associated electrical support systems located along the Metro Blue Line right-of-way and Metro Blue Line Yard.

A \$1 million grant was submitted April 27 for:

- Enhancements such as public art, signage, and way-finding improvements for up to 19 bus stations or stops along the Harbor and El Monte transitways and local bus stops in downtown Los Angeles.

Two projects submitted in early June remain pending: A grant for \$66.7 million to advance a portion of the federal funds Metro is scheduled to receive in FY10 for the Metro Gold Line Extension to East Los Angeles and a \$6.7 million grant to fund the installation of 14 canopies to enhance pedestrian access to Metro Rail stations, said Gladys Lowe, director, countywide planning and development.