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Systems Safety Manager Abdul Zohbi watches over photo enforcement for the Metro Gold Line extension to East Los Angeles. *Photo by José Ubaldó*

## Traffic Enforcement Camera Installation Nearly Complete Around Gold Line

Lights ! Camera ! Stop and Think !

By Michael D. White  
*Staff Writer*

(Sept. 8, 2009) Metro has begun the installation of traffic enforcement cameras at selected intersections along the six-mile long Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension.

Part of a concerted effort to promote safe driving habits and reduce the number of incidents of motorists crossing rail tracks against signals, the cameras will be positioned at 14 intersections selected by Metro and the Transit Services Bureau of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) based on risk and potential for accidents.

According to Abdul Zohbi, Systems Safety Manager - Metro Corporate Safety, a pair of cameras will monitor the left-hand turn lanes at each of the selected intersections as they account for the highest rate of grade crossing accidents.

"Metro is the only transit agency in the country with photo enforcement at grade crossings," he said, adding that the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension camera program is an extension of the camera systems in place on the Metro Blue Line and Metro Orange Line.

According to Zohbi, who serves as Photo Enforcement Project Manager, the Eastside Extension camera array will be completed by the end of this month and, as new light rail and dedicated busway alignments are built, Corporate Safety plans call for making photo enforcement part of the system's overall safety elements.

### Pays for itself

The camera system, he stressed, is "cost neutral," meaning that the expenditures for equipment and maintenance is entirely paid for by the revenue generated by the citations issued by the LASD.

Each of the photo installations is comprised of a specially-designed cameras equipped with flash equipment and ground loop detectors. Violators will have their vehicles "shot" twice – once prior to the violation point and again after their vehicle has moved beyond the violation point.

Citations will be processed per Metro, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and the California Department of Motor Vehicles to ensure citations are mailed to the vehicle's registered owner.

Warnings will be issued to offending motorists for 30-days after the cameras are installed, said Zohbi. After that, the LASD will begin issuing citations to drivers that violate the grade crossing rules.

The current fines for a photo enforcement violation are \$445 for adults and \$435 for legal motorists under 18. Additional fees for attending traffic school apply.

**Saving lives**

Due to open in the coming months, the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension will serve eight new stations and run from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles via the Arts District/Little Tokyo and Boyle Heights to Atlantic/Pomona Boulevards in East Los Angeles.

The light rail construction project is within budget, on time and the contractor has logged more than four million working hours without a day lost for any accident or injuries – a safety record that Zohbi wants to see continue.

"Like the other Metro routes that are camera equipped, we want to make sure that the new installation on the Eastside Extension exceeds the standard requirements for safety," said Zohbi. "This has been a tremendous cooperative effort between Metro and all of the partners involved in designing, installing and implementing the new system and if it all results in the saving of just one life, it will be worth it."