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Next Stop: East L.A. The train starts here. Officials break ground for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension on July 14, 2004.

Public Grand Opening of Metro Gold Line to East Los Angeles Set For Sunday, Nov. 15

- Local, state and federal officials will take an inaugural ride following an official ceremony the day before on Saturday, Nov. 14.

By JOSE UBALDO
Media Relations

(Oct. 26, 2009) Following five years of construction and coming in on budget with a flawless 4-million plus hour construction safety record, the Edward R. Roybal Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension from Union Station downtown to East Los Angeles will open to the public on Sunday, Nov. 15.

The six-mile Eastside Extension light rail segment will have eight new stations, two of them underground at Soto and Mariachi Plaza, and 1.7 miles of underground track. It will link the existing Metro Gold Line to Pasadena with Little Tokyo and the Arts District in downtown Los Angeles, before traveling east along 1st Street through Boyle Heights to East Los Angeles. When it opens it will bring the Metro Rail system to a total of 79 miles of rail -- all built during the past 20 years.

The Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension will be supported by a confluence of buses to further extend its reach into the neighborhoods. More than 20 bus lines -- including those serving L.A.'s downtown Union Station -- will connect the Eastside Extension with greater Los Angeles County.

Atlantic Station, for example, is the location of a mini-bus hub for East Los Angeles and is served by six lines. Other stations, such as Indiana Station, are served by local buses as well as municipal carriers including Montebello Transit.

Groundbreaking for the line, which was constructed by Eastside LRT Constructors, was in July 2004. The project has posted an exemplary safety record -- more than 4 million construction hours without a lost-time work injury -- making it perhaps the safest major public works project in U.S. history.

Ridership on the extension is expected to grow steadily, reaching 13,000 average weekday boarding passengers by the end of the first year of operation.

Free rides on the entire Metro Gold Line from Pasadena to East Los Angeles will be offered on opening day Sunday, Nov. 15. Community celebrations also are planned around some of the stations. Details will be announced shortly.