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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro Board of Directors Certifies Final Environmental Impact Report on Exposition Light Rail Transit Project and Adopts Locally Preferred Alternative Alignment

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) Board of Directors today certified the Los Angeles Mid-City/Exposition Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement/Report (FEIS/FEIR) paving the way for the start of construction to begin on the Exposition Light Rail Transit Project next year.

"Today's approval by the Board signals the start of a much needed transportation project that will serve thousands of Westside residents," said City of Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chairman Antonio R. Villaraigosa.

In certifying the FEIS/FEIR, the Board also adopted the Locally Preferred Alternative that was previously approved by the Metro Board in June 2001 and modified in the FEIS/FEIR as the Light Rail Build Alternative from downtown Los Angeles (7th/Metro Center) to Culver City (Venice/Robertson) using Flower Street in the downtown Los Angeles area to connect with the Exposition right-of-way and incorporating the following design options:

- An undercrossing between Jefferson Boulevard and Trousdale Parkway.
- La Brea aerial station and grade separation.
- La Cienega station parking facility on the southeast corner (East Central Interceptor Sewer - ECIS Construction Staging site).
- Jefferson Boulevard north side widening at La Cienega Boulevard.
- Jefferson Boulevard grade separation near Ballona Creek.
- Venice/Robertson interim station located east of National Boulevard within the Metro-owned Exposition right-of-way.

The Exposition Light Rail Transit Project will use local funding instead of federal New Starts funding, thereby keeping the project on an accelerated schedule for a June 2010 completion. Cost of the project is \$640 million.

The Exposition Light Rail Line will be approximately 9 miles in length and will share common track and two station (7th St./Metro Center and Pico/Chick Hearn) with the Metro Blue Line as it leaves downtown Los Angeles. Just south of downtown the line will proceed west on the Metro-owned right-of-way on Exposition Boulevard, which parallels the heavily congested I-10 Freeway, with a terminus at Venice/Robertson.

Approximately eight new stations will be constructed between downtown Los Angeles and Culver City. A future second phase would extend the

Exposition line to the City of Santa Monica.

Following today's certification of the FEIR/FEIS the Metro Board will now seek the issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD) for the project by the Federal Transit Administration. FTA environmental clearance (as represented by the issuance of the ROD) is needed to enable the Exposition Construction Authority to award a contract for design and construction of the project.

Today's Board action also included environmentally clearing the following design options for construction in the event that additional funding becomes available:

- USC/Exposition Park optional at-grade station near Kinsey Drive.
- USC/Exposition Park extended undercrossing option (precludes option at-grade station near Kinsey Drive).
- Venice/Robertson aerial station.

Metro's Board also adopted the findings of Facts and Statement of Overriding Considerations in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and adopted the Mitigation Monitoring Plan for the project. The Board also eliminated from further consideration a Venice/Robertson at-grade station (at-grade rail crossings of Washington and National Boulevards).

Today's Board action came after a 45-day public circulation period for the Exposition Light Rail Transit Project FEIR/FEIS that concluded on Nov. 28.

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