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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension Light Rail Project is on Time, under Budget with Excellent Safety Record

- Project construction reaches mid-point

Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension construction is halfway completed. It is on time, under budget, and construction workers have gone more than 1,000 days without a lost-time incident since construction began July 1, 2004. Opening date is scheduled for late 2009.

The six-mile light rail line will feature eight new stations (two underground) and will go from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles via the Little Tokyo/Arts District and Boyle Heights to Atlantic/Pomona boulevards in East Los Angeles. The cost of the project is \$898 million.

"This project has been moving in the right direction on schedule and under budget and with a very good safety record," said Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Board Chair Gloria Molina. "This confirms Metro's commitment to build the best transportation infrastructure for the future of the Los Angeles region."

Construction of at-grade street level stations at Atlantic and Little Tokyo/Arts District is underway along the right-of-way. Workers are installing rail tracks and overhead power lines. The bridge over the 101 Freeway is complete and installation of the overhead power system and track there also will soon begin.

Improvements along First Street in Boyle Heights and Third Street in East Los Angeles at the station sites are moving forward including street reconstruction, paving, new color sidewalks, crosswalks, landscaping, street lights and traffic signals.

Construction of the two underground stations (Boyle Heights/Mariachi Plaza and Soto) is proceeding. Work on interior walls in Boyle Heights/Mariachi Plaza and the track level concrete floor of Soto Station are in process. Tunneling operations concluded in late 2006 and Metro construction crews are working on the concrete track slab, walkway, and cross-passages inside the 1.7 mile twin tunnels beneath Boyle Heights. The concrete work for the East and West portals entrance to the tunnels is almost complete.

A groundbreaking ceremony for the new Ramona Opportunity High School building has been scheduled for May 31. Metro will contribute more than \$32 million for the rebuilding as part of the school property exchange for the right-of-way on Indiana Street required to construct the Indiana Station for the light rail line.

Other inter-agency coordination work includes the 710 Freeway Bridge near Third and Ford streets in East Los Angeles that is being seismically upgraded and retrofitted. Also, the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering is widening and retrofitting the First Street Bridge over the Los Angeles River in preparation for the construction of the right-of-way and overhead power lines.

For more information on Eastside construction activity, call Metro Community Relations at (213) 922-2259.

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- **Editors Note:** Metro Media Relations has B-roll (60 seconds) and still pictures of the construction along the light rail alignment available upon request. Please contact José E. Ubaldo at (213) 922-3087