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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro Receives Outstanding Environmental and Engineering Award for L.A. Metro Rail Subway

The Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists (AEG) Sept. 26 honored Metro with the 2007 Outstanding Environmental and Engineering Geologic Project Award for the Los Angeles Metro Rail subway.

The 17.4 mile subway serves 16 stations, beginning at Union Station in downtown Los Angeles and extending to North Hollywood in the San Fernando Valley. Construction of the first three phases was completed in 2000. The Wilshire extension to Western Avenue, now known as the Metro Purple Line, opened in 1996. Annual boardings are estimated at nearly 41 million, with weekday boardings topping 132,000.

AEG praised Metro for introducing an innovative seminal underground seismic structural design method during the design phases that began in 1980.

"The seismic design of the Metro Red Line subway passed with flying colors during the Northridge earthquake of 1994," said Metro Board Chair Pam O'Connor. This method has now been adopted as a design standard around the world, she said.

Noted in the AEG evaluation:

• The Metro Rail subway was the first to use high-density polyethylene (plastic) to completely wrap transit stations and tunnels, thus preventing methane, hydrogen sulfide and water form entering the structures.

• The first use of compaction grouting was applied to protect major structures from damage by settlements due to tunneling.

• A unique method of observing and testing in-place geologic materials was devised, thus allowing hands-free logging of soil and bedrock, observations of defects in materials, sampling soil and ground water where encountered.

The AEG is a U.S.-based nonprofit organization of engineers and geologists. Projects selected for the outstanding environmental and engineering geologic award must display national significance, demonstrate applications of environmental and engineering geology, show recognition and respect for the environment, history and culture of the project area and provide an opportunity for public education.

Metro-177