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Metro

News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Valley Measure M Project Moves Forward
Metro Board Approves Study for Railroad-Style Crossing Gates, Busway Bridge on Metro Orange Line to Improve Safety, Speed and Reliability

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) Board of Directors approved staff recommendations today to greatly improve the Valley's Metro Orange Line by launching a formal environmental study of railroad-style crossing gates throughout the line and grade separations at key locations along the corridor. Proposed improvements would be designed to allow for future conversion of this Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line to light rail.

Metro has completed a technical study that evaluated ways to enhance the BRT Line's speed, safety, reliability and ridership. Alternatives considered included grade separations at some major intersections, minor street closures, better signal priority technology, electronic bus connectivity and a four quadrant gating system. After evaluating several potential improvements, the study found that four quadrant gates installed at more than 30 major Orange Line intersections between North Hollywood and Chatsworth provided the greatest speed and safety benefits.

The recommended project also includes a single elevated busway bridge from Van Nuys to Sepulveda boulevards, two of the Valley's busiest and most congested thoroughfares. The bridge would also span three additional intersecting streets. Existing stations at these locations would be elevated onto the new bridge.

Under a Board amendment, Metro will also further evaluate the stand-alone grade separations from the technical study as potential project alternatives. Metro will also work closely with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation to further study local intersection impacts.

"Metro is hard at work building the transportation network of tomorrow – without neglecting vital improvements for our system today," said L.A. Mayor and Metro Board Chair Eric Garcetti. "These projects will improve the rider experience for everyone who uses the Orange Line to get where they're going."

Metro will now start environmental review and preliminary engineering work as well as begin public outreach for the project. Approximately \$286 million for the Metro Orange Line

Improvements project is included in Measure M, the sales tax ballot measure approved by voters in 2016. Groundbreaking is scheduled to begin in 2019 with an opening date approximately six years later.

Improvements have the potential to create substantial time savings for Orange Line riders. Excluding station dwell times, the improvements are expected to shave up to 16 minutes off an end-to-end transit trip in each direction. The gates and bridge will also enhance safety by greatly reducing potential vehicle intrusions along the busway.

“Metro is committed to delivering this shovel-ready project to ensure our Valley customers have the benefits of a faster, safer ride in the future,” said Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington. “Combined with other major Valley transit projects we are now planning, we will effectively create an interconnected system that will literally transform transportation in the San Fernando Valley.”

Proposed improvements would also accommodate integration with other future Metro transit projects, including the East San Fernando Valley and Sepulveda Transit Corridor projects. Additionally, the Orange Line’s conversion to light rail is scheduled for later in the Measure M program.

Project recommendations would retain the Orange Line bicycle/pedestrian path for multi-modal transit commuters. The bike/ped path adjacent to the span of the busway bridge between Van Nuys and Sepulveda Orange Line stations would also be grade-separated.

The Metro Orange Line, which opened in 2005, now provides a vital transit link that extends nearly 18 miles from the North Hollywood Metro Red Line Station to the Chatsworth Metrolink Station. The line carries approximately 25,000 boardings on the average weekday.

About Metro

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is unique among the nation’s transportation agencies. Created in 1993, Metro is a multimodal transportation agency that transports about 1.3 million passengers daily on a fleet of 2,200 clean air buses and six rail lines. The agency also oversees bus, rail, highway and other mobility-related building projects and leads transportation planning and programming for Los Angeles County.

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