

Eastside Gold Line extension down to two possible routes

BY [STEVE HYMON](#) , [OCTOBER 21, 2009](#)

(<http://beta.metro.net/blog/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/WashingtonRoute.jpg>)

The Gold Line to East Los Angeles is not yet open — that is scheduled for November — but an extension of the light rail line is already rolling through the planning stages.

Four proposed routes for the line was recently whittled to a list of two: one along the 60 freeway to South El Monte and the other along Washington Boulevard to Whittier. Forty-seven potential alignments were initially considered.

A report released by a Metro committee earlier this month made the case that the route along the 60 would be the quickest, but that the Washington route would have more average daily weekday riders — 15,660 to 12,270. The report also noted that both routes have serious engineering challenges.

It's important to understand that this is a long-term project ([here's a link to the project's website](#)

(http://www.metro.net/projects_studies/eastside_phase2/default.htm)). The extension isn't scheduled to be completed until 2035. It's a project partially funded by the Measure R sales tax approved by voters last year, but Measure R money is first slated to flow to other transit lines

and freeway fixes. That date could be advanced if other funding sources are found; on Tuesday 14 members of Congress asked the Metro Board of Directors to seek federal funds for this project and two others.

The Metro Board of Directors are scheduled to accept Metro staff's recommendation and move the two routes into the draft environmental study phase at their Thursday meeting. The Board's planning committee voted in favor of going forward last week (here's a link to the latest [Metro staff report](http://www.metro.net/board/Items/2009/10_October/20091014P%26PItem8.pdf) (http://www.metro.net/board/Items/2009/10_October/20091014P%26PItem8.pdf) on the routes). The full Board will have the final say on which route is chosen after the environmental impact studies are done.

Supporters of the 60 alignment held a press conference last week at Metro headquarters in Los Angeles that included [Assemblyman Mike Eng](http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a49/) (<http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a49/>) and officials from cities along the route. The 60 route falls within Eng's district, which covers the southwestern San Gabriel Valley.

Metro Board Member John Fasana, a Duarte city councilmember, also spoke and said later he supports the route along the 60, a positive sign for supporters. Also in attendance at the event — although they didn't speak publicly — were two high-profile consultants to the 60 route, Richard Alatorre and [Mike Roos](http://mroosco.com/bio.html) (<http://mroosco.com/bio.html>). Both are former elected officials.

If you would like to learn more about the project, a community meeting is scheduled for tomorrow night:

Thursday, October 22, 6-8pm

Pio Pico Women's Club

[9214 Mines Av](#)

[Pico Rivera, CA 90660](http://maps.google.com/maps?oe=utf-8&client=firefox-) (<http://maps.google.com/maps?oe=utf-8&client=firefox->

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Transit Access: Metro Line 266 (<http://maps.google.com/maps/place?ftid=ox8oc2d1f2coddebe1:oxe89f92cd23e0e8fd>)

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