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Eastside Extension Tunneling Begins Beneath Boyle Heights

Photos: Luis Inzunza



Tunneling on the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension began, Thursday, when "Lola" – a 2 million-pound, closed-faced earth pressure balance (EPB) tunnel boring machine – started her march through 1.7 miles of earth under Boyle Heights. Twin sister "Vikki" stands ready to begin excavation on her side of the tunnels. Taking the rail line underground was necessary for this part of the 5.9 mile Eastside Extension because of the area's narrow streets.



Creating a 21-foot, 4-inch-wide tunnel under East Los Angeles will be no sweat for "Lola" and "Vikki," two German-manufactured tunnel boring machines. The machines will excavate the dirt and process it through to the back of their 344-foot bodies, while also installing the 8,000-pound concrete tunnel liner segments as they go. At \$10 million each, "Lola" and "Vikki" are a fraction of the \$898.8 million cost for the entire Gold Line Eastside Extension. (2/24/06)

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