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Lisa Levy Buch  
Director of Public Affairs  
(909) 267-0161 or (626) 305-7004  
llevybuch@foothillextension.org  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Critical Agreement Executed for Foothill Extension Light Rail Project**

### ***Metro and BNSF Railway Amend Shared-Use Agreement for 11.5-Mile Corridor***

Monrovia, CA –Today, the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority (Construction Authority) announced the execution of a critically-needed agreement between the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) and BNSF Railway (BNSF) that will result in BNSF abandoning their rights to use the corridor between (roughly) the future Arcadia and Irwindale Stations along the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension from Pasadena to Azusa. The agreement was completed just over one year following approval of full funding for the project in March 2010.

“This is a truly historic day,” said Doug Tessitor, Board Chairman for the Construction Authority. “This agreement, which has been in the works for many years, will allow a significant portion of the Foothill Extension from Pasadena to Azusa to be built as a stand-alone corridor – reducing cost for the project’s construction and future impacts to the community.”

Amendment of the shared-use agreement between the agencies was a critical path item for the Foothill Extension project. It was one of a number of conditions required of the Construction Authority in the Funding Agreement with Metro that needed to be satisfied before significant funds would be released for the project.

The original shared-use agreement was executed in the early 1990s, when the then-Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (now Metro) purchased the right-of-way between Pasadena and Claremont from Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (ATSF) as part of a multi-billion dollar county-wide right-of-way purchase. The initial agreement allowed ATSF right to continue use of the rail right-of-way with the understanding that sometime in the future it would be needed for a planned rail line. BNSF Railway inherited the agreement, after ATSF merged with the Burlington Northern Railroad to form BNSF Railway in 1996.

“This has taken a significant effort,” said Construction Authority CEO, Habib F. Balian. “Metro staff made this agreement a priority for the agency and committed themselves to seeing it completed in time for the Construction Authority to award a design-build contract this summer for the approximately \$450 million Pasadena to Azusa Alignment work.”

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### **Additional Background**

The Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority is an independent transportation planning and construction agency created in 1999 by the California state legislature. Its purpose is to extend the Metro Gold Line light rail line from Union Station to Montclair. The first phase completed by the Construction Authority opened in 2003, connecting downtown Los Angeles and Pasadena. Los Angeles County’s Measure R half-cent sales tax increase will fully fund the segment between Pasadena and Azusa. Additional funding is needed to complete the line further east, to Montclair. A proposed final extension to the LA/Ontario International Airport is also under study.