

Gold Line authority approves study on extension to ONT

A request for organizations to analyze whether to extend the Gold Line to LA/Ontario Airport will be sought soon by the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority Board.

The analysis would look at the different forms of transportation the authority may use to transport Gold Line riders to the airport, including identifying routes. The action was approved during a meeting Wednesday night in Monrovia.

In addition, the study would identify other factors, such as how much it would cost to operate and maintain the service as well as forecast ridership.

“The board approved moving forward with the study, they are still very dedicated and committed to getting to ONT airport — at least studying it,” said Lisa Levy Buch, spokeswoman for Gold Line.

The Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension, overseen by the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority, is a \$1.7 billion, 24-mile extension of the Metro Gold Line light rail system.

The eight-mile extension from Montclair to ONT is not a formal part of the project, but the construction authority in 2008 conducted an initial study of extending the line. That study found it was feasible to go to the airport.

The construction authority will issue the requests for proposals on March 5. The last day to submit proposals will be April 30 and officials expect to award a contract in June.

Funding for the \$1.5 million study will come from the authority’s reserves, but staff will work with other agencies in San Bernardino and Los Angeles counties to be reimbursed.

Ontario mayor and authority board member Paul Leon said despite the lack of the funding support, the authority is committed to the vision.

“We firmly believe if you stop or surrender the process, you are not going to get there. It’s a lot harder to pick something back up then it is to continue with the goal,” Leon said.