

BULLETIN BOARD

The officers and directors for 2001 as elected at our Dec. 9 meeting:

President - Kris Sharp

Vice-President - Anthony Loui

Treasurer - Juanita Dellomes

Recording Secretary - Mark Strickert

Executive Secretary - Dana Gabbard

Directors at Large - Phillip Capo, Kyle Minnis, Kymberleigh Richards

At our Jan. 13 meeting OCTA will make a presentation on its CenterLine light rail project. This will be held in the library of Angelus Plaza (3rd floor) beginning at 2 p.m. Preceding it at 1 p.m. will be our regular monthly member meeting (in abbreviated form).

Tuesday, January 30 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the Westside Pavilion Community Room A/B (10800 West Pico Blvd. in West Los Angeles) SO.CA.TA is co-sponsoring with MTA and the Southern California Council on Environment and Development a public meeting on MTA's draft Long Range Plan 2000-2025. This is a follow-up to the meeting held Nov. 30.

Our annual holiday buffet was a great success with members enjoying good food and good company in a relaxed atmosphere. Special thanks to the following agencies for supplying trinkets: Caltrans Division of Rail, Culver CityBus, Glendale Beeline, MARTA, Metrolink, Omnitrans, San Diego Transit, San Diego Trolley, Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District, Santa Clarita Transit, Torrance Transit.

“Terms of Engagement: Urban Design in Greater Los Angeles at the Millennium” is a exhibition that explores the diversity of Urban Design in Los Angeles. Among those involved with it are Vice President Anthony Loui and Bus Rapid Transit advocate Martha Welborne. The latter as part of her advocacy for a comprehensive Express Bus system in Los Angeles is presenting a video loop simulating an exclusive bus right-of-way ride along Wilshire Blvd. The event is being held at the Harriet and Charles Luckman Fine Arts Gallery, located on the campus of California State University, Los Angeles, January 13 - February 24, 2001. Gallery hours are Mon. - Thur. & Sat., 12 noon - 5:00 p.m.; admission is free; (323) 343-6610 for further information.

Member J.K. Drummond informs us the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) of the city of Los Angeles has a million and a half dollar grant from the MTA to build a transit center in San Pedro. Due to concerns about the suitability of the site initially chosen alternate sites are being evaluated. The Pacific (Ave. in San Pedro) Corridor advisory committee which is providing input for the process will hold its next meeting February 7. For further information, contact Betty A. Pace, community affairs specialist for the CRA, at (213) 977-1707. (*cont'd on pg. 5*)

TRANSIT UPDATES *Have anything to report? Call 213 388 2364*

MTA #58 (Alameda Bl) will be fare-free until Jan 31. The program allowing people to ride Harbor Freeway Transitway buses for base fare only (no zone fares charged) has also been extended to January 31.

According to an article in the Jan 5 Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, the Downtown Pomona Metrolink station is ready to be served—all it needs is the ticket machines, which Metrolink hasn't provided yet.

Fontana Metrolink station is being upgraded, with new bus bays and restrooms. Construction may require that the current bus stops be closed; in which case, buses (Omni routes #10, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 61, 66, and 67) will stop on Orange Way next to the station.

Another Metrolink station is to be built in Corona, this one at Main St, just north of the Riverside Freeway (SR-91). The Riverside County Transportation Commission has agreed to spend up to \$700,000 in design costs.

LADOT Dash in Wilmington now runs every 15-minutes (was 12) as of December 4.

Culver Citybus increased its fares, effective January 1:

- Adult (Base) Fare 75¢
- Student Fare 50¢
- Senior (62+ Years) 35¢
- Disabled Fare 35¢
- Blind Fare Free
- Local Transfer Free
- Inter-Agency Transfer:
 - Base (Adult/Student) 25¢
 - Senior 10¢
 - Disabled 10¢

Foothill Transit is proposing a transit center in Downtown Covina (Citrus Ave. and San Bernardino Rd--about two blocks south of the Covina Metrolink). This would be a mixed use project, with bus bays, a parking garage, and some shops and businesses. (FT headquarters

would also move there)

Omnitrans had some minor changes: Routes #63 (Chino-Ontario) and #64 (Ontario-Upland) have been combined into a single Route #63. (Actually, the two routes had been through-routed at times). Also, the loop on the north end of #7 (in Verdemon) is now done in the counter-clockwise direction.

Omnitrans is also providing free bus service on Routes #21 and #29 over the Sierra Ave/I-10 overpass in Fontana. (The overpass is being widened, and it can be dangerous to walk across at times). Free bus service is being offered during the construction period. In order to board free, southbound passengers should wait for either #21 or #29 at Sierra/Permanente; northbound passengers should wait at either Palm Court near the County Center (#21) or on Slover near Empire Center (#29)

Currently, four bus systems (RTA, City of Banning, City of Beaumont and Sunline-Palm Springs) serve the Banning/Beaumont area. This has led to some problems for riders making connections from one system to another, even to travel a few blocks (across the Banning/Beaumont city limit at Highland Springs, for example). Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa and Riverside County are studying a regional bus system serving this area, perhaps absorbing the Banning and Beaumont bus routes, and possibly even the RTA routes to Hemet, Morenc Valley, and Yucaipa.

Sunlink (Riverside-Coachella Valley service operated by Sunline Transit) has been modified to serve the Palm Springs Mall, as well as the Desert Factory Outlet Stores and Casino Morongo in Cabazon. Four weekday round trips are still provided, although the early morning and mid-evening trips have been dropped in favor of more midday service (trip leave Palm Desert at 5:45, 8:10, 11:50 a.m and 2:50 p.m, and leave Riverside at 8:30 and 11:20 a.m. and 3:15 and 5:25 p.m.

This month MTA will hold the last Stakeholder Focus Group meeting for its Long Range Plan. While often a frustrating process, attending these meetings have proven a great opportunity to network and hear diverse viewpoints. My mind is fixed on the 2003 revision as when we should finally shake up the status quo.

Speaking of the status quo, SCAG has just released its draft Regional Transportation Plan for public review and comment. Available at <http://www.scag-rtp.govconnect.org/> or request a hardcopy by calling SCAG at (213) 236-1800. Member Hank Fung informs me the Technical Appendices are due for release shortly. I suspect these will be made available on CD-ROM. Deadline for comments on the Plan is March 15.

I was surprised to learn MTA's consultants actually made a Long Range Plan presentation to the Bus Riders Union (although it is unclear whether this was for the full membership or only its Planning Committee). Wonder if the response consisted of anything other than the usual soundbites?

I was gratified Danny Wu of MTA quickly responded to my query why the page of links for MTA's Countywide Planning and Development Dept. on the MTA website didn't include SO.CA.TA. In being added we join such august company as the Auto Club and the Urban Land Institute:
<http://www.mta.net/corporate/depts/CPD/links.htm>

To the surprise of no one the NIMBYs of the Mt. Washington Association (<http://www.mtwashington.org/projects/blue-line/index.htm>) and the No Blue Line at Grade (<http://www.noblag.org/>) have filed protests with the Public Utility Commission to at-grade crossings for the Pasadena Blue Line project they object to. Ironically both group claim to

support the project, and that their demands are merely seeking to improve it (albeit with expensive project changes).

The Dec. Metro Investment Report provides more details about the infrastructure effort being undertaken by the L.A. County Economic Development Corporation. Their first move is to revive a report formerly published by Security Pacific Bank known as the 60 mile Circle to provide business leaders with a picture of our region's challenges and needs. This to me is another sign that transportation will no longer be a political backwater and opportunities now exist for coalition building that did not just 3-4 years ago.

Josh Shaw, Executive Director of the California Transit Association, posts on the CTA website a weekly report that often includes insider tidbits: http://www.transitassociation.org/exec_dir_reports/index.html

For example it tipped me off that the influential Legislative Analyst's Office has released its transportation recommendations for 2001: http://www.lao.ca.gov/2000_reports/recommended_leg/2000_recommended_leg_transportation.html.

Caltrans' plans to update the 1993 California Transportation Plan continue apace. We are keeping an eye on this process and will inform members when opportunities for public input occur.

The Dec. 18 Contra Costa Times revealed California has joined eight other states and the Federal Highway Administration in a study concerning whether mileage-based user fees could provide a realistic alternative to the gas tax. This responds to concerns that the yield from these taxes will shrink as emerging new clean alternative technologies such as fuel cells become available; also some see it as a mechanism for congestion

pricing. Global positioning systems are being evaluated, which are less invasive than past odometer based VMT (Vehicle Mileage Tax) proposals.

I spent part of my vacation beginning to work thru the copy of Jeremy March's California Transportation Law (Solano Press, <http://www.solano.com/>) we bought with funds from passing the hat at one of our meetings. I am finding it an invaluable explication of the arcane process by which transportation planning and funding occurs. It has even already given me a few ideas and revealed out of the way concepts

that require further research. For a policy wonk it doesn't get any better than this!

The passing of Congressman Julian Dixon marks the loss of the last of what I called the quartet of wisemen (the other three were Mayor Tom Bradley, Supervisor Kenny Hahn and Congressman Glenn Anderson) who shaped our transportation systems for the past quarter century. And my most disquieting realization is that no successors are apparent in the current political landscape. ■

(*Bulletin Board*, from pg. 2) OCTA has released supplemental environmental documents for its CenterLine project. An open house will be held at OCTA's Administrative Offices in Orange (600 S. Main Street) Thursday, January 18 from 2:00 - 7:00 p.m. The public hearing will be held Monday, January 22 at 9:00 a.m. at the County Hall of Administration, Planning Commission Hearing Room, 10 Civic Center Plaza in Santa Ana. Copies of the documents are available for review at several public libraries in Orange County or can be downloaded from OCTA's website: <http://www.octa.net> Deadline for comments is Feb. 1.

Redefining Community is a smart growth conference being held Jan. 19-20 in San Diego. Further details: 800-PSU-TODAY or [http://www.outreach.psu.edu/C&I/Redefining Community/](http://www.outreach.psu.edu/C&I/Redefining%20Community/)

A new California transportation coalition is seeking a full-time coordinator to broaden the coalition and help develop its state level transportation policy and outreach efforts. Coalition members include the Surface Transportation Policy Project, the California Futures Network, Latino Issues Forum, and the Planning and Conservation League. For details, contact Eddy Moore at Planning and Conservation League at emoore@pcl.org or visit <http://www.transact.org/ca/> for full job description.

The California Transportation Report is a monthly publication distributed via the net published by the Surface Transportation Policy Project's California offices. To subscribe (for free) send your name, address, e-mail and affiliation to: jcorless@transact.org.

As always, *The Transit Advocate* needs articles, letters, Transit Tips, photographs and research (newspaper clippings, etc.) from all members and interested non-members. All materials should be sent to **3010 Wilshire #362, Los Angeles, CA 90010**. (or e-mailed to transit@lerami.lerctr.org). Material for publication should be received two weeks before the scheduled SO.CA.TA meeting date. ■

MEMBERS IN ACTION

A correction to last month's column: members Russ Jones and Nate Zablén also attended the MTA Long Range Plan meeting at the Westside Pavilion.

Anthony Loui attended the Dec. 7 Technology & Innovation TDM Forum put on by the MTA. He found many of the presentations illuminating and is hopeful this could become an annual event.

Loui also attended the Dec. 14 symposium at USC Activism and Mobility in the Global City: Transportation in Los Angeles 1970-2000 co-sponsored by the Auto Club and the Smithsonian. The most interesting presentation were comments made by John Dyer, former General Manager of RTD (predecessor to MTA). Dyer asserted the ridership expansion during 1983-1985 caused by having a fifty cent fare was a period of chaos for passengers and bus operations that to his thinking proved the region could not rely on buses alone for its future mobility needs. Indeed, MTA is already exploring acquiring articulated buses for its Wilshire Metro Rapid line as its ridership growth approaches the operational limits of 40 foot coaches.

Kymerleigh Richards had another op-ed about the Valley transit zone published in the Jan 7 Los Angeles Times, Valley section.

Mark Panitz has been appointed to MTA's Access Advisory Committee, which provides input on accessibility issues to the agency. Our heartiest congratulations, Mark! ■

SunLink Route Map

