

TRANSIT UPDATES

Due to track construction projects between El Monte and Union Station, as well as between San Bernardino and Riverside, weekend Metrolink train service between these stations will be replaced with shuttle buses until December 13th.

Closure of the adjacent El Monte Busway during weekend and late-night hours will mean that Foothill Transit and MTA buses will not stop at the Cal State and County Hospital stops during the hours that the busway is closed.

Some changes to the proposed December MTA changes:

- The proposed changes in the Whittier/Norwalk area for #270 and #275 have been put on hold, pending consultation with Norwalk Transit
- A few additional stops will be added to the new all-Limited #362 (such as the Commerce Casino)
- #576 would be cancelled, and its service hours allocated to provide late night and weekend service on #265. (Current #576 riders can use a combination of #305, #705 and #2)

- While #108 would be straightlined along Slauson between Pacific and Miles, the route of #254 will not be changed
- The extension of #711 (Florence Rapid) to LAX has been postponed until the next shakeup (June 2005)
- Frequent service on #217 (8 min headway during peak hours, 16 midday) will be retained. Also #217 will continue to serve Sunset/Vermont, while #2 shortlines will continue to terminate at Fairfax (not San Vincente as proposed)

The routes of #205, #447 and #550 would be modified to operate along a one-way loop via Gaffey, 7th, Weymouth and 13th. #205 would operate clockwise, while the other two routes would operate counter-clockwise. This change would take place, pending approvals, in October.

Recent changes to VISTA buses include new stops in Calabasas on the Conejo Connection route (along Agoura Rd between Lost Hills and Las Virgenes Rd) and an additional 3:25 p.m. express trip between Goleta/Santa Barbara and Ventura. ■

BULLETIN BOARD

Co-founder Steven Crosmer will share his perspective on the upcoming presidential election at our meeting on Saturday October 9th.

Friends of Atwater Village is holding a fundraiser titled "Revisiting the Red Car" Friday September 10th 2004 starting at 7 p.m. at the Los Angeles River Center & Gardens on West Avenue 26 in Cypress Park. The highlight will be a screening of an excerpt from Sky City Productions documentary on the Red Car era - "This Was Pacific Electric". FAV n hopes to use funds raised to preserve the history of the Red Car by means of a commemorative Mural, an ironwork gateway near the original trestle at the junction of the Los Angeles River & Glendale Blvd., or markers along the original route as it passed through Atwater Village. Tickets are \$45 per person and can be ordered online at <http://friendsofatwatervillage.org> ; For further information e-mail info@friendsofatwatervillage.org or phone Netty Carr at (323) 913 2999.

The Better California Campaign is holding their Southern California Summit Friday Sept. 17 at the Burbank Hilton. For additional information, and to RSVP, please contact BCC's Campaign Consultant Justin Fanslau at 916.313.5830 or 916.524.3890 or email him at justin_fanslau@sbcglobal.net

The Sierra Club is holding a Newcomers' fair Saturday Sept. 18 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Eaton Canyon Nature Center in Pasa-

dena at 1750 N. Altadena Dr. (818) 247-8208

The Sept. 7 Destination: Freedom e-zine [<http://nationalcorridors.org>] states Amtrak CEO David Gunn will be in Los Angeles October 14 as he goes around the country attending ceremonies awarding President's Service and Safety Awards to Amtrak employees. He will also be checking out Amtrak offices, crew bases, and maintenance facilities. Gunn will be doing all his travel via Amtrak riding in the business car Beech Grove (and reportedly often walking through the rest of the train to speak with his fellow passengers) .

The draft environmental documents for the Union State run through project have been released:

<http://www.runthroughtracks.org/eir.htm> ; a public hearing will be held on October 13, 2004 from 4 pm to 8 pm at the MTA Building, 3rd Floor Conference Room. For more information about this project or to submit comments, contact Gary Iverson (Caltrans Division 7) at (213) 897-0685

The next meeting of Friends of the Green Line will be on Thursday, October 21, 2004 at 7 p.m. at the Boston Market Restaurant near the Rosecrans/Douglas Green Line station.

Train Riders Association of California annual meeting is being held Sat. Nov. 6 in San Francisco. Details at <http://calrailnews.com> or (916) 557-1667. *(continued on page 9)*

The current transportation funding outlook is generally bleak. One small ray of hope is if Propositions 68 and 70 fail in November that monies from casino compact funds will be used to issue bonds to start addressing the "borrowing" of transportation funds that occurred during the past few years. On the downside finding funds to cover the latest overruns for constructing the Bay Bridge promises to be difficult. Meanwhile TEA-21 reauthorization is stalled and likely will remain so until after the Presidential election. Lastly a new GAO report "FTA Needs to Better Define and Assess Impact of Certain Policies on New Starts Program" (GAO-04-748) describes the difficulties our region will encounter obtaining the full federal funds for construction of the Eastside Gold Line extension. I guess this is what the old proverb meant "May you live in interesting times"...

I was quoted in the Aug. 2 Los Angeles Business Journal article "MTA Rolling Out Plan to Overhaul City Bus Routes", pointing out that hopefully Metro Connections may finally spark a regional discussion about smart growth issues.

prudent action of the month: Antelope Valley Transit Authority has budgeted approximately \$60,000 for preventive maintenance of the 16 Detroit Diesel Series 40 engines in its fleet. This equipment has a reputation in the industry for being prone to leaks and overheating with problems occurring cyclically about every 60,000-75,000 miles.

The 2nd annual L.A. Neighborhood Initiative Community Forum held Aug. 20 at USC was a very informative event. The plenary

session had a sensational presentation by Steve Davies, Vice President of Project for Public Spaces [<http://www.pps.org/>], a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating and sustaining public places that build communities through technical assistance, education, and research. The workshop I attended on fundraising had useful advice for groups like ours that are novices at raising funds. And I was glad when I addressed a blunt question to keynote speaker Tom Gilmore regarding one of the more obnoxious downtown developers that Gilmore's response was candid and direct.

The MTA Office of Inspector General receive and file report presented at the Aug. 19 Executive Management and Audit Committee meeting summarized two OIG reports that touch on key problems at MTA:

- there are systemic problems relating to policies and procedures at the agency
- deficiencies exist in the training of bus operators

What is even worse is the reports give no indication what actions, if any, are being taken by MTA to address these issues. Oh, well...

Words fail me in when attempting to grapple with the magnitude of delusion exhibited by the San Gabriel Valley power elites regarding their belief that federal funding of the Gold Line Foothill extension is just a matter of political maneuvering. With near hysteria the Pasadena Star-News in a Aug. 26 editorial titled "Valley Will Best MTA Giant" shows an almost childlike belief that

heavyweight local Congressman David Dreier and Gary Miller can overturn established federal transportation funding procedures and put those funds directly into the hands of the yet-to-be-established Metro Foothills Gold Line Construction Authority. I wonder how long it will be before Dreier or Miller finally own up that that hundreds of millions for the elites' pet project simply isn't in the cards. Imagine the howling that revelation will provoke!

fact of the month: the LOSSAN corridor is defined in federal law (TEA-21) as only consisting of the rail corridor between Del Mar and San Diego, which hinders efforts to obtain federal funds for projects outside this narrow segment. An effort (so far unsuccessful) is being made to have a correct definition included in the TEA-21 reauthorization bill.

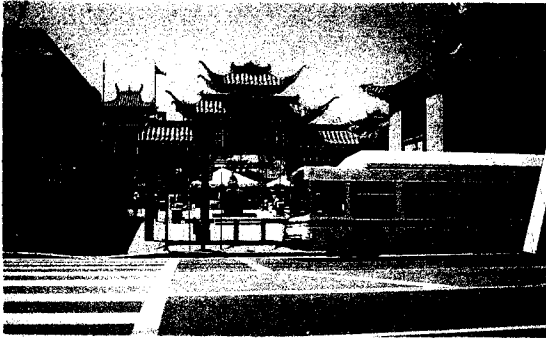
Remember the scandal at SunLine Transit in the Coachella Valley last year? One problem was its habit of moving federal funds between the agency and its "affiliates", which is a big no-no. To resolve this accounting voodoo affiliate SunLine Services Group transferred assets valued at \$1,142,000 to SunLine Transit to resolve SSG's outstanding debt to the transit agency. Good to see things finally being done on the up-and-up.

Reading the interview with Mike Gordon, former Mayor of El Segundo and a current candidate for the state Assembly, in the August Metro Investment Report makes me question whether the "consensus" plan by Councilwoman Miscikowski can rescue the beleaguered Hahn LAX modernization proposal. Are we close to having this process start over from scratch? ■

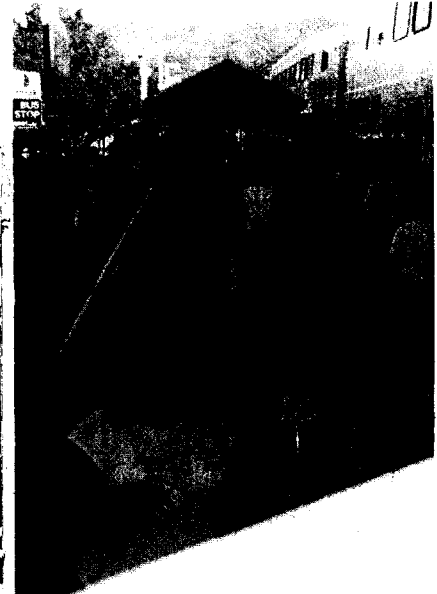
WHAT TRANSIT DID FOR OUR SUMMER VACATION

John Ulloth

From the Dodger Bus to the game, to Greyhound across the country, transit provides summer rides without the fatigue of driving or hassle of airports. Where did you go this summer?



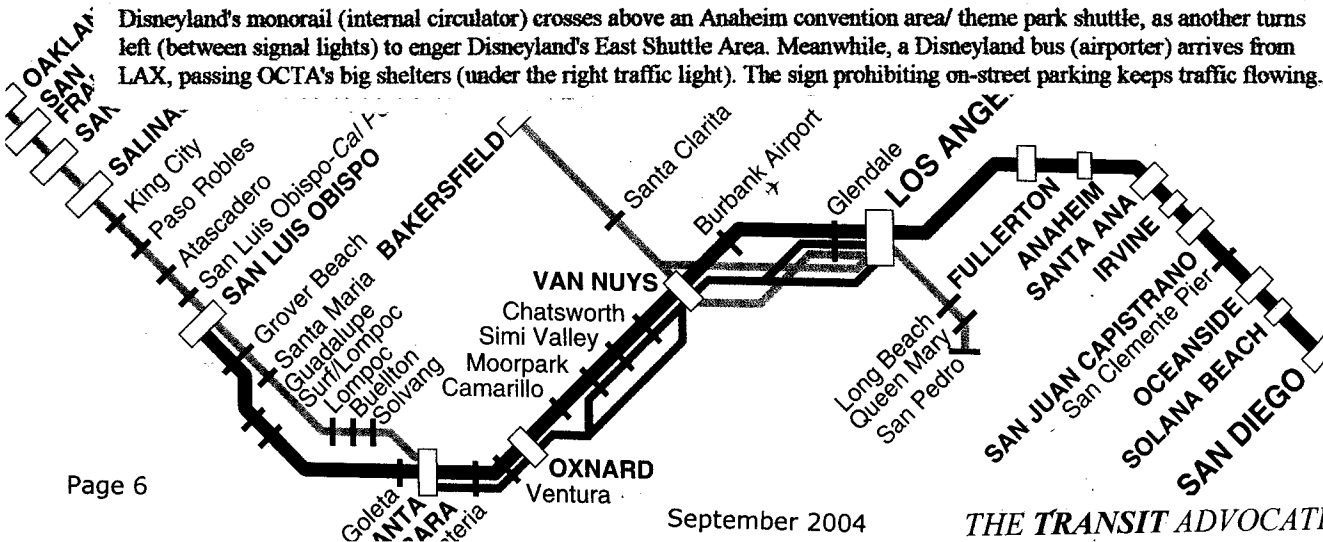
To China and back- for \$3? An MTA bus hurtles past a serene statue of Sun Yat Sen in L.A.'s Chinatown.



MetroLink ran six special 7 car trains between Ventura and Chatsworth stations on weekend days of the Ventura County Fair. Hundreds of passengers detrained at Simi Valley...

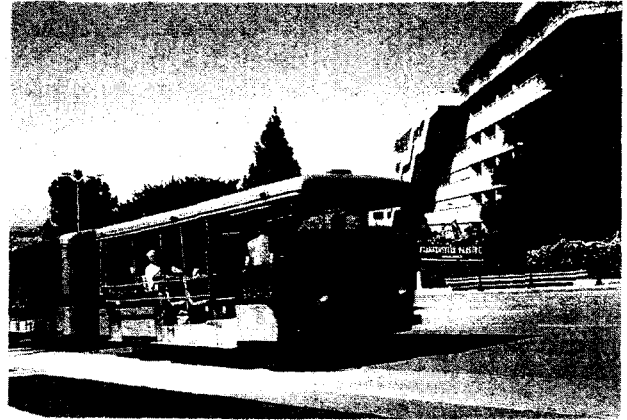


Disneyland's monorail (internal circulator) crosses above an Anaheim convention area/ theme park shuttle, as another turns left (between signal lights) to enter Disneyland's East Shuttle Area. Meanwhile, a Disneyland bus (airporter) arrives from LAX, passing OCTA's big shelters (under the right traffic light). The sign prohibiting on-street parking keeps traffic flowing.





...Hundreds more board Durham school busses to ride to and from nearby hotels and remote parking lots.



Free transit! Universal City's entrained shuttle hauls transit riders & pedestrians from the Universal station up a steep hill past "Frankenstein Garage" to its theme park or studio tour.



Painted Pasadena Arts Shuttles, Foothill, and MTA busses serve museum patrons, Saturday shoppers, & the Sunday brunch crowd on Colorado Boulevard, Old Pasadena



4 Transit Systems' coaches fill with patrons at Chatsworth station before running Hollywood Bowl Special- "Line 653".



Amtak's Pacific Surfliner approaches San Clemente Pier Station. 4 trains stop here every summer day.

In total over \$5 billion has been lost to transportation in fiscal year (FY) 2004-05 and the prior two fiscal years due to loans, transfers, diversions, and lower than expected federal reimbursements. Gasoline sales tax revenues (\$3.3 billion) that were dedicated to transportation with the enactment of Proposition 42 have not been made available due to state budget ills. Regular gas tax (ad valorem) funds from the State Highway Account (\$1.4 billion) have been used to keep the construction going on allocated Traffic Congestion Relief Act of 2000 projects that were to be funded with gasoline sales tax revenues. The latest cash forecast from Caltrans indicates that federal reimbursements will be running approximately \$300 million less in FY 2004-05 than previously expected.

Background

On May 5, 1999, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) published a 10-year needs

assessment of California's transportation system. The CTC roughly estimated the state's unfunded transportation need to be \$117 billion. In response, the Governor proposed and the Legislature enacted the Traffic Congestion Relief Act of 2000. The Act provided, over a six year period, \$6.8 billion in new funds to transportation, derived from the state's sales tax on gasoline, to initiate projects to help relieve traffic congestion and provide funds for other transportation infrastructure needs. In March 2002, 70% of the electorate approved Proposition 42, a legislative constitutional amendment that permanently dedicated revenues from the sales tax on gasoline to

transportation infrastructure needs.

Under provisions of Proposition 42, upon declaration of the Governor and with two-thirds concurrence of both houses of the Legislature, the gasoline sales tax dedication to transportation can be suspended. Unfortunately, due to constant state budget ills, none of the gasoline sales tax derived funds promised to transportation (approximately \$1.1 billion a year) has been transferred from the general fund and made available to address the state's huge transportation infrastructure need. In response, the CTC suspended all new allocations to Traffic Congestion Relief Act projects in December 2002. In reality, the ongoing construction of Traffic Congestion Relief Act projects allocated by the CTC prior to December 2002 has been kept going by continuous borrowing of regular gas tax (ad valorem) funds from the State Highway Account. This borrowing, combined with the fact that federal aid is not flowing in the amounts projected, strained the State Highway Account to such an extent that the CTC suspended all new allocations during FY 2003-04 of programmed State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) projects and sharply reduced allocations of state highway rehabilitation projects, a category of transportation projects that have a very high statutorily mandated priority.

The outlook for FY 2004-05 is turning out to be even more severe than for the prior fiscal year. The slower than expected flow of federal transportation funds, exacerbated by the lack of Proposition 42 funds, has imperiled transportation project allocations.

(Bulletin Board, from pg. 3)

The latest to advance a maglev proposal is Sandy Shapery, a prominent San Diego attorney: <http://www.shaperyenterprises.com/maglev1.htm>

The latest grassroots light rail proposal is the Yellow Line, which would serve Downtown L.A., Echo Park, Silver Lake, Glendale, Burbank and North Hollywood: <http://www.yellowline.org>

Also the draft environmental documents for the L.A.-San Diego segment of the LOSSAN corridor has been released and will be posted at <http://www.amtrakcalifornia.com/>.

"Up Against the Sprawl: Public Policy and the Making of Southern California" co-edited by Jennifer Wolch (USC), Manuel Pastor Jr. (UC Santa Cruz), and Peter Dreier (Occidental College) has just been

published by the University of Minnesota Press. The book focuses on managing urban growth and change in Los Angeles. Further information: <http://www.upress.umn.edu>

MTA is opening a field office for the Gold Line eastside extension project at 1505 E. 1st Street, (213) 922-2259

Caltrans has added a page to its website for the Statewide Conformity Working Group: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/air/State_CWG/CWGindex.htm

Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer has proposed a federal funding program for urban trolleys: <http://www.nationalcorridors.org/df/df09152003.shtml#Blumenauer> ■

Per the latest cash estimate, the State Highway Account will only have enough cash to sustain \$500 million in project allocations through December 2004; this is less than one quarter of the planned \$2.2 billion in allocations for the fiscal year. The CTC will not resume STIP or Traffic Congestion Relief Act project allocations, will be unable to do any new GARVEE bonding and will be forced to stop state highway rehabilitation project allocations after the December 2004 meeting. At this rate, the 1999 estimated \$117 billion unfunded transportation need will grow to \$160 billion by FY 2009-10.

The CTC might be able to resume STIP al-

locations in FY 2004-05 if one or a combination of events transpires:

- 1) The federal ethanol issue is resolved favorably for California;
- 2) The federal reauthorization bill is passed at a higher level than proposed by the President and the U.S. House of Representatives;
- 3) Proposition 68 and 70 are defeated by the voters at the November 2004 elections and the \$1.2 billion in new tribal gaming compact funds negotiated by the Governor flow to transportation as repayment of past loans. ■

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Harold Katz's letter decrying NIMBYism appeared in the Aug. 16 Los Angeles Business Journal.

Ken Ruben attended the Sept. 2 MTA Westside Sector Governance Council meeting last Thursday and presented SO.CA.TA's statement on service change proposals plus made public comment. Ruben also attended the LOSSAN and MTA Board meetings on August 26; and at the latter thanked Linda Culp on behalf of SO.CA.TA for her presentation at our last meeting.

Mr. Ruben attended a recent Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission meeting regarding the Red Car tunnel representing SO.CA.TA. He also spoke on behalf of SO.CA.TA and RailPAC at the Aug. 24 Public Utility Commission hearing held at South Pasadena Library on complaints regarding the Gold Line.

Sept. 1 Michael Divindo attended the South Coast Area Transit Board meeting and also

sat in on the meeting of the City of Oxnard Transportation Policy Committee.

John Ulloth and Nate Zablén attended the San Fernando Valley Service Sector Governance Council Meeting on September 1st. Nate spoke to the council about the need for a direct transit link between the North Hollywood Red Line station and Bob Hope Airport. He also urged the council to look into improving shuttle service between the Airport Metro link station and Hollywood Way bus stop to the airport terminal.

Roger Christensen's article "Gold Line: A Tale of Two Extensions" appeared in the July-Aug. issue of California Rail News and includes quotes by Dana Gabbard.

If you attend a meeting, have a letter published in a newspaper, are quoted in the media or otherwise engage in active advocacy please inform the Executive Secretary so he can be sure it is noted in the next edition of this column. Thank you! ■