

TRANSIT UPDATES

One more, under-the-radar addition to the **MTA** June 2005 Service Changes: the cancelled "last train" on the Metro Green Line was replaced with new bus Line 622. The 622 stops at or near stations between Aviation and Norwalk.

Wasting no time, the advertising TVs are already beginning to appear on MTA buses.

The updated, we-mean-it-this-time list of MTA December 2005 Service Change proposals is online at http://metro.net/board/Items/2005/06_June/20050609OtherSectorGCItem7.pdf. Public hearings for the MTA December 2005 Service Changes:

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY SERVICE SECTOR

August 9th, 6:00 PM

SGV Sector Office

3369 Santa Anita Ave., El Monte

WESTSIDE/CENTRAL SERVICE SECTOR

August 11th, 6:00 PM

La Cienega Tennis Center

325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills

SOUTH BAY SERVICE SECTOR

August 10th, 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Arthur Winston Division

5425 Van Ness Ave, Los Angeles

GATEWAY CITIES SERVICE SECTOR

August 11th, 5:00 PM

The Gas Company

9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey

In the land of the Metropolitan Transit System, the grand opening of the Mission Valley East Extension brings these Service Changes to the San Diego Trolley lines, effective Sunday, July 10, 2005:

Blue Line: San Ysidro Transit Center to Old Town Transit Center, with peak-period trains continuing to Qualcomm Stadium

Green Line: Old Town Transit Center to

Santee Town Transit Center, via the extension and its 4 new stations

Orange Line: 12th & Imperial Transit Center to Gillespie Field station (formerly called Weld Blvd.)

Special Event Service: Gaslamp Quarter to Qualcomm Stadium. Replaces former Green Line special event service train

Some of the related bus changes:

Route 1 eastern terminal to 70th St. Trolley station

Route 13 re-route to Grantville Trolley Station, with new north/east terminal at 73rd/El Cajon. Mission Valley portion part of a new **Route 14**

Route 40 re-route to Grantville Trolley Station

Route 81 discontinued, due to duplication with new Green Line and other existing bus routes. Service along Camino del Rio North and South to be covered by new **Route 18**

Route 876 extended north to serve 70th St. and Grossmont stations

Route 936 northern terminal to 70th St. station

Also, the western terminal of **Route 4** will be 12th & Imperial, and **Routes 961 and 962** will no longer have route deviations, stopping only at marked stops

Amtrak and NCTD have extended their "Rail2Rail" agreement for another year. COASTER pass-holders can ride Amtrak "within the zone limits of their monthly pass" between Oceanside and San Diego.

After early public comment, **Golden Empire Transit** revised the proposed service changes for this fall. Changes to be voted on at the GET board's July meeting:

Route 2: Revise southern loop to one direction, keeping Rexland Acres Park. Route would travel south on Monitor, east on Panama, north on South Union, east on Fairview, north on Sparks and west on Pacheco; Eliminate the last two of the

three deviations to BARC on weekday mornings.

Route 4: Eliminate service on the Acacia Loop to improve schedule adherence.

Route 5: Change headways to 20-minutes on Saturday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Route 7: Alternate service to Stockdale High School and to Silver Creek. Service to each area will be hourly; Eliminate service through Campus Park, providing two-way service along that portion of White Lane; Add one bus to west end of Route 7 to keep hourly weekend service to Stockdale High school area; Move central portion of route, move from Lotus Lane to Cottonwood.

Route 8: (Original recommendation was withdrawn due to cost)

Route 9: Change turnaround at Bakersfield Adult School, eliminating need to turn buses around on cul-de-sac; Extend service to include Harris Road (to Stine). Eliminate service on Half Moon. Requires one extra bus, and also should improve schedule adherence.

Routes 10 and 15: Add bus and combine these two single-bus routes into one larger route using three buses. Maintains 45-minute headways, but more reliable.

Route 12: 45 minute headways all day.

OCTA September 2005 Service Changes

Route 21 increase headways from :45 to :60; change terminal from Botryoides to Fullerton Park-n-Ride, via Artesia-Beach-Commonwealth-Magnolia

Route 26 increase weekend headways from :50 to :60; change west end of route all days to Commonwealth-Magnolia-Fullerton Park-n-Ride. Route 26's stops on Manchester and Stanton to close; those on

Commonwealth west of Magnolia to be served (weekdays only) by Route 21

Route 59 weekdays alternate midday terminal between short (Pullman-Dyer) and long (UC Irvine)

Route 60 all days reroute in Seal Beach to Westminster-Seal Beach Blvd-Leisure World-Seal Beach Blvd-22 Fwy-7th St

Route 66 all trips to/from Boeing to go through Goldenwest Transportation Center, via Gothard

Route 87 Saturday headways increase from :45 to :60

Route 167 weekends increase headways from :45 to :60; change northern terminal to Village at Orange

Route 193 all days, delete last two trips

Beginning 7/2/05, a new shuttle service will operate a clockwise loop route to connect parts of the park with parking areas and transit stops. The **Santa Monica Mountains PARKlink** shuttle will meet MTA Line 439 at Cross Creek and at several stops along PCH. A day pass is available for \$5, or you may use the Metro Day Pass. Further information, and a route map, are at <http://www.nps.gov/samo/shuttle/>, or call (805) 370-2301. ■



MTS website

BULLETIN BOARD

The San Diego Trolley's Mission East extension gets its final pre-opening test Saturday, July 9th, with free rides between Qualcomm Stadium and Santee Trolley stations from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Festivities will be limited. SO.CA.TA will not have a booth, though several members will be riding that day. The new "Green Line" will operate over the extension, beginning revenue service on Sunday, July 10th.

To accommodate the many members attending the opening of the San Diego Trolley Mission Valley extension, the SO.CA.TA July meeting will be held a week later, on July 16th.

At the July 16th SO.CA.TA meeting, we will be discussing, and with luck voting on, the following By-Laws amendment:

"An Archivist shall be appointed and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board. All work products of the Secretary and Treasurer are property of SOCATA and shall be turned over to the Archivist at the end of each person's term. The work products of Committees are the property of SOCATA, upon dissolution all Committee work products shall be turned over to the Archivist."

Speaking of votes to change the By-Laws, members at the June SO.CA.TA meeting voted not to revoke By Law Sec. 6.1.2 ("The Executive Committee shall have the authority to waive regular membership dues for one year on a case by case basis with documentation of special circumstances.").

The Gateway Cities MTA Sector Council has 3 vacancies, to be filled by the Gateway Cities Council of Governments. To apply,

you must either live or work in the sector, are not an MTA employee, and get the application in to the Gateway Cities COG office by July 9th. Apply yourself at <http://www.gatewaycog.org/mtasector.html>

Angels Flight Railway Foundation will receive a \$996,350 grant from the California Cultural and Historical Endowment Board. This is one of the first grants issued from funds gained from Proposition 40 bond funds, a bond for natural resource conservation, parks, and historical and cultural resources approved by state voters in 2002.

The first meeting of the Exposition Light Rail Construction Authority will be Thursday July 14 at 4 p.m. For location information call the project hotline at (310) 366-6443.

Local community leaders in North San Diego County have formed a transit coalition to support public transportation called the Transit Alliance for a Better North County. They can be reached at (760) 967-2857 or tabnc@nctd.org

Reminder: the Train Riders Association of California open board meeting at the historic National City Depot will be on Saturday, July 16 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Special guests include Linda Culp of LOSSAN, NARP Board member Patrick Montague, and Jim Price, President, San Diego Electric Railway Association.

The Pacific Bus Museum has a new mailing address: P.O. Box 601105, Sacramento CA 95860-1105

The historic Overland Trail luxury railcar now is having wine tours from L.A. to San Luis Obispo once a month. Details at <http://overlandtrail.com/>

The city of L.A. website has links to a telephone directory that is updated frequently to various departments: <http://www.lacity.org/cityfone/>

department_drilldown.cfm?SECT=a

Rebuild California is a coalition of heavy construction firms advocating for transportation investment: <http://www.rebuildca.org/>

MTA is now selling merchandise with its logo: <http://bamart.com/metrostore> ■



The lunch-time Brea Trolley. Mark Strickert photo

I am reviewing an analysis by the L.A. Dept. of Transportation of the downtown Los Angeles Spring Street contraflow lane. We have already submitted to the City Council Transportation Committee a letter outlining our initial concerns about shifting the lane to Main Street. The final (and most significant) point raised was instead of piecemeal actions that a comprehensive analysis of downtown circulation issues needs to be undertaken. And I suspect the new Mayor would agree with that point of view.

One thing I learned from Rick Thorpe's comments at the June 16 Friends For Expo Transit meeting: the current Expo funding plan is riddled with Swiss cheese-like holes, i.e. many assumptions that may not hold up. On the other hand with new L.A. councilman Bill Rosenthal showing up at the meeting to state his firm support along with the vocal support new L.A. Mayor Villaraigosa has expressed, this project appears to have a good shot at actually happening. And my comments in the Los Angeles Business Journal June 27 article "Suddenly, Light Rail Line to Westside Has Gotten Onto the Fast Track" noted the other advantage this project has: strong community support by activists who for years have fought to make this line a reality.

It was puzzling at first to learn in the June Metro Investment Report that Martha Welborne is MTA's representative on the Expo Construction Authority. After all, Welborne is most noted for her past advocacy of Bus Rapid Transit. But a well placed insider pointed out Welborne's background in architecture could be invaluable as station de-

sign goes forward. And also Welborne in the past has stated she supports rail.

I was recently exchanging e-mails with Margaret Okuzumi of the BayRail Alliance in the bay area and was surprised at her reference to the Surface Transportation Policy Project no longer having a presence in California. And indeed upon further investigation it appears they have retrenched into being almost solely a Washington, DC based group. Boy did that one sneak under the radar screen...

The Daily News June 5 article "Free Lunch for MTA" provided details about the food Board members are served in the conference room they gather in before the board and committee meetings. I used this as a jumping off point for a letter that was published June 10:

"The buzz has always been that the plush eats served up to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority board are considered necessary to guarantee the attendance of some board members who otherwise are less than enthused about attending meetings. The true tragedy is that it is widely acknowledged among insiders that the MTA board is a dysfunctional entity born out of political compromise brokered among key L.A. County power blocs that wanted to control the agency, yet in many instances have little interest in its actual functions or purposes. Sadly, MTA board reform continues to be bottlenecked in the Legislature by the very same power players who can barely endure undertaking their MTA board duties. I fear only a crisis will ever allow this logjam against reform to be broken."

Another letter was published in the Los Angeles Times on June 25. This one was in reaction to the June 22 article about TVs on MTA buses "MTA Offers New Way to Avoid Eye Contact". My comments were somewhat heated because to my annoyance MTA Marketing has repeatedly claimed no complaints were made about the TVs when they were tried out. Since in fact I had taken time off from work to attend an MTA Board meeting and speak against the TV contract I wanted to put the truth in print: "I urged the MTA board not to approve the TV contract, but my arguments were ignored. Why should they care? Their eyes and ears aren't being assaulted. But mine will be, and I resent it."

At the June 16 Southern California Association of Governments Plans & Programs Technical Advisory Committee meeting we had an excellent presentation on the High-Flow Arterial Study being done by the Los Angeles Dept. of Transportation. This identifies key arterials for upgrading to address the lack of freeway capacity. You can request a copy of the Phase I report by calling (213) 485-1062.

Dueling Zevs: In the July 1 L.A. Weekly Robert Green's article "The Amazing Adventures of Super Mayor" on new Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa quotes County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky as being quite acid regarding Villaraigosa's vow to extend the Red Line subway to the ocean. "Antonio said a lot of things. A subway to Sylmar. A subway to the sea. All these things are campaign statements. He was painting a vision and a dream. Now he's been elected and he's woken up." When asked if Villaraigosa could influence Congressman Henry Waxman to reverse the prohibition of federal

money for subway construction along Wilshire, Yaroslavsky retorted "Antonio can test it. He can go out and get an initiative on the ballot and see how well people like it. Extending from Western to Fairfax would be a billion dollars. And that's in today's dollars."

A much more mellow Zev was interviewed on the same subject in the April Metro Investment Report. After a realistic appraisal of the current funding prospects for a Wilshire subway extension Yaroslavsky states "I think it's a worthy project".

Why the difference in tone? One clue is the reference Zev makes in the Weekly to an initiative. In 1998 Yaroslavsky spent an estimated \$100,000 from his campaign war chest to get on the ballot Proposition A, The MTA Reform and Accountability Act of 1998, which easily passed and prohibited local transportation sales taxes from being used for underground construction. Zev may be defensive at how quickly this measure sunk from view and is now mostly referred to in the popular press in a negative light (i.e. "This is why the subway can't be extended"). While as always ready to swing whichever way the winds blow Zev may not feel he can quite reverse course yet in the popular press on the Wilshire subway. In contrast Metro Investment Report is a pricey newsletter aimed at insiders. One can be nuanced in their comments and expect readers to understand the slow shifting of position a politician like Zev often must undertake to stay on the right side of the polls.

I was pleased to learn the Governor has included in his revised budget funds for agencies like SCAG to create regional

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"blueprint" planning documents. Astonishingly I learned about this not in a newspaper or newsletter but instead in a report the legislative newspaper or newsletter but instead in a report the legislative advocacy firm Shaw/Yoder prepared for their client Access Services, Inc.

Not surprisingly Alan Cantrell retired after 21 months as Executive Director of Access Services, Inc. on June 30. Cantrell's main accomplishment was cleaning up the mess left by his predecessor, grappling with escalating spending and reasserting control of the agency. I have to imagine given ASI's rocky history it will be hard to find a successor to Mr. Cantrell.

An example of why ASI is a troubled agency is when a proposal was made to adopt policies for night owl service that adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act that public comments by activists claimed "many" would be impacted and that this wasn't "what the ADA intended". Staff reported that the policy would affect approximately 34 trips during the weekday that represent about \$500,000 per year.

Congratulations to our former President Kimberleigh Richards at her recent election to Vice-Chair of the San Fernando Valley Metro Sector Governance Council.

Ever wonder where former MTA staffer Karen Heit ended up? It appears her expertise is helping South Pasadena get some of the Gold Line enhancements its hysterical citizens have demanded: <http://www.streetcarwedeseire.com/>

All I'll say about the June 25 bullet train meeting I attended in Glassell Park was the last speaker was astonishing in his parochialism. He was an older gentleman and I gathered from how the audience responded that he was a community leader of some eminence. He started by asking why must growth be assumed. And he concluded a rambling diatribe by announcing if Los Angeles ever became as dense as future projections show that it would be a place no one would want to live in. Essentially "I don't like the future so let's pretend it won't happen and let's not prepare for it." The selfishness and short-sightedness is truly breathtaking.

Talk about chutzpah! The Coast Rail Coordinating Council has labored to establish a Coast Daylight train providing daily (bi-directional) train service between L.A. and San Francisco. One obstacle has been concerns of the Union Pacific about capacity in the mid-coast. So CRCC hired the consultants preferred by UP to do modeling. Now due to their own problems UP has stated at this time they won't validate the modeling results. Despite this strong-arming CRCC has determined to stay on UP's good side to the extent of sending a letter acknowledging UP's need to focus on its core freight business while expressing hope that funds can be obtained to enhance the corridor and eventually allow access by additional passenger trains. Talk about forbearance!

Columnist Neal Pierce in writing on the current federal transportation funding bill notes "The 'explosion of earmarks' and other new transportation programs ... is now hogging close to 40 percent of federal

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surface transportation aid, 'seriously injurious' to the careful system of state and metropolitan area transportation planning first spelled out in the landmark 1991 "ISTEA" transportation bill. 'Congress,' [a former senior government transportation executive summed up], 'has lost sight of national goals and purposes in transportation.'" My own feeling is the ribbon-cutting potential of transportation spending to aid incumbents is overwhelming every other purpose of such spending. But who is the

adult that will finally bring order to this growing chaos?

I'll conclude by noting the recent tragic passing of D.A. McClain and Gary Clark, two MTA staffers. McClain for years was the gracious liaison to the MTA Citizens Advisory Council. Clark handled governmental affairs and board research services and remained admirably low-key however turbulent the times. They will be missed. ■



Anaheim Resort Transit. Mark Strickert photo

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Members Juanita Dellomes, Dana Gabbard, Bart Reed, and Mark Strickert attended a community workshop on the proposed California High Speed Rail project, held June 25th at the Glassell Park Elementary School. Routes and other plans are still being tweaked, and public input is being sought, while they await word as to whether the bond issue to pay for Phase I reaches the state ballot in 2006 or in 2008. Mr. Gabbard will be bringing updated literature to the August SO.CA.TA meeting. The California High Speed Rail Authority website is <http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/>

The June 16 Friends for Expo Transit general meeting was attended by Ken Ruben, Anthony Loui, Nate Zablen, Dana Gabbard, Roger Christensen, Chaffee Yiu, Bart Reed, Jeff Carpenter, Lionel Jones and John Ulloth.

Mark Strickert will be a judge at the Foothill Transit rodeo on July 9th, and at the Montebello Bus Lines rodeo July 16th.

Thomas Rubin had a letter in the May issue of Mass Transit

Dana Gabbard was one of two letter-

writers against advertising TVs on MTA buses, in the June 25th Los Angeles Times

Ken Ruben attended the May 4 and May 24 Culver City Redevelopment Agency Walkable Communities Workshop examining the pedestrian infrastructure at the future Expo Station site at Venice/Robertson.

He also attended the Santa Fe Railway Historical and Modeling Society meeting held in Pasadena from June 22 through June 26. Presentations he attended included Mike McGinley of Metrolink on June 22 about Metrolink, Chard Walker (famed Railfan writer and photographer) on June 23 talking about the Mt. Lowe Railway, and another famed Railfan photographer, Stan Kistler, about Pasadena memories on June 24.

June 29 Ruben attended the South Bay Sector Artesia Transit Open house.

Ruben and John Ulloth participated in the preview of the extension of the San Diego Trolley on June 25 sponsored by the San Diego Electric Railway Historical Association.

Lastly Ruben and Bart Reed were present at the inaugural for new Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa July 1 ■

TransitWorks!