

BULLETIN BOARD

SO.CA.TA MEETING NOTES

Phil Aker of LADOT will make a presentation on the DASH system, its present and future, at our April 14th meeting. Other topics for discussion at the meeting include the Metro fare restructuring proposal, proposed changes to regional Formula Allocation Procedure (FAP) funding distribution, and issues to be raised at the annual sector council meet and confer meeting. We will also present details for our April 21st study tour through the San Gabriel Valley and Inland Empire, using the new Foothill Transit Silver Streak service.

Our tentative schedule of speakers for the rest of the year include:

- * May 12 - Damien Goodmon will give a presentation on his master rail plan
- * June 9 - Ed Clifford of Metro will give an updated presentation on Metro Connections, including how the December and June shake-ups fit into the plan and what impact the structural operating deficit is having
- * August 11th -- Walter King of Flexcar
- * October 13th -- Cathi Cole from Pasadena ARTS

EVENT LOG

SO.CA.TA will have a booth at the 2nd annual South Bay Energy Fair, to be held on the grounds of the Pacific Unitarian Church, 5621 Montemalaga Drive in Rancho Palos Verdes. The fair will take place on Saturday, May 5th from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, and admission is free. Take MTA Line 444, to

Hawthorne and Silver Spur, then walk about a mile along Silver Spur and Montemalaga to the church. www.pacificunitarian.org or <http://www.southbayenergyfair.com/>

We will also have a booth at the annual Fullerton Railroad Days, being held at the Fullerton Train Station (Corner of Pomona Ave. and Santa Fe St.) the weekend of May 5-6 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. This year the event features a display of The C. K. Holliday steam locomotive, and The Kalamazo handcar from Disneyland. Admission is free, though they will accept donations at the entrance. SO.CA.TA's booth is in space 45: <http://www.scrmf.org/rrdays/rrdays-layout-2006.jpg>

Saturday April 21st from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, the Port of Los Angeles is sponsoring a Rail Festival at the corner of 6th St. & Harbor Blvd. in San Pedro. Besides free rides on the historic Waterfront Red Car Line, the San Bernardino Railroad Historical Society historic steam train 3751 will be on display. For further information, call (800) 831-7678.

The Orange Empire Railway Museum is holding its semi-annual train & trolley festival on the weekend of April 28-29, from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM both days. The museum is at 2201 S. "A" St. in Perris. An all-day pass to ride the trains costs \$10 for adults, \$8 for children 5-11, and free for kids under 5. For more information, call (951) 657-2605 (recorded information) or (951) 943-3020 (live). 🚂



MEMBERS IN ACTION

Participants in our informal subway extension Wilshire corridor exploration on March 31st included Hank Fung, Dana Gabbard, Lionel Jones, Robert Meinert, Kymberleigh Richards, Alex Schaffer, Mark Strickert, and Craig Weingarten

Bart Reed and were at the initial meeting of Subway-to-the-Sea Coalition, held March 29th in Santa Monica.

Philip Provencio in the March 29th *L.A. Times* decried both the Bus Riders Union and MTA regarding proposed transit fare increases.

J.K. Drummond has a letter in the March 25th *Daily Breeze* outlining key issues for officialdom to overcome inertia that has afflicted a proposed transit center in San Pedro during the past decade.

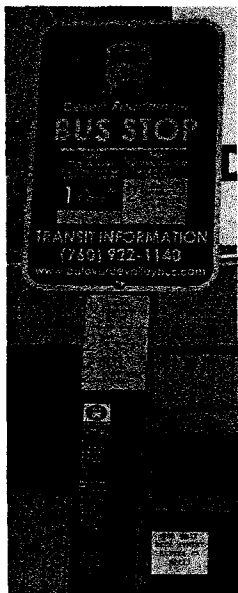
Kymberleigh Richards spent March 20th in Sacramento, at Lobbying Day with the Cali-

fornia Public Interest Research Group (CalPIRG) and the Transportation And Land Use Coalition, and March 24th in Oakland at the Transportation And Land Use Coalition conference.

SO.CA.TA members attending the joint Rail-PAC/NARP/Transit Coalition meeting on March 17th included Ray Ahearn, Barry Christensen, Steve Crosmer, Dana Gabbard, Bart Reed, Ken Ruben, John Ulloth, and Nate Zablen.

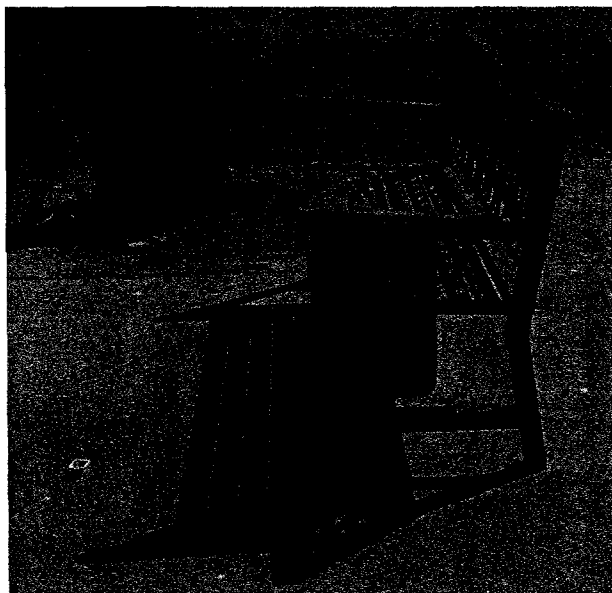
Hank Fung, Lionel Jones, and Ken Ruben all spoke at the MTA Westside/Central Sector Meeting on March 14th. Ken notes t sector governance council voted for all of the proposed December service changes, except for the 20 and 21 service cuts (they did not have a majority vote, so will probably go to the full MTA Board).

Damien Goodmon now sits on SCAG's Regional Transit Task Force, representing Get LA Moving. 🚌



Checking out the Desert Roadrunner in Blythe last month, where they often attach bus stop signs to square light posts, and to benches!

— Mark Strickert photos



I was glad to see Kymberleigh Richards in a letter to the editor published March 1 in the *Los Angeles Times* thoroughly debunked the clueless op-ed by Los Angeles City Transportation Commissioner D. Malcolm Carson I mentioned last month.

Speaking of clueless, what can one say about the hysterics who are demanding the first phase of the Expo light rail line already under construction be redesigned to be underground? This is the sort of stuff too incredible to be made up: <http://expocommunities.com/>

Hysteria is also the word for the reaction to MTA's nascent "fare restructuring". The Bus Riders Union is flooding the streets with propaganda amidst what promises to be a political Kabuki Dance a la 1994. I'd prefer a straight forward process and being treated like an adult. The growing hints of manipulation and empty theatrics are not my cup of tea.

In addition, we need analysis of how various proposals and trends interact with the budget deficit projected. These include:

- John Fasana's proposal of a "simplified and equitable" Formula Allocation Procedure (agenda item #41, Mar. 22 MTA Board meeting)
- The rather encouraging FY07 second quarter Financial Performance Report (agenda item #11, Mar. 14 MTA Board Finance and Budget Committee Meeting)
- And, the proposal in the updated financial forecast and baseline analysis for the 2007 Long Range Transportation Plan Update that the fare recovery ratio increase to 38% by 2010 (agenda item #10, Feb. 14 MTA Board

Planning and Programming Committee Meeting)

Shawn Solomon, Chair of the Access Service Community Advisory Committee, at its Feb. 13 Meeting in his Chair's Report (item #4), in reaction to shared rides proposed as a criteria for trip planning by ASI's contractors "that maximum time for a shared ride trip be no longer than 2 times the normal solo direct trip time to the same location." Which as a practical matter means no shared rides, amidst ASI grappling with upward spiraling costs.

Disability activists have also been attempting to pressure ASI to grandfather all existing users from undergoing recertification for eligibility; ASI staff in the March 16 board box outline why this would be illegal [<http://asila.org/pdf/BoardBox299.pdf>]. Now poor Mayor Villaraigosa has been induced by activist howls to ask for an audit of ASI (agenda item #22, March 22 MTA Board meeting). Want to bet the findings prove again (as with the gnashing of teeth over eliminating same day service) that ASI is proved in compliance with ADA?

The MTA Board agreed with the staff recommendation to upgrade a vacant position to DEO Labor Relations with a salary of \$150,000 (agenda item #40, Mar. 22 MTA Board meeting). Which leaves unanswered my curiosity as to just who is handling labor relations for the agency since the departure of John Catoe?

Forming a Green Line Coalition to promote its extension is a good idea [<http://www.greenlinecoalition.com/>]. Introducing legislation to establish a Construction Authority is premature and a bad idea (AB

889, Lieu).

I very much enjoyed the presentation on contract operated MTA bus lines by Gary Hewitt of Metro staff at the March 21 MTA Citizens' Advisory Council meeting. And I would have liked it even more if Mr. Hewitt could have assured me the statistics he presented are ever seen by the Metro Board, or indeed reported anywhere accessible to the public. Instead he was rather vague when I asked about that. And by the way Hewitt stated if a contractor has a bus breakdown MTA is prohibited from providing the needed part (even if they happen to have it in their inventory). This despite that Metro owns the buses that the contractors use. In some cases this means a vehicle is sidelined for 90 days waiting for a part to be delivered from back order. Incredible!

So this Greg Stein from what is called Southern California Transportation Solutions [<http://www.socaltransolutions.org/>] appears at the Feb. 8 SCAG Maglev Task Force meeting and the minutes indicate touts a maglev link between "the California regional maglev" and the SCAG Maglev proposal to form some sort of loop. HUH? Sounds like fantasy piled on top of delusion.

And then at the April 5 Transportation Committee of the local Sierra Club chapter I heard a presentation on that downtown L.A. Red Car study. Which is predicated on some rather unlikely funding assumptions (much less dealing with the likely objections of the traffic engineers of LADOT).

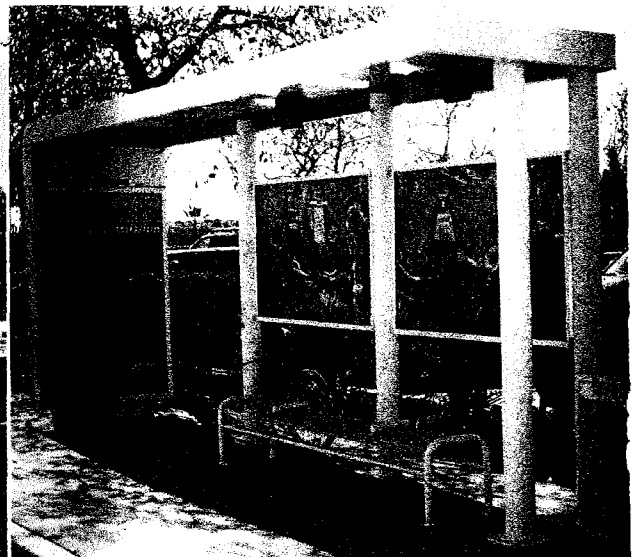
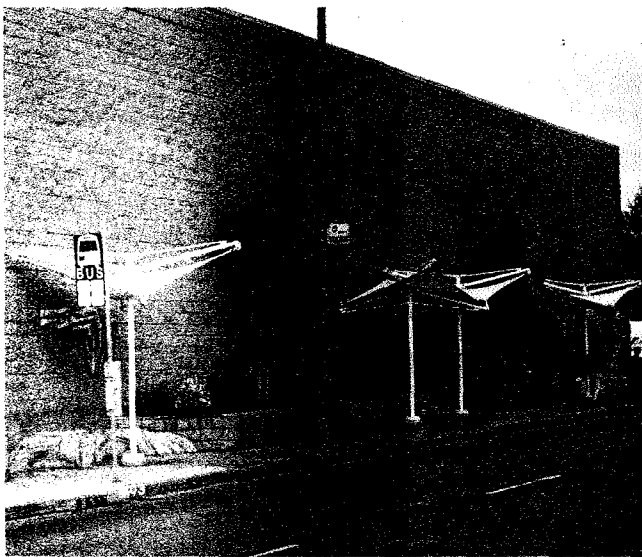
In the April *Wheel Clicks* (newsletter of the Pacific Railroad Society) I read how the Victorville to Las Vegas bullet train proposal [<http://www.desertxpress.com/>] is involved with a massive master planned community

adjacent to the station site. Could this be the real motive for the project? Wouldn't be the first example I've run across where leveraging development is the main goal of a transportation proposal (e.g. the maglev Orange Line).

Meanwhile we progress slowly on the Wilshire corridor campaign. Even when one is going to write checks you have to exercise diplomacy in dealing with venues. By next month's newsletter some dates and locations should be finalized.

I'll conclude by noting our friends at <http://www.odyssey.org/> have posted sample letters and informational materials for those who want to join the battle against the cuts in transportation funding the Governor has proposed. Hopefully this will be the last time we go through this ritual of undertaking a campaign to stop senseless funding cuts (a tip of the hat to Kymberleigh Richards and Benjamin Etgen for bringing this to my attention). 🚗





GIMME SHELTER

Bus stop shelters recently seen in Long Beach (Channel/7th), Brea, Duarte, Montebello, Bell Gardens, and Norwalk (Imperial/Norwalk)

— Mark Strickert photos

