

BULLETIN BOARD

Our thanks to Bruce Shelburne of Metro Rail Operations for a fun and informative presentation at our April meeting.

Fabio Ficano, director of government affairs for AnsaldoBreda, will address our May 2nd meeting. We will use a moderated format with questions submitted on index cards.

The following Saturday, May 9th, we will have a booth at the National Train Day celebration at Union Station from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nick Matonak will be representing us at a NTD celebration that same day at the Van Nuys Amtrak/Metrolink Station, 7724 Van Nuys Blvd. Drop by either location and say hello.

Phil Pearson, one of the seniors we assisted at our recent TAP card application workshop, e-mailed us in early April "I want to

thank you for facilitating my wife and me obtaining senior TAP passes. They arrived yesterday, good through June 20, 2013."

A Yahoo group has been established for the Calimesa/Yucaipa Friends of Public Transportation:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TCYFPT/?v=1&t=search&ch=web&pub=groups&sec=group&slk=2>

The annual Torrance City Yard Open House (20500 Madrona Avenue) will be 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday June 6th.

Richard Hunt of the MTA will be our guest speaker at our June 13th meeting speaking on recent bus procurements.

Save the Dates: the 3rd annual South Pasadena Clean Air show will be on Sunday July 26th and the 4th annual AltCar Expo in Santa Monica will be Oct. 2nd-3rd. 🚌 🚌 🚌

Bob Burrowes

On April 23rd, noted bus fan Bob Burrowes passed away near his home in Yerington, Nevada, he was 89.

Burrowes began his career in transit with the Key System in Oakland and retired as General Manager for Humboldt Transit Authority in Eureka. He also was the head man at Culver City and was involved in the start of the Riverside Transit Agency along with several other jobs he held within the industry.

Burrowes was also a noted photographer who began taking bus photos in the 1930s.



Transit Updates

Amtrak Thruway

Effective May 11, 2009, Amtrak Thruway bus service will be changing in southern California.

-Buses 5763, 5768, 5785 and 5792 that operate between Los Angeles and San Pedro/Long Beach will be canceled.

-Buses 4202, 4203, 4214, and 4217 that operate between Bakersfield and Las Vegas will be canceled.

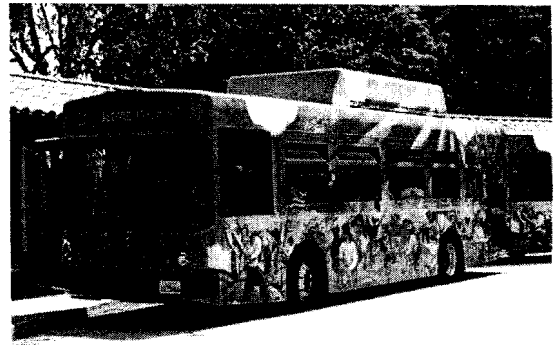
El Monte Trolley

El Monte Trolley implemented several route changes on January 1, 2009.

In order to reduce travel time, especially during peak commute hours, a portion of the Yellow Route was cut. Bus will no longer travel westbound Ramona to northbound Santa Anita and northbound Santa Anita to eastbound Valley Blvd.

Changes to the Orange Route will include elimination of the short route on Ferris from Durfee to Gillman, south to Exline and then back to Durfee. The eastbound turn down Denholm to southbound Parkway will also be eliminated and will instead continue south on Durfee to Magnolia turning south to Parkway and continue the regular route.

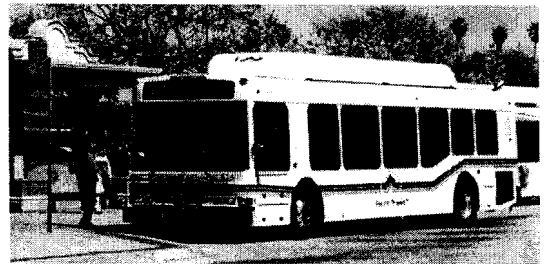
The Blue Route will no longer serve westbound Bryant Road or southbound Santa Anita. This was a temporary detour due to the closure of Ramona Blvd for during construction of an underpass on the Union Pacific mainline.



Foothill Transit

Foothill Transit made several changes that took effect on April 5th and a new bus book was issued. Service adjustments were made on several lines including Line 486 only serving the Lanternman Development Center only during peak hours.

Line 281 will be rerouted along Nelson between California and Sunset in the City of Industry as ACE construction continues along its regular route. This change will stay in effect for the duration of construction. The bus stop at Sunset and Nelson will be re-installed and the southbound bus stop at Temple and Sunset will be relocated to the northwest corner of Sunset and Temple.



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TRANSIT UPDATES continued

Foothill Transit continued

Line 272 will be rerouted to its original route in Duarte along Huntington between Highland and Buena Vista and along Buena Vista between Huntington and Duarte Rd.

Foothill Transit will also be removing several bus stops through out their service area. For a complete list of these bus stops visit the Foothill Website at:

<http://www.foothilltransit.org/EAlert/NewsDisplay.aspx?ID=594&type=news>

Golden Empire Transit

On April 19th GET made a several changes to their service.

Route 1 on Weekends: Change service from 30 minute headways to 40 minute headways so route is the same all week. Add one bus on Sundays.

Route 5 on Weekends: Reduce headways on Saturdays and Sundays to 20 minutes as on weekdays. Add one bus on Saturdays and five buses on Sundays.

Route 7 on Sunday: Minor time point changes for more reliable service. Add one bus on Sundays.

Route 9 on Saturdays: will provide service to the Adult School by request only and on **Sundays** will be extend route to Pioneer/Oswell.

Route 11 on Weekends: schedule will be adjusted to be the same as on week days.

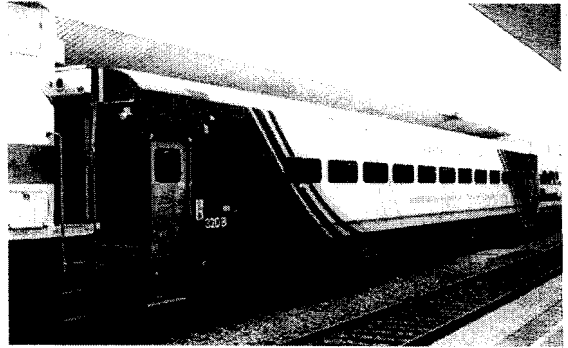
Long Beach Transit

One April 27th , Long Beach Transit placed their 25 new Gasoline -Electric Hybrid buses in service throughout the system. The new buses were built by New Flyer and have the new bus rapid transit styling.

These buses are also the first to carry a new Long Beach Transit paint scheme.

Metrolink

10 leased "comet" cars from UTA in Salt Lake City, Utah have been placed in service on lines throughout the Metrolink System. The cars will be in service until the agency's new cars arrive later this year.



Omnitrans

Several system changes took effect in May.

Route 1: Due to the closure of the San Bernardino Depot parking lot caused by long-term construction, Route 1 will detour at J Street and travel directly on 2nd Street to Viaduct. A free shuttle operating between the Depot and Carousel Mall will be available Monday - Friday, 5:30 - 8:30 a.m. and 3:50 - 7:30 p.m running at 10 - 15 minute intervals.

Routes 10 and 67: The long-term detour on Baseline between Sierra and Citrus Avenues has become permanent, allowing direct service to A.B. Miller High School.

Route 68: Due to road construction Route 68 will detour at Ramona to travel on Holt, Monte Vista and Mission

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Rio Hondo College's "GO RIO" program wins national award


The Go Rio program at Rio Hondo College in Whittier offers full time students incredible discounts on monthly bus passes.

Full time students who care 12 units or more per semester can purchase a monthly bus pass for only \$3.00 that is good on Metro, Foothill Transit, Norwalk Transit, Montebello Bus Lines and the South Whittier Sunshine Shuttle. The sticker that is affixed to the student ID card is not valid on Foothill's Silver Streak service.

The program first began in 2006 as a two year pilot program and during the 2006-2007 school year about 900 students were enrolled in the program. This past school year 1,450 students had signed up for the program.

Recently the "Go Rio" program was awarded first place in the Planning, Governance and Finance category of the 2009 National Bellwether Award, sponsored by the Community College Futures Assembly, a national independent policy think tank.


The success of the "Go Rio" program has inspired similar programs at Riverside City College in Riverside and the Peralta Colleges in Oakland and Berkeley.

The program costs about \$70,000 per semester with the pass sales covering about half the cost. The rest of the cost is paid by the college and a variety of state and federal grants. Additional funds are also provided by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) based on the amount of auto emissions eliminated by the program. 

TRANSIT UPDATES continued

Paramount Easy Rider

On January 5th, a new free van shuttle was started between the Lakewood Blvd. Green Line Station and the main Easy Rider transfer location at the Wal Mart on Lakewood Blvd and Rosecrans.

The shuttle operates Monday through Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. It is being funded by Proposition A, which was passed by voters to enhance mass transit. Shuttles leave every 10-15 minutes during those hours. 



CALENDAR OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

We encourage members to regularly check the calendar on our website

<http://socata.net/calendar.htm>

This includes far more detail than any printed calendar can and is able to be updated or enhanced as we become aware of events almost immediately.

We think you will be impressed at the depth and breadth of coverage therein.



I continue to feel \$3 billion for the Purple Line spur to connect Hollywood, West Hollywood and the Beverly Center with the Wilshire corridor for what is rather modest additional ridership just doesn't make sense as we gear up to fight for federal funds. Pursuing a full funding grant agreement for the Wilshire extension alone would be advancing the most competitive project per federal cost effective criteria when evaluated against the proposals of other areas.

And if you want a good laugh a man who says he is an Architect and has been attending meetings on the Westside for years (including the recent Wilshire subway meetings) has a website with his "vision" that seems to basically consist of dubious claims in service of fixing automobile congestion: <http://flowboulevardplan.com/>

I am chagrined to find just as Kymberleigh Richards predicted since Steve Hyman was dropped as the L.A. Times' transportation reporter the Bottleneck Blog has been reduced to posting cut and pasted press releases along with breathless bulletins reporting on traffic jams and accidents. What a let down!

When la Streetsblog editor Damien Newton made a post on the Expo Phase II alignment decision by the Expo Authority I was curious that for several days thereafter Damien Goodman was absent from the discussion. Well, making up for lost time he suddenly started posting his usual bricks (my phrase for his lengthy diatribes). And coming out swinging he attacked me "and others" for what he called "soft racism". Soon the leftists of the Bus Bench blog joined in, defending Goodman and attacking those of

us who question his crusade. If nothing else it made for a long thread (99 comments before Newton shut it down as he felt it was becoming repetitive).

Interestingly Randall of the Bus Bench in attacking me asked in re SO.CA.TA "what have YOU done?" before offering the rather self-serving excuse "Which is not to imply The Bus Bench are advocates; we are doing what should have been done long ago: prompting folk to get off their knees." More leftist nonsense a la Eric Mann--get off their knees, indeed!

<http://la.streetsblog.org/2009/04/02/breaking-news-expo-board-backs-route-down-right-of-way-and-colorado/>

One thing we have been doing is making noises regarding Metro's proposed dual hub aka route 910. The recent delay of the project may in part be the result of those very concerns reaching the right ears. Listening to Conan Cheung's status report at the April 22nd Metro Citizens' Advisory Council meeting, I was struck that the 910 seems to be a solution in search of a problem. Maybe we should follow the lead of New York and tell the feds to keep their congestion pricing demonstration grant--some money is just too expensive to keep.

The Obama administration has announced it opposes hiking the federal gas tax. Which begs the question--how do they intend to make the trust funds solvent without such an increase? Should make reauthorization very interesting.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/vcCandidateFeed7/idUSTRE53866420090409>

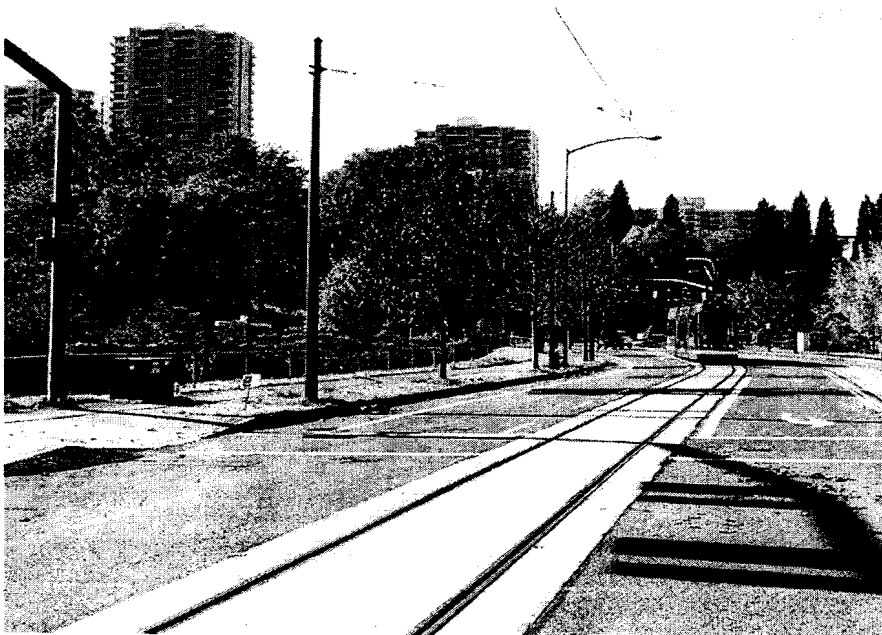
Public/Legislative Affairs Continued...

The California Transit Association recently submitted to the Commission on the 21st Century Economy comments on public transit funding. It provides a nice summary of the current situation and at least makes some comments on what needs to be done. Many activists are frustrated at the whirl of service cuts and fare increases that have afflicted transit users of late. To grapple with the abstract concept of remote legislators in budget votes having a direct impact on your transit service is awfully hard for most any of us to grasp. I honestly don't know how and when the situation can be resolved, but it is untenable and eventually must be addressed. Big talk about greenhouse gases, livability etc. are meaningless if transit meanwhile is repeatedly on the chopping block. The CTA comments are available at this link:

<http://www.caltransit.org/files/resources/Recommendations%20to%20Commision%20on%20the%2021st%20Century%20Economy%204-7-09.pdf>

Out of the blue the City of Riverside is again looking at placing a Transit Center near the Metrolink station. And the anti-Greyhound bias seems to have eased. Nice for reason to finally prevail (hopefully).

I'll conclude with a fond farewell to the reporter at the Press Enterprise who tipped me off about the foregoing. Doug Haberman is leaving journalism as he and his wife accept two year teaching positions in Thailand. I first met Doug back when he covered the MTA beat at the Daily News. Then he worked at the Inland Valley Our Times, which eventually became the last gasp of the L.A. Times regional sections unit. After it expired he went to the PE, covering the City Hall beat. A good guy--he'll be missed. 🚗 🚗 🚗



"Streetcar in Portland. Look how clean and welcoming the streets become! Imagine how beneficial streetcars in Los Angeles could be, and how our pedestrian life could improve!"

Caption and photo by Alexander Friedman.

LAUPT Turns 70!

On May 7, 1939, Southern Pacific's (SP) Train 39 "The Imperial" arrived at the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal (LAUPT) becoming the first revenue train to arrive at the newly completed station.

LAUPT, commonly known as Union Station, was considered the last of the great passenger stations to be built in the United States. At the time most major US cities already had union stations where all the railroad's passenger trains would call.

The idea for a union station in Los Angeles first began in 1915 when civic leaders were considering ideas to improve grade crossing safety and improve connections with the city's three railroads. Each of the three major railroads serving Los Angeles, Santa Fe (ATSF), SP, and the Los Angeles & Salt Lake (latter Union Pacific) had their own stations in the city and getting them to agree on a common location was no easy task especially considering the three railroads would foot the bill for the station.

During the 1920s the city and the railroads were engaged in a variety of legal battles over the station and where it should be built. By the time the legal issues were resolved, the country was now in the Great Depression and now the railroads were not willing to foot the bill for the station. Once the City of Los Angeles agreed to contribute to the cost of the station, survey work began in 1933 at the chose site across from the historic plaza in Los Angeles.

Work began on the site in 1934, but came to a halt in 1935 when the United States Post Office selected a location for their new central post office. The original plan took a

portion of the land designated for Union Station. After much discussion the post office agreed to move their building to the north side of Macy Street and work continued on the new station. The station construction continued on the completion of the station in 1939.

On May 3, 1939 the station opened with much fan fare that lasted three days. The highlight of the opening celebration was a parade showcasing the history of railroads in America played out on Alameda Street in front of Union Station.

When the station first opened in 1939 there were 66 scheduled arrivals and departures in and out of the station. This number increased dramatically during World War II. After the war, the number of scheduled trains returned to normal and even began to decrease with the popularity of air travel.

The station was heading into a steady decline that would last into the 1990s.

To be continued....



Metro Board Report for April 2009

by Kymberleigh Richards, Public & Legislative Affairs Director

La Linea de Oro de Gloria: Unless you were somewhere outside the reach of news media the week of the Board meeting, Gloria Molina brought a motion to rename the Eastside extension of the Metro Gold Line "La Linea de Oro, Edward R. Roybal." In a move that I am still trying to determine the political significance of, Antonio Villaraigosa left the room, leaving Don Knabe to chair the item and passed the motion "without objection." But wait! José Huizar complained that he didn't get to speak; Knabe, not sitting in the Chair's seat, couldn't see the screen where Directors' requests to speak are shown, and after some confusion about that, Huizar offered a substitute motion to send Gloria's proposal back through committee and have staff do stakeholder. Knabe couldn't figure out how to handle a substitute motion when the original motion had already passed, and that created new confusion before someone called for reconsideration of the original motion.

The substitute failed, with only Ara Najarian siding with him ... and it was only that then Zev Yaroslavsky said he didn't even know what Molina's intention was. By this time, Metro Communications Officer Matt Raymond was at the podium trying to clarify the naming policies. Zev was unsure how we were supposed to handle this on "only part of the Gold Line" and didn't know whether this was supposed to affect timetables and the like. The way it appears to be resolved now: The line will be dedicated in the late Congressman Roybal's honor, any Spanish language promotional literatures will carry the Spanish translation, while English language media will still call it the Gold Line, and if there is any signage at stations along the Eastside Extension that say "Gold Line" we will add "Linea del Oro" to those. As of the time I wrote this, a little over 24 hours later, there were already 60 comments on the Times' L.A. Now blog and 34 on

the CurbedLA blog about this, none of them very complimentary of Molina or her motion.

This Should Make the BRU Happy: A list of proposed bus service improvements to be funded by Measure R has been released. Among the proposals: New Rapid lines on Venice Blvd. in 2010, Sunset Blvd. in 2011, and Avalon Blvd. in 2012, with La Brea and Slauson Aves. and Sepulveda Blvd. (south of LAX, apparently, unless this is a reference to the continued differences with Culver City for Rapid 6) on the list for future expansion; Express lines between Long Beach and LAX, South Bay and the San Fernando Valley, and West Los Angeles and Long Beach by 2013.

A fresh look at the Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena and San Fernando Valley-Westwood proposals and the Orange Line skip-stop express concept; bus-only lanes on both Wilshire and Van Nuys Blvds.; service frequency improvements and porting the "next bus" system to the Metro website. There's also hope of adding passenger amenities at regional hub locations and an expansion of the solar-powered bus stop light program.

Then Again, Maybe Nothing Will Make Them Happy: A letter from the BRU to Mayor (and Board Chair) Villaraigosa was released during the Measure R Implementation Committee in which they call for "expanding the bus fleet by 500," "reversing the 2007 fare increase," and "protecting bus service." (Where did I hear all that before?) At the Board meeting itself, they released a packet of letters of support from four churches in the southern Los Angeles region, all of which were cut-and-pasted from the letter to Villaraigosa ... and a group of 17 faculty members at Cal State Northridge sent a representative at the Board meeting with a letter of their own in support of the BRU, with the same cut-and-paste. Does the BRU think the Board members won't recognize the same text in multiple letters? And do they still think the consent decree is in force?

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Metro Board Report for April 2009 Continued

Fasana vs. Zev, Round 2: The motion that John Fasana brought to the Board a month ago to add the Measure R projects to the 2001 Long Range Transportation Plan made it to the Planning and Programming Committee, where Zev Yaroslavsky got a second chance to show how transparent John's motion was. After pointing out that he would not support any move to put the Foothill Gold Line extension ahead of other projects (like Expo Phase II), the motion died for lack of a second; with Expo Authority Board members Mark Ridley-Thomas, Pam O'Connor, and Zev on the committee, Fasana should have seen this one was DOA.

But If At First You Don't Succeed, Try, Try Again: Fasana tried a different tactic one week later, introducing a direct-to-Board motion to "confirm [Metro's] intent to acquire a maintenance facility in Irwindale" for the Foothill extension. This time, it was Richard Katz who sent the motion to the Planning and Programming Committee for review.

Never Mind Measure R, What About Propositions A and C?: Sales tax revenues are now projected at close to 14% lower than the historic average for this year. That's almost \$200 million less revenue than usual, which impacts not only Metro but the included operators under the FAP. And all that before one penny of Measure R revenue has even been collected! Meanwhile, fare revenue is up 1% over a year ago on a 3.5% increase in boardings ... must be a lot of pass usage out there.

Tier 1 Changes Approved, Minus One: Line 910 (Metro Silver Line) was withdrawn from the service change program, with concerns about the fare policy and implications to other services on the two corridors as the main reason for the delay. In addition, new CEO Art Leahy has expressed concern about whether the changes would be resource neutral or if there would be

savings to count against the structural deficit, and a need to integrate service with Foothill Transit and Metrolink. Staff is now deferring Line 910 to the December service changes, at the earliest.

Contract Services to Go CNG: Federal stimulus dollars will be spent, in part, to acquire fifty 32-foot CNG-powered buses to replace diesel and propane-powered equipment that was new in 2001. The remaining buses used in contract service (all 40-footers) will be replaced under the existing contract options with North American Bus Industries, with the exception of the buses used on Line 577X, which are already CNG-powered NABIs. Metro is also exercising an option to acquire 100 more 45-foot CNG "compobuses" between now and 2012.

It Didn't Even Take Until June For My Prediction to Come True: I have been saying for several weeks now that I expected the Gold Line to begin revenue service with the gates locked open. Now comes the brief but significant mention in the monthly TAP report that the first phase of the gating "will permit entry and exit without locked gates" meaning that while TAP will still be required in case a fare inspector wants to validate your card, the gates will "free spin" so a TAP card won't be actually required to get past the gates. Wonder how long that will last? I'm thinking at least a year ...

Staff reports on these items, as well as other matters of interest, will be available for reading at the May 2 meeting.



MEMBERS IN ACTION

Kymerleigh Richards spoke on our behalf at Metro's farewell reception for Roger Snoble April 2nd at Disney Hall in downtown Los Angeles.

We had attendees at several of the recent Regional Connector meetings:

March 31st, Little Tokyo - Kent Landfield

April 1st, Pasadena - Jerard Wright & Ken Ruben

April 2nd, L.A. Central Library - Craig Weingarten, Kymerleigh Richards, Roger Christensen and Nate Zablén. Nate was quoted in a KPCC news story on the event.

Attending the April 2nd Expo Construction Authority meeting were Ken Ruben, Roger Christensen, Jerard Wright and Kymerleigh Richards.

We had attendees at several of the recent Wilshire corridor meetings:

April 13th, LACMA - Alex Schaffer, Ken Ruben, Mike Baron, Charles Powell, Dana Gabbard

April 14th, West Hollywood Plummer Park - Joe Dunn, Nate Zablén, Bart Reed, Alex Friedman, Dana Gabbard

April 16th, Beverly Hills - Joe Dunn, Ken Alpern, Alex Friedman and Kymerleigh Richards

Nate Zablén's comments at the April 13th meeting were quoted in the Beverly Press article "Residents Say Put Subway to the Sea on Fast Track" (April 16th): "It is costly, but if we don't do anything I think it will be even worse in terms of traffic and lack of mobility." A photo accompanying the article shows Alexander Friedman having a discussion with a project consultant.

<http://www.parklabreanewsbeverlypress.com/pdf/4.16%20issue.pdf>

Ken Alpern's article "Seeking the Light in the Expo Rail Line" was in the April 17th edition of the online CityWatch:

<http://www.citywatchla.com/content/view/2193>

We also had attendees at several of the recent Westside Subway Scoping meetings:

April 20th, Westwood — Nate Zablén and Roger Christiansen

April 22nd, Hancock Park — Nate Zablén and Alex Schaffer

April 23rd, Santa Monica — Kymerleigh Richards, Jerard Wright and Nate Zablén



Metro Rail Facts:

Expo Line end-to-end travel time (to Culver City) will be less than 30 minutes, with a projected weekday ridership of 27,000 by 2020.

Metro currently operates 73.1 miles of heavy and light rail systems. Completion of the Eastside Extension this summer and the Expo Line next year will raise that number to 88.

Metro has reported an exemplary safety record for the Eastside Extension: more than 3.8 million construction working hours without a single lost-time injury.