

THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE

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Metro LRV 100 breaks through a ceremonial banner in Los Angeles on July 14, 1990. This was the first train on the newly completed line.

— Photo from Metro Library On-Line Collection



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Bulletin Board / Members in Action

Bulletin Board:

Our thanks to Jon Hillmer at Metro for an informative discussion about the evolving relationship between Metro and the governance councils after the elimination of sectors.

Lauren Cencic will be the guest speaker at the August 14 meeting discussing recent changes in the CityRide program for seniors in the City of Los Angeles.

Our speakers for the rest of 2010 are:

September - Rick Peterson, Amtrak Thruway
October - Jano Baghdanian, Glendale Beeline
November - Conan Cheung, Metro (2011 restructuring concepts)

Parks in your backyard is a new website on how to access National Parks using Amtrak:
<http://amtraktoparks.com/>

Did you know the archives of the Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society are housed at Sherman Library & Garden in Corona del Mar? Open hours are 9AM-4:30PM Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. For more information: 949-673-1880 or
<http://www.sphts.org/archives.php>

We encourage members to regularly check the calendar on our website. We have upgraded the calendar and you can get an e-mail reminder 3 days before any listed event (the feature is included in the pop-up box when you click on an event listing).
<http://socata.net/calendar.htm>

All dues-paying members are entitled to access the member message board on our website. To request a password send an email to Kymberleigh Richards at:
krichards@socata.net

Department of Corrections:

In our July Issue on Page 9, the changes Listed for Foothill Transit Line 187 were actually changes for Foothill Line 178.

Members in Action:

Chris Flescher has been appointed to the City of Salinas Traffic and Transportation Commission.

Jerry Martin, Kirk Schneider, Bart Reed and Ken Ruben attended the July 28th LOSSAN Board Meeting.

Ken Ruben also attended both the San Gabriel and Westside Governance Council Meetings on July 12th and 14th respectively.

Bart Reed, Kirk Schneider and Ken Ruben attended the opening of the L.A. Beyond Cars gallery exhibit in downtown Los Angeles on July 29th. 🚌 🚌 🚌

Are you buried in paper?



Are you interested in getting your SO.CA.TA newsletter in PDF?

We are now offering the SO.CA.TA newsletter in PDF format to our members.

The PDF newsletters will be available a week before the meeting and will be in full color. If you would like to get the PDF newsletter instead of the printed version email us at:

rtd1121@yahoo.com

Transit Updates

Big Blue Bus (Santa Monica)

The City of Santa Monica has awarded a multi-year contract to NABI and has issued a Notice to Proceed for the purchase of nine forty-foot low-floor CNG transit buses. There are options to purchase up to an additional 58 buses over the 5-year contract period subject to approval by the City Council. These new buses will replace the last diesel buses in the Santa Monica Fleet.



Glendale Beeline

Effective August 1st Glendale Beeline will no longer accept Metro passes or Metro TAP cards as valid fare. Beeline will still honor the Los Angeles County EZ-Pass. Beeline also offers 10-Trip cards for \$2 and a 31-Day pass for \$12. For more information call Beeline at 818-548-3960, #1.

Metrolink Free Shuttle

On July 1st a free van shuttle began operating between the Burbank Airport and the downtown Burbank station. From the airport, passengers can request a SuperShuttle van ride to the station at the shuttle island in front of the Airport terminal at any time during normal Airport operating hours of 5:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. From the station, passengers are advised to make advance reservations for prompt pick-up, but they can also request the service without reservations, allowing 15-30 minutes for the shuttle van to arrive. Advanced reservations can be made

by calling 1-800-224-7767. Immediate or after-hours service can be arranged at: 818-558-3179.

Omnitrans (San Bernardino)

On September 7th, Omnitrans will be making a variety of changes in response to a loss in state funding and declining sales tax revenues. Below is a basic summary of those changes. For details about each route visit www.omnitrans.org

The following routes will have frequency reductions: 1, 5, 10, 11, 15, 20, 22, 63, 65, 80, 83, and 215.

There will be trip reductions on the following routes: 9, 19, 63, and 215.

Weekend service will be eliminated on routes 67 and 81.

Service to the 46th and Sepulveda loop will be eliminated on Route 7.

On weekends Route 82 service will be eliminated west of Mulbury ending at Mulbury and Jurupa. The weekend service will be extended on the north end to the Summit and Beach Loop.

New Circulator Routes 308 and 309 will serve Yucaipa. New Grand Terrace Circulator 325 will begin operation now that RTA Line 25 will no longer serve Grand Terrace.

(Continued on Page 4)



Transit Updates Continued

Pasadena ARTS

On August 1st Pasadena ARTS made several changes to their service. The most significant was the elimination of Sunday service on all routes due to a funding shortfall. Route 10 has been moved from Wilson Avenue to Lake Avenue. Also Route 51 will now offer limited service between the Rose Bowl (Seco and Arroyo) and Memorial Park (Raymond and Holly) on Saturdays.

Santa Clarita Transit (SCT)

Below is a summary of the new fares that take effect in August. SCT will no longer offer reduced student fares on the commuter routes. Local monthly passes will no longer be valid for a \$1.00 credit on express routes. Local transfers have been eliminated and interagency transfers will not be sold on buses inbound to Santa Clarita.

Monthly passes for all commuter routes, except route 757, will be on TAP cards. Also a new local day pass for \$2.50 is available with a TAP card.

Additional information on the new fares at www.SantaClaritaTransit.com or by calling 661-294-1287.

Santa Barbra MTD

Effective August 23rd MTD will make the following changes.

- Route 3: service will be reduced to every 30 minutes between 9 am and 2 pm.
- Routes 4 & 17: interline on weekends to provide hourly service on each route in both directions.
- Route 21X: eliminate Sunday service
- Route 27: reduce weekday service when Fall, Winter, or Spring quarter classes are not in session at UCSB.

-Route 2210: school booster route will be eliminated.

All MTD routes will now operate on a Saturday schedule on Veterans' Day and on New Year's Eve.

San Diego Trolley

Beginning in summer 2010, the San Diego Trolley will undergo a massive overhaul. This new overhaul will include new low-floor Trolleys, track, overhead wires, signals, and station platforms to accommodate the new cars. The Blue and Orange Lines will be the focus of the project and is expected to be completed in 2015. For more information on the Trolley Renewal Project visit:

<http://www.sdmts.com/trolleyrenewal.asp>



Yucaipa Transit Center

On July 12th, the new Yucaipa Transit Center opened at 34276 Yucaipa Boulevard adjacent to City Hall. Omnitrans routes 8 and 9 began serving the transit center on July 13th. In September, new Yucaipa Circulator routes 308 and 309 will begin serving the center. The new center features eight centrally-located bus stops, shelters, benches and information kiosks featuring a fountain and clock tower at either end. 🚌 🚌 🚌

Metro Board Report for July 2010 by Kymberleigh Richards

Another fairly light month for the Metro Board of Directors, with only half of the committee meetings taking place and the full Board meeting lasting just over two hours. Nevertheless, a few items of interest made their way into the discussion ...

Measure R Requirements Cause 30/10 Argument: The bill by Assembly member Mike Feuer that allowed Measure R to get onto the ballot two years ago contained a provision that the state Legislature has to be advised one year in advance of any changes to the project list. Since the pursuit of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's 30/10 initiative has the potential to alter the project completion schedule, the Board was asked to send a "notice of intent" to the Legislature. And, of course, nothing came easy to the process.

Incoming Board Chair Don Knabe objected to the language regarding highway projects being removed from the notice, saying it "goes against the [South Bay] COG's concerns." Which led to attempted clarifications by Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky and Villaraigosa, which Knabe wasn't buying. Zev pointed out that "highway projects are already ahead of the game" and insisted that the language of the notice needed to be specific to "only notify the Legislature of what they need to be notified of." Muddying the waters further was clueless gadfly Dr. Clyde Williams, who thought a subsequent item supporting legislation that would shorten the notification period to 90 days, meant this item was premature. (Apparently Williams, using his selective ability to read staff reports, thought the Board itself had the legal authority to modify the notification period. He also thinks changing the notice period will result in some kind of "slush fund" and thought the notification timing was in Measure R itself, which may

give an indication of how little he knows or reads.)

It all ended when Zev added "or highway acceleration plans, if necessary" to the notice and everyone happily voted to send it to Sacramento.

And While We're On The Subject: A harmless status report on the 2011 Call For Projects and the acceleration of the 2009 LRTP schedule acceleration brought more nonsense from Williams, who thinks that (a) the public should be allowed to add projects to the list without the involvement of the cities and counties; (b) there should be a "public participation process" when projects are submitted for the Call; and (c) the 30/10 initiative includes highways. As Dana would say, the mind boggles.

Further boggling of the mind came from the comments by Director Diane DuBois, who said she was still hearing that the Purple Line extension will "suck the life away from other projects" and from Zev, who expressed concern that the Regional Connector will hamper New Starts funding for the Purple Line. Leahy did offer an opinion that would make Director John Fasana happy when he hears about it, which is that the Regional Connector, because it will lower transfers at 7th St/ Metro Center and Union Station, is likely to force the issue of distance-based fares on Metro Rail. (This, of course, presumes TAP will be working by then.)

Defining "Interim" as "New"?: In the great reorganization of Metro, CEO Art Leahy has had to make some interim appointments.

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S*I*G*H We know the L.A. Times is clueless but having an article about the Blue Line's 20th anniversary ("L.A. officials to mark 20th anniversary of Metro Rail system") become mostly a platform for the usual anti-rail arguments of Tom Ruben and James Moore is sad beyond belief.

I can't count the quotes and op eds in the pages of the Times these two have been indulged in over the years as history passes them. How sad that the Times continues to prove how out of step it is with the city it is supposed to cover. Yesh!

I have to say it is dizzying the amount of attention and second-guessing the bullet train project is now getting. Not so long ago it was almost unknown except among us few keen observers. But I guess it is inevitable when you undertake something so daunting in its challenges that the volume of the conversation would elevate as the process moves toward looking more instead of less likely.

Bill Boyarsky in his commentary for L.A.Observed.com "Here's something more important than the mayoral free tickets" makes the case that 30/10 plan has national significance and a potential real legacy for L.A. Mayor Villaraigosa if it is successfully executed. I agree.

Damien Goodman of late has mostly communicated via e-mails from Fix Expo world headquarters (while the Fix Expo website hasn't been updated in six months!). His latest missive includes more "you ain't seen nothing yet" rhetoric in reaction to the PUC final decision regarding the Expo Line's Farmdale crossing, claiming a successful appeal to the Court of Appeals against the grade crossing is a sure thing. All the usual suspects Goodman has gathered up over the

years of his "crusade" are trotted out with the same old quotes and claims. First, we'll see if any appeal is actually filed (Goodmon has in the past publicly spoke of alleged impending legal actions that were never filed). If an appeal is filed the next hurdle is whether the Court even sees an issue worth considering. Just because you have latched onto an impressive latin phrase like "res judicata" doesn't mean that a court necessarily considers it to be raising an issue the merits reviewing. Despite all the bluster of "rope-a-dope legal strategy" this appeal is a hail mary and if it fails Goodmon's "crusade" will be finito...

It must be summer--things are really getting heated. Some residents of Beverly Hills are in near hysterics about the Purple Line extension possibly passing under a few homes, businesses and a school. I had letters in two community newspapers (the July 15-21 BH Weekly and the July 15 Beverly Press) that both concluded "Metro is engaged in a planning process that has as its goal the highest public good as its outcome. Hopefully we can set aside hyperbole and let the rational process go forward".

And then we have the dust-up at the May 25th meeting of the Antelope Valley Transit Authority over the proposal to bring fleet maintenance in house. 20 plus pages with Michael Cano, transportation aide to L.A. County Supervisor Michael Antonovich, entreating the Board to reconsider this action segueing into a healthy discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of contracting. I can share the PDF of this if anyone wishes to receive it as an e-mail attachment - quite illuminating reading. A hat tip to Hank Fung for bringing this to my attention.

(Continued on Page 7)

Public and Legislative Affairs Continued

The North County Times in its July 17th article "Citizens plan town halls on I-5 expansion plans" touches on the different formats for community meetings (Town Hall vs. Open House) and the growing trend of agencies favoring the use of Open Houses which are more informational one on one affairs versus Town Hall open mike sessions that can become a platform for project opponents to vent.

Former Metro San Gabriel Valley Service Sector General Manager Jack Gabig has now landed at Gardena Bus as the Transportation Director. Kymberleigh Richards informs me retired Metro CEO Roger Snoble has joined the Public Infrastructure Advisory Commis-

sion which oversees public-private partnerships. Other prominent Commissioners include Fran Inman from Majestic Realty, Katherine Perez from Urban Land Institute and Richard Little from the Keston Institute.

I'll conclude by noting that many of us get a laugh out of the terminal beneath the 10 at Washington/Fairfax being grandly termed West Los Angeles Transit Center when all it has is a few benches and shelters for riders. Recently I boarded a Metro route 217 bus and found its headsign announce the destination was Washington/Fairfax Transit Hub. And confusing the timetable for the 780 uses both terms. Double yesh! 🚌 🚌 🚌

El Monte Station to close this month



In mid-August, the El Monte Station will close and be torn down to make way for a new terminal. The demolition and construction of the new terminal is expected to be completed in January 2012. A temporary terminal located in the parking lot will be used until the new terminal is complete. Originally opened on July 15, 1973, the El Monte Station was the focal point of the newly completed El Monte Busway. Aside from a major transit hub in the San Gabriel Valley the terminal is also the Greyhound Station for El Monte. The new terminal will be bigger and include a Foot-hill Transit store.

For more information on the project visit: www.metro.net/elmonte

◀ *El Monte in the 1980s (SCRTD Photo)*



Metro Board Report Continued

However, the May Board decision that limited Leahy to only make such appointments to "direct report" positions has created some problems, such as the replacement of Jon Hillmer as Division 9's manager (Hillmer now has the thankless task of managing the Governance Councils' affairs). But the Board, ever vigilant when it comes to micro-managing, wanted to be sure Leahy couldn't create new positions or adjust salary ranges for any interim appointments. Needless to say, this required an amendment by Director Ara Najarian adding "to existing positions" to the motion to get it passed (even though I thought the staff report was pretty clear that this was already the intent).

Transit Court Is Coming! (Well, Eventually):

The much talked-about Metro Transit Court has moved a giant step closer to reality, after the Superior Court indicated it wants Metro to have first crack at offenders. Under the new system, which is now scheduled to take place in July of next year, infractions that are ticketed by Sheriff's deputies, fare inspectors and Metro security officers will be handled internally, with non-responding scofflaws still being referred to the Superior Court for criminal prosecution.

The Bus Riders Union, naturally, claimed Metro is "criminalizing the poor" (apparently ignoring the part of the staff report that says the Transit Court could impose community service rather than fines, at its discretion) and that this somehow was another reason why the fare increase should be undone. John Walsh played the part of "Captain Obvious" by pointing out that the gates would need to be locked before enforcement was viable. No one seemed to be aware, until it was pointed out by Ethics Officer Karen Gorman, that pending legislation (AB 2324,

Perez) would change fare evasion from an infraction to a misdemeanor, which she thought would increase pressure by the Superior Court for Metro to handle within Los Angeles County. Will any of this actually work? We'll see, starting a year from now ...

Artesia Transit Center Restroom Issue Moves Forward:

A staff report responding to Director Pam O'Connor's motion dealing with the issue of restroom facilities at the Silver Line's south terminal spilled over to a Board action on the ExpressLanes' revenue guidelines and expenditure plan. When told that a policy change would be needed to have a Metro-operated restroom facility at the ATC, O'Connor suggested that "geographical remoteness" from commercial properties with restrooms needs to be a factor, and she later joined with Knabe in a motion making the ATC a priority in terms of spending on passenger amenities.


This, of course, all grew out of the famous list of suggestions that SO.CA.TA delivered to the Board at the February "meet and confer" of the five Governance Councils. The Expo Line's favorite detractor, Damien Goodman, instead wants HOT lane revenue to be used for pedestrian access to transitway stations. The O'Connor/Knabe motion passed easily, so Goodman can put that on the shelf with the rest of his defeats. (You did all hear about the CPUC decision on Dorsey High, right?)

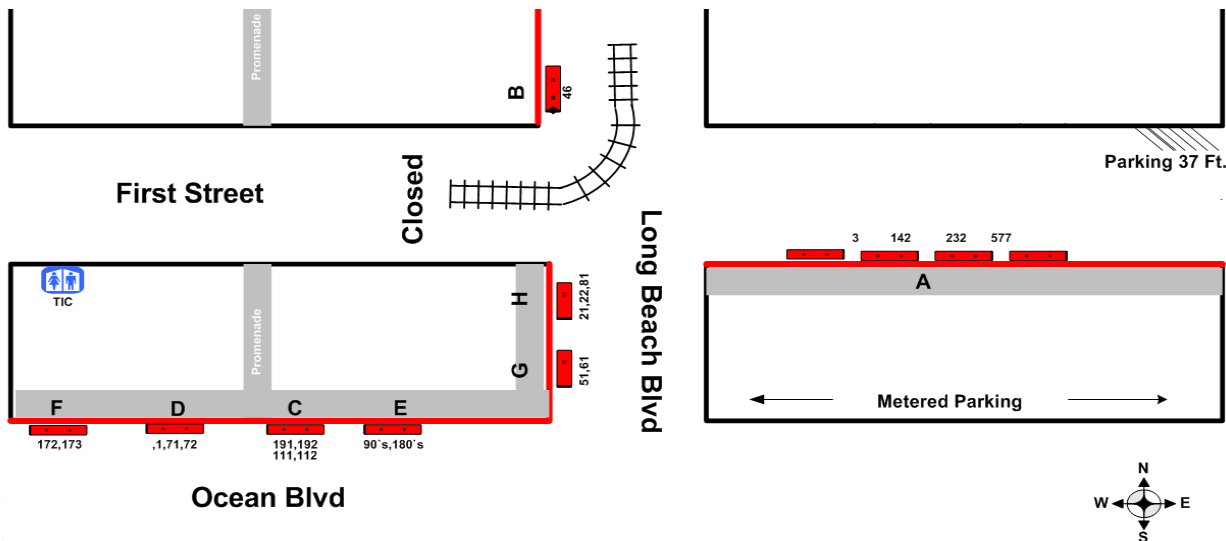
(Continued on Page 9)



Long Beach Transit Mall Closes / Metro Board Report Ctd.

On August 29th, First Street, between Pacific Avenue & Long Beach Blvd, will be closed to all bus traffic to upgrade the Long Beach Transit Mall with public art, night lighting, new bus shelters and landscaping. This work has been made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. First Street will remain open to pedestrian traffic and Metro Blue Line operations.

Transit customers will board buses on Ocean Blvd between Pine Avenue & Long Beach Blvd., on Long Beach Blvd between Ocean Blvd & First Street and on First Street between Long Beach Blvd & Elm Avenue. The project is expected to be complete in Spring 2011. Below is a diagram with the temporary boarding locations. 



Quote Of The Month: Knabe, after one too many off-topic attacks on Villaraigosa by Walsh (and a protest by Zev): "John, I'm not going to have you arrested, because you'd like that too much. What I may do is put you on the 'do not speak' list for a couple of months, because that will probably kill you." And about time, in my opinion.

I'd like to close by acknowledging that Ray Harris, who has been the transportation deputy to Supervisor Knabe for the past ten years, retired from public service at the end of July. Ray's work in public transportation goes back to a long stint with RTD's govern-

ment relations department, starting in 1973. He has been one of my "go to" contacts when I've needed answers, and will be very much missed.

Finally, I have decided, after several months of carrying pounds of staff reports to our meetings only to have them largely ignored, to stop doing so. The Metro website makes them available if you feel you need to know the details, so I will invite our members to go there to read them. The Metro Board will, as usual, take the month of August off, so therefore this column will do likewise. See you in the October newsletter! 🚌 🚌 🚌

Metro Blue Line Turns 20!

On July 14, 1990 the Metro Blue Line opened between Los Angeles and Long Beach with great fan fare. Construction of the 22 mile light rail line began in 1987 and cost \$877 million to build. The line consists of 22 stations and was built along a significant portion of the former Pacific Electric line between Los Angeles and Long Beach. 🚃 🚃 🚃



Photo above from the Metro Library On-Line Collection. All others by Andrew Novak.



Photos of the Month



On August 7, 2010 at 12:15 am, AC Transit NABI 4088 departed the Transbay Terminal in San Francisco on Line O bound for Alameda. This was the last bus to depart the 71-year old terminal. A new Transbay Terminal will be built on the site of the historic terminal and is expected to open in 2017. The terminal was originally build as a railway terminal for electric trains of the Key System, Interurban Electric Railway and the Sacramento Northern that came from the east bay on the lower level of the Oakland Bay Bridge. In 1959 the terminal was converted to a bus terminal after the abandonment of the Key System's street car system. The Transbay Terminal was also the Greyhound Station for San Francisco. 🚌 🚌 🚌



Photo credits (clockwise) an exterior view of the Terminal in 2000 (Andrew Novak Photo), AC Transit New Flyer 1003 in the 1970s (Jim Walker Photo), AC Transit NABI 4088 on August 7, 2010 (Ty Angel Photo), and an Interurban Electric Train enters the terminal in 1940 (Andrew Novak Collection).

How to join SO.CA.TA: Yearly dues are \$30.00 (\$12.00 low income). Dues are prorated on a quarterly basis.

Submission of materials: ALL materials for the TRANSIT ADVOCATE newsletter go to Andrew Novak at P.O. Box 2383, Downey California 90242 or to rtd1121@yahoo.com. Please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for returns.

Newsletter deadlines are the Fridays a week before SO.CA.TA meetings, at 6:00 p.m. Pacific time, unless otherwise announced.

Opinions: Unless clearly marked as "Editorial" or "Position Paper", all written material within, including all inserted flyers and postcards, are the expressed opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the Southern California Transit Advocates.

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NEXT SO.CA.TA MEETINGS : **Aug 14th** and **Sep 11th** at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

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