

THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE

Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates
August 2011

Vol. 19, No. 08

ISSN 1525-2892



Inside This Issue:

- Bulletin Board (pg. 2)
- Members in Action (pg.2)
- Transit Updates (pg. 3)
- Get to know local transit (pg. 5)
- Public/Legislative Affairs (pg. 6)
- VVTA moving to new digs! (pg. 7)
- Photos of the month (pg. 11)

*City of Commerce Flexible 328 in Commerce on
June 3, 2011.*

— Andrew Novak Photo

Bulletin Board / Members in Action

Bulletin Board:

Our thanks to Jack Gabig, Transportation Director of the city of Gardena, for a frank and informative presentation and question/answer session at our July 9th meeting.

Ken Ruben informs us the meeting of the Metro Citizens' Advisory Council on Wednesday August 24th will feature a discussion on the LOSSAN (L.A.-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail) corridor with guests Art Leahy of METRO and Will Kempton of OCTA. This will be held at the Metro Headquarters Building (3rd floor) starting at 6:30 PM.



i <3 transit (I heart transit) is a public education initiative that seeks to recruit public transportation supporters via a mobile text messaging campaign. Riders and advocates can show support by texting TRANSIT to 86677. Once the text is received they will receive a message instructing them how they can further support public transit, and the expansion of public transportation options. These instructions will include web links to a petition in support of transit funding and various other websites.

Members in Action:

August 2nd Bart Reed, Perias Pillay and Ken Ruben attended the downtown Los Angeles streetcar project meeting. Reed, Pillay and Ruben also attended Rick Thorp's presentation on the Expo light rail line at the July 26th Transit Coalition meeting.

Reed, Ruben and Jerry Martin attended the LOSSAN meeting on July 27th.

Ruben attended the Westside and San Gabriel Service Council meetings on July 13th and 11th, respectively. He also

attended the Metro Citizens' Advisory Council meeting on July 27th. Lastly Ruben on August 4th rode a portion (northbound to Santa Barbara) of the trainorders.com Sierra Fantasy Limited excursion.  

Upcoming Events:

On Sunday August 28th, The Pacific Bus Museum will be hosting their Annual Open House and Flea Market at the Shinn Street yard in Fremont, California. For more information visit: www.pacbus.org

For those interesting on riding vintage Railroad cars, visit www.larail.com This Los Angeles based group of private car owners offers a variety of special trips from multi-day trips to one day excursions.

Former member Kym Richards is posting her Metro Board Reports on her Blog Page at: <http://mtaboardreport.blogspot.com/>

Finally don't forget to visit our friends at Rapid Transit Press. They are currently offering a wide variety of transit related books and newsletters. Visit them at: www.rapidtransit-press.com

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)

Effective August 28th, Big Blue Bus will be implementing several changes to their system. Below is a list of those changes.

Lines 1 and 2: Line 2 will only travel as far south as the intersection of Hill and Main Streets. Select weekday Line 1 trips will be extended east of the Windward Circle to Walgrove Avenue along current Line 2 routing (on weekends select trips will extend to Lincoln Boulevard instead of Walgrove Avenue). Additionally, Sunday frequency will be increased from every 20 minutes to every 15 minutes between 11 AM and 8:30 PM.

Line 7: Frequencies on the Line will be decreased. Between 9:30 AM and 12 PM it will decrease from every 10 minutes to 15 minutes. Between 12 PM and 7 PM it will be decreased from 10 minutes to every 12 minutes and from 7 PM to 10 PM it will be decreased from every 15 minutes to every 20 minutes. Morning frequencies will remain unchanged.

Rapid 7: New 60-foot NABI buses will now be used on Line. The Line will also be extended from the Pico-Rimpau Terminal to the Wilshire/Western Metro Rail Station.

New stops will be added on Pico Boulevard near Rimpau, Crenshaw Boulevard at Pico, Olympic and Wilshire, and on Western Avenue at Wilshire. In Santa Monica, a new stop will be added on Pico at 28th Street/Stewart Street. In Los Angeles the stop on Pico at South Beverly Drive will be removed.

Service between the Wilshire/Western Station and downtown Santa Monica will operate every 15 minutes between 6 AM and 6 PM, every 20 minutes from 6 PM to 8 PM, and every 30 minutes from 8 PM to 10 PM.

Line 10: This Express Line will be converted to Rapid Line 10 and several under-utilized bus stops will be removed.

Westbound from downtown Los Angeles the following stops will be removed: Alameda/E. Cesar Chavez, Hope/Temple, Flower/Third Street, Grand Avenue/11th Street, Santa Monica Boulevard/Wellesley, and Santa Monica Boulevard/Berkeley.

Eastbound from Santa Monica the following stops will be removed: Santa Monica Boulevard/Berkeley, Santa Monica Boulevard/Wellesley, Olive/11th Street, and Los Angeles Street/Arcadia.

Line 13: The frequency will be reduced to every 60 minutes on Weekdays. Service will be canceled on Saturdays.

Downtown Ride: This new service will operate in a loop from the Civic Center parking structure and parking lot to Santa Monica Boulevard in a clockwise pattern northbound on 2nd Street and southbound on 4th Street. The weekday only service will operate in the morning between 7 AM and 10 AM and in the evening between 3:30 PM and 7:30 PM.

For more information contact Big Blue Bus customer service at 310-451-5444.



(Don Lewis Photo)

(Continued on Page 4)

Transit Updates Continued

Burbank Bus

Effective August 15th Got Wheels service will no longer provide after-school youth transportation during the school year, including winter and spring breaks. Beginning in 2012, Got Wheels will be offered as a summer-only service. A revised summer schedule and route will be announced prior to the 2012 summer season.

Downeylink

Effective August 1st the City of Downey will begin selling 30-Use Ticket books for \$15 per book. Each ticket is good for one ride on Downeylink. Transfers to other Downeylink are still free. The ticket books are available Monday through Friday at the locations listed below.

Downey City Hall - Community Services on the 2nd floor at 11111 Brookshire Avenue from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Downey Transit Depot at 8150 Nance Street from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.



Glendale Bee Line

New schedules for Express Lines 11-12 dated July 5, 2011 are available at: <http://www.glendalebeeline.com/#Route11-12> or by calling 818-548-3960 or via email at: beeline@ci.glendale.ca.us

Gold Coast Transit (GCT) Oxnard

Effective July 1st Seniors over the age of 75 are now able to ride GCT buses for free at any time, with GCT 75+ ID Card or proof of age shown upon boarding.

Effective August 21st GCT will be implementing the following changes:

Route 6: All trips will now serve Main Street and Ventura Avenue.

Route 14: This new route will begin connecting the Esplanade, RiverPark, St. John's Regional Medical Center and Nyeland Acres.

Route 15: This route will be restructured, connecting the Esplanade, El Rio, Auto Center Drive and St. John's Regional Medical Center.

Route 20: This new route will be providing direct morning connections between the Oxnard Transportation Center and the Seagate Industrial Park in Oxnard.

Fare Increase: Gold Coast Transit will implement the second phase of a fare increase approved by the Board in 2009 and base fare will increase from \$1.35 to \$1.50.

For more information:

Call Gold Coast at: 805-483-3959 or visit them online at: www.goldcoasttransit.org



(Continued on Page 8)

Palo Verde Valley Transit Agency - Desert Roadrunner



The Palo Verde Valley Transit Agency is the only public transit operator in Eastern Riverside County. The PVVTA aka Desert Roadrunner serves the City of Blythe and the Unincorporated County areas of the Palo Verde Valley. The PVVTA operates five deviated fixed routes.

Routes 1-4 operate Monday through Friday while Route 5 operates on Saturdays and select holidays. Each route will deviate up to 3/4 of a mile to pick up passengers with reservations. Route 2 operates in Ehrenberg Arizona and Route 3 is an express service to the California State Prisons of Ironwood and Chuckawalla Valley on Wiley Well Road.

Fares on Routes 1, 2, 4, and 5 are \$1.65 for general public and 80¢ for senior/disabled. There is an additional \$1.65 zone charge for travel to Ehrenberg Arizona on Route 2. There is also an 80¢ charge for a route deviation pick up. Fares on Route 3 is \$3.30 for general public and 80¢ for senior/disabled. PVVTA offers a variety of passes for all types of rides on all the routes.

For more information on the PVVTA service visit on the web at: www.pvvta.com or by calling at 760-922-1140 or by mail at 125 W. Murphy Street Blythe, California 92225.



“Getting to know Local Transit” is a new semi-regular feature where we will profile some of the smaller, lesser known transit agencies in southern California. If you know of an agency you would like to see profiled here, please contact the editor with your ideas.  



Public and Legislative Affairs By Dana Gabbard

Contemplating the current political climate in Washington, D.C. and Sacramento makes my head hurt. Slogans, pandering ideology and crass calculation have overwhelmed any reasonable hope of progress on infrastructure investment for the foreseeable future. The stuttering economy has also weakened the yields of the local sales taxes that are crucial to funding much of the transit service that exists in California. We are all painfully aware of the consequences of the foregoing being a near constant cycle of service cuts and fare hikes among public transit providers. Frankly it is a painful time to be an advocate for transit, facing this whirlwind of dismaying events.

One small glimmer of hope is many commentators acknowledge infrastructure investment is crucial to our being economically competitive. Also the limitations of tolling, privatization, congestion pricing and similar market-based strategies are becoming apparent and losing their "silver bullet" luster.

Hopefully once we are past the 2012 election a serious dialogue can start on the future of our transportation network. Leadership, vision and appreciating that challenges also present opportunities will be needed if we are to move beyond the sound bite dogmas that far too often have dominated past discussion of these issues.

Forgive the truncated column this month--I have been coping with some personal issues and been most disengaged from the day to day of recent transit happenings. Thankfully there is a growing light at the end of the tunnel offering hope I will soon be able to reengage in activism with vigor. 🚗 🚗



VVTA moving to new digs!

The Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA) is currently building a new facility in Hesperia that will open later this year. The new facility includes a 27,000 square foot administration and operations building. The facility will also include a 31,00 square foot maintenance building. There will be parking for 120 buses and paratransit buses. Below are photos of the progress on the new facility taken by Craig Barnes. 🚌 🚌



Above are two photos of the new administration building. To the right of the administration building is the new maintenance building.



Above is a photo of the new covered bus parking and a photo of the new maintenance facility. The service bays on the right are for the large buses while the ones on the left are for the small buses.

Transit Updates Continued

LADOT

Effective July 1st the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) increased fares for both Commuter Express and DASH services. Below is a summary of the new LADOT fares.

Commuter Express

Base Fare:

\$1.50 (One-Way)

75¢ (Senior/Disabled)

\$57 (Monthly Pass)

\$30 (20-Trip Ticket Booklet)

Zone 1 / Zone 2:

\$2.50 / \$3.00 (One-Way)

\$1.25 / \$1.50 (Senior/Disabled)

\$80 / \$100 (Monthly Pass)

\$46 / \$56 (20-Trip Ticket Booklet)

Zone 3 / Zone 4:

\$3.75 / \$4.25 (One-Way)

\$1.85 / \$2.10 (Senior/Disabled)

\$124 / \$140 (Monthly Pass)

\$67 / \$75 (20-Trip Ticket Booklet)

DASH

50¢ (One-Way)

25¢ (Senior/Disabled)

\$18 (Monthly Pass)

\$30 (60-Trip Ticket Booklet)



Metrolink

On July 15th Metrolink canceled the 11 PM trains on the Antelope Valley and Ventura County Lines citing low ridership. These trains began on March 31st along with an 11 PM train on the San Bernardino Line. The San Bernardino Train has become so popular it has been added to the regular schedule.

From July 23rd to September 4th, Metrolink will be offering special weekend service to Del Mar for horse racing season. The special service is \$28 for a round trip and are valid from any station on the system. Train 6662 departs Los Angeles Union Station at 10:40 AM and arrives at the Solana Beach Station at 12:47 PM. Train 6661 departs Solana Beach Station at 6:45 PM and arrives at Los Angeles Union Station at 8:53 PM.

Metrolink has also added additional service on the Orange County Line between Fullerton and Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo.

Trains from Fullerton to Laguna Niguel:

Train 640 - Departs 4:50 PM

Train 642 - Departs 7:45 PM

Trains from Laguna Niguel to Fullerton:

Train 643 - Departs 5:50 PM

Train 645 - Departs 8:50 PM

Train 641 Oceanside to Fullerton at 2:47 PM
Train 644 Fullerton to Oceanside at 10:00 PM
(When there is a 7:05 PM Angels home game, Train 644 departs 30 minutes after game ends.)



*(Continued
on Page 9)*

Transit Updates Continued

Omnitrans

On July 6th the Omnitrans Board of Directors awarded a contract to the Griffith Company and Comet Electric Inc., to begin construction of the new 15.7 mile sbX Bus Rapid Transit Line from Cal State San Bernardino to Loma Linda Medical Center. Construction is set to begin in Fall of 2011 and is expected to be completed in 2013, with passenger service beginning in 2014.

For more information visit:

<http://sbx.omnitrans.org>

or call the sbX hot line at 855-729-6397.



Santa Barbara MTD

Effective August 22nd the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) will be making several changes to their service. Below is a summary of those changes.

Lines 1 and 2: The frequency on these lines will be reduced to every 15 minutes during the morning peak service. Booster (tripper) service will be added to maintain capacity during peak commute times. Afternoon peak service will now operate from 2:30 PM to 5:30 PM.

Line 3: Service will now operate every 30 minutes all day on weekdays. Booster service will be added to maintain capacity during peak commute times. The 5:50 AM, 7:30 PM and 9:00 PM roundtrips will also be eliminated to reduce the span of service.

Line 5: During the evening, 5 trips will be reduced to 4 trips and all 4 will be extend to Hillside House with a stop at Arroyo Burro Beach on trips toward downtown.

Line 9: Will be reduced to a limited peak hour/ midday service.

Line 15X: Evening schedules will be adjusted to better meet the schedules at Santa Barbara City College.

Line 22: Three one-way trips will be eliminated due to low ridership. Service on Micheltorena, Olive, and Valerio will be eliminated and service will go straight on Garden.

Line 24X: The first inbound weekday trip will be eliminated.

Line 36: Service will be re-routed on 7th, Elm, and 5th streets and will no longer service Sandyland per request from the City of Carpinteria. With a shorter route, frequency on the route will be increased.

Line 37: Crosstown Shuttles will run every 22.5 minutes all day. This will mean reducing from 35 round trips per day to 31 round trips over the same span, and entails less-frequent service in the morning, but more frequent service mid-day.

Waterfront Shuttle: Summer service on Friday, Saturday and Sunday will now end at 9:00 PM.

MTD
Santa Barbara

(Continued on Page 10)

Transit Updates Continued

anta Barbara MTD continued

Booster Service: Lines 2310 and 2320 between the Mesa & the Westside and La Cumbre Jr High School will be eliminated.

Booster lines 2660 and 2670 will be combined into one trip from Goleta Valley Junior High School.

Valley Express: The Valley Express service will be modified and transferred to Clean Air Express.

Line 82: Service will continue with smaller buses.

Line 83: Service eliminated.

Line 84: Service will continue via Clean Air Express service from Santa Maria with a stop in Buellton.

Clean Air Express fares are as follows:

\$150 Monthly Pass

\$50 10-Ride Pass

\$7 Single Ride

For more information on the MTD service changes visit: www.sbmtd.gov, call 805-963-3364 or email info@sbmtd.gov 🚌 🚌



*Below are two photos of New Montebello Bus Lines New Flyer 21003 in a ne w paint schemes.
(Photos by Josh Thurman)*



Photos of the Month

*VVTA NABI 613 and
Blue Bird 715 at the
current VVTA yard
on July 25, 2011.
(Craig Barnes Photo)*



*Former AVTA Neo-
plan 716 in the San
Francisco Bay Area
now operating for a
company called Trans
Metro.*

*This bus along with
several other AVTA
buses were sold at
auction on July 2,
2011. This photo was
taken on July 22,
2011.*

(Peter Ho Photo)

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.

Copyright: © 2011 Southern California Transit Advocates. Permission is freely granted to reproduce/reprint ORIGINAL articles from the Transit Advocate, provided credit is given to both the author and the Southern California Transit Advo-

cates. In all other cases, permission must be secured from the copyright holder.

Disclaimer: The Southern California Transit Advocates is not affiliated with any governmental agency or transportation provider. Names and logos of agencies appear for information and reference purposes only.

SO.CA.TA officers, 2011

President:	Nate Zaben
Vice President:	Kent Landfield
Recording Secretary:	Edmund Buckley
Executive Secretary:	Dana Gabbard
Treasurer:	Dave Snowden
Directors at Large:	Ken Ruben J.K. Drummond Joe Dunn

Newsletter Editor:	Andrew Novak
Newsletter Prod. Mgr:	Dana Gabbard
Webmaster:	Charles Hobbs

NEXT SO.CA.TA MEETINGS : **Aug 13th** and **Sep 10th** at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

August 2011 — Issue 225



Southern California Transit Advocates
3010 Wilshire #362
Los Angeles, CA 90010

213-388-2364
<http://www.socata.net>
dgabbard@hotmail.com

44¢
First
Class
Postage

FIRST CLASS MAIL