

THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE

Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates
February 2012

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*Metrolink Train 682 at the Anaheim Station on
January 19, 2012.*

—Andrew Novak Photo

Bulletin Board / Members in Action

Bulletin Board:

Our thanks to January speaker Rolando Cruz, Executive Director and Vice-President for Maintenance and Facilities at Long Beach Transit, for an excellent presentation on asset management. Our March 10th speakers will discuss the proposed statewide high speed rail project (L.A. to Palmdale and L.A. to Riverside segments).

February 18th we will have a special event. Former Massachusetts Governor and Presidential candidate Michael Dukakis will discuss The Future of Rail and Transit in America. This will begin at 1:00 PM in the auditorium of Angelus Plaza, 255 S. Hill Street in downtown Los Angeles, on the 4th floor. After the speech there will be a period for questions and answers. Light refreshments will be served.

We are at work on arranging a preview trip on the Exposition light rail for members and guests. Ditto the Orange Line extension. Details will be sent via e-mail and the newsletter once they are finalized.

You can e-mail requests for copies of the 2011 Annual Report to the Legislature of the California Transportation Commission to: annette.gilbertson@dot.ca.gov

Metro currently has an online survey which will have a weekly drawing among participants for \$250 through the end of next month: <http://www.metro-survey.net/>

Save the date: The Motor Bus Society will be having its Spring 2012 convention in Los Angeles (April 27-30, 2012). The convention will include tours of various bus yards and a mini-convention. More information in next months issue on this event.

Members in Action:

Alek Friedman's letter "A Desire Named Streetcar" appeared in the December 29, 2011 edition of the Park La Brea News/Beverly Press.

J.K. Drummond attended the January 24th meeting of the Torrance City Council Transportation Committee. He along with Charles Hobbs and Perias Pillay attended the January 19th appearance at UCLA by Human Transit blogger Jarrett Walker.

Pillay along with Ken Rubin attended the January 24th Transit Coalition meeting featuring Don Sepulveda of Metro. Pillay participated in the Los Angeles Railroad Heritage Foundation January 28th rail tour of San Diego County.

Ruben and Dana Gabbard attended the Metro Citizens' Advisory Council meeting on January 25th. Ruben attended the Metro Westside/Central Service Council meeting on January 11th. On February 1st Ken Ruben rode private car Tioga Pass from Los Angeles to Oxnard. 🚌 🚌

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

AVTA

AVTA is seeking public comment on a proposed change to its fixed route system that would take effect on April 1, 2012. The Route 1 Express would be converting it into NEW Route 10. The proposed changes would continue service to the University of Antelope Valley and make connections at Lancaster City Park, Antelope Valley Courthouse, Palmdale Transportation Center, and 47th St. East and Ave. S. Stops would be located at 47th St. East and Avenue S, Avenue S and 25th St. East, Palmdale Blvd. and 9th St. East, Palmdale Transportation Center, Avenue M and 4th St. West (Antelope Valley Courthouse), Lancaster City Park, and Sierra Hwy. and Avenue J-8 (University of Antelope Valley)

Written comments will be accepted until the Board of Directors Meeting at 10:00 AM on February 28, 2012 in the AVTA Boardroom, 42210 6th Street West, Lancaster. Comments may be submitted to the address above, attention Wendy Williams, or via email to wwilliams@avta.com



Foothill Transit

Effective January 20th The Line 486 bus stop on the corner of Baldwin Park Boulevard and Bess Avenue, near the Baldwin Park Kaiser Permanente Hospital, has been re-opened. Line 486 buses will stop on the corner of Baldwin Park Boulevard and Bess Avenue, and will also continue serving the alternate stop on the corner of Amar Road and Baldwin Park Boulevard.

In observance of the Presidents' Day holiday on Monday, February 20th the following Foothill Transit lines will be running on their weekend schedules: 178, 185, 187, 195, 197, 269, 272, 274, 280, 281, 282, 284, 285, 286, 289, 291, 480, 482, 486, 488, 492, and the Silver Streak. No other lines will be running. The West Covina, Pomona, Claremont, and El Monte Station Foothill Transit Stores will be closed. The Puente Hills Mall Transit Store will be open from 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM.



Glendale Beeline

Effective January 21st Glendale Beeline issued new schedules for Lines 1, 2, 3, 7, 31, 32, 33, and 34. At the same time Beeline also officially cancelled Line 13. Replacement service for Line 13 is being provided by a revised Metro Line 201. For more information call 818-548-3960 or visit:

glendalebeeline.com

(Continued on Page 4)

Transit Updates Continued

Hollywood Bowl

The County Board of Supervisors has recently approved an increase in the fares for the Hollywood Bowl Park-and-Ride services. Prepaid tickets from the outlying Park-and-Ride lots will still be \$5.00 per person while tickets purchased at the lots will increase from \$8.00 to \$10.00. The fares for service to and from the nearby shuttle lots will increase from \$4.00 to \$5.00 per roundtrip. There will be more on the Hollywood Bowl service in a future issue of this newsletter.

iShuttle (Irvine)

Effective January 9th the Irvine iShuttle made minor adjustments to their schedules in conjunction with the Amtrak and Metro-link changes. The new iShuttle timetables are available online at www.irvineshuttle.net or via email at info@irvineshuttle.net or by calling 949.72.GO.BUS



LADOT - DASH

Effective January 29th Coach America began route operations for DASH Panorama City/Van Nuys, Van Nuys/Studio City and Northridge.

LADOT - Commuter Express

Effective January 9th Coach America began operation of Commuter Express Lines 409, 419, 422, 423, 549, 573, and 574.

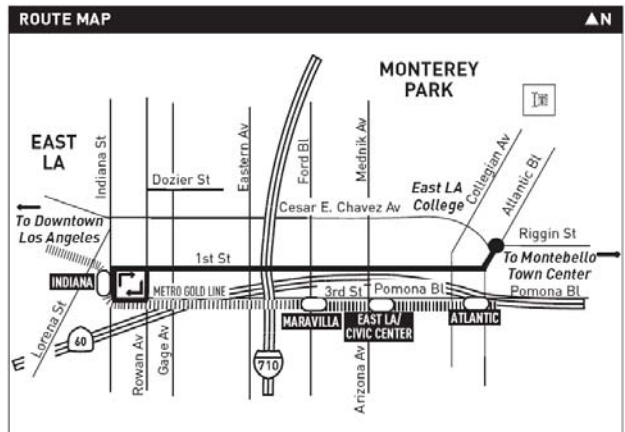
Effective December 5, 2011 MV Transportation began operation of Commuter Express Lines 142, 431, 437, 438, 448, 534, and Union Station/Bunker Hill Shuttle. For more information call LADOT at (818, 323, 310, 213) 808-2273.

MARTA

The Off-the-Mountain bus stop for the Omnitrans Transit Center has been relocated to F Street between 4th and 5th Streets in San Bernardino. Also the stop at Highland and Boulder has been moved from the parking lot at Walmart to the Omnitrans shelter located on Highland.

Metro

Effective January 11th Metro began operation of a new Line 68 shuttle from East Los Angeles College to the Indiana Gold Line Station along 1st Street. The shuttle operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to 7:30 PM. Below is a map of this new shuttle.



Metro has also extended five round trips on Line 201 between Glendale Adventist Medical Center and Glenoaks Canyon to replace cancelled Glendale Beeline Line 13. These trips began operation on January 9th and are similar to the times of the cancelled Line 13. For more information visit www.metro.net or call 323.GO.METRO

(Continued on Page 8)

Transit Topics By Andrew Novak

This month in Transit Topics we have a few things you might have missed from the world of transit.

UC Davis Double Decker: In January one of Unitrans original London Double Decker buses was shipped back to London. The London Ensignbus Transport Museum purchased bus RTL 1014 from the campus bus service. RTL 1014 and another former London Double Decker were purchased in 1968 and started the campus bus service. The 1950 built bus had been in service with Unitrans longer than it was in service with London Transport, 44 years, vs 18 years.

SEPTA ADA Center: In February the South Eastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) will be opening a new Accessible Travel Center in a storefront in the SEPTA's Suburban Station in downtown Philadelphia. The new SEPTA center has mock rail platforms and the front section of a SEPTA bus which allow patrons with disabilities to learn how to navigate the transit system with out outside pressure and distractions. The center is open on weekdays and can provide training for individuals as well as small groups. Patrons must schedule appointments ahead of time either by phone or online.

No roof riding: In Jakarta, Indonesia the state owned railway system has installed concrete balls suspended by chains on a steel frame over railroad tracks to prevent passengers from ridding on the roofs of trains. The new balls hang about 10 inches above the cars and so far have proved a successful deterrent to roof riders. Aside from commuters looking for relief from over crowded trains, some people have taking up the sport of train surfing on the roofs of pas-

senger cars. Officials say that on average two passengers are killed every month while roof riding on trains and they are hoping the balls will prevent future deaths. Currently one set has been installed outside the Jakarta Station and if successful more will be installed on the railway.



(CNN photo)

Short Turns: Recently a Starbucks was opened in Tukwila Washington built out of former shipping containers. The new coffee stand was built using one 20-foot container and three 40-foot containers offers drive-thru and outdoor seating. Starbucks could very well be a trend setter in containerized buildings and if affordable they could be used in transit applications such as information kiosks or other buildings at transit centers. 🚆 🚆



Public and Legislative Affairs By Dana Gabbard

I notice Governor Brown is not letting up in his support of the high speed rail project. Nice to have an elected who doesn't back down when a position they take involves facing opposition. That is what they call leadership, which we have precious little of these days.

Meanwhile in the category of mindless show-boating example #1 is the esteemed Damien Goodmon whose current venture the Crenshaw Subway Coalition recently held a community meeting that received zero media coverage that I am able to discern. Amazingly in comments to Streetsblog L.A. ("Crenshaw Subway Coalition Sees Opening in FTA Approval of Crenshaw Environmental Documents") Goodmon opine "At the end of the day, it cost Expo Construction Authority more to fight us than it would have to put an overpass or underpass at Farmdale. Metro shouldn't repeat that mistake." Of course Goodmon from start to finish wanted a tunnel not overpasses or underpasses, options which he denounced. Plus many of his allies openly wanted the project in a tunnel for the full length, not merely one crossing. Metro is wise to stick to its guns rejecting the unnecessary tunnel segment Goodmon demands.

Besides CEO Rolf Van Ark, among the other key California High Speed Rail Authority staff members that recent left the agency was longtime deputy director Dan Leavitt. I've learned Leavitt was not idle long and has subsequently taken a position as a Special Projects Coordinator for the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (which owns and operates, and is the policy-making body for, the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) service). SJRRC was smart to nab him.

Another recent change among transportation veterans involves longtime customer relations manager for Big Blue Bus Dan Dawson who late last year was hired by Capital Metro of

Austin Texas as its vice president of marketing and communications.

The Daily Breeze headline says it all: "Westwood FlyAway bus gets another 6-month reprieve". Reporter Art Marroquin notes the line is averaging a little more than six passengers per bus. Meanwhile the Irvine route averages fewer than four passengers per bus leading LAX executive director Gina Marie Lindsey to admit "I believe it's safe to say that Irvine is on life support". The search for a location to add a stop in Long Beach has proven futile. Los Angeles World Airports is also looking at locations along the Orange Line, the soon to open Expo Line plus in Santa Monica and Culver City. All because LAWA foolishly agreed to have nine FlyAway routes by 2015 to settle lawsuits against airport expansion filed by L.A. County along with surrounding cities and a community group. Evidently whether that was feasible to promise never entered LAWA's thoughts. Now the daunting challenge is very clear. A Flyaway route from Santa Monica? Doesn't that sound like a dud in the making...

I am in despair about the L.A. Mayor race next year. Most of the candidates (and potential candidates) have said things about transportation that are beyond clueless:

Rick Caruso champions monorail down highway medians (yikes!)

Austin Beutner champions Metro purchasing electric buses that he alleges should be locally built (built by who?)

Eric Garcetti calls the Wilshire bus lanes "a failure" before they have even opened because of the gaps in Beverly Hills, Santa Monica and near Westwood (has Garcetti lifted a finger to get the lanes extended?)

Zev Yaroslavsky was the elected who championed having the bus lane gap in Westwood

Public and Legislative Affairs By Dana Gabbard

Jan Perry championed Metro taking over Angel's Flight long after it was obvious the agency had no desire to do so

Wendy Greuel so far has been sensible and as City Controller oversaw an audit that should be a wakeup call about the problems of the city of Los Angeles Street Furniture program. But does Wendy have a chance amid all these big players crowding the field?

What irony! Hassan Ikhara Executive Director of the Southern California Association of Governments in a January 11th op-ed for the San Bernardino Sun ("Invest in Interregional Rail") argues that instead of the proposed high speed rail project that scarce resources can best be invested in upgrading Metrolink routes and Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner. There is merit in some of what he says, but I am amused since the same logic applies to the maglev SCAG long championed (wasting millions in studies of the idea). In fact high speed rail makes a lot more sense than regional maglev.

Here are some tidbits from the agenda of the latest meeting of the Board of the Los Angeles - San Diego - San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency (LOSSAN):

Pacific Surfliner– Caltrans will be discontinuing the billboard promotion program and focusing on television advertisements promoting on-board Wi-Fi. Amtrak is continuing its partnership with the L.A. Clippers, Metrolink, and L.A. Metro, as well as radio ads. Amtrak is also promoting the Pacific Surfliner at travel and art shows in Los Angeles.

Metrolink– Metrolink is promoting rail to various events such as the Lunar New Year in Chinatown and the Academy and Grammy Awards. There is also ongoing coordination with Metro on the opening of the Expo Line. Metrolink has also been in discussions with Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) on a transfer agreement that would allow Metrolink monthly

passholders to transfer to LAX using the Flyaway shuttle for free. Eventually, Metrolink ticket vending machines will be able to dispense LAX Flyaway tickets allowing all Metrolink passengers the ability to book a ticket from any Metrolink station to LAX. Metrolink will also be launching a newly-redesigned Web site this month.

COASTER– NCTD staff has distributed information to the public on service cancellations due to construction activities on the weekends. There is also construction on the SPRINT light rail service. Wi-Fi beta testing is underway on the COASTER. NCTD will also be installing next bus/next train signs for COASTER and BREEZE bus services.

Orange County– OCTA has been working with Metrolink on the Anaheim Ducks Express train and it is now working with the Angels to continue promotions for the 2012 season. OCTA is also conducting a customer market survey to measure how trends in ridership have changed with the addition of new Orange County Line trains.

Santa Barbara– SBCAG is negotiating with the developer of the Smart Ride iPhone application to port the app to the Android platform. Smart Ride is a free app that uses Next Bus information to enable passengers to access real-time bus arrival times on their phones for L.A. Metro and VISTA (Ventura/Santa Barbara) bus service. SBCAG has installed signs on bus stops that include a QR code with a direct link to the Smart Ride application download page

I'll conclude by noting the recent passing of Claremont political and social leader Judy Wright, who played a key role in the starts of Metrolink and Foothill Transit plus championed the renovation of the Claremont Depot as a transportation hub. Comments in the press make clear she was beloved and will be much missed. 🚗 🚗

Transit Updates Continued

Metrolink

Effective November 1st Metrolink patrons are now able to ride a free shuttle from the San Bernardino Metrolink Station to San Manuel Indian Bingo & Casino. The service operates on weekdays and Metrolink patrons with valid Monthly Passes, 10-Trip Tickets, 7-Day Passes, and Roundtrip tickets can board the special shuttle.

The shuttle departs San Bernardino at 9:35 AM, 10:50 AM, 1:00 PM, and 2:00 PM. Return buses leave San Manuel at 1:30 PM, 2:30 PM, 3:30 PM, and 4:30 PM.

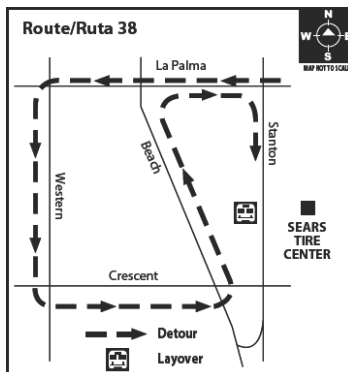
For details and more information call Metrolink at 800-371-LINK or visit www.metrolinktrains.com

OCTA

Effective February 12th OCTA will be making several changes to the bus service in Orange County. Below is a summary of those changes.

Schedule adjustments have been made to the following Routes: 26, 29, 47, 50, 53, 56, 57, 59, 60, 70, 76, 83, 89, 90, 145, 177, 187, 188, 213, 462, 472, 473, 758

Route 38: The weekday detour in Buena Park has been made permanent. See map below.



Route 57: To help relieve early morning overloads on northbound weekday trips, the 6:00 AM, 6:30 AM, 7:19 AM, and 4:06 PM trips were extended from State College and Via Burton to the Brea Mall. The 8:43 AM northbound trip was extended to begin at the Newport Transportation Center at 8:22 AM and end at the Brea Mall.

Route 89: On weekdays buses will now operate every 35 minutes instead of every 40 minutes.

The following three routes will have changes made to their Sunday Service.

Route 90: buses will operate every 80 minutes instead of every 90 minutes.

Route 145: buses will operate every 50 minutes instead of every 60 minutes.

Route 177: buses will operate every 80 minutes instead of every 100 minutes.

For Routes 191, 212 and 216 the San Juan Capistrano Park-and-Ride time point will be now called Rancho Viejo and Junipero Serra.

Route 463: On weekdays the current detour will be made permanent. Northbound trips will continue to Grand & McFadden, then will travel along McFadden to Standard, then to 3rd, along Garfield to 4th, then to Poinsettia, and then 6th/Santiago to the Depot at Santa Ana.

Route 758: Southbound trips will no longer serve the Diamond Bar Park-and-Ride, Pathfinder Park-and-Ride or stop number 1482 on Brea Canyon Road. The route will begin at the Chino Transit Center, travel along Grand Avenue, enter the 60 freeway, continue on the 57 freeway, exiting at Lambert and then resume normal routing.

(Continued on Page 9)

Transit Updates Continued

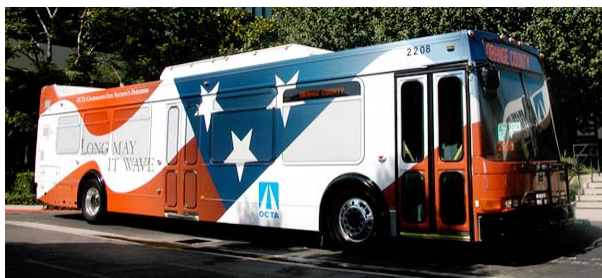
OCTA Continued

Route 758 ctd: Passengers currently boarding at stop 1475 on Brea Canyon Road should board Route 757 at this location and then transfer to Route 758 at the Brea Mall. Routes 757 and 758 are scheduled to wait for transferring passengers. The Northbound route will retain its current routing to State College and Lambert, then it will enter the 57 freeway, continue on the 60 freeway, exit on Grand Avenue, and resume current routing to the Chino Transit Center.

OCTA has also made changes to their bus passes. Beginning January 1, 2012 OCTA will no longer be offering the 15-day regular or senior/disabled pass for sale. Previously purchased 15-day passes will continue to be honored on all OCTA fixed-route buses.

The weekday OCLINK pass can be used for unlimited rides on Metrolink trains and OCTA buses for only \$7 per day. These new passes can be purchased online at octa.net/oclink, at any Orange County Ralphs, Vons or Pavilions supermarket, at the OCTA Store in Orange, at Orange County Metrolink station vending machines, or on board OCTA buses.

For more information:
www.octa.net/february2012



Omnitrans

Passengers can now purchase bus passes at 37 Stater Brothers Markets. For more information: www.omnitrans.org/fares/outlet.asp

Riverside Transit Agency (RTA)

Effective January 9th, Route 51 will follow a new schedule that is not in the January 8th Ride Guide. Due to bicycle and pedestrian congestion at the UCR/Bannockburn bus stop, the schedule has been adjusted so the bus spends less time idling at that busy bus stop.

For more information call 951-565-5002 or visit: www.riversidetransit.com

San Diego Transit

Effective January 29th Line 44 has had major schedule adjustments to improve on-time performance. On weekday mornings additional trips have been added to increase capacity from Old Town to Mesa College.

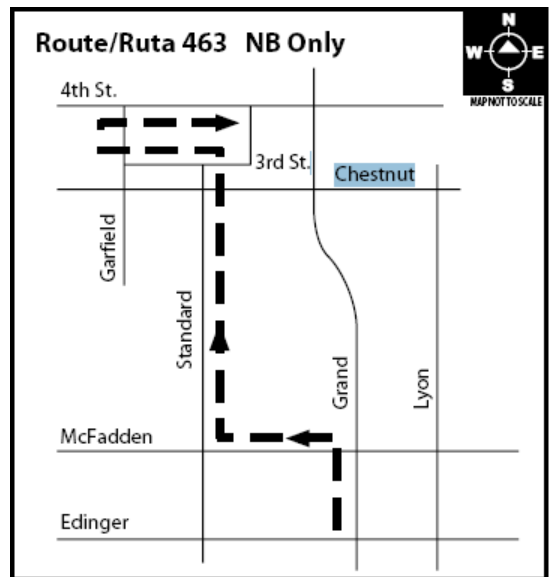
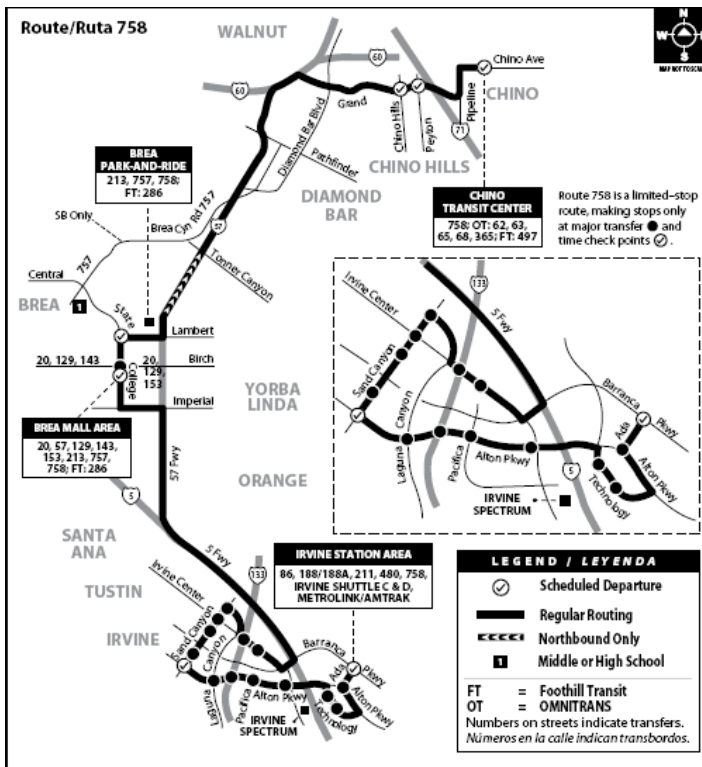
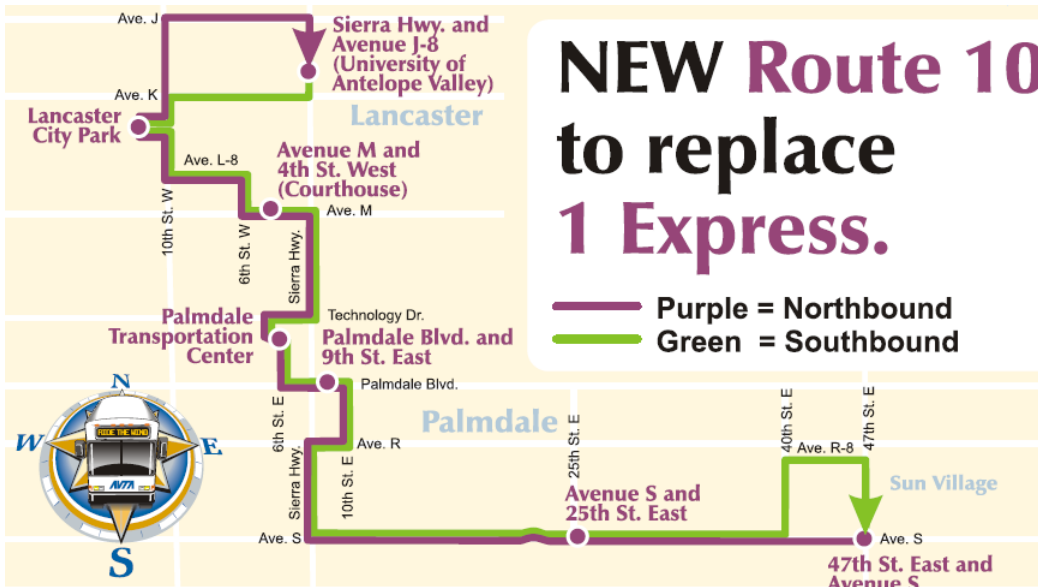
Effective February 2nd passengers boarding Routes 891 and 892 at Ramona will only pay a one zone fare. Passengers traveling through Ramona will still pay a two zone fare.

Effective January 20th the RegionPlus Day Pass will drop from \$14 to \$12. For more information visit www.sandag.org/fares

Santa Monica Big Blue Bus

Big Blue Bus Getaways are currently on hiatus to fully evaluate the program. Big Blue Bus is soliciting feedback on the Getaway program and comments can be sent to Bus-Info@bigbluebus.com or by calling 310-451-5444. 🚌 🚌

Maps of the Month



Map of the OCTA Route 463 re-route (above) and OCTA Route 758 (left)

Photos of the Month

*Los Angeles
County bus
L-210 on the link
route in Lennox.*

*-SoCalMetro
Photo viaFlickr*



*Metro Neoplan 6766
in Pasadena on
January 13, 2012.*

*-Andrew Novak
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 PM 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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Newsletter Prod. Mgr:	Dana Gabbard
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NEXT SO.CA.TA MEETINGS : **Feb 11th** and **Mar 10th** at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

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