

# ***THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE***

**Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates**  
**November 2012** **Vol. 20, No. 11**



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*A westbound Metrolink train prepares to stop at the Glendale Station on May 12, 2008.*

*—Photo by Andrew Novak*

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## ***Bulletin Board / Members in Action***

### **Bulletin Board:**

Our thanks to Metro Executive Director, Countywide Planning Martha Welborne for the informative Planning Update and discussion at our October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

At the November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting Macy Neshati Vice President, Sales & Marketing for Complete Coach Works will make a presentation on the 100% electric Zero Emission Propulsion System for remanufactured transit bus.

We have learned the city of South Pasadena plans to hold its Clean-Air Car Show & Green-Living Expo again in 2013, which will provide an opportunity for us to do outreach.

Check our calendar for upcoming holiday transportation related events, including Santa Trains and "fill/stuff a bus" food drives: <http://www.brownbearsww.com/freecal/socata>

### **Members in Action:**

Andrew Novak attended the Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society Convention in Ventura from October 11-13, 2012.

Director Ken Ruben was featured on Tony's LA, hosted by Tony Valdez on local Channel 11 and re-run numerous times (including October 13, 14 and 15), talking about Southern Pacific passenger trains including the DAYLIGHT, STARLIGHT and the LARK and the mail contracts being terminated for all passenger trains in 1967. Ruben attended the LOSSAN Board Meeting on October 15<sup>th</sup> which was held in the Fred Harvey Restaurant at L.A. Union Station. Ruben and Dana Gabbard attended the Metro Citizens' Advisory Council meeting on October 24<sup>th</sup> and Ruben attended the Metro Westside Central Service Sector Governance

Council meeting on October 17<sup>th</sup>. In addition Ruben attended the 7th-annual Los Angeles Archives Bazaar held at USC on October 27<sup>th</sup>, the opening preview of the rebuilt El Monte Station on October 10<sup>th</sup> and Inauguration of the New Station Tracks and Platform at Los Angeles Union Station on October 17<sup>th</sup>. John Ulloth was also at the latter.

Jane Reifer of our affiliate Transit Advocates of Orange County was quoted in the Orange County Register twice: "Bus riders invited to meeting on fare-increase proposal" (October 19<sup>th</sup>) and "Bus riders make plea to block fare increases" (October 22<sup>nd</sup>).

Robert Meinert attended the presentation meeting for the Downtown Connector's 3 stations at the Central Library on August 23<sup>rd</sup> and August 28<sup>th</sup> at the Coburn School. He has also been updating & detailing LARy (aka the Yellow Cars) entries on Wikipedia.

At the October 10<sup>th</sup> Metro Westside/central Governance Council meeting Alexander Friedman commented on the Metro Line 4/704 corridor study presentation. 🚇 🚇

### ***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](mailto:rtd1121@yahoo.com)

## ***Transit Updates***

### ***Big Blue Bus (Santa Monica)***

Effective November 1<sup>st</sup> passengers on Blue Bus Rapid 7 and Rapid 10 transferring to Metro Rail will now be issued paper TAP transfers. Passengers will need to inform the operator when boarding that they are transferring to a Metro Rail Line. Once they have purchased the transfer the operator will issue the TAP transfers. Passengers will then need to TAP the transfer at the turnstile or validator at the Metro Rail Station.



Richard Silagi Photo

### ***Disneyland Resort Express***

Effective November 1<sup>st</sup> the Disneyland Resort Express (DRE), operated by Pacific Coast Sightseeing Tours and Charters, will no longer accept cash as payment for fare. DRE operates between the Anaheim Resort and the Los Angeles International Airport and the Santa Ana/Orange County Airport. Passengers will now have to have prepaid travel vouchers or use credit cards. For more information visit:

[www.graylineanaheim.com](http://www.graylineanaheim.com)

### ***Foothill Transit***

Foothill Transit and Metro have entered into an agreement to honor each other passes and charge the same cash fare on the El Monte Bus Way from downtown Los Angeles and El Monte Station on Foothill's Silver Streak and Metro's Silver Line. The new Silver 2 Silver program began on October 14<sup>th</sup>

with a new cash fare is \$2.45 (\$1.15 Senior/Disabled) for either service. Passes are not interchangeable on the Silver Streak east of El Monte or on the Silver Line south of downtown Los Angeles. For more information visit: [www.foothilltransit.org](http://www.foothilltransit.org)



### ***Gardena Municipal Bus Lines***

Effective October 28<sup>th</sup> Gardena made several changes to their service. Below is a summary of those changes.

Line 1X: Service has been increased to downtown Los Angeles on weekdays during peak hours. Midday service on weekdays and service on weekends will no longer go into downtown ending at the Harbor Transit Station. A new bus stop has been added on Figueroa, southwest of Imperial (across from the parking structure) for passengers coming from downtown Los Angeles.

Line 2: Passengers will no longer have to wait through the layover when traveling to the end of the line at PCH and Western or PCH and Normandie. Passengers will transfer to a second bus free of charge to continue their trip.

Line 4: Service on weekdays now operates every 45 minutes from 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM. The line has also been extended to 147th and Hawthorne. Line 1 has been discontinued and passengers can now use expanded Line 4 service. For more information visit: [www.gardenabus.com](http://www.gardenabus.com) or call 310-965-8888.

*(Continued on Page 4)*

## *Transit Updates Continued*

### **Montebello Bus Lines**

Starting November 10<sup>th</sup> Montebello Bus Lines will no longer operate Line 60 (Passons Boulevard) on Saturdays. For more information visit: <http://www.cityofmontebello.com/depts/transit/bus/schedules.asp> or by calling 323-558-1625 (Montebello Bus Lines has also posted special holiday schedules for all of their routes on the website listed above.)



### **Sun Line**

The agency recently announced the award of a contract to build a new headquarters and transit hub in the Coachella Valley. The contract was awarded to Doug Wall Construction of Bermuda Dunes, California and is expected to be completed in late 2013 or early 2014.

### **Torrance Transit**

On November 18<sup>th</sup>, Torrance Transit will be making several changes to their service including the addition of a new Rapid Line. Below is a summary of those changes:

Line 1: Frequency will be increased to 40-45 minutes and span of service will be increased seven days a week. The schedule has also been adjusted to improve night time connections. Service to downtown Los Angeles will be cancelled and the southern terminus will be moved to Carson Street at

Hawthorne Boulevard by rerouting service via Torrance and Hawthorne Boulevards. This will improve connections at Del Amo Mall.

Line 2: Service to downtown Los Angeles will be cancelled. Span of service will be increased on weekdays and Saturdays along with improved late night connections. Northbound service will also be routed around the South Bay Galleria via Inglewood Avenue and Artesia Boulevard.

Line 3: Weekday peak and weekend service will be increased to every 20-25 minutes along with an increase in the span of service. Late night service will be adjusted to every 60 minutes and connections to Long Beach Transit routes will be improved. A new short-line will be established from Long Beach to Del Amo Mall. Finally additional school trippers have been added to reduce over crowding.

Line Rapid 3: This new service will begin operation from Long Beach to the South Bay Galleria with 20 minute service Monday through Friday during AM and PM peak hours.

Line 4: This new service will operated between Torrance and downtown Los Angeles replacing the express portions of Lines 1 and 2. This new service will operate on Interstate 110 on the ExpressLanes. The new service will operate every 30-60 minutes during the AM and PM peak periods on weekdays only. The service will run from Torrance into downtown in the morning and from downtown in the afternoon. Fares will be \$2.00 one-way and monthly passes will be available.

*(Continued on Page 8)*



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

**Fastest Highway:** On October 24, 2012 a section of Texas State Highway 130 opened between Austin and Seguin Texas. This 41-mile section of freeway has the highest posted speed limit in the United States at 85 Miles Per Hour. Wow!



**Anaheim Street Car:** Recently the Anaheim City Council voted to back a \$319 million dollar streetcar project connecting the ARTIC Transit Hub and the Anaheim Resort including Disneyland and the convention center. The new 10 car system is proposed to operate along Katella Avenue and Harbor Boulevard. The system will be similar to the one currently operating in Portland Oregon and could open in 2015 when the ARTIC is scheduled to open. Below is a photo of the Portland System.



Josh Thurman Photo

**Tri-Met iPhone Tickets:** Tri-Met is currently developing an app for iPhone and Android phone users that will allow passengers to purchase tickets and show fare on their phones. Passengers will have to register a credit card or debit card on the secure website and will then be able to by fare prior to boarding buses and trolleys. The agency hopes to have the app ready by spring 2013.



**End of an era:** I will conclude this month with a photo from my friend Jeremy Dickson that shows Horizon Coach Line staff removing Coach America decals from one of their buses in Bakersfield. Prior to declaring bankruptcy at the beginning of 2012, Coach America was one of the largest tour and charter bus operators in the United States. Horizon Coach Lines parent Transportation Management Services purchased a large portion of Coach America. 🚌 🚌



## ***Public and Legislative Affairs By Dana Gabbard***

I have recently discovered that late last year Nassau County in New York State decided to contract its transit services (re-named Nassau Inter-County Express) with Veolia. Formerly their transit system was operated by New York MTA with public sector employees. This is the second such transition I am aware of in the public transit industry, the first being North County Transit District a few years ago. Is this a trend? Not yet but a second major agency making the change does deserve attention.

Kudos to the Victor Valley Transit Authority on being awarded the 2011/12 Exemplar Award by the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District in recognition of its energy-saving, carbon friendly new bus facility and headquarters in Hesperia. Way to Go!

Via the Delaware Valley Rail Passenger newsletter I have learned a serious effort has been mounted to promote maglev along the northeast corridor. There is even a website put together by the proponents:

<http://www.northeastmaglev.com/>

David Sutton has been appointed Director of TAP Operations at Metro, replacing the retired Jane Matsumoto. In other TAP news, while the agency hopes to lock subway station turnstiles early next year complications with finding a TAP solution for Metrolink riders may force a delay.

Ty Schuling, long-time policy expert at the San Bernardino Associated Governments, recently retired. Mr. Schuling chaired the Southern California Association of Governments advisory committee I sat on some years ago and always impressed with his acumen and knowledge.

Plowing through the agenda packet for the September 18<sup>th</sup> Board meeting of the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District I was floored to read regarding employee development "Recognizing the limited time frame to the retirement of the current General Manager". Some years ago Pacific Bus Museum with the help of Andrew Novak put together a bus tour of MTD that included a meet and greeting featuring MTD General Manager Sherrie Fisher, who impressed me as a true leader with vision. Replacing her will be a tough task. *(Ed Note: Ms. Fisher began her career with MTD as a bus operator and rose through the ranks.)*

I was also bowed over to learn the city of Riverside is still seeking relocation of RTA's downtown Transit Center to a remote location. It has long since become beyond obnoxious the barely concealed bias toward bus riders as being akin to a nuisance held by the Riverside powers-that be. Gads!

Once in a while the usually sedate minutes most agencies include in the agenda packets crackle instead with discord and bickering that cannot be concealed by the clunky functioning of the bureaucracy. Such was with the case with the minutes of the September 26<sup>th</sup> Sunline Transit Board of Directors meeting. One member's grouching over how the General Manager handled labor negotiations caused pushback and displeasure from the other members. We are talking multiple pages of text where you can tell it was a rather testy gathering. Yowsa!

*(Continued on Page 7)*

## ***Public and Legislative Affairs Continued***

Good news! Super Developer Rick Caruso is not running for Mayor of Los Angeles. Considering some of his past comically uninformed comments on transportation topics, it is a relief we are spared this Richard Riordan redux. Yuck!

The Planning Report recently interviewed Los Angeles World Airport Gina Marie Lindsey ("Gina Marie Lindsey Updates LAX's Capital Program: Bradley West". I'm glad Curbed L.A. agrees with me her comments on transit access to LAX are as they note "oblique."

Metropolitan LA is building-out ground transit across the region. Is LAX planning the connection points for intersection with Metro's present and prospective rail lines?

First of all, a robust connection between Metro and the airport is imperative. The airport is staunchly in support of that, and we will, between us and Metro, achieve that. We have a couple of challenges at the moment. One is that Metro was fortunate enough to get Measure R, which expedited their ability to do definitive planning. At the airport we have been lagging on that front because of our specific plan amendment process. The draft EIR has us basically in a programmatic level of development definition until we get CEQA approval. That hopefully will be by June of next year. In the meantime, MTA has been able to race past us, and we can't keep up because we can't plan at the same level of detail until we have programmatic CEQA approval. So our draft EIR has a general concept of the airport putting an inter-modal transportation facility (ITF) right around 96th and Lot C, and examines the option of a consolidated rental car facility on Manchester Square. But

again, we're talking bubbles here, so it should not be seen as very precise. The airport would connect the ITF to the terminals by building a dedicated, grade-separated bus-way that could eventually become some sort of automated people mover when airport traffic demand grows. But that's as detailed as our planning is on the airport side of things. MTA, I think, has narrowed their options down to about four. We're working with them, and I know they would like us to be more granular in our planning. I hope that we can get the decisions on CEQA so we can oblige them sooner rather than later.

Bubbles? What is the sam hill does that mean?

LA Observed reports Brian Sumers has left the LA Daily Journal to cover the LAX beat for the Daily Breeze as of early October. This is in the wake of Art Marroquin's move to editorial which I mentioned previously.

As always you can track my posts for L.A. Streetsblog at: <http://la.streetsblog.org/author/dana-gabbard/>

I'll conclude by noting the passing of Santa Barbara MTD Manager of Transit Development and Community Relations David Damiano on Monday, October 15, 2012, widely admired in the community. The Santa Barbara Independent noted "Damiano will be missed by all who knew him". 🚌 🚌



## ***Transit Updates Continued***

### ***Torrance Transit continued***

Line 5: Span of service will be increased on weekdays and Saturdays. Service on Crenshaw Boulevard will be replaced by new Line 10. The northern terminus will be moved to the Metro Green Line Crenshaw Station via Van Ness Avenue with minor adjustments to routing around El Camino College.

Line 6: The frequency will be adjusted to 40-45 minutes all day. The southern terminus will be moved to Carson Street and Hawthorne Boulevard to improve connections at Del Amo Mall.

Line 7: Span of service will be increased on weekdays and Saturdays and service will operate every 60 minutes. Service south of Sepulveda Boulevard at Vermont Avenue will be discontinued to reduce service duplication. Service will now be extended east to Avalon Boulevard via Sepulveda.

Line 8: Span of service will be increased seven days a week. Weekday frequency will now be every 25 minutes and every 60 minutes on Saturday. The northbound route will be routed onto Nash Street to serve the Green Line. Also service will be straight lined on Hawthorne Boulevard between Torrance Boulevard and Fashion Way and southbound service between Skypark Drive and Pacific Coast Highway.

Line 9: Span of service will be increased on weekdays and Saturdays. Service will be rerouted between Del Amo Mall and Lomita Boulevard via Lomita Boulevard, Anza Avenue, and Carson Street. The western terminus will now be at Carson Street at Hawthorne Boulevard. Service will be discontinued on Normandie Avenue, Pacific Coast Highway, and Vermont Avenue.

Line 10: This new service will operate on Crenshaw Boulevard between Pacific Coast Highway and the Crenshaw Green Line Station. The service will operate from 5:00 AM to 11:00 PM on weekdays and 5:00 AM to 10:00 PM on Saturdays. The line will operate every 30 minutes on weekdays and every 60 minutes on nights and Saturdays.



### ***VISTA***

Effective October 15<sup>th</sup>, VISTA issued a new schedule for the Coastal Express Route. Two roundtrips between Ventura and Carpinteria/Santa Barbara/Goleta were added along with modest schedule adjustments to existing trips. The 6:25 PM stop at Cortona and Castilian in Goleta was removed. These changes were intended to improve on-time performance and efficiency.



### ***Union Station Platforms***

Platform 7 has now reopened at Union Station after construction began in May 2011 to restore the platform to service. As part of the project tracks 13 and 14 were placed back in service and Track 15 was restored for extra storage. 🚊 🚊



## ***SOCATA EVENTS!***

Need to work off Thanksgiving dinner? Join the Southern California Transit Advocates for our annual Day After Thanksgiving Trip. This year we will be riding Omnitrans in San Bernardino County. We will be meeting at Union Station November 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 AM. For details see email the newsletter editor at [rtd1121@yahoo.com](mailto:rtd1121@yahoo.com). We have also been notified by Metrolink that the \$10 Weekend Pass will be available on the Day After Thanksgiving.



At our November meeting we will be accepting nominations for 2013 officers and directors in SOCATA. At this meeting we will also be appointing our Election Committee.

Our holiday banquet will be held this year the evening of December 8<sup>th</sup> at Taix, on Sunset Boulevard near Alvarado Street just west of downtown Los Angeles. Meals include fresh French baguette, soup of the day, organic greens with house vinaigrette dressing, fresh vegetable, rice or potato (choice of one), sherbet, and coffee or tea. Entree choices: pot roast of beef, roast chicken or Pasta Monégasque (Penne pasta with tomatoes, garlic, basil and olive oil). Cost will be \$25 per person. Enjoy good company plus the usual trinket goody bag and door prizes.

Contact the Executive Secretary Dana Gabbard if you plan to attend at: [dgabbard@hotmail.com](mailto:dgabbard@hotmail.com) or by calling 213-388-2364.

## The new El Monte Station Opens!

On October 14, 2012 the new El Monte Station opened. The new terminal features two levels, local buses on the lower level and express buses on the upper and includes a Foothill Transit Store and Greyhound Station. The original El Monte Station closed on September 12, 2010. 🚌 🚌



### UPPER LEVEL/NIVEL SUPERIOR



### LOWER LEVEL/NIVEL BAJO



OCT 2012

Subject to Change

## Photos of the Month

*On October 28, 2012 the City of Torrance celebrated their 100th Anniversary. As part of the celebration Torrance Transit had on display their restored GMC New Look 341 on display. The agency acquired the bus from private ownership and was restored by the agency.*

*—Torrance Transit Photo*



*On October 26, 2012 Metrolink Celebrated their 20th Anniversary. Here we see a Metrolink Special operating at the Port of Long Beach on October 21, 2012.*

*-John Anderson Photo*

*Metrolink 20th Anniversary Report*  
[metrolinktrains.com/pdfs/20thAnniversar\\_yReport/](http://metrolinktrains.com/pdfs/20thAnniversar_yReport/)



**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](mailto: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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#### **SO.CA.TA officers, 2012**

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Directors at Large:	Ken Ruben J.K. Drummond (Vacant)

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

NEXT SO.CA.TA MEETINGS : **Nov 10<sup>th</sup>** and **Dec 8<sup>th</sup>** at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

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