

THE *TRANSIT* ADVOCATE

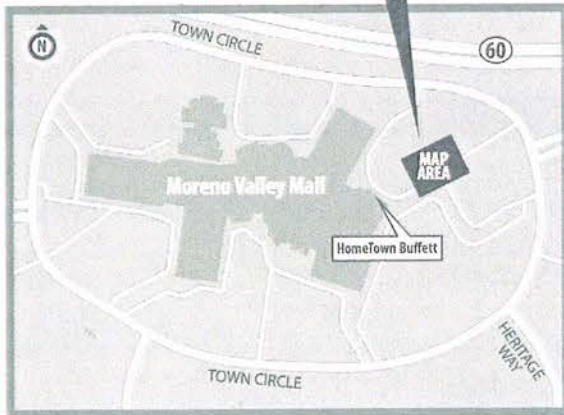
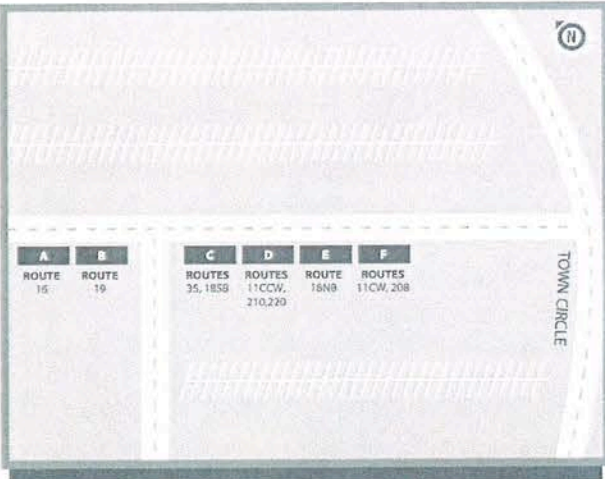
Newsletter of Southern California Transit Advocates

February - March 2015
Volume 23, Number 2
Issue 262



Map of the Month: Moreno Valley Mall

Cover: February 15th, Riverside Transit Agency (RTA) opened 6 new bus shelters on Moreno Valley Mall's eastern palm-lined exit road from Hometown Buffet to Town Circle, the parking lot's perimeter road. Planned upgrades include next-bus signage & solar lighting. For more, RTA's Customer Information Center: (951) 565-5002, or www.RiversideTransit.com. (compass rose in top detail drawing appears twisted 90° counterclockwise)



(hat tip to Andrew Novak)

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Newsletter of Southern California
Transit Advocates

February-March 2015
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Issue 262

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SoCaTA Officers 2015:

President: Nate Zablen
Vice President: Ken Ruben
Secretary: Perias Pillay
Treasurer: Dana Gabbard
Webmaster: Charles Hobbs
Newsletter Editor/ Production: John Ulloth
Archivist: Edmund Buckley

SoCaTA Website:

Our website address is: www.socata.net

SoCaTA Calendar of Meetings & Events:

www.brownbearsw.com/freecal/socata

SoCaTA Membership Dues:

Individual Member: \$30.00 (Print or PDF)
Low Income: \$18.00 (Print Newsletter)
Low Income: \$12.00 (PDF Newsletter)
Mail Dues to the return address. Thank you!

Special Request to 2015 Renewing Members (if only we had 2,015 renewing members!) Please send your dues a.s.a.p.; otherwise it's impossible to plan how many times we can publish. Those who order




PDF get *all* color pages, save SoCaTA postage, & can print color copies for recruitment! **PDF members:** try printing (and distributing) your own color copies for recruitment now (see    at right)...

Submission of Material: Newsworthy, original, attributed writing, images, & photos for *The Transit Advocate* are appreciated, & should go to Ulloth Graphics, Post Office Box 7232, Van Nuys, California 91409. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for returns. Temporarily, ullcott@yahoo.com may be used, but no "stuff" may be dumped there (i.e. somebody else's or unidentified work, raw newspaper clippings). Submissions may be used at the discretion of the Editor.

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

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   Start by counting the total number of pages in the issue (including the cover & back page). Divide that number (this issue it's 8) by 4: which is 2 "pages" each side, folded in half = (2): this is the number of sheets of paper you'll need... use "legal" sheets (8 ½" x 14"). Next, add 1 to the total number of sheets = 9: the sum that page numbers "add up to" across any face.

Next, start the computer printer, and lay out the Back ("Page 8") on the left half of the sheet, and the Cover ("Page 1") on the right. That's called a "double-page spread." Now even-number pages always go on the left and odd-number pages always go on the right; 8+1=9 Check. Turn that sheet over, printing Page 2 on the left of *this* side, & Page 7 on the right; 2+7= 9 Check. (Another Check is that Page numbers "around the corner" of each sheet will be sequential)

Lay out the next sheet with Page 6 on the left, & Page 3 on the right; 6+3=9 Check. Turn this sheet over, & print page 4 on the left, & page 5 on the right; 4+5=9 Check. Note this "center spread" is unbroken in the middle, the best place for maps or other long images...

Place the sheet with Pages 1 & 8 face-down on a tabletop. Place the sheet with Pages 6 & 3 face-down on top of the 1st sheet. Now fold each sheet in half (so fold is 8½" long), lifting the corners up toward you, lining up corners carefully (folding sheets separately works best). You're done!

(No need to fold it in half again- & it usually wrinkles the pages- unless you're mailing it).

A long-term Rail Passengers Association of California (RailPAC) objective, this process

started after years of groundwork; with much credit due VP Bob Manning of Palm Springs.

Want to escape from LAUS to Palm Springs Springs in 2½ hrs., or Indio in 3... and on a

convenient time schedule? Public support for the process is needed "attend if you can!"



Please Join Us: Public Meetings, Coachella Valley-San Gorgonio Pass Corridor Rail Service

Por favor Acompañenos en las Reuniones Públicas de Coachella Valley-San Gorgonio Pass Corridor Rail Service

February 23 and 26, 2015

Meetings & Webcast Details

Detalles de las Reuniones y Webcast

Monday, February 23, 2015

5:30 - 8:00 PM

Banning City Hall - Council Chambers
99 E. Ramsey Street
Banning, CA 92220

***Thursday, February 26, 2015**

Live Broadcast Presentation at 6 pm

5:30 - 8:00 PM

Coachella Valley
Association of Governments
73-710 Fred Waring Dr., #119
Palm Desert, CA 92260

*The Palm Desert meeting will be webcast live at
ustream.tv/channel/coachella-valley-rail-project

Information presented at each meeting will be identical so
please attend the meeting that is more convenient for you.

Connecting Southern California

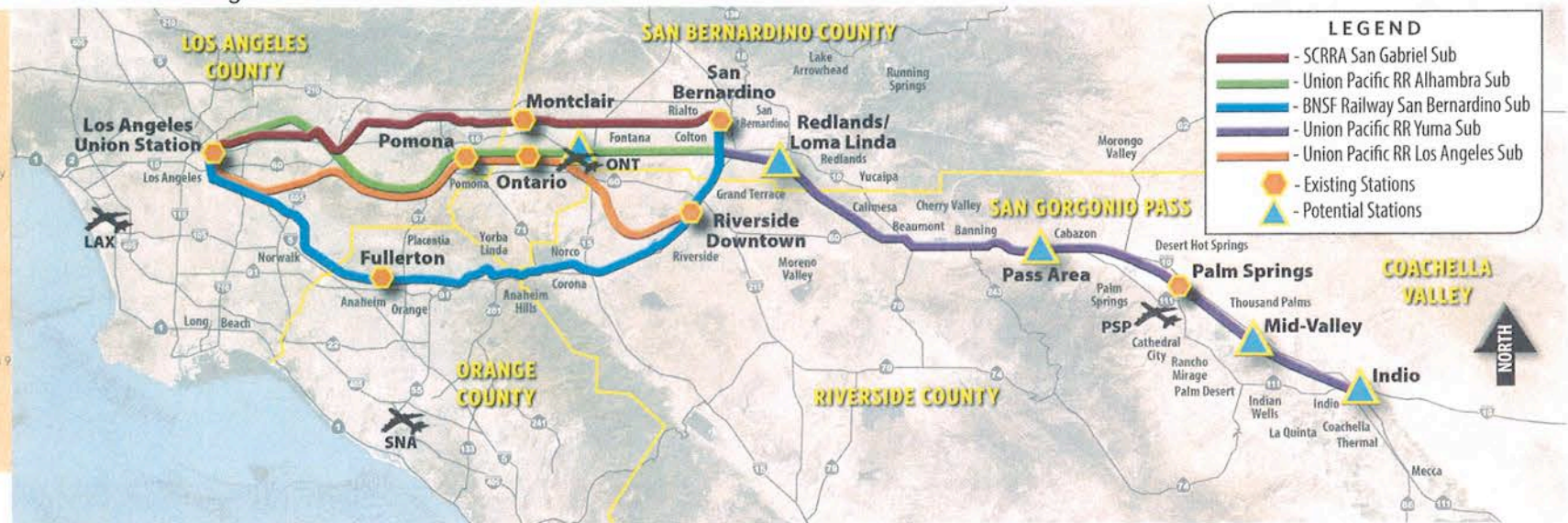
The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), in coordination with Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG), the Federal Railroad Administration, and California Department of Transportation, is studying the expansion of Amtrak passenger rail service to the Coachella Valley and San Gorgonio Pass. RCTC is analyzing various alignments for the rail system and a number of station locations in an effort to bring the best service to the region.

Please Join Us

The focus of the public meetings is to receive feedback from the public about the proposed rail service expansion and the project's purpose and need. Information will be provided about proposed routes and stations. We welcome your participation.

Fast Facts

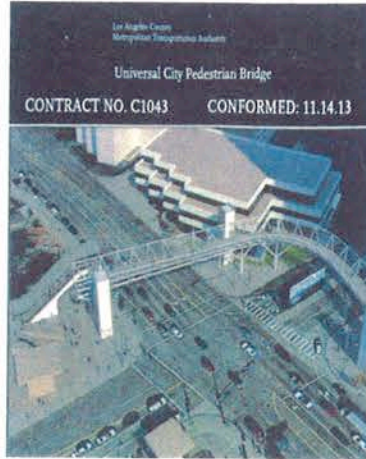
- Los Angeles Basin:
16.5 million population,
7.2 million jobs
- Coachella Valley:
443,000 population,
12.2 million visitors
- Commuter Trips: 140,000 daily
- Route length: 141 miles
- Proposed initial daily round-trips: 2
- Running time Los Angeles-Indio: 3 hours
- Host railroads: Union Pacific, BNSF Railway, SCRR (Metrolink)
- Stations being studied: Up to 9
- Current phase: Planning/Alternatives Analysis



Not all potential stations will be needed; construction and alignment alternatives will be determined in the future.



My major concerns are: 1) The lack of public transit accessibility for the residents of Los Angeles County who do not reside in the Central City or West Side areas of LA County. 2) Most North/ South bus routes run only once an hour, and 3) one of the largest public parks in the nation, with the Autry Museum & Los Angeles Zoo, are almost impossible to reach by public transportation from parts of the San Fernando Valley, and 4) Infrequent bus service to major hospitals & Cal State



Northridge are also a problem. 5) Metro is now spending over \$50,000,000 to build a pedestrian bridge to the Universal Studios Shuttle (see MTA's February, 2013 contract cover, at left) but there have hardly been any transit enhancements in our region. 6) The Orange Line has been touted as a great success- & it is an achievement- but there are limitations to a service which requires long stops on the many traffic signals along the busway.

From the Editor John Ulloth

Fresno: California High Speed Rail "broke ground" January 6. Los Angeles Times photo featured track, its nearest web autographed by officials; whose name would be on the end- Governor Brown, High Speed Rail's truest believer? Rail Authority Chief & defender Jeff Morales? Peering closer... Oh No! It's "Tom LaBonge" -if only that guy's capacity for self-promotion could be turned into railroad track, we'd be halfway done by now! Not saying he could do the work... But be very afraid of who is supposed to build it: Remember Sylmar contractor *Ron Tudor*; caught shorting tunnels of concrete on the Red Line? Whose structurally-inadequate Van Nuys FlyAway parking garage had to be partly torn apart & rebuilt in 2004? *Who even allowed Tudor to bid on something that must go perfectly in every detail* as California High Speed Rail must?... Vultures are circling.

LAC MTA-land: Unbelievably, Art Leahy, who started driving a SCRTD bus (the right way to do it), came to steer one of the US' largest transit agencies as CEO for 6 challenging years... abruptly tendered his resignation- What's wrong with this picture? Who did this?- MTA *needs* Art Leahy- Replace him? -who could? One transit observer pointed out Leahy's resignation-effective date is April (end of his contract), suggesting poor MTA leadership + several new Board faces aren't giving him backing he needs to do the job (= disaster for who ever comes next!)... But Michael DePallo already vacated Metro Link's CEO post... so when Leahy "cleans out his desk" at MTA, maybe its contents only need go down few levels (MetroLink rents on 12th floor) For better transit & more of it, let's hope MetroLink- & Leahy- think so.

Rail Users Network (RUN)'s 10th Annual Conference will be held March 27, 2015 at the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG): 818 West 7th Street, Los Angeles. "Making the Transition from Road to Rails" will feature 4 "interactive panels" on: Transit Oriented Development, "Big Rail, Little Rail", The Multi-State Effort to save the Southwest Chief, & Best Practices for Effective Rail Advocacy. Presenters include: MOVE LA Executive Director Denny Zane, MTA CEO Arthur Leahy, Amtrak Long Distance Service's General Manager Mike Murray, & Managing Director of Locus, Chris Coes (who is also a Smart Growth America staffer). With a pre-conference welcoming reception Thursday night, continental breakfast, lunch, & refreshment break Friday, optional inspection tour of Union Station & MTA's Rail Operation Center Saturday (+ a chance for out of town visitors to experience L.A. area rail- fares not included), early registration \$75 until March 6/ \$85 after/ \$90 at the door. Registration & info at railusers.net.

RUN "represents rail passengers' interests in North America... networks passengers, their advocacy organizations, and advisory councils... to help secure an interconnected system of rail services... form(ing) a strong, unified voice for intercity, regional/ commuter, & transit rail passenger interests..." Dana Gabbard is a RUN boardmember, & SoCaTA has a publication exchange with an affiliate. Individual/ family membership includes the quarterly RUN Newsletter (\$40): Rail Users' Network/ 55 River Road/ Steep Falls, ME 04085.

Transit TV is about to Go Dark Dana Gabbard reports, "After I nudged him, Steve Hymon posted a brief news item on The Source," & that **"Metro is looking into various uses & programming for the Transit TV screens."** Members with opinions about this are asked to please make comments on the blog post: <http://thesource.metro.net2015/02/10/metro-statement-on-transit-tv-monitors-on-buses/>. Also, **RE: SoCaTA Marketing**, Mr. Gabbard forwarded Amtrak V.P. Sales & Marketing SouthWest Brian Hart's message, " 'National Train Day is transitioning this year into Amtrak Train Days (ATD) www.amtraktraindays.com with events throughout the country but we are not hosting a large event in LA this year' " and, "It doesn't appear the San Bernardino Event will be held this year... I guess our best option is Fullerton Railroad Days." (Expo? Perris perhaps? -Ed.)

Did you know- The Fullerton & Richfield Railway Company was incorporated February 18, 1910, printed stock, but never turned a wheel; Santa Fe Railway bought the F&R July 1, 1910... (source: California Railroads by Alvin A. Fickewirth). But it's not too late to buy your Share (1 available), in 11" x 14" acid-free matt for framing. Originals not reprints; most of these stocks have share numbers, owner names, cancellation stamps, etc. on them. Engraving may depict factories, scenery, or equipment. Though hundreds of railway & traction companies' are "in stock", more can be "searched for" with no obligation to buy. Find RailStocks™ at local railroad collectible- & model train shows, (714) 921-1760/ railstox@pacbell.net

Expo Phase 2 Update Meetings by James Henry Washington, Jr.

Expo Construction Authority scheduled 2 meetings: February 17 at 3200 Motor Ave., Los Angeles, & February 25 at 1715 Olympic Boulevard, Santa Monica, both 6:30-8:00pm. A quickie "Formal Presentation" reviewed Expo facts: 64,000 Riders by 2030, 45 minutes from the end of Phase 1 to Santa Monica. 7 bridges done, 7 stations under construction. The "Open House" part following, some Friends 4 Expo members in attendance learned track is still not in place at Barrington- where sub-surface sound attenuation is not completed-, signal testing has begun at Bagley, catenary was started last week over Colorado street-running, platforms can accomodate 3-car trains (275'), & projected Substantial Completion (hand-off to MTA for their last "punch-list" of work needed to accept it) may be July 2015.

Drawings show the "ruling grade" of roller-coastering around grade separations at nearly 6%! Skanska workers were knowledgeable about their company's work, but not all about new railcars' delivery dates, testing, or the maintenance facility (by Herzog). Info. at (213) 922-EXPO, or www.BuildExpo.org.



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FIRST CLASS MAIL

THE **TRANSIT** ADVOCATE

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Dear SoCaTA Member,

I'm writing to thank you for your interest in Southern California Transit Advocates & its publications, & ask (or give you permission) to get *involved* this year. **Incredibly, there still is a SoCaTA in 2015- that's weathered both external storms** (the Great Recession of 2008 is still ravaging the non-profit world: donations have tanked, taking down many... including my last employer), **and internal flames** (as anyone knows who came to a 2014 meeting or visited the Member Board).

Not new to editing & publishing, The Transit Advocate January edition proved wickedly expensive & technically difficult (more format-snarling, unopenable PDF etc. than I thought possible)! Though struggling personally, I still took it on because I believe in the Press- the Printing Press that is- news, images, analysis in physical form, is essential for membership and recruitment. **"Freedom of the Press is guaranteed only to those who own one."** -A. J. Liebling I mention this because now **SoCaTA NEEDS YOU like never before:**

1) **Please send SoCaTA dues (to the return address on mailing panel)** if you haven't yet (see The Transit Advocate's masthead pitch).

2) Mr. Gabbard's announced his retirement from www.brownbearsw.com/freecal/socata; **Will someone please adopt our Calendar?** Just for 2015? 2 members? alternate months?

3) **The Transit Advocate needs reporters! Please send transit material as soon as you find it!** Unlike prior editors, I've promised "I will not write it" - which democratizes our pages! **Most needed: Short news items** you wrote/ summarized, telling us why it matters- (links optional). **News beyond MTA-land. Of new equipment, plans, & service. Write it "Inverted Pyramid Style": in order of importance, not chronology,** in order to edit or trim least painfully from the article's back end. **Proper news coverage answers The Five**

"W's" & an "H" = Who, What, When, Where, Why, & How. **Make a phone call & get a Name + Quote (Always Good; except it's Always Bad if it's from a Public Relations source).** As editors should, I solicited outside membership (recruiting two in the process), but theirs was the bulk of January's content... Don't wait! or ask for some mythic last-minute "Submission Deadline"; the sooner in = more likely to be published... **long before the 1st of the Month!** If it's longer (>250 words = ~a half page), suggest a headline & indicate how you'd like your name on the byline. Transition is coming; at the SoCaTA meeting when I accepted the job, I said I'd work to convert The Transit Advocate to a corner of our website that can be easily edited down to a format for printing once a month* (as other organizations do), by the end of 2015. What this will do: A) decentralize printing (see pitch to current PDF subscribers on The Transit Advocate's masthead page), B) provide new member-outreach that's only been done at tabling events; that's crucial, since we don't have regular meetings, & C) make work very easy for The Transit Advocate's next editor.

4) **Step up: create a SoCaTA event or tour!** ... especially since meetings have gone away. Most anyone can; ask help of those who have. Occasionally running into lapsed members of another organization I belong to, I ask, "Why don't you rejoin"? The reply usually is "You used to run a lot more trips/ used to have lots more going on..." (their **membership's down to <1/2 their peak, key "do-ers" retired or quit...** sound familiar?) But compared to theirs, our Independent Contractor-style trips are *far* easier to run.... yet They still have a proper Holiday Banquet, & still meet monthly. Now SoCaTA has **transit professionals in our midst**; while I won't out them, surely they have access/ discounts/ tips to run a unique/ low-cost/ memorable SoCaTA trip?

"For Better Transit & More of It"-



John Jay Ulloth

* I have not begun lobbying our Webmaster, Webhost, Board, or members who may not agree. Options to receive The Transit Advocate in present formats: printed & mailed, or PDF, will continue at least through 2015.