

# METROLINK

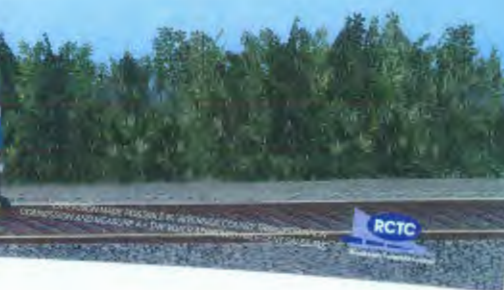
IS READY TO ROLL ON THE  
91/PERRIS VALLEY LINE

TAKE THE TRAIL. METROLINK.



## 91/PERRIS VALLEY LINE

- L.A. UNION STATION
- NORWALK/SANTA FE SPRINGS
- BUENA PARK
- FULLERTON
- WEST CORONA
- NORTH MAIN CORONA
- RIVERSIDE-LA SIERRA
- RIVERSIDE-DOWNTOWN
- RIVERSIDE-HUNTER PARK/UCR - NEW
- MORENO VALLEY/MARCH FIELD - NEW
- DOWNTOWN PERRIS - NEW
- SOUTH PERRIS - NEW



# THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE

Newsletter of Southern California Transit Advocates  
December 2015      Volume 23, Number 8      Issue 268

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Newsletter of Southern California  
Transit Advocates

December 2015  
Volume 23, Number 8  
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ISSN: 15252892

## SoCaTA Officers 2015:

President: Nate Zablen  
Vice President: Andrew Novak  
Secretary: Perias Pillay  
Treasurer: Dana Gabbard

## Non-elected Officers for 2015:

Webmaster: Charles Hobbs  
Newsletter Editor/ Production: John Ulloth  
Archivist: Edmund Buckley

## SoCaTA Website:

Our website address is: [www.socata.net](http://www.socata.net)

## 2015 SoCaTA Membership Dues:

Individual Member: \$30 (Print or PDF)  
Low Income: \$18 (Print Newsletter)  
Low Income: \$12 (PDF)

Mail 2015 Dues to the return address on  
The Transit Advocate's mailing panel.

**Disclaimer:** Southern California Transit Advocates is not affiliated with any government agency or transportation provider; names & logos of agencies appear for information, reference, & art.

**2 Volunteers Needed:** to post the Calendar of transit meetings & events (see [www.brownbears.com/freecal/socata](http://www.brownbears.com/freecal/socata)). And another to design a SoCaTA outreach flyer.

**Submission of Material:** Newsworthy, Original, attributed writing/ images/ photos for The Transit Advocate are appreciated, and go to Ulloth Graphics, P.O. Box 7232, Van Nuys, California 91409; please send a self-addressed stamped envelope for returns. Temporarily, submissions may be sent to ullcott@yahoo.com but no "STUFF" may be dumped there (i.e. somebody else's or unidentified work, or other newspaper's 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 inserted flyers & postcards, are the expressed opinions of the authors, and not necessarily that of Southern California Transit Advocates.

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## SoCaTA Board In Action x Perias Pillay

The Executive Board of Southern California Transit Advocates (SoCaTA) officially approved a motion (by Hank Fung) "to oppose Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA)'s proposal to terminate Line 30 at the Cerritos Town Center, and to support the creation and implementation by OCTA of "Bravo" Line 560 from Cal State Long Beach to the Santa Ana Transit Center, in order to facilitate regional connections." There was some discussion about poor transit planning on other lines during Q&A after Gerard Wright's presentation, and some support for a meeting to discuss Metro's proposed Service Changes in June 2016, but no date was set for the meeting.





## ***SoCaTA Meeting & Election Results 2016***

December 12, 2015 at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, Southern California Transit Advocate's December meeting came to order.

### ***SoCaTA Election***

#### **SoCaTA Officers 2016:**

President: Nate Zablen

Vice President: Andrew Novak

Secretary: Perias Pillay

Treasurer: Dana Gabbard

#### **Non-elected Officers for 2016:**

Webmaster: Charles Hobbs

Newsletter Editor/ Production: Mark Strickert

Archivist: Edmund Buckley

Candidates for SoCaTA offices of President, Secretary, & Treasurer were uncontested (they were the incumbents); these were confirmed By Affirmation, leaving the only contested office with 2 candidates for SoCaTA Vice President. No published platforms were sent The Transit Advocate, so candidates J.K. Drummond & Andrew Novak were offered 2 minutes to deliver a Candidate Statement verbally. A last-minute membership renewal created an odd number of voters & secret ballots, and the vote was taken. However one over-voted ballot created a tie. This was broken by a re-vote, preceded by 1) a verbal warning to all voters to vote for only 1 candidate if they wanted their ballot to count, & 2) 2 more minutes for each candidate to make another "stump speech".

The results of that contest concluded SoCaTA's Officers' election for 2016 (as above). Not running for office themselves, Hank Fung, Dominick Falzone, and John Ulloth volunteered to conduct the election.

### ***Jerard Wright speaks on Measure R2***

Due to a last-minute rescheduling of our scheduled guest speaker for 1:00p.m., Jerard

Wright agreed to address us as Move LA's Policy Analyst. He spent the bulk of his time discussing L.A. County Measure R (funding transit projects), and evaluating what kinds of projects would- & would not- be in its successor's project list, dubbed "R2." Creating any ballot measure or tax is a balancing act, but Measure R is considered to have over-promised with a large project list, which may appeal to voters who want to see benefits locally... but if funding's spread too thinly, can starve all projects & limit alternatives... either way could cause voters to reject it. For instance, Wright said, though MTA wants voters to fund highway tunnels for the 710 between Pasadena & Alhambra, it knows it's highly controversial, & would rather leave it off the list than risk putting passage of R2 in jeopardy.

### ***Former SoCaTA Boardmember appears***

Right after the election, former SoCaTA Boardmember Anthony Loui appeared in the doorway at our meeting for a visit, and attended our holiday party. He had stepped down from SoCaTA's board, sometime after he became project manager/ designer for LAC MTA's Expo Line starting in 2001. Since 2008, Loui has been a community planner for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in Washington, D.C.; he knows Acting Administrator McMillan (see Perris Valley Line article this issue), though he doesn't work with her daily. He believes that Perris Valley extension is the only *commuter rail* line to qualify for FTA Small Starts/ New Starts funding.

### ***Holiday After-Party Proves Bounty-ful***

After the distribution of transit promotional items & schedule-grab at Angelus Plaza, the bulk of the group repaired to the HMS Bounty on MidWilshire for "food & grog". After settling in most of us at one long table, staff decided to relocate us to booths to make way for a large bridal party... but a good time was had anyway.



**Cover:** Photos & beverage-container graphic from the December 11 "Dedication" of Metro Link (ML)'s "Perris Valley Line"; Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) was the lead agency. Using the "91"'s LA-Fullerton-Riverside routing benefits riders south & north.

450 people braved predictions of rain, backed by angry skies & harsh wind to attend the ceremony, not quite fitting into 2 nearly-circus-sized tents opposite Perris' 1892 brick Queen Anne-style station. We checked in with Eliza Echevarria Perez, (RCTC Public Affairs), following a tall white-haired man who moved thru the crowd like a line-backer... Daryl Busch, Perris' Mayor, "owns" this line if anybody does:

**TTA:** "Congratulations! So this happened on your watch? How long have you been Mayor?" Busch: "Yes, I've been Mayor about 15 years; but RCTC (Riverside County Transportation Commission) is the place this started" (he's on that Board too.)

At breakfast\*, we chatted with SoCaTA Treasurer Dana Gabbard, who pointed out Riverside Transit Agency has already been using the station as a hub for several years (90 buses roll through Perris per day, a speaker would say later), and listened in on personnel from design-engineering firm STV over lunch\*, who "have been working on this project for 6 or 7 years."

Orange Empire Railroad Museum (OREM)'s Ventura County Railway Locomotive #2, that had steamed up to the station from the museum (to pose nose-to-nose with the MetroLink train's diesel) gave a whistle blast to begin the 1:00 p.m. ceremony. After the color guard & a moment of silence (for victims of December 2's mass- shooting at the Inland Regional Center in nearby San Bernardino), RCTC Executive Director Anne Mayer opened, saying it seems as if we're operating in "dog-years"- "it feels like it takes forever", beginning with pursuing a \$75Million New Starts Grant more than 10 years

ago. "America would do well to follow the lead of Riverside County," admonished Therese McMillan, Acting Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Jose Medina, local Assemblymember, & on the State Transportation Committee, pointed out riders will be able to reach L.A. without the hassle of traffic & high gas prices. Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley said, "Completing these projects is connecting our past to our future." Daryl Busch & San Jacinto Mayor Andrew Kotyuk also spoke... the intro for MetroLink Chief Executive Officer Art Leahy, which noted the many areas MetroLink serves, concluded, "...We are his favorite..." and in his remarks, Leahy dutifully confirmed "...Riverside County is my favorite." -couldn't we excuse him for being under the spell of MetroLink's 1st new line in 21 years? Now what about the lack of service on weekends? "I'm looking forward to having our trains come here. Would you like to have MetroLink here with free rides on Saturday?" (Yes) "Now all Anne (Mayer) has to do is come up with the money!" (cheeky. funny. everyone laughed). For a moment between tents, Leahy, Maher & others stood, available for questions, James pitched the obvious "What about Phase 2?" (silence) "...to Hemet & San Jacinto?" Before Leahy could answer, RCTC Chair Mayer stepped up & deadpanned, "We only need about \$500Million to rebuild to Hemet or San Jacinto" (not quite as funny, but neither of them had said "No", giving advocates room to work!)

Officials picked up hammers to simultaneously wreak minor damage (to somehow impress the Press?) on a short commemorative piece of pre-assembled track; gold-colored spikes- somehow too valuable to damage?- were left untouched, & rendered obsolete by rail clips anyway... crazy!

Lured by carolers to board the free train ride\*, the MetroLink train in the station crawled north, then returned to Perris without a stop at any station), passing the unloved "Comet cars" on a siding...

\* Both meals & train ride were free; very classy.



We said goodbye to Mr. Gabbard, then left by auto along the historic alignment southward, then east, toward the San Jacinto end of the project. Approaching bright sparks in the distance, it became apparent why this line can't open today (& maybe not 'til February): the stations aren't done; on Dedication day, welders were still busy on the "South Perris Station" canopy.

Shortly, BNSF's heavy welded rail & fresh ballast gave way to lightweight jointed rail & old-growth tumbleweeds rooted between crossties. Zig-zagging across grade crossings as parallel roads gave out beyond Romoland (the 1st place sangria was manufactured in California). Romoland's station-some distance from the tracks & now surrounded by attached railcars- is repurposed as a Chinese Bistro. Tired & thirsty farmsteads & feral eucalyptus windbreaks line the tracks, high ridges close in, but signs point to housing tracts on the horizon...

what will people who move here do for employment?

The track passes right next to Hemet-Ryan Airport's buildings, suggesting a plane-to-train flag stop; (which would be a most valuable asset to private plane business travelers, as I once was. -Ed.) The historic outskirts of Hemet suggest higher ridership potential than the rest of the line, with more on the way... but where tracks curved northward, we were blown away to find Hemet's rail station; restored as a history museum... (Amtrak ThruWay has 2 stops only a few blocks away.) Now tracks vanished into an old industrial district & gathering darkness. Skipping ahead, down-town San Jac. near the end of Ramona diagonal, was thick with older retail buildings, but short on clues- this will have to wait... but you can follow the project at: <http://perrisvalleyline.info/>

### Map of the Month: Perris Valley Line x Riverside Transportation Commission



### Hoverboard Ban on MetroLink

New law for 2016: you must not bring your "electrically motorized board" (aka "hoverboard"), on MetroLink; reports of hoverboard battery fires have prompted the precautionary rule.

## ***Bike Share Stations Rolled Out in SM x Jack Neff***

**Santa Monica, CA** Santa Monica became LA County's first city to roll out a bicycle sharing program, perfect for getting that "last mile" done between home & transit. Officially titled "[Breeze Bike Share](#)" it opened November 12th, 2015 with 75 racks or "bike stations" holding 500 yellow-green rental 8-speed bicycles placed at 75 stations citywide. Bicycles have a front basket for freight, "hulu" & MTA logos. Santa Monica Mayor Kevin McKeown participated in November 12<sup>th</sup> ribbon-cutting & took a ride that morning.

To rent a bike, you must first become a member of <http://www.santamoncabikeshare.com> and choose your bike rental plan to 1) Pay As You Go" (\$6 per hour), 2) Unlimited monthly rental for \$20 per month, 3) Unlimited annual rental for either \$119 or \$47 for students. To become a member you must 1) use the internet or a smartphone to create an account number before renting a bike, or 2) or use your existing TAP card linked to a valid credit card at a bike rental kiosk. Santa Monica's global bike-share program also allows users to remotely reserve bicycles by downloading a bike rental app at <http://help.socialbicycles.com/hc/en-on-the->

[us/articles/201135335-Advanced-reservations-mobile-app](http://www.santamoncabikeshare.com)

To retrieve a rental bike from one of the 75 kiosks, you must enter your SantaMonicaBikeShare.com account number on a computer keypad mounted on each bicycle. Bicyclists must be at least 18 years old to check out a bike with a credit card and must be at least 16 years old to ride. Plans are in place to add several bike stations in Venice during 2016.

Not everything is perfect during the rollout. This reporter was unable to create a membership under the "Pay As You Go" membership plan. The <http://www.santamoncabikeshare.com> website requires anyone who wants to use the Pay As You Go plan to have a smartphone with a French phone number. Perhaps with a TAP card linked to a valid credit card, it might be possible to rent a bike by the hour, a method unable to be tested before this article went to press. The inability to obtain an hourly rental, or for non-member rental are obstacles to use created by the system which makes bicyclists without a smartphone, an internet connection, or a TAP card, locked out of the Breeze Bike Share rental option.

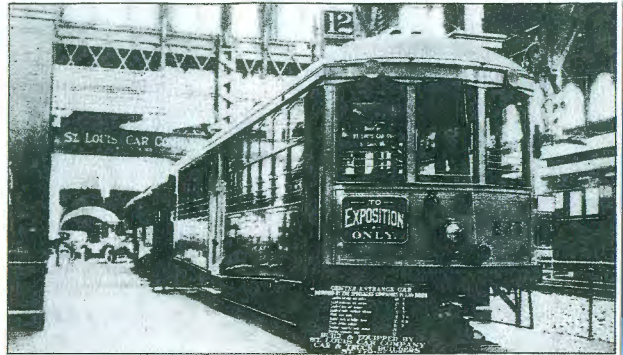


2 views of Bike Share station on Wilshire, near SM/WLA border (blue sculpture across road behind bus



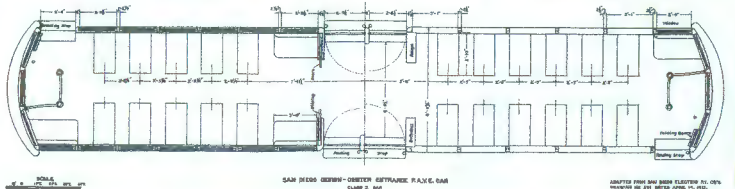
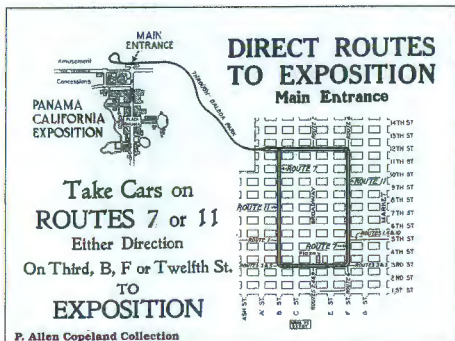
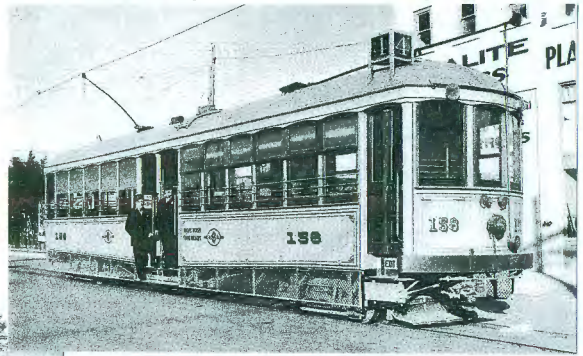
## 2015-2016 Marks Pan-California Anniversaries by James Henry Washington, Jr.

Losing its bid for 1915's federally-supported Panama-Pacific International Exposition to San Francisco, San Diego built a separate *Panama-California* Exposition in Balboa Park in 1915 (celebrating both the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the (Europeans') 'discovery' of the Pacific Ocean, & the Panama Canal's 1914 opening to shipping). San Diego's Expo was so popular, it was extended a full year to the end of 1916, even receiving some exhibits after San Francisco's closed. Many of both Expos' buildings were meant to be temporary (like movie sets), but large portions of San Diego's were made permanent as late as the 1980's, & San Diego's famous Zoo was built from its remnants. Sugar magnate & San Diego Electric Railway President (SDERy) John D. Spreckels, who was also vice-president of the Exposition, extended SDERy lines to serve its East entry. He ordered a fleet of new trolleys- a simple design twist on the "California Car"- that equally divided open-air & closed end. To load crowds of Expo riders on & off quickly, double center entrances were added to create the "pay as you enter" (P.A.Y.E.) system, the first on a Class 1 streetcar. In service until 1939, (3) of them survive (San Diego Historic Landmark #339). Buildings & grounds were recycled at anniversaries following the Expo.: 1935... 2015....



M. D. McCarter Collection

The St. Louis Car Company's version of the car awarded "finest streetcar in U.S."\* (above) at San Francisco's Pan-Pacific Expo; others were manufactured by McGuire-Cummings (below).



To see an **early film** of the Expo, go to: [public.csusm.edu/becht004/1915expopage.html](http://public.csusm.edu/becht004/1915expopage.html)

\* Sources: Rails of the Silver Gate, San Diego's South Bay Interurban, and other material can be researched at Pacific Railroad Society museum's archives, 210 West Bonita Avenue, San Dimas.

## ***FlyAway Adds 2 New Stops by Dominick Falzone***

The FlyAway airport bus system will add 2 stops for service to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX): 1) Dec. 7th: south side/ Victory Blvd. near Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Orange Line busway's Woodley Station, & 2) Dec. 30th: downtown Long Beach's 1st Street transit mall, west of Long Beach Blvd.

The buses which stop at the Orange Line are the buses already enroute to the Van Nuys Airport's FlyAway bus terminal. Both the Orange Line's FlyAway bus stop & the Van Nuys Airport's FlyAway bus stop are in the vicinity of Woodley Avenue. The Long Beach Transit "Gallery" (mall) provides connections to Los Angeles (City) Department of Transportation (LADOT) buses, MTA buses, MTA Blue Line light rail trains, Long Beach Transit buses, & Torrance Transit buses. Downtown Long Beach itself has a large population of residents & hotel guests. According to its website, LAWA has completed its legal obligation to expand FlyAway; FlyAway is a service of Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA),

a department of LA City government, which owns LAX & Van Nuys Airports. FlyAway buses currently pick up LAX-bound passengers from 7 locations: 1) New MTA Orange Line Woodley Station\* 2) New Long Beach Transit Mall, 3) Van Nuys Airport\*, 4) Los Angeles Union Station\*, 5) Hollywood, 6) West-wood, & 7) Santa Monica. FlyAway discontinued service to the Expo Line La Brea Station, and to the City of Irvine.

The Los Angeles city government contracts private companies to operate FlyAway buses, airport shuttle buses which operate on the streets, and LADOT buses ("DASH" & Commuter Express Routes). City government may operate its own buses on the airfield itself. In addition to FlyAway buses, LAX has service from MTA buses & trains. The municipal systems of Santa Monica, Culver City, Torrance, and Redondo Beach also travel to the airport.

*\*Note: Effective January 1, 2016 fares at stops listed above as 1), 3), & 4) above will increase to \$9 one-way.*

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