

CALL FOR ARTICLES

The TRANSIT ADVOCATE is requesting articles on transit services and policy in the Los Angeles area.

Most articles will be written by SO.CA.TA members, although material from outside sources will also appear. Articles appearing in the TRANSIT ADVOCATE will generally be about current transit events; there will be a few historical articles as well.

ABOUT SO.CA.TA.

The Southern California Transit Advocates meetings are held every month. Please call (213) 254 9041 for current time, location and directions.

Letters and articles for the TRANSIT ADVOCATE newsletter may be sent to P.O.Box 41198, Los Angeles, CA 90041. Please enclosed a self addressed stamped envelope for return of materials.

With the exception of articles clearly marked "Editorial" or "Position Paper", all opinions expressed are those of the article authors and not necessarily that of the Southern California Transit Advocates.

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*President:
Pat Moser*

*Vice President/Newsletter Editor
Charles P. Hobbs*

TRANSIT UPDATES:

RAPID TRANSIT

• Evening service will be available on the Metro Red Line, effective Sept. 12. The last train will leave Union Station at 9:02 p.m., and Westlake at 9:15 p.m. This additional service will operate seven days a week.

More information on forthcoming rail projects. Pages 4 and 5!

COMMUTER RAIL

• Metrolink will provide special weekend trains to the Los Angeles County Fair, Sept 10 through Oct 3. See page 7

BUS

• All midday MTA #110 trips have been extended to serve the industrial park at Jefferson Bl. and Alla Road.

• Service has been added on 25 crowded bus lines. See pages 3,4.

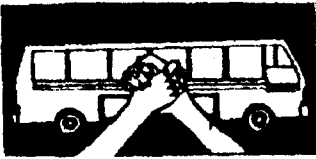
• The "Blue Line Transfer" (BLT) is a new express bus service connecting the Metro Blue Line Artesia Station with employment areas in Redondo Beach and El Segundo. Service is provided every 20 minutes during rush hours (4:30-8:30 a.m. and 3:05-7:05 p.m.)

• A new shuttle bus service is reportedly operating in downtown Santa Monica. "The Tide", sponsored by several Santa Monica hotels and the city, operates primarily via Broadway, Ocean Avenue, and Main Street. The fare is \$.50, service runs every day from noon to 10 p.m, and is scheduled to be available until Oct. 31

• The special LADOT shuttle buses operating between Union Station and Downtown Los Angeles have been discontinued. Metrolink passengers may transfer to the Metro Red Line Subway or MTA bus lines #60, #439, #443, #444, #446 or #447 as well as to LADOT DASH #D

• Effective Sept 13., the Glendale Beeline shuttles will start collecting fares: 25 cents, or 15 cents for senior and disabled riders.

• Antelope Valley Transit Authority is reportedly operating a new line between Lake Los Angeles and Palmdale/Lancaster.



UNIDOS PARA MEJORAR EL TRANSPORTE DE PICO-UNION

The message is clear: invest more in the bus system

The Pico-Union district is a low-income area of Los Angeles, roughly bounded by Alvarado St., Washington Bl, Western Ave, and Third St. MTA buses passing through this area have some of the highest ridership in the United States (Line #204 on Vermont has almost 55,000 daily boardings).

There is constant trouble with overcrowding, graffiti, and crime on these buses, as well as at the bus stops. In response to these problems, a group of local young people have formed "United to Improve Transportation in Pico Union", and have started to work with two other community activist groups: El Rescate and the Labor Community Strategy Center on issues dealing with public transportation.

These groups have called on the MTA to improve bus service and transit security in

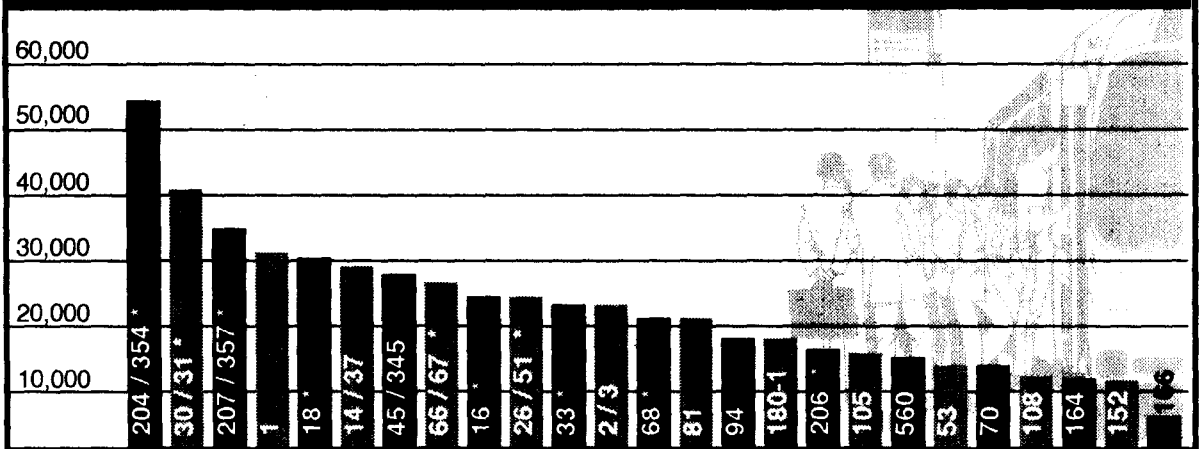
Pico-Union, while avoiding fare increases.

One sticking point is the MTA's development of the rail transit system. In particular, the Labor Community Strategy Center claims that the MTA is developing and operating the rail system at the expense of its bus lines. It has pointed out the difference in subsidy per ride (about \$.50-\$.1.00 for a bus passenger vs. \$11.35 for a rail passenger) and has asked the MTA to cease funding rail projects until it has allocated \$1 billion in bus service improvements.

At the August 25 MTA board meeting, several community members spoke about the problems with bus service in Pico-Union, as well as other inner city areas. Finally, the MTA allocated \$17.3 million (far from the \$1 billion the activists were seeking) for additional buses and security.

THE 25 MOST CROWDED MTA BUS LINES (WEEKDAY BOARDINGS)

*(Routes with * serve Pico-Union and nearby areas)*



Highlights of MTA Budget

At the August 25 meeting, the Metropolitan Transportation Agency adopted a \$3.7 billion dollar budget. This budget will allow design work to start on two major rail projects, while avoiding fare increases.

Pasadena Blue Line

After heavy lobbying by political and community leaders along the route, the MTA board allocated \$97 million in funding to start construction on a light rail route serving Los Angeles, Highland Park, and Pasadena.

It was thought that only about \$48 million would be made available for the Pasadena Blue Line. Construction would have been delayed even further if that had been done.

The Pasadena Blue Line is now scheduled to open in 1998.

San Fernando Valley Line

As predicted, the MTA was able to allocate only \$4.1 million for route studies of two alternative rail line routings (Ventura Freeway and Burbank/ Chandler), although \$438 million in state rail bond revenues was also set aside for this project. Meanwhile, the MTA plans to apply for federal funding in order to be able to start building this project before 2000.

Bus service improvements

The MTA board, after hearing complaints about neglected bus service, allocated \$4.5 million for bus service improvements. Forty

additional buses will be deployed on 25 of MTA's most overcrowded bus routes.

Also, \$12.6 million was also made available for graffiti abatement and additional transit police.

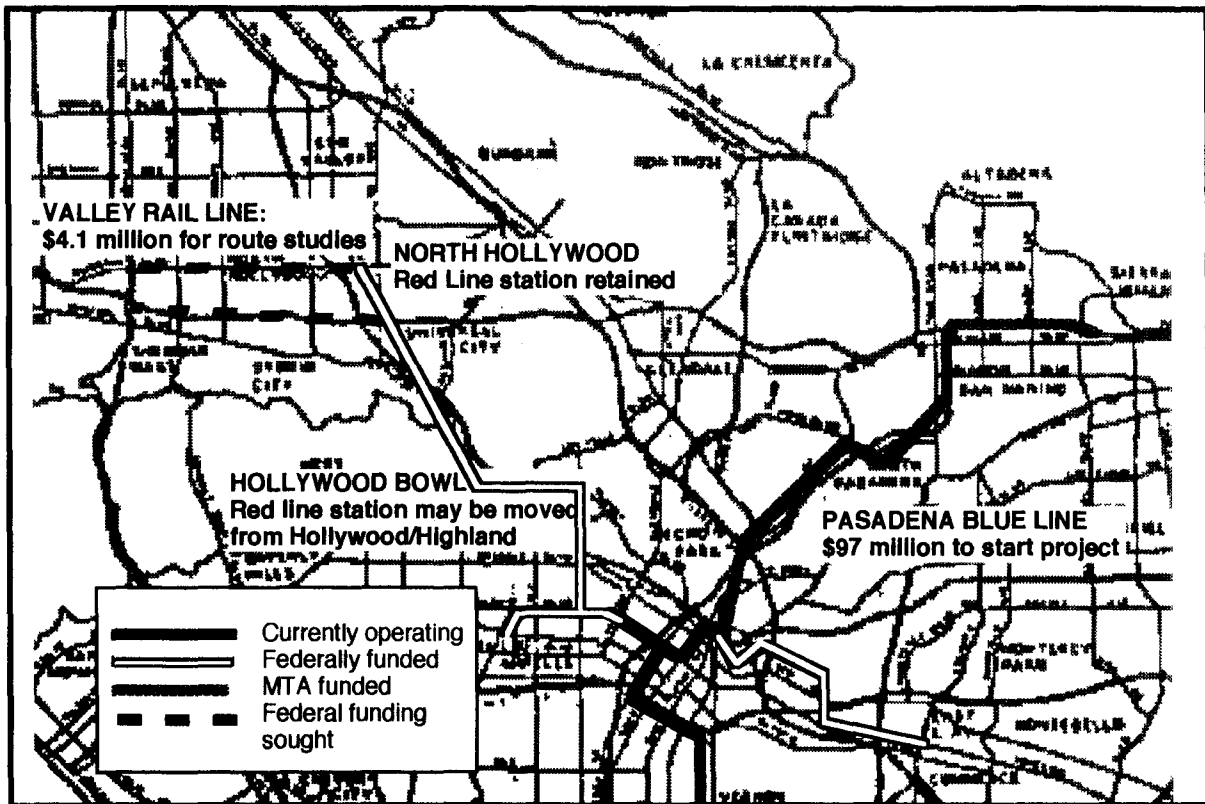
Hollywood Bowl Red Line Station

The earliest plans for the Red Line called for a station at the Hollywood Bowl. However, as the planned routing was modified over the years, the Hollywood Bowl station was scrapped in favor of a station at Hollywood and Highland Boulevards.

After a recent newspaper article (*Daily News*, August 15, 1993) noted that most of the planned rail lines would bypass sports and entertainment venues, the MTA board, led by Nick Patsouras, voted to investigate moving the Hollywood/Highland station to the Hollywood Bowl.

North Hollywood Red Line Station

However, Patsouras was unsuccessful in deleting the two-mile North Hollywood segment from the current Red Line. Although Patsouras sought to use the \$362 million cost of that segment toward other transit projects, other board members feared that attempting to remove the segment might jeopardize federal funding for the entire Red Line.



IS THE RED LINE READY FOR THE BIG ONE?

Structural design flaws found in subway

The MTA has discovered that, in several places, the walls of the Metro Red Line subway are thinner than they should be, making the system more susceptible to damage in a major earthquake.

In response to an article in the Los Angeles Times (August 29, 1993), MTA officials tested the subway walls. The tunnel walls were intended to be at least twelve inches thick, but portions of tunnel walls as thin as six inches

have been discovered.

Steel reinforcing is now being added to those areas. Meanwhile, the MTA is currently investigating the subway construction and will form an independent panel.

As the Red Line is a federally funded project, the United States attorney's office is also investigating the construction.

Generally, subways have fared well in major earthquakes. In Mexico City (1985), as well as in the Bay Area (1989), the subway systems continued operating after major earthquakes that severely damaged other structures.

SANTA CLARITA TRANSIT:

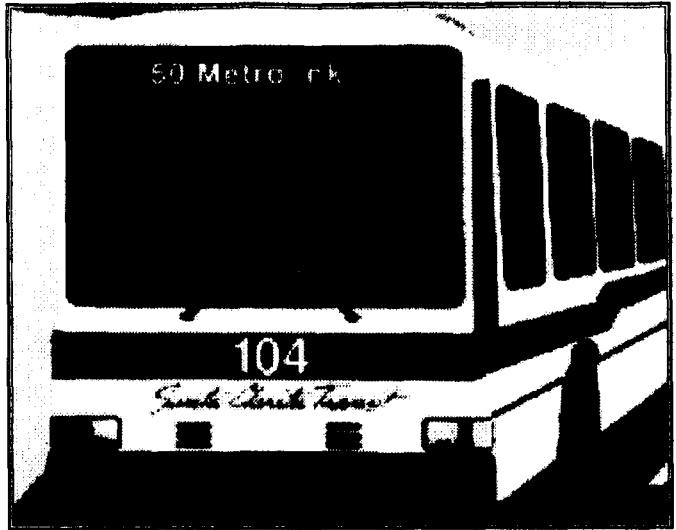
#1 in ridership growth

According to the American Public Transit Association, Santa Clarita Transit has had the fastest ridership growth of any bus system during the first quarter of 1993.

During that those first three months of 1993, 238,842 riders boarded Santa Clarita Transit buses—a 104% increase in last year's ridership during those same three months.

This phenomenal increase in ridership has surprised transit officials somewhat, as Santa Clarita is not particularly transit dependent, and the sluggish local economy has generally caused transit ridership to decrease in most places. One cause of the increased usage is probably high school and junior high students using the buses, as school bus service has been reduced, or is no longer free to students in Santa Clarita.

Santa Clarita Transit in its present form started in August 1991, when the City of Santa Clarita took



over local and commuter bus service from the County of Los Angeles. Since then, routes have been restructured and added.

Additional services to relieve overcrowding, as well as new services (such as a proposed local route to San Fernando) are planned, but currently lack funding. An additional commuter bus route to West Los Angeles (possibly operated by the City of Los Angeles) is still under discussion.

Fare Changes Under Consideration for MTA Bus and Rail

The Southern California Metropolitan Transit Agency (MTA) is considering changes in its bus and rail fares. A series of special Fare Restructuring meetings are being held to discuss possible fare changes.

However, MTA, already under criticism for its transit development policies, does not intend to raise the basic \$1.10 fare. Instead, one or more of the following strategies may be used:

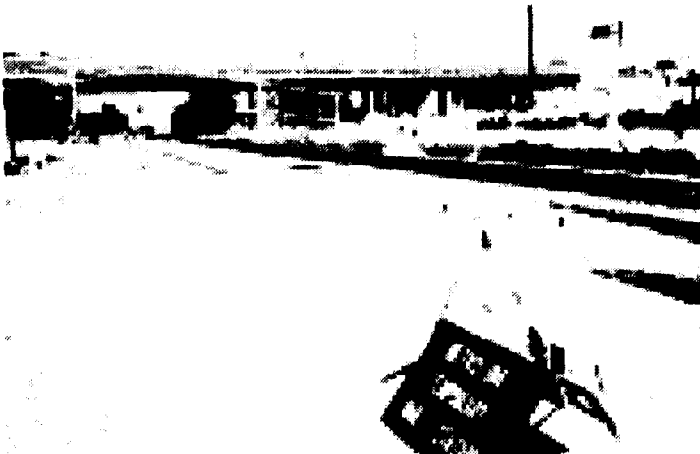
- Reducing the base fare as low as \$.80

- Increasing monthly pass prices from \$42 to \$52.
- Replacing the unlimited use pass with a pass with a fixed number of uses.

(It should be noted that some local bus lines—Santa Monica Municipal in particular—have low fares but no unlimited use passes)

- Distance based fares on all services
- Premium fares (surcharges) for rail lines.

Ride METROLINK to the Fair!



Temporary station at Camarillo for Metrolink service to Ventura County Fair.

VENTURA COUNTY FAIR METROLINK SERVICE

- Service operated August 21, 22, 28 and 29
- Four round trips per day operated between Simi Valley and Ventura, with stops at Moorpark, Camarillo and Oxnard.
- Over 40,000 riders took advantage of this service. (At least one train pulled in excess of twelve cars!)

LOS ANGELES COUNTY FAIR METROLINK SERVICE

- Special weekend trains will operate via the San Bernardino route (see schedule on this page) on the following dates: Sept. 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26; Oct. 2 and 3.
- A temporary station platform has been provided at the Fairplex (LA County Fairgrounds) for Metrolink passengers.
- Round trip fares on these special trains are \$4, valid between any two stations
- Passengers are also encouraged to use this service to visit Downtown Los Angeles, or any of the other cities along the route.
- Please call Metrolink at (800) 371-LINK for more information about this service.

WESTBOUND TO FAIRPLEX and L.A.

Rialto.....	8:28a	12:25p	4:48p
Upland	8:49	12:46	5:09
Montclair	8:58	12:55	5:18
Claremont	9:03	1:00	5:33
Pomona	9:07	1:04	5:27
★Fairplex★.....	9:10	1:07	5:30
Covina.....	9:20	1:17	5:48
Baldwin Park.....	9:26	1:23	5:54
El Monte.....	9:35	1:32	6:03
Union Station	10:00	1:57	6:25

EASTBOUND TO FAIRPLEX, RIALTO

Union Station	10:25a	2:20p	8:00
El Monte.....	10:45	2:40	8:20
Baldwin Park	10:54	2:49	8:29
Covina.....	11:00	2:55	8:36
★Fairplex★.....	11:10	3:05	8:46
Pomona	11:13	3:11	8:52
Claremont	11:16	3:14	8:55
Montclair	11:21	3:19	9:00
Upland	11:30	3:28	9:09
Rialto.....	11:52	3:50	9:31