

TRANSIT UPDATES

Metrolink commuter rail service has been substantially improved after the Jan. 17 earthquake. See page 5.

Also, **MTA** has made some improvements in bus service in response to the earthquake. Pages 6-7.

The MTA shuttle services (described in the Dec. 1993 issue) are now in operation. The San Fernando-Chatsworth express (#545) is known as the "Highway Hummer"; the routes operating near LAX (#622, #623) are called "Rabbit Transit", the route connecting CSULA with Monterey Park (#621) is "The Local Limo", and the route in the western San Fernando Valley (#624) is called "West Hills Loop". All of these services use 22-passenger minibuses and (except #624) run peak hour service only.

Long Beach Transit will change its schedules on Feb. 20. New schedules are already available (I got one on Saturday, Feb. 5). The major changes are :

- #1 (Easy St.) and #7 (Orange St) will be through-routed at the Transit Mall, meaning a bus coming into there on one route will leave on the other. This will not require any routing change, but will result in major schedule changes.
- Routes #31 and #32, the two Downtown Loops, will operate only every 60 minutes on

weekdays, and Saturday service will be discontinued.

- * Routes # 41 and #42 will no longer provide evening service to CSULB.
- Several other LBT routes will have minor schedule changes.

Foothill Transit #690 now uses the HOV lanes on I-210, saving about 10 minutes each trip. #690 no longer stops in Monrovia; there is a new #691 that serves Monrovia and East Pasadena. Foothill is now accepting MTA discount tokens as fare payment.

Omnitrans #14 now terminates at Fontana Metrolink. West of Fontana, new routes #73 and #74 operate to Montclair via Arrow and Foothill, respectively. In Fontana, a new route #23 was implemented.

Also, anyone wanting to ride #76E (electric shuttle at Ontario Airport) had better hurry; it's scheduled to stop operating on March 11

The **Orange County Transportation Agency** will start operating new schedules on Feb. 13. And it's not just the schedules that are changing on Feb. 13 for OCTA. On that day, the agency will start providing Bike & Ride service. Route #50 (Katella Ave.) will be one of the routes providing this service (the new #50 schedule has a Bike & Ride symbol on the front cover).

THANKS FOR CONTRIBUTING!

Our thanks to member Michael Ludwig, as well as to guest authors Elson Trinidad, Garth Groff and Joel Woodhull for contributing to this month's issue! of The Transit Advocate!

If ANYONE (member or not) has any information on new, improved, reduced or cancelled transit services, please contact SO.CA.TA at (213)-254-9041!

FROM THE EDITOR

by *Charles P. Hobbs*
Vice President/Newsletter Editor

At the SO.CA.TA Executive Board meeting held on February 5,

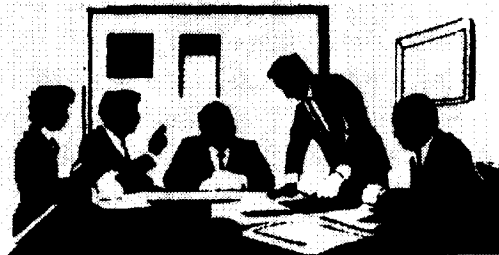
- A more well-defined agenda will be used in all SO.CA.TA meetings. Doing so should help make the meetings more productive and useful.
- All board members will review *Robert's Rules of Order* (parliamentary procedures used in the meetings.) Copies of that text will be bought by SO.CA.TA
- The continuous, acrimonious debates on transit technologies will have to be resolved in some way, and soon. A committee will be formed to develop a consistent SO.CA.TA policy on light rail, rapid transit, Proposition A funds, and related matters.
- Long discussions about the routing of proposed transit projects should be handled by the Master Plan Committee. (It's taking up too much time in the meetings).
- We need at least three volunteers to help produce next month's newsletter. Tasks will include stapling, folding and mailing the newsletter. If you are interested, please sign up at the next meeting or call (213) 254 9041.

AGENDA FOR MEETING

- I. Introduction of members and guests
- II. Secretary's report
- III. Treasurer's report
- IV. Newsletter report
- V. Reports from standing committees
- VI. Old business
- VII. New business
- VIII. Transit reports (New news not in newsletter)
- IX. Announcements
- X. Adjournment

(The above items should require no more than two hours!)

- XI. Open discussion, formation of new committees, etc.



ETB PROJECT KILLED!

At the December 15 meeting, the MTA board, facing continual budget problems, decided to abandon its proposed electric trolleybus project.

Electric trolleybuses look like regular diesel buses, except that they are powered with overhead wires. They would have eventually replaced MTA diesel, methanol or natural gas buses on most of MTA's most used bus routes in compliance with local air quality regulations.

Montebello Municipal Bus Lines and Long Beach Transit were also considering converting some of their bus routes to electric operation.

Although the first phase of the electric trolleybus project (a pilot line in Downtown Los Angeles) would have cost about \$38 million, development of the entire system would have cost \$1.2 billion.

The \$38 million will probably go toward building the L.A.-to-Pasadena extension of the Metro Blue Line light rail. More natural gas buses will be acquired for use in local bus service.

"The L.A. electric trolley bus project is dead. It went from the large network planned to fight pollution, to a few pilot lines, to a single truncated line, to nothing. The effort was abandoned because of cost, relative to other options, and the large operating deficit faced by the MTA.

I think there is a place for electric trolley buses in L.A., but it is to aid in rebuilding the city in compact forms, rather than in cleaning the air in the short term. It could be shown that the increased cost of the bus substitution would displace riders into cars and thereby worsen air pollution — in the short term.

In the longer term (10-20 years) I believe the main issue will be petroleum shortage, and we will regret not having the electric infrastructure well under development. I admit this is a minority view within the agency. I may be the only one who believes it."

~Joel Woodhull



EARTHQUAKE TRANSIT UPDATE

METRO RED LINE

The Los Angeles County MTA temporarily halted Metro Red Line subway service for all day Monday, Saturday and Sunday, January 17, 22 and 23 for thorough inspection of the 1-year old subway line.

MOS-1 (the existing section from Union Station to Alvarado Bl.) had minor cosmetic cracking; MOS-2 (Wilshire Corridor) suffered no damage whatsoever. Red Line service was provided all day 1/18 through 1/21, although at reduced speed (15 mph) from time to time.

When subway service was not provided, the MTA operated a temporary bus line (line 802) that covered the same route as the Red Line. The special 25-cent fares and passes and transfers were accepted on this line.

Service resumed on its regular schedule on Monday, January 24.

METRO BLUE LINE

Flower St. tunnel was closed on 1/17 due to inspections. No damage reported. Limited service operated on 1/17 until mid-day. Service on the Blue Line was suspended, and a bus shuttle service substituted, near Slauson Station. The Slauson damage was of a considerable cosmetic nature; chunks of concrete fell in some places.

METRO GREEN LINE

According to a Metro Green Line project engineer, the 20-mile light rail line under

construction suffered very little damage as a

result of the quake. The rail yard had some minor damage, but nothing that would significantly delay the project. (Thanks to Ed Suranyi for the Green Line info)

METROLINK

See Page 6 for a complete description of extended Metrolink service

BUS SERVICE

To connect with Metrolink service, **MTA** bus routes #154 Burbank Bl., #163 (Sherman Way), #164 (Victory Bl.) and #165 (Vanowen St.) have been extended to serve the stop near the Burbank Metrolink Platform station.

MTA is also operating a number of emergency bus routes from Burbank to Glendale/Pasadena (#640), Encino/Warner Center (#641) and East Pasadena (#642).

At the Glendale Metrolink station, routes #180-181 (Hollywood, Glendale, Eagle Rock, Pasadena), and #201 (Mid-Wilshire, Silverlake, Northeast Glendale) have been re-routed to serve the existing #183 stop near the station.

Metrolink passengers can transfer at Sylmar to routes #92-93-410 (Glenoaks Bl), #94 (San Fernando Rd.) #230 (Laurel Cyn.), #239 (Rinaldi/Zelzah St.) as well as express lines to Chatsworth, Westwood/Century City and LAX/EI Segundo.

Other shuttle services available to Metrolink ticket holders include service between Burbank and UCLA, and service between Union Station and Hollywood.

-Charles P. Hobbs and Elson Trinidad

THE METROLINK MIRACLE

The 6.6 Northridge Earthquake of January 17, 1994 hit transportation hard in the Newhall Pass area (between the San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valleys)

This earthquake caused the collapse of the I-5/S-14 interchange, forcing traffic to crawl for hours on rural side roads. Therefore, commuters turned to one obvious solution—Metrolink.

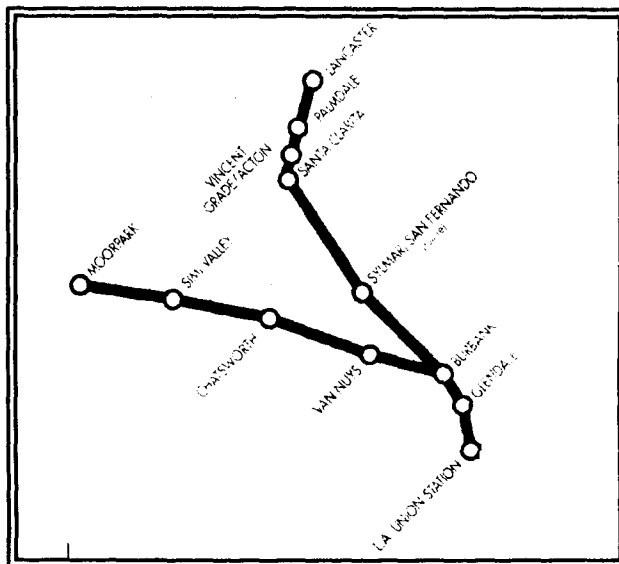
During the week of January 17, the Santa Clarita Line, which had been the least productive of all four Metrolink lines (992 daily boardings) had 9,000 passengers boarding it per day, making it the busiest line in the Metrolink system. Ridership from Santa Clarita steadily climbed to 16,000 per day.

Then, on January 24, Metrolink added two new trains to Lancaster. The fact that both trains left Lancaster before 5 a.m. and that the ride to Los Angeles took about two hours and thirty minutes, did not stop 3,000 riders from boarding one ten-car train from Lancaster. Makeshift stations were opened in Lancaster and Palmdale, with additional stations in Acton and Canyon Country on the way. And, the long-delayed Sylmar/San

Fernando station's platform was opened for public use (its parking lot will be ready on Feb 21)

That week, Metrolink set a record of **31,276** daily boardings, with **21,952** of those on the Santa Clarita/Lancaster service.

By January 31, a new I-5 bypass was opened, causing Metrolink ridership on the Santa Clarita Line to drop to 13,000 daily boardings (still far above the pre-quake figure). Metrolink is continuing to expand service, both on the Santa Clarita Line (with a third round-trip serving Lancaster added on February 10). Enhanced service on the Ventura Line is also planned, with new stations in Northridge and Camarillo, and additional trains.



Metrolink has obtained additional equipment from San Francisco (Caltrain) and Toronto (GO Transit)

The expanded service should continue for a year, until the freeways are rebuilt. Beyond that time, continued service will depend on ridership.

Will the Metrolink Miracle continue?

1. A *third* Metrolink round trip to Lancaster has been added. Now, trains leave Lancaster at 4:11, 4:52, and 5:55 a.m. The return trips leaves Los Angeles at 3:45, 4:57, and 5:31 p.m.
2. Caltrain cars are probably being used on trips arriving Union Station at 7:00 and 10:10 a.m and on trips leaving Union Station at 7:42 a.m and 6:01 p.m.
3. Amtrak has also expanded service along the Coast Line to Santa Barbara, and opened a temporary Burbank Airport station (the real one will open this fall).

Train #	767	773	777	783
	-----	(Sa/Su)	(M-F)	(daily)
			(daily)	(daily)
Los Angeles	9:15a	9:40a	2:00p	8:05p
Burbank Airport	9:42	10:07	2:24	8:31
Oxnard	10:49	11:44	3:33	9:39
Santa Barbara	11:50	12:15p	4:35	10:40

Train #	774	780	786
	-----	(daily)	(daily)
		(daily)	(daily)
Santa Barbara	7:45a	1:45p	5:45p
Oxnard	8:35	2:35	6:35
Burbank Airport	9:45	3:50	7:57
Los Angeles	10:25	4:25	8:32

Stops are also made at Glendale, Van Nuys, Chatsworth, Simi Valley, Moorpark and Ventura.

MEANWHILE, ON THE WESTSIDE . . .

The Northridge Earthquake also did considerable damage to West Los Angeles, including destroying the Santa Monica Freeway (I-10) between Fairfax and La Cienega Blvds In order provide commuters with alternatives to the quake-damaged Santa Monica Freeway, transportation agencies have provided several services.

- Expanded service on the following MTA bus lines: #2 (Sunset Bl.), #4 (Santa Monica Bl.), #20 (Wilshire Bl), #439 (Express to La Cienega, Culver City, LAX) and #434 (Express to Santa Monica and Malibu)

- New emergency bus services have been

provided: MTA #634 (Operates between VA park/ride lot (Sepulveda/Constitution) and Downtown via Century City and Olympic Bl. Operates in both directions during peak hours only. LADOT #644 (Operates express between VA park/ride and downtown Los Angeles)

Also, Caltrans has placed HOV lanes on the freeway nearest the closed portion. Buses and carpools (2 or more passengers) enjoy the shortest possible detour (between La Cienega and Fairfax); other cars must detour between La Brea and Robertson.

The freeway is scheduled to be rebuilt within six months.

EXPOSITION LINE EMERGENCY SERVICE?

"With the Santa Monica freeway out of commission for the next year, wouldn't it also make sense to run trains from Santa Monica to downtown LA? The track already exists—it runs along Exposition Blvd. (Jefferson, National) to at least 16th Street in Santa Monica (and presumably could be extended further into SM if needed)."

As a person who knows the Exposition line well (it's just a few feet from my school), although the whole R-O-W has been studied for a light rail line, it will not come for another 10 years or so, especially in the MTA's financial position.

It would not be feasible and in fact would be very expensive to run a Metrolink train through the Exposition R-O-W (a.k.a. the old Pacific Electric Santa Monica Air Line). Here are the reasons:

1. The track is simply too old to support decent rapid transit. Short of installing wire, which in itself will take time to do, the track, which has foundry dates stamped on it that read "1906" (!) is too old and too thin to support the speed and weight of a commuter train (A Metrolink train is the only possible rail mode through that track, if ever possible).

2. There are many places where the track has been "partially-paved" by asphalt, meaning the track is exposed, but the flangeways in the track have been covered by asphalt.

3. There is a tunnel underneath the I-10 freeway through the Cheviot Hills community that doesn't appear to have the clearance to accommodate the bi-level Metrolink cars. Besides, even if it WERE to fit, those Cheviot Hills residents would bitch

and complain about the trains and try everything in their power to halt operations anyways, as they are opposed to the light rail for the same reason.

4. NO SIGNALLING.

5. Obstacles. There are certain obstacles placed in the tracks, particularly in Santa Monica/West Los Angeles, where certain industries have stored items on the unused tracks. Also, under the I-405 freeway in West L.A., Caltrans has turned the area on the tracks into a storage yard, and the tracks have been blocked by K-rail (the long concrete blocks used for freeway center dividers). Also, on the eastern end, Caltrans has blocked off the end where the I-110 freeway passes over the Expo R-O-W, due to freeway widening/Harbor Transitway work.

6. Speaking of the Caltrans Freeway work, Caltrans has had special permission from the MTA to remove the track to build a temporary left turn lane at the corner of Figueroa and Exposition, near the USC campus. Because about 200 feet of track has been removed, there is no way for a train to come from Union Station to the Exposition R-O-W. Even if the light rail were to be built, there will be no more tracks in that inter-section: The Light rail plans call for a short subway segment for LRT trains in that area.

As much I support rail transit in L.A., the Exposition R-O-W for emergency transit service is not very feasible for anything at the moment. I'll just hope the Big One will happen AFTER the LRT is built there!

-Elson Trinidad

WASHINGTON, Jan. 31 — Benjamin L. Hooks, former executive director of the NAACP, and U.S. Rep. Harold E. Ford, (D-Tenn.) two influential figures in the U.S. civil rights movement, will join Federal Transit Administrator Gordon J. Linton in the speaker's lineup at the fourth annual American Public Transit Foundation/Federal Transit Administration Civil Rights Seminar, Feb. 20-23, at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis.

Dr. Hooks will speak on "Putting the Civil Rights Movement into Current, Practical Perspectives" at a dinner Feb. 22, at 7 p.m.

Ford, a lawmaker active in transit and civil rights issues, will deliver remarks Feb. 21, at 10:15 a.m., at a forum titled "Legal and Regulatory Update." The discussion will include a review of federal drug and alcohol testing initiatives.

FTA Administrator Linton will deliver the federal perspective on transit and civil rights in a presentation Feb. 21, at 8 a.m. A former Pennsylvania state legislator and board member of Philadelphia's SEPTA transit system, Linton is a strong advocate of public transportation. In 1991, he shepherded through the Pennsylvania legislature a bill that provided the first-ever dedicated funding to transit authorities in that state. He will be introduced by Memphis Mayor W.W. Herenton.

Also speaking will be economist Cecilia A. Conrad, assistant professor of economics at Barnard

College. She will speak on "Rethinking the Cost of Discrimination," Feb. 20, from 4 to 6 p.m.

J.A. "Al" Brown, a presidential appointee to the U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission and a management consultant in labor relations and human resources, will lead a senior management roundtable Feb. 21, from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

The seminar will focus on the relationship between civil rights and public transportation. Additional presentations will address the role of disadvantaged

business enterprises and human resources in creating livable communities, Federal Transit Administration program oversight, and Americans with Disabilities Act changes and litigation.

American Public Transit Association (APTA) Executive Vice President Jack R. Gilstrap said, "Diversity is a strength of public transportation in America. Our industry is strong because of our commitment to civil rights." He added, "The APTF/FTA Civil Rights Seminar is a unique opportunity to meet with those who make policy decisions in civil rights

"When I first arrived in the Los Angeles area for college in 1960, the driver on the RTD told me that they had just put a fleet of used buses from some major Southern city into service (I vaguely remember him saying it was Birmingham, but I could be wrong). When I received (he said) the buses had a sign above the window on each side which was moved by a pulley by the driver. It marked the "color line" so to speak. As the bus filled with white passengers, the driver could squeeze the blacks into fewer and fewer seats in the back. He noted that this equipment had been completely removed before any of the buses ventured out into LA."

—Garth G. Groff, University of Virginia

and transit, and to learn the latest thinking on both subjects."

Managers and other executives of public transportation agencies, state authorities or any private organization that does business with a transit agency may register for the conference. Those interested should contact Russell G. Harris at 202-898-4041.

VALLEY RAIL FUNDS—USE IT OR LOSE IT!

Rail bond funds for use on an east-west Valley rail fund are in danger of being lost if the project is not started by 2000, according to transit officials.

The funds in question come from state rail bonds approved by voters in 1990 (Proposition 116). \$438 million was made available to the east-west line.

Although the general lack of funds for most MTA projects has hampered the development of this rail line, it is most likely a continuing debate over the routing of the line that caused most of the delays.

Two routes are under consideration:

either an elevated transit line (sometimes called a "monorail", but most likely an automated light rail) over the Ventura Freeway (US-101) or a continuation of the Red Line subway under a railroad right-of-way along Burbank and Chandler Boulevards. The choice of the two routes has been a long-running point of contention between politicians, homeowner groups and other parties.

The MTA board is considering applying to the State for a deadline extension. This would allow the project to be completed by 2010 without jeopardizing the bond funds.

LAST TRAIN TO PASADENA



As of January 15, 1994, all Amtrak service formerly serving Pasadena and Pomona was rerouted through Fullerton.

The Pasadena and Pomona Amtrak stations have been permanently closed. Amtrak Thruway Buses now stop at the Pasadena Hilton and the Claremont Transit Depot.

The rail line between Los Angeles and Pasadena will be used for the Pasadena Metro Blue Line extension (to open in 1997).