

TRANSIT UPDATES

Improved **Metrolink** service between Lancaster and Los Angeles! See page 7

New bus services operating in Ventura County and Pasadena. See pages 4,5 and 6

Several changes to **MTA** bus and Blue Line service have gone into effect as of January 26. Here are the major changes:

- Line #33 (the Rose Avenue branch of Line #33) has been cancelled (it was an experimental service, and had low ridership)
- Night and owl service (between 9 p.m. and 4 a.m.) on Line #446 will be provided by an extension of #45 via the #446 routing to San Pedro.
- Night service on #71 (to the Sybil Brand Institute) will be replaced by a rerouted #70.
- Night service (after 10 p.m) on #108 and #110 east of Huntington Park has been cancelled.
- Lines #152, #154, #163, #164 and #165 have been permanently routed to terminate at the Burbank Metrolink station (this change had been implemented after the Jan. 17 earthquake). #92/#93 will also be re-routed to serve First St. in downtown Burbank. (There is a recommendation that a transit center be developed along First St.)
- Rush hour Metro Blue Line service south of Willow Station will run every 12 minutes. Service will be provided every 6 minutes north of Willow.

In other MTA news: the Commission has deferred making any decision on fare increases until their next meeting (July 24). Also, a bus drivers' strike is being considered; see page 6.

The Los Angeles City Council has authorized **LADOT** to solicit operators and vehicles for three new DASH shuttle routes: Highland Park, Lincoln Heights (would connect Union Station with USC Medical Center) and Sherman Oaks (Ventura Blvd.). Federal funding may also be sought in order to operate these new services.

Foothill Transit will extend Route #480 from Claremont to Montclair effective July 10.

FEMA funded **Santa Clarita Transit** emergency service lines #796 (Warner Center), #797 (Chatsworth) and #798 (Van Nuys), as well as Metrolink shuttle service from Sylmar Station, will operate at least until July 17.

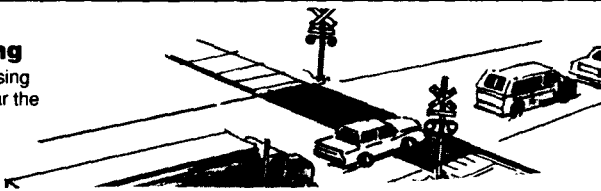
Certain **South Coast Area Transit** routes may be modified in order to coordinate service with the new VISTA (see page 4 for more information) bus service. In particular Route #17 (Santa Paula) will probably be cut back and replaced with dial-a-ride service. **Fillmore Area Transit Company** local and express service is also being replaced with VISTA services.

Construction of new HOV lanes on I-405 (between I-5 and US-101) has started; completion date is late 1996. Also, an HOV lane is being built on S-170 (Hollywood Freeway north of US-101); that project will be completed in early 1995.

Transit Updates are compiled by SO.CA.TA members. If you notice any new, changed or discontinued transit services, please call us at (213) 254 9041 .

Don't Get Trapped On A Grade Crossing

Never drive onto a grade crossing until you are sure you can clear the tracks. Once you have started across the tracks, keep going, especially if you see a train approaching.



FROM THE EDITOR

Membership: Since the new brochure was produced last April, we have been getting about one new member every month, plus several requests for sample newsletters and information. Let's keep distributing as many of these brochures as possible. (If anyone wants some brochures to distribute, please call us!)

New Meeting Location: Our next meeting will be at the Echo Park United Methodist Church, 1226 N. Alvarado St, Los Angeles., north of Sunset Bl. This location is easily accessed by MTA bus route s #1, #2, #3, #4, #92, #93 and #200

Newsletter: Starting with this issue, member Dana Gabbard is helping mail this newsletter. Anyone is welcome to help out! In the near future, I will be asking for interested members to help write news articles. As always, *The Transit Advocate* needs articles, letters, photographs and research (newspaper clippings, etc.) from all members and interested non-members. If you see an interesting, transit-related article in the newspaper, consider sending a copy (preferably two copies) of the article to Box 41198, Los Angeles 90041. Material for publication should be received two weeks before the scheduled SO.CA.TA meeting date.

-Charles P. Hobbs, Vice President/Newsletter Editor

RAPID TRANSIT AND LIGHT RAIL BY MICHAEL LUDWIG

NOTE: Opinions in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent SO.CA.TA opinion.

As most SO.CA.TA members know, there has been much debate in this organization recently about 1980 Proposition A (LACTC Ordinance Number 16). This debate has centered around whether or not light rail transit such as the Metro Blue Line can legally be funded from the 35% share of Proposition A revenues.

A step-by-step, legal method for resolving questions like this has been established. First the text of the proposition is examined for the legislative intent suggested by its face-value meaning. If the meaning (and therefore the legislative intent) is not clear on its face, then several other clues to legislative intent must be considered; foremost amongst these clues is the legislative history. Extraneous usages of terms (such as meanings in a particular industry) are employed only as a last resort. (For more information on this process, see the Los Angeles County Counsel's opinion of Sept 4, 1981). Following these steps, it can convincingly be argued that the Blue Line and other light rail can legally receive Prop A. 35% money.

The first step in establishing whether or not the Blue Line can legally be funded with Prop A 35% money is to see what the 35% money can be used for. This is easy: the text of the proposition states that this money "would be allocated to the Commission for construction and operation of a rail rapid transit system"

The next step is to determine what was meant by the phrase "rail rapid transit system". Contrary to some opinions, "rapid transit"

does not have one absolute, universal meaning; there are various definitions which can be shown to be valid in different contexts. The text of Prop. A (Section 5(a)1.) defines the term for this context:

"System" or "Rail rapid transit system" means all land and other improvements and equipment necessary to provide an operable, exclusive right of way, or guideway, for rail transit"

Because it is defined in that way in the proposition, *no other definition of rapid transit matters in this debate*, even if another one is "better" as an overall definition. It is possible that the Blue Line is not rapid transit by most definitions. But it could be rapid transit by the one relevant definition in this debate—the one in the text of the proposition.

The third step in establishing the legality of spending Prop. A 35% money on the Blue Line is to ascertain what was meant by the phrase "exclusive right-of-way, or guideway, for rail transit". Many in the transit industry have used the term "exclusive" to mean trackage which is free from grade crossings. Interpreting this phrase is not as easy as the other two steps, because it is not defined anywhere in the text of the proposition.

As established by court case law, in such cases of ambiguity, it is entirely proper to examine the legislative history to ascertain the legislative intent. The relevant legislative history that must be examined is in the text of the *draft ordinance* (date Aug 14, 1980). Draft section 5(a)1, defines: (cont'd on Page 5)

VENTURA INTERCITY SERVICE TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Starting July 5, Ventura County residents and commuters will have a new way of getting around: the Ventura Intercity Service Transit Authority (VISTA) bus service.

Three VISTA routes will replace existing or former county-operated Interconnect bus lines with more frequent service. (The Central County route serves areas that have never had local bus service)

Four new fixed routes will be provided:

- **Highway 101 Route:** Operates between the Oaks Mall and the Buenaventura Plaza, serving Camarillo and Oxnard. This route replaces the current Ventura County Interconnect route.
- **Highway 126 Route:** Connects Ventura, Santa Paula and Fillmore (essentially the same route as the Fillmore Area Transit Company bus it replaces)
- **Central County Route:** Travels between the Oxnard Transportation Center to Camarillo via Oxnard College, Point Mugu Naval Air Warfare Center, and Camarillo State Hospital. (During mid-day periods, service is extended to Oxnard State Beach)
- **East County Route:** Connects Moorpark, the extreme west end of Simi Valley, and Thousand Oaks. Peak hour service is extended to Westlake Village and Agoura Hills.

Service will be provided on weekdays only, with hourly headways on the 101 and 126 routes; headways on the Central and East County routes will be half-hourly during peak hours, hourly

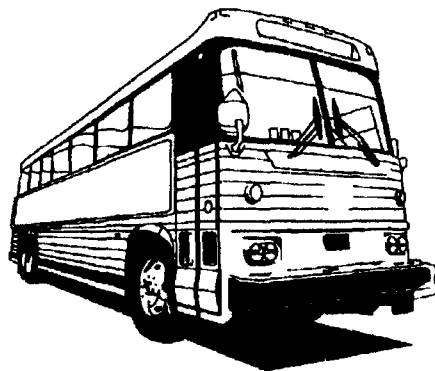
during the off-peak.

New dial-a-ride services will also be implemented in Oak Park, Santa Paula and the Fillmore/Bardsdale/Piru area; the Fillmore dial-a-ride service will operate south to Moorpark for connections with the East County Route, Moorpark Transit and Metrolink.

One way fare is \$1 (\$1.50 for dial-a-rides), with reduced fares for students, seniors and disabled people. Transfers will be available to other routes and services. In addition, a new county-wide bus pass (Passport) will be available; it will be valid on all Ventura County transit services.

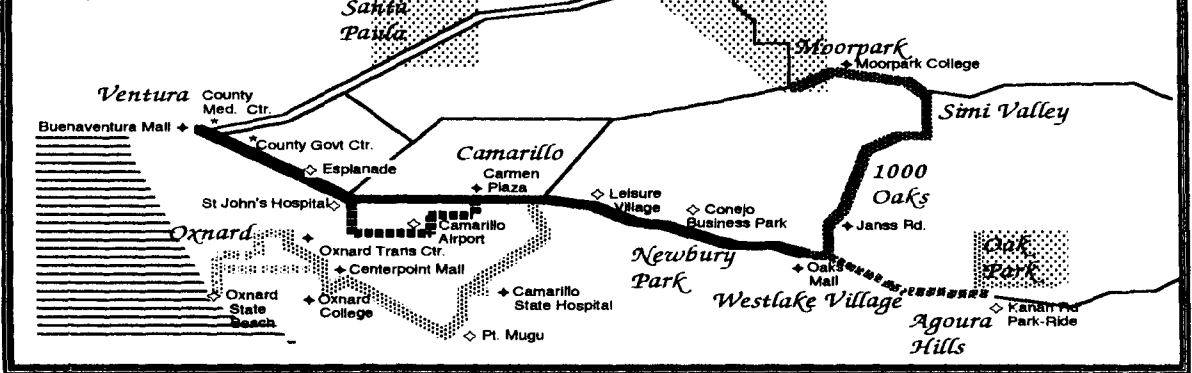
VISTA is currently funded with \$1.9 million in (mostly) federal funds as a two-year pilot project. Ventura County Transportation Commission officials expect the system to carry at least 600 passengers per day.

More information about VISTA, and other Ventura County transit services, can be obtained at 1-800-438-1112



| | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| | Hwy 101 Route | ◆ | Full time stop |
| | Hwy 126 Route | ◇ | Part time stop |
| | Central Route (off peak only) | ◆ | 101 part time, 126 full time |
| | East Route (peak only) | ◆ | Dial-A-Ride area |

Staff Graphic: C.P.Hobbs



(from Page 3)

"Rapid transit system" or "System" means all land and other improvements necessary to provide an operable, exclusive right-of-way, or guideway, for public transit, including but not limited to, rail, additional non-exclusive high occupancy vehicle lanes, or other transit technology. "System" also includes regional transportation centers"

This same section in the final ordinance is simply the draft ordinance definition limited to a rail transit by a motion from Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, seconded by Baxter Ward (dated Aug 20, 1980).

The draft ordinance suggests the intended meaning by the contrast between "exclusive" and "non-exclusive". "Non-exclusive" high occupancy vehicle lanes" are non-exclusive in that they are not used exclusively by public transit vehicles but are also used by private carpools. The logical inference must be that, in the draft ordinance, an "exclusive right-of-way, or guideway, for rail transit" means that the "right-of-way, or guideway" must be used exclusively by rail transit as opposed to other modes of transportation.

One ambiguity still remains that cannot be resolved even by looking at the legislative history or similar aids. The question is "What does 'right-of-way, or guideway' mean?" These two terms do not have the same meaning. "Right-of-way" properly means an extended strip of land, or elevated or subterranean easements for transportation. However, "guideway" is defined as "a channel, slot or track in which something is fitted so that the line of motion [of a

vehicle or train] is controlled" (Calif. Attorney General's Opinion 87-101). For rail lines, the guideway would refer to the two rails.

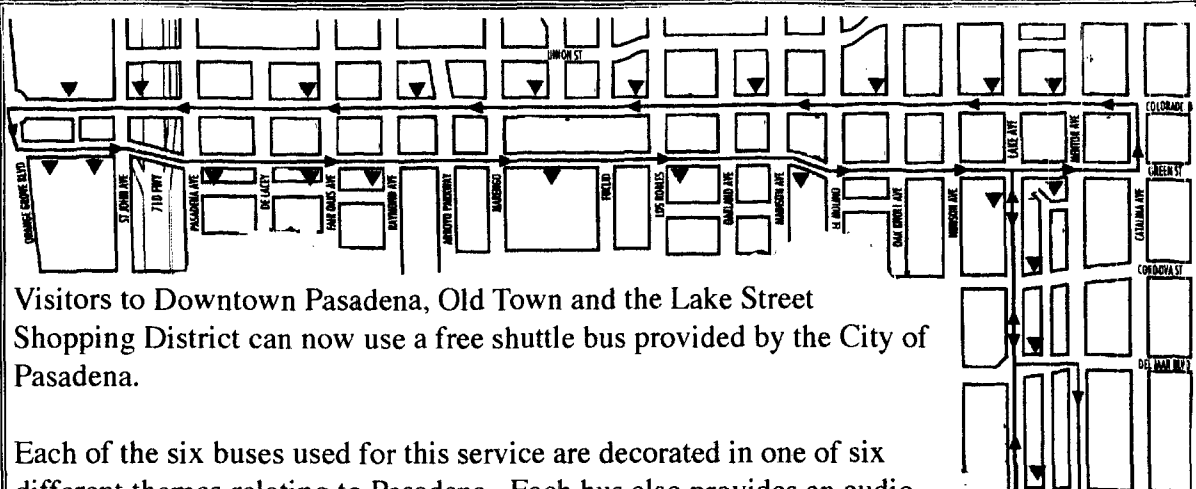
But even in the transit industry, the term "guideway" has been used to mean guideway-supporting structure, i.e. aerial structure or at-grade roadbed or tunnel. That meaning is not far from "right of way". Thus it seems most advisable to use the latter meaning of "guideway" in this context. So, the strip of land or barrier defined pathway used by rail transit must be used exclusively by rail transit. Although it is true that there are grade crossings on some light rail lines and the land at such places is used by automobiles in a transverse direction, nevertheless longitudinally (as a linear path) all of the Blue Line right-of-way is used exclusively by rail transit vehicles.

Faced with this final irresolvable ambiguity, courts would defer to the judgement of the drafting and implementing agency (the LACTC and its successor, the LACMTA). The LACTC has already essentially sided with the above interpretation through its County Counsel opinion of Sept 27, 1988.

We can never be completely sure on this issue, since neither the text of the proposition nor the legislative record is perfectly clear at explaining the lawmakers' intended meaning. However, most indications support the Blue Line and other light rail legally qualifying for Prop A 35% money.

The only legitimate issue here is legality, not one's opinion of what is right or wrong, or what should or should not be done for transit in the Los Angeles region..

PASADENA AREA RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM



Visitors to Downtown Pasadena, Old Town and the Lake Street Shopping District can now use a free shuttle bus provided by the City of Pasadena.

Each of the six buses used for this service are decorated in one of six different themes relating to Pasadena. Each bus also provides an audio program appropriate to its theme.

The buses operate from 11 a.m.-9 p.m. on weekdays and from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturdays.

For more information on this service, please call 818-405-4055

▼ ARTS Bus Stop



MTA STRIKE/CONTINGENCY PLAN

Upon the expiration of their contract with the MTA on June 30, the United Transportation Union (representing MTA bus drivers) voted to authorize a strike if negotiations with the MTA fail.

The unions oppose the MTA proposal to reduce labor costs by \$21 million as part of its effort to eliminate its \$141 million operating deficit.

As is customary, both the MTA and the unions have presented their views to the Governor, who will most likely call for a two-month "cooling-off period". That means that no strike would begin until September.

If a strike does occur, though, MTA has set up a contingency plan, using supervisors and non-union personnel to operate and maintain buses. Service would be very limited:

- Only the eighteen busiest bus lines (and the Red and Blue rail lines) would operate
- A total limit of 250 vehicles would be deployed
- Service would be provided Monday-Friday, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

METROLINK UPDATE JULY 1994

Improved Speed to Lancaster: Work has been completed on the trackage between Lancaster and Santa Clarita, reducing commute time to 2 hours. (Additional improvements continue in order to reach a goal of 1 hour 40 minutes between Lancaster and Los Angeles.) Ten miles of new track were installed between Lancaster and Palmdale, while curves were straightened between Palmdale and Santa Clarita.

No More Palmdale Station: Because of the construction of the new track between Lancaster and Palmdale, the existing Palmdale station will be closed. (Because of the frequent freight trains, it is unsafe to cross the tracks). The Palmdale City Council refused to consider a pedestrian grade separation at the current station site because of uncertainties as to whether the existing station (at the Lockheed plant) would

be retained in the future. A new Palmdale station location, perhaps near downtown Palmdale, is being sought.

Ridership on the Santa Clarita route is currently at 3,900 boardings.

Oxnard Extension Permanent? The Ventura County Transportation Commission voted to continue Metrolink service to Camarillo and Oxnard. until mid-1995, after FEMA funding is terminated. Doing so will cost the county \$1.6 million. Because Ventura County has no transportation sales tax, Metrolink service must use the same limited funds that now go towards buses and local streets. (A half-cent sales tax for transportation may be placed on the ballot this November).

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS + EVENTS

Note: Meeting times and places subject to change without notice.

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|---------|---------|---|--------|---------|---|
| July 8 | 10:00am | Metrolink, SCAG Conf Rm 12th Floor 818 W.7th, Los Angeles | Aug 12 | 10:00am | Metrolink, SCAG Conf Rm 12th Floor 818 W. 7th, Los Angeles |
| July 9 | 1:00pm | SO.CA.TA meeting Echo Park United Methodist Church 1226 N. Alvarado St, LA | Aug 13 | 1:00pm | SO.CA.TA meeting Echo Park United Methodist Church 1226 N. Alvarado St, LA |
| July 25 | ??? | Antelope Valley Transit Fare Meeting (Time and place to be announced—call 805-945-9445) | Aug 24 | 8:00am | Foothill Transit Board 100 N. Barranca, 4th Floor West Covina |
| July 27 | 12:00pm | MTA Board Meeting Bd. Supervisors Hearing Rm 500 W. Temple, LA | Aug 26 | 12:00pm | MTA Board Meeting Bd. Supervisors Hearing Rm 500 W. Temple, LA |
| July 29 | 8:00am | Foothill Transit Board 100 N. Barranca, 4th Floor West Covina | | | |