

TRANSIT UPDATES *Have anything to report? Call 213 388 2364*

See Page 6 for information about the MTA Metro Red Line extension, and related bus service reroutes!

MTA Metro Blue and Green Line patrons can now also enjoy later service. The last Blue Line train leaves Downtown at 11:23 p.m. and arrives in Long Beach Transit Mall at 12:18 a.m. The last train from Long Beach to Downtown Los Angeles leaves at 10 p.m.; thereafter, service operates to Wardlow Station every 20 minutes until 12:21 p.m.

On the Green Line, the last through trains leaves Marine Station at 11:34 p.m. and Norwalk at 11:42 p.m. The very last trains (which terminate at Wilmington/Imperial) leave Marine and Norwalk at 12:34 a.m. and 12:22 a.m., respectively. The above times apply seven days per week, including MTA holidays.

Speaking of holidays, according to the latest schedules, MTA is operating Saturday-level service on Martin Luther King Day. This might be a problem for people expecting to ride a "commuter" bus (such as #436 or #497) that day . . .

On weekends and holidays, #161 now provides service between Ventura/Topanga Cyn and Westlake Village. Buses will operate every 2 hours.

#258 has been extended to South Gate during the midday, providing 30-minute service over Eastern Avenue all day.

#446 and 447 are now serving the Harbor Freeway/I-105 Transitway station, providing for an easy connection with the Green Line. (However, buses are not yet serving the entire Transitway: see page 5 for details)

#484 and 490 will be rerouted to serve the new Cal Poly Pomona Transcenter. #484 will also serve the Pomona Transcenter, on weekdays only (Both locations are already served by Foothill Transit)

Reportedly, #167 will be transferred to a private carrier (Charterways) as of July 15. As with the ATE operated routes (#130, #266, etc.) fares and passes remain the same.

LA County is also operating their summer beach buses from Antelope Valley, Altadena and La Canada to Santa Monica, and from Charter Oak (near Glendora) to Seal Beach. For more information: 818-458-3961

Metrolink and the Riverside County Transportation Commission, will be operating beach trains between Inland Empire points (Rialto, San Bernardino, Riverside and Corona) and San Juan Capistrano/San Clemente Pier.

Trains will operate on July 20 (sold out!) July 21, and August 17. Tickets will not be sold on trains or at the stations, but are only available from RCTC (call 909-715-3440 for information)

The **Pasadena Area Rapid Transit System (ARTS)** will implement an additional route on July 6. The new "Uptown Line" is the same route that had been operated by ARTS during holiday periods. (*cont'd on Page 10*)



BULLETIN BOARD

Transit Guide: Since the start of the year, we have sold 80 copies of our Transit Guide. This is with no marketing beyond two blurbs in community newspapers (the Los Angeles Downtown News and Los Angeles Independent) and flyers left at libraries, transportation centers, etc. We plan to reach out to agencies and libraries later this summer.

Of course we'll also be selling the Guide at our booth at the Red Line extension opening July 13th-14th. We are presently slated to occupy space at the Western Avenue station. A number of members have volunteered to help staff the booth. Don't forget to drop by and say 'hi!'.

Metro Red Line Sneak Preview: On July 2nd a group of SO.CA.TA members and their guests gathered at the Gateway Center near Union Station in downtown Los Angeles to take part in a tour of the soon to open extension of the Red Line through mid-Wilshire. Computer problems with signalling almost scuttled our plans but the intrepid guides (Colin Haugh and Joseph Romero of MTA Marketing) persevered through the difficulties and soon we were on our way! Of the three stations (Wilshire/Vermont, Wilshire/Normandie, Wilshire/Western) Wilshire/Vermont was most impressive because of its unique stacking of the tunnels to accommodate the eventual Hollywood branch. Our thanks to Colin and Joseph, along with Cathy Dickinson of Marketing who arranged the tour, for a fun and informative sneak peek.

July Meeting: It is anticipated the July member meeting (July 20, Eagle Rock Library, 10 a.m.) will be abbreviated and mostly deal with administrative matters. In August we'll be back at Angelus Plaza on the 2nd Saturday of the month.

From member Chris Flescher: "I believe that these two factors should be very important in planning subway/light rail routing: the rail lines should relieve congestion on the most heavily traveled bus routes; and the rail lines should go past areas where many people live, work, or shop. The Wilshire route satisfies both of these conditions because the Wilshire bus routes are some of the most crowded ones and the density of commercial and residential development is much higher on Wilshire than on Pico. Also, major trip generators, such as the County Museum of Art and La Brea Tar Pits are on Wilshire. And, by following Wilshire, the line can later be extended to Westwood and Santa Monica."

Chris also writes: "I recently discovered how bad it is for RTA to terminate its 496 lines in Country Village. I caught the last #496 out of Montclair on a Friday evening. It was 30 minutes late, so I missed the connecting #49 bus. I spent 2 hours walking towards Riverside, until I gave up and called a taxi. I had to spend \$15 to get to downtown. I have decided now that I will never ride the #496 again and I am going to write a letter to RTA telling them this. It is just as easy to take the #460 then the #149 instead of the #480 and #496 and go through Anaheim. I told [SO.CA.TA Vice President] Dana and [Director] Charles Powell about this experience, and I thought you might find it interesting."

By now most have probably heard the environmental suit against Runyon Canyon tunneling was settled, with the plaintiffs accepting the mitigation measures (including less blasting) the MTA board adopted earlier this year. But what I am sure many are wondering is why it fizzled so fast. Senator Tom Hayden, who organized the suit, until recently was making a big show (and getting on TV a lot) by claiming that the lawsuit would have a major impact on the agency. It appears his main purpose was to add to his resume as an environmentalist (he chairs the Environmental Committee). And when the time came to dig into his own pocket to keep the effort alive... Meanwhile the federal civil rights lawsuit filed by the Bus Riders Union (and others) has been sent to mediation and if not settled won't even go to trial until October.

Alternate Rail Technology continues to march forward. The MTA Board at its June 26th meeting approved a piecemeal report on implementation. Everyone knows the inside track is for the L.A./Glendale/ Burbank corridor (stomping grounds of Board chairman Larry Zarian). Some candidate corridors probably are dead (Yvonne Burke publicly said the Harbor Subdivision won't happen, probably because she sees it as competing with her pet project - the Crenshaw/Prairie light rail line; mention of mid-segment objections to Exposition seem to have kept it from even further study).

Will it actually happen? For now the looming problem of FRA standards is being avoided as to the L.A./Glendale/Burbank corridor. Santa Clarita/Ventura and North San Gabriel Valley have some support in their areas. But my money

is Mr. Zarian will get his train (or at least the nod for a demonstration project, if money can be found and issues resolved).

The first clues as to the status of the mobility allowance are buried in MTA's newly adopted 1997-2000 Short Range Transit Plan. The process of considering proposals for alternative service on selected lines will conclude in early Fiscal Year 1997 (later this year). The estimate is 10,000 to 20,000 Revenue Service Hours will be effected (for comparison, MTA estimates in FY '97 it will operate 6.23 million R.S.H.).

Promises to the contrary, the central area restructuring meetings weren't held in June. This process has been quite slow, which is understandable as is it is complicated. Can they really start on the Westside by October?

Richard DeRock, administrator of Access Services Incorporated (the consolidated Americans with Disability Act transit provider for Los Angeles county), gave an informative presentation at the June 26th MTA Citizen Advisory Committee meeting.

ASI is presently suffering from excessive success. Original estimates of usage were woefully short. Certified users are making 24 trips a month (the federal government projected it would be 4, ASI began with an estimate of 16). A transfer center near the Gateway to be opened in the near future may help lower costs (at present \$29 per trip). To learn more about ASI call (800) 827-0829.

HARBOR FREEWAY TRANSITWAY

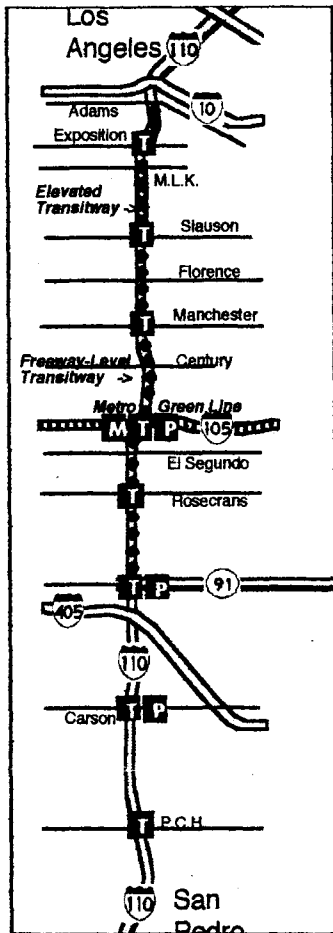
On June 26, 1996, the Harbor Freeway Transitway opened to the public. (Construction continues on ramps to Adams Blvd)

This \$500-million project features 7.2 miles of four additional lanes (two in each direction), designated solely for buses, carpools and vanpools.

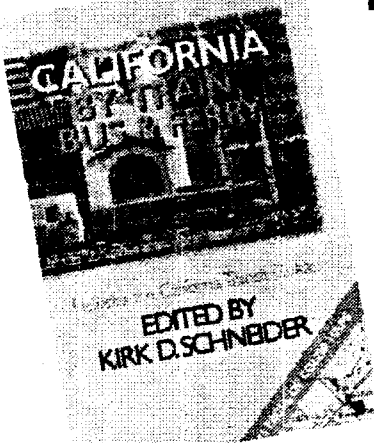
2.6 miles of the Transitway are elevated over the regular freeway lanes, a first for the Los Angeles area.

MTA buses won't be using the Transitway at least until August, after the drivers have been trained to use it. (No word on if/when Gardena, Torrance and LADOT buses will be using the Transitway).

Transit stations (bus stops) are being built along the Transitway; one or two have already been completed. A few (marked 'P' on the map) will have park/ride lots. Transitway users can also connect to the Metro Green Line at the I-105. The Transitway is also designed to support a rail transit line, although there are no plans (or funds) to build one in the near future.



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When the first segment of the Metro Red Line opened in February 1993, its short length severely limited its usefulness.

Sure, it made a great shuttle for Metrolink passengers between Union Station and the Financial District. It also got plenty of use as a shoppers shuttle for Westlake residents and a lunchtime shuttle for workers in Downtown Los Angeles. But most of the time, it ran nearly empty.

This should change on July 13, when the first extension opens along Wilshire Blvd. This new two mile extension will add three stations (Western/Vermont, Western/Normandie and Western/Wilshire) to the existing Red Line route (see map).

This extension will provide access to the various office towers along Wilshire Bl, as well as improved transit service for local area residents.

Also, the regular MTA bus fare of \$1.35 (as well as all discount bus fares, tokens and passes) will go into effect as of July 15 (There will be free rides on July 13-14 as part of the opening ceremony for the new extension)

Compared to existing surface bus routes, the Metro Red Line will be fast; a trip from Union Station to Western Ave. will take only 12 minutes on the Metro Red Line, rather than the 25 minutes for a bus trip.

Of course, bus connections to all the new stations will be available. In addition to existing bus service on Wilshire, Western and Normandie, several other bus lines have been rerouted, and one new line created, to serve the new Metro Rail stations (see page 7 for more information about these bus services).

Currently under construction are extensions to Hollywood and Vine (will open in 1998) and to, North Hollywood (will open in 2001). Construction will start soon on an extension to East Los Angeles, while studies are underway to determining the routing of future extensions to the San Fernando Valley and West Los Angeles.

Bus-Rail Connections

To improve connections with the new Metro Red Line stations, MTA has modified some of their Metro Bus routes, and created one new line.

The new route is #316, a limited-stop route operating via Third St. #316 operates from the Vermont/Wilshire station, to Cedars-Sinai, Beverly Hills, and Century City, bidirectionally during peak hours only.

Other changes include:

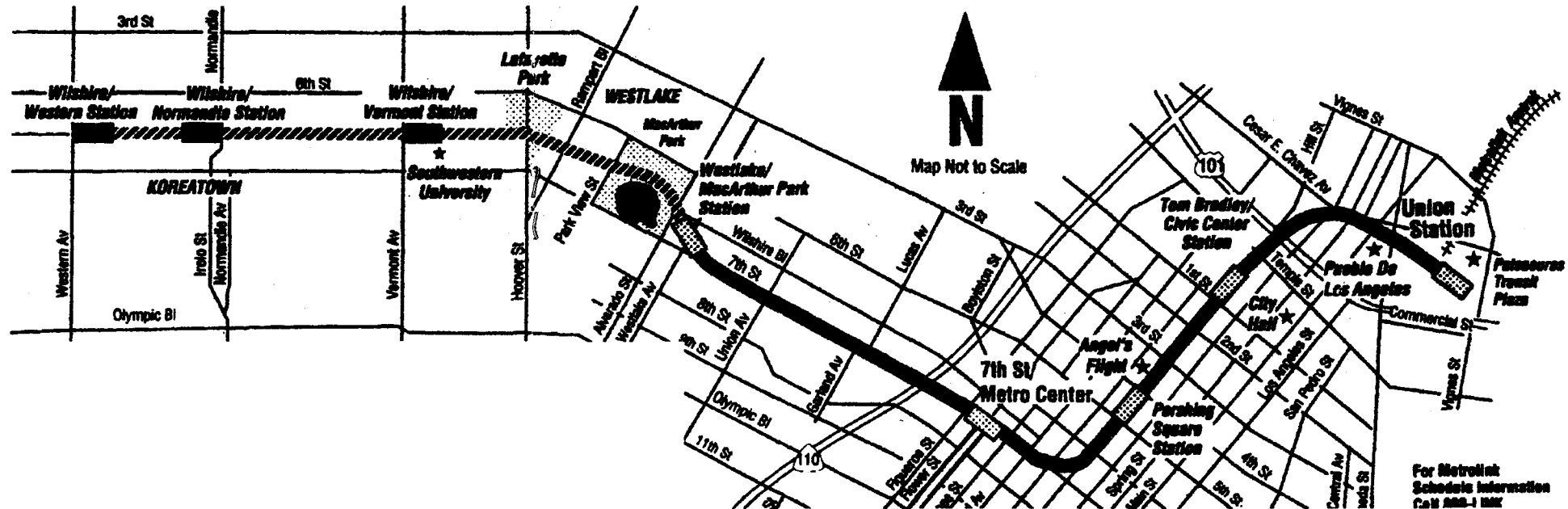
- #51 and 201 will terminate at Wilshire/Vermont, rather than serving 7th/New Hampshire
- #209 will terminate at the Wilshire/Western Red Line Station, rather than 6th/Wilton.

• #310 will be serve the Wilshire/Western station.

• #320 and #322 will terminate at Wilshire/Western station. Passengers who wish to continue riding along Wilshire Blvd. can ask for a free "line continuation" transfer, valid on the Red Line or local buses #20, #21 and #22.

• #426 will terminate at Wilshire/Western rather than Westlake station.

• #497 will be rerouted to serve the Gateway Transit Plaza at Union Station, and will terminate at Westlake Red Line station. (Line #497 Passengers destined to points along Wilshire Bl. west of Alvarado should transfer to the Metro Red Line at either Union Station or 7th/Metro Center).



For Metrolink Schedule Information Call 800-1-1000

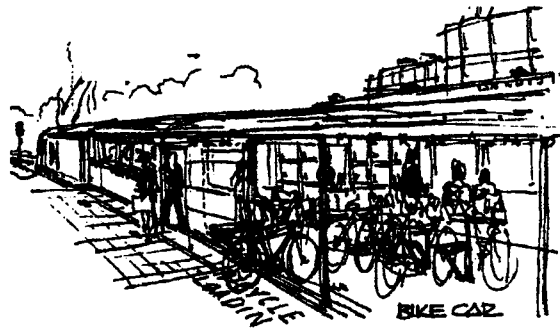
VALRAIL DREAM RIDE *John Jay Ulloth (Illustrations by the author)*

It seems more than one of our members has been thinking about San Fernando Valley Rail. While opinions expressed herein are those of the author, he points out their resemblance to any future people, places, or events is entirely up to So.Ca.T.A. members and their allies.

Grabbing my carry on, I exit the rear of the plane down a portable staircase- charming relic of the last century- onto the jetway, through the terminal building, and onto the high speed belt bridge over Empire Avenue, down the elevators to Burbank Airport's Amtrak/ ValRail Multimodal. Unlocking my bike in the bicycle garage, then relocking my carry-on my bike's luggage rack, I wheel both thru the Bike Car's automatic doors near the front of the train waiting on the south Valley track.

On the side of the locomotive, "H" stands 5 feet high for "Hydrogen" from chemistry's Periodic Table of the Elements. Designed and built in Los Angeles by idled Aerospace engineers and technicians, the hydrogen trains' fuel cycle's byproducts are water vapor & heat- no smog, electric poles, or wires to maintain, no 3rd-rail danger to worry about; hydrogen is separated from water using solar power beating down along abundant railroad right-of-way, stored in trackside fuel cells, then loaded into locomotives to be burned in their turbines.

Even though my plane was 10 minutes late, Valley trains arrive every 15 minutes, nearly twice that often during rush hour. Pulling out my ValRail card, I swipe open the railcar's bike bar, relocking it around my bike with another swipe of my card's access code.

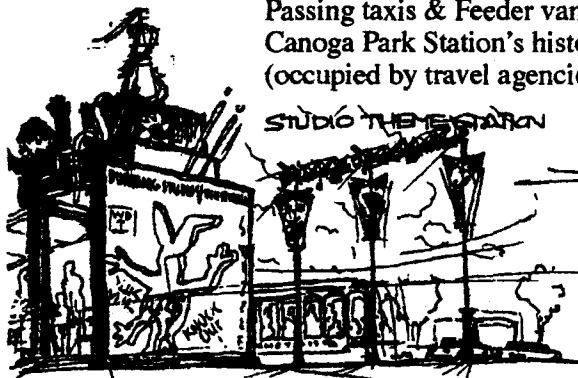


As the locomotive tugs us from the station, I picture tea in the luxurious quiet of the Pullman-styled club car up front, but it's been a long day and I may sleep through my station! So I change cars toward the rear of the train, passing Southwest Museum's "Sancho Villa" recounting tales of the Gabrielino-Shoshone, ranchos, & wildlife in coach; through the panoramic quiet of the dome car, to watch steel rails flash from under the observation car toward the horizon. The first stop is Metrolink's Burbank Media Center Station to the east, taking on more bicyclists; both commuters & tourists from Metro BikeTours. Reversing direction briefly, now forward through the Chandler branch of the wye, we plough southwest through a sea of gridlocked autos.



This is a west valley express, picking up speed

rather than stopping at mid-Valley stations: the fantastic cartoon shapes of Burbank Studios/Whitnall... westward to L.A. Valley College Station draped in ivy & students... northwest to jackhammering at the Art Deco Van Nuys Government Center, upgrading the station & expanding retail to link the retro-"Red Cars" running down the center of Van Nuys & Sepulveda Boulevards... finally tunneling beneath the gridlocked I-405 to brake inside a Japanese garden pavilion at Woodley Park Gateway- health food, roller blade & bike rentals surround the information/ ticket area... At Reseda, we pass a ValRail locomotive dropping lumber cars for unloading at the Terry siding just like Southern Pacific used to do... Ventura Boulevard shuttles appear at the Tampa shops and station... a Little Leaguer slides into home in the Field of Dreams station fronting Pierce College...



Passing taxis & Feeder vans running west from Canoga Park Station's historic re-creation, (occupied by travel agencies, car rental, and

railroad hobby shop, along with a 3-railcar restaurant parked in the siding), I get up to retrieve my wheels from the bike car. As we slow to a stop, I notice a Circus tent going up

Before Warner Gateway, double track is heading toward us as the train passes the Heavy Steel Track Crew spiking it down; 3 dozen teenagers and their union overseers, part of the mayor's union-run Summer Employment Taskforce for young L.A. residents, laying track & building muscle the old-fashioned way. Wages are modest, but increasingly valuable tuition credits to the Los Angeles college/ university of their choice makes their jobs highly desirable. Before the end of summer, the other end of this Warner Grand Central spur will arrive in Calabasas...

Trackwork like the one on this right-of-way had deteriorated several years after abandonment back in the mid-90's. Until the subway collapsed, when a coalition of transit groups, sinkhole property owners, environmentalists, and progressive councilmembers went to court,

at L.A. County's Topanga Festival Grounds beyond the Valley's Railshop and solar hydrogen plant. Finally my stop, Chatsworth Multimodal, a Park & Ride where ValRail meets westbound feeder busses, Amtrak, Metrolink trains & city busses; this is where I roll off. From here, this train will turn east via the south track of the Amtrak right of way, providing local service at Wilbur and Firebird Park & Ride (formerly Van Nuys North) on the way back to Burbank Airport Multimodal. So, casting long shadows, I'm riding home "into the sunset" as the saying goes...

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Transit Updates, from Page 2

The new ARTS route travels through Northwest Pasadena, Orange Grove Avenue, and East Pasadena (Hastings Ranch). For more information, call 818-405-4055.

Omnitrans has new fares: \$.85 regular, \$.35 senior and disabled. Monthly pass rates remain at \$30 regular, \$13 senior/disabled. However, there is a new student pass for \$22.50 (the regular and student "Quarter Fare" passes were discontinued).

Most significantly, Omnitrans will no longer issue any transfers. Instead, passengers needing to ride more than one bus can purchase day passes for \$2 (\$1 senior/disabled). This makes Omnitrans the first transit operator in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area to offer day passes instead of transfers (this practice being common in parts of Northern California).

Day passes and monthly passes will be accepted as a local transfer, when boarding Metrolink, Foothill Transit, RTA and Inland Empire Connection buses. There are minor changes (less than 5 minutes) on Omnitrans #3, 5, 9, 11, 14, 27, 73 and 74.

All **Inland Empire Connection** fares on trips from, to, or within San Bernardino County have gone up by \$.10 (S/D: \$.05), reflecting the new Omnitrans fares. (IEC will continue to sell the conventional transfers).

IEC #100 now operates every 30 minutes (M-F); the last bus leaves Riverside at 9:35pm #110 stops in Fontana (Kaiser Hosp) instead of Bloomington. #100 and #110 both operate on a new, more direct routing in Downtown San Bernardino, operating non-stop to the San Bernardino Transit mall. IEC #120 (San Bernardino-Redlands) has been cancelled, due to low ridership.

TRANSIT TRIVIA *Michael Ludwig/Charles P. Hobbs*

Last month's Transit Trivia question was:

Which bus routes in the Los Angeles metropolitan area take a freeway 24 hours per day?

The answer:

IMTA #180 and #420; Foothill #480

This month's Transit Trivia question:

How many different bus operators serve Century City?

(The answer will be in next month's Transit Advocate, and announced at the July SO.CA.TA meeting!)