

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

The **Metro Blue Line** signal prioritization along Washington Boulevard near downtown Los Angeles will be made permanent; new schedules will reflect the three-minute time savings.

The latest MTA sector map to be released is for the South-Central Los Angeles area. The maps for the San Gabriel Valley and Mid-Cities area should follow by the end of the year for a total of 9 maps. By year-end a system map for MTA is also slated for distribution.

MTA Metro Bus routes #104 and #128 are now being operated by Charterways Transportation Management (fares, etc. on these buses are the same as on regular MTA buses)

Antelope Valley Transit Authority is now running double decker buses on Line #785 between Lancaster and Los Angeles.

A few ridership figures for **Metrolink**:

- Average systemwide daily ridership in Sept 96: 22,254
- Approximate weekday boardings on the San Bernardino Line: 7,280
- Approximate weekday boardings on the Orange County Line: 5,137
- Approximate number of riders travelling to the LA County Fair: 2,500
- Approximate weekday boardings on the Inland Empire-Orange County Line: 976

**NEW LADOT Downtown DASH** routes and schedules went into effect Oct 28: see page 6.

A new HOV lane has opened on I-405 between S-118 and US-101 (i.e. that portion of I-405 through the San Fernando Valley)

## WEST LOS ANGELES BUS TRANSIT STATISTICS

⊗ The two busiest bus lines in Los Angeles County are in the Westside.

- Wilshire Blvd. Line 20
- Vermont Ave. Line 204

⊗ 18 of the MTA's 20 busiest bus lines are in the Westside. These 18 lines carry 45% of all MTA daily boardings, countywide.

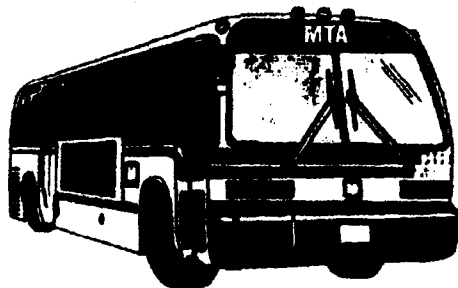
⊗ Single busiest freeway in the U.S. is in the Westside (Santa Monica Freeway)

⊗ Single busiest intersection in the U.S. is in the Westside (Wilshire/Westwood)

⊗ The single biggest urban development in the U.S. is in the Westside.

⊗ The most cost-effective medium size bus operator in the U.S. is in the Westside (Santa Monica Municipal Bus Lines)

(Source: LACMTA)



# BULLETIN BOARD

On November 16th at 3:00 p.m., the Riverside Transit Agency will be having a public hearing about the proposal to eliminate Line #496 and possibly modify #149. Some SO.CA.TA members may be taking advantage of this Saturday event to swing through the Omnitrans service area before the changes in January. We would go out on Metrolink and return either via #496 or #149. Let us know (213-388-2364) if you are interested in participating.

Nominations for SO.CA.TA leadership positions (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and three Directors-at-large) will be held at the November 9th meeting. Are you interested in running of office? If not, who do you think is the best person for the job?

We have several choices for our "Day After Thanksgiving Local Transit Excursion":

- Bakersfield via Lancaster (will require return trip via Greyhound or Amtrak bus)
- Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley
- Yucaipa, Banning and Cabazon (some of these routes run 3 days/week!)
- Ventura County II (Camarillo and Ojai perhaps)
- Big Bear II (might be snow!)

Interested in any of these? Or do you have other ideas? Let us know, we'll select one excursion at the Nov. 9 meeting.

SO.CA.TA's new Internet web page is up; point your browser at <http://socata.lerctr.org> and take a look. (Not to be confused with the Southern California Transit Information Page described in last month's newsletter.) Our thanks go to Larry Rosenman for providing this service.

On October 22nd several SO.CA.TA members participated in a tour of the Metrolink Dispatching Center. It was fascinating to watch how they handle almost all rail traffic in the corridor between San Luis Obispo and San Diego (including freights, Metrolink, Amtrak and the Coaster). Our thanks to Francisco Oaxaca of Metrolink for kindly arranging our visit.

Stephanie Griffin of Santa Monica Municipal Bus Lines made a presentation at our October 12th meeting about their proposed restructuring and conducted a question and answer period afterwards soliciting input. It was an informative session and we thank her for the chance to be part of the process.

Any members who wish a copy of the consent decree between MTA and the Bus Rider's Union et al can arrange for one from member Dana Gabbard for a nominal cost by calling our voice mail and leaving a message - (213) 388-2364 extension 2.

New York Streetcar News is a newsletter published by the Light Rail Action Group of the Committee for Better Transit. It is dedicated to promoting light rail in New York. A one year subscription (6 issues) is \$12 to: Committee for Better Transit, Box 3106, Long Island City NY 11103

The Land Use and Transit Planning Committee will convene after our November meeting to continue its evaluation of transit service.

Prior to our October 12th meeting members Dana Gabbard and Juanita Dellomes participated in a Senior Citizen fair at Angelus Plaza. Information our group and Transit Guide order forms were distributed to attendees including service providers. We hope to do more such outreach in 1997.

Founder and Director-at-Large Pat Moser recently had an episode of heart trouble but with prompt medical attention is now expected to fully recover. Members who wish to share words of encouragement can reach him at (213) 254-9041.

# PLAC REPORT #10 *Dana Gabbard, chair*

No one can guess what will be the effect of the lawsuit settlement MTA and the Bus Rider's Union et al reached. The MTA evidently plans to start with Line #40 to implement the 75-cent fare for off peak service on lines heavily used by the transit dependent. The Municipal Operators fear MTA gave away the store and even within the agency there is grumbling. Politics, as with everything, was served on both sides. When the MTA Board has its workshop on the future <sup>Cancelled</sup> rail construction November 8th (Noon-3 p.m. <sup>at</sup> ~~at~~ <sup>at</sup> Teway Center) we'll have a clearer picture of just how far reality can be stretched.

I attended a workshop on the Long Range Plan Update process October 22nd. My fellow participants (including community leaders, environmentalists and TMA employees) were openly skeptical of many underlying assumptions. At least our views are on the record (whether or not they are being politely ignored).

Here is an interesting tidbit - to maintain speeds to make them appealing MTA now anticipates eventually increasing the minimum number of occupants required for using HOV lanes to 3!

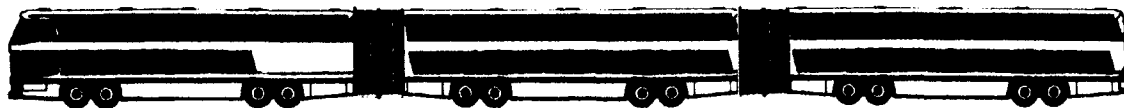
Meetings for the Westside restructuring have been pushed back to January to avoid

the holidays and conflicting with meetings regarding the proposals for the median of Santa Monica Blvd. It is anticipated the Mid-City area study will have its first public meetings during the same period or shortly thereafter. We'll pass on dates, times and places when known.

Santa Monica's restructuring will have its final round of public meetings in January or February with the hope to bring the changes before their city council by March 1st.

MTA continues to go forward with the plan to extend the Red Line westward from Western Avenue to Pico/San Vicente. The staff is not studying Wilshire because they have not been directed to do so by the Board. Preliminary environmental evaluation begins this month, an alignment is slated to be settled upon by next August with the hope of Federal approval in March of 1998. Stay tuned on this one...

S.B. 836, recently signed by Governor Wilson, will have a huge impact on ride-share programs. It raises the threshold to 250 employees for mandatory compliance with AQMD rule 2202 (formerly Regulation XV). In the present business-friendly climate ridesharing will probably be a voluntary activity. The era of mandates has passed (at least for present).



# GETTING TO KNOW YOU

*This article originally appeared in the context of animal-protection advocacy and issues. Its content has been modified to apply specifically to southern California transit issues. A copy of the original text is available from The Humane Society of the United States. This version is printed by permission from the Animal Activist Alert, published by The HSUS, Washington, D.C. 20037.*

We have often encouraged our SO.CA.TA members to meet and develop a relationship with the state legislators who represent you in your state's capitol. Here are a few tips to get you started. It taking the first step makes you nervous, get a group together and plunge in!

While there are only 535 elected members of Congress, there are nearly 8,000 state legislators. They are approachable. You can simply call his/her office and ask to meet with a legislator who represents you. If you don't know where to find your legislators, call your local board of elections for the information. In some states legislators may have large staffs, but many operate virtually on their own. Legislators may have offices in the state capitol, but they spend most of their time in their home districts. They want you to feel free to contact them.

1. Be politically active. Put campaign signs in your yard, volunteer to work on a campaign, or attend political fund-raisers or work for a political party. Any legislator you actively support will get to know you and appreciate you!

2. Use your local transit agency. If you're involved with a good agency invite the politician to come view it. If the agency has problems, ask him/her to come and discuss

solutions. Invite the legislator to be a part of activities. He/she may be happy to be a master of ceremonies or just be introduced to the crowd.

3. Give awards. Public officials like to receive awards--who doesn't? If you belong to a transit advocacy group that has any reason to present an award to an elected official, do it publicly and with as much media attention as possible. If you are presenting someone in your community with an award or certificate of appreciation, involve the legislator--let him/her know ahead of time so a letter of congratulation can be written. Include legislators' spouses at ceremonies and events. Often they are interested in our issues and can be quite helpful.

4. Drop names. If you can tap a big name celebrity--a famous athlete, singer, television or movie star, another politician, or government official--to help you on a project, invite your local state legislator to come and meet this famous person.

5. Slip in through the back door. Transit and transportation issues are not always a top priority with legislators. If you can get to know an elected official while working on another issue, do so. You can later use that relationship to cultivate him/her on transit-related issues.

6. Try the direct approach. Call a legislator up and simply tell him/her you would like to get better acquainted. Ask him/her at a convenient time to discuss areas of mutual interest. Offer to provide information on transit and transportation issues. Follow up with a thank-you note. Keep in touch with notes on local issues (including non transit issues). (*cont'd on pg 9*)

## **DOWNTOWN DASH** *Chris Ledermuller/*

These are the new LADOT DASH routes effective Oct 28:

**Route A:** Originates from Little Tokyo, travels west along 1st St., south on Flower down to the Convention Center, where it returns north on Figueroa, and back north on Flower, east on 1st, back to Little Tokyo. Operates: Monday through Friday, 6:30am-6:30pm. Frequency: Every 5 minutes.

**Route B:** Originates in Chinatown, heads south on Broadway, east on Ord, south on Alameda, serves the front of Union Station, then south on Los Angeles St., west on Temple, south on Grand, then a loop around the Financial District (west on 5th, south on Flower, east on 7th, north on Olive, west on 5th), north via Grand, east via Temple, north via Los Angeles St., stop on Alameda in front of Union Station, left on Cesar Chavez, north on Spring, west on Ord, north on Broadway, west on College, and north on Hill. Operates: Monday through Friday, 5:50am-6:30pm. Frequency: Every 5 minutes.

**Route C:** Originates at the west part of the Financial District loop (see above), and from heading east on 7th goes south on Grand, east on Pico, north on Olive, and finishes its route by doing the east part of the Financial District loop. Operates: Monday through Friday, 9:00am-3:00pm. Frequency: Every 10 minutes.

**Route D:** Originates from Gateway, heads south serving Piper Tech and City Personnel Building, where it heads west on Temple, south on Spring, west on Olympic, south on Hill, west on Pico, south on Grand, where it serves the Grand Station and Trade Tech College. North, it goes east on 18th, north on Olive, east on Olympic, north on Spring, east on Temple, and back to Gateway. Operates: Monday through Friday,

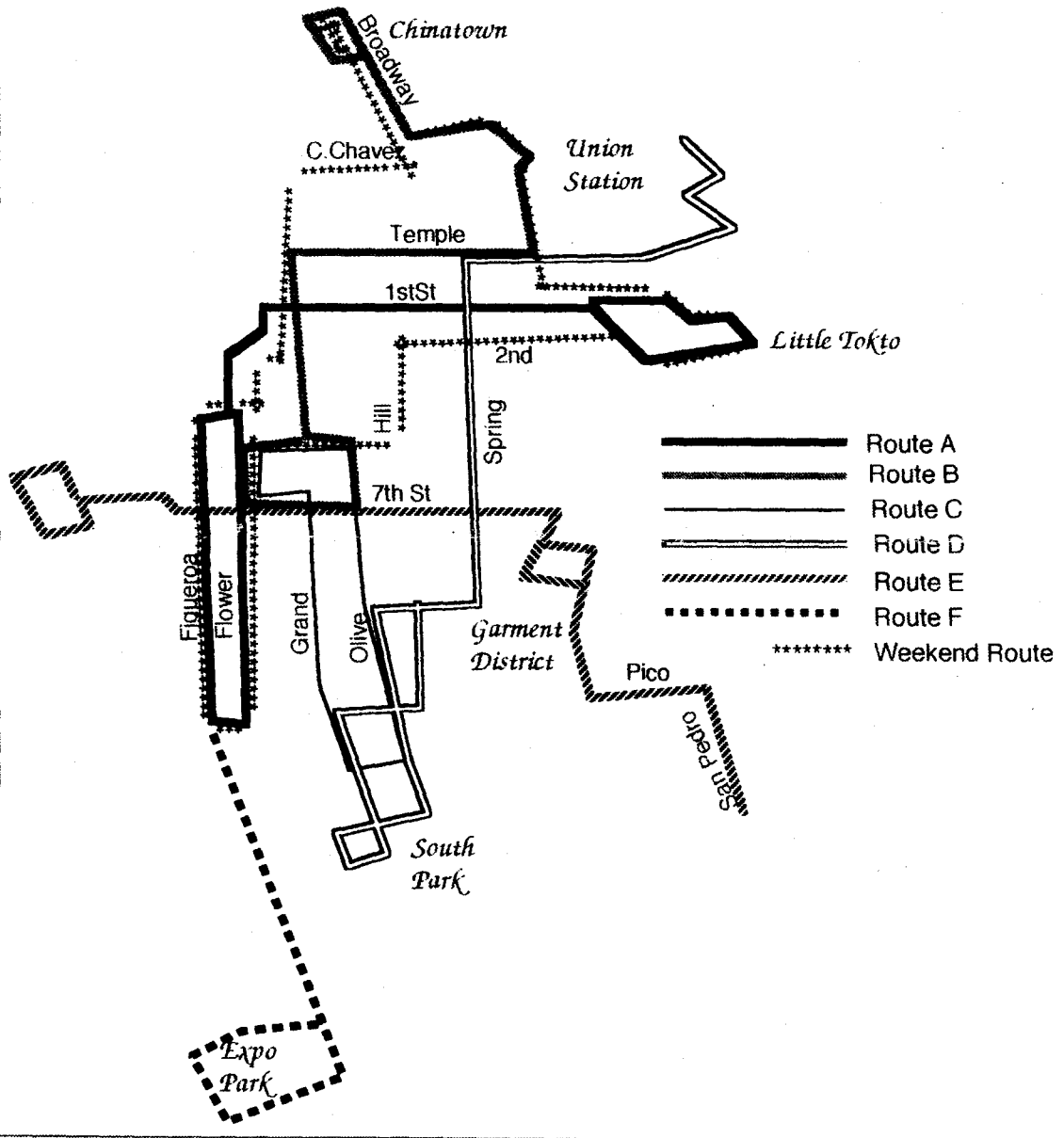
5:50am-7:00pm. Frequency: Every 5 minutes.

**Route E:** Originates from Good Samaritan Hospital, heads east on 6th, south on Bixel, east on Wilshire, east on 7th via Francisco, south on Los Angeles St., east on 9th, south on Maple, east on Pico, and south on San Pedro to the San Pedro Station. Northbound goes north on San Pedro, west on Pico, north on Maple, west on 8th, north on Los Angeles, west on 7th, west on Wilshire via Francisco, south on Bixel, west on 7th, and north on Witmer back to Good Sam. Operates: Mon.-Fri. 6:30am-7:30pm, Saturdays 6:30am-5:00pm, Sundays 10:00am-5:00pm. Frequency: Every 5 minutes weekdays, every 15 minutes weekends.

**Route F:** Starts at the western edge of the Financial District Loop (see above), heads south on Flower, west on 11th, south on Figueroa straight down to USC/Exposition Park. Returning, the bus heads west on Exposition, north on Vermont, east on Jefferson, and north on Figueroa all the way back to the Financial District. Operates: 6:30am-6:30pm weekdays, 10:00am-5:00pm weekends. Frequency: Every 15 minutes weekdays, every 20 minutes weekends.

**Downtown Discovery:** Tested during the time when the Smithsonian was here. Starts in Chinatown (see line B), east on Ord, south on Alameda, serves Union Station, south on Los Angeles St., west on 1st, serves Little Tokyo (see Line A), west on 2nd, south on Hill, west on 5th, south on Flower, where it serves the Pico Blue Line Station. Returns serving the Convention Center, north on Figueroa, east on 4th, north on Hope, north on Grand, east on Cesar Chavez, and north back up to Chinatown. Operates: Weekends only, 10:00am-5:00pm. Frequency: Every 20 minutes.

# NEW DOWNTOWN DASH ROUTES



## **MTA DAY PASS PLAN** *Chris Leder Muller/Pat Moser*

Public transportation, especially the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority, should implement new and easy ways for passengers to be encouraged to ride public transportation at a fair price. Therefore, a day pass program should be implemented by the MTA as such a ridership tool.

Omnitrans in San Bernardino, began using the day pass as a replacement for transfers in their systems July 1 of this year. Since their program is in its infancy, no usage comments are available. San Diego Transit also sells day passes. Their day passes are being bought more by tourists who ride the bus and trolley system in the metropolitan San Diego area, and those can be bought in multiple-day increments, for up to 2 weeks.

The MTA should test out this day pass program. In order for the system to work with some success, the Omnitrans method [of eliminating the transfer] should not be used, because bus rides would cost too much and ridership would severely plummet. However, start out day passes as being available only through Metro Rail Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs). If operated through the TVMs, MTA can save a lot of money starting a program like this up. A relatively easy modification can be made to the TVM's programming to understand a passenger's asking for a day pass (plenty of surplus buttons and computer memory). Also, a new size of paper, perhaps the size of a business card, would be prudent to use instead of the normal rail ticket sliver. A new size of paper may be used, but the day pass would have an advantage over a transfer: the day pass will be printed on demand, rather than a mass of unused

and unusable transfers at the end of the day.

The day pass should have a fair price to it, like \$3.00. A passenger would have to ride a bus, transfer, and come back to pay for the pass with a savings of \$0.20. The MTA, if considerate enough, could also add the price of express zones into the day pass, and the passenger won't have to shell out cash to pay zone charges [one day pass at \$4.00 a day], or simply sell another day pass at a higher price which allows a rider free express zones as well as the \$3.00 pass.

One problem that could create a great idea like this to be killed is if the MTA is worried about abuse of the day pass. Passengers may transfer them in between people, and this could go on for an all day period. The truth is, fare fraud occurs every day, and the fraud is on such a small scale that it is not a financial threat. The best thing to do is to simply encourage the honor system: when passengers will no longer need a day pass, make sure that they hand it over to a driver or simply tear the day pass up. Better yet, have a small perforated section on the ticket (although it would cost more to produce) that a person could tear off, and without that section, the ticket is void and is not honored.

If the day pass becomes successful available through ticket machines only, then set up a program where the drivers will also sell day passes. The day pass should be good on all local, rail (maybe express too), and interagency details can be worked out with the individual providers themselves. (*cont'd on Page 9*)

*(Day Pass, from page 8)*

The day passes should expire on 12:01 a.m. the next morning. Also, only make a regular fare day pass available (no senior or student day passes).

The third phase should involve a computerized printing system available through all pass/token outlets and customer centers. The MTA should buy only as many machines as demanded by outlets who actually join the program and charge a subscription fee, either monthly or yearly, for the outlets to sell day passes, to pay for the machines. Basically, the outlets would be renting the machines from the MTA. Also, the MTA should allow the outlets to do something that wouldn't be available on the TVM's or through drivers: the ability to sell day passes in multiple-day increments, for up to 7 consecutive days, with their special machines. For value,

passengers would then be steered towards the other passes, like semi-monthly. The MTA should also allow the outlet to keep a commission of around \$0.50 for each day sold on a day pass. Then, the outlet would promote passengers to buy multiple days on a day pass.

The day pass program would be a great savings for many riders. People who would need to use more than 3 lines, people who wish to stop over on a certain line, and a day pass also attracts tourists. This program would be great, but the MTA should not hype the day pass to death or eliminate other fare payment methods to force people to use this. The best method for MTA to keep this program successful is to do everything on demand to save money, and not be over-ambitious with the program. The easier it is to use, the better, and everybody ends up happy.

*(Getting to Know You, from page 5)*

7. Get to know the legislator's staff. If the staff likes you, you are more likely to get to know the legislator directly. Offer to assist the staff so that they come to think of you as a resource on transit and transportation.

8. Say thank you. When appropriate, thank legislators for their actions. Publicize their good work in your transit advocacy group newsletter (or in other ways) and let them know you spread the word. If they voted correctly on any kind of bill, drop them a handwritten note of thanks to let them know of your appreciation.

9. Send an invitation. Invite a legislator you'd like to meet to discuss the legislative process with members or your transit advocacy group. Ask him/her to speak to your group on how to be

more effective.

10. Network. If you ask around, you will probably find someone who knows the legislator and who could personally introduce you. If you spend time in the capitol when the legislature is convened, you will eventually get a chance to meet most legislators. Remember, even if legislators don't agree with you on an issue you may be working on, never antagonize anyone. A legislator may disagree with you on subway construction but agree with you on bus service improvement. Cultivate mutual areas of interest. Of course, you never want a legislator to so dislike you that he/she deliberately works against you.

These suggestions should help you make contact with the state representatives from your district. To develop a friendship with a legislator from another district, enlist an acquaintance from that



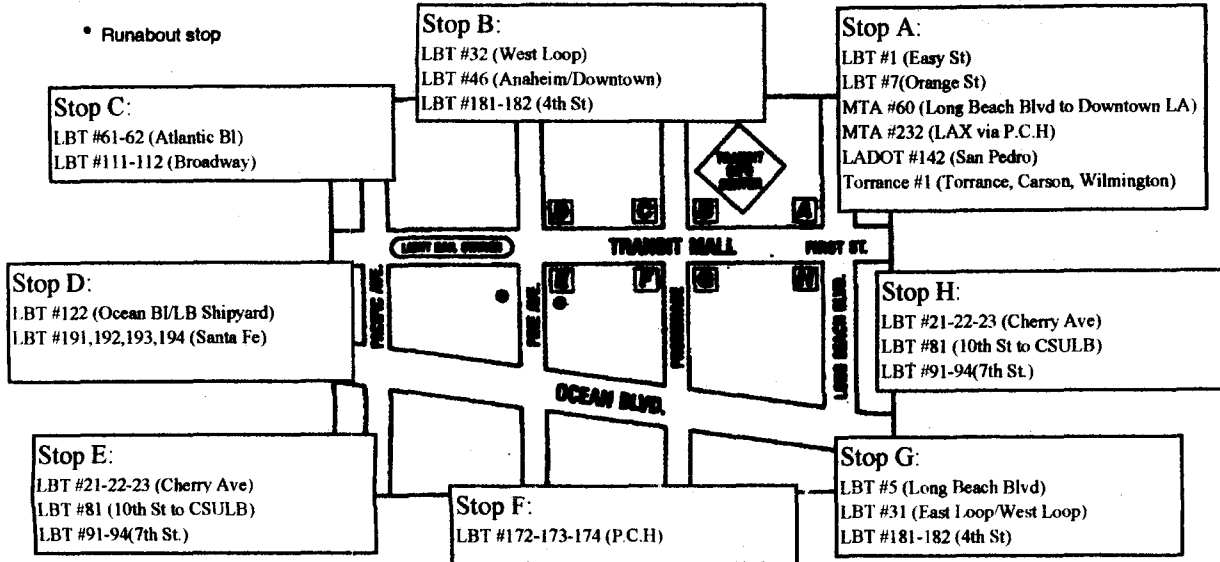
# TRANSIT CENTER OF THE MONTH

## LONG BEACH TRANSIT MALL

Location: 1st St (between Long Beach Ave and Pacific Ave), Downtown Long Beach.

Information Center: 223 E. First St., open Mon-Fri, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm.

Transit Information: 310-591-2301 (Long Beach Transit), 1-800-COMMUTE (other systems)



## TRANSIT TRIVIA *Steve Crosmer/Michael Ludwig*

### September's Transit Trivia question was:

What agency provided the first rail transit service to a Southern California airport?

**The answer:** Caltrans (provided commuter rail service between Los Angeles and Oxnard in the early '80's. One of the stops was Burbank Airport)

### This month's Transit Trivia question:

Which systems in the Los Angeles metropolitan area are completely free of charge?

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