

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

MTA's June 29th schedule changes include two improvements enhancing evening connections long advocated by SO.CA.TA members:

- Route 81 will now run to Eagle Rock Plaza until midnight, connecting with route 180/181 which goes between Hollywood and Pasadena via Glendale. Founder Pat Moser is credited by MTA staff as making this happen.

- Route 111 has additional evening stops at Florence and Paramount in Downey (eastbound at 9:02 p.m. and 10:22 p.m., westbound at 8:21 p.m. and 9:03 p.m.) connecting with route 460 which runs between downtown Los Angeles and Anaheim via Downey, Norwalk, Buena Park and Fullerton. President Gabbard and Director Phil Capo highlighted this as a key gap that needed addressing. We hope eventually yet more late stops will be added.

Other recent MTA route improvements include:

- new stops on #497 at Arrow Hwy/Claremont Bl, and on the San Bernardino Fwy. bus stops at Azusa Ave. and Puente Ave.

- #444, 445, 446, 447 and LADOT 448 now serve the Harbor Freeway Transitway stop at Slauson. #444 and #445 also serve the new Artesia Transit Center, near I-110 and S-91 (Service to Alpine Village on #445 has been discontinued).

- late nite #70 to Sybil Brand has been deleted
- #78 will shuttle between Arcadia and

Huntington/Maycrest (connection w/#79) after 8:30 pm.

- #164 and #165 modified to serve Warner Center Transit Center (Oxnard/Owensmouth)

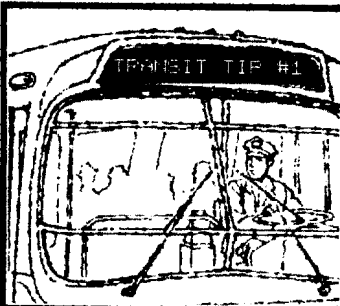
Service changes in Orange County include:

- all peak-hour #50 trips extended to Long Beach VA Hospital
- all #53 trips extended to Main Place Mall, Santa Ana
- all weekday #60 trips extended to the Long Beach Transit Mall (OCTA service had been removed from Downtown Long Beach in 1992)
- consolidation of #394 and #397 in San Clemente (now one route, called #397)
- consolidation of #439 and #454 in Orange

Antelope Valley Transit has approved changes recommended by a restructuring study prepared by consultants. Hopefully by next month we'll know what the changes are and when they will start.

Vice President Charles Powell reports that Baldwin Park on July 1st began operation of a single fixed route shuttle. Cost to ride is 25 cents.

VISTA Central (Oxnard-Camarillo) hasn't been cancelled, but service has been reduced to six peak-hour round trips between Oxnard (Transportation Ctr/C. St/College) and Camarillo (Flynn Rd-service to Downtown Camarillo has been deleted)



When in downtown Los Angeles evenings or weekends, and you need MTA timetables go to Arco Plaza's MTA customer relations location. The Gateway rack (near the aquarium) often is emptied by heavy use. The Arco schedule rack usually has new timetables earlier than Gateway and rarely is out of a particular schedule. And only on Sundays do you have to sign in with the guard in the lobby.

BULLETIN BOARD

If a strike is called by MTA's operators the latest information about replacement service will be on MTA's home page (<http://www.mta.net>). We will in such circumstances work to make the public aware of our Transit Guide as an information source, along with the Southern California Transit Information Page.

Member John Ulloth suggests these changes to our meeting agendas to improve efficiency: "have announcements of new service as the first item, with a time limit if necessary. Members get to blow off steam and visitors can witness our expertise; and, all other announcements, old business, minutes and the treasurer's report should be in the newsletter instead as they are time consuming and boring"

On June 21st President Gabbard was the guest for a class dealing with Modern American Social Problems at Cal State Dominguez Hills. The topic was "Pollution, Congestion and Public Transit". Our existence came to their attention via our home page! Because the class is broadcast live, with sessions seen over local cable public access channels, at remote sites and on video-cassette, it afforded a chance for one of our leaders to practice media relations in an informal setting. Professor Alex Burckin interviewed the President for about 1 hour and 40 minutes in a stimulating and wide-ranging discussion. We were provided with a videocassette of the appearance for our archives.

LA Times reporter Richard Simon wishes to contact anyone who regularly rides the Blue Line during peak hours for an article he is working on. He can be contacted at (213) 237-7108.

Our July 25th owl excursion (beginning 8 p.m. at the aquarium in the East Portal building in the Gateway Transit Center near Union Station in downtown Los Angeles) has gained a political aspect with the announcement MTA plans to restructure owl service starting in December (to save about \$1 million a year). By riding and seeing what things are like late at night we will have credibility when responding to the proposed changes.

At our May meeting Director Chris Ledermuller circulated a draft report on his research about articulated buses with some recommendations for several local operators including MTA. He has also written Foothill and MTA suggesting that zones be marked in schedules. In response Foothill sent him their new brochure on zones. MTA is considering the idea. We appreciate Chris's work in these areas. Other members who recently have had letters published in various newspapers include Roger Christensen, Chris Flescher and Kymberleigh Richards. We appreciate their efforts to be involved in the dialogue about public transit and its place in our transportation system.

We hope to discuss the draft by-laws at the July 12th meeting. By now all members should have received their copy for review. Comments have already been received from several members. All will be shared at the meeting. If you can't attend you can call, write or e-mail your comments for consideration. Our thanks to the working group for preparing the draft.

Executive Committee meetings will now be held at the Eagle Rock City Hall, which is located on Colorado Blvd. a few blocks from our former meeting site at the Eagle Rock Branch Library. This locale was secured by the efforts of Founder Pat Moser. (cont'd on Page 5)

PLAC REPORT *Dana Gabbard*

What is one to make of the political grandstanding surrounding rail in the San Fernando Valley? Bud Lembke in *California Corridors* speaks of it as "the latest brouhaha". Vice President Charles Powell sagely suggests the succession movement is behind most of it. Both Founder Pat Moser and a *Los Angeles Times* editorial have pointed out that ongoing squabbling among Valley residents over where to put a rail line is chiefly why the project won't begin construction until after 2007. Besides, the people seem less interested in rail than in making sure no one else gets it before them.

California Journal (a magazine on politics) has in its July issue an article titled "MTA: Los Angeles' Transit Nightmare" by Sigrid Bathen. It is an excellent overview and concludes that the blame for the situation rests squarely with the MTA Board.

Mayor Riordan's appointed board proposal is to me no better than Senate Polanco's rearranging of the deck chairs approach. I wonder if SO.CA.TA should adopt a motion supporting an elected board. The present board is not accountable and any proposal for reforming it must deal with that.

The price of our situation is loss of local control. Gordon Linton at the Federal Transit Administration dictated key parts of the recently adopted recovery plan. We have local and state government also trying to dictate to the agency. It is a woeful state we have descended to. Meanwhile Board members play parochial politics (the feeding frenzy over the Call for Projects that even had Inspector General Arthur Sinai laugh in disbelief) and grandstanding (the tag team of Riordan and Yaroslavsky have their 200 bus proposal summarily held over until next month).

Last month I mentioned BRU leader Eric Mann stated he felt 100 new buses would be needed to comply with the pilot project new service in the consent decree. And I wondered where he thought they should be operated. I am still wondering, because at none of the meetings last month did the BRU have a single suggestion for new service.

I attended the June 27th Joint Focus Group meeting to provide input for MTA's Long Range Plan Update. It is a sign of the chaos board meddling has created that all we had to review was a document titled "Draft Plan Emerging Recommendations". There will be a public hearing for the draft plan that may occur this month (the schedule is also in chaos). Anyone who wants to attend should contact me so I can let them know the date and time as soon as I find out when it is.

The plan includes details about the mysterious mobility allowance from the '95 plan. Now known as the three tier approach, it is:

- Tier I (high volume bus lines) - current UTU drivers and perhaps with articulated buses
- Tier II (moderate level, key connectors, community circulators) - UTU drivers, munis or private operators
- Tier III (low demand) - instead of fixed route have smart shuttle, demand-responsive service such as the Crenshaw Connector

In my statement for the meeting I questioned financial assumptions in the plan and continued avoidance of the possible impact of the consent decree on bus capital and operating costs. And I expressed concern that requests from local Councils of Government to evaluate whether various areas get their so called "fair share" of transportation funding is parochialism that a regional body like MTA shouldn't feed into. ☹

(Bulletin Board, from Page 3)

"Dollars & Sense; The Economic Case for Public Transportation in America" is a report made on behalf of a coalition of groups advocating for public transit in ISTEA renewal. Its key points:

- transit has benefits for those who use it plus motorists, businesses and society at large.
- many areas have made public transit an essential component of their transportation system.
- where investment in the transit system has been made, ridership increased with economic benefits for the local economy. There is a market for transit if strategies are geared to tap it.

To request a copy e-mail: mmullins@apta.com (or look at the copy that will be brought to our July meeting)

A study of downtown Los Angeles bus service has begun under the aegis of the CRA. This is in the early stages and meetings will be held when the consultants have recommendations ready for review.

LAX has upcoming scoping meetings about the EIS/EIR for its master plan. (see pg. 7 for meeting times). One of the key goals of the master plan is connections to transit networks, especially the Green Line. The Notice of Preparation/Notice of Intent can be obtained by calling (310) 646-7690.

A group of Southern California bus enthusiasts who have been getting together since May finally have a name: the Rapid Transit Society. Quite a few So.Ca.TA members have been attending the meetings. The meeting consists of a monthly excursion the 3rd Saturday of every month. For this month's excursion, the trip will start from the Union Station Busway stop. Members should arrive at the stop by 11:30 am. The trip will be L.A. to Pasadena to Hollywood to the Observatory via Lines 485, 180, and 203. (RTS produces a monthly bulletin, *Bus Notes*, which will be available at the July meeting).

If you can help distribute flyers publicizing SO.CA.TA and the Transit Guide please let us know and we'll gladly send you some. Libraries and transit centers are especially good locales to leave them.

As always, *The Transit Advocate* needs articles, letters, photographs and research (newspaper clippings, etc.) from all members and interested non-members. All materials should be sent to **3010 Wilshire #362, Los Angeles, CA 90010**. (or e-mailed to transit@lerami.lerctr.org). Material for publication should be received two weeks before the scheduled SO.CA.TA meeting date.

MTA isn't the only body drafting long range plans concerning transportation. The City of Los Angeles is drafting a transportation element for their general plan revision. It is currently under review by the City Council and Mayor's Office and may yet undergo further changes. And the Southern California Association of Governments is preparing a Regional Transportation Plan they hope to have ready

early next year. A draft recently circulated received a very poor reception for seeming to encourage sprawl and fixate on goods movement by increasing highway capacity. And air quality goals SCAG is supposed help local governments to comply with were left out.

Oh well, back to the drawing board.

ROUTE OF THE MONTH *Chris Ledermuller*

OCTA 60-Tustin to Long Beach via 17th/Westminster

Where does it go: Long Beach Transit Mall (weekdays only), Long Beach VA Hospital, Cal State Long Beach, Leisure World, Rancho Santiago College-Santa Ana Campus, Atlantis Park, 6th & Flower transfer area, Santa Ana Transit Terminal, Larwin Square.

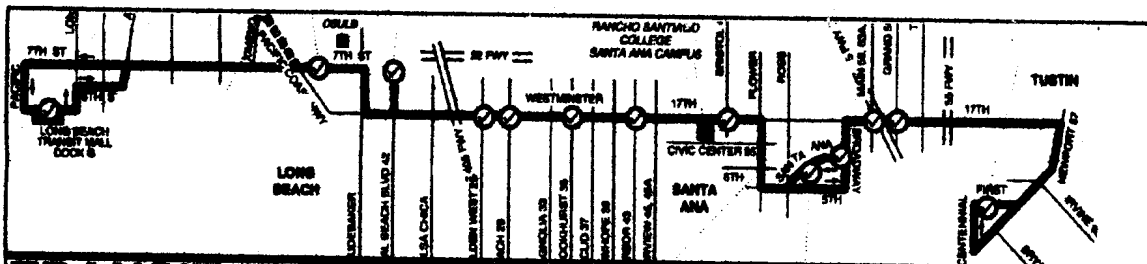
When does it run: 4:30am-11:00pm everyday. Weekend service starts later and ends earlier than shown.

How frequently: 15 minutes weekdays, 20 minutes weekends, 30 minutes Sundays.

How much: \$1.00 (\$.45 during peak hours, \$.15 during all other times for seniors disabled).

Note: Line 60 is not fully through routed. Many buses from Long Beach only go to Santa Ana Transit Terminal. The other portion travels from Westminster & Golden West to Larwin Square. Weekends, the westbound layover point is still PCH & Ximeno.

Who can I call: (714) or (800)-636-RIDE (7433).



TRANSIT TRIVIA *Chris Ledermuller*

Last month's Transit Trivia question was:

Besides MTA #439, what other bus routes connect with all three Metro rail lines (Red, Blue and Green)?

The answer: MTA #40, 51, 55, 60, 207, 357, 442, 460, 444-447; Gardena route 1, Torrance routes 1 and 2; LADOT route 448; OCTA route 701

This month's Transit Trivia question:

Question: Which Metro Rail station has no connecting bus service on weekends (except for Dial-A-Ride)?

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