

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

Major changes to **Montebello** bus service took place in June: Routes #10 and #50 were cancelled (the portion of Riggan Bl served by #10 is covered by Monterey Park Transit routes #1, 2 and 5). Remaining portions of #10 and #50, along with #70, were consolidated into one large loop around Montebello, designated Line #70. This service operates weekdays and Saturdays, and will serve the Montebello Metrolink station when it opens in Fall 1997.

- Line #4 shortcuts along Medical Center Dr, replacing service on California Street.
- Line 19 no longer serves the County Museum. (stays on Redlands Blvd)
- Line #71 uses "D" St. instead of "I" St. between Mountain and Euclid.
- Weekend service has doubled on Lines #1, 2, and 14, from 30 minutes Saturdays and 60 minutes Sundays to 15 minutes Saturdays and 30 minutes Sundays. Service has also been added on Sundays to Lines #10 and #63, as well as additional Saturday service on #3/4.

As of July 1st **West Hollywood** discontinued its night shuttle route. This was prompted by budget woes plus low ridership (per passenger cost was \$5!). Service weekdays and Saturday afternoons (10 a.m.-7:30 p.m.) will continue.

Inland Empire 110 now also serves Ontario Mills Mall. Travel times have been adjusted to account for this. It takes about 30-40 minutes from Montclair TransCenter to Ontario Mills. The stop has also been moved closer to the entrance.

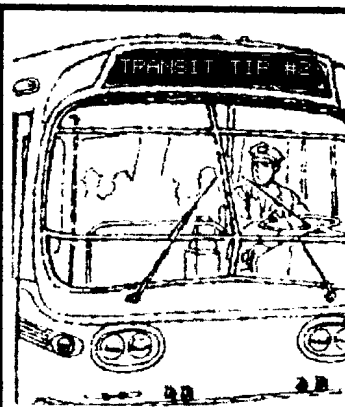
Omnitrans service changes include:

All **MARTA** Off-The-Mountain service now operates through Lake Arrowhead between San Bernardino and Big Bear. In addition, Sunday service, as well as experimental night service in Big Bear, has been cancelled.

- New Route #69 will go from Haven and Foothill to the Ontario Mills Mall during week-days from 7-10 am and 3-6 pm, serving the government offices along Haven Ave.

- New Line #73 replaces Line #72 weekend service. It travels along Holt and Central (like the old MTA #694) from the Indian Hill Mall to the Chino Institute for Men.

- Line #2 routes via Prospect, instead of providing direct service to Loma Linda Medical Center.



When using MTA tokens be aware that only the first one has the value of a base fare (\$1.35). If you use more than one token for an express line the subsequent tokens are redeemed for the purchase price (90 cents each).

An example - you board a line with two freeway zones: the cost paid with tokens would be two tokens plus ten cents - the first token for base fare, and since the second is only worth 90 cents you have to also pay a dime (50 cents/zone x 2=\$1-90 cents=10 cents).

BULLETIN BOARD

"Transit Tips" have appeared in the July issue of the newsletter, as well as the current issue. Is this a feature that you would like to see more often? If so, we need more transit tips! All members and nonmembers are invited to submit a "Transit Tip" to SO.CA.TA (using the address at the end of this article)

Given last month's transit tip, we are sorry to pass along word that founder Pat Moser reports he was refused access to the lower level of Arco Plaza in downtown Los Angeles on a Saturday to get schedules from the MTA Customer Center there. When complaining about this treatment Mr. Moser was surprised at one point to have a security or mall official state that the rack attracts "transients" and they'd prefer it not be there. MTA staff say they want people to have access to the rack evenings and weekends and that they will investigate the incident.

Our next public outreach will be at an Eco Fest being held at Barnsdall Arts Park Complex (4804 Hollywood Blvd.) on Sunday September 28th from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Let us know if you are interested in helping staff the booth anytime during those hours. It is a great chance to meet the public, publicize SO.CA.TA and sell transit guides!

It isn't too early to mark your calendar to remember October 25th and 26th will be the fall Rail Festival at the Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris (17 miles south of Riverside). Also upcoming at OERM is a pumpkin train Oct. 5 & 11. For details call (909) 657-2605 or <http://www.oerm.mus.ca.us>

Next month's newsletter will have a report on our recent owl excursion. But we are happy to report our publicizing of this event resulted in notices appearing in two publications (the Independent and New Times-Los Angeles) plus news radio KFVB interviewed President Gabbard about the purpose of the trip (if any members heard what was broadcast we'd appreciate hearing about it).

MTA is giving tours of the Red Line tunnel in North Hollywood. We hope to schedule such a tour for this fall (possibly on a Saturday).

Another site to get information about the status of ISTEPA (and other useful information) is <http://www.transit-center.com>

Numbers in a new Census Bureau report, "Population Projections: States, 1995-2025" (P25-1131, May 1997), illustrate why transportation issues will become only more important in the years ahead. California's population is projected to increase by over 50% (nearly 18 million persons) during those thirty years! Plus the state will be the leading recipient of international migrants (8 million). It is daunting to imagine the impact on our transportation infrastructure

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 is again reeling from reversals. First a judge declared the process of selecting a firm to oversee the east extension of Red Line had to be reopened. This was the object of the fierce battle that destroyed Joe Drew. And the Federal Transit Administration gave thumbs down to the revised recovery plan as still unrealistic. Which may force the Board to again deal with the rail construction schedule--and set off inter-regional warfare.

Mayor Riordan marked the start of his MTA Board Chairmanship by changing its by-laws to discourage public comment. He also moved the meetings to the last Thursday of the month starting at 9:30 a.m. Then he mumbled that he may change the schedule. The meeting was even more chaotic than usual.

A.B. 1143 has been signed by the Governor and goes into force January 1st. Authored by Assembly Transportation Committee Chairman Kevin Murry, it eliminates most board alternates and strengthens the CEO (4 year term, 2/3 vote of the board to remove, approves all construction contracts).

S.B. 567 by Senator Richard Polanco now has the backing of Mayor Riordan. It gives the Supervisors one appointee (non-public official from an unincorporated area), the Mayor of Los Angeles 4 appointees (non-public officials) and leaves the 4 city selection seats unchanged. A member tells me her supervisor in reaction now supports an elected board. This bill sits in the Assembly Appropriation Committee, and if passed out of it next goes to the full Assembly for a vote. As if MTA board meetings weren't tense enough without this hanging over them!

The search for an MTA CEO continues. Michael Ascher, who heads the New York agency for tunnels and bridges, is the candidate Mayor

Riordan favors. He evidently is well regarded in the industry but heading MTA is far beyond anything he has done. The search firm also suggested ex-SEPTA CEO Louis Gambaccini. Both will be interviewed by the Board.

A profile of the Bus Riders Union in the July 18th LA Weekly ("Hell on Wheels" by Erin Aubry) is worthy of note because it is not 100% laudatory. Criticisms are included (albeit anonymous ones) and questions are raised if one reads between the lines.

We should acknowledge one of the BRU's finest hours. At the July 31st MTA board meeting they made a strong stand against a proposed cut of the commission MTA pays vendors of its passes and tokens. And for good reason: the staff report (if you read a chart carefully) showed the number of outlets could drop by a third from 726 to 467! In a savvy move the BRU had an official from Ralphs who clearly implied a commission cut would probably force them to stop selling passes. And Eric Mann read consent decree provisions the proposal seemed to violate. Suddenly an egregiously opportunistic boardmember denounced the idea. It was sent back to committee. Want to bet it'll never again see the light of day?

I see a deeper significance and a pattern: MTA's staff generally avoid political land mines whenever possible. This and other recent cost cutting measures could signify MTA is in far worse financial shape than it wants to admit. Last year's State Auditor report makes this surmise credible. Don't think I'm gloating - the prospect of MTA going broke worries me.

Another financial hot potato is funding of Access Services, Inc. (the ADA compliance paratransit provider in Los Angeles County). MTA is trying to have it funded with federal funds and ►

ARTICULATED BUSES *Chris Ledermuller*

Recently, I have presented a report I have researched about the beneficial uses of articulated buses. For those that might be interested in articulated buses, I have provided some brief facts about the pros of articulated buses.

- Obviously, articulated buses provide more capacity per bus. A typical 40 foot bus can hold around 80 people. An articulated bus can hold around 140-150.

- There is a trade-off between cost of acquisition and cost per passenger. A shorter bus is cheaper to purchase. The costs for carrying the passenger increase, however. More so if the route has overflow passengers. While an articulated bus is the most expensive bus that could be purchased due to length, the costs of carrying passengers drops.

- Undoubtedly, labor costs will be saved. One driver can carry a lot more passengers on an artic than a 40 foot bus.

- The Los Angeles area is a prime area for articulated buses. Since most of MTA's inner-city service has frequencies of 10 minutes or

better, articulated buses can be very useful for carrying passengers, especially on the problem overcrowding routes (20, 204, 207, etc.).

- MTA in particular, has to reduce load factors. They have a consent decree to worry about,

- Many bus stops are long enough to handle articulated buses all over L.A.

- While it would take 2 years from initial order until arrival of production, MTA will have to put more buses on the roads. By then, 8 minute headway runs will be common. Articulated buses can help from putting more 40 foot buses on the road.

- It is not just MTA that could benefit from articulated buses. There could be good use from SMMBL, Long Beach Transit, OCTA in Orange County, and even Foothill Transit.

After doing months of research both from federal facts and information bus manufacturers provided me, I hope I can get support from fellow members to have So. Ca. TA urge the use of artic. ■

keep the budget flat. ASI says it is growing and will need more funds. Besides us members of MTA's Citizen Advisory Council and Access Advisory Council are also keeping an eye on this situation.

Here is a surprise: the latest supplement to the draft Transportation Element for Los Angeles' General Plan mentions the Proposition A map! They even include a version of it the LACTC issued which I hadn't seen before and is less schematic than the one in the ballot pamphlet. Why has this happened? The Mayor's Planning Commissioners want to highlight the San Diego

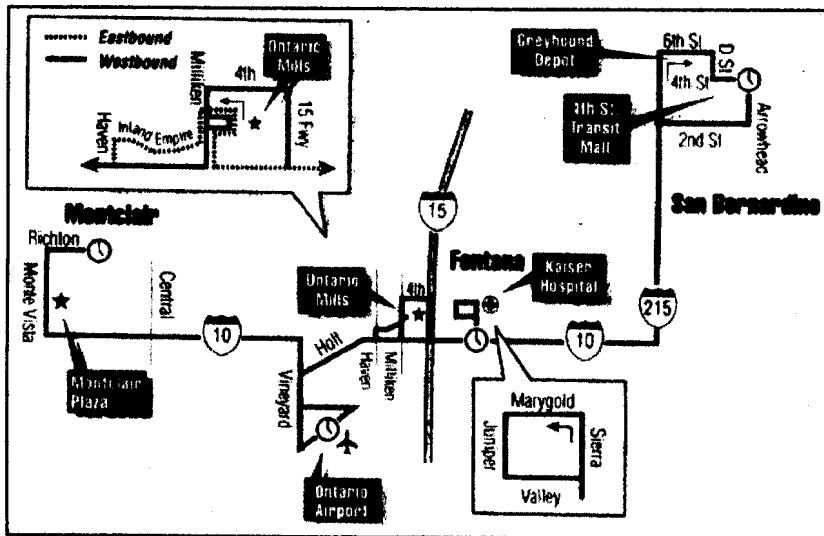
freeway rail line in the map (Mayor Riordan recently stated he wants to do something about this crowded corridor).

Another oddity is the Element lists the Crenshaw rail project as one of those slated for future construction while MTA's long range plan does not. You know I had to write and point this out to the Planning Commission.

In keeping with my policy of saying nothing if you have nothing nice to say, I will say nothing about Patt Morrison's July 11th LA Times column "We've Got Wheels - and Excuses". ■

ROUTE OF THE MONTH *Chris Ledermuller*

Inland Empire Connection #110 (Montclair-San Bernardino)



Where does it go: Montclair TransCenter, Ontario Airport, Fontana Kaiser Hospital, 4th St. Transit Mall in San Bernardino. And now...ONTARIO MILLS MALL!

When does it run: Hourly everyday.

How much does it cost: 85 cents for one zone, \$1.60 for both zones. An Omnitrans day pass is good for 85 cents off your fare.

Conveniences: Better connections to the Ontario Mills mall for people from the L.A. area, San Gabriel Valley, and San Bernardino. Also, #110 buses continue as IEC Line #100 to Riverside.

Whom to call: 1-800-90MNIBUS.

TRANSIT TRIVIA *Chris Ledermuller/Joe Dunn*

Last month's Transit Trivia question was:

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

The answer: Marine/Redondo Green Line station. WAVE Dial-a-ride must be called for service.

This month's Transit Trivia question:

What MTA local routes use a freeway for a segment of their route?

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