

Metrolink has expanded weekend service on the San Bernardino Line, and has made significant modifications in the Antelope Valley (Santa Clarita) Line weekend service as well.

The San Bernardino Line now has six round trips on Saturday (up from four); four of the inbound trips and five of the outbound trips have been extended from San Bernardino to Riverside via Colton.

Weekend service on the Antelope Valley Line now runs four round trips instead of five. However, all four round trips now go all the way to Lancaster, adding flexibility for those wishing to visit the Antelope Valley from points south. (Beware, the last train from Lancaster now leaves earlier, at 3:41 p.m)

Santa Monica is providing additional peak hour service to the following routes:

- #3 (Montana-Lincoln-LAX)
- #5 (Century City-VA Hospital)
- #7 (Pico Bl)
- #12 (Robertson Bl-Palms)
- #14 (Bundy-Centinel)

The additional service is in the form of non-scheduled "extra" buses, so there will be no change in the current printed schedules.

LADOT DASH is now operating three new lines:

- Van Nuys-Panorama City; a two-way loop via Sylvan, Kittridge, Hazeltine, Sherman Way, Van Nuys, Parthenia, Langdon, Lanark, Sepulveda, Saticoy, Kester and Victory. Points of interest include the Van Nuys Civic Center, the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak station, the Panorama Mall, and a new shopping center called "The Plant" (built on the site of the former General Motors factory in Van Nuys). Connections can be made to the existing Van Nuys-Studio City DASH route at the Civic Center.

- Highland Park-Eagle Rock; operating from the Eagle Rock Plaza via Colorado, Townsend, Ave 57, York, Ave 54, Figueroa, Meridian, Ave 64, York and San Pascual, terminating near Arroyo Seco Park.

- Lincoln Heights-Chinatown; a two-way loop via Union Station (Gateway), Vignes, North Main, Daly, State, Griffin, Baldwin, Hancock, Manitou, Lincoln Park, N. Broadway, Griffin, Ave 26, Daly, N. Spring, N. Broadway, College, Centennial, Figueroa, and Cesar Chavez back to Union Station. Connections are possible with Downtown DASH routes #B, D and DD (weekend service)

Service on all three new lines operates every 30 minutes. (20 minutes on Highland Park), Monday-Saturday (starting later on Saturday) Apparently, Arroyo Seco DASH no longer operates (it is not mentioned in the list of DASH routes on the newest brochures).

The following Foothill Transit changes took effect on October 25th:

- #178 now serves Cal Poly Pomona on weekends.
- #179 only operates during rush hours.
- #195 now serves the shopping area at Diamond Bar Bl. & Golden Springs Rd.
- #185, 274 and 276 now operate on Sundays & holidays. (Now all FT non-commute lines do!)
- #291 serves North Pomona Metrolink on weekends.
- #479 now operates via Murchison Avenue. (instead of I-10, which is often jammed)
- #493 and 495 have new early afternoon and late evening trips.
- 690 has one new trip in each direction.

Santa Clarita Transit ridership between July 1997 and June 1998 totaled 2,002,907, a thirteen percent increase over the previous twelve month period!

# BULLETIN BOARD

At our Saturday November 14 meeting George Eslinger will give a presentation on the L.A. Red Car Concept. This will begin at 2 p.m. at our Angelus Plaza meeting location. We anticipate a significant attendance by members of the public and look forward to hearing Mr. Eslinger's ideas.

Also at our November meeting we will have nominations for 1999 officers and Directors. This will occur in the first hour of the meeting (from 1:00-2:00 before the Red Car presentation).

Add to your calendar our annual Holiday Banquet, Dec. 12 at 5 p.m. See the flyer included with this month's newsletter for details. [P.S. the bag of goodies to be given away as door prizes is bulging!]

The Annual day-after-Thanksgiving excursion on November 27 will be a trip to Santa Barbara to ride MTD service. We'll be using Greyhound from Downtown Los Angeles to travel to Santa Barbara; call us or check <http://socata.lerctr.org/sbexcursion.htm> for details. The only cost is out of pocket expenses for transportation and food. Join us for a day of intense bus riding!

The Rail Passengers Association of California is undertaking a campaign advocating the improvement of coastal rail service between the Bay Area and Southern California. Do SO.CA.TA members support adding our voice to this effort?

The Southern California Association of Governments is soliciting nominations for its 16th Annual Regional Citizen's Award. If members have persons they believe worthy of this honor we will gladly submit them for consideration.

Recent members' activities: Kymberleigh Richards had a letter critical of the concept of a San Fernando Valley transit zone in the Oct. 5 Daily News. In the Oct. 24 Daily News President Gabbard, Director Ledermuller and members Richards and Roger Christensen all had letters published as part of a forum on Proposition A. Ledermuller also had a Prop A letter published in the Oct. 28 Los Angeles Independent. Chris Flescher had a letter published in the October San Diego Metropolitan Magazine and Daily Business Report on a proposed tunnel under La Jolla to improve the performance of the San Diegan. Members who attended the recent Railvolution in Portland, OR (and had a chance to ride the new MAX light rail extension) include Christensen, Sean Bainbridge and Anthony Loui. Our thanks to these members for being active advocates.

From the "Comments to SO.CA.TA" form on our web page: Paul DiMaria, from the New York-based Committee for Better Transit writes in support of articulated buses (to reduce overcrowding), an experimental guided bus being tested by Bombardier in France (guided by electronic sensors in the road), and light rail connections between the Pasadena and Long Beach light rail lines, as well as a light rail connection to USC/Exposition Park.

Another comment: an OCTA bus driver states that she has "...been trying to get the operators of the (MTA #128 and 104 lines into Orange County to give the MTA passengers the right transfers when coming into O.C. I talked to a 104 driver from Charterways and he said they are not given the O.C interagency transfers. Can someone help these people out so they are given the right transfers?"

As always, *The Transit Advocate* needs articles, letters, Transit Tips, 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](mailto:transit@lerami.lerctr.org)). Material for publication should be received two weeks before the scheduled SO.CA.TA meeting date. ■

Will Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky soon be ruining his advocacy of Proposition A? I have already heard rumblings of various possible unintended consequences. For example the Regional Transit Alternatives Analysis that consultant Booz-Allen is presently preparing for MTA is finding that the subway wasn't undertaken solely due to politics. Meanwhile Zev's idea of putting light rail in the middle of the San Bernardino freeway to assuage eastside displeasure is DOA.

Another person who may be finding that winning is losing is Eric Mann, majordomo of the BRU. Now that the MTA Board has begun spending major money on bus purchases Mann is hitting the rhetoric ceiling. No one takes seriously his claim a bus fleet of 4,000 vehicles is called for to comply with the consent decree. Maybe soon Mann will follow his usual m.o. and jump to the next hot issue.

Our friends the brilliant beancounters of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) on Oct. 23 sponsored a conference on their mag-lev regional rail proposal. Member Anthony Loui, who attended, says it was dominated by discussion of how the federal transportation bill recently passed by Congress could provide funding for the project due to special demonstrator set-asides, etc. But does the project make sense?

The federal bill also has made money available for an addition to the 1998 State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). By early next year the California Transportation Commission will allocate the funds to local and regional priorities - an unexpected windfall that should jumpstart many projects that had been left out of the original plan due to inadequate funds.

The San Fernando Valley transit zone process continues to grind forward, with the edge cities

(Glendale, Burbank, et al) enticed at grabbing power but scared about the Zone being dominated by big bad L.A. This thing will probably go nowhere. But the Foothill Transit expansion proposal is gaining steam. This one is serious. But it'll be interesting to see how the changed conditions versus when Foothill was originally formed impacts the expansion. UTU, the bus driver's union, has over the years since losing its original legal challenge of Foothill's creation been busily laying obstacles to thwart further assumption of MTA service by a zone.

SCAG has launched a newsletter on its activities: "Regional Vision". The inaugural October issue has an article on the recently adopted Regional Transportation Plan, and other interesting tidbits. To be added to the mailing list contact Shelia Stewart at (213) 236-1868.

"Gridlock ...and Beyond" by Sigrid Bathen in the November California Journal (the state's leading public policy journal) reflects the growing concern among key stakeholders that transportation needs and options are not being adequately addressed and that this could have a major impact on California's economy.

Attendees of the Oct. 16 Assembly Transportation Committee hearing held at MTA's headquarters were left scratching their heads over why Chair Kevin Murray could so seriously mis-understand the impact of the Schiff legislation (S.B. 1847) creating a separate Pasadena Blue Line Authority. Murray kept incorrectly stating the Pasadena funds were still flexible despite being given several opportunities to pull his foot out of his mouth. Thankfully Murray's bid for the Chairmanship of the Senate Transportation Committee when he moves to that body in December fell short. Senator Betty Karnette of Long Beach will be the new chair instead (replacing termed out Quentin Kopp).

# FORUM REPORT *Dana Gabbard*

**Saturday October 3rd Southern California Transit Advocates sponsored its first ever forum, Public Transportation for Southern California: Directions for a New Millennium. The event brought together key stake-holders and decision makers in a public setting to discuss the current state of public transportation in the region and what its future may hold. Among the attendees were legislative aides Martha Saucedo (for Congressman Xavier Becerra) and Paul Hubler (for State Senator Adam Schiff), Frank Villalobos of Barrio Planners, former RTD treasurer/controller Tom Rubin and Dana Reed of the California Transportation Commission.**

**For 2 and a half hours the panel discussed public transportation and answered questions from the audience. Among the highlights were Commissioner Reed's strong denunciations of the MTA Board and the consent decree and Rubins' incisive analysis of MTA current precarious financial condition.**

**Overall the participants and audience members found the event information. We hope to make the Forum an annual event and a focus for our regional consensus building efforts. ■**

I have confirmed that BDOF has struck a major snag. The UTU contract stipulated the second tier drivers (who are paid \$10 per hour with minimal benefits) could drive those bus routes whose subsidies were 135% of the average for all service. Evidently no one at MTA realized "all service" included rail. If the average includes the cost of operating the rail lines it may well be no bus line qualifies for BDOF. And don't forget BDOF figured prominently in MTA's restructuring plan. At least one consequence of this huge gaffe is the exit of MTA's crack negotiator.

Our accolades to Governor Wilson for vetoing A.B. 542. This was the Perata Greyhound bill that would have had a disastrous impact on Amtrak's bus feeder network. The bill after long being moribund came suddenly to life at the

close of the legislative session. Showing rare clarity of vision, Wilson turned thumbs down.

Oct. 17 I attended a community fair at Los Angeles City College sponsored by L.A. City Councilmember Jackie Goldberg. "Planning Our Neighborhood" was an innovative attempt to involve residents in the planning of their neighborhood, adjacent to the Red Line stations due to open next year. The bus workshop I participated in was useful for the opportunity to hear the thoughts of concerned citizens and my fellow riders. SO.CA.TA had a booth and I shared information about our group with attendees plus networked with various L.A. city staffers. Our thanks to Councilmember Goldberg for the opportunity to be a part of this groundbreaking effort! ■

## **SANTA CLARITA** *Charles P. Hobbs*

It's not easy for a fast growing suburban city to keep up with transit needs, but Santa Clarita seems to be trying.

Even though the city was not laid out with transit in mind, over 2 million passengers a year, from Metrolink commuters to high school students, utilize the services of Santa Clarita Transit.

The City of Santa Clarita has developed a "Transportation Development plan" containing several plans for improving local and commuter bus service, as well as interfacing with Metrolink and even the proposed statewide high speed rail project.

Many local bus routes are to be expanded, although certain expansions are awaiting completion of new or improved streets. Most of the proposed routes in the western part of the map will be implemented when the large "Newhall Ranch" development is completed.

A transit center is to be developed at Valencia Town Center, near the center of the city. Already negotiations are in progress with the shopping center owners as to the location of this transit center on the property. The Metrolink station in Saugus would continue to be served by buses, but would no longer be a transit "hub". Favoring

Valencia Town Center over the Metrolink station would save many miles of needless "back-tracking" by bus routes.

Additional transit centers are proposed at Newhall Metrolink (under construction), Princessa Metrolink, and in Via Verde. (which also could be a future Metrolink station, if the rail line linking Santa Clarita and Ventura is ever reactivated).

What about the current express services? Well, #799 (express to LA) may have its service reduced or even eliminated, as Metrolink service is expanded. However, service to the San Fernando Valley and West LA will be improved. One idea is a route connecting Santa Clarita with the Universal City Metro Red Line Station (once it is built in 2002 or thereabouts). Service to the Antelope Valley may also be strengthened. The plan also hints at service to Pasadena, Ventura County and even Kern County (Fraizer Park, connection with KRTS to Bakersfield), although admittedly, it is a long shot.

In any event, Santa Clarita should do its best to provide transit to the new developments, and also making sure that these developments are as "transit friendly" as possible (e.g. easy for people to walk to a bus stop, wait for a bus, etc.)

## **FOOTHILL EXPANSION** *Charles P. Hobbs/Hank Fung*

On Nov 2, the Pasadena City Council voted unanimously to take the first steps toward joining Foothill Transit, spending \$45,000 in the process. This follows the recent San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments approval of Foothill's expansion.

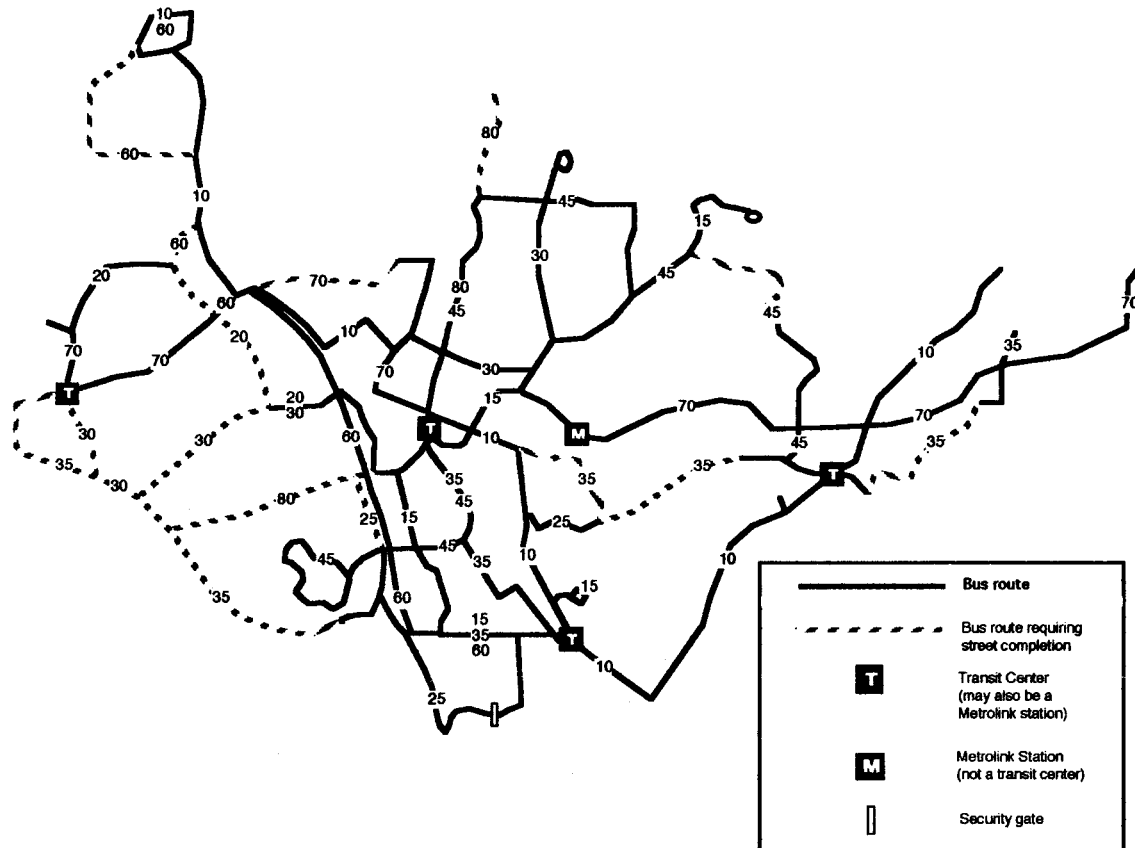
Other cities interested in joining Foothill include Alhambra, San Gabriel, Monterey Park, Montebello, Rosemead, San Marino, Sierra Madre and South Pasadena. (Interestingly enough, Montebello and Monterey Park have substantial municipal bus services of their own; Pasadena, Rosemead and Sierra Madre have city-operated shuttle systems).

Pasadena, in particular, seems to have lost faith

in the MTA, as evidenced by their support of the new agency that would be responsible for completing the Pasadena Blue Line. Even if the Foothill was required to retain the existing MTA labor contracts on any lines it acquired from MTA, the Pasadena City Council claims that Foothill could still operate them at less cost (\$80/hr vs. \$100/hr for MTA vs \$55/hr for a private operator).

Based on a cursory check of the San Gabriel Valley sector map, the new Zone would take on lines #78, 79, 170, 177 (whatever is left of it after the Glendale restructuring), 188, 264, 267, 268, 401, 402, 483, 484, 485, 487, 489, and 491. (Other routes in the area are long routes serving areas outside of the expanded Foothill zone).

# SANTA CLARITA "ULTIMATE" LOCAL BUS ROUTE NETWORK



## VOTE FOR THE ROUTE OF THE YEAR!

Once again, it's time to choose a Route of The Year from all of 1998's Routes Of The Month.

The routes to select from are:

(Jan) Santa Monica #14

(Feb) MTA #550

(Mar) LADOT #412

(May) 1. VISTA 101

2. MTA #218

(Jul) 1. Long Beach #172-173-174

2. MTA #603

(Sep) Santa Monica #12

Please vote for the route that you wish to be route of the year by either stating your choice at the November So.Ca.TA meeting, or by mailing your selection before Thanksgiving to So.Ca.TA (address on cover), or sending e-mail to [transit@lerami.lerctr.org](mailto:transit@lerami.lerctr.org)

The results will be published in the December issue of the Transit Advocate.