

TRANSIT UPDATES

MTA is building an additional elevator at the Wilshire/Vermont station.

The Foothill service change proposal has changed slightly:

- Two hour weekend headways on #191 and #193 in Pomona and #289 in Walnut (weekend service was to be removed completely)
- Possible peak-hour (only) service on #292 in Pomona/Claremont on weekends.

Also, Foothill Transit will no longer accept MTA tokens as fare.

RTA has approved the changes #36 (Banning-Calimesa-Redlands) and #41 (Mead Valley-Riverside Community College) to go into effect July 1. Now there are two additional changes that, if approved, would go into effect next September:

- #17 (Moreno Valley) would lose service east of Fredrick/Cactus. Instead it would be routed a short distance into the "March Base Redevelopment Area".
- #38 (Norco-Jurupa) would be rerouted out of the Jurupa area, and would stay on Limonite and Mission to Downtown Riverside. Service to the Pedley Metro-link station would remain.

The following Omnitrans changes went into effect s of April:

- Minor schedule changes (less than 10 minutes) on #3, 4, 15, and 19.
- Minor reroutes on #1, 62, 63 and 67.
- #61 will no longer enter Ontario Mills

Mall but will remain on Milliken.

- #64 will no longer operate in San Antonio Heights (on 21st St. between Euclid and Mountain)
- #65 service has been permanently removed from Peyton/Valle Vista (due to resident complaints).
- #66: Route change (no service to San Antonio Hospital due to resident complaints) in February made permanent. Also, on Sunday, 16 minutes added to running time eastbound on most trips (most of it added to the Foothill/Grove and Foothill/Haven timepoints) and 10 minutes added westbound (most of it to Foothil/Haven and Foothill/Mountain).
- Additional evening trips will be provided on #70.

A correction to the transit tip in the April newsletter: the notice referred to parcel checking (i.e. temporary storage) rather than checking baggage. Ken Ruben also informs us as of mid-April temporary non-parcel checking resumed at Union Station. Stored bags or parcels must be picked up by 10 p.m. the same day and price per parcel or bag for the service is \$2.

BULLETIN BOARD

Our thanks to Chris Carson of the League of Women Voters for her presentation at our April 10 meeting. Tom Hines is scheduled to discuss Personal Rapid Transit at our May 8 meeting.

We appreciate the many members who helped staff our booth at the Fullerton Railroad Days (May 1-2). These included Mark Strickert, Lionel Jones, Ed Buckley, Craig Barnes, Andy Novak, Barry Christensen, Russ Jones, Woody Rosner, Charles Powell, Carlos Osuna, Paul Castillo, Armando Avalos, John Ulloth and Dana Gabbard. Members who dropped by to say hellp included T.J. Stiller, Ken Ruben, James and Marilyn Gusky, Chaf-fee Yiu, Bart Reed and Kirk Schnider. Despite sweltering heat a good time was had by all and we sold a number of Transit Guides and other items.

The Compton/Carson transit study tour has been rescheduled to Saturday May 15. We will meet at 8 a.m. the fish tank in the East Portal building near Union Station, thence via the Red and Blue Lines to the Compton Transportation Center.

RailPAC is holding a meeting at the San Juan Depot Bar and Grill at the San Juan Capistrano Train Station Saturday June 5 between 12:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. More details as they become available.

The next Friends 4 Expo Transit general meeting will be Thursday, May 27, at 7:00 p.m. It will be in the Hamilton High School library (second floor, main build-

ing, 2955 Robertson Boulevard, just north of the Santa Monica Freeway. MTA will present the alternatives in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Expo Line light rail, phase 1 from downtown L.A. to Culver City.

Beach Cities Transit News is a newsletter that covers transit in the South Bay. Further information: terisa.price@redondo.org

Torrance's annual City Yard open house will be held Saturday, June 5th from 10 AM - 2 PM. The yard is located at 20500 Madrona Ave. in Torrance.

The Pacific Bus Museum is having a bus excursion Saturday, June 5, 2004 in Orange County. Cost is \$25 for members, \$30 non-members (and space if filling fast): Pacific Bus Museum, P.O. Box 91, San Anselmo, CA 94979-0091 or (415)458-BUSS or info@pacbus.org

Sunday June 13 a public grand opening will be held of the renovated Santa Fe depot in San Bernardino between 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Historic steam train 3751 will be on display. Tours and food will be available at the free event.

The California Futures Network, of which SO.CA.TA is an affiliate, disbanded as of April 30 due to the current tight funding environment. ■

Things are kind of quiet this month, so I will simply present status reports on funding issues (federal and state) plus LAX master plan continued squabbling:

It seems clear a stalemate has developed between the Congress and Administration regarding TEA21 renewal. Veto threats and veto proof votes have escalated the situation and so far compromise hasn't been a serious part of the equation. I have to think the Congressional Republicans don't want to undermine Bush as the re-election effort gather steam. But perhaps emotions and grand-standing has created a situation that is hard to back away from. I suspect eventually things will be worked out but the outlines of any such deal seem dim at this time.

Governor Schwarzenegger is still likely to follow thru on his plans to divert transportation funds to help close the budget gap. The interesting aspect is transportation has a larger and more diverse constituency than it had in the past. There are signs some funds will be made available for priority projects. And even some of the recently passed bond used to pay back past transportation trust fund "loans". While transportation is not high on his list of priorities Schwarzenegger has promised to address long term funding issues. Some advocates hope this will include reforms that bring an end to the threat of future transportation

fund raids.

Mayor Hahn may come to see LAX as his Waterloo. Nobody is satisfied with his LAX modernization proposal--not residents near the airport, or the airlines or most other stakeholders. Meanwhile the recent audit of contracting practices at the airport released by the City Controller has created a sense of "blood in the water" as valued allies resign and candidates to challenge Hahn's re-election start lining up. Hahn isn't dead in the water yet but he certainly appears vulnerable. I predict the LAX process will go back to square 1 and finally address fundamentals.

P.S. - can anyone explain why Los Angeles claims to support a regional approach yet stopped sending representatives to meetings of the Southern California Regional Airport Authority? SCRRA eventually disbanded partly due to lack of support from L.A. This looks like a perfect example of Hahn dropping the ball...

I'd like to conclude with a fond farewell to Trinh Nguyen, who is leaving the Surface Transportation Policy Project as its California Field Director. Thankfully Trinh will continue to be involved in transportation/ land use activism in her new job. Good luck, Trinh! ■

METROLINK FARE RESTRUCTURING Hank Fung

Editor's Note: This article is based on a speech presented by Member Hank Fung at the Metrolink public hearing on April 23. (The Metrolink board did approve the fare restructuring as originally proposed).

The entire speech, as well as the spreadsheets, will be available at <http://socata.lerctr.org/hfstmt0404.html>.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today. I am a resident of Pomona who commutes on the San Bernardino Line regularly to work.

I have questions about the proposed 2005 fare restructuring. Staff has stated that fare increases will not exceed 8% per year under the Metrolink fare restructuring. To check the veracity of this statement, I inputted all of the current fare zones into a spreadsheet.

I found that the fare jump from 2004 to 2005 could potentially be up to 55% for some riders. For instance, a student catching a train to go from Cal State LA to Burbank Airport will pay 22% more effective July 1, 2005 to make that trip. This is in contrast with the 8% maximum fare increase stated in literature handed to riders.

With the off peak and senior/disabled fares, a total of 13,780 fares will need to be programmed. This is in sharp contrast to the 70 fares in the current fare system. When a new station is added, another 500 fares have to be calculated and inputted into every single fare machine in the system.

The sheer number of fares required is one reason why Metrolink has purchased new fare machines. Yet, the fare machines are showing glitches. Will introducing more fares exacerbate the technical issues with the machines? Will these issues be resolved in 12 months, without new issues occurring?

Certainly, the increase in the number in fares will cause passenger confusion. No other commuter rail agency has chosen to embark on such a fare restructuring as Metrolink is planning on in 2005. Indeed, other commuter rail operators, such as Cal-Train, have opted to reduce the number of zones, not increase them.

Finally, Board members should be reminded that Metrolink does not operate in a vacuum. There are commuter buses that parallel many Metrolink lines, as well as carpools and vanpools. Other shifts in behavior could occur that may not be obvious at first when the fare structure is implemented. Will there be extra demand on the shuttle from Burbank to Burbank Airport? Will more passengers choose to get off the train at Cal State LA instead of riding in to Union Station, and transfer to local transit there?

Thus, an alternative that should be considered is creating smaller zones. Instead of 11 mile zones, a system with 7 or 8 mile zones could deliver many of the benefits of this fare restructuring, while reducing passenger confusion caused by such an expansion of zones. Another way of addressing the issue would be just to place the stations that do not conform to the zone structure in the correct zone. ■

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Attendees of the April 13 California High Speed Rail Authority hearing held in Los Angeles included Bart Reed, Roger Christensen, Woody Rosner, Ken Ruben and Dana Gabbard. Earlier that day Ken Ruben attended the LOSSAN (L.A. to San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Committee) meeting. Ruben's report on the LOSSAN meeting has been posted on the RailPAC newsletter (<http://www.railpac.com>).

The Metrolink April 23 Board meeting was attended by Bart Reed, Hank Fung and Ken Ruben. Fung (with the aid of Ruben) read into the public record comments on the proposed Metrolink fare restructuring. This statement has been posted on the front page of our website.

Dana Gabbard was quoted in the San Gabriel Valley Tribune April 16 article "Foothill Transit may cut services throughout area". Robert Meinert similarly was quoted in the LA Times April 17 article "Foothill Transit Seeks Cut".

John Ulloth and Mark Strickert staffed our booth at the Environmental Expo held April 26 at California State University San Bernardino. Stopping by to drop off literature was Charles Hobbs.

Chris Flescher attended the April 27 meeting of the Coast Rail Coordinating Council held in Salinas. The same day he had a letter on pedestrian issues printed in the Salinas Californian.

J.K. Drummond had a letter published in the April 16 Daily Breeze.

Among those attending the South Bay Sector Council meeting and transit fair held at Division 18 on April 17 were Armando Avalos, Chaffee Yiu, Dave Snowden, Russ Jones, Lionel Jones, Bart Reed, J.K. Drummond, Ken Ruben and Dana Gabbard.

Nate Zablen spoke at the March San Fernando Valley Service Sector meeting and attended the April one.

Bart Reed, Ken Ruben and Kevin Devlin attended the April MTA Board meeting and also several of the April Board Committee meetings while Ruben and Devlin joined Dana Gabbard in attending the April MTA Citizen Advisory Council meeting. ■