

CALL FOR ARTICLES

The TRANSIT ADVOCATE is requesting articles on transit services and policy in the Los Angeles area.

Most articles will be written by SO.CA.TA members, although material from outside sources will also appear. Articles appearing in the TRANSIT ADVOCATE will generally be about current transit events; there will be a few historical articles as well.

ABOUT SO.CA.TA.

The Southern California Transit Advocates meetings are held every month. Please call (213) 254 9041 for current time, location and directions.

Letters and articles for the TRANSIT ADVOCATE newsletter may be sent to P.O.Box 41198, Los Angeles, CA 90041. Please enclosed a self addressed stamped envelope for return of materials.

With the exception of articles clearly marked "Editorial" or "Position Paper", all opinions expressed are those of the article authors and not necessarily that of the Southern California Transit Advocates.

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Pat Moser*

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UPDATES:

RAPID TRANSIT

- The Metro Red Line subway opening may be delayed. Page 4

- LACTC has selected a route along the Ventura Freeway (US-101) for a rail transit route. Page 4

LIGHT RAIL

- LACTC will consider certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Metro Blue Line-Exposition Park Branch Extension at the LACTC meetings on January 13 and 27.

- Also, LACTC will be holding public hearings for proposed transit improvements (most likely a light rail line) along Crenshaw Boulevard.

See back cover for time and location of LACTC meetings.

COMMUTER RAIL

- Metrolink commuter rail now serves Claremont and will serve Montclair by mid-January. Page 2

BUS

- Foothill Transit has rerouted Routes #185, 187, 192, 194 and 690 to serve the new Claremont Metrolink station.

- Omnitrans may also adjust some schedules serving the new Metrolink station in Montclair.

- The City of West Covina will extend its shuttle system to serve the Baldwin Park Metrolink station when it opens in late February or early March.

- Santa Clarita Transit is seeking funding for expanding its commuter bus service to operate during mid-day periods. Also being considered: elimination of daytime general public Dial-A-Ride to improve access to seniors and the disabled.

METROLINK to Claremont and Montclair

The Claremont Metrolink Depot opened to the public on December 5, 1992. Three of the five San Bernadino Line trains now serve the new station, located on First Avenue in downtown Claremont. (As the route is extended farther east to Montclair, more trains may stop in Claremont)

The station building itself dates back to the late 1800's, and had been unused for a long time; it will soon contain a "Transit Store" and possibly a restaurant.

Several Foothill Transit bus routes have been rerouted to serve the Claremont Depot. Line #480 has been extended from Holt Boulevard to the station via Indian Hill Boulevard; this segment of Line #480 is starting to gain ridership. This route extension also provides new, 24-hour service to Downtown Claremont and the Claremont Colleges.

In mid-January, Metrolink service will again be extended, this time to Montclair. A new station is being built near Central Avenue; RTD, Foothill and Omnitrans buses already serve this station. (The original Montclair Transcenter, near Monte Vista and Arrow, is no longer used.)

Metrolink also ran special Saturday trains on December 12 and 19. These trains, which provided fare-free service were intended to attract shoppers as well as potential Metrolink commuters.

One round trip operated between Moorpark and Los Angeles on December 12; service to

Santa Clarita and Claremont was provided on the 19th. Approximately 4700 passengers enjoyed the free Metrolink service on both days. Four-car trains inbound to Los Angeles were standing-room-only; trains leaving Los Angeles pulled up to eight cars. Because the station platforms were only meant for five-car trains, the trains had to stop twice at each station!

On Christmas and New Years' Eves, special mid-day trains operated on all three lines, to accommodate commuters leaving work early.

One purpose of these special services may be to determine interest in midday and weekend Metrolink service. Judging from the response to the Saturday trains, the interest is there. Although no firm plans for such service have been presented at this time, Metrolink service operating during non-commute periods may be a reality by the middle of this year, according to some reports.

Metrolink is currently offering a special "two-for-one" promotion. A monthly pass bought this January (before January 10) will also be valid throughout February.

Passengers taking advantage of this promotion will have their fares halved. (Metrolink fares may, in some cases, even be less expensive than express bus fares) The results of this promotion, if ridership increases, may result in lower fares on Metrolink.

Metro Red Line Opening Delayed to Jan. 30

The Metro Red Line Subway, which was to have opened on January 11, will now open on January 30.

The two-week delay will allow transit officials and security personnel to conduct several emergency response drills.

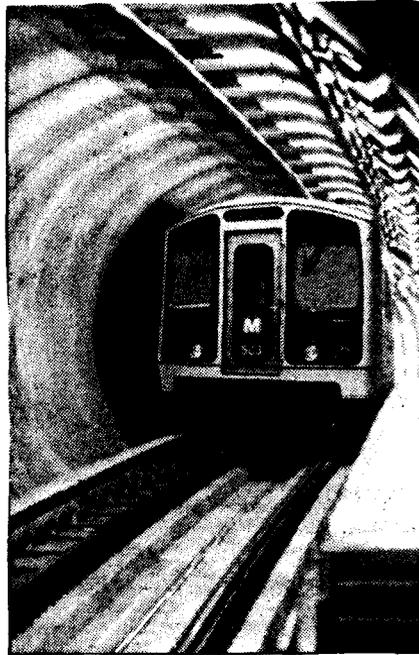
Transit officials (both RTD and LACTC) attribute the delay to a variety of technical problems with the rail cars and other safety equipment. The problems included doors that refused to close, faulty braking systems, and emergency alarm systems that failed to operate properly.

At one time, only four cars were in good operating condition. However, at this time, enough cars are said to be available to start service.

Another issue which has been determined is the provision of security services. LACTC officials preferred that the Los Angeles Police Department patrolled the system; RTD wanted their Transit Police to do the job. The Transit

Police won out, primarily because of their lower price (\$2 million for RTD Transit Police, as opposed to \$6 million for the LAPD)

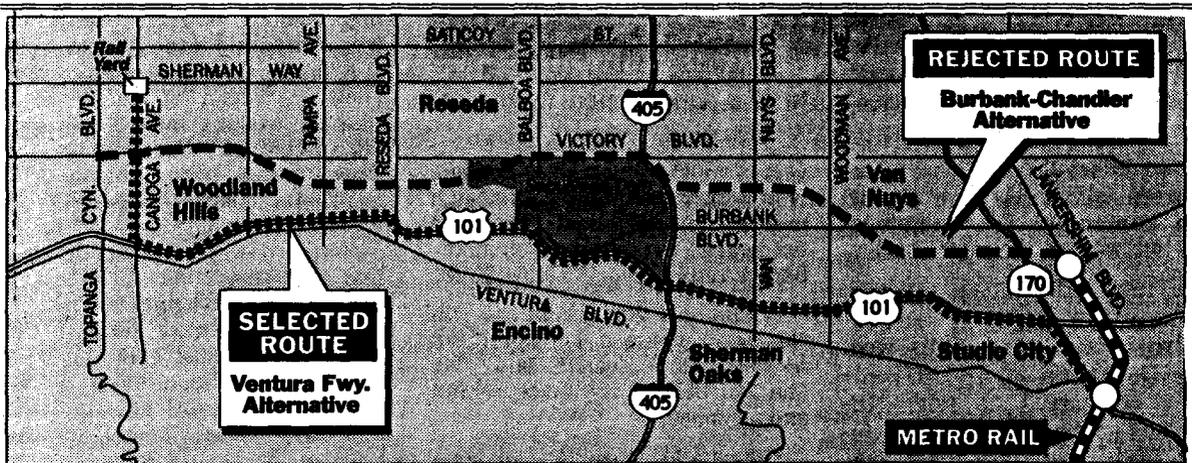
When the 4.4-mile, \$1.45 billion initial segment of the Red Line finally opens, service will be provided between Union



Station and Alvarado Street, with three intermediate stops (Civic Center, Fifth Street and Metro Center). Trains will initially operate every ten minutes between 5:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Connections will be available to the Blue Line (to South Central LA and Long Beach) and to Metrolink commuter trains.

The fare will be \$1.10 (same as RTD local

buses), but a free-ride period will probably be held for at least the first week of service. (Some transit officials have considered a free-ride period of up to five months, as well as extending free-ride privileges to the Blue Line and Metrolink)



S.F. Valley Transit: Freeway or Subway?

Although the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) has voted for a route along the Ventura Freeway, the controversy still continues.

The recommended route would involve running a rail line on an elevated structure on the freeway. Although no particular type of vehicle technology was specified, several groups have proposed a monorail (which would be incompatible with other transit equipment)

The alternative would extend the Red Line Subway along a railroad right-of-way, under Chandler Boulevard. This route would serve a more central area of the San Fernando Valley, including the Van Nuys Civic Center.

Opposition to one or the other route has come chiefly from various homeowners groups, in their typical "not-in-my-backyard" response to transit projects. Support for either line has generally come from various politicians, civic groups and labor organizations.

The LACTC cited the estimated lower cost (\$2.59 billion vs. \$3.03 billion) of the freeway

route as their reason for selecting it. Opponents state that the estimated cost does not include freeway widening, which may be necessary to accommodate the rail line.

Supporters of the freeway route include:

- County Supervisor Mike Antonovich
- Los Angeles Building and Construction Trades Council (part of the AFL-CIO)
- Several homeowner's groups located along the railroad right-of-way

Supporters of the subway include:

- United Chambers of Commerce of the San Fernando Valley
- State Assemblyman Richard Katz (originally, a monorail supporter)
- The Valley-Wide Transportation Coalition (various business leaders and homeowner groups)
- Coalition of Freeway Residents (homeowner's groups along the Ventura Freeway)

TRANSIT TERMS

David Wyatt, University of Manitoba

All the discussion about different terms for different types of transit systems reminds me of how inconsistent the vocabulary is. Usually, when you attempt to categorize things, you have to be arbitrary about some choices, but here's the vocabulary I use. I draw on the terms used by Vukan Vukic and Richard Kunz, but disagree with both of them in one way or another. Debate welcomed.

(1) Commuter Rail (CR)

Aliases: Metropolitan Rail (MR) :Kunz.,
Regional Rail (RGR) :Vukic:

Confusion: These systems, in many places, serve much more than just peak hour commuters.

Description: This is the technology that most resembles intercity railroading. Train frequencies are the least, typically mid-day headways are half-hourly or more. Suburban stations are typically spaced more than a mile or so apart. The tracks may be shared with freight services, street-running is rare, diesel locomotive-hauled trains are common, along with electric locomotive-hauled trains and multiple-unit trainsets. Service is typically city-centre to outlying suburbs.

Examples:

Chicago, Southshore and South Bend Railroad
(Chicago IL-IN)
GO Transit (Toronto ON),
Long Island Rail Road (New York City NY), MARC
(Washington DC-MD-WV, Baltimore MD),
MBTA "Purple lines" (Boston MA-RI),
MetroLink (Los Angeles CA),
Metro North (New York City NY-CT),
Metra, (Chicago IL-WI),
New Jersey Transit "rail lines"
Orange County Commuter (Los Angeles CA)
Peninsula Commute (San Francisco-San Jose CA)
Shore Line East RR (New Haven CT)
STCUM "Rigaud and Deux-Montagnes lines" (Montreal QC)
SEPTA "regional rail lines" (Philadelphia PA)
TriRail (Miami FL)
Virginia Railway Express (Washington DC-VA)

(2) Heavy Rail Transit (HRT)

Aliases: Subway, L, El, Rapid Transit, Metro

Confusion: Using "Heavy Rail" to describe intercity railroads.

Description: Typified by multiple-car trains with high capacity operating at close frequencies (as little as a 60 seconds in peak hours). Electric powered multiple-unit trains are nearly universal. Car-floor level loading platforms are nearly universal, as are exclusive rights-of-way (even level crossings with vehicle traffic are rare). Service is typically intra-urban, with stations spaced from a few blocks to not much more than a mile apart.

Examples:

Atlanta GA,
Baltimore MD "Metro",
Boston MA "Red, Blue and Orange lines," Chicago IL,
Cleveland OH "Red line,"
Los Angeles CA "Red line,"
Mexico City DF "Metro,"
Miami FL "MetroRail,"
Montreal QC "Metro,"
New York City "IRT, IND-BMT and SIRT lines," New York City NY-NJ "PATH,"
Philadelphia PA "Market-Frankfort, Broad lines,"
Philadelphia PA-NJ "PATCO,"
San Francisco CA- Oakland CA "BART,"
Toronto ON "Yonge-Spadina, Bloor-Danforth & Scarborough RT,"
Vancouver BC "SkyTrain,"
Washington DC-VA-MD.

Notes: The Vancouver and Scarborough lines represent the bottom end of HRT characteristics, coming the closest to LRT. The Skokie Swift (Chicago) and the Cleveland Red line are also LRT-ish HRT lines. BART in San Francisco comes the closest to being CR rather than HRT, because of its station spacing and regional service area.

(3) People Mover (PM) :Kunz:

Aliases: Horizontal elevator.

Description: Essentially a transit technology applied in the moving of people in or around small concentrated service areas, such as downtowns, airports, amusement parks, zoos, and educational campuses. (cont'd on p. 7)

(from p. 6)

Examples:

- Chicago IL (under construction),
- Detroit MI (DPM),
- Irving TX (Los Colinas),
- Jacksonville FL,
- Las Vegas NV (under construction),
- Miami FL (MetroMover),
- Morgantown WV (Univ. of WV),
- Orlando FL (Walt Disney World monorail),
- Seattle WA (Seattle Center Monorail),
- Tampa FL.

Notes: The Downtown People Mover in Detroit uses the same technology as SkyTrain in Vancouver and the Scarborough RT in Toronto. The above list is derived from *The New Electric Railway Journal* whose editor does not list intra-complex people movers as public transit.

(4) Light Rail Transit (LRT)

Aliases: Streetcars, trolleys, surface cars, cars, trams, pre-metro.

Confusion: British term "light railway" meaning light-capacity rural short-line. Others see LRT as too broad, and divide it into "pre-metro" and "trams."

Description: Catch-all category for rail transit systems that don't fit the other descriptions. Typically electric powered single cars, short MU trains or car-and-trailer combinations. Stop spacing closest to bus pattern. Right-of-way options include everything from subway to street running in mixed traffic (sometimes all on the same line!). Overhead power delivery most common (but not universal). Curb-height, floor-height platforms or both.

Examples:

- Baltimore MD (Central Light Rail),
- Boston MA (Green line, Ashmont- Mattapan red line),
- Buffalo NY,
- Calgary AB (C-Train),
- Cleveland OH (Shaker Heights (Green, Blue) lines),
- Edmonton AB,
- Fort Worth TX (Tandy subway),
- Guadalajara JA,
- Los Angeles CA (Blue and Green Lines),
- Mexico City DF (STC: Pantitlan-Santa Marta line, STE: Xochimilco line and Tlalpan branch),
- Monterrey NL (Metrorrey),
- New Orleans LA (St. Charles line),
- Newark NJ (7 City Subway),
- Philadelphia (subway-surface (green) lines, Norristown & Media-Sharon Hills lines, remaining N. Phila. lines),
- Pittsburgh PA,
- Portland OR (MAX),
- Sacramento CA,
- Saint Louis MO-IL (under construction),
- San Diego CA,
- San Francisco CA (Muni Metro and cable cars),
- San Jose CA,
- Toronto ON (surface car lines and Harbourfront Line).

Notes: The Buffalo and Edmonton LRT lines most resemble HRT in their right-of-way configuration: Kunz calls them "Rapid Transit". The Norristown line in Philadelphia is kind of a cross between HRT track and performance, LRT capacity and CR service area: Kunz calls it "Rapid Transit". The Media-Sharon Hill lines in Philadelphia are light rail in most characteristics but serve a CR-like area.

I-210 HOV Lane Delayed; #690 Express Cut Back

Foothill Transit has reduced service by half (6 instead of 22 round-trips) on its Line #690 (freeway express between Claremont and Pasadena) because of persistently low ridership.

The bus route was initiated in May 1991, and was eventually to operate via a bus/carpool lane on I-210 (Foothill Freeway). This lane was to have been completed in late 1991. Because of construction complications (damaged pavement needed to be totally replaced), the lane will not open until 1994.

Without the HOV lane, the Line

#690 buses are caught in the same traffic as other vehicles; that has made the line less attractive to potential riders.

The line carries up to 150 passengers per workday. Foothill will continue to market the line through corporate Employee Transportation Coordinators and Transit Management Associations.