

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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UPDATES:

RAPID TRANSIT

- The Metro Red Line subway has finally opened! Page 4
- LACTC has still not selected a rail route for the San Fernando Valley. Page 6

LIGHT RAIL

- LACTC has approved \$841 million for a light-rail line between Los Angeles and Pasadena. Construction may begin as early as April, and service may start by 1997.

COMMUTER RAIL

- Metrolink commuter rail will serve Montclair by February 22. Also, reverse-commute and off-peak trains will be added. Page 6
- Construction of stations along the San Bernadino Line may be delayed past March 15 because of problems with contractors.

BUS

- Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) has cancelled one Metrolink shuttle line, and modified another, because the Red Line now operates. Also, LADOT is considering new DASH lines in Watts and Highland Park.
- Orange County Transit District may extend Line #30, which serves Fullerton and Los Cerritos Center, to the Metro Blue Line.
- Foothill Transit has the right to continue operating lines taken from the SCRTRD, according to a recent court decision.
- Omnitrans will adjust some schedules serving the new Metrolink station in Montclair. It also has extended its Route #72 via Grand and Chino Hills Parkway, to serve more of Chino Hills.

RTD, LACTC Merge to form New Agency

Effective February 1, the Southern California Rapid Transit District and the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission have merged to form a new agency, the Los Angeles County Transportation Authority. However, both RTD and LACTC will continue to operate as separate agencies until April 1, in order to assure an orderly transition.

It is hoped that this merger will mean the end of many disputes between the RTD and the LACTC. These disputes have involved control over rail project construction and operation and privatization of bus services

However, not everyone is enthusiastic about this merger. Los Angeles City Councilman Richard Katz complained about duplicated staff positions after the merger, and the possibility that the administrative functions of the new agency (formerly performed by LACTC) might move into a totally separate building than the one used by the operations (formerly done by RTD) arm of the LACMTA.

LACMTA ("Metro") would not be limited to public transit operations, but would also administer programs such as bikeways and freeway callboxes.

The 13-member LACMTA board is made up of many of the same people who are on the current LACTC board, as well as a few new members. Included are:

The five Los Angeles County Supervisors (Yvonne Braithwaite Burke, Mike Antonovich, Gloria Molina, Ed Edelman and Deane Dana)

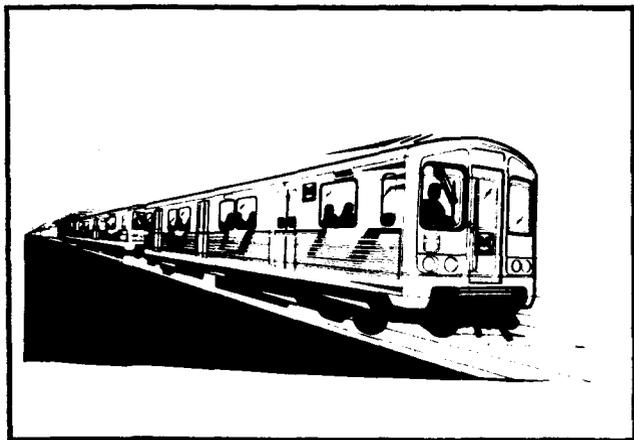
The Mayor of Los Angeles, and three mayoral appointees. Currently these are: Tom Bradley, Richard Alatorre, Marvin Braude, and Mark Ridley-Thomas.

Four representatives from the League of California Cities. Currently, these are: Long Beach City Councilman Evan Anderson-Braude, Gardena Councilman Jim Cragin, Duarte Councilman John Fasana, and Glendale Councilman Larry Zarian.

Jerry Baxter of Caltrans District 7 represents the State of California as a non-voting member of the board.

Also, the LACMTA Board has selected Franklin White, formerly of the New York transit and transportation agencies, as chief executive officer of the board.

L.A. Red Line Opens to 25,000 Coi



The long-awaited Metro Red Line Subway in Downtown Los Angeles is finally operating as of Saturday, January 30th, 1993.

After speeches from various politicians, including Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley and California Governor Pete Wilson, about 140,000 people jammed the subway cars for a weekend of free rides. Weekday ridership, with a month-long demonstration fare of 25 cents, has approached 25,000 passengers per day. Metrolink commuter trains, which connect with the Red Line at Union Station, have also enjoyed a 17% increase in ridership, now carrying about 4,100 passengers per day. The fast subway ride replaced connecting shuttle bus trips of up to 30 minutes in length.

The idea of a subway, or of rapid transit in general, is not new to Los Angeles: various

proposals have been presented over the past seventy or so years. A one-mile streetcar tunnel was operational for several years in the earlier part of the century; this allowed Glendale- and Hollywood-bound streetcars fast access to the center of Downtown. Many other plans involved proposed subway tunnels under Venice Boulevard or a system of elevated railways throughout Downtown.

During the 60's and 70's, transit officials attempted to obtain voter support for various rapid transit plans; these were consistently turned down until the passage of Proposition 'A' in 1980. This was a half-cent sales tax to provide funds primarily to build a system of rapid transit rail lines in Los Angeles County. The Red Line is one of those lines. It has almost always been considered one of the most important lines in the system (it has often been called the "spine" or "backbone" route).

The Red Line route begins at Union Station connecting with Metrolink and Amtrak trains as well as several bus routes. From there it stops at the Civic Center Station, providing service various governmental buildings. Pershing Square station is the next stop, providing access to Pershing Square Park (now under construction) as well as the Broadway shopping district, the jewelry district, and the new Gas Company Tower.

Commuters Per Day

Next is the 7th Street Metro Center, which serves the business and financial district of Los Angeles. This station also provides a quick connection to the Metro Blue Line, serving South-Central Los Angeles and Long Beach. Only minutes later, the train arrives at Alvarado Street and Wilshire Boulevard, currently the end of the line. This neighborhood, known as Westlake, has been neglected for several years. However, with the advent of the subway service, redevelopment possibilities are being investigated. Many downtown commuters, who ordinarily would not go to this area, are now showing a new interest in Westlake.

In 1996, the Red Line will be extended to Wilshire and Western; service to Hollywood is scheduled to start in 1999, and to North Hollywood in 2001. Other extensions, such as one to East Los Angeles, Southwestern Los Angeles and to the San Fernando Valley are also being considered at this time.

The Red Line, along with the other transit projects planned for Los Angeles, will do quite a big job in aiding regional mobility throughout Southern California. The Southern California Transit Advocates will be at the forefront of encouraging transit use and providing suggestions for improvement of transit services and facilities.

ABOUT THE RED LINE

Fares: \$.25 (in February \$1.10 (Starting March 1)

Service: Every 10 minutes between 5 a.m and 7 p.m

Travel Time: 7 minutes between Wilshire/Alvarado and Union Station; about 1-2 minutes between most pairs of stations

Transfers:

From Blue Line: (at 7th Street Metro Center) Valid Tickets purchased at Blue Line stations also good on Red Line

To Blue Line: Full \$1.10 fare must be purchased at Red Line Station

From Buses (at all stations): Purchase \$.25 transfer from driver and retain while riding Red Line

To Buses: "Transfer To Bus" tickets must be purchased at ticket machines. Total cost: \$.50 (until March 1, then \$1.35)

From Metrolink (at Union Station): Holders of valid one-way tickets are entitled to one Red Line trip, away from Union Station. Holders of valid round-trip, 10-trip and monthly tickets are entitled to one trip away from Union Station, and one trip back to Union Station

To Metrolink: Passengers without any Metrolink tickets should purchase "Transfer to Bus" tickets at the Red Line ticket machines. These tickets are worth \$1.00 towards the one-way Metrolink fare and should be retained, along with the Metrolink tickets, throughout the Metrolink trip.

Still No Decision on Controversial Valley Line

The Los Angeles Transportation Commission has once again postponed its decision for a San Fernando Valley rail line. Instead, it has decided to leave the decision for the board of the forthcoming Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

One route would operate along a railroad right of way along Burbank and Chandler, potentially serving Pierce College and the Van Nuys Civic Center. The alternative route would operate on or near the Ventura Freeway, serving Universal City, Studio City and Sherman Oaks. Both routes would eventually terminate at or near the Warner Center,

at the extreme southwest corner of the Valley.

The two potential routes have been the cause of much controversy among various civic leaders, business interests and homeowner groups over the past several years or so.

Two Ventura County supervisors have also expressed an interest in extending the freeway rail line to Thousand Oaks, and are considering a half-cent sales tax in order to finance such an extension.

MORE METROLINK!

Metrolink will extend to Montclair and add more trains this month



Metrolink will open its Montclair station on February 22. At least three trains will be extended from either Pomona or Claremont to serve the new terminal on Richton Street, near Central Avenue.

RTD, Foothill, Omnitrans and Inland Empire Connection buses have been serving this terminal since last summer; the original "Montclair Transcenter" has

been closed to make way for an extension of Monte Vista St. to the new terminal. The Metrolink station will have much more parking available than the original terminal.

Metrolink will also offer regular reverse-commuter service from L.A. to Glendale and Burbank, as well as off-peak round trip service to Santa Clarita, Simi Valley and Montclair. Off-peak fares will be 75% of regular fares.

CRENSHAW CORRIDOR "PLANNING"

The Los Angeles County Transportation Commission is considering transit routes which would serve the Crenshaw Boulevard area. Several technologies (trolleybus, light rail, automated light rail, and rapid transit) are under consideration.

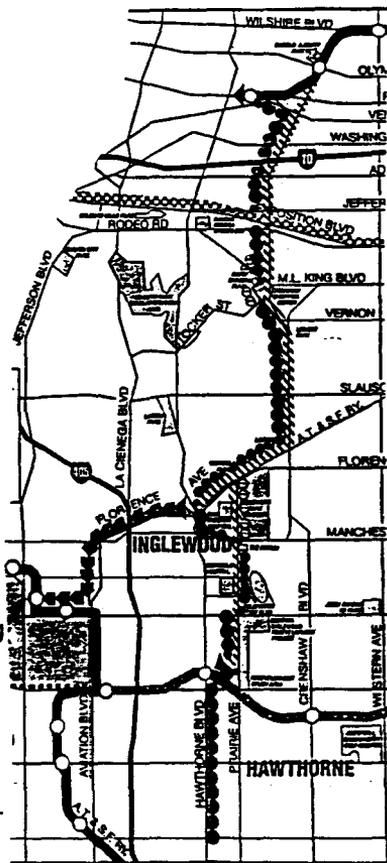
From Inglewood southward, various routings are proposed: one operating through Downtown Inglewood (and possibly to Los Angeles International Airport); another via Prairie Avenue to the (future) Metro Green Line Hawthorne Boulevard station.

The LACTC's Crenshaw Corridor Interagency Task Force proposed a so-called "base" route roughly stretching from a proposed Metro Red Line Pico/San Vicente station, past the Baldwin Hills/Crenshaw Plaza to Hyde Park, south-westerly along the Santa Fe Railway right-of-way, along Prairie Avenue through Inglewood, and finally to the Metro Green Line.

Inglewood city staff favor the Prairie route over one through downtown Inglewood/La Brea Avenue, believing that the Prairie route would stimulate the most business development and ridership. The relative strengths of possible rail routes can be roughly inferred from today's corresponding bus routes. RTD Line #40's daily, on-board, South Bay, peak passenger volume is 3546, southbound at Market/La Brea. Line #211's is ten percent of that - 360 at Prairie/El Segundo northbound. Line #40's second-strongest single stop on the entire line is at Market/Manchester, with over 1200 daily boardings and alightings both ways. Ironically, Line #211 also passes through downtown Inglewood. Its second-strongest stop is also at Market/Manchester with 97 northbound and 110 south-bound daily ons and offs.

3.3 times as many riders board and alight at Market/Manchester than at Prairie Ave's Freeman Hospital—on the same line #211!

Hollywood Park and the Forum would yield heavy ridership only a fraction of the year, whereas Downtown Inglewood would attract many riders all year long. Betting on new Hollywood Park development is hazardous, while Downtown Inglewood is the South Bay's only true mixed-use, multi-function center.



LACTC adheres to an inside-out method of transit "planning". First they just draw some lines on a map, mindless of measurable demographics and land-use, then sift them preeminently using engineering and political criteria. "Surviving" lines are only much later subjected to demographic, land-use, and ridership analyses—too late. This method has given us a Green Line passing through an empty, abandoned oil field (Nash St) without even one station within a five-minute walk of El Segundo's high-rise buildings on Sepulveda Boulevard and Imperial Highway.

In genuine transit planning, station locations are paramount; they must enable large numbers of people to ride without unacceptable walks or transfers. Transit riders must walk to their final destinations, unlike automobile drivers who can drive miles from a freeway to reach destinations. Routes between stations should not be devised until key station candidates are identified.

The LACTC's hit-and-miss methods will probably miss again.