

It's Official!

The Southern California Rapid Transit District and the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission have merged to become the Los Angeles County Transportation Authority.

(Buses will still carry the RTD logo for up to two years, until they all are repainted)

SO.CA.TA Agenda for 4/10/93

1. Why is rail construction taking so long?
2. Comparison of SO.CA.TA and other local transit advocacy groups
3. Should SO.CA.TA oppose light-rail projects?
4. Discussion of motion-making procedures

SO.CA.TA TRANSIT GUIDES

We are developing a series of brochures containing information on bus and rail services at various transit centers.

A sample guide will be presented at the April 10 meeting. We are looking for suggestions concerning the production and distribution of these guides.

TRANSIT UPDATES:

RAPID TRANSIT

- The Metro Red Line 25-cent fare has been extended once again until the end of April. (Passengers must pay \$1.10 + \$.25 transfer charge in order to transfer to buses, the Blue Line, or Metrolink.)

COMMUTER RAIL

- See "Metrolink Update" on Page 7

BUS

- The Rapid Transit District has introduced a \$23, half-month pass., valid on all RTD/MTA bus and rail service.

• Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) now operates the new Southwest DASH route connecting Exposition Park with portions of South Central Los Angeles. Fare is \$.25, and transfer connections are available to DASH Route C serving Downtown Los Angeles.

• According to Santa Clarita city officials, LADOT plans to extend its Route #573 (Granada Hills-Encino-Westwood-Century City) into Santa Clarita sometime during April.

• More LADOT news: Line #549 (Encino-Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena) may be modified to serve Lake Ave and Los Robles Ave. in Pasadena.

• For detailed information on LADOT's new City Ride transit program for seniors and disabled, see page 6

• Foothill Transit is modifying several of its bus routes in the San Gabriel Valley area. Page 6

CARPPOOL LANES AND PARK/RIDE

• A park/ride lot in Glendora (Grand/I-210) is being expanded from 100 to 300 spaces. This lot is served by Foothill Transit routes #488, #498 and #690

• A carpool lane (2 or more per car) has just been opened on the southbound San Diego Freeway (I-405) between El Segundo and the Harbor Freeway (I-110)

Transit Updates are compiled by SO.CA.TA members. If you notice any new, changed or discontinued transit services, please call us at (213) 254 9041 so that all members may be informed.

TRANSIT DICTATOR!

by Berton Corson,

California State University, Northridge

(Below is a hypothetical question asked of me, and other students, in a transportation class this past semester. The test question was designed to have some fun with, and any monetary figures may not be accurate, in the way I answered it.)

Question #2

Being appointed transportation dictator for L.A. County, with a two billion dollar a year annual budget. You have dictatorial powers over the next 20 years, in trying to solve Los Angeles County's transportation problems.

In this hypothetical situation of being appointed the transportation dictator for Los Angeles County for the next 20 years, I will see that many changes will occur. But this two billion dollar annual budget does give one the urge to try and do everything at once.

First, I will have to make a few assumptions in my planning strategy. One is the rate of inflation should be reasonable over the next 20 years, in order to calculate buying power. Second, because I am

Problems in Transit: What Needs to BE, and What Needs NOT TO BE!

by Michael A. Weinberg, SO.CA.TA

Here are a number of transit and transportation improvement suggestions that I developed through my long experience in studying urban planning and environmental issues, as well as by riding public transit:

TO BE:

✓ Ride Sharing and Job Sharing.

When commuting catches up with the computer revolution of the late 1980's, large databases will juggle and match job needs with places where people live, eliminating many unnecessary commute hours.

✓ Rapid development of transit lines.

If there were an emergency (for example, the total depletion of our oil supply), development (see pg. 5)

dictator, anything I say will not be blocked by groups that oppose my plans. Also, any environmental impact reports will be quickly approved, so I can accomplish my long-range plan of having 25% of the heavy rail system finished in 5 years, 50% in 10 years, 75% in 15 years, and 100% in 20 years. I will also have the authority to fine and/or jail contractors who's work isn't completed within a specified amount of time.

My first order of business will be to put forth plans initially that would show immediate results within one to two years, while also carrying out my long term plans. Keeping in mind the possibility that we will eventually run out of fossil fuels, I will have to have some compassion in executing my plans or I would probably risk being the country's first transportation commissioner ever to be assassinated.

In my first year, we will be in the planning stages for heavy rail transit, mostly above ground, that will serve the most heavily traveled and densely populated corridors. Initial engineering work will be made to bring the Metro Red Line all the way west, down Wilshire Boulevard, to Santa Monica. Planning will also start in running the Red Line south, down the San Diego Freeway, going through commercial centers, Los Angeles International Airport, downtown Long Beach, and terminating near the L.A. County line, at the Long Beach VA Hospital. The Red Line will also be eventually extended into the San Fernando Valley, from Universal City, through Burbank, and ending at Burbank Airport.

The Red Line will also be extended north to Pasadena, and east along the San Bernadino Freeway, with many stops along the way, terminating in Pomona. Another Red Line route will go from North Hollywood to Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Ventura Boulevard in Woodland Hills. And still another Red Line Route will go from Downtown, along the Santa Ana Freeway to Cerritos (although with cooperation from the Orange County Transportation Commission, I would like to extend it to Anaheim Stadium).

The Red Line will use a single, heavy rail technology, and thus any cars will be interchangeable throughout the system. (I also realized I called all these routes the 'Red Line', just to refer to heavy rail technology, but as these routes are completed, they will be given an appropriate color name).

The timetable for completion will be very strict, as stated in the second paragraph of this report.

Now that I've laid my long range goals, I would like to state my short range plans to get people (see pg. 4)

APTA Applauds Clinton Administration's Backing for Mass Transit, Renews Full Funding Call

WASHINGTON, March 30 — The chairman of the American Public Transit Association today praised the Clinton administration for taking positive steps to promote mass transit. In testimony before the Senate Housing and Urban Affairs Subcommittee, APTA Chairman Louis J. Gambaccini praised Transportation Secretary Federico Pena for setting aside 20 percent of new gas tax revenue for mass transit projects in states and local communities.

"We applaud Secretary Pena's proposal to extend the 2.5 cents gas tax that will expire in 1995, to dedicate the revenue to the Highway Trust Fund and to give a half cent to mass transit," he said. Administration officials earlier had proposed to reserve all the expected revenue — some \$3 billion yearly — for highway projects, thereby scrapping the traditional 80/20 split between roads and transit. "We are very pleased by (Pena's) commitment to intermodal thinking," Gambaccini added. "He is the ideal person to galvanize the federal government into making ISTEA (the 1991 federal surface transportation law) work."

The APTA chairman also urged senators to support all \$5.1 billion in ISTEA-authorized transit funding next year to help meet current needs and to advance the goals of "America's New Surface Transportation Network." "The completion of these high-capacity, surface transportation options ranks in importance with the on-going expansion of our highway system," he said. Gambaccini urged backing for the administration's economic stimulus plan saying, "The \$752 million for transit will put thousands of people to work on needed projects that have been delayed by funding shortfalls."

In later testimony in his role as general manager and chief operating officer of Philadelphia's SEPTA transit system, Gambaccini emphasized SEPTA's need for full federal operating assistance. "We don't want to cut service again, and we know that many of our passengers can't afford to pay higher fares," he said, adding that a recession-induced reduction in SEPTA ridership had earlier prompted layoffs along with cuts in service and worker benefits.

APTA is the international association of operating transit authorities, their suppliers and other advocates of improved transit service.

For further information and interviews, contact Chip Bishop of APTA at 202-898-4114.

(Dictator, from pg.3)

immediate habit of leaving their cars at home. A majority of my two billion annual budget will be used to buy 5000 new buses, eliminate the RTD and put the whole system under the Transportation Commission's control. I see it as too much risk to give the money to the RTD to carry out our plans, given their past history of running a very poor bus system. 5000 new bus routes will be created, with a standard 50-cent fare throughout the system. There also will be a police officer on every transit vehicle, whether it be a railcar or a bus, with strict orders to arrest or shoot anyone performing a crime on a public vehicle, such as robbery or tagging (graffiti).

Many of these 5000 buses will gradually be replaced over the next three to five years, as an extensive electric trolley bus network evolves. These electric buses will crisscross over thousands of miles of L.A. County streets, and eventually be used as feeder lines into Red Line stations. I will try to have the trolleybuses have their own dedicated lanes on the busiest streets that they serve. This will entice more people to use them. (I know some people will object to over-head electrical lines being ugly, but since I'm dictator, they're stuck.) These buses operate in cities such as Vancouver, and they are quieter, and pollution free, when compared to an RTD (diesel) vehicle. Also, a trolley bus route is the most quickly built route of any transit technology, aside from using regular buses. Some people would also argue that they would cause more pollution from the extra oil and gas-powered electric power plants will need to generate to run this system. But my plan includes a large solar and wind powered facility, out in the high desert, to power the whole electric transportation network without pollution. Also, eventually, a common type of light rail line will replace many of the higher passenger trolley bus routes. Everything will be done while maintaining a standard 50 cent fare.

As the mid-point of my twenty year plan arrives, the heavy rail routes should be about 50% operational, from the city core to the suburbs. What I'll do now is offer tax incentives to house-holds who agree to possess only one car. Also, in the tenth year, construction of overhead bike paths will start. Bike paths will connect residential areas with nearby shopping centers, schools, and light commercial areas. All these bike paths will be separate from motor vehicle traffic. The good part about this, is more families will opt to leave their cars at home for shorter trips, and more students will decide to bike to school, as opposed to

having their parents make special trips for dropping them off and picking them up.

Van pooling will also be encouraged. Any company that manages to get 20 employees to van pool on the same route, will be given a van to be used for free. If the participation dwindles, they'll have to return the vans that aren't being utilized properly.

By the 15th year, the bike paths will be finished, the heavy rail lines 75% finished, and the light rail lines starting to replace many of the trolley bus routes. At this point, 90% of the population of the county is within walking distance to a public transportation point, with park and ride facilities available on the most heavily used rail stops. There are now car pool lanes on almost every section of L.A. County freeways, although rush hour volumes have actually subsided, due to the enormous amount of transit available at 50 cent fares. Being that there are police officers on every transit vehicle, they are also one of the most safest places to be.

By the time 20 years are up, all heavy rail lines should be completed, and all light rail lines finished. There is now so much economical rapid transit available that freeway lanes are actually being removed from service. This land is being sold to commercial developers, and the funds used to subsidize the 50 cent fares for many, many more years to come. There is also another reason why freeway traffic has decreased: oil has become very scarce, as OPEC is starting to run out, so fewer people can afford to operate their cars. If it wasn't for my dictatorial powers over the last 20 years, this county would be an economic catastrophe, as there

would be no fuel for automobiles, and no decent rapid transit system to use as an alternative. Fortunately, at this time, the airports will still be able to be used, as the airlines receive their first hydrogen powered aircraft.

In the 20 years since this hypothetical transit plan started, Los Angeles has gone from an automobile based society, to a rail transit based society. And the people are using it. The reasons is that the the light rail, heavy rail, and trolley systems were built with state of the art technology, although the technology wasn't so advanced that the average user wouldn't understand it. That is why I avoided technology such as nuclear powered, anti-gravity, floating mono-rails. An individual wants the feeling he's traveling around town in comfort, not like he's going to Mars. Also, this transit plan takes people where THEY WANT TO GO, at a very economical 50 cent fare. Even though the heavy rail portion of my plan focused on downtown, my whole plan did not, since everyone doesn't need to go downtown. The light rail, and above all, the trolley buses, have allowed pollution free transit to even the remotest areas of the county, with frequent stops in both directions at all times.

I've now retired as Transportation Dictator, on January 1, 2013. I have avoided assassination, and I am now convinced that this was the way to complete L.A. County's transportation plan efficiently. Otherwise, we couldn't get any city officials, transit planners, and the public, to agree on anything, and we would have ended up with a patchwork system started in the 1980's that would be of little benefit to anyone.

(Problems, from p.3)

of transit lines would most likely be accelerated. So why should we spend so much transit money in building subways (which take longer to build than elevated or surface rail)?

✓ More park and ride lots, including those with bicycle facilities.

✓ New breakthroughs in transit technology and transit planning. Encouraging interest in science and transportation planning is the BEST way to improve public transportation.

✓ Passenger trains and buses for both commuter and long-distance (interstate) travel. Rail systems, with improved efficiency and comfort should be able to break the airlines' monopoly in long-distance transportation.

✓ Passenger cars and transit vehicles that generate their

own energy (Solar-electric, perhaps?)

NOT TO BE:

✗ Ghost lines--buses running empty.
✗ High bus and rail fares (which encourage private vehicle use)

✗ Clogged freeway offramps designed for lower traffic density--the offramps should be redesigned so that they are more efficient.

✗ Bus number panels which cannot be seen by the visually impaired.

✗ Lack of restrooms at transit stations.

Remember--NEED isn't what get things done; having many wise minds with skilled hands is what get things done.

L.A.'s New CityRide—More Options for You!

Senior (65+) and disabled residents of the City of Los Angeles now have more transit options (subsidized bus passes, Dial-A-Ride, taxis and lift vans) under the new CityRide program. This single program consolidates all the different dial-a-ride, lift-van, and taxi coupon book programs as well as the \$4/monthly RTD bus pass.

Please note that RTD bus pass fares are not being increased! In fact, under the CityRide program, actual bus pass prices would be no more than \$2.50.

Eligible users can buy \$60 worth of "scrip" for \$15 (or only \$6 for Medi-Cal and/or SSI recipients), four times each year (for a total of \$240 in scrip for \$60 each year). It may be less confusing to think of one dollar's worth scrip as a "Transportation Unit": These may be used to purchase any of the following:

- A senior or disabled bus pass (10 units).

• A trip on Dial-A-Ride (2 units for special group trips, 4 units for trips of 10 to 20 miles, and 6 units for trips up to 20 miles)

• Up to 8 units can be used toward taxi or lift-van fares.

CityRide participants will enjoy total flexibility among travel modes. One participant may choose to buy only bus passes, while another may buy a bus pass and occasionally take advantage of Dial-A-Ride or short taxi trips.

Remember that only the first **100,000** people who register will be able to participate in the program. Additionally, only the first **40,000** Medi-Cal/SSI recipients will be eligible for the \$6 discounted rate. Therefore anyone who might be eligible for CityRide should obtain an application (available at senior centers, independent living centers and RTD Customer Service Centers) as soon as possible. Or, call CityRide at (800) 956-7400.

Foothill Transit Modifies, Expands Bus Routes

Effective April 18, Foothill Transit will make extensive changes to several bus routes in the San Gabriel Valley:

Lines #178 and #179 will now both serve La Puente Road in Walnut between Azusa Ave. and Mount San Antonio College. The two lines combined will provide 30 minute service on weekdays (except on Valinda and Lark Ellen, where the two routes separate and operate hourly).

Line #185 will no longer serve Arrow Highway, Bonita Avenue, or Montclair. (See description of new Line #492 for service to these points). Instead, it will continue north along Irwindale Avenue, serving an area currently without bus service, and terminate in Azusa.

Line #187 now detours in Claremont (via Foothill, Claremont, and Arrow Highway) to serve the Claremont Transit Center (Metrolink). Service along Towne Ave. between Foothill and Arrow Hwy. will be discontinued.

Also, weekday night service will be offered, with the last buses leaving Pasadena at 9:55 pm and Pomona at 9:20 pm.

Lines #274 and #276 will operate as separate lines. In addition, #274 will be extended via Workman Mill to Crossroads Business Park, Rio Hondo College and Whittier (Beverly/Palm). #276 will extend via Gale Ave to Puente Hills Mall.

Alternating trips on **Line #486** will serve either Puente Hills Mall (as it does now) or Amar Road and Temple Bl. to Cal Poly Pomona.

Line #492, formerly rush-hour only along Arrow Highway to Los Angeles, has been expanded to an all-day operation (including Saturdays) and extended to Montclair via the former route of #185

Line #494 will be extended to San Dimas via Lone Hill.

METROLINK COMMUTER RAIL UPDATE

Metrolink now runs additional reverse-commute service. Three new round trips leave Union Station for Glendale and Burbank in the morning, returning in the evening. This allows San Bernadino line commuters access to Burbank and Glendale.

Other Metrolink developments:

- All midday trains on the San Bernadino Line now travel to and from Montclair.
- Service on the Riverside Line will be delayed until June. Many of the same issues which delayed construction on the San Bernadino Line

(i.e. contractor problems) also affected the Riverside Line.

- The Baldwin Park station should be open sometime in April. Construction of the Sylmar station has started; it should be open by June.
- An Ontario Airport station on the Riverside Line is now under consideration, partly due to hazardous waste problems at the downtown Ontario station site.
- VISA and Mastercard credit cards can now be used at Metrolink ticket machines.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS + EVENTS

Note: Meeting times and places subject to change without notice.

April 10 1:00pm **SO.CA.TA @ ECO-HOME**
4344 Russell, Los Angeles

April 13 7:00pm Exposition Right-Of-Way
(between I-405 and Centinela)
Westside YMCA,
11311 La Grange, West L.A.

April 14 7:00pm Exposition Right-Of-Way
(between La Cienega and Motor)
Echo Horizons School,
3430 McManus, Culver City

April 9 10:00am Metrolink, SCAG Conf Rm
818 W. 7th, Los Angeles

April 19 7:00pm Exposition Right-Of-Way
(from Centinela to Santa Monica)
Ken Edwards Center,
1527 4th St, Santa Monica

April 21 7:00pm Exposition Right-Of-Way
(Trolleybus alternative on Venice Bl)
Palms Middle School
10860 Woodbine, Los Angeles

April 21 6:00pm Crenshaw-Prarie Corridor
L.A. Dept of Water and Power
4030 Crenshaw, LA

April 22 6:00pm Crenshaw-Prarie Corridor
West Angeles Church of God
3045 Crenshaw, LA

April 24 9:00am 1993 Spring Rail Festival
April 25 Orange Empire Railway Museum
Perris. (909) 657-2605

April 27 7:00pm Exposition Right-Of-Way
(Trolleybus alternative on Venice Bl)
Westminster Senior Center
1234 Pacific, Venice

April 28 7:00pm Exposition Right-Of-Way
(between Motor and I-405)
Temple Isaiah
10345 W. Pico, Los Angeles

April 29 6:00pm Crenshaw-Prarie Corridor
Inglewood City Hall Comm. Rm "A"
One Manchester, Inglewood

May 4 7:00pm Exposition Right-Of-Way
(between Arlington and La Cienega)
Dorsey High School
3537 Ferndale, LA

May 6 7:00pm Exposition Right-Of-Way
(between Arlington and Vermont)
California Afro-American Museum,
600 State Drive (Exposition Park)

May 8 1:00pm **SO.CA.TA @ ECO-HOME**
4344.Russell, Los Angeles