

THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE

Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates
June 2011 Vol. 19, No. 06

ISSN 1525-2892



Inside This Issue:

- Bulletin Board (pg. 2)
- Members in Action (pg.2)
- Transit Updates (pg. 3)
- Get to know local transit (pg. 5)
- Public/Legislative Affairs (pg. 6)
- Metro Service Changes (pg. 8)
- OCTA Service Changes (pg. 10)
- Photos of the month (pg. 11)

Metrolink Cab Car 656 at Los Angeles Union Station on May 7, 2011. Full train sets equipped with the all new Hyundai-Rotem cars are becoming more common.

— Andrew Novak Photo

Bulletin Board / Members in Action

Bulletin Board:

We have undertaken a realignment of our Executive Board, matching preferences and opportunities with the members enduring the changes at our May meeting:

Treasurer - Dave Snowden
Recording Secretary and Archivist - Edmund Buckley
Corresponding Secretary - Dana Gabbard
Director - Joe Dunn

Our thanks to Stephen Box for a stimulating dialogue on advocacy and policy making at our May 14th meeting.

Upcoming speakers include Stephen Villavaso of the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition on June 11th and Jack Gabig Transportation Director for the city of Gardena on July 9th.

At Noon before the July general membership meeting the By-laws Committee will meet in our usual meeting place to begin reviewing our By-laws for possible revision.

Save the date: The 2011 California Rail 2020 Conference will be held in Los Angeles on November 4-6.

Members in Action:

Joe Dunn spoke on our behalf at the May 17th Press conference and rally in support of the full Wilshire Boulevard Bus-Only Lanes project. This received coverage in L.A. Streetsblog ("Today's BRU Presser: All Hands on Deck for Westside Bus Only Lanes") and linking YouTube post of Dunn's comments.

Dunn also advocated for the lanes at the May 18th Metro Board Planning & Programming Committee meeting and made public

comments at Los Angeles city council meeting on May 24th. He also had a chance to speak with his councilmember, Tom LaBonge, who is a big supporter of the project.

Alek Friedman attended the May 17th meeting on the downtown Streetcar project. A comment of his on the meeting was quoted in the L.A. Downtown News article "Speaking Out on the Streetcar".

Ken Ruben attended the California High Speed Rail Authority Open House held in the Metro headquarters Lobby on June 1st. He also attended the Westside Governance Council meeting on May 11th.

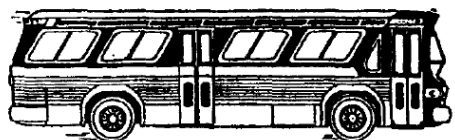
Nick Matonak was voted in as a Pacific Railroad Society member at the PRS Board June 4th meeting. 🚌 🚌

Are you buried in paper?

Are you interested in getting your SO.CA.TA newsletter in PDF?

We are now offering the SO.CA.TA newsletter in PDF format to our members. The PDF newsletters will be available a week before the meeting and will be in full color. If you would like to get the PDF newsletter instead of the printed version email us at: rtd1121@yahoo.com

Go by BUS



Transit Updates

Long Beach Transit

On June 2nd, Long Beach Transit celebrated the completion of the newly remodeled Long Beach Transit Mall. A special ceremony was held in the afternoon at Promenade Park, off First St., between Long Beach Boulevard and Pine Street).

Metrolink Fare Changes

Effective July 1st, Metrolink will be making the following changes to their fare policy:

-Weekend Pass: unlimited Metrolink train rides for only \$10. The unlimited weekend passes will be valid system-wide between Friday at 7 PM and Sunday at midnight and also include connections to bus and rail across the region, except Amtrak, at no additional charge. Monthly pass holders will also be unlimited Metrolink train rides at no additional charge.

-10-Trip Tickets: The 10-trip tickets will be discontinued and a new 7-day pass will be introduced. The new 7-day pass will be good for seven consecutive days from purchase between a set origination and destination.

-Student Discount: a new 10 percent student discount added to one-way and roundtrip tickets. Students will continue to receive discounts on 7-Day and the monthly pass.

OCLink

Effective July 1st, new Metrolink service begins in Orange County operating between the Fullerton Station and the Laguna Niguel/ Mission Viejo Station. The new service will add more service to the Orange County line Monday thru Friday.

Along with the expanded train service OCTA is introducing the new OCLink Pass. The new pass is \$7 (\$6 senior/disabled) and includes

unlimited rides on OCTA buses and Metrolink trains in Orange County, Monday thru Friday. These new passes will be available at Metrolink ticket vending machines in Orange County, at the OCTA store in Santa Ana, and at Orange County Ralphs Markets. For more information visit: www.octa.net/OCLink



Thousand Oaks Transit

Thousand Oaks Transit is now on Facebook. You can visit them at: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Thousand-Oaks-Transit/156220921106323>



LADOT

In early May, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) signed a contract with Motor Coach Industries' (MCI) for 84, 40-foot, CNG buses. These new 49-seat buses will replace the current fleet of Commuter Express buses that includes Neoplans, Gilligs, and Stewart Stevenson buses.

(Continued on Page 4)

Transit Updates Continued

San Diego Vintage Trolley

The San Diego Vintage Trolley Silver Line is set to begin operation in mid-July in downtown San Diego.

The new Silver Line will be a clockwise-loop that begins at 12th and Imperial Station and travel along the current Orange Line to America Plaza and then along C Street and through City College before returning to the 12th and Imperial Station. The new service will operate on weekends and holidays and fare will be \$2 round-trip (\$1 for seniors). For this service the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) will be using PCC Car 529 painted in the historic San Diego Transit paint scheme.

Car 529 was built in 1946 by St. Louis Car Company for the St. Louis Public Service. In 1957 it was sold to San Francisco MUNI and retired in the 1980s. The car was sold to a private party in South Lake Tahoe who was planning to start a street car service in that city. The Lake Tahoe plans fell through and in 2005 the car, along with others were acquired by the San Diego Vintage Trolley for use on the proposed Silver Line.

Passengers will board through the center door of the car and fares will be collected at that time. No Compass cards or debit cards will be accepted, only cash. More when this service begins.

Water Bus

Effective May 27th, The Marina Del Rey Water Bus has returned for another summer season and will operate on Fridays, Saturdays, and holidays until September 5th. The service schedule is as follows:

-Fridays: 5 PM to midnight

-Saturdays: 11 AM to midnight

-Sundays and Labor Day: 11 AM – 9 PM

-Summer Concert Series (Thursday nights):
5 PM – midnight

Fare is still \$1.00 per trip. Visit the water bus website for more details and stop locations. <http://www.marinawaterbus.com/>



1-800-COMMUTE

Just a reminder, as of June 30, 2011 1-800-COMMUTE, the regional transit information number will be discontinued. Replacements include 323-GO-METRO and 511.

For more information on all the services available at 511 visit www.go511.com or dial 511 from a cell phone or landline. 🚌 🚊



Getting to know Local Transit by Andrew Novak

Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA)

The ESTA is a Joint Powers Authority that was established in November of 2006 between the Counties of Inyo and Mono, the City of Bishop, and the Town of Mammoth Lakes. ESTA is a public transit agency created to meet the growing need for public transportation throughout the entire Eastern Sierra region.

ESTA transit services began on July 1, 2007, assuming control of all the services, staff and capital formerly known as Inyo Mono Transit (a division of Inyo County government). ESTA offers a variety of bus services, including; deviated fixed routes, local in-town dial-a-ride services, multiple town-to-town services throughout the Hwy 395 and Hwy 6 corridors, and interregional service (CREST) extending from Reno, Nevada to Lancaster.

ESTA Routes:

- Crest Lone Pine to Reno
- Crest Mammoth to Lancaster (Connections to Metrolink)
- Bishop to Mammoth
- Lone Pine to Bishop
- Benton to Bishop
- Bridgeport to Carson City
- Tecopa/Pahrump
- Mammoth Fixed Routes (Mammoth Lift and Mammoth Trolleys)
- Reds Mountain Shuttle (Mammoth Mountain Lodge to Reds Mountain/Devils Postpile)
- Dial-a-Ride (Bishop, Lone Pine, Mammoth, and Walker)

For schedules, fares, and additional information contact ESTA at:

800-922-1930 -or- 760-872-1901 -or- www.easternsierratransitauthority.com

“Getting to know Local Transit” is a new semi-regular feature were we will profile some of the smaller, lesser known transit agencies in southern California. If you know of an agency you would like to see profiled here, please contact the editor with your ideas. 🚌 🚌



Public and Legislative Affairs By Dana Gabbard

The whole Leimert Park dust up just reinforces my humble realization trying to fathom what is really going on in L.A. politics is often a dicey thing. Did County Supervisor Mark Ridely-Thomas really think he would be able to steal funding from other light rail projects to build an unnecessary tunnel just by turning out the masses in a show of organizing prowess (documented by Bill Boyarsky in a post on LAObserved.com titled "Mark Ridley-Thomas' telephone town hall") which involved something like 11 charter buses full of South L.A. residents descending on the May Metro Board meeting?

In fact Ari Nonnan in his post-mortem for The Front Page Online ("I Will Be Back in June with a New Proposal, Ridley-Thomas Promises") notes Ridley-Thomas from the beginning thought getting the many millions for the tunnel section was unlikely (my thanks to Ken Ruben for bringing Noonan's piece to my attention).

Since I am not overly familiar with the area under contention I contacted Roderick Diaz who is Project Manager for the Crenshaw light rail project to learn what is feasible to serve Leimert Park if a tunnel and underground station isn't in the cards. He informed me "The factors related to the curves and the grade of the track mean the closest location to Vernon Avenue for an at-grade station is likely south of 48th Street. There is a design option for a below-grade station, which considers an open trench station just south of Vernon Avenue in the triangle bound by Vernon, Crenshaw and Leimert Boulevard."

Despite all his preparation Ridley-Thomas didn't have at hand a compromise proposal reflecting these realities ready to offer. It

was left to Board member Richard Katz on the fly to craft a motion that tried to be fair but realistic. Noonan notes evidently Ridley-Thomas vows to cobble together a follow-up proposal. After the circus he forced the Board to endure only to have him drop the ball in the end what chance does this have of being any more effective? And won't the good folks of South L.A. be a bit gun-shy to again drag themselves to the Metro Board meeting especially given the dismal result that resulted the last time they did so?

I think Leimert Park deserves a station. Too bad Ridley-Thomas was too busy being big man on campus to have prepared a strategy to win, not just showboat. Or maybe this all is just act I and more awaits to play out. I do have to admit that is possible.

I also learned something interesting from Robert Leabow's analysis of the result posted on CityWatch ("The Crenshaw Light Rail Experience: What Has Mark Ridley-Thomas Taught Us?"). Arcadia in 2006 passed a bond measure (71.92% voter approval!) to issue bonds to pay for a grade separation when the Gold Line Foothill extension goes through their city. Much like Berkeley did to have BART in a tunnel through their city instead of elevated. Putting money on the table for what you want works better than caterwauling with an expectation the rest of us should pay for what you want.



PLAC Continued

Art Marroquin of the Daily Breeze in his article "The FlyAway to LAX \$4.6M deficit" documents the confused state of L.A. World Airport's Flyaway system: the Westwood route is on the cusp of cancellation, they are contemplating adding a stop at Wardlow Blue Line station to boost ridership on the Irvine route and they are looking at adding routes to Valencia, Santa Monica and Culver City -- all while struggling to fulfill a goal of having 9 routes by 2015 to fulfill an agreement made with airport expansion opponents. Several of these ideas seem pretty weak or ill conceived. Charles Powell and Eddie Anthony tell me the smart move for the Irvine route would be to add a stop at John Wayne Airport. As charter drivers they have numerous times encountered folks at the Orange County airport asking how to get to LAX. Makes more sense than going to Wardlow.

I don't know who I want to be the next Mayor of Los Angeles. But I am now sure about who I don't want: developer Rick Caruso. His mind-numbing idiotic recent comment about the Purple Line extension as quoted by Rick Orlov of the Daily News


("Caruso continues to sound like an L.A. mayoral candidate") leaves me speechless: "To me, it has just been a colossal waste of local and federal money. I don't get it. We have the best climate in the world and they want to put transit underground."

I'll conclude by noting two signs that Proposition 22 was just the beginning of the effort to give transit a firm footing:

*Assembly member Bob Blumenfield who represents a portion of the San Fernando Valley has introduced Assembly Bill 650 which would create a Blue Ribbon Task Force on Transit to develop a plan for the future of public transit in California.

*TransForm, the Bay Area transit and walkable communities advocacy group, is raising funds to launch Invest in Transit, a campaign to build a statewide movement of transit riders, workers, health advocates, environmental groups, business leaders, and others to advocate on behalf of transit. We haven't had anything like that since Odyssey wilted up some years ago.

I'll be keeping an eye on both these efforts.



**We Have a New Number:
323.GO.METRO**

Transit information for all of LA County.

*Please note the 1.800.COMMUTE
phone number is being discontinued.*

Metro Service Changes

Effective June 26, Metro will be making a variety of service changes to their system. Below is a summary of those changes:

Lines 2/302: A new short line terminal will be established in Echo Park at Sunset Boulevard and Alvarado Street with select trips continuing to downtown. No changes to Owl service.

Line 4: Service between West Los Angeles and Santa Monica will operate after Line 704 service ends for the day. No changes to Owl service.

Line 20: Service between Westwood and Santa Monica will operate after Big Blue Bus Line 2 service ends for the day. No changes to Owl service.

Line 26: Service on Virgil Avenue will be discontinued.

Lines 35/335: Discontinue Limited Stop Line 335.

Line 38: The first and last stop in Downtown LA will be relocated to Broadway & Venice Boulevard from 17th Street & Broadway and 18th Street & Broadway before 9 PM. After 9 PM, additionally, service will operate on Broadway between 18th & 8th Streets instead of Olive Street and Grand Av and 8th/9th Streets. The late night transfer connections will remain at Spring & 7th Streets.

Lines 94/794: Line 794 will be discontinued on weekends and Line 94 will be extended to Sylmar Station.

Lines 96/155: Line 96 will now end at the Burbank Metrolink Station and a modified Line 155 will replace the canceled portion on Line 96 between Burbank Station & Sherman Oaks. The line will now operate on Olive Avenue instead of Alameda Avenue in the Media District and extends via Riverside Drive to Sherman Oaks.

Line 155 will operate on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays on the same frequency as Line 96.

Line 121: The Line will be renumbered as Line 120 and will operate from Aviation Green Line Station to Whittwood Mall.

Lines 176/287: Line 287 will be combined with Line 176 at El Monte Station and both lines will operate every 45 minutes, all day. Both will serve Bay 6 at El Monte Station.

Line 180: A new late night shuttle service on Lake Avenue between Colorado Boulevard and Altadena Drive to replace late night service on Line 485. This shuttle will operate daily to provide connections to the Metro Gold Line Lake Station.

Line 205: In San Pedro the service will be extended on 1st Street and 7th Street to Harbor Boulevard. Service on Pacific Avenue between 1st and 7th Streets will be discontinued.

Line 207: Select weekday trips will be extended to Metro Green Line Crenshaw Station and all trips will be extended on weekends and Holidays. Also 60-foot buses will now be assigned to the line.

Line 210: The first southbound stop will be moved from Argyle Avenue & Hollywood Boulevard to Hollywood & Vine Street.

Line 217: Service will be discontinued east of Metro Red Line Hollywood/Vine Station. Owl service will continue to operate to Metro Red Line Vermont/Sunset Station.

Lines 230/634: Line 230 will be extended to Mission College over the alignment of Line 634 which will be cancelled.

(Continued on Page 9)

Metro Service Changes Continued

Line 247: Will be discontinued with new Line 205 service east on 1st and 7th Streets to provide connections to Harbor Boulevard.

Line 442: This line will be discontinued once the new Line 115 stop at Manchester Harbor Transitway Station is completed.

Line 445: Will be discontinued and replaced with an extended Line 450X to San Pedro.

Line 450X: Will be extended to San Pedro and operate mid-day and weekend service between Artesia Transit Center and San Pedro.

Line 485: Will operate from Altadena Drive & Lake Avenue to Gateway Transit Plaza (Union Station) between 6am and 9pm weekdays only. The new frequency will be 40 minutes at peak hours and 60 minutes off-peak. Late night service on Lake Avenue provided by new Line 180 shuttle.

Line 487: Route will now operate along Foothill Boulevard between San Gabriel Boulevard & Halsted Street. Service along San Gabriel and Sierra Madre Boulevards between Foothill & Sierra Madre Villa Avenue will be discontinued.

Line 577X: Service between Long Beach Transit Mall and CSULB/VA Hospital will be canceled.

Line 612: Will now operate hourly.

Line 705: A new stop will be added at La Cienega and Olympic Boulevards to provide connections to lines 28, 728 and La Cienega Park.

Line 751: Saturday service discontinued.

Line 757: Weekend service will be discontinued and the first southbound stop is now at Western Avenue and Hollywood Boulevard instead of Western and Russell.



40-foot buses will now be used on Line 757.

Line 760: Service south of the Green Line will be discontinued. Sunday service will also be discontinued.

Line 902: Will be discontinued with alternate service available on Line 233 or Line 761 and transferring to Metro Orange Line to the Metro Red Line North Hollywood Station.

Line 910 (Metro Silver Line): Service on the Harbor Transitway segment will operate every 15 minutes during the mid-day Monday through Friday. On Saturday the service will operate every 40 minutes.

Lines 40/42, 704 and 728 will now provide direct service into the Gateway Transit Plaza (Union Station) in downtown LA.

For more information on these changes and alternative service visit Metro.net or call 323.GO.METRO.  



OCTA June Changes

On June 12th, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) will make a variety of service changes. Below is a summary of those changes.

Minor schedule changes will be made to the following routes: 1, 25, 26, 29, 38, 43, 47, 50, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 64, 70, 71, 82, 83, 91, 129, 143, 153, 167, 188, 191, 482, 490, and 701.

Route 1: Summer schedule will be implemented on weekdays by adjusting trip times to start earlier and end later to accommodate additional traffic along Pacific Coast Highway during the summer months.

Route 25: Beginning July 1st, four morning and four afternoon round-trips between the Fullerton Park-and-Ride and the Buena Park Metrolink Station on weekdays to replace the discontinued Buena Park Metrolink Shuttle. These added trips are in addition to the existing trips to and from Huntington Beach.

Route 60: Westbound buses will be on detour to bypass the 7th Street Bridge in Long Beach. This detour will be in effect for approximately one year.

Select trips on Saturday and Sunday mornings will be converted to full-length trips from short-turn trips.

Route 153: On Saturdays and Sundays, bus will operate every 60 minutes instead of every 80 minutes.



OCTA will also be making a variety of changes to their fare policy on June 12th.

The eligible age for senior fare is lowered to age 60. New Senior passes will be available for sale starting in June. Upon boarding with a Senior Bus Pass, passengers need to be prepared to show proof of age identification with valid driver's license, California DMV ID card, Medicare card or OCTA senior reduced fare ID card.

The age for children to ride free is lowered to age 5 and under, and must be accompanied by a fare-paying passenger. Up to 3 children may ride free with a fare-paying passenger.

The fee for a reduced fare ID card is increased from \$2.00 to \$4.00.

College passes: the number of units per quarter/semester a student is required to attend school is reduced from 12 units to 9 units.

ACCESS ADA Personal Care Attendant (PCA): PCA's assisting an ACCESS eligible passenger learning to ride fixed route are now offered the ACCESS eligible fixed route local fare of 25¢.

Mobility Trainers: The current photo ID cards Mobility Trainers are required to show when riding an OCTA bus when teaching persons with disabilities to use public transit does not contain a magnetic strip. In order to better monitor use, the current photo ID cards must be replaced with cards containing a magnetic strip. Free ride must be exclusively restricted to travel training trips. 🚌 🚗



Photos of the Month

*San Diego Vintage
Trolley 529 on
Commercial Street in
San Diego.
(Ron Sutch Photo/
via Andy Goddard)*



*UC Irvine Anteater
Express El Dorado
EZ-Rider 257 near
UCI in May 2011.
This is one of the
former OCTA
EZ-Riders.*

*(Mark Strickert
Photo)*

How to join SO.CA.TA: Yearly dues are \$30.00 (\$12.00 low income). Dues are prorated on a quarterly basis.

Submission of materials: ALL materials for the TRANSIT ADVOCATE newsletter go to Andrew Novak at P.O. Box 2383, Downey California 90242 or to rtd1121@yahoo.com. Please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for returns.

Newsletter deadlines are the Fridays a week before SO.CA.TA meetings, at 6:00 p.m. Pacific time, unless otherwise announced.

Opinions: Unless clearly marked as "Editorial" or "Position Paper", all written material within, including all inserted flyers and postcards, are the expressed opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the Southern California Transit Advocates.

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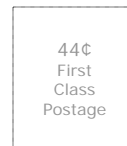
NEXT SO.CA.TA MEETINGS : **June 11th** and **July 9th** at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

June 2011 — Issue 223



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