



# HEADWAY



Southern California Rapid Transit District

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## All buses to have security devices

The entire fleet of Southern California Rapid Transit District buses will soon be outfitted with the most advanced on-board communications equipment in the transit industry. RTD has authorized the purchase of 1578 two-way radios with silent alarms to complete the most critical element in its intensive on-board bus security program.

Funded by a federal grant of more than \$1.7 million, the purchase will enable the District to equip its fleet of 1869 buses with the electronic security devices. Delivery and installation will begin early in 1975.

"The expansion of our radio-equipped fleet will not only allow

us to make instant operational adjustments in routes and schedules, but will also enhance the security of passengers and drivers aboard RTD buses," said Thomas G. Neusom, RTD president. "Together with the recent assignment of the special law enforcement task force to bus security, the District can expect a significant reduction in the number of incidents aboard our buses."

About one-third of the District's fleet is currently equipped with two-way radios, and about one-fourth with silent alarms — the first such units ever utilized on buses in the nation. The electronic equipment to be purchased will be used to outfit the re-

mainder of RTD's fleet, as well as the 300 buses the District now has on order.

"Early next year, every RTD bus will feature emergency flasher lights, roof-top identification numbers, and instantaneous silent and voice communication between RTD drivers and security personnel in the District's dispatch center," said Jack R. Gilstrap, RTD general manager. "The installation of flashers and identification numbers was completed earlier this year, and has enabled the District to head off the rising rate of incidents aboard our buses."

In a joint response to RTD's plea for increased protection for its

drivers and passengers, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has joined Los Angeles Police in assigning roving, unmarked patrol units in high-crime areas to help control incidents of violence aboard buses. "Our goal is to speed up our response time in incidents on public buses," Gilstrap said, "and to increase the number of apprehensions by law enforcement officers."

The purchase of the electronic security equipment is funded by a \$1,722,000 grant from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

## Public response favorable to contraflow usage

The bus-only contraflow lane on Spring Street in downtown Los Angeles has been judged a safe and uncomplicated transit innovation by the people most affected by it — pedestrians, auto drivers, businessmen, and the passengers of the Southern California Rapid Transit District.

In a survey conducted after the first six weeks of the lane's operation, RTD reports that there have been no pedestrian accidents involving buses, and only two minor vehicular accidents. One auto hit the side of a bus as it passed a parking lot driveway, and another rolled backwards out of a driveway into the side of a bus. While the Spring Street operation has served primarily as an experiment in signing and signaling as RTD introduces the contraflow concept to Los Angeles, the survey indicated that a significant time saving has resulted for both buses and vehicular traffic.

### Good public acceptance

"It appears that the lane's effect on bus movements, vehicular traffic, and passenger acceptance has made the contraflow operation an unqualified success," said Thomas G. Neusom, RTD president. "The experience gained by both the public and the District in the Spring Street experiment will pave the way for similar priority bus treatments on other city streets." The contraflow lane, which began operations May 19, runs northbound on Spring between 9th and Macy. The other three lanes on Spring Street run one-way southbound.

According to speed tests conducted by the research firm of Wilbur Smith & Associates, there has been a 21 per cent increase in a.m. peak auto speeds on Spring Street, and a 40 per cent increase in p.m. peak speeds on Main Street with the rerouting of many of the northbound RTD lines to Spring.

According to Jack R. Gilstrap, RTD general manager, contraflow bus

patrons traveling to El Monte via the newly completed San Bernardino Express Busway have reported substantial time savings over the bus-only system. "The integration of Spring Street and Busway systems sped up service to such an extent that the District is currently embarking on a program to completely revise its schedules for the Busway Flyers," he said. "There have been no significant delays since the lane's first weekday of service, and of the people surveyed, 93 per cent indicate that they would have no difficulty understanding the signing and signaling which marks the contraflow lane."

The RTD report is based on a sampling of 1463 contraflow bus passengers, and the personal interview of representatives from the 52 businesses which face on the contraflow lane on the east side of Spring. Seventy-four per cent of the bus passengers were in favor of the operation, with six out of 10 passengers indicating that they felt the lane sped up the bus service. Only one out of 10 thought bus service was slower.

### Two-thirds favor

Two-thirds of the Spring Street businessmen were either in favor or did not oppose the contraflow operation. Loading and access difficulties were cited by the remaining one-third, but such problems have been solved by many of those businesses.

Of the bus patrons surveyed, 77 per cent liked the bus stop signs, 63 per cent liked the pedestrian signs, and 65 per cent liked the traffic control signs.

The report included a detailed analysis of bus speeds on both Spring and Main. A 15 per cent increase in bus speed was registered in the contraflow lane as compared to former bus services on a similar stretch of Main Street. A 16 per cent increase in bus speed was recorded on Main Street due to the moving of commuter buses over to Spring.



A procession of RTD buses roll along Spring Street contraflow lane

## Eight new Park and Ride lot opens in Studio City

Live near Studio City or Universal City? Need a quick, convenient ride into downtown?

The Southern California Rapid Transit District provides an answer with the opening Monday, July 29, of its Studio City Park and Ride lot which is serviced by Line 793.

The lot, located on Ventura Blvd. between Vineland and Lankershim Blvd., is RTD's eighth park and ride facility.

"The Studio City Park and Ride has a dual purpose," said Thomas G. Neusom, RTD president. "It operates as a downtown commuter service park and ride lot and also provides

satellite parking for Hollywood Bowl events."

Line 793 operates from the park and ride lot to the Civic Center and along Hill St. to Washington Blvd.

The new Line 793 Studio City service operates Monday through Friday except for holidays and operates six morning and evening rush hour trips at approximately 20-minute intervals. Service to the lot is provided by regular Line 93 buses during the midday and after 5:40 p.m. The cost of parking in the 190-space lot is \$2.00 per month or 25¢ per day.

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# Rapid Transit referendum passage will create many job opportunities

RTD's rapid transit and bus improvement referendum, which will appear on the Los Angeles County ballot in November, not only includes a comprehensive plan to improve public transportation for citizens of the County, but also provides tremendous job opportunities for the District's employees.

Thousands of jobs related to the construction of a mass rapid transit system will be created. District's bus service will be immediately expanded creating hundreds of new contract and non-contract promotional opportunities, as well as greater seniority for current contract employees.

Passage of the November proposition would provide local funds which would be used towards increasing the RTD bus fleet by a projected 1000

units in three years. As a result, the District would require the additional services of up to 2000 operators, 500 maintenance personnel and 500 clerical, supervisory and administrative employees.

"Of course, every effort would be made to fill these non-contract supervisory and management positions, whenever possible, with our own qualified personnel," said Byron Lewis, personnel director. "The advent of rapid transit and bus improvements would definitely be a boon to the District's employee population."

Since the District's 10 operating divisions would not be capable of accommodating all additional equipment and personnel, it is estimated that the equivalent of six new divisions would be built and manned with the capacity to operate and maintain

230 buses each. The District's main overhaul facilities, currently housed at South Park, would have to be enlarged by approximately 75 per cent.

Approximately 10,000 jobs related to the construction of the rapid transit system would also be created by the November referendum, which has been described as the largest public works ballot proposition in state history.

A comprehensive program of bus service improvements has been adopted by the RTD's Board of Directors for implementation during the 12 year interim between the start of rapid transit construction and the beginning of full revenue passenger service on the system. The near-term program includes:

- A goal of adding up to 1000 buses from 1975-1977, which would bring

RTD's fleet of buses up to 2700 units.

- Development of new Park and Ride facilities and extended bus-on-freeway commuter lines to serve them.
- Additional preferential bus lanes on streets and freeways enabling commuters to get into town and out again quickly at peak traffic hours.
- Experimentation with exclusive contraflow lanes for buses on freeways as another way to provide expanded fast commuter service.
- Proposed joint development of dial-a-bus service with interested communities desiring short trip convenience.
- Implementation of new regional grid networks to saturate areas of Los Angeles County with public transportation.

## FOCUS: RAPID TRANSIT

(Editor's Note: This column will be devoted to answering frequently asked questions about the proposed transit improvement plan for Los Angeles. Readers are invited to submit their questions to Headway, Room 500, 1060 South Broadway.)

### Q. "What if I don't plan to ever use transit? What good is rapid transit to me?"

A. It is very important to you if you are going to be residing and traveling in most any developed part of the county. Established suburban communities and older, mature neighborhoods alike will be increasingly threatened by heavier and heavier traffic, the need to widen neighborhood streets for additional cars, and the noise, safety hazards, air pollution and blight that often will result. Fast, efficient public transit is the crucial instrument in managing this threat.

In those communities where blight has already set in, transit can be important in overcoming problems caused by local congestion and lack of accessibility to the rest of the region.

Fast, quiet, efficient public transit to some major places of employment can remove much of the excessive automobile congestion created by people getting to and from their jobs. This will, in turn, make neighborhoods immediately surrounding employment areas more attractive places to live and provide an alternative to the commuter who has to live great distances from his work in order to find tranquility. More pleasant, cohesive neighborhoods will be possible. Spiraling demands for more and longer travel can be brought under control.

These are just a few of the potential benefits of the transit plan proposed. Air pollution reductions, energy resource conservation, more efficient use of utilities and other public services would be among the numerous other examples that could be cited.

### Q. Where will the money come for rapid transit?

A. No transit system today can both service public needs and operate out of the fare box. Like other major public services, a major rapid transit system will require public support.

Financial consultants analyzed many forms of possible local public support and financing. They found that a one-per cent sales tax levy would provide the needed level of funding with the minimum of burden to the average household. The state legislature has provided for an election on twin ½ per cent sales tax levies in November, but recognizes the need for continued evaluation of all funding sources and will review this sales tax levy in 1981.

### Q. "What is the status of the rapid transit plan? It seems like planning has been going on forever."

A. The RTD has been studying ways to improve transit since it was created in 1964. It was a major reason the State Legislature created the RTD. The money to realize these proposals has never before been made available, however.

Over ten years of agency experience and the intensive efforts of specialized consultants is going into the current RTD proposed transit plan and program. It has become the first Los Angeles transit plan to be adopted by the Southern California Association of Governments as the official plan for this part of Southern California.

The first step toward any substantial improvements in transit will be passage of the proposed funding programs at the November polls.

## Park and Ride

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More and more people have discovered a way to save money, wear and tear on their car and nerves during the daily commute from home to work.

They are the thousands of people who have utilized the RTD's successful Park and Ride program, where they can drive their car to any of the seven Park and Ride lots, take a bus and arrive at work relaxed — all for as little as \$12 a month.

"This program has gained good acceptance from the public," said Al Styffe, a member of RTD's Operations staff.

The El Monte Park and Ride lot at the terminus of the Busway has been the most successful in the program with 925 parked cars on weekdays. La Mirada with 200 cars on weekdays and Van Nuys with 100 daily follow in usage, according to Styffe. The other Park and Ride lots show a steady pattern of growth.

"It appears that the further away from downtown these Park and Ride lots are located, the greater attraction there is for the commuter," Styffe continued.

He explained that the substantial savings in money, as well as the convenience factors, serve as the strongest inducements for commuters to use the Park and Ride lots.

A person can park his car at these lots for \$2.00 per month or 25 cents per day, and then ride the bus for \$10 per month with a monthly pass or 50 cents round trip.

"We have received requests for Park and Ride lots in the San Fernando Valley and the eastern end of the South Bay area," Styffe said. District staff members are studying the possibilities of extending this successful service to other areas of the county in order to more effectively serve the needs of the community.



RETIRING EMPLOYEES from Division 2 were recently feted by their fellow employees. Shown cutting their dual cakes are from left to right: Mrs. Velma Tinsley and her husband, Henry Parker Tinsley, supervisor; Mrs. Louise White and her husband, Albert L. White, dispatcher. Tinsley has been an RTD employe for 37 years while White has been with the District for 34 years.



Members of Division 13 pose for the camera, just before they prepare to dig in at their safety awards buffet. Awards were presented to operators who had earned good safety records. Below from left to right are divisions 1-11, 2, 3-10, 4-5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12.

## Safety award honors presented at divisions

RTD buses roll week in and week out safely carrying more than 600,000 passengers to and from their destination every weekday.

And recently amidst a smorgasbord fare, the District paid tribute to those men who are responsible for safely transporting the public.

More than 1500 District operators were awarded safe drivers awards at each operating division. Also in attendance were the men who make sure that the buses are in top-notch operating condition — the maintenance personnel.

The awards were presented to operators who had driven without an avoidable accident during the year. Among the recipients were three drivers who received awards for 29 years of safe driving and 33 drivers who earned 25 years of safe driving.

"The District is extremely proud of these very conscientious employees who have taken such

great care and pride in their task of safely transporting the public," said Jack R. Gilstrap, RTD general manager.

According to Jack Walsh, director of safety, each driver is enrolled as a member of the National Safety Council when he joins the District and automatically becomes a participant in the Safe Driver Award Program.

As the operator progresses in his safe driving career, he becomes eligible for safe driver certificates, awarded by the National Safety Council and validated by the Safety Department, and for the safe driver award pin suitable for display on his uniform.

"The toughest hurdle in the program is winning the three-year award," said Walsh. "Once a driver has earned that, a year is added to his safe driving record for each 12 consecutive months of operating without an avoidable accident. Each year he

receives a new certificate and badge showing his up-to-date record."

If a driver has an avoidable accident any time before he earns his three-year award, he loses whatever standing he may have earned and must begin over again.

"That is," explained Walsh, "he must start from the date of the accident and drive safely for 12 consecutive months to earn a one-year award, even though he has already earned a one- or two-year award prior to his accident."

If a driver does have an avoidable accident after winning his three-year award, he does not have to start over from scratch. Instead, Walsh said, he is given a penalty of 12 months driving time for each avoidable accident charged against his record. These rules are set by the National Safety Council and are followed by participants throughout the nation.



# RTD's divisions have "growing pains"

Undoubtedly you have read in recent issues of *HEADWAY* the articles relating to capital grants available to the District. Without these funds public transit in general and RTD in particular could not provide the quantity and quality of service so necessary for the area.

"A number of projects are currently underway and many more are planned for the near future which will affect almost everyone in the District," said George Heinle, manager of operations. "These include everything from completely new divisions to water fountains. The following update will keep you in tune with the happenings around the property —"

### Division 1

Only so many people, cars and buses can be put in a given area and when that given area is Division 1, it looks like it could burst at the seams. Fortunately, capital grant money will help relieve the problem. Very soon we will be expanding by acquiring the property to the south now being used to park big rigs.

To accomplish this seemingly simple move, however, the District must buy adjoining property and assist the present owners in finding another suitable location. While it is true RTD has the right of eminent domain, it's equally true we have a responsibility to help relocate those we dispossess. Along with more parking space and other maintenance improvements, consideration is being given to enlarging the operations building to provide improved people comfort.

### Division 2

The primary need at the Division 2 property is the enlargement of the Dispatch Center. As the pulse of RTD fleet operations, it is absolutely essential that the facility be expanded to meet our growing operation. Plans are now underway to increase the

size of the building and the working area of the dispatchers. As radio communication becomes the primary link between the operator and the control center, we must provide the facilities to meet the need.

### Division 3

You need only one look at the Division 3 maintenance building to realize it was built to repair street cars at the turn of the century. Today's demands placed on Division 3 calls for expanded service and maintenance capabilities. To meet these needs, plans for new maintenance and service facilities are on the drawing board and scheduled to be implemented in the very near future.

### Division 5

Wall to wall people is the problem at Division 5 and the answer is more room for operators and office personnel. Federal funding is making possible the expansion of these facilities in the near future. So hang in there, help is on the way.

### Division 7

High on the list of priorities is a complete new facility to be built adjoining the present site of Division 7. Plans call for everything to be new from the dirt up. A new multi-level main building fronting Santa Monica Blvd. is designed to accommodate offices, operators' ready room, locker space, instruction, mechanical store room and even employe parking. Additional land has been acquired to allow for free movement of buses, safer entrance and exit roadways. With all this happening, Division 7 cannot help but become the show place of RTD.

### Division 8

If things keep going like they are, we will have to store Division 8 buses on end and park employe cars on top of each other, but fortunately that will not be necessary. Plans are in the design stage to acquire more



RECENT ACQUISITIONS such as this Atlanta bus have created a need for expansion of facilities at most of the District's divisions.

space for bus storage and employe parking while at the same time providing more breathing room in the operation building.

### Division 9

With the El Monte Terminal well on its way to completion, attention now is turning to the new operations and maintenance buildings which will soon begin to take shape. Employes at Division 9 in El Monte will be the first to enjoy a completely new facility since Division 13 in Riverside was completed in the 60's. In planning this facility, a great deal of time and effort went into convenience and creature comfort to make your job as attractive as possible. Keep your eye on the southwest corner of the property and watch an entire new operating division develop.

### New West Valley Division

The evolution in transit is significantly changing our thinking and our physical requirements. New concepts such as park and ride, subscription service, personal demand service, and the need for grid-type operations make it necessary to establish strategically located divisions to accommodate our growth. To this end plans are underway to establish a West Valley division large enough to handle 200 or more buses.

Until this facility is built it may be necessary to lease vacant property for a temporary operation. While no definite location has been decided upon, the facility will be located in the West San Fernando Valley area.

In addition to projects now underway, more major improvements are proposed for fiscal year 1974-75 for which grant applications are being prepared.

## Making Headway...

☐ Congratulations to Pat Cohen, Control Revenue Clerk, who was married to Yvonne Hasson July 20. Cohen first came to work at the District on September 1, 1971.

☐ Be in style as you head for the beach this summer by getting your "Street Fleet" T-shirt. These T-shirts, which are part of the District's promotion for its new "Street Fleet" beach service, are available for \$2.00 in sizes S, M, L and XL. Also available are free colorful posters, plastic "Street Fleet" bags and stick-ons. You can get yours by stopping by Room 500

at 1060 South Broadway or phoning Brenda Mack at Extension 431.

☐ Congratulations to Rogers Tiffany, who is the newly appointed president of BRAC Local 1315. Tiffany, who is a District mileage clerk, was appointed as president until January 1975 by Robert Miller, who resigned from the post.

☐ "MURIEL, YOU were terrific!" read the plaque presented to Muriel Small in appreciation for her duties as Miss Transit Progress. Making the presentation in picture at right, was Muriel's boss, Byron Lewis, personnel director.



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