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Headlines

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Happy 25th Metro!

by Barrett, Matthew on 2/1/2018 10:51 AM
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25 years ago today, the newly formed Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, or Metro, had just 22 miles of light rail operating with the Blue Line, only 4.4 miles of subway open (from Union Station to Alvarado), the El Monte busway, a fleet of 2,289 mostly diesel powered buses burning over 27 million gallons of diesel annually, Metro Freeway Service Patrol, and 3 new Metrolink commuter rail lines (Metrolink wasn't a separate entity until a year later). There were big plans for much more to reshape mass rapid transit and transportation in Los Angeles County.

The new agency had two local 1/2 cent sales taxes, Prop A (1980) and Prop C (1990) as major sources of funding, and on this date in 1993, the base transit fare was \$1.10. The newly opened first segment of the Red Line had a promotional fare of 25 cents, and there was no such thing as a "Day Pass". The Green Line and the second segment of the Red Line were under construction with their opening days was still a few years away.

On February 1, 1993, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority was officially created under State law. Governor Pete Wilson had signed [AB152](#) (Katz), also known as the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority Reform Act, on May 19, 1992, giving our two predecessor agencies, the Southern California Rapid Transit District or SCRTD (1964-1993) and the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission or LACTC (1977-1993) a nine month period to work together and plan out a merger.

A Merger Steering Committee was formed with staff members from both agencies as advisors and headed up by seven board members from the two agencies. Director Richard Alatorre served as Chair of the committee. Other merger steering committee members included Commissioner Jackie Bacharach, Mas Fukai (Chief Deputy to Supervisor Hahn), Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, Supervisor Mike Antonovich, SCRTD Board President Marv Holen, and Glendale City Council Rep. Carl Raggio.

Metro's first board meeting was held on February 4, 1993 at the County Hall of Administration. [Video](#) of the meeting from the Metro Archive collection can be viewed on the Research Library's YouTube channel. The [Agenda](#) and [Meeting Minutes](#) show that the first order of business included swearing in the board and electing its officers, adopting procurement policies, DBE programs, board rules and procedures, and selecting Metro's first CEO.

Metro's first [employee newsletter](#) was published in February 1993 and covers the opening of the Metro Red Line subway on page 1 and the merger on page 2. The last SCRTD newsletter was also published in February 1993 and is titled, [Grand Finale](#). It covered the Red Line opening, the new Metro Board of Directors first meeting, and introduces Metro's first CEO, Franklin E. White.

Metro's CEOs since 1993:

- Franklin E. White (1993-1996)
- Joseph Drew (1996-1997)
- Linda Bohlinger (1997)
- Julian Burke (1997-2001)
- Roger Snoble (2001-2009)
- Arthur T. Leahy (2009-2015)
- Phil Washington (2015-present)

The District and Commission still existed for a 60 day period as business entities for the purpose of closing down business and transitioning all legal authority and obligations to the new agency. The District and Commission were officially abolished in law as of April 1, 1993. It should be noted and remembered that the public agency obligations of both former agencies continue on to this day. The merger legislation did not replace the district and commission laws, it linked them together, modified some responsibilities, and added new ones.

So Happy 25th Birthday Metro! Take a moment to reflect on how far we've come in 25 years, growing from 26.2 miles of rail to over 100 across the Blue, Red/Purple, Green, Gold, and Expo lines, two BRT lines, Orange and Silver, receiving over 2/3rds voter approval for two additional 1/2 cent sales taxes (for a total of four), operating an all clean-air bus fleet, Metro Express Lanes, Metro Bike Share, Metro Van Pools, major extensions of current lines, new rail lines and highway projects under construction, an extensive sustainability program, an office of extraordinary innovation, and much, much more.

What might the next 25 to 50 years look like?

--Metro Research Library, Archive and Records Staff

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Link to compiled and color-coded CA Public Utilities Code's District-Authority-Commission law:
<http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DPGTL/Ordinances/DistrictCommissionAuthority.pdf>

History Fact: Public governance and operation of transit in Los Angeles began on March 3, 1958 when the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority (LAMTA) purchased the two major private transit operators, Los Angeles Transit Lines (successor to L.A. Railway) and Metropolitan Coach Lines (successor to Pacific Electric). LAMTA (1958-1964) was replaced by SCRTD in a state legislative directed merger.

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