

43-Mile Monorail Offered Without Cost to Taxpayers

MTA Given Alweg Plan for System

BY RAY HEBERT

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Los Angeles can have a 43-mile monorail system without cost to taxpayers under a proposal submitted Tuesday by the Alweg Corp.

Sixten Holmquist, Alweg president, made a firm offer to finance and build the \$105,275,000 rapid transit network linking downtown Los Angeles with El Monte, Westwood and Van Nuys at a special meeting of the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

The system, employing 42 air-conditioned trains serving 40 stations, could be constructed in 2½ years.

Will Post Bond

Alweg, Holmquist said, is ready to post a performance bond to back up the proposal.

The detailed offer, firmed up by several months of engineering, feasibility and financial studies, varied only slightly from a preliminary report Holmquist made in February.

Coincidentally, Tuesday's presentation came when financial support appeared to be developing for the MTA's long-stalled plans to build a \$649 million standard rapid transit system.

Assembly Passes Bill

In Sacramento, the State Assembly has passed a bill increasing the in-lieu tax on motor vehicles to provide funds for rapid transit development.

Holmquist told the MTA on Tuesday that his proposal amounts to a \$187,500,000 venture.

Globe, Forgan & Co., Alweg's financial underwriters, he said, are willing to head a syndicate to purchase MTA bonds in that amount and sell them to private investors.

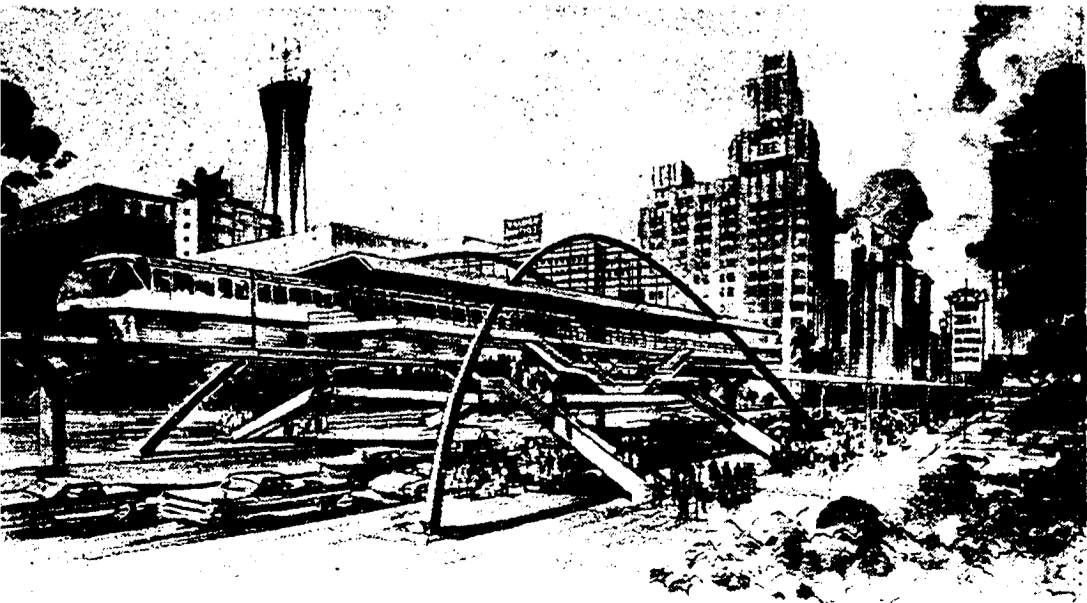
In addition to the \$105,275,000 cost for building and equipping the system, the bonds would provide \$27,500,000 for land acquisition, \$41 million to redeem the MTA's outstanding bonds, interest during construction and other fees.

Backbone Route

Holmquist said Alweg's proposed system would use 75 m.p.h. trains generally following the "backbone" route planned by MTA—from Westwood through downtown to El Monte—and a major leg from San Fernando Valley to the downtown area.

The Westwood-downtown line would roughly parallel Wilshire Blvd. It would use a median strip south of Santa Monica Blvd. in West Los Angeles, private right-of-way south of Wilshire in Beverly Hills and a combi-

Please Turn to Pg. 8, Col. 1



DOWNTOWN TRANSIT STATION.—Sketch of proposed monorail station at Hill and 6th Sts. was pre-

sented by the Alweg Corp. which made a firm offer to the MTA for building and financing of system.

MONORAIL OFFER

Continued from First Page
nation of 7th and 8th Sts. in approaching downtown Los Angeles.

Holmquist said the El Monte leg would follow the center line of Valley Blvd. The San Fernando valley route would use Van Nuys Blvd., Riverside Dr., the southwest side of the Hollywood Freeway through Cahuega Pass and Highland Ave. and La Brea Ave. to its junction with the Wilshire line.

Alweg's firm offer, Holmquist explained, calls for three-car trains, each with 300 seats. Earlier proposals had suggested two-car trains.

Time of Trip

The units would run "almost automatically." Rush hour headways between trains would be 2 minutes and on certain sections of the system five minutes. Average speed would be 32 m.p.h.

On a typical run, the trains would travel from Westwood station to 7th and Hill Sts. in 23 minutes and from the Van Nuys station to 7th and Hill in 36 minutes.

Alweg's plan ran into immediate opposition from some groups attending the meeting in the Hall of Administration.

Ed Tufte, Beverly Hills city engineer, said the Beverly Hills City Council is opposed to any overhead construction within its boundaries.

Joseph F. McCann, representing the Wilshire Cham-

ber of Commerce, said his group also objects to an overhead facility, although it favors a self-supporting rapid transit system.

Another speaker, Gabriel Duque, who said he was representing Wilshire Square, Wilshire Crest, Hancock Park, Oxford and Fremont Place residents, objected to the planned route because of the effect it would have on property values.

But James L. Beebe, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce's state and local government committee, said that in view of Alweg's experience in Seattle a monorail here "might be a good investment for our community." Donald Buckingham, board chairman of the Downtown Business Men's Assn., told the MTA he was impressed by Alweg's presentation.

Committee Dubious

The DBMA, he explained, is in favor of rapid transit but its executive committee has expressed a "general feeling" of opposition to overhead travel because of New York's and Chicago's experiences with elevated trains.

Holmquist promised the MTA that financial feasibility studies of extensions to Long Beach, International Airport and San Bernardino would be undertaken if the offer is accepted.

He said the offer would remain open for 90 days to allow the MTA and its consultants to study the proposal.