



METRO MOVES

Transportation Task Force Moves Ahead on Designing Standard Light Rail Car

Metro Green Line Service Expected to Open on Time in 1994

A special Los Angeles Light Rail Vehicle Task Force of the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission has released a proposal designed to balance short-term transportation needs with long-term regional prosperity.

A report was presented on Feb. 27 to an *ad hoc* committee composed of LACTC commissioners and special appointees. The recommendations call for buying standardized rail cars while encouraging local component manufacture. All of this is intended to create jobs and keep the expansion of the overall Metro Rail system on schedule.

In the meantime, the task force recommended that the LACTC begin negotiations with a sister transportation agency to lease 15 to 25 rail cars to provide initial service to the Green Line so that it can open in November, 1994.

The 26-page proposal addressed three basic objectives:

- Meet the Green Line's original target Revenue Operation Date of November, 1994;

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LACTC Executive Director Neil Peterson

- Ensure that there are Standard Light Rail Vehicles available for the scheduled Pasadena Line startup in 1996;

- Encourage opportunities in the private sector that could create a surface transportation industry in the Los Angeles area that would, in turn, produce long-term jobs and be capable of delivering products to the global market.

The task force presented a three-step plan to accomplish these goals, the first of which involves leasing of light-rail vehicles from another city. The *ad hoc* committee directed LACTC staff to begin lease negotiations, and bring the matter back for approval in mid-April.

After conducting a worldwide search, the task force believes it is possible to negotiate with another transit agency in North America. This would bring Green Line riders service 12 to 18 months earlier than would otherwise have been possible. Also, cars would not need to be

diverted to the Green Line from the successful Blue Line where ridership is expected to increase.

The second recommendation calls for the development of a design for a Standardized Light Rail Vehicle that would be similar in design to the well-accepted Blue Line car. It would include modular design capabilities that would allow modification to various levels of automated sophistication.

At LACTC's January meeting, when the commissioners reopened the ▶

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design concept for Green Line vehicles, Los Angeles Mayor and LACTC Commissioner Tom Bradley introduced a motion that would leave open the option to request bids for automated vehicles for the Green Line. This option is still a possibility according to the *ad hoc* committee's most recent discussions. As long as the track being built for the Green Line has automated capabilities, it can carry either non-automated or automated vehicles. It is up to the *ad hoc* committee to recommend the final specifications that will be sent out for bid.

The LACTC's draft 30-year plan identifies a need for 100 light rail vehicles before the year 2000. Given this objective, the task force believes that by carefully crafting "performance-type" specifications and using a "low bid" method to determine the awarding of the contract, it will generate the widest possible competition, encourage American component suppliers to participate in the bid proposals, and meet its need to procure a fleet of cars by the year 2000.

A modern light rail vehicle uses components from a host of proven suppliers, several of which are located in California. All other American suppliers of propulsion, braking, door operators, air conditioning and other equipment are located elsewhere in the United States.

Of the 100-car order, the first 52 would have the basic components of a standard light-rail vehicle to be used on the Green Line and on the Pasadena Blue Line extension scheduled to open in 1996. The remaining 48 cars will consist of 14 basic vehicles, plus 34 with the capability for full automation.

The *ad hoc* committee directed the Rail Construction Corporation, LACTC's rail building subsidiary, to work with industry experts to begin preparing performance

specifications for an RFP to be brought back to the *ad hoc* committee in April for further discussion.

"The use of rail cars from another city for an interim period allows us to meet our first objective — to open the Green Line on time in 1994," said LACTC's executive director Neil Peterson.

"Secondly, it will give us more time to study technical needs and allow us to refine the performance standards so that the RFP will attract more bidders, and thus lower costs.

Lastly, it realistically addresses the possibility of creating a surface transportation industry in Los Angeles that would provide long-term jobs," Peterson said.



Neil Peterson demonstrates a proposed design concept for a standardized rail car.

The Los Angeles area is ripe to create a surface transportation industry. It has the largest concentration of high technology know-how, which, combined with the downsizing of the defense budget, has aerospace and defense firms looking at other commercial and public markets.

Efforts to interest local aerospace companies in developing transit components have already led to meetings between aerospace engineers and transportation commission engineers to discuss product niches that they might fill.

The task force proposed that the successful contractor who wins the 100-car order can commission two prototype cars, called *Series II*

Advanced Technology Vehicles (ATV's), and that these prototypes can be outfitted with state-of-the-art subsystems designed and constructed with technologies developed by local high-tech firms.

The LACTC could provide the two prototypes to test and evaluate proposed innovations, using the Metro Green Line as a test bed for dynamic testing of any advanced system developed by the consortium. Perhaps equally important, there would be an "instant market" for those advanced subsystems that perform well in testing.

"The overall goal of the task force's plan is not to force the local manufacture of an entire rail car — which would inflate costs and not create permanent jobs — but to identify niche-market opportunities to create a rail-car component industry," Peterson said.

"If we take advantage of the technologies and know-how developed by our local aerospace and defense industry, and apply it to the rail industry, Southern California has a unique advantage for competing in the world market."

The task force report concluded that the appropriate role for the LACTC would be to encourage, rather than demand, manufacturers to devise their own best methods to solve the problems of available technology and low employment in the Los Angeles area. These solutions can then be applied toward the creation of a local surface transportation industry.

In addition to the 11 LACTC Commissioners and their alternates, the standardized car *ad hoc* committee included representatives from labor, business and the private sector. ■

LACTC Holds Public Hearing on Proposed Mid-City Extension of Metro Red Line to Pico/San Vicente

On Feb. 26, a public hearing was held on a proposed change to the Metro Red Line alignment, adding a two-station, 2.3-mile extension to the Mid-City area of Los Angeles at Pico/San Vicente.

This proposed extension, which was approved by Congress as part of the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), responds to a need to take the Red Line west without tunneling through the identified "methane risk zone", as prohibited by Congress in 1985.

Numerous witnesses testified before the commission, including individuals and groups who urged that the LACTC seek to amend federal law so the Red Line can be routed under Wilshire Boulevard through the Miracle Mile area. Several other individuals and groups testified in support of the proposed Mid-City extension, and a letter was presented from U.S. Reps. Julian Dixon and Henry Waxman indicating that they would oppose efforts to reopen the issue of tunneling in the methane risk zone.

The Mid-City segment to Pico/San Vicente will allow for accelerated construction of the Metro Rail west of Wilshire/Western by building on previous environmental documentation and the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. This federal act specifies the route and stations as part of the 11.6-mile, eight-station package of Metro Rail extensions to the San Fernando Valley, East Los Angeles, and Pico/San Vicente.

The Mid-City segment also includes a Crenshaw/Olympic station for im-

proved Metro Rail access and service to residents of Southwest Los Angeles, Korea-town and other Mid-City communities.

The proposed Mid-City extension will provide an interim terminus for the Red Line until a route is approved and then built to extend the subway to Century City and Westwood.

Several witnesses cited the Mid-City station as an excellent prospect for joint development, as the site is adjacent to an RTD-Santa Monica Bus facility and can provide parking spaces and creates virtually no negative residential impacts during either construction or operation.

Construction of the extension would begin in 1995. Metro Red Line Service to Wilshire/Alvarado opens in 1993; to Wilshire/Western in 1996; and, in 1998 to Hollywood/Vine. If the commission adopts the Mid-City extension, it will open by the year 2001 in conjunction with extensions of Metro Rail to North Hollywood, in the San Fernando Valley, and to East Los Angeles, in the area of Whittier and Lorena.

For further information, call (213) 244-6187.

NEWS BRIEFS



Prop. C Wins in Court

The 2nd District of the California State Court of Appeals unanimously upheld the legality of Proposition C, L.A. County's half-cent sales tax measure approved by county voters in November 1990. The ruling on March 5 means that revenues derived from Prop. C can be used to provide necessary transportation improvements throughout the county.

The decision is considered a major victory for LACTC. "We are obviously pleased with the unanimous decision, said LACTC Executive

Director Neil Peterson. "Given these tough economic times, the revenues generated from Proposition C will help us to deliver our planned transportation programs."

However, the California State Supreme Court has a 90-120 day period in which it may decide to hear the case, and the LACTC will continue a prudent approach by not spending the Prop. C principal until it is determined whether or not the Supreme Court will hear the case.

East Los Angeles Metro Rail Extension Generates Interest

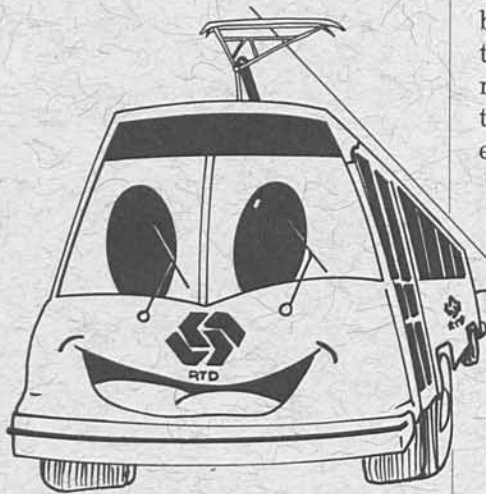
In January, the LACTC's Central Area Team held a second round of meetings with East Los Angeles area residents, elected officials, business and community leaders to evaluate transportation improvements, including rail transit, for the area. The community has responded positively, and a third round of meetings will be held in May. To be placed on a mailing list, or for further information, call the East Los Angeles Metro Bilingual Hotline (213) 244-6834.

Community Meetings Held to Gather Public Comment on Electric Trolley Bus Program

Southern California Rapid Transit District (RTD) and LACTC planners, looking for as much public feedback as possible, have held several community meetings throughout the county to discuss the proposed electric trolley bus project.

Fourteen meetings have already been conducted in the county locations that are earmarked to receive the first electric trolley bus lines. The meetings are being held to inform the public about the joint RTD-LACTC project, answer questions and receive comments. Topics for discussion include the proposed service, design, construction time

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lines, street beautification and economic issues.

"The more citizens we hear from on the subject of electric trolley buses, the better," said Marvin Holen, president of RTD's Board of Directors and an LACTC commissioner.

RTD has identified about 20 potential electric trolley bus routes for study. Of these, about 10 lines will be selected in March for possible development. RTD, Long Beach Transit and Montebello Municipal Bus Lines each could ultimately operate some routes.

The electric trolley bus can offer multiple benefits to a community. Non-polluting and energy-efficient, the bus is electrically powered. Twin trolley poles on the roof of the bus receive power by engaging a pair of overhead wires. It is capable of running on city streets and maneuvering in traffic, just like a conventional bus, and it is 10 to 20 decibels quieter.

■ **Thomas Bros. Maps works with LACTC to Develop Digital Mapping System**

Warren Wilson (left), president and co-owner of Thomas Bros. Maps, looks on as Jim Grummon, an LACTC information services consultant, demonstrates a digital mapping system recently developed

by Thomas Bros. Maps in conjunction with the LACTC. Utilizing a master digital mapping database, the well-known map company has entered a new era of mapping technology. The first computerized Thomas Guide map books of Los Angeles and Orange counties premiered last September.



Focusing on improving mobility and air quality

in Los Angeles, the LACTC uses the elaborate computer mapping system for long-term traffic management programs, Metro Rail construction and planning, and its Freeway Service Patrol Program.

■ **Countywide Traffic Signal Coordination Strategy Under Way**

The LACTC's Southeast Area Team has begun implementing a strategy aimed at improving traffic signal coordination across political boundaries in Los Angeles County. The ultimate goal will be to improve signal operations for the county's

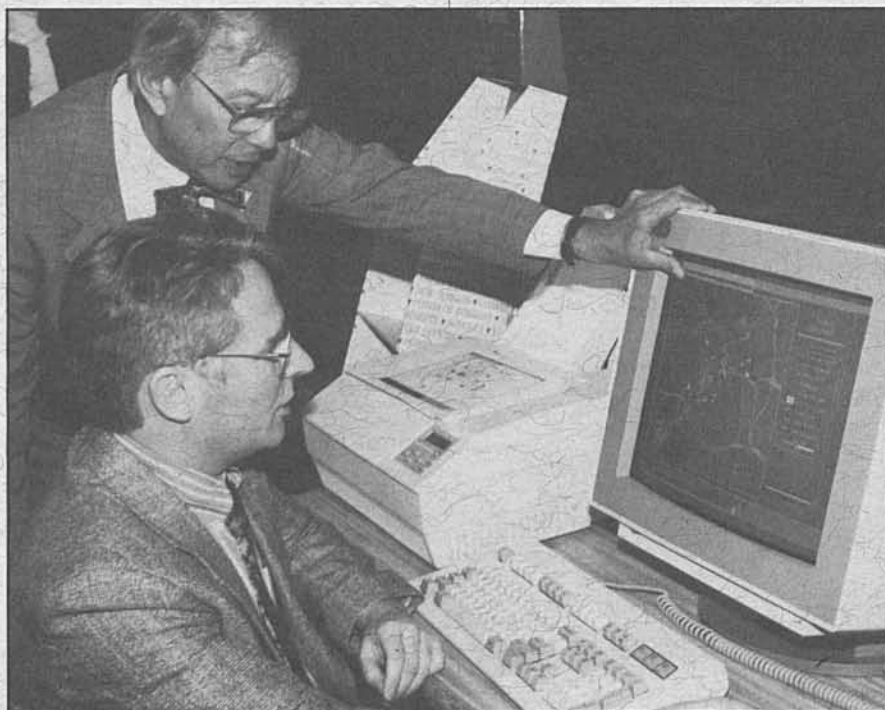
10,000 traffic signals that are currently operated by more than 80 different agencies.

The Signal Support Group will provide administrative support to help operating agencies (cities, county, Caltrans) develop programs that will improve traffic signal operations. The group is the result of a two-year study by the county's Public Works Department and other agencies under the leadership of Los Angeles County Supervisor and LACTC Chairman Michael Antonovich. The LACTC will arrange meetings with traffic signal design and operations personnel in at least 11 county subregions.

Under the direction of a multi-jurisdictional steering committee, the Signal Support Group will work toward a consensus on long-term capital projects and coordinated signal timing plans to improve signal operations countywide.

■ **Montebello Bus Lines Wins January Metro Award**

Montebello Bus Lines received this year's first Metro Award for its formidable renovation of transit equipment and creation of a new interior and exterior design for the buses. ▶



During the past year, Montebello Bus Lines introduced an innovative new logo, new colorful paint scheme and dressed its drivers with new uniforms. The "new look" has sparked new sentiments of pride among passengers, city officials and residents. In 1992, the company will add 20 coaches, replacing two-thirds of the city's fleet.

Congratulations, Montebello Bus Lines!

■ **Advanced Vehicle Communication**

The LACTC's South Bay Area Team is leading an LACTC effort to coordinate the use of Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) system technology to assist with fleet management of buses, rail cars, paratransit and tow trucks. Depending on the type of AVL system used, vehicle locations can be identified within an average range of 100 to 600 feet.

Several ongoing and proposed projects have a use for AVL systems, and by coordinating these systems, consistent technology can ensure economical equipment purchases

Radio frequency needs are also being explored. Certain types of AVL systems require radio frequencies to transmit locational data and some projects require voice communication. The LACTC group will determine the number of frequencies needed for a project and develop a work plan for acquiring frequency licenses. There are no frequencies currently available in the Los Angeles area.

■ **Transit Store Open House**

LACTC and the Pomona Valley Transportation Authority are co-hosting an open house at The Transit Store, located in the Indian Hill Mall in Pomona, at 11 a.m. on Thursday, April 2.

For more information, or to R.S.V.P. for the Open House, call (714) 596-7664. ■

WHAT'S NEW IN RAIL CONSTRUCTION

Community Workshop Held for Metro Rail Station Plan at Sunset/Vermont

The community was invited to listen and contribute to development ideas for the Metro Rail station planned for Sunset Boulevard and Vermont Avenue at an open meeting last month. Metro Rail planners have been working closely with the City of Los Angeles and the three major hospitals in the Sunset/Vermont area to create a joint development project that includes a multipurpose plaza near the station — similar

to the popular open-air rail station plazas of Japan and Europe.

Options for development include using the site for retail, commercial, community service, or cultural facilities.

"A joint development venture would provide a one-of-a-kind pavilion and plaza, bringing convenient services to the high volume of people who pass through the area, as well as provide convenient services to help offset operations costs," said Don Knabe, chair of the Joint Development Ad Hoc Committee of the LACTC/RCC.

For more information, call the LACTC at (213) 244-6841.



Metrolink

Ventura County's First Metrolink Station Breaks Ground

Groundbreaking of Ventura County's first Metrolink train station took place on February 14, providing a Valentine's Day gift to the City of Simi Valley from the city's officials, and from the County of Ventura and the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA), builders and operators of Metrolink.

When the system becomes operational in October, the Simi Valley Metrolink train station will provide a convenient boarding point for Los Angeles County-bound commuters who battle the increasingly over-

crowded freeways.

The station is located south of the SR-118 (Simi Valley Freeway) and west of the intersection of Stearns Street and Los Angeles Avenue.

The station will accommodate 600 parking spaces, which will be periodically monitored by local law enforcement, and will provide easy access for service by Simi Valley Transit to get riders to and from the station.

Station features include a boarding platform 800-feet long that will accept both Metrolink and Amtrak passengers. (The current Simi Valley Amtrak station will close ▶

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Ventura County Supervisor Vicky Howard accepts Metrolink "Valentine".

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when the new station is opened.) A fully automated ticket-vending machine, operated like a bank teller machine, will dispense tickets. The cost of a one-way ticket from Simi Valley to Los Angeles has yet to be determined by the SCRRA, but will vary according to the distance of travel. Additional station features on the platform include access for the disabled, passenger canopy shelters, public phones, ample lighting and bicycle parking.

The SCRRA was formed in August, 1991 and consists of an 11-member board representing the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura. ■



Air Time

Rail Electrification Study Released

A draft report was released last month by the SCRRA Electrification Task Force that highlights costs and schedules to electrify nine Metrolink and four freight rail lines, and provides an analysis of Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) emissions, ranking of lines recommended for electrification, funding scenarios, and an action plan for electrifying the first route.

Electrifying 806 miles of Southern California's commuter and freight railroads would cost \$4.5 billion and could take approximately 18 years, according to the task force findings.

The study was prepared to respond

to environmental concerns raised by the California Transportation Commission on whether the diesel-powered trains ordered for Metrolink, the regional commuter rail system, would meet clean air standards set by the Southern California Air Quality Management District.

Findings of the study indicated that the 90% reduction in rail-related Nitrogen Oxide emissions planned by the SCAQMD is not achievable through Metrolink electrification by 2010. In fact, the study shows that electrification of the nine Metrolink lines only offers a mere 5% reduction of NOx emissions by the year 2010.

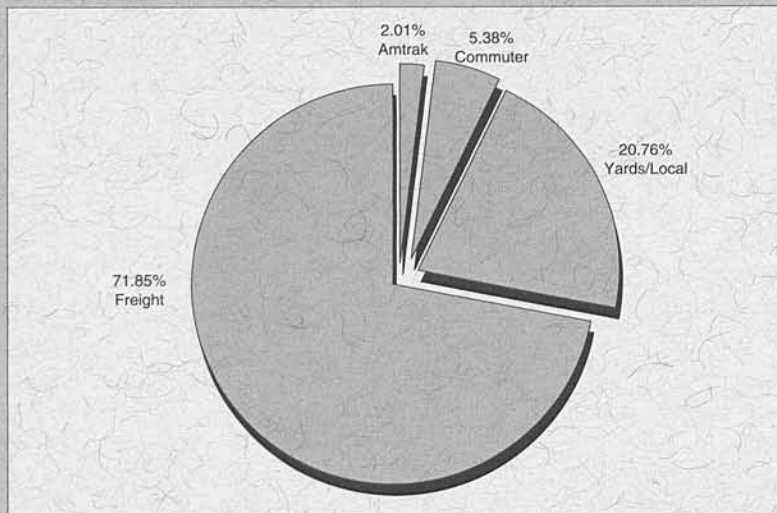
Air quality benefits would be achieved only if both Metrolink and the freight railroads are electrified, the report said. By the year 2010, the freight railroads will be responsible for 72% of rail-related NOx emissions in the South Coast Basin.

Moreover, the study found that electrifying only Metrolink is not a cost-effective strategy to reduce emissions. However, electrification of both Metrolink and freight rail operations was found cost-effective, according to the SCAQMD standards.

"An important outcome of this study is that Measure 14 of the 1991 Air Quality Management Plan, which calls for railroad electrification, will be modified," said Norm Jester, director of the Task Force. "The original assumption that electrification of rail operations would reduce emissions by 90 percent proved to be too high. The Southern California Association of Governments will take the lead in rewriting the measure."

The study urged testing of alternative fuels including cleaner diesel, methanol, compressed natural gas and liquified natural gas as alternative options for emission reductions. Use of alternative fuels was strongly recommended for the routes that are not candidates for early electrification or not viable

Components of Railroad Related NOx Emissions in the South Coast Air Basin in 2010



Source: South Coast Air Quality Management District, February 1992

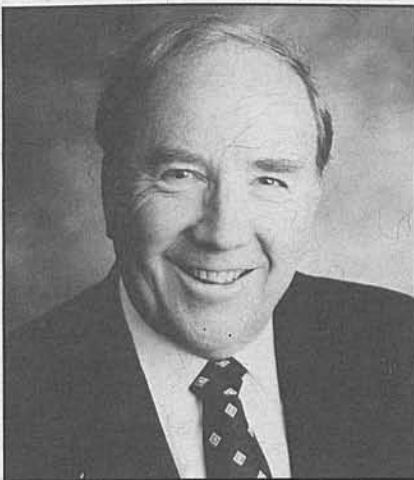
for electrification.

As the next step toward regional rail electrification, the study recommends progressing the engineering effort from 5% to 30% on the highest-scoring Metrolink line — Route 6, Riverside to Los Angeles via the Union Pacific. Parallel to the engineering effort, alternative fuels would be tested as a means to further reduce rail-related emissions within facilities that are not cost-effective for electrification; i.e., yards, shops and rail sidings.

An important step that will be taken prior to initiating further engineering activities will be to open discussions with the freight railroads about their participation in a regional electrification program, because without their participation, the study concluded, electrification is not cost-effective.

The California Transportation Commission agreed to take the lead in establishing a task force to recommend ways of rail electrification funding.

Created in September, 1991, the Southern California Rail Electrification Task Force is a multi-agency group consisting of the utility companies, air quality agencies, environmental groups, freight railroads, transportation commissions and the Public Utilities Commission. ■



U.S. Rep. Carlos J. Moorhead found a surprising rise in his constituents' support for L.A. Metro. (story, right)



Legislative Update

State Legislation

On February 18, the State Legislature's Senate Transportation Committee approved AB 152, a measure by Assemblyman Richard Katz (D-LA) to merge the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) and the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD). About 80% of the bill reflects the principles adopted by the RTD and commission boards in December, 1991. The major provisions of AB 152 include the following:

- Creates the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) with a 14-member board, similar in composition to the Commission's board (similar to LACTC/SCRTD principles);
- Provides that three organizational units be established for (1) rail construction, (2) transportation planning and programming, and (3) bus and rail operation (similar to LACTC/SCRTD principles);
- Provides that certain powers and responsibilities be reserved for the principals of the board (similar to LACTC/SCRTD principles);
- Preserves the funding share for municipal operators (similar to LACTC/SCRTD principles);
- Provides that existing labor agreements not be enhanced or diminished by the creation of the MTA (similar to LACTC/SCRTD principles);
- Includes provisions regarding ethics that are similar to current law applied to state elected officials (not in LACTC/SCRTD principles);

- Requires affirmative action plan for hiring and a DBE/WBE goal on all contracts. Establishes a DBE/WBE Advisory Council (not in LACTC/SCRTD principles);
- Requires a domestic content procurement policy on specified equipment for contracts funded by 50% local or 50% state funding (not in LACTC/SCRTD principles).

Should it be approved, AB 152 would become effective on Jan. 1, 1993. The bill provides for a transition period, with the Los Angeles County MTA board assuming responsibility for transportation services on Feb. 1, but co-existing with the district and commission boards until April 1. After April 1, the RTD and LACTC boards would be abolished.

The measure will be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee and on the Senate floor this month. The bill will then return to the Assembly for concurrence.

For further information on the provisions of AB 152, please contact Claudette Moody, Administrator of State Affairs at (213) 244-6525.

Federal Legislation

Constituent Survey by Congressman Moorhead Shows Dramatic Growth in Support for LA Metro

U.S. Rep. Carlos J. Moorhead of Glendale, who has served in the House of Representatives for almost twenty years, has always been a strong supporter of mass transit ▶

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and the L.A. Metro system.

However, in 1985, when Rep. Moorhead polled his constituents, he found their response to the then-proposed 150-mile Metro system ran 66% **opposed** with only 34% in support. Just recently though, he reported that his 1991 poll demonstrated an amazing turnaround by his constituency. Today, 68% of his respondents **favor** the (now 400-mile) Metro system while only 30% are opposed. Support for commuter trains is even more impressive, as 86% of those answering favor the purchase of rights-of-way for the development of a regional commuter train service (known as Metrolink).

For further information on Federal issues, contact Bevan Dufty, LACTC's Administrator of Federal Affairs, at (213) 244-6555. ■

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