

CEO REPORT

A weekly report  
from the office  
of the CEO

March 28, 1994



During the next month we will meet with you at the 425 and 818 Buildings to gather your comments and concerns about the layoff policy we've proposed as part of our internal cost reduction program. As you know, the Board last week postponed taking action on the policy until directors have the chance to review it. Look for memos within the next couple of weeks advising the dates and times of the upcoming meetings.

Copies of the proposed layoff policy were distributed to all employees last week. I'll go quickly over key points of the policy, which is a revision of the former SCRTD's. Key differences include elimination of bumping rights and changes to severance pay provisions.

Under our proposed layoff policy, severance pay will be based on an effective date of layoff. Upon CEO approval, employees will be notified of the effective date. Employees will receive regular salary payments and medical/dental insurance, or two years additional credit towards retirement based upon their selection in accordance with the following schedule:

YEARS OF SERVICE	MONTHS OF SEVERANCE PAY	OR	RETIREMENT CREDIT
Less than 3	2		N/A
3-4	3		3 years
4-5	4		2 years
5-6	5		2 years
6 or more	6		2 years

Employees of former SCRTD may receive two years' age and two years' service credit.

Employees of former LACTC may receive two years' service credit only, due to pension plan provisions.

Concerning displacement rights, our new policy says there are no automatic rights of bumping. When a

non-represented employee has been laid off, she/he may request and at the option of the Executive Officer, receive a transfer to a lower-level classification within the unit if she/he previously held the position or is qualified to hold the position and the lower-level position is vacant.

Please come to these upcoming meetings prepared with your questions.

**Status of New Headquarters Building**

In other matters, if you get the chance, drive by the new headquarters building at Macy and Vignes. It's really starting to take shape. It's my belief that the project — the only major construction project of its kind in the downtown area right now — is contributing significantly to the economy and will be a catalyst in the formation of future joint development projects. We hope to relocate to the new building in the summer of 1995. Leases at the 425 and 818 Buildings expire soon after.

My staff and I get a lot of questions about the status of the project, which consists of the headquarters building and the public transit center, so I thought I'd share with you the latest:

This month, we began the second stage of construction of the underground parking garage. There will be four levels of parking below ground. To facilitate con-

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struction of the garage, Vignes Street will be closed at the end of April and traffic will be diverted onto Lyon.

#### One Story of Steel a Week

Already, workers have begun erecting steel that frames the plaza level of the 26-story tower. The tower sits atop the parking garage. By August, we'll see a significant amount of steel framing the entire building. I'm told by MTA's John Bollinger, who is our project manager and president of Union Station Gateway, Inc., — a private, non-profit corporation established to be the designer and builder of the project — to expect one level of steel built each week.

Installation of the curtain walls, which is the outside skin of the building, should start in August and continue through February of next year. Interior construction will begin after that.

The next major activity involves tenant improvement design work, meaning that we'll soon begin the procurement process for securing a vendor for furniture inside the building.

The building will house a cafeteria, and we'll be issuing an RFP for an operator in the near future. You should know, too, that a child care center serving more than 100 children will be located on the bottom of a newly constructed two-story building next door.

#### Art Team Contributes to Headquarters

Our art team, headed up by Jessica Cusick, has been doing a fabulous job securing talented artists to decorate the buildings. We've commissioned three teams of artists for the bus shelters, the east portal, and the main pedestrian entrance. We just recently procured a lead artist, James Doolin, for the public area of the headquarters building. His team's art will also hang in the entrance of the building and in the cafeteria.

Incidentally, I hope by this summer we will have all the grant commitments needed to complete the public transit portion of the project. You will recall that last July the Board approved full funding for the headquarters.

#### Casual Day is Friday

I enjoyed very much the session I had with the scheduling and operations planning department a few weeks ago, but I noticed something curious.

It was a Friday, and I had just come from my office at the 818 building, from a staff which traded their ties and heels for Reeboks and sweaters. But everyone at the 425 building was sporting their usual work clothes. Did the message not get around that it's OK to "dress down" on Friday?

I rather like the notion of a Friday "casual day." There's been all sorts of articles of late on companies

whose employees are more productive "dressed down." Frankly, I see the whole thing as a morale booster and, besides, you can do all sorts of things around your work area in casuals that you can't do dressed up. Obviously, if you have an important meeting scheduled for a Friday, you'd dress otherwise. That's why I probably won't take advantage of the day! But enough said.

#### Flex Day Questions

Beginning next week, I'll devote a portion of the newsletter to your questions and answers. However, I wanted to address one subject that my assistant, Phyllis Tucker, gets asked over and over again. Apparently, some employees are concerned about the flex-time policy.

Until the new policy is in place, flex-time is an option available to all non-represented employees. You are not bound by the rules of your former agency when it comes to flex-time, but it should, instead, be up to your manager to design a flex policy that works for the unit. But I will say this: if he or she offers it, it should be offered to every member of that unit for whom it is appropriate.

#### Transportation Academies

I'm excited about our one-of-a-kind, new educational program with the Los Angeles Unified School District. Under the direction of our Naomi Nightengale, the MTA is creating a prototype transportation career academy for ninth to twelfth graders. The academy will prepare students for entry-level jobs in transportation-related occupations, for technical careers in transportation and related industries and for professions in engineering, architecture design or urban planning. Last week, I met with 25 teachers to discuss program planning and curriculum development.

If you are interested in volunteering your time, please call Naomi at 4-6410.

#### Upcoming Dates

Some key dates you might want to make note of: Metrolink will begin building a station at Cal State University, Los Angeles on Wednesday. Metrolink inaugurated Orange County service on Monday. On April 8, MTA will break ground on the Pasadena line.

*Franklin White*

*I welcome your comments and questions in response to CEO Report, which is designed to provide employees with direct communication with my office. Please contact either of my Special Assistants, Michael Gonzalez at 244-7476, or Phyllis Tucker at 244-6191. Also, employees can fax comments to 244-6014.*

#### A publication of the MTA CEO's Office

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