



Metro News BULLETIN



Speakers—Among officials speaking at hearing were Councilman Michael Woo, Assemblywoman Gloria Molina, Senator Art Torrez, and Council President Pat Russell.

More than 250 persons, including bus riders and local elected officials, crowded into the RTD hearing room to hear public testimony and offer support for additional resources to prevent further fare hikes and service cuts.

The September 28 public hearing was convened by the RTD Directors to receive public comment on possible service cuts and/or fare increases to be instituted in December or later. These proposed actions are in anticipation of federal budget cuts of up to \$7 million in annual operating subsidies allocated to the District.

If Congress does not reduce mass transit subsidies this fall, the service cuts and/or fare hikes will not be necessary. If the budget cuts are slight, service and fare adjustments will be downscaled.

A total of 51 lines that presently operate on weekdays, Saturdays and/or Sundays are under consideration for elimination or reduced service. If the Board opts not to raise fares and make up the funding loss solely through service cuts, only about 1% of the District's annual boardings would be affected.

Hearing Probes Ways to Prevent Fare Hikes, Service Cuts

Should the Board opt to raise fares instead of cutting service, the current base fare of 85¢ could increase by as much as a dime. Express and monthly passes would increase accordingly.

"Because of these possible budget cuts, the District has no recourse but to consider raising fares or trimming service," RTD President Nick Patsouras noted at the day-long hearing. "The lines under consideration for possible elimination or curtailment are among the least used and most heavily subsidized."

One alternative Patsouras pointed out is for Los Angeles County Supervisors and the 84 cities in the region to give RTD a portion of their Proposition

A transit tax funds to cover the operational costs for current levels of bus service.

"The county and cities have the financial means to maintain this service until next July or permanently if they choose," he said. "Instead, many localities are banking their Prop. A dollars while the regional public transit system is fraying at the edges.

"With the help of the League of California Cities, we hope to meet with local officials and lay the facts on the table. One fact is that it costs RTD nearly \$3 every time someone boards a bus on one of the 51 low-demand lines. As a result, we can't afford to meet demand elsewhere."

At the hearing, City Council President Pat Russell said the Council was willing to discuss the proposal, noting, "there's an absolute need for sincere dialogue."

RTD Directors will discuss the matter in the ensuing weeks and announce a decision in mid-November, when the federal budget is expected to be finalized. At that time, the District will know exactly how much federal operating subsidy—if any—will be reduced.

News Briefs



A Diesel In Their Future—RTD's female mechanic workforce nearly doubled this year—22 new diesel bus mechanics. The new hires, all graduates of the Harbor Occupational School's automotive training program at San Pedro, begin at Mechanic "C" grade, performing repairs on RTD's fleet of 2,600 buses. RTD already employs 23 female mechanics. All told, women now represent 5% of the District's mechanic workforce. Shown standing (l-r) are Carole Chang, Delia Torres, Alicia Castillo, Lupe Ibarra and Celestine Vierra.

Jackson Keynotes COMTO Confab

Rev. Jesse L. Jackson keynoted the recent Annual Meeting and Training Seminar of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles.

Rev. Jackson discussed the challenges and plight of minorities in the mainstream of American industry.

He joined Texas Rep. Mickey Leland and a slate of prominent local and national leaders from the corporate and public sector, who addressed an array of contemporary issues relative to the conference theme, "Building an Effective Transportation Community through Unity, Training and Economic Opportunity."

RTD officials, including local COMTO President Duane Johnson, participated in the four-day conference.

Students Gain Experience

Eighteen area high school students worked at RTD this summer in a nine-week City of Los Angeles Summer Youth Employment Program.

Participants, who ranged in age from 16 to 20, served in 11 departments as office aides earning money while gaining office skills. Working 25 hours weekly, the students performed tasks that included labeling books and documents, preparing documents for microfilming, operating IBM personal computers, typing, filing and answering telephones. Some even developed cost-saving clerical methods.

RTD Hosts Public Transit Industry

RTD was the host agency to some 3,000 delegates, speakers and their spouses at the 1985 annual meeting of the American Public Transit Association (APTA) October 5-10 at the Westin Bonaventure.

Representatives from more than 80 American and Canadian transit agencies attended the annual event to bestow honors and discuss issues and problems common to the national public transit sector.

Panel discussions and workshops focused on a variety of topics, ranging from federal funding of transit operations to improved bus maintenance techniques. The conference also featured displays created by local bus companies, highlighting public transportation's growth in the Los Angeles region.

RTD provided information about the city, technical inspection tours of District facilities and transported delegates to conference activities.

Curtain Closed (Temporarily) for Hollywood Service Center

Due to extensive renovation work, RTD's Hollywood Customer Service Center at 6249 Hollywood Blvd. has been closed until November 1. The temporary center is located across the street at 6258 Hollywood Blvd. and operates weekdays from 10 AM to 6 PM.



For Improved Efficiency

RTD will install state-of-the-art computerized fareboxes on all RTD buses by the summer of 1986. The new fareboxes accept all U.S. coins, tokens, tickets and dollar bills. Pictured is the new farebox, showing one aperture for the insertion of coins and tokens and another for the insertion of dollar bills and tickets. Districtwide installation of the new fareboxes is set to begin next January.

Metro Rail Update



Congress Remains Supportive of Construction Funding

The eyes of the transit industry are fixed on Capitol Hill to see how federally financed transportation programs—particularly RTD's Metro Rail—will fare in the FY'86 budget appropriations process.

Interestingly, recent headlines following the process have overlooked the most critical fact: *Congress clearly supports the subway project!* The most noteworthy debates on the Hill have not been over "if," but rather "how much" should be allocated for Metro Rail's construction. Ironically, even the Reagan Administration, which wants to abandon public transit support, has repeatedly validated Metro Rail as the nation's most cost-effective new rail project.

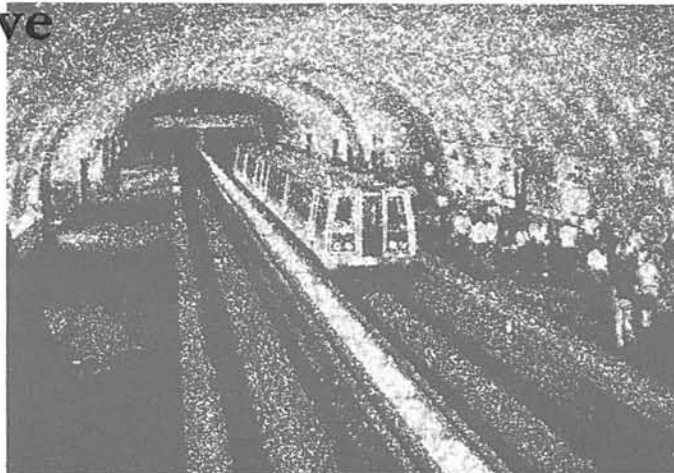
Meanwhile, the gasoline tax dollars are still pouring into the federal mass transit trust fund, which is dedicated solely for the development of transit projects. The annual income of this account now exceeds \$1.8 billion. Congress realizes that this is a self-sustaining trust fund, which does not contribute to the federal deficit. Thus, congressional leaders have proceeded with allocating these trust fund dollars for worthwhile, cost-effective projects, like Metro Rail, despite resistance by the Administration.

As of this writing, the U.S. Senate was preparing transit funding legislation that included construction dollars for the initial 4-mile downtown segment of the 18-mile Metro Rail subway. The Senate Appropriations Committee has accepted its Transportation Subcommittee's earlier recommendation of \$85 million for Metro Rail for the 1986 federal fiscal year, which began this month. This recommendation goes to the full Senate for vote and then on for the final congressional compromise by House and Senate conferees.

A compromise is necessary because on September 12, the House approved a higher appropriation of \$117 million for Metro Rail's construction. Further, the House legislation mandated that the federal Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) enter into a full-funding contract with RTD 30 days after this year's federal transportation bill becomes law. The House bill also directs UMTA to release \$129 million in Metro Rail construction funds from previous congressional appropriations.

The conferees' amended transportation bill will become part of the FY'86 Continuing Resolution, which will go to the President for signature.

Altogether, RTD is seeking \$605 million in federal gasoline tax money—48% of the construction cost for Metro Rail's first phase. This will be matched by previously committed state and local transit funds and revenues from benefit assessment districts, which will be created around the five stations along the 4-mile, downtown-to-Alvarado route.



OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

■ **Possible Route Adjustments.** Recent House funding legislation directs RTD to develop, for public review and consideration, alternatives that would avoid tunneling through high-risk methane gas areas in the Fairfax District. (The western segment of the 18-mile Metro Rail route was to be constructed in the Fairfax District, which contains pockets of methane gas. RTD engineers were aware of geologic conditions since the preliminary engineering phase and had taken this into consideration when they proposed deep-bore tunneling in the area. Special precautions were incorporated in the design and construction plans to minimize possible risks. In recent weeks, however, some community leaders and congressional representatives became uncomfortable with the plan—safety measures notwithstanding—and pressed for this current legislation.)

RTD anticipates it will take about a year to complete additional environmental impact studies that will consider alternatives, though all of these options will still terminate in North Hollywood.

Meanwhile, Los Angeles City Council President Pat Russell will appoint a 10-person panel of experts to review the District's tunneling and safety procedures pertaining to the first phase of the project, which calls for construction of a subway linking Union Station and Alvarado and Wilshire Boulevard, via the Civic Center, Hill Street and Seventh Street.

"We have assured Council President Russell that we will cooperate with the committee and the panel of experts in their work effort," notes General Manager John A. Dyer. The panel's work, which will be subject to public review, should be completed by the end of the year and prior to the start of construction.

■ **Preconstruction Activities.** All systems are go for Metro Rail. Design work on the first 4-mile construction segment is near completion. The properties necessary for construction purposes have been acquired, and utility relocation plans are nearly complete. Bus rerouting plans in the downtown/Alvarado area are also underway.

Focus On Passenger SECURITY

RTD Task Force Moves to Reduce Transit Crime

In an effort to provide the safest possible ride for its passengers, RTD has formed a task force to develop an effective program to reduce transit crimes even more.

"While our own statistics show a drop in crime aboard the buses, we know there is more that can be done," said RTD Board Vice President Gordana Swanson, who chaired the first task force meeting last summer. "While our basic responsibility begins when someone boards one of our buses, we recognize that by working with the community, we can help improve conditions where we have no control, such as at a bus stop."

Swanson said District activities to minimize criminal incidents on buses go back two decades. In the 1960s,



RTD bus operators stopped carrying change; in the '70s, silent alarms were installed on buses. In addition, the District's Transit Police Force was formed in the late '70s to combat crime, and it has proven highly effective. Recent efforts include installation of cameras on buses (see related article). Despite these efforts, the overall increase of crime in society requires more coordinated efforts, notes Swanson.

Thus the creation of the Transit Law Enforcement Policy Task Force, which is composed of representatives from the county Board of Supervisors, the office of Mayor Bradley, the Los Angeles City Council, the Los Angeles and Inglewood Police Departments, RTD management and Transit Police Force, the county Sheriff's Department, and District and City Attorney's offices. While the task force will formulate policies and guidelines for the crime prevention program, an inter-agency management committee will provide staff support to actually implement the program.

The goals of the task force are as follows:

- Increase commitment by responsible agencies toward working for a reduction in the rate of transit-related crime.
- Enhance transit crime data collection procedures and better communication of statistics between agencies.
- Improve analysis and utilization of crime data.
- Increase police presence at bus stops, through redeployment of personnel or creation of additional transit crime prevention units.
- Improve bus stop design and lighting.
- Improve interagency coordination in dealing with transit crime-related issues.

"With bus ridership in Los Angeles still at record high levels and both light and heavy rail systems coming in just a few years, it is critical that we work together to minimize our current problems and plan for a future when public transit will be even more a part of our lives," says RTD General Manager John A. Dyer. "This task force will be a key element."

Dyer added that RTD Transit Police vehicles now display new signage in order to make them more easily identifiable.





Protection Takes On Many Forms—RTD has taken numerous steps to safeguard passengers and District facilities from undesirable behavior. Officer Marvin Merriweather (top, Page 4) patrols El Monte Station, while James Willis (c) and Leo Metoyer assist bus patron (bottom). New surveillance cameras (l) provide additional security for passengers and operators alike.

RTD Continues Police Task Force

Based on a successful crime-fighting pilot project in the Second County Supervisorial District, RTD and Los Angeles County have joined hands establishing a permanent expanded crime suppression task force.

The RTD Board approved a contract September 12 to use funds provided by Supervisor Kenneth Hahn from the county's share of Proposition A revenues to deploy six added transit police officers. The full-time officers and a crime prevention community relations officer will conduct transit crime prevention and awareness workshops, as well as beef up RTD police patrols in the Second District, where RTD has logged the highest crime rate.

The Second District includes South Central Los Angeles, Carson, Culver City, Gardena, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lynwood, and unincorporated areas in the Southern portion of the county.

The effort comes on the heels of a six-month pilot project between December 1984 and June 1985 during which a similar task force was deployed to fight crime in the area. District studies show the task force approach helped reduce transit crime in the area by 6%, despite a 17% increase in bus ridership.

The contract provides \$360,000 and funds the program for a 12-month period beginning October 1 with the entire cost of the program to be paid by the county.

Those interested in learning more about RTD's crime prevention effort may call (213) 972-3258.

Camera Enhances Security

You might call it candid camera. That's because inside nearly a thousand RTD buses, cameras are recording the candid activities of passengers in an effort to enhance security for RTD riders.

"Based on studies done in San Diego and Oakland, we found that these surveillance cameras had a deterring effect on crime," says RTD Transit Police Chief James Burgess. "In Oakland, for instance, a local television station on its nightly news program ran a film of an incident that took place on a city bus. The crime was solved."

The cameras, mounted on a partition located just behind the driver, looks down on passengers, observing and filming activities as they unfold. Above the small red light and the large eye of each camera, a sign reads: "For Your Protection—Continuous Picture Recording Aboard This Bus."

Passengers' reception of this new security measure has been very positive. One elderly woman wrote RTD about the camera, noting, "It's the next best thing to having police officers on the bus. Even though it can't actually stop a crime in progress, it at least makes a person think twice before doing something wrong."

RTD began installing the cameras in March, and the effort is the largest of its kind underway in the nation.

Fines for Transit Crime Up . . . and that's the law!

On January 1, 1986, a new law goes into effect, increasing to \$250 the maximum fine for misdemeanor crimes committed on RTD buses and other public buses in California. Maximum fines will be raised from \$50 to \$250 for the following crimes:

- Fare evasion
- Misuse of transfers, passes, tickets or tokens with the intent to evade fare payment
- Playing radios and other sound equipment in a clearly audible manner
- Smoking, eating or drinking on buses
- Spitting or engaging in loud and unruly behavior

RTD transit police officers are authorized to issue citations for these offenses; last year they issued 1,700.

Accessible Services



RTD Celebrates 'Disability Awareness Month'

RTD joins other agencies throughout the nation in offering assistance and information for disabled persons during October, "Disability Awareness Month."

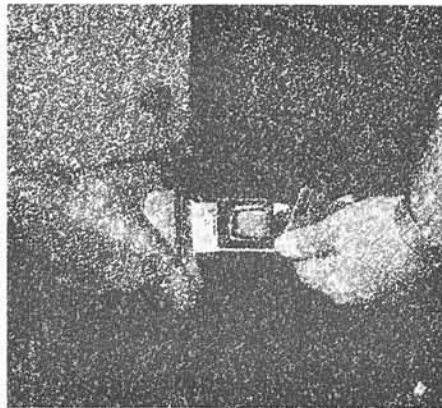
In addition to regular services provided daily to the disabled, RTD is sponsoring special activities. Demonstrations of lift-equipped buses are being offered to organizations that serve the senior and disabled community, and RTD has launched new programs this month to assist wheelchair patrons.

One is an information program that includes the publication and distribution of the fall issue of *ACCESS*, RTD's quarterly newsletter, and a new brochure that advises patrons how to board and exit District buses while accommodating wheelchair patrons.

The other is an innovative safety program, which is receiving considerable applause from wheelchair patrons. Starting this month, RTD is installing a new strap that will serve a greater variety of wheelchairs than those presently accommodated.

These efforts are just part of an ongoing program aimed at one goal: to provide 100% fixed-route accessible service throughout the District's service area.

In 1974, RTD became the nation's first transit agency to adopt a policy of



THE NEW SECUREMENT STRAPS

RTD's new wheelchair securement straps can be used on a larger variety of wheelchair models.

Before, a clamp under the wheelchair position on accessible buses secured the chair by holding a single rear wheel. That clamp, however, does not fit all chair models now on the market.

The new straps, consisting of two belts that secure the wheels on both sides, provides the necessary safety for wheelchair patrons.

full accessibility. Planning sessions with the disabled and senior community, other transit properties, advisory committees and various state and local agencies have resulted in considerable progress.

Early meetings with local senior and disabled groups culminated in the establishment of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (CACAT) by the RTD Board of Directors in 1975. By 1978, RTD had purchased its first fleet of 200 lift-equipped buses and published its first accessible service line map.

To monitor the progress of its accessible service program, the Board formed an Ad Hoc Committee on Accessible Transportation in 1983. By the

end of the year, RTD was operating accessible buses on over half of its routes. Installing and retrofitting lifts are only a few examples of the tasks involved in achieving the District's goal. Equally important is driver training—not only in operating wheelchair lifts and securement devices, but also in making the bus operators aware of riders' special needs.

The District's hefty investment of some \$24 million dramatically underscores the extent of its commitment to the program. This, along with the behind-the-scenes efforts in planning, operations, marketing and community relations, has yielded commendable results.

The District now operates accessible service on 167 of its 245 bus lines. Some 1,600 buses serve those lines, and wheelchair lift operational reliability is now at a record 91.8%. All of these factors are attributable to the marked increase in ridership by wheelchair patrons. Weekday ridership has reached a record 80 boardings, up 64% over the fall quarter of 1983.

"RTD's accessible service program has established milestones in the public transit industry," notes RTD Director Jack Day, who chairs the Ad Hoc Committee on Accessible Transportation. "However, we will not become complacent with our accomplishments. Rather, we stand committed to expand our program even more until our goal of total accessibility is met."



A doggone idea!

Training pups to guide and ride

No, we have not gone to the dogs. Actually the dogs are coming to us! On a recent Saturday, nearly 20 International Guiding Eyes puppies-in-training arrived at the RTD operating division in Pomona to get their "crash course" in public transportation. Their trainers worked with RTD drivers and traveled around certain areas of Pomona, teaching the puppies how to enter and exit the bus as well as how to crouch under the seats or otherwise stay out of the aisles. The young dogs also were exposed to sounds typically heard on buses (i.e., bells ringing, doors closing, fare boxes operating) and how the bus feels in motion. The pups are in training for the Guiding Eyes program and someday soon will be assisting blind citizens in the daily activities of life . . . and that includes boarding buses.

RTD On The Move



A Cleaner Alternative

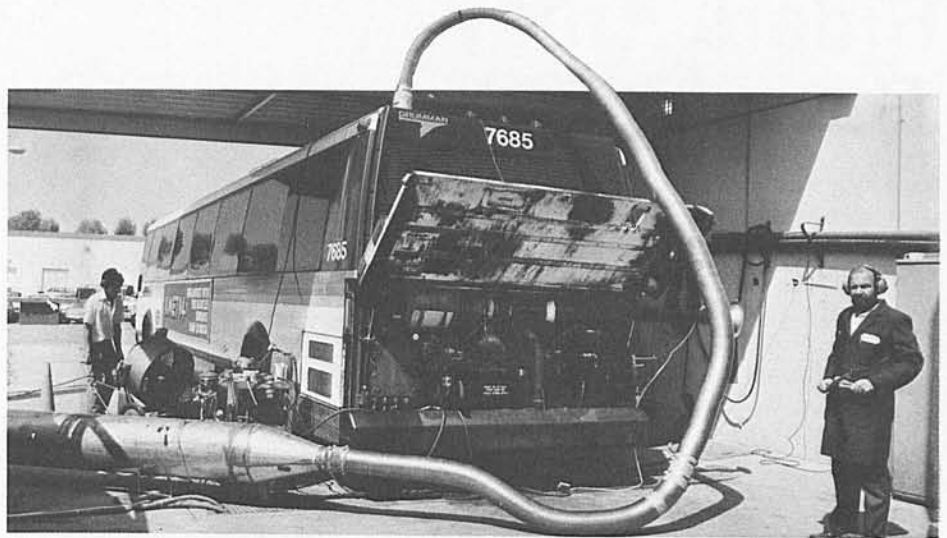
RTD Tests Methanol Fuel



RTD is leading the way toward cleaner air in Southern California. Among other efforts, the District has launched a two-pronged experimental approach to clear the air of exhaust emissions by buses and meet Environmental Protection Agency standards for new diesel buses in the next decade.

The District is currently researching the use of methanol fuel as an alternative to diesel, which RTD buses now use. Recently the District and the American Public Transit Association cosponsored an international workshop to explore the use of clean-burning methanol fuel to operate public buses. The workshop brought together for the first time in Los Angeles RTD maintenance staff and other U.S. public transit agencies, about 40 technology experts from local, state and federal governmental agencies in addition to an international consortium of transit industry suppliers and engineering consultants from Europe, South America and New Zealand.

"This is the first time such a forum has been held to exchange information and develop plans for testing methanol fuel in the public transit industry," explains Rich Davis, RTD Director of Equipment Maintenance. "While our aim is to reduce exhaust emissions by our buses throughout our extensive service area, we also recognize that our research could



Tests—RTD mechanics conduct exhaust emission tests as Pellegrin (above, left) evaluates results.

yield similar benefits for both public transit and the trucking industry worldwide."

Extensive tests of methanol-fueled cars and vans in California have shown that methanol engines emit virtually no smoke or hydrocarbons that help produce smog. Moreover, methanol can be produced cheaply from America's abundant coal reserves or from grain and other organic materials.

Only about a dozen methanol fueled buses in the world are being tested today, including two in the San Francisco Bay Area, Davis noted. RTD plans to order 30 methanol buses next

year and conduct the largest test of its kind over a 24-month period.

The second approach is a demonstration project regarding the feasibility of a Catalytic-Trap Oxidizer. The device is meant to reduce visible exhaust smoke from diesel engines by trapping the particulates produced by the engines. The particulate trap works much like a catalytic converter on gasoline-engine vehicles, capturing heated particulates from the engine exhaust and burning them before they escape into the atmosphere.

According to Maintenance Instructor Vince Pellegrin, the in-service field test of the first RTD bus began in 1984. Since then, Pellegrin has been in communication with the Southwest Research Institute, the recipients of an RTD engine for baseline emission levels and catalysts testing.

"So far, the Institute's findings show a reduction in exhaust emissions," notes Pellegrin. "But the effects of accumulated mileage have yet to be recorded. We are essentially still in the research and development stage on this. However, we are the first transit property to have done this much work on it."

Pellegrin said the goal of the project, besides an exhaust emission reduction level that meets EPA standards, is to discover the device's effect on engine power, fuel efficiency and overall durability.

Fare Dealings



Riders Enjoy Their \$4 Rides

Thousands of senior, disabled and student riders throughout Los Angeles County are enjoying reduced fares thanks to the participation of 22 local communities in the District's monthly pass "buy down" program.

Instead of paying the new July 1 rate of \$7 for an RTD monthly pass, many senior and disabled riders are paying an average \$4. Some pay even less.

As of this writing, 22 cities have joined Los Angeles County supervisorial districts 2, 3, 4 and 5 in using their share of Proposition A sales tax revenues to subsidize RTD monthly passes for senior and disabled residents. Cities making this benefit possible include Agoura Hills, Alhambra, Bell, Covina, Glendale, Huntington Park, Los Angeles, Inglewood, Monterey Park, Pico Rivera, La Puente, West Hollywood, Baldwin Park, Beverly Hills, Burbank, El Monte, Hawthorne, San Fernando, South Pasadena, Temple City and most recently Commerce and South Gate.

Student residents of seven local cities are also enjoying RTD monthly pass discounts ranging from \$3 to \$8 off the regular \$12 rate. These cities include Covina, Monterey Park, San Fernando, South Pasadena, Temple City, Pico Rivera and La Puente.



"Token" of Appreciation—RTD Board Vice President Gordana Swanson and Carson Mall Marketing Director Cynthia Berger inspect RTD fare token during recent festivities launching the RTD/Carson Mall Shop-by-Bus program. Bus shoppers now can get a free 85¢ RTD token with every \$15 minimum purchase at the mall's participating stores. RTD and Alhambra officials recently celebrated the renewal of their successful Shop-by-Bus program.



Metro News

BULLETIN

METRO NEWS BULLETIN is published by the Southern California Rapid Transit District to inform the greater Los Angeles community of progress and developments of the RTD Metro Rail Project and other District operations.

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Beautifying the Neighborhood—What looks like a park, is actually RTD's operating division in Venice. As part of its "Good Neighbor and Beautification Program," the District has attractively landscaped the property surrounding the facility and has refurbished the fence to preserve the privacy of adjacent residences.