

The Year 2000: A Look Back at Major MTA News Stories

(Dec. 29) It's been one of those years. A year many MTA employees will be happy to see fade into the past as they look forward to 2001.

Two major news stories vied for attention during the year: the opening of the Metro Red Line's North Hollywood segment and the 32-day transit strike. Beyond those events, we read about Y2K - which fizzled - the acquisition of more buses, the beginning of construction of the Pasadena Blue Line and the completion of the Harbor Transitway.

The following list of the year's big MTA stories notes other events that caught our attention. For a complete listing of all stories from the year 2000, please check the Intranet's Archives pages.

January

Y2K Bug Fails to Hatch at MTA; All [Systems 'Go'](#) for Year 2000 (Jan. 3) "Quiet" hardly begins to describe New Year's Eve in the MTA's Emergency Operations Center. To say that nothing - nothing Y2K-related, anyway - interrupted a perfectly tranquil evening, pretty much says it all.

February

MTA Unveils [Proposed Transit Alternatives](#) For Mid-City/Westside, Eastside, SF Valley Corridors (Feb. 4) MTA transportation planners and consultants today unveiled a series of 21 potential alternatives and recommendations to improve transit mobility in three key corridors of Los Angeles County. The alternatives were discussed at a special Board workshop.

March

'[Best of the Best](#)' Metro Bus Operators Honored for Perfect Safety Records, Outstanding Customer Relations (March 6) An amazing 45 of the MTA's 4,200 bus operators hailed as unsung heroes for logging five years without accidents, customer complaints or workplace injuries.

MTA Completes Alcohol to [Clean-Air Diesel Conversion](#) (March 13) After more than a year-and-a-half of intense labor, the MTA has completed the conversion of its 333 alcohol-fueled buses to clean-air diesel power --on budget and ahead of schedule.

April

Governor's \$5.2 Billion [Transportation Plan](#) Has \$887 Million for MTA Buses, Rail, Rapid Bus (April 6) With the North Hollywood subway station as a backdrop, Gov. Gray Davis today announced a \$5.2 billion transportation plan he said would provide \$887 million to the MTA for buses, light rail and bus rapid transit projects.

[CPCU Approves Device](#) 'Four-Quad' Rail Crossing Gates Prevent Vehicle Vs. Train Accidents (April 18) The rail crossing at 124th Street in Willowbrook had always been one of the more dangerous on the Metro Blue Line. Three fatalities and at least five serious vehicle vs. train accidents had occurred there over the years.

May

[Board Authorizes Purchase of 370 CNG Buses; Delivery to Begin by End of FY 2002](#) (May 25) The MTA Board today voted to authorize CEO Julian Burke to purchase 370 additional compressed natural gas buses. The buses are scheduled to begin arriving by the end of FY 2002.

June

[Rollout of MTA's 1,000th CNG Bus Called a 'Milestone for Transit Users'](#) (June 2) Calling it a "milestone for transit users," Board Chair Yvonne Brathwaite Burke announced the MTA's 1,000th CNG bus during Friday morning ceremonies. And, with TV cameras rolling, the big white and gold coach burst through a huge banner to welcoming applause at the Arthur Winston Division.

[Groundbreaking Ceremonies to Mark Start of LA-to-Pasadena Light-Rail Construction](#) (June 8) A groundbreaking ceremony Friday morning in Chinatown will mark the beginning of construction of a 13.7-mile light-rail line that will run from LA's Union Station to Sierra Madre Villa in East Pasadena.

[Crews Extending Metro Blue Line Platforms at 19 Stations](#) (June 19) Construction work is under way to extend passenger platforms at the Metro Blue Line's Grand Avenue station and Washington station – the first of 19 that will be lengthened over the next 14 months to accommodate longer trains.

[600 VIPs, Guests and Media Welcome Metro Red Line to San Fernando Valley](#) (June 23) More than 600 guests and perhaps 60 reporters and photographers turned out on a sunny Friday morning to welcome the Metro Red Line to the San Fernando Valley.

[NoHo Opening Weekend Sets Record in Ridership as MTA Chalks up Handful of Achievements](#) (June 26) What a weekend! The North Hollywood segment opens with a record 500,000 boardings over two days of celebration that - for the first time - got Valley residents excited about the Metro Red Line.

July

['Red Car' Debut on Metro Blue Line Marks 10th Anniversary of Metro Rail](#) (July 14) With the sound of a familiar "e-tone" horn announcing its departure, a modern-day Pacific Electric "Red Car" took its first passengers on a nostalgic ride following ceremonies marking the 10th anniversary of Metro Rail.

[MTA, Kaiser Open Subway Entrance to Hospital at Vermont/Sunset](#) (July 25) The MTA and Kaiser-Permanente on Monday opened the Kaiser-Permanente Portal at the Metro Red Line's Vermont/Sunset station. The new entrance that will offer better, easier access to Kaiser's medical facilities located at the northwest corner of Sunset and Vermont.

August

[MTA, ACLU Reach Agreement in Suit by Mobility-Impaired Patrons](#) (August 11) The MTA Board of Directors has approved a proposed settlement of a lawsuit brought against the agency by the ACLU on behalf of a class of mobility-impaired passengers.

[Senior Staff Completes Work on Morale Report Recommendations](#) (Aug. 21) After more than a year's effort, the MTA's senior staff has completed its work on the 90 recommendations presented in August, 1999, by the Employee

Morale Task Force. Copies of the 44-page document will be available in the MTA Library by noon, Tuesday, Aug. 22.

Advance Planning Ensured [LA's Metro System](#) Ran Smoothly during Convention (Aug. 24) Not only did the Metro system operate safely and efficiently throughout the four days of the Democratic National Convention, but the Metro Red Line became one of the few places in Los Angeles where delegates and demonstrators were able to talk without a fence between them.

[Board Items to Watch: Board Gives Go-Ahead to Public Toilet Plan; Assures Cities Concerned about Ad Structures](#) (Aug. 24) After lengthy discussion and public comment, the MTA Board gave the go-ahead, Thursday, to a plan to place up to 10 Automated Public Toilets at Metro System locations. The toilets will be provided by a firm that also will place as many as 54 advertising structures on MTA properties.

September

Operator Evelyn Davis Witnesses [Miracle on 7th Street: A Baby Boy](#) (Sept. 12) Operator Evelyn Davis set out on her first Line 20 run Tuesday morning thinking it would be just another day. But, at 7:30 a.m. at the corner of 7th and Hill streets, she witnessed the miracle of birth and held a vital new life in her hands. Suddenly, the day turned from ordinary to extraordinary.

MTA Activates [Strike Contingency Plan](#); Negotiators Working to Avert Walkout (Sept. 14) The MTA activated its Strike Contingency Plan as of noon, today. With barely 12 hours to go before a possible work stoppage, employees with strike contingency duty were directed to report to their strike work assignments, some of which begin as early as 11 p.m., Thursday.

October

Negotiators [Back at Work](#) after Governor Signs SB-1101 (Oct. 2) Counterproposal to counterproposal, negotiators for the MTA and UTU got down to business Monday afternoon following two face-to-face sessions, Sunday. Mayor Richard Riordan - who met with both sides over the weekend - was back at the Pasadena Hilton, today, to see the continuation of bargaining talks.

First-Ever [Strategic Business Plan](#) Maps Three-Year Path for MTA (Oct. 9) "Where do you think you are going," asks the illustration on the cover of a booklet now making the rounds of MTA management. It's a good question to ask of an agency that is publishing its first-ever strategic business plan.

MTA, UTU Hammer Out [Tentative Agreement](#) to End 32-Day Strike (Oct. 17) After struggling almost around the clock since Friday, MTA and UTU negotiators hammered out a tentative contract agreement, early Tuesday, that is expected to bring a swift end to the 32-day-old strike.

[Favorable Vote Reflects Operators' Desire to Return to Work](#) (Oct. 18) Some Metro Bus operators were said to be so anxious to return to work, they went to the LA Convention Center Tuesday evening, dropped their ballots into the box, then headed for their divisions.

[President Signs Bill with \\$60 Million in Transportation Funds for MTA](#) (Oct. 26) President Clinton has signed HR-4475 - the Transportation Appropriations Bill - a measure that includes \$60 million in federal funding for the MTA.

November

Retro 2.7% [Pay Raise](#) Due, Nov. 17, by Separate Check (Nov. 1) CEO Julian Burke announced Wednesday that the retroactive 2.7 percent pay raise for non-contract employees will be paid by separate check on the Nov. 17 payday.

Ribbon-Cutting Signifies Opening of Last Two [Transitway Bus Stations](#) (Nov 17) MTA and Caltrans officials marked the expansion of express Metro bus service on the Harbor Transitway during a ribbon-cutting ceremony, today, at the newly opened Pacific Coast Highway bus station.

December

[MTA to Add Parking](#) Near NoHo Station; Will Preserve Historic Train Depot (Dec. 1) The MTA will begin construction later this month of 218 temporary parking spaces on MTA-owned property located across the street from the Metro Red Line's North Hollywood station.

[Santa Shoulders](#) 5,000 Toys in MTA's Drive for Skid Row Kids (Dec. 12) Santa Claus struck a rich vein of gifts for the Fred Jordan Mission's Skid Row Kids when he arrived at the MTA Tuesday morning.

Vacant [Plaza-Level Space](#) to be Developed for Employment, Records and Security Offices (Dec. 12) For five years a large space on the ground floor of MTA Headquarters has stood vacant, its interior dark, its picture windows dusty. Now, however, construction crews are developing the space for use by the Human Resources employment office, Records Management and MTA Security.

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