



Division 1 may expand to include five vacant parcels lying directly southwest of the current bus yard at Seventh and Alameda streets.
PHOTO BY JOSÉ UBALDO

MTA Plans to Expand Division 1 with Space for More Buses, More Parking, CNG Facility



(Feb. 1) The MTA is planning a major expansion of its historic Division 1, a project that would permit the bus yard to accommodate 67 more coaches, 120 more employee parking spaces and a CNG pumping facility. The plan will be presented to the Board this month.

The MTA would enlarge Division 1 with the purchase of five vacant parcels lying directly southwest of the current bus yard. The property totals 115,000 square feet.

A report prepared for the Board's Operations committee says, "Additional capacity is needed in the central MTA service area to allow greater flexibility in locating buses and scheduling needed transit service." The report notes that the agency would save some \$1.5 million annually in the cost of "deadheading" buses between the division and their routes.

Minimize operating costs

The division expansion would "...allow the MTA to make service improvements and minimize operating costs," the report says. Transit Operations also is evaluating a possible plan to relocate some or all of Line 720 of the Metro Rapid Bus fleet to the expanded division.

The MTA estimates the division expansion project to cost some \$7.5 million, including land acquisition and construction, according to Gary Spivack, deputy executive officer, Transit Operations.

If the project is approved by the Board, the MTA will make a purchase offer to the owners of the five small parcels later this year. Spivack anticipates that construction could begin in late 2001.

Street closing required

Expanding Division 1 would require closing a portion of the east-west Industrial Street between Alameda and Central Avenue. The street now divides the current bus yard from the proposed expansion site. The street is used by a small number of homeless persons, who have thrown up temporary shelters.

Spivack said the MTA will cooperate with the dozen or more city and county agencies that work with the homeless to find cleaner, healthier environments in which those currently encamped on Industrial Street can live.

"We're going to be sensitive to their needs and treat them with respect. We'll get the right people to work with them," he said.

"Under no circumstances do we want to have an unsafe or unsanitary living condition in this area."

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