

'Visionary Leader in the Transit Industry'

- John A. Dyer, who led SCRTD during Metro Red Line Startup, died May 3 at 66.
- A memorial service is planned, May 28, in Los Angeles.

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(May 6, 2003) John A. Dyer, who led the Southern California Rapid Transit District for almost six and a half years in the 1980s – including through the early days of Metro Red Line funding and construction – died at his Glendale home of a heart attack, Saturday. He was 66.



In this mid-1980's photo, Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley commends Dyer for his "many accomplishments and continued support for transportation systems that serve the Southern California region."

Dyer is survived by Beth Dyer, his wife of 38 years. A funeral service is planned for later this week at the Chattanooga Funeral Home in Hixson, Tenn. A memorial service is planned, May 28, in Los Angeles. Details of both services are pending.



SCRTD General Manager John A. Dyer in a July 1986 photo.

"I was very sad to hear of the death of my long-time friend, John Dyer. He was a visionary leader in the transit industry and was particularly influential in the development of major rail transportation systems in Miami and Los Angeles," said CEO Roger Snoble. "On behalf of the MTA family, especially those former SCRTD employees who worked with John, I want to express our sympathy to his wife, Beth. Our thoughts and prayers are with her."

At his death, Dyer had been a principal consultant since 1999 with PBConsult, a subsidiary of Parsons-Brinckerhoff. Most recently, he had served as principal consultant to the Orange County Transportation Authority's CenterLine rail project. He also served as interim CEO during the startup period of the LA to Pasadena Metro Blue Line Construction Authority.

The SCRTD Board recruited Dyer from the Metropolitan Dade County transit system in Miami, Fla., in 1981 at age 44, to be the agency's general manager. During his eight years in Miami, he had obtained some \$1.1 billion in federal funding to build a 20.5-mile heavy rail line and a 3.7-mile downtown people mover.

Led during 1984 Olympics

As SCRTD general manager, Dyer was responsible for overseeing a 2,400-bus fleet – one of the nation's largest. During a period when fares were capped at 50 cents for three years under Prop A, average

weekday boardings grew from 1.2 million to 1.6 million.

He also directed the agency's much-admired transportation system during the 1984 Summer Olympic Games, but his primary task was to build a subway for Los Angeles.

Dyer succeeded in gaining strong political support for construction of the Metro Red Line and secured a total of \$2.55 billion in federal, state and local funding for its first and second phases. On Sept. 29, 1986, the agency broke ground on the massive project.

Dyer announced his resignation from SCRTD in November 1987. In the years following his leadership of the agency, Dyer headed the firm of Dyer and Associates, providing transportation planning and transit management consulting services in the private and public sectors.

Born in the East Tennessee community of Signal Mountain, Dyer was the youngest child of school teachers J. Pope and Anna Dyer. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science at the University of Chattanooga, and a master's degree in political science and a Ph.D. in public administration at the University of Alabama.

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