



HEADWAY



Southern California Rapid Transit District

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RTD is going places, now and in Nov.

Great start for 25¢ flat fare

RTD's 25-cent flat fare got off to an incredibly smooth start the week of April 1-5 as the District carried nearly half a million more passengers than usual in Los Angeles County. RTD registered a 16.7 percent increase in ridership during the first work-week of the experiment, and a one-day County record was set April 3 when RTD carried 657,000 riders.

But behind the headlines declaring the program's success, RTD employees are taking their first deep breath in more than a month. "Employees in virtually every department have worked long and hard to implement this program on time," said General Manager Jack Gilstrap. "On behalf of the Board of Directors, the management staff, and the residents of Los Angeles County, I want to express my gratitude to everyone for making the 25-cent fare work."

"We're also delighted with the way Los Angeles County residents are responding," he continued. "We expect further increases in ridership once people become better acquainted with the program and consider the fuel-saving and environmental benefits of public transportation."

As part of RTD's implementation of the new fare, nearly 150 buses have been integrated into the District's fleet of 1650 active buses. "These retired and spare buses have been inspected inside and out," Gilstrap noted. "The safety of our passengers has been our primary concern in the refurbishing of these coaches."

According to George Powell, general superintendent of maintenance & equipment, the engines have been checked out or overhauled, the electrical and brake systems reconditioned, and new



OPERATOR MAC McCord helps President Thomas Neusom (left) and Supervisor Kenneth Hahn (right) inaugurate the 25-cent flat fare in Los Angeles County. Below, one of South Park's hard working staff members, Jim Grande, installs new flooring in a refurbished bus.

November's MRT proposition takes shape in Phase 3 plan

Taking a new look at near-term bus improvements and the possibility of phasing rapid transit system construction to conform more closely with the current funding philosophy of the federal government, RTD consultants have presented their Phase III recommendations for rapid transit to the District's Board of Directors.

In a special Board meeting April 26, the consultants recommended that RTD's one-cent sales tax measure on the November ballot provide funds for maintaining and improving bus service at a flat fare, speed-up plans for near-term bus improvements between 1975 and 1980, and initiate mass rapid transit (MRT) construction on a "building block" basis which would be determined by the level of federal matching funds.

During Phase III planning, RTD staff and consultants took the preliminary Phase II proposals into the community for the input of local governmental agencies in Los Angeles County, and the public at large. Together with data collected from over 100 meetings, further refinements in engineering and financing approaches made up this, the most extensive phase of consultants' recommendations.

"In developing a building block approach to federal funding for MRT construction, I believe the consultants have responded to the concern of both UMTA and some community leaders," said George McDonald, head of RTD's rapid transit development team. "The level of federal funding recommended in Phase II may have been too optimistic. However, neither the consultants nor RTD's Board of Control want this interpreted as indicating that the local community ought to back away from the physical system required to do the job here in Los Angeles, or from the

need to aggressively pursue expanded federal funding in Washington."

As a result of Phase III planning, consultants recommend that the community embark on a major bus improvement program in order to immediately serve an increasing reliance on public transportation made necessary by the energy crunch and the Environmental Protection Agency's air pollution rules. Approximately 1000 additional buses would be acquired in the three-year period from 1975 through 1977. In Phase II, the consultants had suggested a more gradual build-up of 100 buses per year. The faster bus build-up creates a problem in maintaining the flat fare through 1981, which is required by state law. The consultants, therefore, suggest that the County of Los Angeles maintain its current subsidy to allow both a continuation of the flat fare and the vital build-up of the bus fleet.

Consultants also indicate that within a one- to three-year period, some significant pilot projects should be initiated regarding the use of preferential lanes on freeways and arterial surface streets. They also recommend improvements in headways, the acquisition of two dozen park/ride lots, and the implementation of a grid system in many communities.

In addition to the recommendations for an expanded near-term bus service improvement program, RTD is continuing its pursuit with the County of Los Angeles for the use of existing railroad trackage for commuter train service. Contingent to a large extent upon the cooperation of the railroads, the lines proposed for study connect Chatsworth, Santa Ana and the Sierra Madre foothill communities via Pasadena with downtown L.A. (continued on page four)

Poll shows timing for MRT proposition never better

According to the results of a public opinion poll commissioned by RTD, Los Angeles County residents are overwhelmingly in favor of implementing a rapid transit system. Two-thirds of those polled indicated if an election were held today, they would vote in favor of a rapid transit plan. Equally as important, three-quarters of those questioned said they would use a rapid transit system if it were available.

The RTD poll was conducted by the Dorothy D. Corey Research organization, a private firm involved in opinion research since 1938. The 1500 persons questioned

included only Los Angeles County registered voters, distributed randomly as to geographic location, ethnic group, and income level.

"On an issue this significant and one involving such a large scale of expenditure, it is unusual to get this across-the-board kind of approval," said Dorothy Corey, president of the firm that bears her name.

Respondents to the poll were presented with samples of the two issues regarding mass transit they will be voting on this November. In regards to beginning construction of a rapid transit system, 66 percent said they would vote yes, 18.6 percent said no, and 15.4 were

undecided. To the second issue up for decision in November, voting on short-term bus improvements, 58.6 percent indicated a favorable vote, 22.8 said they were against the measure, and 18.5 were undecided. A simple majority is required for passage of the proposition.

Those polled also were in favor of a fixed-rail rapid transit system as part of the answer to the area's transportation problem.

"Nearly three-quarters opted for a combination fixed-rail rapid transit and busing system, with only 14 percent recorded as in favor of relying strictly on more buses as the answer," Corey continued. "And

only a very small number — three percent — said more freeways were the solution."

The RTD's team of consultants formulating mass transit plans have recommended such a combination program involving a short-term buildup in the bus system (1000 new buses over the next three years) and the concurrent beginning of construction of a fixed-guideway system.

"Interestingly, our sample group was not particularly concerned with the type of mode for a rapid transit system," Corey said. "Fifty-nine percent said that the uncertainty of (continued on page two)



Division 2 operators discuss impact of flat fare with General Manager Jack Gilstrap.

Flat fare program

(continued from page one)

head signs and seats have been installed as needed in all coaches. "Seven other buses will be ready for service in the next few days," Powell said. "We are very proud of our maintenance staff for the fine level of work performed on these coaches."

Service is being augmented regularly on RTD lines which were running at peak capacity prior to April 1, such as the longer commuter runs and "freeway flyer" services. "The additional buses will be dispatched as needed by radio communication between RTD supervisors on the streets and the District's dispatch center," explained Johnny Johnston, superin-

tendent of transportation. "They will be stationed at the terminus points of our heavier lines, and as the passenger load exceeds the capacity of our regularly scheduled service, the additional buses will begin an extra run."

To expedite the refurbishing process, many buses were painted one color, white, in order to save the time it takes to mask off and paint the champagne and gold panels which normally identify RTD buses. This also allowed the painting of the black security identification numbers on top of each coach.

RTD's effort to field additional equipment has not been limited to

work in its own maintenance yards. According to Powell, the agency has "scoured" the country in search of additional buses.

"We have contacted virtually every transit property in the nation to purchase new or used buses," he said. "The District has just been informed that we were the successful bidder on 75 used coaches in Atlanta, and we have acquired another 14 buses from an auction in Forth Worth. The Atlanta buses will begin to be shipped out to us this week."

Due to the limited production of new buses in the United States, up to one-year delivery period is required by the three major U.S. manufacturers. "We have just awarded a contract for 100 new coaches with an option to buy more," Powell said, "but we will not receive any buses until some-

time this Fall."

The flat fare experiment, which has been made possible by a subsidy from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, will run through June 30. The 25-cent fare is good only on buses operating within County lines; transfers cost 10 cents and are good for up to three bus changes. Monthly passes cost just \$10 for unlimited riding in Los Angeles County; senior citizens' passes may be purchased for \$9.

RTD buses operating in Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties will continue to be governed by normal RTD fares. The basic charge of 30 cents plus zone increments will be applicable. Once inside Los Angeles County, patrons will only be charged an additional quarter, plus 10 cents for transfers if necessary.

Everybody's business

Conservation

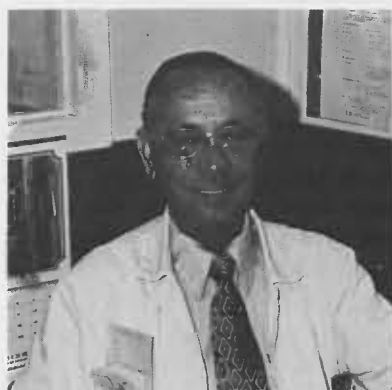


Mark Drumright, Division 4 & 5 Transportation.

"The cooperation here has really been great. We have been using the suggestions from the drivers to shut off lights they know they don't use. The operators are even good about turning off the light over the ping-pong table. They've been a real help."

Eddie Fox, Division 4 & 5 Maintenance & Equipment

"The men have all become oriented toward energy conservation. They turn off lights and shut down machines not in use on their own. Of course, we don't cut down the light where it's not safe, but even the graveyard shift is good about cutting its use of electricity. I have to give everyone a lot of credit."



Elmer Markles, Transit Building 4th Floor

"I've done about all there is I can do—turn off the lights and take all the ribbing. But we've found that we can cut down the consumption of our blue printer. It requires a start-up time to warm up, so we used to have it on all day. But now we don't start the machine until someone needs to use it. That sometimes amounts to a couple of hours saved right there."



One hundred fifty retired and spare coaches have been refurbished.

Corey poll

(continued from page one)

the exact mode to be used was a poor reason to oppose getting underway with a rapid transit plan."

Corey said the general feeling was one of "let's get on with it—there's no reason to delay rapid transit further since money will not get any cheaper and there is ample time to decide on the mode."

Of the reasons stated for opposing the concept of rapid transit, highest concern was shown for the uncertainty of the expense involved and the unknown financial contri-

bution by the federal government. But while 29 percent of respondents would object to rapid transit on the grounds that it might increase taxes, 54 percent felt this was a poor reason for opposition.

A high percentage of those interviewed—87 percent—were familiar with the RTD. More than half stated they thought the District was doing a fair to excellent job of handling the area's public transportation, with 25 percent rating the system as doing a "poor job" and 20 percent unable to state an opinion.



On hand to receive awards were operators from (left to right, top to bottom) Divisions 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, and a group of retired drivers. Director of Safety Jack Walsh emceed the awards dinner.

District honors 25 years of safe driving

Driving a 40-foot vehicle filled with people over the streets and highways of metropolitan Los Angeles is no easy task. And when you consider the number of miles an RTD operator travels in 12 months, an accident-free year is impressive to say the least.

But the caliber of RTD operators is so high that the District has presented 89 active and 24 retired drivers with 25-year Safety Awards at a dinner in their honor March 27.

"While you operators find joy in your work because you are professionals, you still face the toughest job in the District behind that wheel," said General Manager Jack Gilstrap as he congratulated the recipients. "Since the first of the year, we have implemented 10-cent Sunday fares, the 25-cent flat fare program, and are about to begin a contra-flow operation on Spring Street. In November the rapid transit referendum will be on the County ballot making 1974 the busiest year in our history. It will probably be your busiest year as a driver too."

On-job safety earns award

The District has received another prestigious safety award from the Greater Los Angeles Chapter of the National Safety Council. RTD won the 3rd place award for the lowest incidence of on-the-job injuries in its class. Two other agencies, Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District and Long Beach Public Transportation Company, both much smaller and less likely to have as high a rate of injury as RTD, finished 1st and 2nd in the competition.

Accepting the award for the District were Jack Walsh, director of safety, and Marlene Allen of the legal department who processes the District's workman's compensation insurance.

"Twenty-five years without a chargeable accident is a remarkable feat," Gilstrap continued in a lighter vein. "I can't think of anything I've done for 25 years without blowing it at least once!"

Joining the General Manager in honoring the award-winning drivers were George Heinle, John Wilkens, Johnny Johnston, Jack Walsh and

Frank Larson of RTD's headquarters, and Officer Bill Anderson of the California Highway Patrol and Sgt. Rudi Green of the Los Angeles Police Department.

"There are three main elements which are usually responsible for causing an accident," Anderson said, "the vehicle, the driving environment, and the driver. In

your case, you drive a large vehicle, one of the largest on the road today. Plus, you carry a precious cargo, people.

"Those people make up a part of your environment as you drive. They can irritate you and distract you from your work. So can the traffic outside the bus. Another part of your driving environment is your time schedule and the large number of miles you travel. Remember, the average driver only covers 15,000 miles a year.

"But you, as professional drivers, possess driving skills and judgement that the ordinary driver does not. You expect the unexpected, and you anticipate the sudden moves of the other drivers. You can't be taught these skills. You have developed them through experience, and you possess qualities in your personality which have enabled you to reach this level of excellence in your career.

"Anyone who has operated a bus safely in Los Angeles for over 25 years is a special breed of person," he concluded. "I salute you."

Making Headway...

□ Division 7 operator Wayne Speed and his wife Arvella never realized how sweet the sound of crying could be until little Miss Amber Marie came on the scene. Making her debut in life Feb. 26, she weighed-in at 7 lb. 1 oz. and measured 21 inches long. West Hollywood employes are reported to be whispering their congratulations so Mom and Dad can get some sleep between feedings.

□ 1060's clerical staff gave a big maternity leave send-off to Rosemarie Cendejas and Carrie Okimoto March 29.

According to Marie Tervalon and Michele Smoot, who organized the shower, it was the largest such party given in the PAX room in recent memory. Bob Williams, head of the switch-board operation, said both Rosemarie and Carrie of Personnel were due anytime - "In fact," he recalled, "Carrie kept glancing at her watch all day."

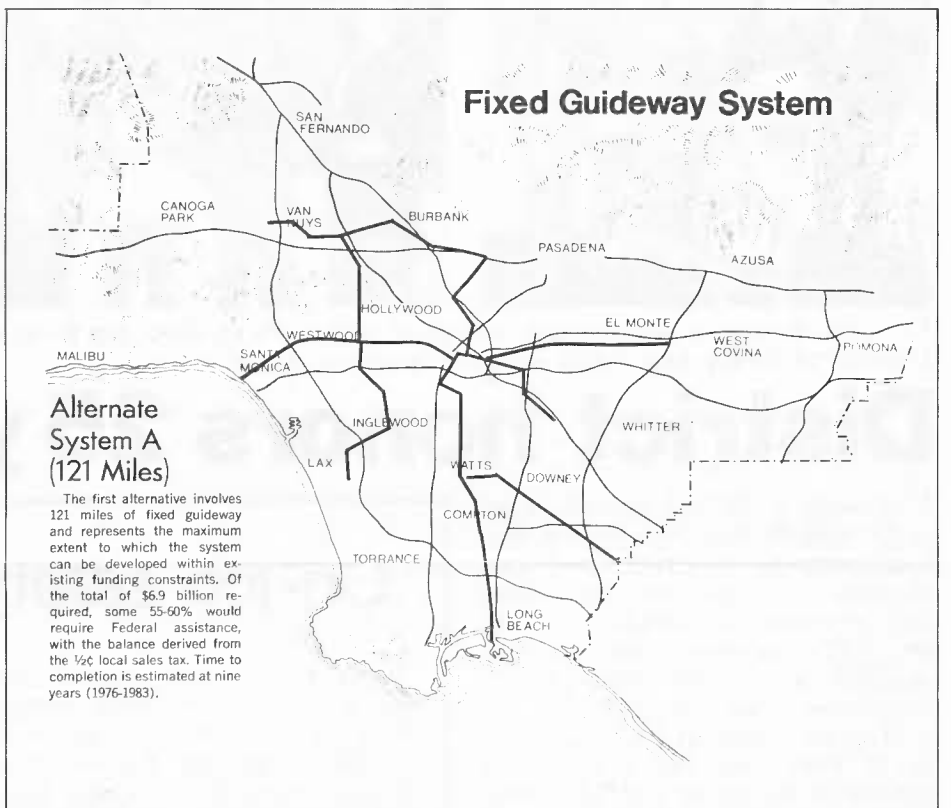
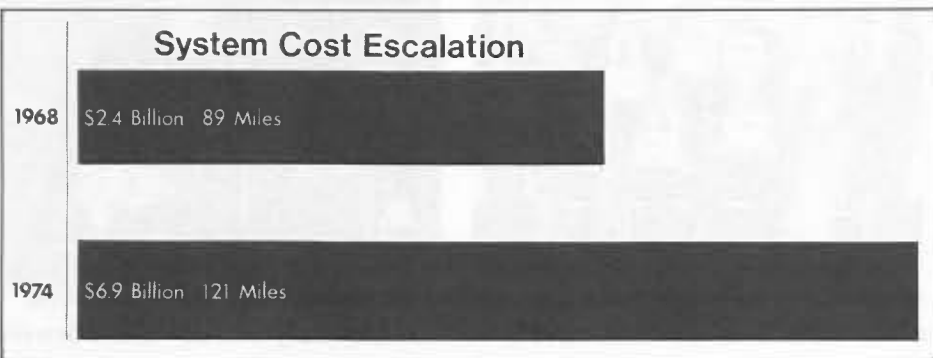
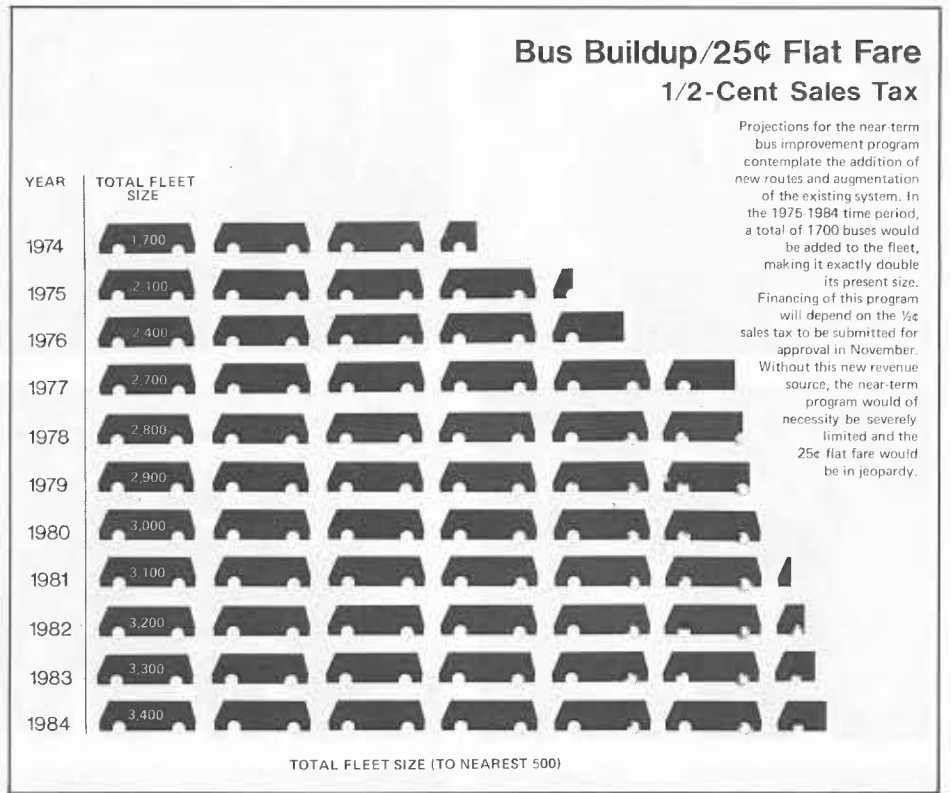
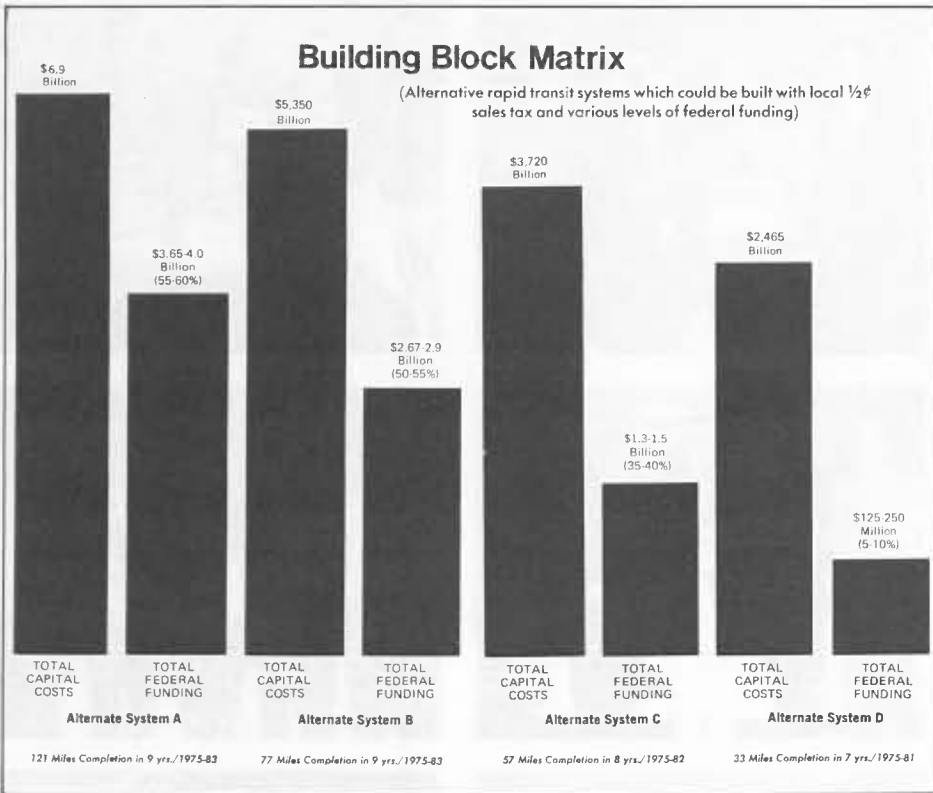
□ Division 2 reports the April 6 marriage of Richard Ennis to Marilyn Kammann. They were married in Burbank, and reside in Canoga Park. Ennis works the extra board at Division 2.



□ Walter Copithorne, a retired 30-year veteran of L.A. public transportation and recent winner of a 25-year safety award, would welcome correspondence from

any of the other old timers in the District. Copithorne worked out of Divisions 3 and 5, and said he is extremely proud to receive the safety award - 1245 W. Cienega Ave., Space 170, San Dimas, Ca. 91773.

□ Another Division 2 operator is about to be married - Sal Hernandez, Jr. His bride is Julie Aguilar. The April 20 ceremony will take place in Montebello, and the newlyweds will live in Monterey Park. Hernandez operates on Line 47.



Phase III plan

(continued from page one)

Finally the consultants, consistent with their Phase I and II recommendations, again called for the construction of the high-speed MRT system, but have now structured this part of the plan so that it can be constructed as the flow of federal funds permits. The local share for capital construction would come from the one-half cent sales tax ear-marked for system construction. The local share would be augmented by federal funding at a level which cannot be forecast at this time. The consultants identify several MRT construction programs for various levels of federal aid — from a 33-mile system requiring only 5-10 percent federal financing, up to a 121 mile system which would require 60-70 percent federal aid. In their initial recommendations, the consultants assumed a 66 percent federal share which was provided in 1970 Urban Mass Transportation Act. Since that time, Congress amended the legislation to 80 percent, but appropriations have not kept pace with the demand nation-wide, leaving many of the cities currently applying out in the cold.

The consultants still indicate, as they did in their preliminary recommendations, the ultimate need for an MRT network including more than 200 miles of high-speed corridor service. This will be submitted to the Southern California Associa-

tion of Governments (SCAG) as the County public transit element of the regional transportation plan for all of Southern California.

Stressing the importance of the decision the voters will make in November, McDonald said that the construction of an automated high-speed trunk-line system integrated with improved community feeder and circulation lines will offer to residents of Los Angeles a truly comfortable, speedy, efficient and reliable alternative means of transport. Cost escalations, however, which the consultants have figured into their proposals, may soon make such a system prohibitively expensive. Should the voters pass the twin measure on the ballot in November, the consultants foresee completion of some MRT elements in 7 years (over 30 miles) and possible completion of over 120 miles of MRT facilities by 1983.

Besides creating thousands of jobs directly related to the construction of the system itself, passage of the November ballot proposition will provide for the addition of over 1000 buses. The District could require the services of up to 2000 more operators, 500 maintenance personnel, and 500 clerical, supervisory and administrative employees. New promotional opportunities and greater seniority will be generated almost immediately for both contract and non-contract personnel.

MRT community meetings scheduled

Seven Phase III Community Informational Meetings have been scheduled at various locations throughout the region as part of RTD's transit development program. The meetings will demonstrate the District's responsiveness to the community's input during Phase II planning. RTD employees and the general public are invited to attend these transit planning update presentations.

Thursday, April 11, 1974 — 7:30 p.m., Department of Water and Power (Auditorium), City of Los Angeles, 111 North Hope Street, (held last week).

Tuesday, April 16, 1974 — 7:30 p.m., Washington School (Cafetorium), 4339 West 129th Street, Hawthorne.

Thursday, April 18, 1974 — 7:30 p.m., Long Beach City Council Chambers, 205 West Broadway, Long Beach.

Tuesday, April 23, 1974 — 7:30 p.m., Sepulveda Junior High School (Multi-Purpose Room), 15330 Plummer Street, Sepulveda.

Wednesday, April 24, 1974 — 7:30 p.m., Torrance City Council Chambers, 3031 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance.

Tuesday, April 30, 1974 — 7:30 p.m., El Monte High School (Auditorium), 3048 North Tyler, El Monte.

Thursday, May 16, 1974 — 7:30 p.m., La Mirada City Council Chambers, 13700 La Mirada Boulevard, La Mirada.

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