



Los Angeles
County
Transportation
Commission

APRIL 1991

METRO MOVES

ROADSIDE REMEDIES

Freeway Service Patrols Will Soon Be Available

Breaking down on the freeway is a Los Angeles driver's worst nightmare. Unfortunately, when it happens, the resulting traffic tie-up won't garner the stranded driver much sympathy. In fact, most motorists aggravate the situation by slowing down to gawk. Worse yet, quickly obtaining help is no simple matter.

As it stands today, approximately 50 percent of Los Angeles County's freeway congestion is the result of accidents, incidents, or disabled vehicles. The average response time for each freeway incident is currently 24 minutes.

All that will change beginning on July 1st when a speedy roadside emergency service will be launched during peak commuting hours on Los Angeles County's most crowded freeways.

Thanks to the foresight of Los Angeles County voters who passed Proposition C last November — the half cent sales tax measure that provides money to be used exclusively for transportation purposes — the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC), along with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the California



Photo courtesy of California Department of Transportation.

Tow trucks are familiar sights on Los Angeles area freeways. Soon they'll be even more familiar—and welcome—as the county's freeway service patrol program gets underway.

Department of Transportation (Caltrans), will implement a freeway service patrol system designed to relieve congestion on at least 250 miles of our county's 500-mile freeway system.

A system of tow trucks will be available during morning and evening commute hours along the busiest freeway corridors, which include the San Diego (405), Pasadena/Harbor (110), Ventura (101), Golden State (5), Pomona (60), and Santa Monica/San Bernardino (10) freeways. The service will not be available on weekends and holidays.

Once the system is in place, there will be approximately three tow trucks for every eight miles of freeway. Trucks will be able to respond to freeway incidents within 10 minutes, thus reducing overall freeway delays by 15 percent — and, eliminating up to 34,000 hours of congestion daily.

The specially-designated patrol trucks will be white, with a freeway patrol symbol; service patrol drivers will be identified by their blue jumpsuits displaying the same symbol. All tow truck drivers are required to participate in a three-day CHP training and certification program.

“Quick fix” items such as changing flat tires, providing one gallon of gasoline, taping radiator hoses and refilling radiators will be provided free of charge. If the vehicle cannot be started, it will be towed to a designated drop location off the freeway, and, if necessary, a call will be placed to a friend or relative, the Automobile Club or a specified tow service, or the CHP's rotating tow truck service.

“The Freeway Service Patrol, which will be run through our state-of-the-art traffic operations ▶

PROP. C DOLLARS HARD AT WORK

(continued from page 1)

center, will assist motorists in distress, and help keep freeway traffic moving smoothly," said Caltrans District 7 Director, Jerry Baxter. "This idea has been around for a long time," he added, "but we didn't have the funds to do it until Proposition C passed."

Although the program will be primarily funded by the LACTC through monies received from Prop. C, additional funds will come from the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane violation account, which could generate as much as \$2 million annually. HOV violators currently pay up to \$246 per violation.

"It is estimated that this program will cost approximately \$12 million the first year," said Bob Cashin, Director of LACTC's South Bay Area Team, "but the program benefits are estimated at \$205 million annually. This equates to a benefit to cost ratio of 16 to 1."

The goal of the Freeway Service Patrol program is to improve mobility and reduce congestion, reduce secondary accidents attributed to congestion, and reduce auto emissions caused by vehicles idling in congestion. Clearly, these goals are exactly what county residents had in mind when they passed Proposition C. ■



Neil Peterson,
Executive Director—
LACTC

As of April 1st, when county residents started paying a 7% sales tax, those who voted for the additional half-cent tax at the polls last November will recall that they did so to improve transportation in Los Angeles County.

They'll be happy to learn that on July 1st, one of the first programs to be launched from Prop. C funds will be a freeway service patrol — a system of tow trucks that will help to immediately relieve congestion on 250 miles of our county's 530-mile freeway system. Eventually, the service will cover all 530 miles of freeway. (See related cover story.)

Prop. C is expected to generate about \$400 million a year, and when these funds are combined with private and other local, state and federal funding sources, the LACTC has the additional financial resources to move forward much more aggressively with our integrated Metro system and implement hundreds of miles of rail, bus and highway improvements.

The passage of Prop. C will also speed up the opening of the first three of seven intercounty commuter rail lines — by as early as 1992. These first three lines will run across the San Gabriel Valley to San Bernardino, across the San Fernando Valley to Ventura County, and a more northern San Fernando Valley route up to Santa Clarita. The purchase of the cars and locomotives for the commuter rail

trains will also be included.

Other programs targeted for these funds include an accelerated building of rail lines, an expanded bus service throughout the county, increased park-and-ride lots, improved and expanded rail and bus security, transit related improvements to freeways and state highways, smart streets, signal synchronization, road repair, and the development of more carpool and vanpool lanes. All of these programs will be in place earlier than anticipated.

Lastly, under a designated 20% local return portion, local cities can fund their choice of qualified public transit, paratransit, and related services such as a transportation system management and demand management programs. For the past three months we've been meeting with local governments to establish Prop. C guidelines. By developing agreed-upon, countywide strategies for cleaner air, increased mobility and reduced congestion, we will meet our shared goals.

We don't expect everyone living in Los Angeles County to find it convenient to use mass transportation, but we will be building enough systems in the next thirty years to provide alternatives to many who want out of the madness of driving on congested freeways. Right now, most motorists feel that they don't have choice.

Thanks to the vision of many, especially Los Angeles County's voters, the LACTC can now set the LA METRO system into motion — moving Los Angeles into the 21st Century sooner than expected. ■

WHAT'S NEW IN RAIL CONSTRUCTION

WORKER SAFETY RECORD EARNS \$10.1 MILLION INSURANCE RETURN FOR RAIL PROJECTS

The Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) and its subsidiary, the Rail Construction Corporation (RCC) received a \$10.1 million return of insurance premiums from Argonaut Insurance Company as a result of superior safety on rail construction projects. This safety rebate covers the period from September 1986 through June 1990, during which time both the Southern California Rapid Transit District and the LACTC managed the Metro Rail projects.

To dramatize the unprecedented amount, a four-foot check was formally presented to the RCC at its March 25th board meeting, and to the LACTC at its March 27th meeting. The check was

presented by the Argonaut Insurance Co., of Menlo Park, CA, and Metro Transit Insurance Administrators (MTIA), a Joint Venture of Sedgwick James of California, Inc.; Rideau and Associates; and Akasaka, Ortiz and Varela.

The RCC is now designing and building Los Angeles County's rail transit system. Neil Peterson, LACTC's executive director, characterized the record dividend as "a milestone in safety achievement which reflects our commitment to an effective safety program."

The dividend was being paid in connection with Worker's Compensation insurance provided by the RCC for the employees of contractors and subcontractors engaged in Metro Red Line and Ted Braucht, Senior Vice President, Construction Insurance for Argonaut, described the unpre-

cedented return as one of the largest in the 43-year old, Menlo Park, California company's history.

The Los Angeles County dividend represents a 45% return of paid premium, which Braucht characterized as an "outstanding rate of return for the construction industry and the result of excellent loss experience."

ARCHAEOLOGISTS UNCOVER PARTS OF OLD CHINATOWN IN METRO RAIL DIG

A team of 12 archaeologists excavating at a Metro Rail construction site uncovered brick structural remains of buildings from the original Chinatown of the 1880's. The building foundations are part of ongoing discoveries that are providing experts with a detailed look at the life of early Chinese residents of Los Angeles' first Chinatown. ▶



A Four-foot check is presented to RCC by the Argonaut Insurance Company. From left to right, Iris C. Rideau, Principal of Rideau & Associates, David M. Anderson, RCC's Chairman, Neil Peterson, LACTC's Executive Director, Wally Ryland, President of Sedgwick James Construction Services Division and the MTIA Joint Venture, Ted Braucht, Senior Vice President of Construction Insurance for Argonaut, and William J. Ortiz, Vice President of Akasaka, Ortiz and Varela.

*("Rail Construction News"
continued from page 3)*

Construction workers were excavating 18 feet down at the site of the future station's west entrance when the old foundations were discovered. Hundreds of small artifacts were found last year during excavation work on the Metro station's east entrance. "The Metro Rail project has allowed us to find these valuable clues to our city's history," said Ed McSpedon, CEO/President of the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission's subsidiary, the Rail Construction Corporation. "The items are contributing to the studies of archaeology, history, urban development, and ethnic studies."

"We're careful to preserve all the historical pieces being found at the construction site," said McSpedon. "Any time we plan to do heavy digging work, we have a member of the archeological team monitor the site for signs of additional findings."

The team is documenting their current findings with film and maps. "Many houses and buildings were demolished to clear the land for Union Station in 1934,"



Hand-painted porcelain dishes, jugs, and vases are among the hundreds of Chinese artifacts that archeologists uncovered at the Metro Red Line construction site at Union Station.

said John Foster, project manager of the archeological team. "Little remains of the structures except for the foundations made of crude bricks. Some bricks are removed to become part of an artifact display, but because the foundations are so fragile, it would be impossible to remove them from the ground," said Foster.

Two display cases are currently set up for viewing the Chinese artifacts; one at Union Station (near the snack bar), and the other at the Fine Arts Building

lobby at 811 W. 7th Street. The pieces include hand-painted porcelain dishes, cooking tools, medicine bottles, door knobs, jewelry, shoes, toys and figurines.

The first 4.4 miles of the Metro Red Line from Union Station to Wilshire Boulevard and Alvarado Street is scheduled to open in fall, 1993. Red Line passengers will be able to transfer to commuter rail and AMTRAK trains at the Union Station subway stop. ■



At a Metro Rail construction site at Union Station, a team of archaeologists are shown uncovering brick structural remains of buildings from the original Chinatown of the 1880's. The building foundations provided experts with a detailed look at the life of LA's early Chinese residents.



NEWS BRIEFS

■ Appeals Court Clears Way for Foothill Transit Zone

On April 3, the State Court of Appeal unanimously upheld a Los Angeles Superior Court decision and ruling that LACTC's creation of a Foothill Transit Zone was consistent with state law.

The county and 20 cities in the San Gabriel Valley, had received LACTC approval in 1988 to operate 14 Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) lines. In 1989, following a request from two unions representing SCRTD's drivers and mechanics, a Superior Court judge refused to issue an injunction to stop Foothill Transit from operating.

Pending the appeal, Foothill Transit was only permitted to run seven lines, while the other seven could not be operated. The appellate court decision clears the way for Foothill Transit to operate all 14 lines.

■ Congestion Management Program Meetings

LACTC is responsible for developing a package of programs, actions and guidelines for accomplishing the county's Congestion Management Plan (CMP) goals. The following meetings are planned in April and May:

April 18 (3:00 p.m.) – A South Bay Area Team CMP workshop for South Bay jurisdictions on Thursday. A South Bay location is yet to be determined.

April 24 (1:30 p.m.) – A CMP Technical Forum, at LACTC's offices, 818 West 7th Street, Suite 1100, Los Angeles, CA.

May 8 – A CMP Policy

Advisory Committee meeting; time and location TBA. For further information, call the CMP hotline at (213) 236-9599.

■ Culver City Paratransit Honored by LACTC

The City of Culver City was honored as the first recipient of LACTC's **Metro Award**. The city was selected for its paratransit service, which is considered one of the most effective, efficient and cost effective programs in Los Angeles County. During 1989-90, the service provided transportation to over 33,000 elderly and physically challenged riders.

LACTC's **Metro Award** is a new monthly award aimed at recognizing local cities, transit operators and their employees; there will be a different award category for each month. The March category was Disadvantaged Access, and the April category is Environmental Concerns. For further information, contact LACTC Public Affairs Officer, Frank Zarider, (213) 236-9563.

■ Transit Appreciation Day

Transit Appreciation Day will be celebrated throughout the nation on Wednesday, May 15, 1991 during National Transportation Week. Local events are being planned in downtown Los Angeles, and are tentatively scheduled to take place outside the ARCO Plaza located between 5th Street and Wilshire Boulevard on Figueroa Street, between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on May 15.

The LACTC will participate, along with Southern California Rapid Transit District and Commuter Transportation Services. Information booths will be set up to provide commuter, bus and rail information.

■ College Students to Design Commuter Rail Cars

The LACTC has contracted with the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena to assist in developing concepts for logos, names, exterior car graphics and interior colors, design and material selection for future commuter rail cars. Bi-Level vehicles manufactured in Canada will be used for the planned commuter rail trains.

Third year students are developing these designs as part of their normal class work. Before any final designs are chosen, the students' ideas will be carefully evaluated from a technical and safety perspective. The final selection will be made by the Commuter Rail Joint Powers Authority. ■

AREA TEAM NEWS

The LACTC has six Area Teams divided along geographic lines within the County. *Metro Moves* regularly covers Area Team developments; the following area teams are covered this month:

■ The Southeast Area Team

will hold a Transportation Focus Group meeting to receive input on the Draft 30-year Transportation Financial Plan and to provide an update on what's happening regarding transportation projects in the Southeast area. The meeting will be held on Thursday, April 11, 1991, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., in the Compton City Council Chambers, 205 So. Willowbrook Avenue, Compton, CA. Contact Naomi Nightingale of the LACTC's Southeast Area Team at (213) 236-9410. ▶

"Area Team News" continued from page 5.

■ **The San Gabriel Valley Area Team**

A Paratransit Network

Status Report: The East San Gabriel Valley is the site of the proposed paratransit network demonstration project — a project established to determine cost and service levels for implementing a countywide paratransit service that will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

Pending approvals of the 15 cities in the proposed service area, the project will include the cities and unincorporated areas to the east of the 605 freeway to the LA County line, from the Orange County line on the south to the San Gabriel mountains in the north. As required by the ADA, the project would coordinate the curb-to-curb paratransit services offered by the cities to the disabled community throughout the East San Gabriel Valley.

Report on Foothill Transit:

The LACTC is currently working with Foothill Transit to provide Express Bus Service to the 210 Corridor from Claremont to Pasadena.

For more information, contact Lupe Valdez of the LACTC's San Gabriel Valley Area Team at (213) 236-9547.

■ **San Fernando/North County**

East/West Rail Line: Although the LACTC has approved a subway rail alignment extending from North Hollywood to the Sepulveda basin, the Commission asked its staff to look at the feasibility of two additional

options: an aerial guideway along the Ventura Freeway from Universal City to Warner Center in Canoga Park and a subway from Universal City to Warner Center under Ventura Boulevard. At its meeting on February 27, the Commission voted to proceed with a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for the aerial guideway over the freeway median.

Cities Issues Meeting: On March 21, the City of Agoura Hills hosted a Cities Issues meeting for 11 cities in the San Fernando Valley/North County. The LACTC provided an update on transportation issues, including Proposition C guidelines, the county's Congestion Management Plan, rail news, and city issues. The next meeting will be held on April 18 in the City of Burbank.

For further information, contact Judi Smith of LACTC's San Fernando/North Valley Area Team at (213) 236-4890.

■ **South Bay Area Team**

The South Bay staff team heads up several LACTC countywide programs, including the tow service patrol (see cover story); SAFE (Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies), an upgrading and expansion of area call-boxes; a study of possible use of Los Angeles River Channel for transportation purposes; a study regarding a proposed LAX/Palmdale rail line; and an urban greenways program whereby LACTC-owned rail rights-of-way could be landscaped.

For information on activities in the South Bay, contact Brynn Kernaghan, Manager of Government and Public Affairs at 236-9533. ■



Air Time

Several bills related to air quality are pending in Sacramento. The following are bills of interest to the LACTC:

Bus operators should pay attention to SB 135 (Boatwright) which mandates use of methanol, ethanol, natural gas, LPG or electricity. This bill requires using specific fuel types rather than performance and cost standards as a way to meet emission reductions as required by the Clean Air Act. LACTC recommends amending this bill to mandate the use of *any* clean fuel or technology that meets state emission standards.

Cities should keep an eye on SB 352 (Green), which reduces SCAQMD's authority to implement Indirect Source Control regulations as now required under the state Clean Air Act. Indirect sources are those that generate non-work trips, such as shopping and recreation centers and schools. While the bill seeks to strengthen local control over land-use decisions, it could weaken the link between transportation and air quality decisions in the state and federal Clean Air Acts and the Congestion Management Program. LACTC supports amendments to SB 352 requiring that air districts document the need for indirect source programs and conduct tests to determine impact and equity before regulations are adopted. ▶

AB 620 (Costa) proposes to expand the SCAQMD Board to include additional city members and an unspecified method for filling additional city seats. The bill's author needs input from the cities to determine the number and method of appointing additional city SCAQMD Board representatives.

Lastly, we urge support of AB 405 and SB 568 to help speed up and increase funding for clean air projects and services. AB 405 (Eaves) and SB 568 (Hill) will require air districts to set up mobile source emissions credit banking systems. Mobile source emissions credits to offset future emissions will be "banked" when a business or industry does more than required under the local air plan. Credits are given for conversion of fleets to clean fuels or for expansion of rideshare or transit incentives.

Call either Rebecca Barrantes, LACTC's Air Quality Management Administrator, at (213)236-4739, or Jim Ortner, LACTC's Air Quality Transportation Administrator, at (213) 236-4865, for more information. ■



Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (r) and LACTC's Executive Director, Neil Peterson (l) share their views on transportation as they take a ride on the Metro Blue Line during the Senator's March visit to Los Angeles.



Legislative Update

Federal Legislative Update

1991 is a critical year in Washington for the LA Metro system. Congress will pass a five-year extension of the Surface Transportation Act, which provides federal funding for mass transit and highway programs. This legislation will also set the level of federal funding for MOS-3 of the Metro Red Line into North Hollywood and future extensions of this heavy rail system into West and East Los Angeles.

Over the past several months, many transit leaders in Congress have come to Los Angeles to personally see the progress which is being made in developing the LA Metro System. Senator Frank Lautenberg, Chairman of the Senate

subcommittee recommends funding levels for Metro Red Line construction and numerous other projects, .

More recently, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York, who chairs the Senate panel that will rewrite the federal highway program, spent two days touring our growing rail system, as well as the future-planned 400-mile HOV network. He convened a field hearing of his Subcommittee at Los Angeles City Hall on March 27, hearing witnesses on our region's priorities for highway and transit funding. Congressman Robert Roe of New Jersey, the new Chairman of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee also toured the Metro system on April 2.

"At one time LA was viewed as being last among major cities in terms of having a viable mass transit system. The interest shown by Congressional leaders in visiting Los Angeles is testament to the tremendous progress which is being made and the perception of our region as a leader in the field," said Neil Peterson LACTC's Executive Director.

Questions on the State program may be directed to Claudette A. Moody, LACTC's Administrator of State Affairs, (213) 236-9525. For any questions regarding the Federal program, contact Bevan Dufty, LACTC's Administrator of Federal Affairs, (213) 236-9555. ■

Appropriations subcommittee on Transportation, visited Los Angeles last December, toured the 7th & Flower station and rode the Metro Blue Line. Senator Lautenberg's

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Managing Editor
Wendy Taylor

Art Director
Anne Roubideaux

Director of Communications
Stephanie Brady



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LACTC

LOS ANGELES COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

818 West Seventh Street, Suite 1100

Los Angeles, CA 90017

213/623-1194

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