

VALLEY HEARING
Pat Garrett, an aide to Rep. Henry A. Waxman, reads congressman's supportive testimony at Valley hearing as hearing officials (inset) listen. More than 600 Valley residents packed Universal Sheraton to affirm support of Metro Rail.

Environmental Impact Hearings

Hundreds Voice Support of Metro Rail

In a dramatic show of community support and enthusiasm for the RTD Metro Rail Project, some 1,100 persons participated in eight public hearings on the project's *Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Environmental Impact Report* during the week of July 18.

Of the 237 persons who testified publicly on the project, an overwhelming 88% underscored the merits of the proposed 18-mile subway connecting the downtown area and the San Fernando Valley, via the Wilshire Corridor. As one Fairfax woman typically stated: "We want Metro Rail, and we want it now!" In addition to the oral testimony, hundreds of written comments were also received—the vast majority of which also supported the project.

Held in the Central Business District, the Wilshire Corridor, the Fairfax/West Hollywood District, Hollywood and the Valley, these federal hearings offered residents and public officials throughout the Los Angeles region the opportunity to go on public record with their support and concerns relative to the project.

The speakers testified before a panel of hearing officials, including hearing Officer Richard T. Powers, RTD General Counsel; Burton Jones, an experienced public hearing consultant;

Abbe Marner and George Grainger of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA); and Nadeem Tahir, Metro Rail Planning Manager.

Overall, public comments focused on major topics of the 400-page environmental impact report, such as air quality, noise, land use, historical and cultural resources, development and economics.

Without question, the most dramatic of the eight hearings were the two Valley sessions. More than 600 persons packed the East Ballroom of the Universal Sheraton over a 7-hour period to affirm their long-standing support of Metro Rail and to formally register their unanimous objection to the Valley aerial alignment option contained in the environmental report.

Now that the hearings have concluded, all substantive comments will be responded to in writing by RTD and included in the final version of the environmental impact document prior to its being forwarded to UMTA for approval and publication (October).

This critical certification will officially signal the end of the Preliminary Engineering phase of the project and serve as the basis for a federal commitment to help finance Metro Rail's construction, which is scheduled to begin next summer. ■

Reagan approves \$117.2 million for subway construction

President Reagan has signed the U.S. Department of Transportation funding bill for fiscal year '84, which contains a \$117.2-million appropriation to start construction of Metro Rail next summer.

Significantly, this appropriation marks a historic milestone in local transit history, in that this is the first time a Los Angeles project has been approved for federal construction dollars. Of the 10 transit projects recommended for construction funding next fiscal year (beginning October 1), Metro Rail received the highest appropriation.

The President's signature ended a 3-month congressional budgetary process in which the House recommended \$127.5 million for Metro Rail, and the Senate, \$110.4 million. The House/Senate Conference Committee compromised earlier this month at the Reagan-approved \$117.2-million figure.

"President Reagan's approval constitutes a turning point for an administration which earlier opposed new rail projects," noted RTD General Manager John A. Dyer. "It also confirms the widespread support of Metro Rail on Capitol Hill and underscores the general view of Metro Rail as the nation's most cost-effective, most justified transit project."

Before any construction funds for the \$3-billion subway can be released, the all-important Metro Rail Project *Final Environmental Impact Statement* must be approved by the RTD



Board of Directors and the U.S. Department of Transportation. This is expected to take place in late fall.

"If that proceeds on schedule, we should begin construction on the first phase of the 18-mile system by June 1984," Dyer said. "We would begin in the maintenance yard and shop area east of downtown and around Union Station. So there will not be any disruption of surface streets when the Olympic Games begin a month later."

Combining the federal appropriation with state and county matching funds, a total of \$232.2-million should be available for Metro Rail's first year of construction. ■

Day, Holden Join RTD Board

Glendale City Councilman John F. Day and former state Senator Nate Holden have joined the 11-member RTD Board of Directors. Director Day was elected by the League of California Cities in May to represent RTD's northern service area, including the cities of Glendale, Burbank, San Fernando, Hidden Hills, LaCanada-Flintridge, Agoura and Westlake Village. He replaces former Glendale Councilman Carl Meseck for a term on the RTD Board, expiring in June 1984.



Day



Holden

works as assistant chief deputy. The Ladera Heights resident represented the 30th District in the California Senate from 1974 to 1978. As a state senator, he served as chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Rapid Transit for Southern California and as vice-chairman of the Public Utilities, Transit and Energy Committee. Holden succeeds former RTD Board

President Thomas G. Neusom, who died June 29.

As RTD directors, Day and Holden vote on policy decisions affecting the operation of the nation's third largest public transit agency and will take part in making crucial decisions on the development of the Metro Rail Project.

Director Holden was appointed to the Board last month by County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, for whom he now



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

State Considers Legislation Providing Metro Rail Funding Mechanisms

Deukmejian signs bill allowing joint development ventures

Governor George Deukmejian has signed into law legislation authorizing the RTD to engage in joint development ventures, which could financially benefit the Metro Rail system.

State Senator Art Torres' SB1159 allows RTD to "develop, jointly develop, lease or dispose of facilities and property necessary for, incidental to, or convenient to its powers, and to contract with others in exercising those additional powers with respect to District facilities."

Basically, "joint development" is a process through which public transportation investments are coordinated with private land development investments so that they will generate a maximum stimulus to economic development and urban revitalization. Joint development occurs when the public and private sectors work cooperatively in the planning, financing and construction of development projects adjacent to and integrated with transportation facilities.

The various mechanisms RTD can use to implement joint development are outlined and discussed in the report, *Milestone 6: Land Use and Development*, available upon request through the RTD Community Relations Department (213) 972-6456.

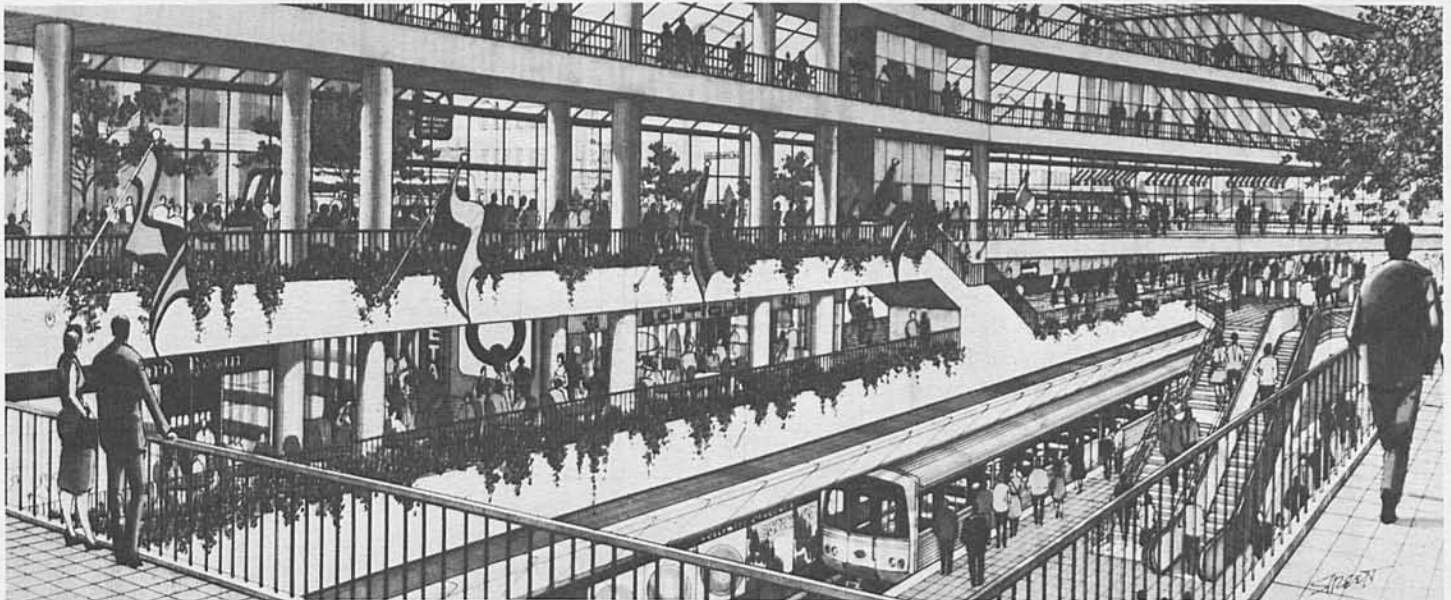
Bill allows for creation of benefit assessment districts

State legislators are considering passage of a critically needed Senate bill to provide part of the local share of Metro Rail's financing.

Authored by Senator Diane Watson, SB1238 would authorize RTD to establish "benefit assessment districts" around the 18 Metro Rail stations. Property owners whose land would escalate in value because of direct benefits derived from the transit stations' locations would be assessed user fee. The money generated from this user fee would back about \$170 million in revenue bonds over Metro Rail's construction period. That, combined with local sales tax funds and state and federal grants, would sufficiently finance the project's construction.

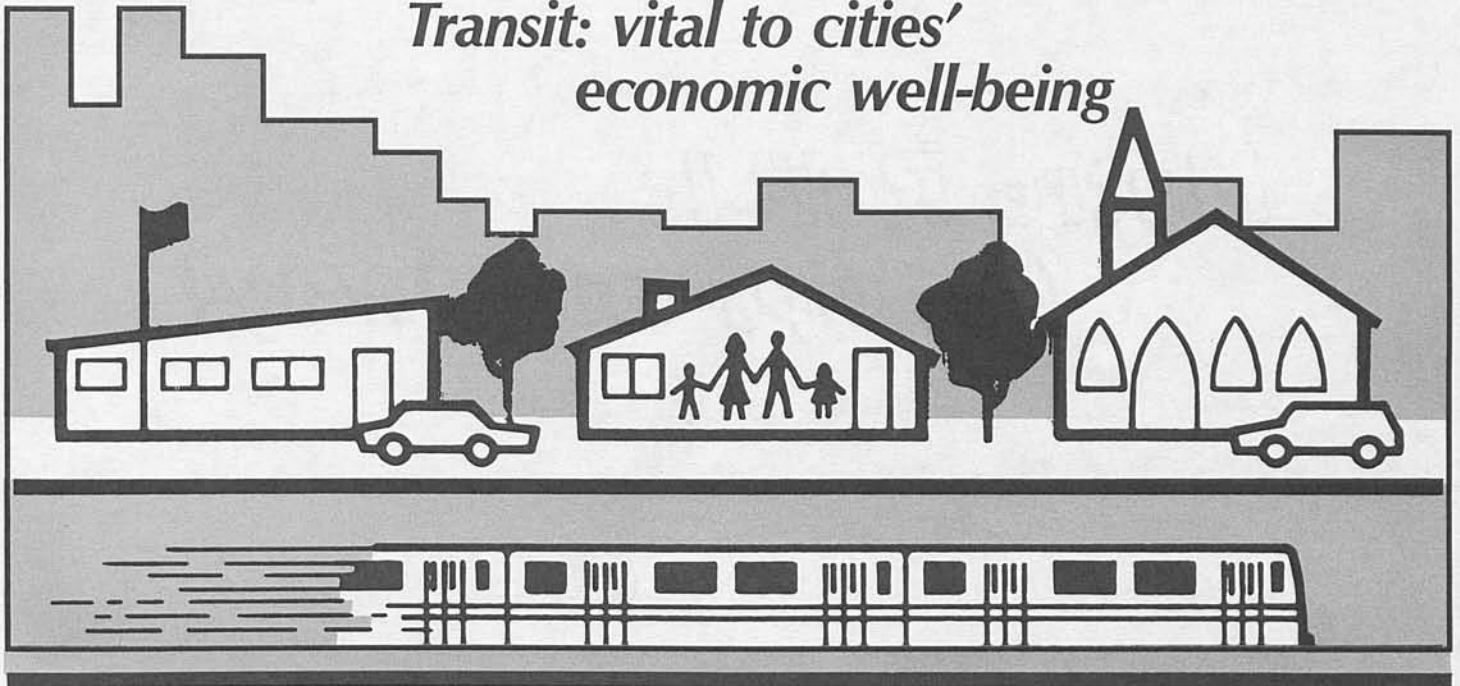
The RTD Board of Directors has adopted a resolution specifying that boundaries of the benefit assessment districts will be drawn to exclude single-family residences and that residences that must be included within these districts will be excluded from assessment.

The Senate has passed the bill. At press time, the measure was still under review in the Assembly. ■



SHOPS & STATIONS — Artist's rendering illustrates how transit can be effectively and aesthetically integrated with commercial development. — Gene Street illustration.

Transit: vital to cities' economic well-being



Public transit is vital to the economic well-being of urban and rural areas, according to a report released by the American Public Transit Association (APTA). Transit creates jobs, attracts new business, stimulates retail sales and boosts local tax revenues, the report said.

"Public transportation can help solve the national problem of unemployment and contribute to the economic recovery of our businesses and industries," said APTA Executive Vice President Jack Gilstrap.

The report examined some of the unique economic benefits of public transit—buses, trolleys and rail systems—in communities across the United States and Canada.

Transit systems attract new business and encourage company relocations by supporting established travel patterns and by providing a reliable and convenient mode of travel for employees, the report said.

It cited Farinon Electronics, Inc., of San Antonio, whose move to that area was largely the result of the local transit agency's agreement to provide service to the plant.

The study also cited the "clustering effect" in business site selection. Historically, companies tend to cluster in cen-

tral locations because of access to clients, information sources, financial advice and other professional services.

Transit systems are ideal in such concentrated business centers because they can transport large numbers of people quickly and efficiently. Surveys of a number of urban areas show that large percentages of downtown employees use public transit to get to work: Los Angeles, 45.5%; Philadelphia, 64%; Atlanta, 40%; Seattle, 50%; Washington, D.C., 38%; New York City, 80%; Cleveland, 50%; Chicago, 80%; and Toronto, 80%.

The APTA report also detailed the employment impact of public transit. Between 7,400 and 8,000 jobs are generated by every \$100 million spent for transit capital projects, while more than 9,600 jobs are generated by the same amount of money spent for operating assistance.

The report found increased sales for shops, restaurants and entertainment facilities located near transit routes. Several cities have constructed shopping malls directly on or around central transit stations.

In Brockton, Mass., a cornerstone in the rebuilding of the transit system was the "Transit Center" in the middle of the

downtown area, through which 80% of all system riders pass. The center is credited with helping to generate more than \$14 million in new private investments.

Many retail businesses in smaller cities have experienced significant fluctuations in sales when bus routes are altered, the report said.

It cited Jacksonville, Fla., where downtown retailers complained after a number of major bus routes were moved just three to four blocks away. Retail sales had dropped 9% over a five-month period, and business owners, store employees and other citizens convinced officials to intervene to have the routes reinstated.

Another economic benefit linked to public transit is the increase in local tax revenues. A report by Washington, D.C.'s City Council predicted that almost \$50 million in new local tax revenues (excluding income taxes) may be expected by 1985 due to transit-related development.

"Tax revenues are vital to municipalities that are struggling to keep pace with the costs of delivering the most basic public services," Gilstrap said. "Transit boosts property values and helps businesses, which result in more tax revenues." ■

Metro Rail Is Up, Up, and Away!



Unseasonal rain couldn't even dampen the spirits of elected officials, community leaders and the local press corps, who braved winds and showers August 19 to celebrate President Reagan's signing of an appropriations bill, earmarking federal construction dollars for Metro Rail.

"This is a bright day for Los Angeles, even though the sun's not shining," beamed U.S. Senator Pete Wilson, who joined Supervisor Ed Edelman, Mayor Tom Bradley, RTD President Mike Lewis and General Manager John A. Dyer in celebrating the occasion.

At a kickoff ceremony at the future downtown maintenance yard site, Dyer briefed officials on the project's engineering status. They then boarded helicopters and toured the 18-mile, L-shaped Metro Rail route—over downtown, Wilshire, Fairfax and Hollywood areas—and ultimately landed in North Hollywood, where they talked to local leaders and the press about the benefits of the project to the Los Angeles area.



Mayor Bradley addresses Valley audience.



Edelman greets press.



Senator Wilson with (l-r) Lewis and Dyer.



SAFE & SECURE

Transit experts from other properties across the nation recently met with Metro Rail engineers to review and discuss RTD plans to make Metro Rail stations safe and secure for patrons. Attending this Peer Review Board meeting at District headquarters were (at table, l-r) RTD Assistant Transit Police Chief Harry Budds, Harold Taylor of the Bay Area (BART), John Waters of Atlanta (MARTA), James Meehan of New York (NYCTA), Dennie Stewart of Washington, D.C. (WMATA), Roger Wood (RTD), (rear, l-r) Kirk Rummel of Kaiser Engineers, Ernie Von Ibsch and Hadji Jameel of the California Public Utilities Commission. Peer Review Boards have been convened over the past two years on such issues as fare collection and fire protection.

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**METRO
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