

WHEEL CLICKS

Pacific Railroad Society Inc.

APRIL 2008

ORANGELINE AUTHORITY

In Sept., officials of the Southeast-based Orangeline Development Authority were looking for support from the city of Los Angeles in hopes of obtaining additional state funding. The authority was requesting \$200 million from the California Transportation Commission to be used as seed money to get the rail system, which would be powered by magnetic levitation through southeast Los Angeles, underway.

The Orangeline is a separate project from the California High-Speed Rail system. The latter proponents hope will eventually link San Diego with the Bay Area. Bellflower Mayor Scott Larsen, outgoing chairman of the authority board, which meets in Paramount once a month, contends the two systems are not competing against each other for funding.

The Orangeline would use the abandoned Union Pacific railroad tracks, the route of the famous Red Car electric system about 100 years ago, through its member cities, which include Vernon, Maywood, Bell, Cudahy, Huntington Park, South Gate, Paramount, Downey, Bellflower, Artesia, Cerritos and into Orange County to Irvine. Santa Ana recently voted to join the group, Larsen said.

Larsen said the initial plan was to run the Orangeline from Los Angeles Union Station to Irvine, but a number of cities to the north, including Palmdale and Santa Clarita, have expressed interest. Most of the member cities will have a station, which would spur economic development around it, Larsen said.

The county Metropolitan Transportation Authority has tentatively approved use of its Red Car right-of-way from Los Angeles. Other tracks to the northern cities would have to be found, Larsen said. Both rail systems would offer trains traveling 200 to 250 miles per hour. But the Orangeline would use monorail trains running some 30 feet above the ground and powered by magnetic levitation. In the crowded Southeast area, speeds would probably average 125 to 150 mph. "It would still get you to Los Angeles in 20 minutes," Larsen said.

Estimated cost is \$19 billion, including \$3 billion for vehicles, \$1 billion for engineering, design and management, and \$15 billion for actual construction, with a break-even time of 32 years, Larsen said. If all goes well, work could start in 2010 and be completed by 2014.

The Orangeline Development Authority budget for the coming fiscal year is \$539,000, financed by dues from member cities and a federal transit grant from Rep. Linda Sanchez, D-Cerritos.

[Info. from *The Press*]

OREGON COAST LINE TRACK

Gov. Ted Kulongoski has turned down a railroad company's request for state aid to repair tunnels along the 120-mile stretch of Coast Range track it has closed.



Construction of the Little Tokyo/Arts District Station platform at 1st/Alameda Sts. is complete..

Photo by Metro



Excavation for construction of the Pico/Aliso Station near 1st/Utah has been completed.

Photo by Metro

The owners of the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad are asking the federal government and the shippers who use the line from Eugene to Coquille for a commitment of more than \$20 million before they sink \$3 million to \$4 million into repairing the tunnels that prompted the Boca Raton, Fla.-based hedge fund RailAmerica to close the line last fall.

"Let me be clear," Kulongoski said in a letter Feb. 12 to Paul Lundberg of RailAmerica's Operation Support Group. "I do not believe that it is possible for the state to provide a subsidy to a private corporation to cover the operating expenses on your privately held railroad." Kulongoski also said that any public-private partnership to fix tunnels and other problems on the short line was possible only after CORP reopens the route.

The letter caused renewed talk of a public takeover.

[Info. from *The Oregonian* via Caroline Hobson]



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PACIFIC RAILROAD MUSEUM is operated by Pacific Railroad Society at 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas, CA 91773. Telephone: (909) 394-0616. Museum e-mail: PRSTrainman@aol.com Open Saturdays. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Wednesdays 1-5 p.m.

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PRS NEWS — ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Apr. 4 Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
 Apr. 5, 12 Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Bonita & Monte Vista Aves., San Dimas.
 Sats. Committee meeting: Mar. 26.
 Apr. 5, 12 Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, Saunders Yard, Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular Sats. day: 5, 19; Extra day: 12, 26. Committee Mtg.: 19.
 Apr. 11 Membership Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
 Apr. 18 Slide Night at Saunders Yard, 7:30 p.m., Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Everyone welcome.
 Apr. 26-27 Train & Trolley Fest at OERM, Perris, Cal. See the Sat. & Sun. PRS *Descanso* and many other rail cars.
 May 2 Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
 May 3, 10, Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Bonita & Monte Vista Aves., San Dimas.
 Sats. Committee meeting: Apr. 24.
 May 3, 10, Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, Saunders

17, 24, 31 Yard, Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce, Regular Sats. day: 3, 17; Extra day: 10, 24, 31. Com. Mtg.: 17.
 May 9 Membership Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
 Fri.

MEETING PROGRAMS

by RUSS DAVIES

April 11: **The best of Ralph Melching!** See all of **Ralph's** wonderful **black and white images** in slide from, plus other images from his priceless collection. We'll see the **opening ceremonies of LAUPT** in 1939, and other treasures. A slide presentation from your Museum Committee. **Be there, and bring slide or digital briefs!**

May 9: **Surprise selections** from the wonderful **Roger Bogenburger Collection**. We'll see a slide presentation by **Jerry Dunkin**, being backed up by **Tom Geer**. **Be there, and bring slide or digital briefs!**

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

by VIRGINIA GRUPP

There were no late renewals at the last report. Otto Kroutil, with Seniority No. 517, was voted into PRS at the Board Meeting on March 7.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The tally of ballots by PRS members for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 was counted at the meeting on March 14, 2008. The Election Committee counted 12 miscellaneous votes for various offices in addition to the listed votes. Members take office on April 1. Approximately 33 percent of the membership voted.

President	Will Walters	171
Vice-President	Vince Camarrano	166
Secretary	Bill Smith	168
Treasurer	Owen Danaher	168
Director	Dave Abbott	171
Director	Vic Carlucci	167

EXCURSION NO. 534 THE SIERRA IN WINTER or OH SO SLOW SNOW TRAIN

by TED CREVELING

Barbara Sibert assigned Frances, my wife, to act as Tour Director, and Dave Abbott, as Assistant, since she was still recuperating from hip surgery. My wife asked me to help her.

Our group consisted of 22 persons, all bound for Reno to gamble, ride the train, and see the snow and shows. We left Los Angeles Union Station on Feb. 4, 2008 on the bus to Bakersfield, and got as far as Magic Mountain when we were stopped due to the Grapevine being closed by ice. We were delayed here about one hour and began to wonder if Amtrak would hold our train at Bakersfield, which they did.

The train ride to Emeryville was uneventful. To our amazement, the elevator to the hotel from the station was operating. We met nine of our group at the hotel, who had arrived earlier from Paso Robles. Tuesday morning we all met at the Emeryville Station and the Snow Train arrived right on time. All boarded, got our assigned car and seats, and we were off. The train set was 15 cars and two Amtrak locomotives. We had the *Plaza Santa Fe*, *Amtrak Dome*, *Royal Gorge*, *Overland Trail*, and the balance in Amtrak *Horizon* and *Amfleet* cars. For some reason we had three power units on the return trip.

The trip over Donner was amazing. The snow was the deepest most of us had ever seen on this route. At one point, the

flashing lights at a road crossing were even with the top of the snow and the road had not been plowed. The weather was great, with the outside temperature, according to my scanner, around 25 to 30 degrees. Arrival in Reno was late in the afternoon with temperature around 40 degrees. One event that was not foreseen was the handing out of room keys on the train before we arrived in Reno. It was greatly appreciated by all.

I cannot give any information on what everybody did while in Reno. I didn't hear anyone bragging about big winnings, but no one complained outwardly about losses either.

The return trip started in fine shape but then developed into a problem. With all passengers waiting at the station, it was reported that a freight had broken in two, on single track somewhere around Donner, and that the line was tied up for an unknown length of time. It was decided that the *Snow Train* would leave Sparks, where it was parked, and pick up the passengers in Reno. Then proceed and probably have to wait at Truckee until the tracks were cleared – which is what we did.

We waited there for about an hour while three freights passed us by. The town of Truckee was buried in snow. Some of the piles in town that had been shoveled or plowed were at least 10 to 15 feet high, with icicles hanging on the roofs.

We left there and traveled about 10 miles. Then pulled into a siding to wait for Train No. 6, eastbound *California Zephyr*. We waited another hour, as it was also running late. After departing this stop, we made pretty good time the rest of the trip. Although according to the track detectors, the average speed of our train all day must have been about 35 mph. Once we left Sacramento, we did pick up speed into Emeryville. We arrived about two hours late, but still early enough, about 8:30 p.m.

We were met with another surprise. The elevator was only working on one side, so we had to climb the stairs and ride down the other side. The trip home on the *San Joaquin* was uneventful, as was the bus trip into Los Angeles. I believe all had a fun trip. Both Frances and I enjoyed ourselves, but please, Barbara, get well for the next trip.

ANGELS FLIGHT

After multiple missed opening days, John Welborne, president of the Angels Flight Railway Foundation, is not setting a new opening date for the tiny railway that connects Bunker Hill to the Historic Core. A new drive system was installed in November 2007, and one of the things required before it opens is an inspection from the California Public Utilities Commission, which must approve the train and its safety features.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY RIDERS

During the month of December 2007, the average number of weekday riders traveling on trains going to, from, or within Los Angeles County, other than on Amtrak, was 284,203. This was a decrease of about 5 percent from the previous month, and was evident throughout the system.

BEIJING-HAMBURG OVERLAND TRAIN

The Beijing-Hamburg Container Express arrived in the marshaling yard in the Port of Hamburg on January 24, 2008, completing its 10,000 km (6,214 miles) journey through China, the Mongolian Republic, Russia, Belarus, Poland, and Germany

in just 15 days. The participants in the Eurasian Land Bridge project are the railroads of the six countries along the route. The goal is to strengthen rail's competitive position in relation to ocean transport. Seagoing vessels require more than thirty days for the ocean route.

Hartmut Mehdorn, chairman of Deutsche Bahn's management board, said that the excellent co-operation between the six participating companies is proof that Asian-European freight transport along the Eurasian Land Bridge has a future. "If we can overcome further technical and bureaucratic hurdles and upgrade the infrastructure, and if the demand for transport services from Europe to Asia also grows, by the end of the decade we can aim at launching regular freight transport services along this axis," said Mehdorn.

"The test train was a success," said Dr. Norbert Bense, BD's member of the management board for transportation and logistics. "We have demonstrated that we can transport goods by rail between China and Germany safely, reliably and yet twice as fast compared with ships. At the same time, we're considerably cheaper than airfreight for many types of cargo. Now is the time to analyze and compare our notes with all partners and to define the next steps."

[Info. from Eyefortransport via Lindsay Smith]

CALTRAIN NEWS

by MIKE GONDON

During the first three weeks of last October, Caltrain conducted a customer satisfaction survey. Of the 4200 riders surveyed, an outstanding 82 percent responded, most with favorable reviews.

Weekday rides gave Caltrain a 4.02 rating out of a possible 5.0, while weekend riders were even more satisfied, giving Caltrain a 4.13 rating. That's somewhat surprising, since most of Caltrain's construction work is on weekends with more resulting delays.

The survey also determined that the average Caltrain rider is a 37-year-old, male, college graduate, who rides at least four days per week and earns over \$100,000 per year. Also, 74 percent of riders take the train to work, 12 percent use it for social outings, and 9 percent commute to school.

Caltrain's average weekday ridership reached a historic level of nearly 11 million during Fiscal Year 2007, and with gas prices still spiraling, is expected to surpass the 12 million mark this year.

March 3 saw two more trains added to Caltrain's evening schedule, one in each direction, bringing the total of weekday trains to 98. The evening schedule was also revised, so trains leave each end at 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, and 10:30 p.m. The last southbound train from San Francisco will still depart at 12:01 a.m. March 3 also saw the startup of a free shuttle between Belmont and Hillsdale for Belmont residents to take advantage of Baby Bullet service at the Hillsdale station. The pilot program will last 16 months, and as an incentive, parking will be free at Belmont through June 2009.

In February, Caltrain began a \$4.3 million construction project to improve several grade crossings in San Bruno. The project is expected to last one year and will help prepare the area for construction of a grade separation project that is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2012.

The Burlingame station project is nearing completion, and on February 25, the northbound platform was opened for passenger boarding. The southbound platform is still under construction, and pedestrian gates are not yet installed, so the station remains a "hold out" station, where only one train at a time may occupy the platform.

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL

The California High-Speed Rail Authority has been planning to build a 700-mile bullet train with locomotives barreling at 200 miles per hour. Last May the authority approved the first phase with San Diego and the Inland Empire cut out of the action. In December, Modesto, Stockton and Sacramento were excluded, at least for the foreseeable future.

This happened when the authority approved a Pacheco Pass route from the San Joaquin Valley to the Bay Area – a path through rural Los Banos roughly 60 miles south of an alternative Altamont Pass line near fast-growing Tracy. But the Pacheco Pass route was more direct to San Francisco, less expensive and a detour around environmental slow-downs.

The 420-mile Anaheim to San Francisco route will be built first. And after it's up and running on time with full cars, the "second phase" of the 700-mile line will be constructed. That will be done, "Whenever there is money to do it," says Mehdi Morshed, executive director of the rail authority.

The plan is to place a \$10-billion state bond issue on the November ballot in 2008. The bond would provide seed money for the \$30-billion Anaheim-to-San Francisco line. But that bond vote has been scheduled twice previously, in 2004 and 2006, and delayed by politicians who had higher priorities.

"If it's postponed again, it's gone," says authority chairman Quentin Kopp, a former legislator and retired San Mateo County Superior Court judge.

If the bond passes in November, the next step will be to seek federal matching funds. If federal money can be lined up, the rail authority hopes to secure private investment.

One thing that's getting Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger revved up about high-speed rail is the opportunities for public-private partnerships – or "P3" as he calls it. He placed his P3 guru, retired investment banker David Crane, on the authority board.

In order to get the private sector in, it's going to need confidence that the project can actually be built," Crane says. There'd be a much better chance of winning public support for state bond financing if so many voters weren't being left on the station platform. Building the entire project at once would cost another \$10 billion – but require boosting the bond size to only around \$13 billion.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

UNION STATION/EL PUEBLO

Mozaic apartments, the second phase of which opened in February, is at Los Angeles Union Station. The total 272-unit development, with a rooftop pool and many restaurants within walking distance was rescued from an original listing as condos.

ONE SANTA FE

Final city approvals have been obtained for the \$140 million Arts District project and a groundbreaking is expected this

summer. Plans for the 500,000-squarer-foot project call for 439 rental units above 55,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial live-work space with retail. The development would stand approximately 65 feet and five stories tall. It would rise on a four-acre site that currently houses a Metro parking lot, bounded by Santa Fe Avenue, the First and Fourth street bridges, and Metrolink service tracks adjacent to the Los Angeles River. [Info. from *Los Angeles Downtown News*]

S. CALIF. COMMUTER RAIL

by DICK FINLEY

RIDERSHIP

Metrolink weekday, systemwide, average trips during January 2008 were 43,322. This was an increase from the previous month of about 7 percent and about the same as in November. Metrolink weekday, systemwide, schedule adherence (within five minutes of scheduled time) was 96 percent, about the same as last month.

CORONA PARKING STRUCTURE

Increased ridership at the North Main Street station in Corona has forced the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) to build a 1,065-car parking garage at the station. Construction was to begin Jan. 7, 2008. The \$19.1-million, five-story parking structure will displace hundreds of Metrolink commuters during construction because it is being built on parking spaces that already exist.

While county and Corona city officials have arranged for shuttles to and from temporary parking lots around the city, officials are also encouraging Metrolink riders to use alternate stations three miles west at Auto Center Drive in Corona and seven miles to the east at La Sierra Avenue in Riverside. The La Sierra station is best equipped to handle the increase in passengers because it has roughly 330 parking spaces available.

Over the last five years, use of Metrolink in Riverside County has shot up by 28 percent to nearly 2.9 million trips a year. RCTC already has expanded the parking lots at the La Sierra and downtown Riverside stations, said commission spokesman John Standiford.

SHUTTLE BUSES TO JOHN WAYNE AIRPORT

Shuttle buses will start rolling in the Irvine Business Complex this spring. The service will work with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) bus service, providing traffic relief during peak hours and serving customers, employees and residents of the area near John Wayne Airport. Shuttle routes will link the airport with the Tustin Metrolink Station.

There are three planned routes:

- Route A will connect the Tustin Metrolink Station to John Wayne Airport via Von Karman.
- Route B will connect the Tustin station to residential and commercial areas near the airport via Jamboree and Michelson.
- Route C will provide midday service to the employment and retail centers in the area.

Most of the shuttle stops will be at the OCTA's stops. Thirteen other stops will be added for a total of 68. Rides will be free for the first 90 days. The shuttle plan must be approved by the OCTA and the California Transportation Commission.

SHUTTLE TO PALMDALE AIRPORT

Starting April 2, 2008, a new shuttle service will connect Van Nuys and the Santa Clarita Valley to the Los Angeles/

Palmdale Regional Airport (PMD), where air passengers can board United Airlines flights to San Francisco International Airport. Sponsored by Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich and Los Angeles World Airports, this shuttle service will operate daily. For a limited time it will be free of charge.

With stops at the Van Nuys FlyAway Bus Terminal and the Via Princessa Metrolink Station, the Palmdale Flyer service is timed to accommodate United's departures and arrivals. For more information, call (661) 266-7600.

PERRIS VALLEY LINE

The Perris Valley Line will extend the Metrolink 91 Line 22.7 miles farther into Riverside County, offering easy access to the Inland Empire/Orange County and Riverside lines. The new line will serve Perris, the business development at March Air Reserve Base, Morena Valley, the UC Riverside area, and the Hunter Park Business Development in northern Riverside.

In December, the RCTC received news that the project had received a favorable rating from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which paved the way for federal funding. President Bush's recently released proposed budget for 2008-09 includes \$50 million for the Perris Valley project, with another \$25 million recommended to follow in 2010. The rest of the funding for the project, which has a total projected cost of about \$168 million, is expected to come from a combination of state, local, and other federal sources.

Preliminary engineering is now in progress. One of the primary ideas they're considering to keep costs down is phased development of stations. Not unlike the way Metrolink began, the Perris Line might open a few stations at a time to balance costs with growing ridership. Construction is scheduled to begin during 2009, with estimated project completion by 2011.

ORANGE DEPOT PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

The Orange Depot consists of two mainline tracks with east and west side boarding platforms, two parking areas, and a bus transfer facility. The main parking lot is situated on the west side of the mainline tracks. The secondary parking lot and bus transfer facility are located on the east side of the mainline tracks. Currently there is no grade-separated pedestrian crossing in the station. Passengers must go to Chapman Ave., a busy arterial street at the south end of the station, to cross the mainline tracks.

Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) staff recommends the award of a contract to construct a pedestrian undercrossing with stairs and accessible ramps to provide direct access between the platforms and parking lots, and an easy connection to the various bus stops. The project includes extension of both platforms over the undercrossing, modifications to the west parking lot and bus transfer facility to accommodate the crossing stairway and ramps and relocation of existing ticket vending machines and passenger information equipment.

The low bidder, Adams/Mallory, has performed similar Metrolink station work for SCRRA and the City of Irvine. The bid amount is \$4,695,418 and a 10 percent contingency is recommended. Funding for construction of the Orange Depot Pedestrian Crossing is provided by Caltrans under agreement with SCRRA.

LOS ANGELES CHINATOWN DEVELOPMENTS

BLOSSOM PLAZA

Final plans on Blossom Plaza were approved last November, and construction on a 262-unit mixed-use project is set to start by the third quarter of 2008, said Elizabeth Borstein, the project manager. Blossom Plaza aims to transform the site of the former Little Joe's restaurant at 900 N. Broadway in Chinatown and connect the Chinatown Metro Gold Line station to Broadway.

The \$170 million effort would hold two residential towers with the apartments, 43,000 square feet of retail space, and a 372-car garage, roughly half of which would be available for public, paid parking. The development would also include a 17,500-square-foot plaza for cultural events. It would offer 20 percent affordable housing.

CAPITAL MILLING BUILDING

There has been no movement on plans to convert a former grain mill and silo at 1231 N. Spring St. Developer Steve Riboli previously said the project would include a 60,000-square-foot structure with 40 apartments and 25,000 square feet of retail. The development would be linked to the nearby Blossom Plaza in Chinatown, another mixed-use complex, through public space. The revamped Capital Milling Building would be the southern anchor of the four-phase Riverview Project at the Cornfield, expected to create up to 300 residential units. The Riboli family also owns San Antonio Winery north of Chinatown.

CHINATOWN LOFTS

The Los Angeles City Council recently approved plans for a 318-unit condominium project at 1101 N. Main St., southeast of Los Angeles State Historic Park. The project would total 392,522 square feet and stand six stories tall. It would include market-rate condos and 18 commercial-residential "flex" units, with 618 parking spaces, ground-floor retail and green space. The developer, Thomas A. Patty, has said he hopes to open the project in three years.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Downtown News*]

PASSENGER TRAIN UPDATES by CHARLES VARNES

On February 20, 2008, Amtrak submitted its Grant and Legislative Request for Fiscal Year 2009. The railroad is requesting a total of \$1.671 billion, which includes \$525 million for operations, \$801 million for capital, and \$345 million for debt service. The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development held a hearing on Amtrak Fiscal 2009 funding on February 26. President Bush's budget proposal for FY 2009, submitted to Congress on February 4, requests \$800 million for Amtrak and \$100 million for state matching grants for intercity passenger rail capital projects to address their transportation goals and priorities.

AMTRAK NEWS

National Train Day

To raise awareness of the vital role rail plays in our nation's transportation system, Amtrak will celebrate its first annual National Train Day during six weeks of celebrations culminating on Saturday, May 10, 2008. That day is the 139th anniversary of the driving of the gold spike at Promontory, Utah.

Amtrak's celebration of National Train Day will begin six weeks prior to May 10 with special promotions, events, partnerships and an advertising campaign. On May 10 Amtrak will host

events at four of its largest stations, Washington, New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, where visitors may take part in a variety of activities including live musical performances, exhibits, trip planning, VIP appearances and trip giveaways.

Pullman Porters Honored

Amtrak, in partnership with the A. Philip Randolph Museum, hosted a ceremony at Washington Union Station on Feb. 25 to honor the contributions of the legendary Pullman Porters to the nation's railroads.

In addition to that event, Amtrak will also host receptions for retired Porters in the Midwest in Chicago in May, and in San Francisco in August for former Porters in the West.

Summer Timetable

The Amtrak Summer Timetable is planned to become effective on May 12, 2008.

INTERCITY TRAINS

Coast Starlight

On Jan. 19, 2008, a massive landslide buried two sections of the Union Pacific's main line between Klamath Falls and Eugene Oregon in 20 feet of mud, snow, and downed trees, disrupting the operation of the *Coast Starlight*.

The line between those locations is the UP Cascade Subdivision. The site of the slide is about 20 miles southeast of Oakridge. In the area of the slide the track makes a horseshoe curve followed by about four miles of generally straight track and then another horseshoe curve as it descends from Cascade Summit to the town.

The northbound *Starlight* (Tr. No. 14, Jan. 18) was taken back to Klamath Falls and its passengers were placed aboard buses for Portland where they boarded the equipment from the southbound *Starlight* (Tr. No. 11, Jan. 19) which then operated as Tr. No. 14 (Jan. 18) to Seattle.

Passengers aboard the southbound *Starlight* (Tr. No. 11, Jan. 19) were transferred to buses at Portland for Klamath Falls. There they boarded the equipment from Tr. No. 14 (Jan. 18) which then operated from there to Los Angeles as Tr. No. 11 (Jan. 19).

Tr. No 14 originating at Los Angeles on Jan. 19 through 22, operated as a full service train (Coaches, Diner, Lounge, and Sleeping Cars) to Klamath Falls. Tr. No 11 originating at Seattle on Jan. 20 through 22 operated to Portland with only coaches and a lounge car. A bus bridge was operated between Klamath Falls and Portland. Sleeping car passengers who traveled aboard the bus received a proportional refund of their accommodation charge.

Tr. No. 14 which originated in Los Angeles on Jan. 23 terminated at Klamath Falls with a bus bridge to Eugene. Tr. No. 11 which originated in Seattle on Jan. 23 and 24 terminated at Eugene with a bus bridge to Klamath Falls.

From Jan. 24 through Jan. 31 Tr. No 14 was canceled, with no alternate transportation provided. From Jan. 25 through Feb. 1 Tr. No. 11 was canceled, with no alternate transportation provided.

On Feb. 6 northbound *Starlight* service was resumed between Los Angeles and Sacramento, with southbound service resuming the next day. The train began operating with one locomotive, one coach-baggage car, two coaches, and a *Sight-seer Lounge* offering the standard café menu. The train contin-

ues to be all-reserved, and offers checked baggage service.

On Feb. 29 Amtrak restored *Starlight* service between Seattle and Los Angeles when it began operating *Thruway* motor coach service between Portland and Sacramento. A Sacramento to Portland *Thruway* motor coach began operating the next day. The motorcoaches make stops in both directions at Sacramento, Medford, Eugene, Salem and Portland, Ore. They will also make meal and rest stops to accommodate passengers along the route. The *Thruway* motorcoach will connect with the Chicago-Portland Empire Builder at Portland, also. The motor coach operation is currently scheduled to operate northbound through April 20, and southbound through April 21.

The *Starlight* is not operating between Seattle and Portland. Train service between those cities is being offered aboard *Amtrak Cascades* trains.

WESTERN CORRIDORS

A third rebuilt Superliner coach for *Capitol/San Joaquin* service was moved from Beech Grove to Chicago on Tr. No. 851 on March 7, and then from Chicago to Oakland on Tr. No 5 on March 8. The car is numbered 34943, and named *Oak Grove*. Its former number was 34043.

The first two rebuilt coaches were received in July 2007. Number 34953, named *Pacific Grove*, and 34981, named *Pleasant Grove*. Their former numbers were 34053 and 34081 respectively.

All the cars are *Superliner* Is.

Pacific Surfliner

On weekends from Saturday, April 12 through Sunday, May 4, *Pacific Surfliner* schedules will be modified to accommodate a bridge replacement project north of Oceanside and some road crossing replacements. Also, on Friday evenings Tr. Nos. 595 and 796, will be replaced with buses between San Diego and Los Angeles.

MIDWEST CORRIDORS

Hiawatha Service

On February 11, 2008, Amtrak began offering a *Thruway Motor Coach Connection* between Milwaukee and Houghton, Mich. via Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Green Bay, and Escanaba. The *Thruway* service connects with *Hiawatha Service* trains and the *Empire Builder* at Milwaukee. Bus No. 8539 departs Milwaukee at 8:45 p.m. and arrives in Houghton at 7:25 a.m. Bus No.8532 departs Houghton at 11:05 p.m. and arrives in Milwaukee at 7:45 a.m.

DEPOT DOINGS

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. The former Santa Fe depot reopened to travelers on March 3. The Historical and Pioneer Society and the San Bernardino Railroad Historical Society are providing station hosts to open the depot for morning and evening *Southwest Chiefs* passengers.

SEATTLE, Wash. The city of Seattle has purchased the historic King Street station from the BNSF Railway for \$10. The purchase will permit continued restoration and seismic reinforcement of the building. Currently, the estimated cost of the project is about \$30 million. It is expected to be completed in 2011. The depot is served by the *Coast Starlight*, *Amtrak Cascades*, and *Sounder* commuter trains. Sound Transit's light rail trains and King County Metro transit buses stop across the

street at the now-restored Union Station where Sound Transit is headquartered

[Info. from Ken Ruben, Ed Von Nordeck]

METRO CENTERS CONVERT TO TAP CARDS

With a handy “how-to” brochure, customer service agents handed out Transit Access Pass (TAP) cards to customers lining up at Metro Customer Service Centers to buy February passes. The transition from paper monthly, weekly, and Zones 1 and 2 passes to the plastic blue TAP card on sale to the general public marks another milestone to the progression of the Universal Fare System (UFS), said Jane Matsumoto, deputy executive officer of Metro.

The TAP card enables a customer to travel the Metro system, switching seamlessly between rail and bus and ultimately other transit systems. After purchasing the Metro pass, the only thing a patron must do to “Go Metro” is tap the TAP card on the stand-alone validators (SAVs), ticket vending machines (TVMs), or bus fareboxes carrying the blue circular Transit Access Pass smart card reader.

The card is valid for unlimited rides just like the paper pass, but can be re-loaded and re-used again many times. When it’s time to buy another pass, simply pay as usual and the pass will automatically be added to the card. There is no need for a new card when buying a pass because the pass information is loaded onto the existing TAP card.

Valid on Metro Rail and Metro buses, TAP is a regional program to be implemented for all participating operators, which in February included Antelope Valley, Culver City, Foothill Transit, Gardena, LADOT, Long Beach, Montebello, Norwalk, Santa Clarita, Torrance Transit, and Metrolink commuter rail. For more information about TAP, call 1-866-TAPTOGO.

URBAN RAIL TRANSIT by **DICK FINLEY**
LOS ANGELES METRO RAIL
RIDERSHIP

January 2008	Red Line	Blue Line	Green Line	Gold Line
Weekday Ave.	124,358	69,731	34,979	19,000
Saturday Ave.	82,786	45,393	19,939	12,146
Sunday Ave.	72,006	41,160	16,206	9,658
Monthly Total	3,427,051	1,971,491	928,710	513,696

FINANCIAL STABILITY

The Financial Stability Policy adopted by the Board in January 2008 requires that capital projects in excess of \$5 million be presented separately for life-of-project approval prior to inclusion in the annual budget. At the Board Meeting on Feb. 28, three rail related projects were presented:

- Modernize the elevators and escalators at the Civic Center Station – LOP \$12,000,000.
- Replace the Blue Line power sub-stations – LOP \$82,200,000.
- Replace the Blue Line overhead catenary systems – LOP \$13,000,000.

GOLD LINE EASTSIDE EXTENSION

The Gold Line extension from Downtown to East Los Angeles is 75 percent complete. Crews are building guideways for the trains and laying track, said a Metro spokesman. The First Street Bridge (from Mission Rd. to Vignes St.) was closed until Feb. 28, 2008. Construction of canopies and platforms is

underway for the East Los Angeles Civic Center station. The \$899 million light rail line will extend the Gold Line from Los Angeles Union Station across the 101 Freeway, creating eight new stations and culminating at Atlantic Blvd. Officials expect to complete the project in 2009, and estimate the extension could carry 23,000 riders a day by 2020.

GOLD LINE FOOTHILL EXTENSION

The Southern California Association of Governments and the San Bernardino Associated Governments are funding a study to evaluate light rail connections from the proposed Foothill Extension terminus in Montclair to the expanding LA/Ontario International Airport. The study will identify potential routes and station locations, conduct traffic analyses, and provide an overall land use and transit-oriented development opportunities within the study area.

EXPOSITION LIGHT RAIL

Heavy construction continues on the \$808 million Metro Expo Line, which will connect downtown Los Angeles to Culver City. Currently crews are working on a 2,700-foot long, 25-foot deep trench, expected to be completed by September. and are installing a water line on Exposition Blvd. Last September, state officials approved full funding for the project. The eight-mile light rail line will share two stops with the Blue Line and will add nine more stations. A second phase of the project that would extend the Expo Line to Santa Monica is in the planning stage.

METRO ROUTE MAPS

Two separate train connections were proposed in Feb. by Metro. One would zigzag along existing freight rail tracks from the existing Green Line station near LAX, bypass downtown Inglewood by using railroad property along Prairie and Florence avenues, and then go north on Crenshaw Blvd. Trains would then use the Expo Line, now starting construction, for their connection on into downtown Los Angeles.

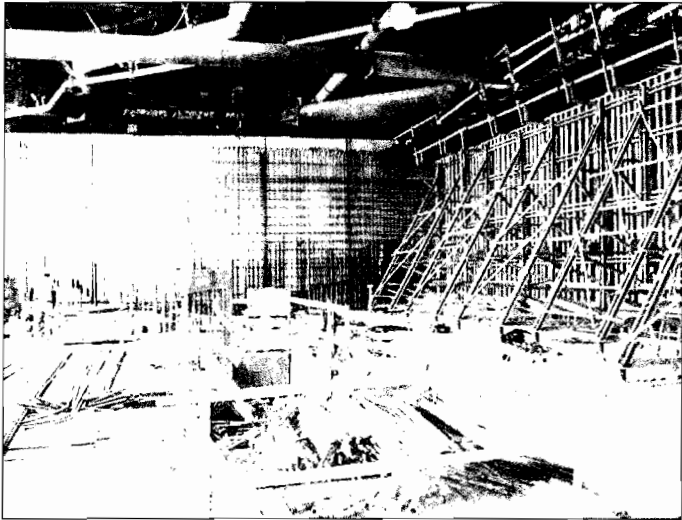
The other proposal would link the Expo, new Crenshaw, and Blue Line, which all end at 7th and Flower, with the Gold Line and its Eastside Extension with a “Metro Connector.” This line would run north on Figueroa St. from the underground terminal at Seventh St., and traverse the Civic Center on one of four east-west streets to connect with the Gold Line tracks near Little Tokyo.

The planning process would determine whether tracks should be buried, on the surface or on bridges, Metro says.

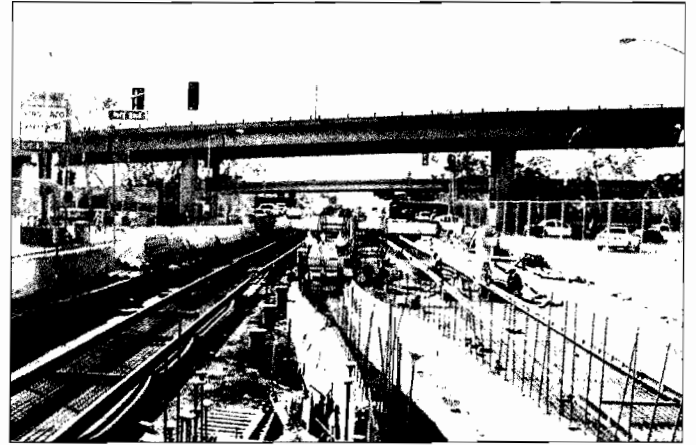
PORTLAND, OREGON

MAX EASTSIDE PRECINCT

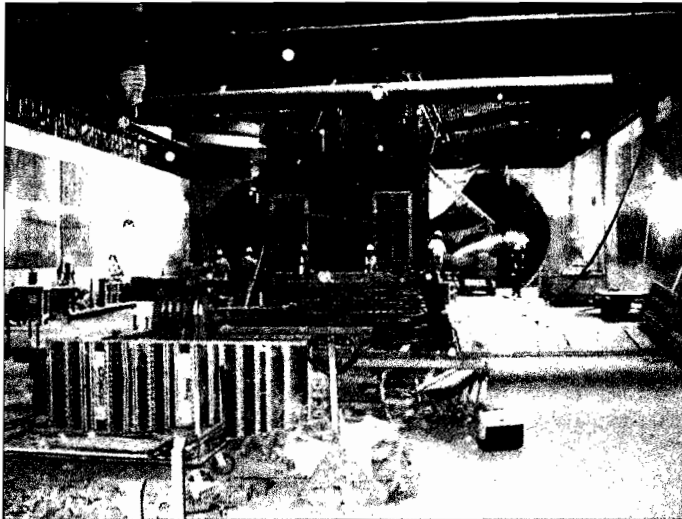
After months of bickering about safety on the MAX light-rail system, Gresham and TriMet have agreed to create a police precinct to address the problem. By April 1 the city and transit agency will open an eastside precinct of TriMet’s Transit Police Division. The officers will spent 70 percent of their time patrolling trains. The 10 officers, including a supervisor, meet the staffing level that Gresham police have said would help end what they call widespread lawlessness on the light rail system. [Info. from *The Oregonian* via Caroline Hobson]



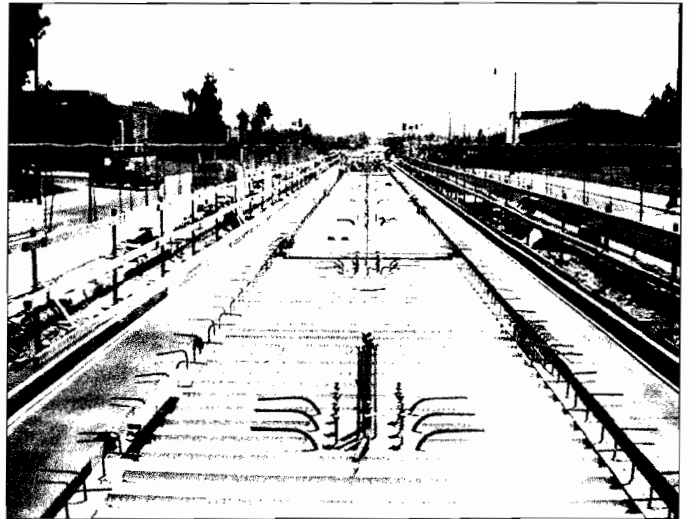
Concrete for upper mezzanine level walls are underway at the 1st/Boyle Mariachi Plaza Station. All lower walls at the track level have been completed.
Photo by Metro



Maravilla Station construction at 3rd/Ford is well underway.
Photo by Metro



Work on the track level equipment rooms has begun at the 1st/Soto Station.
Photo by Metro



Installing pole foundations on the East LA Civic Center Station platform at 3rd/Mednick has begun.
Photo by Metro



Indiana Station construction near 3rd St. is well underway.
Photo by Metro



The Overhead Contact System and station canopy are being installed at the Atlantic Station at Pomona/Atlantic Blvds.
Photo by Metro