

# WHEEL CLICKS

Pacific Railroad Society Inc.

JULY 2008

## BROADWAY REVITALIZATION

In the effort to help get a streetcar for Broadway, in April, Los Angeles City Councilman José Huizar led a delegation of Downtown stakeholders to Portland and Seattle to observe and learn about the streetcar systems in those cities. The streetcar effort would be a later-phase addition (possibly a decade down the line) in Huizar's Bringing Back Broadway Initiative, which was announced in January. The goal is to enliven the historic corridor between Third and Olympic Blvd. and help reinvigorate some of the street's dozen former movie palaces and surrounding businesses.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Downtown News*]

## STREETCAR WORKSHOP

by JOHN ULLOTH & KEN RUBEN

Street Smart: Streetcars and Cities in the 21st Century was attended by 250 people on Thursday, May 22, at the Orpheum Theatre at 9th and Broadway in downtown Los Angeles. Five panel discussions included: Streetcars 101, Streetcars 202, Comparisons of Historic Trolleys and Modern Streetcars, and Local Case Studies. The workshop was attended by many members of local and statewide rail and transit advocacy groups. Notable guests were Steve Brye, Project Manager for Metro, and Carol Schatz, President and CEO of the Central City Association.

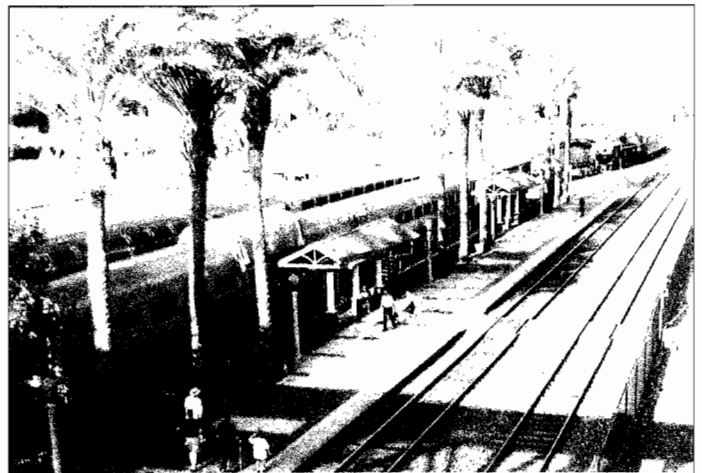
Workshop organizer, Gloria Ohland of Reconnecting America, said she doesn't care about transportation – streetcars are about improving the urban quality of life. I.B.I. (consultants for the previous L.A. streetcar study) said "the route they keep coming back to" is along Broadway, with potential branches westward to L.A. Live/Nokia Theater or the proposed Grand Ave. redevelopment. Michael Powell from Portland, Oregon, told a story about convincing owners of auto parts stores to pay for a Business Improvement District (local tax) for the streetcar, telling them trolley construction would take two weeks, and their property would be worth 50 percent more. Construction did take two weeks but their property was worth 300 percent more afterward.

The entire program was videotaped and the authors answered questions on stage. One of the panelists, former Portland Transportation Commissioner Charles Hales, invoked Ken Ruben's knowledge of what streetcars operated on Broadway. Bob Henry of the Port of Los Angeles Harbor Commission (i.e., Waterfront Red Car Line) talked about all of the skeptics who disappeared after saying the Pacific Electric car wouldn't work, yet some 10,000 people showed up on opening day in July 2003. He talked about building an historic lower floor vehicle and extensions to the current network.

Jolene Hayes, Supervising Transportation Analyst for the



*The PRS booth at Fullerton Railroad Days on May 3 and 4, 2008.* Photo by John Ulloth



*Railcars and booths are seen from the Fullerton Station bridge before the start of Fullerton RR Days.* Photo by John Ulloth

City of Irvine, made a presentation about a modern trolley for the Great Park (former Marine Naval Air Station at El Toro), a "multi-model" reuse with paving for cars, and a modern trolley for the Santa Ana to Garden Grove portion of the abandoned PE right-of-way.

## LOS ANGELES COUNTY RIDERS

During the month of April 2008, the average number of weekday riders traveling on trains going to, from, or within Los Angeles County, other than on Amtrak, was 315,016. This was a decrease of 9,026 riders per day from March or about 3 percent.



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### PRS NEWS — ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

July 3 Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., Pacific Railroad Museum, Bonita & Monte Vista Aves., San Dimas.  
 Thu.  
 July 5, 12, Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Bonita & Monte Vista Aves., San Dimas.  
 19, 26  
 Sats. Committee meeting: July 26.  
 July 5, 12, Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, Saunders Yard, Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular  
 19, 26 Day: 5, 19; Extra day: 12, 26; Com. Meeting: 19.  
 Sats.  
 July 11 Membership meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.  
 Fri.  
 Aug. 1 Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.  
 Fri.  
 Aug. 2, 9, Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Bonita & Monte Vista Aves., San Dimas.  
 16, 23, 30  
 Sats. Committee meeting: August 23.  
 Aug. 2, 9, Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, Saunders Yard, Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular  
 16, 23, 30 Day: 2, 16; Extra day: 9, 23, 30; Com. Meeting: 16.  
 Sats.

Aug. 8 Membership meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.  
 Fri.  
 Aug. 15 Slide Night at Saunders Yard, 7:30 p.m., Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Everyone welcome.  
 Fri.

### MEETING PROGRAMS

by RUSS DAVIES

July 11: ERHA of Southern California President Al Fishel will present slides of steam and diesel railroading taken by Jack Ferrier and Ira Swett in the 1940s and 50s. This will be a good one! Be there, and bring slide or digital briefs!

August 8: Traction Night, Switzerland! See interurbans entering major cities on streetcar tracks, old 1920s box cars still in service, electric railroading in depots with giant train sheds, and major streetcar systems (called trams) still in service, and growing! Switzerland is the world's biggest electric train set! Slides from my visits in the early 90s. Be there, and bring slide briefs! (For digital briefs, please contact Russ Davies, 310-454-0046, at least two weeks prior to meeting date, so we can accommodate you.)

### MEMBERSHIP REPORT

by VIRGINIA GRUPP

There were about 30 late renewals last month with membership numbers starting at 417.

### TEHACHAPI TRAGEDY

by MARGO PETROS

On Friday, June 13, 2008, Tehachapi City officials announced that at 3:00 a.m. the ex-S.P. station, which had been undergoing restoration, caught fire and was essentially destroyed with only the east wall stranding with braces before demolition. An arson investigation is underway.

As reported in the June issue of *Wheel Clicks*, the renovated station was to open this summer as a Southern Pacific Museum and Visitor Center. No information as to the future of the site was available at *Wheel Clicks*' press time.

### CALTRAIN NEWS

by MIKE GONDRON

The big news at Caltrain right now is the removal from service of 14 cars due to cracks found in the truck bolster, which supports the car's suspension. After discovering the crack on one bolster, additional cars were inspected, resulting in finding 14 defective bolsters. The fact that 14 bolsters were found defective overnight raises questions about Caltrain's inspection procedures. Be that as it may, it leaves Caltrain with a severe car shortage. Many trains, which were running at capacity with five cars, now have been reduced to four, resulting in many standees, and making it difficult, if not impossible, for conductors to check tickets.

Many of the defective cars are wheelchair accessible, so to accommodate wheelchair passengers, luggage racks have been removed from the luggage cars to accommodate the wheelchairs. Also in many cases, the wheelchairs will now have to be on and off loaded by manual lift, which will result in longer station dwell times.

It isn't known how long these cars will be out of service, but it certainly will be no quick fix. In the meantime, Caltrain is contacting other commuter railroads in search of any spare cars they might be able to borrow.

In less controversial news, on May 18, Caltrain ran its annual Bay to Breakers Special for the San Francisco footrace. Actually, this year two trains were run. The first Special ran deadhead to California Avenue, leaving there at 6:24 a.m., making all stops to San Bruno, then running nonstop to San Francisco, arriving at 7:25 a.m. The second Special left San Jose at 6:17 a.m., made all stops to Redwood City, then made stops only at Hillsdale and Millbrae, arriving San Francisco at 7:30 a.m. Because people come back at different times, no southbound Specials were run.

On May 21, Caltrain held a Rail Safety Relay to try to call attention to safety around trains and tracks. The event began in San Jose at 7:50 a.m. on Train #225, when a Caltrain conductor, who shall remain nameless, boarded the train with a "torch" in the form of railroad crossbucks. At Mountain View, the torch was passed to a San Mateo County Sheriff's Office detective. He rode to San Bruno, where the torch was passed to a local school principal. She rode to San Francisco, where everyone was met by Caltrain Board Chair Jim Hartnett, who awarded them gold medals. Caltrain staff also handed out safety brochures during the relay.

The fact that there was little advance notice and media attention surrounding this event leaves doubt as to how successful it was, but I guess their intentions were good.

#### PASSENGER TRAIN UPDATES by CHARLES VARNES

On June 11, 2008, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 6003, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act, by a vote of 311 to 104. The Bill authorizes appropriations for Amtrak for Fiscal Years 2009-2013.

##### AMTRAK USA RAIL PASS

In May Amtrak replaced its Explore America fares with the USA Rail Pass. The new USA Rail Pass offers either 15 or 30 days of unlimited coach travel throughout the entire United States, or within the western, eastern, or northeast regions of the country. The western region extends from the Pacific Coast to Chicago and New Orleans and includes all destinations on the City of New Orleans route. The eastern region overlaps the western region extending from Wolf Point, Mont.; Denver; Albuquerque; and El Paso to the Atlantic Coast. The Northeast region extends from Buffalo to the Atlantic Coast and northward from New Port News, Va.

The fares are offered on a peak and off-peak basis and range from \$399.00 to \$599.00 for a National Pass. Western and eastern region passes range from \$329.00 to \$459.00. The Northeastern Rail Pass ranges from \$149.50 to \$299.00. Travelers may upgrade from coach seats to Business Class or sleeping car accommodations for an additional charge.

The USA Rail Pass is sold on line at the Amtrak web site. Information about the Pass can be found on the "Hot Deals" page of the Amtrak web site.

##### INTERCITY TRAINS

###### Southwest Chief

The *Southwest Chief* was detoured from West Riverside to the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal (LAUS) via the Union Pacific Los Angeles Subdivision on May 25, 2008. The detour was operated because of an absolute work window on all tracks from 4:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., which was required for a

signal cut over and CP replacement including signals at Bandini, MP 149.8, on the BNSF San Bernardino Subdivision. Because the Fullerton stop was missed, passengers destined for that station were carried to LAUS where they took the first available *Pacific Surfliner* train from there to Fullerton. The *Chief* ran from West Riverside to LAUS in 1 hour and 5 minutes, departing at 8:36 a.m. and arriving at 9:41 a.m. Its scheduled running time via Fullerton is 2 hours and 22 minutes, which includes 1 hour and 4 minutes schedule recovery time.

##### Southwest Chief On-Time Performance

May 2008: 46.8% – Last 12 Months: 70.3%

Primary Cause of Delays – May 2008

Track and Signals: 37.9%

97.0% on Burlington Northern Santa Fe

2.1% on New Mexico D.O.T.

0.7% on Kansas City Terminal

Train Interference: 31.1%

96.4% on Burlington Northern Santa Fe

2.1% on New Mexico D.O.T.

0.9% on Kansas City Terminal

Passenger: 15.2%

91.6% on Burlington Northern Santa Fe

4.0% on Kansas City Terminal

3.2% on New Mexico D.O.T.

Top three causes of delays, in percent of delay minutes, may not add to 100%.

##### Coast Starlight

Amtrak relaunched its *Coast Starlight* in June. In its press release announcing the relaunch, Amtrak stated, "new features and amenities include at-seat meal options for Coach passengers and new arcade rooms equipped with arcade-style video games and board games. Sleeping Car passengers will experience a refurbished Parlour Car with enhanced services such as alternative dining, daily wine tasting with regional wines, a specialty coffee bar and a newly redesigned theater with 50-inch plasma HD monitors. The redesigned theater features family and classic movies three times a day. Parlour Car menu items include regional cuisine such as Pacific Bay scallops and Santa Maria beef short-ribs. Complimentary library and board games are also available in the Car."

Ceremonies were held in Los Angeles and Seattle on June 10 to celebrate the relaunch.

The northbound and southbound *Coast Starlights* were scheduled to operate between Los Angeles and Sacramento via Tehachapi and the San Joaquin Valley on June 22. The detour was required to allow for a bridge replacement and other work in the Santa Barbara area, which necessitated an absolute 12-hour work window on the Union Pacific Santa Barbara Subdivision.

When the detour was announced, Amtrak intended to operate the trains without any passenger stops between Los Angeles and Bakersfield. However, 10 days before the detour, Amtrak placed a Los Angeles-Bakersfield route segment, with a Thruway Bus return to Los Angeles, for sale on its web site.

##### Coast Starlight On-Time Performance

May 2008: 85.1% – Last 12 Months: 78.1%

Primary Cause of Delays – May 2008

Train Interference: 41.0%

85.2% on Union Pacific

8.0% on Burlington Northern Santa Fe

6.8% on S.C.R.R.A. (Moorpark to LAUS)

Track and Signals: 38.9%

93.7% on Union Pacific

6.1% on Burlington Northern Santa Fe

0.1% on S.C.R.R.A. (Moorpark to LAUS)

Operational: 5.4%

77.9% on Union Pacific

11.3% on S.C.R.R.A. (Moorpark to LAUS)

10.8% on Burlington Northern Santa Fe

Top three causes of delays, in percent of delay minutes, may not add to 100%.

#### Texas Eagle

The *Texas Eagle* operated in Illinois from May 23-31 and June 16-24 via a detour route that bypassed the Springfield station because of a major Union Pacific Railroad track project in Springfield. The project included installing 10,000 new concrete ties and replacing 25 road crossings in Springfield, Ill. Carlinville and Lincoln station passengers traveling on the *Eagle* in Illinois during that time were provided alternate transportation from those stations to Springfield.

#### MIDWEST CORRIDORS

##### Chicago-St. Louis

From May 23-31 and June 16-24 Chicago-St. Louis *Lincoln Service* was adjusted because of a major Union Pacific Railroad track project in Springfield, Ill. which affected the *Texas Eagle*, also.

During the first phase of the work, Tr. No. 301, the morning Lincoln Service departure from Chicago to St. Louis; and Tr. No. 306, the evening Lincoln Service departure from St. Louis to Chicago were canceled. Passengers were directed to the four other round-trips on the corridor as alternate transportation from May 23 through May 31, including Tr. No. 300, the early morning Lincoln Service departure from St. Louis to Chicago, and Trains 305 & 307, the evening Lincoln Service departures from Chicago to St. Louis, which operated normally.

Tr. Nos. 302 and 304, morning and mid-afternoon Lincoln Service departures from St. Louis to Chicago, and Tr. No. 303, the mid-morning Lincoln Service departure from Chicago to St. Louis operated on modified schedules during the period May 23 through May 31. Tr. Nos. 302 and 303 operated between Bloomington-Normal and Chicago and were replaced by chartered motorcoaches between Bloomington-Normal and St. Louis, making scheduled stops in Lincoln, Springfield, Carlinville and Alton.

[Info. from Ken Ruben, Ed Von Nordeck]

#### HIGH SPEED RAIL IN ARGENTINA

The government of Argentina has awarded a contract worth more than \$1.48 billion to a consortium led by Alstom Transport for building a high speed rail system. The 435-mile line will link the cities of Buenos Aires, Rosario, and Cordoba. Using TGV technology, it will operate at speeds from 160 to 186 miles per hour, and involve upgrading and electrifying existing rights-of-way. It will be built in two phases.

[Info. from *Railway Age*]

#### S. CALIF. COMMUTER RAIL

by DICK FINLEY

Note: April ridership was listed in the June *Wheel Clicks*.

##### ORANGE STATION

The Orange Station was to begin in June on construction of a new safer and convenient pedestrian crossing of the tracks. The grade-separated crossing will have stairs as well as ramps accessible for the disabled. The \$8 million Caltrans-funded project involves extension of both platforms, modifications to the west parking lot and bus transfer facility, and relocation of existing Ticket Vending Machines. The new crossing will be decorated by public art commissioned by the City of Orange. Construction is expected to be completed by February 2009.

##### NORTHRIDGE STATION

The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) is reconstructing the southern half of the parking lot and building a new sidewalk from the station to Parthenia Street. The construction began on May 19, 2008, and is expected to take about one year to complete.

[Info. from *Metrolink Matters*]

##### ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

OCTA board members awarded \$100,000 grants in March to Los Alamitos, Seal Beach, Westminster, Fountain Valley, Costa Mesa, and Newport Beach. The grants will fund studies linking the cities' business and tourism centers to Metrolink stations. Cities will later compete for additional funding out of a \$25.4 million pot. The money comes from Measure M, which funds wide-ranging transportation projects with a countywide half-cent sales tax. Prior to this award, 28 cities received \$100,000 grants to study potential improvements.

Some proposals include:

- A Tri-City Trolley that could link residents and visitors to attractions in San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point and San Clemente. Details of the trolley plan are under review, including the route (there are three proposals), cost to riders and funding. The trolley would run every day at 20-minute intervals from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and at 30-minute intervals from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
- A shuttle to take patrons from Aliso Viejo Town Center to Metrolink stations in Laguna Niguel and Irvine.
- A dedicated right-of-way to link rail to business centers and later the Great Park.

##### ORANGE COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

ANAHEIM is banking on a multilayered transportation hub to pull traffic off the streets around the city's Platinum Triangle development of more than 18,000 residential units. In the next eight years, commuters would be able to catch a bus, trolley, train or taxi from the hub through the proposed ARCTIC transportation center. The center also could be linked to John Wayne Airport and Ontario Airport and eventually have a magnetic levitation train to haul tourists to Las Vegas in 90 minutes. Some officials have also pushed for a public-private partnership to add a monorail in the downtown area.

IRVINE has plans to build Heritage Fields, a proposed district near the train station and the Great Park.

OCTA's plan to devote \$382.5 million for Metrolink expansion, has cities preparing for activity around their transportation hubs by studying how to connect train commuters to popular destinations.

BUENA PARK has tied its new Metrolink station to a \$90

million transit-oriented development project steps from the tracks. The station recycles a former industrial site next to nearly 100 newly built townhomes catering to commuter residents. The project is at the end of development with fewer than six units unsold.

FULLERTON has SoCoWalk, a transit-oriented project (TOP) comprising townhomes, live-work units and lofts. This went up a few years ago adjacent to the depot to attract younger commuters. The project has a total of 110 homes, with 15 under construction.

ORANGE's vision for its transit hub in Old Towne includes connectivity and economic prosperity. The Depot Walk project of 32 units is near the station. The city, along with the OCTA, is working to build a pedestrian undercrossing at Santa Fe Depot that will bridge the station to distinct Old Towne.

PLACENTIA has no current plans for redevelopment around the proposed Metrolink station. The city's plan has not been completed.

SANTA ANA recently filed plans for a \$300 million streetcar line that would shuttle people through town and attract development. More than 100 lofts, some built and others in progress, are located near the Metrolink station. The Santiago Street Lofts along Santa Ana Blvd. were dubbed the first TOP in Orange County four years ago. The streetcar, officials say, could be a way to reel in developers to build high-rise towers, condos and hotels at vacant lots near downtown.

STANTON is studying building, with state Department of Transportation funds, a Metrolink station on the Pacific Electric right-of-way, the rail line that cuts diagonally through town from the northwest. Tentative plans include building a transit-oriented retail development around the proposed station, anchored by the five acres owned by the OCTA near the Katella Ave. and Beach Blvd. intersection.

[Info. from *Orange County Register*]

**ECO-FRIENDLY LOCOMOTIVE**

Metrolink celebrated Earth Day April 22, 2008, by unveiling a new eco-friendly locomotive, the first of 15 "green" trains that will begin circulating on Southern California lines during the next 15 months. "They'll be coming in one per month," said Metrolink spokeswoman Denise Tyrrell. Metrolink displayed the two-story locomotive at Taylor Yard in Los Angeles.

The Orange County Transportation Authority bought the 15 locomotives for \$1.9 million each. The authority bought seven of the 15 locomotives for \$21 million total, which includes a fee for spare parts and other costs, said Joel Zlotnik, an OCTA spokesman. The transportation authority will integrate all of the new locomotives by 2010 as part of the plan to expand Metrolink service.

Called the MotivePower MPXpress, the commuter locomotive emits far fewer emissions than a typical locomotive – 42% less nitrogen oxide gas, 70% less carbon monoxide and 60% less hydrocarbons, she said. The new locomotive also has a stop-start engine, similar to a hybrid vehicle, which reduces the amount of time the train spends idling.

"The train will idle, but it significantly shortens the idling time," she said. "This is extremely important to people who live near train yards and stations, who complain that trains idle for hours and hours because they're so difficult to start and restart.

The new locomotives will also broaden Metrolink's passenger capacity, having the power to pull 10 rail cars at a time, which is four more than the current capability, Tyrrell said. Ten feet longer than current Metrolink locomotives, the "green" locomotive can pull 1,200 more passengers.

Incorporating the 15 new locomotives into the fleet will cost Metrolink \$1.9 million per train. For every new train that goes into circulation, officials will temporarily remove an older train from service, in order to be refurbished and given a cleaner and more energy-efficient engine, she said.

The train added Tuesday brings the total number of locomotives in the fleet to 40, with 14 more on the way.

[Info. from *Glendale News Press & Orange County Register*]

**PROPOSED PERRIS VALLEY LINE**

Residents along the rail line and around UC Riverside had concerns that the new Spruce Station was too close to a proposed UCR station. Under the new plan up for a vote before the Riverside County Transportation Commission, the line will extend farther north and connect to a BNSF line near Citrus, and then turn into downtown Riverside. The proposed Spruce station will move to Palmyrita Ave., which will be \$4.6 million cheaper but add about a mile to the proposed extension.

[Info. from *The Press Enterprise*]

**URBAN RAIL TRANSIT**

by **DICK FINLEY**

**LOS ANGELES METRO RAIL**

**RIDERSHIP**

	Red Line	Blue Line	Green Line	Gold Line
April 2008				
Weekday Ave.	136,736	77,386	38,941	22,169
Saturday Ave.	91,972	50,142	22,968	15,107
Sunday Ave.	74,116	42,523	17,989	11,490
Monthly Total	3,672,546	2,000,073	1,018,921	594,108

**DOWNTOWN REGIONAL CONNECTOR**

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) has narrowed down plans for its proposed Downtown Regional Connector (DRC) to two options – a mostly level light rail line or a subway. Both alternatives would fill the approximately two-mile public transportation gap between the Financial District and Little Tokyo on the east side of Downtown.

The street level option is estimated at approximately \$650 million, while the subway could cost \$800 million or more. While the project could take a decade to come to fruition, plans are slowly moving forward. Officials said they chose the two preferred routes based on public input and an analysis of ridership potential within Downtown Los Angeles.

The DRC would link the Gold Line, which connects Pasadena to LAUS; the upcoming Gold Line Eastside Extension, which will continue the route through East L.A., with completion expected next year; the Blue Line, which runs between Long Beach and a station at Seventh and Flower streets; and the future Expo Line, which will also feature a stop at Seventh and Flower before stretching west to Culver City.

Metro officials plan to finalize their report on preferred routing options for the DRC this summer, and will seek approval from the Metro Board to move forward with the project in Sept. If Metro approves continuing the study, officials can begin analyzing environmental impacts, which could take two to three

years. They would also start looking for funding at that point. Completion is likely seven to 10 years away.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Downtown News*]

#### GOLD LINE FOOTHILL EXTENSION

Duarte has become the latest San Gabriel Valley municipality to gamble on the uncertain future of the Gold Line extension. An agreement approved by the City council in mid-May gives a developer exclusive rights to present plans for a 19-acre residential and retail project that would be centered on Duarte's proposed light-rail station.

Three industrial businesses currently occupy the site, part of a city redevelopment area at the northwest corner of Duarte Road and Highland Avenue, across from the City of Hope medical center. If built, the project could include 830 residential units, a hotel and a major retail center, according to a concept developed for the site in recent months. The council on May 13 approved a six-month exclusive agreement with Los Angeles-based Lowe Enterprises Real Estate Group.

Lowe Enterprises is developing the Block 36 project near neighboring Azusa's proposed Gold Line station and is working on plans for a major mixed-use project near the Red Line station in North Hollywood.

With the "exclusive negotiation agreement" with Lowe, Duarte joins a number of cities that have moved forward with transit-oriented projects around Gold Line stations that don't yet exist. Funding for the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension, which would run from Pasadena to Montclair, remains uncertain.

Duarte Councilman John Fasana, who sits on the Metro Board, said the city's pursuit of the transit projects was not just optimistic. "I think it's more than faith. I think it's sound planning principals," Fasana said.

#### Funding

Millions of dollars in federal funding could be released to help build the Foothill Extension under legislation signed June 6 by President Bush. The SAFETEA-LU Technical Corrections Act of 2008 includes language urging the Federal Transit Administration to "make the most favorable match possible" of federal dollars to local funds devoted to the project, according to Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Pasadena.

That favorable match could be up to 80 percent of the project's costs, or \$320 million, if the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and other local agencies can raise \$80 million, Schiff said. "This is good news for the San Gabriel Valley and the Inland Empire," he said. The Foothill Extension is listed as a "Tier 1 Strategic Unfunded" project in Metro's long-range transportation plan, set to be approved by Metro's Board of Directors in June.

[Foothill Extension info. from *Pasadena Star-News*]

#### GOLD LINE EASTSIDE EXTENSION

The following recent major accomplishments have occurred as of May 2008.

- The project is on time and within budget.
- Construction is over 80 percent complete.
- Over 3 million work hours have occurred since the start of construction in July 2004, without an accident requiring a single day-away from work.
- At-grade track and guideway work is approximately 86 percent complete and track installation is underway in both

tunnels.

- Underground construction of the West Portal, 1st/Boyle Station, 1st/Soto Station, and the East Portal has progressed to the point at which the temporary concrete street deck panels are being removed in phases from West-to-East: followed by street restoration that will be completed at the last location by mid-summer.

- Phase 1 (West Portal) and Phase 2 (1st/Boyle) have been completed and the start of Phase 3 (1st/Soto) is being postponed for one month to re-plan the work to perform utility relocations and also avoid conflicts with the upcoming Hollenbeck Police Station construction street closure.

#### PORTLAND, OREGON

##### NEW LIGHT-RAIL SPAN

The Willamette River Crossing Partnership recommended what it called a "most supported" alignment for the crossing, which is part of the new \$1 billion-plus Portland to Milwaukie light rail line. The bridge would cross the river just south of the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry on the east side and land on the west side between Southwest Meade and Sherman Streets. The western landing would provide access to the Oregon Health & Science University's South Waterfront property and to the aerial tram that ascends to the medical school's facilities on the hill.

The alignment puts the new bridge between the Marquam Bridge to the north and the Ross Island Bridge to the south. Final alignment approval is expected this summer, after which bridge design and engineering work would begin in earnest. Construction is tentatively scheduled for 2011-14. The bridge would go into service in 2015.

The cost of the overall project, including the bridge, is estimated at \$1.25 billion to \$1.4 billion. Of that, \$1 billion is known to be available. The federal government will provide up to \$750 million, and the Oregon Legislature has allocated \$250 million in state lottery bond money.

The light-rail extension, nearly seven miles long, is a joint project of the cities of Portland, Milwaukie and Oregon City, Clackamas and Multnomah counties, TriMet, Metro and the Oregon Department of Transportation.

#### GLADSTONE-MILWAUKIE TROLLEY TRAIL

Bikers and hikers would be able to walk from Gladstone to Milwaukie along a new Trolley Trail sometime in 2011, if plans presented to the board of commissioners at the end of April stay on track. The latest plans describe a disabled accessible trail of about six miles that would snake along the Willamette River on a path once used by a trolley. The path would form part of a loop connecting with a network of existing trails along Interstate 205 and other areas.

[Oregon info. from *The Oregonian* via Caroline Hobson]

#### UNION PACIFIC BLOCKS BULLET TRAIN

Officials at Union Pacific Railroad recently told the California High Speed Rail Authority that they have safety and operational concerns about running a bullet train close to lumbering freight trains. "Just look at what happened in L.A. a few years ago," said Scott Moore, a Union Pacific vice-president, citing the 2005 crash of a Metrolink passenger train that killed 11 and hampered rail operations. "Those accidents happen."

A prominent environmental group and several railroad advocacy organizations contend that Union Pacific's refusal will prove a formidable challenge to the project at a key moment. California voters will be asked in November to approve nearly \$10 billion in bonds to help finance construction.

Stuart Flashman, an attorney representing those groups, said a shift away from running the bullet train in Union Pacific's right-of-way would require a new environmental analysis for affected sections of the route – a process that could add time and dollars.

The bullet train line is designed to run alongside Union Pacific tracks for many miles in Southern California, the Central Valley and the Bay Area. Flashman said the biggest problems could be on the leg from the Central Valley across Pacheco Pass to San Jose, and on the route from Bakersfield into Los Angeles.

Flashman said the organizations he represents support the high-speed rail line but also want safety concerns more fully addressed. Freight-car derailments occur "fairly often," he said. "You can imagine if you have a high-speed train zooming through there and it hits one of those freight cars. It's not a pretty picture."

Critics question why the California High Speed Rail Authority didn't negotiate a deal long ago with Union Pacific. Until a meeting in May, high-speed rail officials had not held formal discussions with Union Pacific in "a couple of years," said Moore of Union Pacific. "There's been no circumstance where we've indicated we felt this might be workable."

Morshed of the high-speed rail authority, however, insisted the process of planning and constructing what would be among the biggest public works projects in California history – and the first high-speed rail line in the U.S. – could overcome the obstacles.

Dan McNamara of the California Rail Foundation said he believes the bond vote, already canceled by the Legislature on two previous occasions, should be delayed once again, and the planning should be put under the aegis of the Department of Transportation, "Where there's some checks and balances." This is not ready for prime time," he said. "It needs to be done right."

Morshed, however, said the project was ready to go. A bigger worry, he said, could be the rising cost of raw materials such as steel and concrete. Aside from miles of new steel rails, the project would feature 650 steel and concrete highway bridges, which account for up to 40% of the entire project cost, Morshed said.

If voters approve the November ballot measure, project backers hope to get another \$10 billion in financing from the federal government and an equal amount from private investors. Construction then could start in two to three years, and the first high-speed trains might be rolling within a decade, Morshed said.

In areas where the bullet train would run near freight trains, a stout barrier would separate the two sets of tracks, he said, adding that during decades of high-speed rail operations in France and Japan, there have been no fatalities. "We don't want to sacrifice the safety of our passengers any more than the railroad wants to sacrifice its freight," Morshed said.

[Info from *Los Angeles Times*]

## 3751 TRAIN CHASERS

by ROLLAND GRAHAM

Sure, riding amfleet isn't the greatest thrill, but you can still hear the 3751 clearly from the vestibules, even if the windows can't be opened. And the sound is spectacular! Plus, knowing that you are supporting STEAM operation is extremely satisfying. Without someone paying \$\$ to ride, there would be no steam operations to photograph.

With all the traffic on the railroad, getting the 3751 special over the road surely challenged the dispatchers, and resulted in some unusual operations. Departing LAUS late [8:15](I heard a rumor that no one notified the BNSF dispatchers that there would be an extra train) put the 3751 out of its slot, departing right ahead of *Pacific Surfliner* 566. 3751's arrival in Fullerton (where I boarded) was on 566's time, so there was confusion on the platform when 566's passengers tried to climb aboard too. 566 was right on our markers so to speak, but since we barreled through Anaheim and Santa Ana stations at track speed, we kept ahead until Irvine. Here 3751 had a scheduled stop for passengers. 566 caught up with us there, the dispatcher putting it on the northbound track in the station.

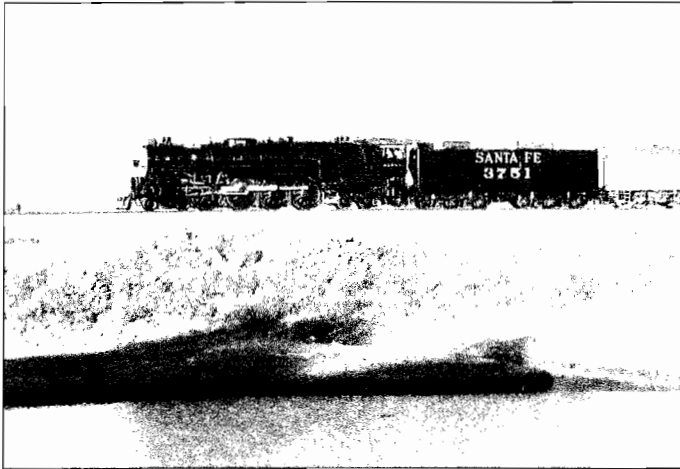
The 3751 and 566 departed Irvine southbound simultaneous, and ran parallel for the first mile or so. The 3751 was held for southbound Metrolink 654, which also used the Irvine northbound track, and ran around us, crossing over to the southbound track to get positioned for the correct platform at Laguna Niguel. 654 turns at San Juan Capistrano, usually waiting in the station from 10:08 to 10:23 when it heads north as Metrolink 655. But with the 3751 now behind it, the equipment was moved to the next siding and we blasted through San Juan Capistrano at 10:15. Talk about threading the needle!

There was a stop for water at Carlsbad-Poinsettia Coaster station. [Many people got off the train to watch the 3751 crew and firemen fill up the tender.] After which the train reversed out of the station and did a very nice run-by.

After arriving in San Diego, the 3751 and the Amtrak engine cut off and returned to Miramar to turn on the wye, with the train remaining in the station in San Diego. We finally departed San Diego about 6:05 p.m. [3½ hours late]. I understand we were held in San Diego rather than being allowed to depart sooner and have an extended wait at Miramar for the meet with *Pacific Surfliner* 582. As it worked out, we had a running meet with 582 at Miramar with no apparent delay to either train. While we were late, there were literally thousands of people lining the tracks from San Diego to Oceanside to see the train. Quite a spectacle!

We stopped for water at the Coaster facility just north of Oceanside. Then continued north along the coast for a late twilight run along the ocean. I got off at Irvine at 9 p.m. The engine stopped north of the station platform. As there is substantial open space, fans wanting a night photo op were able to walk north to a photo line set up ahead of the engine for a really nice night shot. There was time for everyone to get their shots before the train departed north into the darkness. It was a dramatic climax to an exciting day.

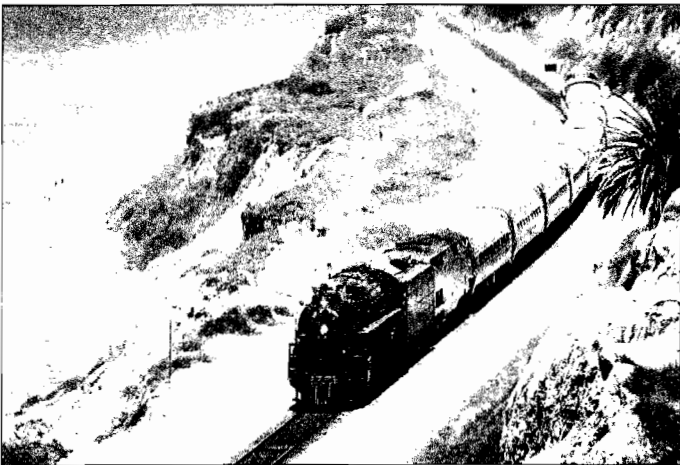
The trip was sponsored by the Central Coast NRHS and Pacific Locomotive Assn., both Bay Area groups. The owner of 3751 is the San Bernardino Railroad Historical Society



*Santa Fe 3751 southbound near Del Mar Racetrack on June 1, 2008.*  
 Photo by Marti Ann Draper



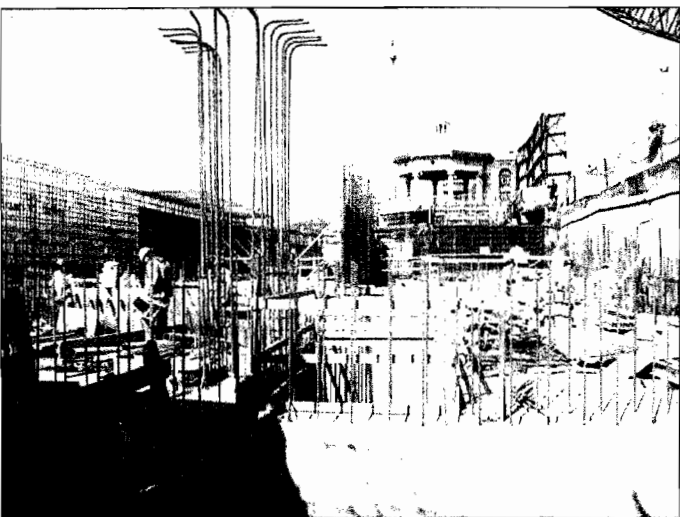
*Construction of the 1st/Soto station underground structure and side structure surface penetrations are well underway. Relocation of utilities is being performed prior to the removal of the temporary concrete deck panels and street restoration improvements, scheduled to begin June 6, 2008.*  
 Photo by Metro



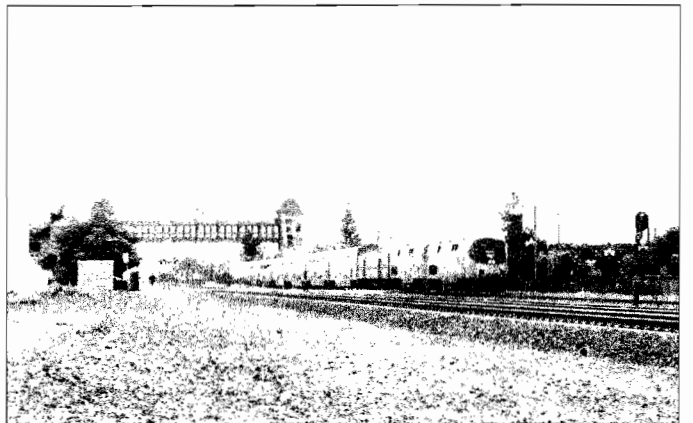
*Santa Fe 3751 with Amtrak 117 and train southbound at Del Mar Seagrove Park.*  
 Photo by Marti Ann Draper



*Construction of the tracks and guideway continues at the 1st Street and Indiana Street intersection and street paving is scheduled to be completed by mid-May 2008.*  
 Photo by Metro



*Construction of the station entrance structure is well underway on the site adjacent to the Mariachi Plaza Kiosk which will become the entrance plaza to the underground station. The final street paving surface will be finished after the station plaza construction is completed.*  
 Photo by Metro



*The detoured Southwest Chief speeds through Pomona without stopping on May 25, 2008. The train ran via the Union Pacific Los Angeles Subdivision because of a trackwork project at Bandini on its usual route.*  
 Photo by Charles Varnes