



## **TRANSPORTATION CLIPS**

March 20, 2009

**County bus service cut, fares up on Sunday** - Sunday is the day of reckoning for the County Connection bus system in Contra Costa County when it raises fares, reduces service and lays off nearly one in five of its bus drivers in its most severe cutbacks ever. Bus riders are urged to study up on the revamped and renumbered routes in 11 communities from Martinez to San Ramon. Central Contra Costa Transit Authority officials said they made the cuts reluctantly in response to a decline in sales tax revenue and a state diversion of transit dollars. Many other transit operators also are taking or considering similar actions. "We are being forced to do something that will make things very challenging for some of our riders," said Rick Ramacier, County Connection general manager... County Connection gets 17 percent of its operating costs from fares, making government subsidies crucial. County Connection spokeswoman Mary Burdick said the changes Sunday, coupled with the federal stimulus, will enable the system to get by for a year or two without having to consider further cuts.

[http://www.contracostatimes.com/traffic/ci\\_11952058?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.contracostatimes.com/traffic/ci_11952058?nclick_check=1)

**Difficult road likely for transit district** - After receiving an update yesterday that shows \$19 million of the North County Transit District's \$90 million annual budget evaporating in 2013, board members said the system will have to change drastically over the next four years. They also expressed dismay that the state has eliminated funding to transit districts because of its own budget crisis. North County Transit had expected \$10 million annually in state grants. "It's very discouraging, what's happening here," said board member Bill Horn, a county supervisor. Board member Jerome Stocks said the state was contradicting itself by requiring a reduction in greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming while reducing funding for public transit... In addition to grants and fare revenue, public transit depends largely on sales taxes for its funding, and the current recession has cut into that. The San Diego Association of Governments has told the district to reduce its sales-tax-revenue projections by an additional \$10 million for 2010. Transit board member Chris Orlando said the district's fiscal predicament was not the result of bad planning. "The reality is this budget problem is not operations-driven," said Orlando, a San Marcos City Council member. "It's state-funding-driven; it's economics-driven."

<http://www3.signonsandiego.com/stories/2009/mar/20/1mc20nctd213415-difficult-road-likely-transit-dist/?zIndex=69870>

**BRU: How About a Stimulus for Bus Riders?**- This morning, the Bus Rider's Union, including members from South and East L.A., and civic leaders from Koreatown gathered to ask the MTA to support the BRU's Clean Air and Economic Justice Plan. Their plan calls for increased funding and expansion of Metro's bus fleet and a rollback fo the 2007 fare hike by using Measure R and federal stimulus dollars over time. They also pointed out that while Metro staff had released a report earlier in the week that called for some short-term improvements, there was also language in the report that called for fare hikes in the next couple of years and long-term cuts in bus service as different rail projects come online.

<http://la.streetsblog.org/2009/03/19/bru-how-about-a-stimulus-for-bus-riders/>