



PUBLIC TRANSIT CLIPS

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Behind the Orange Curtain: Massive Service Cuts at OCTA - Around the country, many of our largest transit agencies are dealing with massive deficits by cutting back service and laying off employees...Closer to home, our neighbors in Orange County are facing a 25% cut in OCTA bus trips and laying off over 400 drivers. The plan doesn't have specific routes designated for cuts, just a mandate from the board to make these cuts and for the staff to get creative. These cuts would be in addition to the 133,000 hours in cuts that have already been ordered in the last nine months, some of which haven't gone into effect. So far the only organized opposition to the cuts comes from a local Teamsters branch representing the bus drivers. Naturally, this has led to OCTA staff noting that if the drivers were willing to give up their 4% mandated raise in July, the total cut would drop by 10%.

<http://la.streetsblog.org/2009/03/25/behind-the-orange-curtain-massive-service-cuts-at-octa/>

How a world-class transit line works - in Los Angeles! - Clarence Eckerson, Jr. has produced a terrific little film on a highly successful BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) line in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles. Writing for Streetfilms.org, Eckerson introduces the film. "Who would have thought that one of the best Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems in the U.S. would be in its most crowded, congested, sprawling city? Well check this out. It's really fabulous. "In October 2005, the Los Angeles County Metro Authority (or Metro) debuted a new 14-mile BRT system in the San Fernando Valley using a former rail right-of-way. Unlike many "rapid" bus transit systems in the U.S., the Orange Line is true BRT - it features a dedicated roadway that cars may not enter, has a pre-board payment system so buses load quickly and efficiently, and uses handsome, articulated buses to transport passengers fast - sometimes at speeds approaching 55 mph! The roadway is landscaped so ornately you could almost call it a bus greenway."But that's not all. The corridor also boasts a world class bike and pedestrian path which runs adjacent to the BRT route for nearly its entire length, giving users numerous multi-modal options. Each station has bike amenities, including bike lockers and racks, and all the buses feature racks on the front that accommodate up to three bikes . . ." The line has been immensely popular with riders, exceeding expectations on all counts. But what I like best about Eckerson's terrific 5-minute video is that it is tremendously instructional about the details that separate a great transit line from a merely good one.

http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/kbenfield/how_a_worldclass_transit_line.html

Transit officials look to increasing efficiency - Driven by sinking revenues and increased demand for public transit, Bay Area transportation officials are ready to take another shot at consolidating parts of the region's Byzantine collection of services. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is proposing to study ways of increasing the efficiency of the Bay Area's transit network - a look that might involve merging agencies, developing common fare structures and customer service operations or eliminating different types of transit serving the same markets. The commission agreed on Wednesday to add the study to its 25-year transportation plan, expected to be adopted in April. "We need to increase productivity and squeeze more out of our existing system," said Ann Flemer, the commission's deputy director of operations. At least 26 transit agencies operate some type of bus, rail or ferry service in the nine-county Bay Area, said John Goodwin, a commission spokesman. But that number could climb past 40 if private operators, shuttle services and multiple services provided by the same government agency are counted.... The study would analyze the regional transit system as a single network, ignoring jurisdictional boundaries, Flemer said. It would study commute corridors that have overlapping services and determine whether too much service is being offered, come up with alternatives to high-cost services with low ridership, identify improvements, combine or coordinate customer service operations, and streamline fare policies and information services to make it easier for riders.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/03/26/BASO16N0CS.DTL>