

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT

Minutes of Special Meeting of  
the Board of Directors of the District

January 15, 1968

Upon notice duly given, the Directors of the Southern California Rapid Transit District met at a special meeting in the District Board Room, 1060 South Broadway, Los Angeles, California, at 9:30 a.m. on January 15, 1968, at which time President A. J. Eyraud called the meeting to order.

Directors Kermit M. Bill, Charles E. Compton, A. J. Eyraud, Jr., Gordon R. Hahn, H. Lee Hale, David K. Hayward, Herbert H. Krauch, Michael E. Macke, Don C. McMillan, Douglas A. Newcomb and Norman Topping were present.

Also present were General Manager Dale W. Barratt; General Counsel Milton McKay; Assistant General Manager Jack R. Gilstrap; Manager of Operations R. W. Gareau; Chief Engineer Richard Gallagher; Director of Rapid Transit Planning John Curtis; Director of Public Information John D. Kemp; Secretary Virginia L. Rees; and the public.

Statement by President Eyraud

President Eyraud announced that the purpose of the meeting today was to acquaint interested individuals, officials and civic or other groups with the District's Preliminary Report of a proposed rapid transit system and service, with the studies

made and the information developed, and to obtain the views of such persons or organizations with respect to the Preliminary Report, which Report was adopted by the Board on October 30, 1967 and distributed pursuant to Section 30636 of the Public Utilities Code.

Affidavits of Publication of Notice of Public Meeting

At the request of the President, the Secretary reported that she had in her possession affidavits of publication of Notice of Public Meeting in the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, Los Angeles Times and Metropolitan News on December 29, 1967 and on January 5, 1968. Copies of the affidavits are attached to the Secretary's file of this meeting.

The following is a transcript of the meeting:

President A. J. Eyraud:

This is a most important occasion in the history of transit in Southern California because, for the first time in the many years and the many studies that have been promulgated in the community, we now have actual engineering and a Preliminary Report issued to the people of the metropolitan area.

Today's public meeting is part of the process required by law and will lead to a vote of the people on funding construction of the first phase of an area-wide Rapid Transit system and place in operation new and augmented bus services.

We appreciate that many of you here today have taken time from busy schedules to bring the District your views regarding the Preliminary Report recommendations.

So that we can accomplish as much as possible in the shortest possible time, I am asking that all comments be addressed to the chair.

And now Mr. Dale Barratt, the District's General Manager will explain the purpose of today's meeting in more detail.

Mr. Dale W. Barratt:

Mr. President, the District has scheduled today's meeting in accordance with Section 30636 of the Public Utilities Code and the District Law.

It enables persons desiring to do so to comment on the Preliminary Report. The views expressed here today, and at other community meetings, will be taken into account by the District staff in the preparation of the Final Report to be issued this Spring.

Mr. Jack Gilstrap, Assistant General Manager in charge of Rapid Transit Development, will report on the activities of the District since the Preliminary Report was issued last October 30th. Following Mr. Gilstrap's remarks the meeting can then be opened to those who have registered to appear at today's hearing.

Mr. Jack R. Gilstrap:

Mr. Eyraud, members of the Board, Mr. Barratt, and members of the public: In the first few minutes, the staff would like to report to you...and for the record...the scope and the results of our program of the last two months to inform the community---formally and informally---about the District's Preliminary Report.

For the record, I should point out that this Preliminary Report is the one required by District law. It describes, in as much detail as possible, the type of Rapid Transit system the RTD proposes the community build -- where it would go -- what it would do -- how much it would cost -- and ways that the cost might be publicly financed. The law specifies what kind of information the report should contain, and it specifies to whom the report should be given official distribution.

In addition to the official and legally-required distribution, the District also felt a moral obligation to disseminate the information in the Report as widely as possible throughout the entire community --- so that the general public --- voters, taxpayers and all citizens --- would have opportunity to learn about the District's proposal. And have a chance to judge it and comment on it. Building a Rapid Transit system of the scope and cost necessary to serve this community is a vast project --- one in which each citizen has a deep and personal interest. Therefore, the RTD staff felt it imperative that we do all in our power to inform the entire community -- accurately and adequately.

This is a report to you as to how we proceeded with both the legally-required and the morally-required informing of the community.

The District's Preliminary Report, you will recall, was officially adopted by this board at a public meeting held in the Hall of Administration on October 30, 1967. Concurrently with its adoption, it was also released to the public and to the news media.

Official Notice of the October 30 public meeting was mailed to each city in the District. In addition, invitations to attend the meeting were sent to 1,812 individual city, county and state officials, civic leaders, community-minded groups and organizations. As a result, 27 cities in the District were represented at the October 30 meeting as well as 138 civic organizations and community groups.

Official copies of the Preliminary Report were, at the same time, mailed to: Major business firms, financial institutions, all Los Angeles County Chambers of Commerce, News Media, California State executives, Research firms, State Legislators, Los Angeles Goals Committee, Federal Agencies and others. We also made copies available to public, university and special-purpose libraries to allow all interested citizens access to our complete report.

The press was thoroughly advised of the meeting. Five television stations and many radio stations sent crews to cover the meeting, and all of the principal newspapers were represented. In addition, complete press kits were mailed or delivered to more than 500 metropolitan and community newspapers, radio and television stations, news magazines, trade papers and industrial publications. As a result, news coverage of the District's proposal was wide, with major stories with maps played (in most cases) on page one.

Beginning immediately after the October 30 announcement, specially-called community meetings were held in nine selected geographic sections of the District. These were highly publicized in the local press and, in addition, civic officials and community leaders were extended special invitations. Besides the pre-meeting publicity, extensive news coverage of the meetings themselves was stimulated.

At each meeting, an identical film strip and recorded presentation was made, in order that complete and uniform coverage of the Preliminary Report would be assured. The film strip utilized the same slides and illustrations used at the October 30 presentation of the Report. Following the formal presentation, the meetings were opened to questions and answers, which usually gave opportunity for the local impact of the RTD proposal to be clarified. Many of the Board members participated in these meetings held throughout our District.

At all meetings, including the one on October 30, comment

sheets were distributed, and those in attendance were urged to record their suggestions and comments. Attendance records and copies of each comment sheet are attached to my report for inclusion into the record of today's meeting.

All the community meetings were scheduled and conducted by personnel of the RTD Public Information Department, with substantial assistance and participation by representatives of the Rapid Transit Planning and the Rapid Transit Engineering Departments.

In addition to these publicized "formal" community meetings, opportunities were sought to make the same film strip presentation to service clubs, civic organizations and similar groups throughout the District. During November and December, 134 such presentations were made by representatives of the Public Information Department, supplemented by members of the District's Speakers Bureau, reaching a total audience of nearly 8,000 people.

District staff have also appeared on a number of television and radio public service programs reaching several million Southern California viewers and listeners. These included the three-and-one-half hour Rapid Transit Special on KLAC; the Press Conference programs on KABC-TV, KMPC AND KFVB; KCET-TV's Leo McElroy Reports; and the KGBS Viewpoint Show, as well as special Rapid Transit feature interviews on KNXT, KNBC and KHJ Television.

Special arrangements were made to make our presentation to particularly important groups, such as:

- (a) League of Cities - Technical Transportation Committee
- (b) Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
- (c) Media executives
- (d) Ad Hoc Committee and Planning Staff - City of Los Angeles

And a series of meetings were held with the members of the Los Angeles-California Legislative delegation.

Besides the activities of the Public Information Department, engineering and planning personnel, and the District's Consultants also scheduled calls and conferences with the engineering and planning staffs of the several affected cities to, first, make sure they understood the RTD proposal as it applied to their individual cities and, second, to receive any official or semi-official comments concerning routes and station locations. Data obtained in these engineer-to-engineer sessions is also attached to my remarks to form a permanent part of the record.

It would be impossible and impractical, of course, for me to include in my remarks today all the individual comments and suggestions regarding the Preliminary Report that this concentrated and wide-spread dialogue with virtually every corner of the community produced. Some of the most significant of these have already been passed along to you. All of them have been made a part of the official in-put that RTD engineers and their consultants will analyze in formulating recommendations for the for the Final Report.

It would, however, be helpful, I think, for me to summarize the thrust of the majority of these comments -- corridor by corridor, particularly as they apply to route delineation and station location.

For the San Gabriel Valley Corridor: There seems to be almost universal city and citizen approval of the proposed use of the median strip of the San Bernardino Freeway. Station locations were generally acceptable, but some concern was expressed (particularly by the City of Alhambra) that local communities will want to have strong influence in the final pin-pointing of feeder bus routes and similar matters of local impact. The City of Los Angeles urges a route along Brooklyn Avenue as providing better service in that vicinity. However, a number of residents of that particular area have previously voiced strong opposition to leaving the San Bernardino Freeway instead for the Brooklyn Avenue alignment.

Turning to the San Fernando Valley-Hollywood Corridor route selection, here we find it has met with general approval, with two major exceptions. There is opposition from the City of Los Angeles and from some local residents to the use of skyway along Van Nuys Boulevard. The suggestion has been made that the route alignment be moved a block west. That would be into private right of way instead of in the median of the public street. And a number of citizens and groups have urged that the first-stage line be extended westward from its present initial terminal at Balboa. Some minor changes in station location were also put forth.

Then to the Wilshire Corridor: This line has been almost universally criticized for its first-stage terminal at Fairfax Avenue, with most people urging that it be extended as far as Barrington, west of the San Diego Freeway. Sentiment in the City of Beverly Hills is split. The Chamber of Commerce urges the RTD to include a station in Beverly Hills in the first stage. The attitude of the City Council, on the other hand, seems to reflect little interest in having Rapid Transit serve the city in any way.

The Long Beach Corridor has stimulated the greatest community discussion. In other corridors, community comment has

dealt mainly with the length of the line or precise detail of route alignment, with the route in general favorably received. Comment concerning the Long Beach route, however, has not dealt with minor suggested adjustments.

The City of Huntington Park has officially objected to the proposed RTD routing in overhead structure down Pacific Boulevard and also the proposed use of the Industrial Freeway right-of-way south and west of the city. Lakewood, South Gate and Lynwood have also voiced objection to the Industrial Freeway routing, and the City of Alhambra has joined in this, although it is not a part of that corridor.

On the other hand, the City of Compton soundly approved the route proposed in the Preliminary Report, as did also a number of citizens and community leaders in the Watts area, which would be directly served by the Industrial Freeway alignment. Several representatives of the South Central Los Angeles region urge that the route be moved farther westward, and the Ad Hoc Committee of the City of Los Angeles suggests a line down Central Avenue as the most effective way to serve that region. They appear also to concur with the Citizen's Advisory Council on Public Transportation in questioning whether the line should be extended all the way to Long Beach in the initial phase.

The City of Long Beach is in basic agreement with the District's proposal and favors the proposed alignment on the east side of the Los Angeles River.

In summary, our meeting and dialogue with the community, officially and unofficially, seem to produce these conclusions:

There is almost universal agreement that a system of Rapid Transit should be built which will provide an alternate means of community mobility, supplementing the freeways.

It is substantially agreed that some form of public financing of the construction of Rapid Transit is necessary, appropriate and acceptable.

It is an almost unanimous conclusion that financing construction bonds by means of a property tax is wholly unacceptable to the public and to public officials, and that alternate financing methods must be authorized by the state legislature.

The priority Rapid Transit system and the Master Plan Concept as proposed in the Preliminary Report seems to meet with general approval -- as far as it goes -- but there seems to be strong community support for more initial system rather than less, regardless of the cost. In other words, the community seems well aware of the need for Rapid Transit and appears willing to go for as much system as necessary -- with community

service and mobility being a bigger factor than total cost.

In general, these are the community reactions that the RTD staff has identified. The details of their specific recommendations from the community are attached to the record as part of my report and will continue to be taken into account by our engineers and planners in making final recommendation to this board and to the community.

This meeting today is, as you know, an official part of the District's dialogue with the community. It has been legally announced, advertised and publicized. Testimony will be heard from individuals and groups who want their position known.

The views expressed here today will be submitted to the District's staff for analysis and consideration. It is not the intent of today's meeting to defend the Preliminary Report recommendations, but rather to receive further official unofficial and community reaction to the District's proposal.

The community in-pu-t of the past two and one half months along with that of today's meeting will be weighed carefully in the preparation of the Final Report, which will be issued in the Spring to be followed by further public hearings.

President Eyraud:

Thank you, Mr. Gilstrap.

Before we begin hearing testimony on these plans, if there is anyone desiring to appear and who has not registered, you may do so now. I would suggest that you raise your hand and members of our staff are in the audience and they will give you an appearance card.

Is there anyone present who has not filled in an appearance card or made their wants known? Is there anybody here who wants to appear who has not indicated so? There is one in the back row, there. All right.

All right, I will ask those people who wish to testify or to be heard, to come forward and state their name for the record, and I would suggest that you address yourself at that microphone over there.

I believe the first appearance will be Councilman Raymond C. Kealer from the City of Long Beach. Mr. Kealer --.

Mr. Raymond C. Kealer:

Good morning, Mr. President and Members of the Board of Directors.

I am Raymond C. Kealer, Councilman of the City of Long Beach.

I trust it is with design that your Board scheduled the public meeting for 9:30 this morning. Your thoughtfulness is sincerely appreciated, for an earlier hour would of necessity have extended my travel time on the freeway. It is readily apparent that implementation of the subject under discussion today will materially improve one's ability to cope with the complexities of time and distance in our metropolitan area. It is, therefore, with distinct pleasure that I am able to appear before your Honorable Board this morning. As the City Council representative, I am duly authorized to present the official views of the City of Long Beach regarding your Preliminary Report of October 30, 1967.

The concept of balanced transportation incorporating rapid transit as an integral part has been discussed and studied for years. On each occasion in which these studies have been prepared, the findings have continued to indicate a need on a regional basis. Yet, the recommendations are not implemented. The region's dynamic growth continues, traffic congestion increases daily, and public transportation is asked to fill the gap without appropriate resources. Moreover, the irony of the situation has been that the obvious solution remains dormant, while its availability becomes more expensive. The City of Long Beach, therefore, reaffirms its past position in support of rapid transit. At the meeting of January 9, 1968, the Long Beach City Council adopted a motion endorsing in principle the rapid transit concept presented in your Board's Preliminary Report.

In setting forth its support of rapid transit, the City of Long Beach feels that the following points should be offered to the District for consideration in the formulation of your Final Report:

- (1) The District should formulate a program for financing and implementation of the system's master plan set forth in the Preliminary Report.
- (2) In the overall aspect of rapid transit, the District should consult with officials of immediately adjacent counties in order to pursue an ultimate system that is truly of regional scope.
- (3) The District should, in the final report, clearly

predicate its capital expenditure program upon multi-base tax revenues for the retirement of bonded debt. The major source of monies should emanate from gasoline sales tax similar to the legislation introduced last year, known as AB 2092.

- (4) The State and Federal governments should lend their assistance and financial support for total system development

The City of Long Beach firmly believes that any proposed rapid transit system must include our city. We recognize there are interests that are actively seeking realignments of the Long Beach line to both the east and west of its proposed location. Furthermore, we recognize there are interests that advocate abandonment of the proposed line south of south central Los Angeles.

The City of Long Beach does not agree with this type of thinking. It is apparent to us that the four integral lines recommended by your Board are required to meet the immediate public transportation needs of the metropolitan area. It is clear that the proposed backbone system provides service to areas of greatest urgency and therefore should, in total, be initially constructed under the first-priority phase program. We feel that consideration, concurrent with proper justification, should be given to expansion of the proposed master plan system rather than deleting service lines to areas of need.

We concur with the idea of a bi-modal system and agree with the proposed route which would enter Long Beach down the east bank of the Los Angeles River. The City generally agrees with the location of the downtown terminal; however, we feel the need for additional intermediate stations at locations along this route. The City particularly objects to the five-mile stretch with no stations from Wardlow Road to Compton Boulevard. It is our feeling that grave consideration should be given to possible station locations at Del Amo Boulevard and Artesia Street.

I am advised by City Manager John R. Mansell that he has provided your General Manager with a copy of his report which was filed with the City Council on January 9, 1968. This communication sets forth in more detail the City's feelings on your preliminary report. Accordingly, the City Council has authorized the City Manager to discuss with your staff the various points I have referred to earlier.

Your Board may be assured Mr. Mansell's office will be most pleased to cooperate with your management and consultants regarding these matters.

Thank you for your very kind invitation to be present this

morning. I appreciate the opportunity to make known to your Honorable Board the opinions and desires of the City of Long Beach.

President Eyraud:

Thank you very much, Mr. Kealer, for taking your time to come down here, and we appreciate your comments and your general support of our program.

Now, for the next --

Mr. Kealer:

Copies of this are available if you are interested.

President Eyraud:

Thank you, Councilman.

I now want to call on John Vaughn, Vice President of the L. A. Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. John Vaughn:

Mr. Chairman and members of the Board, my name is John Vaughn and I am a Vice President and Director of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. It is my pleasure and purpose to attempt to present to you today the views of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, and I should like to add at the outset that the recent change was made in the name of the Chamber to incorporate the name "Area," which indicates the degree and the extent of its interest in the entire region of Southern California. The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce consists of some 14,000 members and we are concerned with, not only the problems of Los Angeles as a city and Los Angeles County, but with the entire Southern California region.

The action that was taken by the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce on January 4 in response to the Preliminary Report issued by the Rapid Transit District, in our estimation, is a significant one. It is the culmination of years, if you will, of study and interest and concern over a very vital problem for this Los Angeles region. We would like to give you our views, not only with respect to the Report, but with respect to the financing of any bond proposal that might be submitted to carry the cost.

First, we are completely convinced that there is a crisis in the area of mass public transportation in this area. We are convinced that the freeways alone cannot do the job; that they

must be supplemented and complemented with some form of public mass transit. We responded to the Preliminary Report in the sense that it is preliminary; that it does not require at this time our endorsement or rejection. We did forward to the District what we term a "critique" of the Report, in which we have registered some areas of concern. We have pointed out some instances where, in our judgment, the information is not sufficiently provided or sufficiently persuasive to point to your selection of a particular load or particular route. And, I should like to cover these areas as briefly as possible, but we feel that they are of sufficient import that they should be considered by the Board before the development of its Final Report. Although, as I pointed out, we are completely in accord that the need is critical; the evidence is clear on that point. We feel that there is insufficient evidence on many other points.

Number one is the utilization of the freeways. And, by the way, before I get into these, let me point out the agonizing problem that the Chamber has had in trying to come to grips with this problem; that you recognize that the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce represents so many interests and, not only in numbers, but in major interests in the community; that it is not an easy task for such a large group with such varied interests to come to a consensus. But we have tried to recognize the points and reasoning behind some of the interests represented on the Chamber and in the community by those who feel that rapid transit perhaps is not needed or not the answer, and by those who feel that there should be a different way of solving the problem.

So, we first say to you that we find insufficient evidence in the Preliminary Report justifying the building of separate rights of way rather than utilizing parts of existing freeways. And, utilization could come in the form of double decking, providing extra lanes or reserving perhaps some lanes. Now, this is not to say that we do not regard your proposal as the best. It may well be. But it is merely to say that there is insufficient evidence that we find available to us that would lead to the need for the tremendous outlay of funds in order to accommodate the plan that you propose.

Also, we feel that additional information should be provided to the community as to the facts that persuaded the use of a dual rail -- fixed rail system, with the resultant extremely high cost as compared with alternate modes, such as utilizing buses or bus trains, modernized to whatever extent is possible, and operating those either on existing freeways in special lanes reserved for that purpose, extra lanes built for that purpose, double decking for that purpose, etc., or operating such buses or bus trains or alternate modes other than a dual rail system on the proposed rights of way. In other words, we find no clear proof that a dual rail system is superior to perhaps one or two

alternate modes.

Then, we find insufficient evidence supporting the selection of the four corridor routes. We are not arguing the point as to whether or not any or all of those routes might in themselves, based on demand, justify the building of a route there, but merely that there are many other needs and many other identifiable corridors and routes in Los Angeles County and adjacent to it that might perhaps based on an evaluation of need and demand, suggest priority treatment. And we recognize that what has been proposed is only a first phase of perhaps two, three or four phases in the total system and, therefore, perhaps more attention or more information should be given to the community that would justify the selection of those particular routes.

We also have some concern about the exceptionally high cost of building the subway portion of the system. There is a figure that was kicked around -- I am not certain whether it was a reliable figure that the cost for some or all of the Wilshire Corridor could run in the magnitude of 40 million dollars a mile. If that is so, we would hope that additional information could be made available as to the cost of alternate methods of running that corridor.

We are also concerned, as Mr. Gilstrap mentioned awhile ago, and as expressed by others in the community, with the termini of some of the systems, particularly the one that ends at Fairfax. And we are concerned also with the problems at these termini, whether sufficient ascension plans have been made to disperse travelers who would come to and leave from those termini and, particularly, the downtown area and also the terminus, such as the one at Fairfax, if that were left as it is.

Another area of concern, and this is the major one in our estimation, is that since the buses are an integral part of the multi-mode system that the District is proposing, and therefore the fixed portion and the very costly portion of the system, is interrelated and interdependent upon its being served by feeder buses and by other buses. We would like to see some commitment in the District's final proposal indicating that the bus coverage is adequate, not only to serve the fixed rail portion of the line, but to serve all parts of the county or of the District to the optimum degree. We would like to see some guarantee that this is all feasible; that a certain minimum level of service be continually provided by the District and these buses. We think it would be a travesty on justice if the community were asked to, and did support the cost burden of a billion and a half, or perhaps considerably more than that, and then find that, for whatever reason in the future, the bus portion of the system or some other parts of the District not directly served by the fixed rail portion were neglected.

