

The RTA Wrap-Up

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RTA Ridership on Upswing

More than one year after RTA raised fares for the first time in five years, ridership has begun to grow, at times significantly, thanks largely to improved passenger service and higher demand. Compared to this time last year, ridership as a whole is up nearly 2 percent. More specifically, contracted fixed routes are up roughly 11 percent, Dial a Ride service jumped 12 percent and CommuterLink service rocketed 45 percent. Directly operated fixed routes remained about the same. "The ridership growth shows that the residents of Riverside County want transportation alternatives and will leave their cars behind when quality public transit services are available," said RTA Chair Jeff Fox. Many passengers, especially those riding CommuterLink buses, say record-high gas prices have prompted them to try public transit. Also, new technologies such as wire-



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RTA to Boost Passenger Safety



This summer, RTA will improve passenger safety by installing special shields on the right rear wheels of its largest vehicles. The so-called S1 Guards are designed to reduce injuries by pushing pedestrians and bicyclists from the path of curbside rear wheels. RTA joins a growing number of transit agencies nationwide --- from Chicago to Los Angeles to Baltimore --- that have already equipped their buses with the urethane devices. Some of those agencies have reported improved safety and fewer serious injuries thanks to the devices, according to Public Transportation Safety Inc., which manufactures the safety shields.

2007 Budget, Short Range Transit Plan Approved

Board members approved the Agency's Short Range Transit Plan and budget for Fiscal Year 2007. The \$43.6 million operating budget reflects a 7 percent increase from the latest fiscal year, which ends June 30. The budget was developed to support the Agency's goals of increased ridership, providing excellent

customer service and cost-containment through improved efficiencies. The Short Range Transit Plan shows a 1 percent decrease in revenue service hours and a 3 percent decrease in revenue service miles compared to the current fiscal year, which are primarily due to the realignment and reduction of service on unproductive routes.



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less Internet and satellite television on CommuterLink buses have greatly enhanced the riding experience. RTA plans to equip more buses with the popular technology. High gas prices or not, RTA is focused on keeping its passengers happy. Last month, RTA injected additional service to its CommuterLink system to keep up with the demand. RTA recently hired Southland Transit Inc. to operate Dial-A-Ride service, and since then customer complaints have plunged. Upgrades to schedules and routes are maximizing customer service. RTA is also undergoing a massive system wide analysis to pinpoint areas for improvement. The results of that analysis are expected later this year.

New Pass Gets Warm Reception

A new report on the 7-Day Pass, which debuted in April, indicated widespread support among passengers. On average 451 passengers use the 7-Day Pass each day and the pass currently makes up 10 percent of all passes used. The pass costs \$12 and is available on buses, at pass outlets and through the RTA web site. RTA's 1- and 31-Day passes have also increased in usage compared to this time last year.



RTA Salutes Nation's Fallen



RTA joined transit agencies across the nation during Memorial Day to honor the servicemen and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Hoping to bring more awareness to the holiday, RTA participated in the national Moment of Remembrance by issuing public service announcements, special messages on its website and handing out Memorial Day stickers to passengers.



PUBLIC TRANSIT FACT: If Americans used public transit for roughly 10 percent of their daily travel needs, the United States would reduce its dependence on imported oil from the Persian Gulf by more than 40 percent.