



# RAPID TRANSIT PROGRESS

METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

**"MARTA REPORTS TO THE PEOPLE IT SERVES..."**

AUGUST 1967  
VOL. 2, No. 8

## MARTA DIGS FIRST "HOLE-IN-THE-GROUND"

Rapid Transit's first "hole in the ground" was dug in a parking lot at Broad Street-Trinity Avenue in downtown Atlanta Friday morning, August 4, 1967. The hole was the first of a series of 35 test holes drilled to secure rock and soil samples.

The borings are part of the preliminary engineering now being conducted by the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority through its consulting engineers.

Henry L. Stuart, MARTA General Manager, explained, "This hole drilled today marks the first time MARTA has initiated its own research into the basic characteristics of the ground in which we will put our subway. Soil tests are a very basic part of the preliminary engineering required before any detailed design is possible. After all, you can't design the foundation 'til you know what's down there to put it on."

"Another very important decision to be made," Stuart continued, "is how deep to put the subway under Peachtree Street:

that is, very deep in a tunnel, or shallow in a trench, which would involve relocation of utilities and digging up Peachtree Street. These soil tests will provide much of the information we will need to make this decision."

"Of course, the hole we are really looking forward to drilling is the one that marks the start of construction," Stuart concluded.

Some 16 of these test borings have since been made on the Central Line of Rapid Transit along Broad, Peachtree, and West Peachtree Streets; this 5½ mile section of rapid transit will be subway the entire distance. The holes ranged in depth from 35 to 105 feet.

The soil tests were made by Law Engineering Testing Company of Atlanta, under contract with Parsons Brinckerhoff-Tudor-Bechtel, engineering consultants for MARTA. Analysis of the soil and rock samples is underway at this time.



MARTA General Manager Henry L. Stuart (with glasses) watches closely as drill brings up soil from first test hole.



Samples of soil are carefully put into glass jars which are then labeled and taken to laboratory for study.

**METROPOLITAN ATLANTA  
RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

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"DIRECTED BY THE GEORGIA STATE  
LEGISLATURE TO DEVELOP A RAPID  
TRANSIT SYSTEM FOR THE 5-COUNTY  
METROPOLITAN ATLANTA AREA."

*Edited by KING ELLIOTT*



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## RICH URGES CUTS RESTORED

MARTA Chairman, Richard H. Rich, has formally urged the restoration of cuts made in the U.S. House of Representatives in the budget request of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Rich made his request in a statement to Senator Warren G. Magnuson, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Independent Offices, July 27, 1967.

Rich referred to the Metropolitan Development Incentive Grants under Section 205 of Title II of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966, and to appropriations for the urban transportation programs, and continued, "I am urging you to approve the full HUD requests and to restore cuts made in the House of Representatives. We support strongly the \$30 million requested by HUD for the Metropolitan Development Incentive Grants and the \$230 million advance funding requested by HUD for the transportation program."

"We are certainly ready to take advantage of Section 205 of the Metropolitan Development Act of 1966," he said. "Funding of the Metropolitan Development Act incentive program can do much to encourage our local governments when it comes to implementing area-wide comprehensive planning for transportation, water pollution control, open space land for recreation, and the other public programs having regional significance."

Rich outlined progress made in the development of rapid transit plans here with the use of local, state and federal funds. "It is therefore clear that the availability of federal funds for transit in the last three years has made it financially feasible for public officials in urban areas to consider and develop the much needed balanced systems of transportation. Without sufficient assurance that the required level of aid will be made available at the correct time, it will be extremely difficult for us to implement our plans in the time we have," he said.

"I therefore strongly request that your Subcommittee recommend the restoration of the full \$230 million sought in the HUD budget request," Rich concluded.

## MARTA REVIEWS "BUSWAYS IDEA"-- COSTS, TIME EXCEED ESTIMATES.

The Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority recommended that no attempt be made to implement the "Rapid Busways" proposal made recently by the Atlanta Transit System.

Richard H. Rich, MARTA Chairman, stated, "The proposal has been given serious and objective consideration and study over a period of approximately five weeks. Contact was made with Atlanta Transit System personnel and additional material was obtained from them."

"Based on MARTA's study and review of the "Rapid Busways" proposal, MARTA concludes that implementation of the busways proposal as it now stands is not practicable," Rich said.

The report contains three basic conclusions:

1. The costs to develop the busways were seriously underestimated. MARTA estimates that the costs would be about \$150 million, rather than the \$52 million estimated in the Busways report.

2. Time schedules for construction were also seriously underestimated. No busway could be made operational in less than 3½ years, the same time required for the East Line of Rapid Transit. Preparation of the rights of way for either rails or paving is essentially the same. The interim between completion of busways and completion of rail rapid transit would range from a minimum of one year to a maximum of three years.

3. The amount of busways coinciding with MARTA routes is no more than 50 per cent, and quite likely as little as one third, and would require considerable expenditures which would never be recovered by MARTA.

MARTA made two recommendations in the report which was sent to Mayor Allen:

1. Because of the high cost for very short term relief, implementation of the "Rapid Busways" proposal should not be attempted; and

2. If the public interest demands an experimental development of busways, any experimental busway should be built along MARTA's East-West Line.

Rich commented, "The MARTA Board instructed the staff and consulting engineers to take the "Rapid Busways" proposal and to find out if it would work, and how to implement it if at all possible. Their findings as to cost and construction time required indicate that developing the "Rapid Busways" system is simply not feasible. While \$150 million is indeed much less than the cost of Rapid Transit, busways would not do the job of relieving traffic as will be required for a permanent, long-range solution for a city of 2 million people."

"Although there is a great differential in costs," Rich concluded, "it would be much more wasteful to spend \$150 million for an inadequate interim system than to spend \$350 million for permanent and efficient relief."

Robert L. Sommerville, President of the Atlanta Transit System, described the MARTA review as a "perfunctory brush-off" and indicated that he would continue to urge acceptance of the idea.

The MARTA review notes that the "Rapid Busways" proposal does not take into proper account the costs involved in right of way acquisition and relocation of railroad tracks, utilities, and households. Whereas the Atlanta Transit System figures are by admission estimates, MARTA engineering consultants (Parsons Brinckerhoff-Tudor-Bechtel) have been working some 14 months developing accurate statistics on which to base cost projections. Thus much of the information required in the review of the busways proposal was already on hand when the proposal was first made. PBTB has been checking and testing these figures against other information and informs MARTA that the figures given to and used by MARTA reflect the most accurate

*(Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)*



Southern Railway line looking south toward Ponce de Leon Avenue bridge at Sears. The many side tracks and spurs must be kept in service; this creates a problem for either busways or rapid transit, the solution of which is complex, costly, and time-consuming.

(Continued from Page 2)

information available. These figures, while available, were not sought or used by the ATS in development of the busways proposal.

The acquisition of right of way and its preparation for either rails or paving of busways is an expensive process, accounting for about 70 per cent of the expenditures. The West Line has perhaps 400 individual households and small businesses which must be purchased, and the occupants relocated to new and suitable quarters. This is a matter of lengthy negotiation, and would be true for busways as well as for rapid transit.

The railroads usually occupy the center of their right of way; this means some tracks will have to be moved to one side to make room on the other for transit right of way.

Buried public utilities are virtually everywhere. They must be relocated (and kept in service while being moved), so that they can be maintained later without disrupting the transitway. These costs for right of way, track and utility relocation have been inadequately evaluated in the busways proposal, and account for much of the spread between the \$8½ million ATS estimate and the \$40 million MARTA estimate for the proposed 12 mile west to northeast test leg.

Since the width of a busway is about the same as for rail rapid transit, the same amount of money and time is required to survey, appraise, acquire, clear or relocate, drain, bring to grade, and provide structures for installation of either rails or paving.

Other questions which would have to be resolved relate to the legality of MARTA entering into such a development. The MARTA Act establishes the Authority to develop a "rapid transit system." The "system" is later defined as using vehicles "traveling on rights of way fully protected from other vehicular and pedestrian traffic." Under the "Rapid Busways" proposal, buses would travel at times on regular city streets with other vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Also, the vehicles would be owned and the system operated by a private company rather than by MARTA.

A further question is raised as to whether the building of roads for exclusive use of privately owned buses would comply with the law. "Busways" proposes the building of roads with public funds for the exclusive use of a private enterprise corporation. No reference is made in the "Rapid Busways" proposal to indicate intent on the part of the Atlanta Transit System to lease or to operate under franchise the roadways to be constructed, or in any way to share in the costs of development of the busways.

(Continued in Col. 2)

## LANDSCAPING AND RAPID TRANSIT

The recently created five-man Advisory Committee will provide professional advice to the MARTA Board of Directors in a number of fields involved in the development of rapid transit. H. Boyer Marx, who represents landscape architects on the Advisory Committee, explains the function of his profession in the overall evolution of rapid transit.

The interest of the Landscape Architectural profession and responsibility to MARTA rests in the harmonious use of space, the impact, and aesthetics in a proposed rapid transit system.

The impact of clearing the necessary wide right-of-way may be positive or negative, depending upon the degree of coordination of the technical people involved. The profession is interested in seeing that the grading within and along the entire planned system is carried out with restraint, and with as much freedom from bulldozer destruction as possible, consistent with sound engineering requirements. Nature is the best architect, and as much of the native growth should be retained as possible. Areas free from natural growth should be supplemented.



H. Boyer Marx

To the Landscape Architect the riders' view from the trains, even though rapid in movement, becomes extremely important. A restful setting, stimulating yet relaxing landscape vistas, with disciplined hedges, tree groupings and grass lined avenues, bringing incomparable naturalistic landscape within the sight of the trackage and the traveler, is our prime concern. From without we want to see the severity of the concrete structures softened by groupings of flowering trees and low maintenance plant material.

The Landscape Architect is vitally concerned with variations in design and plantings of the pedestrian plazas at the various stations to provide smooth traffic flow yet produce a pleasing setting for Architectural structures. We desire to see entrance plantings dignified but inviting with achievement of symmetry by the correct use of plant material that will not outgrow its allotted space.

It is the unique contribution of the profession in advancing the techniques of accommodating the MARTA structures to the sites and the development of the site to its maximum benefits and usefulness to all groups.

H. Boyer Marx, owner of H. Boyer Marx & Associates, Atlanta, is a graduate of Michigan State University with a B.S. Degree in Landscape Architecture. His experience includes Directorship of City Planning and Landscape Design, U.S. Housing Authority; Directorship of Landscape and Site Planning, Region 4, Southeast U.S., Federal Public Housing Authority. He is a member of American Society of Landscape Architects, American Horticultural Society, American Planning and Civic Association, and Southeastern Chapter, ASLA.

(Continued from Col. 1)

MARTA attorneys advise that the above and other questions would have to be resolved legislatively or judicially before MARTA could participate in the activities proposed in "Rapid Busways."

There is another serious question: whether Federal Aid could be used to build such private roads, even if it should be determined that MARTA's legislation would allow the Authority to participate.

Copies of MARTA's review of the "Rapid Busways" proposal are available at the MARTA offices.

# MARTAnswers

MARTA is called on to answer many and varied questions about rapid transit and the plans for this area. The more pertinent questions will appear from time to time in RAPID TRANSIT PROGRESS under this heading, answered by MARTA General Manager Henry L. Stuart.

**QUESTION: THERE ARE MANY UNUSED OR LITTLE-USED TRACKS INTO AND OUT OF ATLANTA IN ALL DIRECTIONS — WHY DOESN'T MARTA JUST RUN RAPID TRANSIT TRAINS ON EXISTING RAILROAD TRACKS?**

**ANSWER:** Very early in the study of rapid transit for the Atlanta region the possibility of using diesel electric commuter cars on existing tracks was very carefully considered. The proposal was not accepted for a number of reasons.

Rapid transit, to be successful, must move large numbers of people rapidly and comfortably at frequent intervals. The Atlanta system will use trains traveling at maximum speeds of 70 miles per hour, with an average speed of 40 m.p.h., including station stops, operating at intervals as often as every 90 seconds. Railroad operation conditions in the city require speeds as low as 15 miles per hour in many places. This would slow rapid transit trains to the point where they would be no more rapid than the expressway.

Also, it would be necessary to operate rapid transit vehicles on the same tracks with freight trains, passenger trains, and switch engines. This would invariably cause delays to the railroad operation and to the rapid transit operation, neither of which would be tolerable. In the same connection, the problem of maintaining a safe operation would be exceedingly difficult.

Another very difficult problem in using existing railroad tracks is that there would be no way to provide any service to Peachtree Street between Brookwood Station and the Five Points area. A similar gap exists on the West Line from Chappell Road to downtown.

MARTA's position is that such a service using old cars on old tracks to inconvenient or inaccessible stations would not be practical.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Henry L. Stuart, MARTA General Manager, was, prior to assuming his present position, Director of Service Control, Southern Railway System, Atlanta, and was responsible for developing and implementing effective operational control plans for the entire Southern system, and is very familiar with the operational procedures and problems.*

*If you have a question about MARTA or rapid transit, address it to MARTAnswers, 808 Glenn Building, Atlanta, Ga. 30303.*



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## RAPID TRANSIT BRIEFS

SEATTLE officials expect a final report from transit consultants (De Leuw, Cather & Co.) by October, outlining just what the city's rapid transit plan should be. Indications are that it will be a network of 50 or 60 miles in length, costing about \$750 million. If it is approved by civic officials, a referendum on a bond issue will probably be set for January or February, 1968.

SAN FRANCISCO Bay Area Rapid Transit construction is booming the economy. During June, 2,245 construction workers received \$3,000,000 in wages from the 28 general contractors and the 71 sub-contractors who are building individual segments of the 75-mile rail rapid transit system and its facilities.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT officials report that over \$133 million in matching federal funds for 73 mass transit programs were distributed during fiscal year 1967. A similar amount is available during the current fiscal year. The House of Representatives has approved \$175 million for fiscal year 1969.

OHIO Governor James A. Rhodes has established a statewide transportation committee to study mass transportation problems in his state. One of the main jobs of the committee will be to meet with regional counterparts to coordinate local programs. There are 15 comprehensive transportation studies underway at the present in Ohio.

### MARTA ACTION

At the regular meeting of the Board of Directors on August 1, General Manager Henry L. Stuart reported that Cousins Properties would have additional expenses because of rapid transit requirements in the "City Center" project under development in the railroad gulch at Spring and Hunter Streets, and that these additional costs should eventually be borne by MARTA. The Board instructed Stuart to continue negotiations with Cousins Properties to reach agreement on exact costs which would be eventually chargeable to MARTA when funds were available.

The Board approved a sub-contract between consultants Parsons Brinckerhoff-Tudor-Bechtel and Law Engineering Testing Company for a series of test borings for soil samples. (See separate story, page 1.)

The Board approved the MARTA review of the "Rapid Buses" proposal, and instructed that copies be sent to the Mayor and other officials. (See separate story, page 2.)

The next meeting of the MARTA Board of Directors will be Tuesday, September 5, 1967, 3:30 p.m., Room 619, Glenn Building, 120 Marietta St., N.W.

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