

# CALIFORNIA Waterfront Age

SUMMER 1988

VOL. 4 NO. 3



Cover: Man comes to Catalina! Courtesy Catalina Island Museum, Whittington Collection.

## Contents

- 2 From the Executive Office**
- 3 Ebb and Flow**
- 7 Conference Log**
- 8 Ways To Go—A Report on Coastal Transit Options**
- 10 Ferries: Goodbye Gridlock, Hello Waves?**  
*Heather Clendenin Antilla*
- 16 Beach Shuttles: Relief from Traffic Snarls**  
*Gail Odom Rosen*
- 23 Trains: By Rail Through the Redwoods**  
*Kristi Farnham*
- 26 Military Coast Sequel: Patterns of Honorable Discharge**  
*Tom McKeag*
- 32 Close-Up: A Fortress Transformed**
- 34 Santa Catalina Island: California's Offshore Playland**  
*Dewey Schwartzenburg*
- 44 Letters**
- 46 Book Reviews**
- 48 CrossCurrents**



Focus on Coastal Transit  
page 8.

### **Guidelines for Contributors**

*California Waterfront Age* is glad to consider contributions of articles and shorter items related to the state's waterfronts. We aim to provide a forum for the description and discussion of public programs and private initiatives relating to waterfront restoration and development in California. Resource management and economic development are our major themes.

We will consider articles of up to 3,000 words on the following subjects:

1. Economic development, project finance, waterfront restoration, the impact of changing uses.
2. Tourism, waterfront parks, public access.
3. Maritime industries.
4. Water quality, resource restoration, enhancement.
5. Cultural and historical issues.

We will also consider the following shorter features:

Conferences: We publish summaries of waterfront-related conferences.

Book reviews: We seek relevant reviews, about 500 words in length, of current books and other publications of interest to our readers.

Essays: Reflections on themes related to waterfronts are welcome. They can be verbal, photographic, graphic, or in cartoon form.

Interested contributors should call or write the editor. Send self-addressed stamped envelopes with submissions.

### **Are you on our mailing list?**

To receive *California Waterfront Age*, or for information on the programs or projects of the State Coastal Conservancy, please send a note with your name, organization, address, and affiliation (civic group, government agency, consultant, development/financial, maritime industry, other) to:

California Waterfront Age  
State Coastal Conservancy  
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100  
Oakland, CA 94612

### STATE COASTAL CONSERVANCY

#### Board Members:

Gordon K. Van Vleck  
Jesse R. Huff  
Michael Wornum  
Margaret Azevedo  
Penny Allen  
Marcus E. Powers  
Reginald F. Dupuy

#### Alternates:

Gordon Snow  
LaFenus Stancell

#### Executive Officer:

Peter Grenell

### CALIFORNIA WATERFRONT AGE

Rasa Gustaitis, *Editor*

Jan Jue, *Associate Editor*

Avril Angevine, *Art Director*

Dewey Schwartzburg,  
*Managing Editor*

Kyle Houbolt, *Production*

Another Point, Inc., *Typesetting*

Warren's Waller Press Inc., *Printing*

### CALIFORNIA WATERFRONT AGE

(ISSN 8756-0852) is published four times a year by the California State Coastal Conservancy in association with the Paul F. Romberg Tiburon Center for Environmental Studies, San Francisco State University. Copyright © 1988 State Coastal Conservancy, all rights reserved. No part of this issue may be reproduced by any mechanical, photographic, or electronic process or otherwise copied for public or private use without written permission of the publisher. All opinions expressed are the responsibility of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the positions, official or otherwise, of either the State Coastal Conservancy or the Paul F. Romberg Tiburon Center for Environmental Studies. Direct all correspondence, including editorial submissions, to CALIFORNIA WATERFRONT AGE, State Coastal Conservancy, 1330 Broadway, Suite 1100, Oakland, CA 94612. Telephone (415) 464-1015. For information on the programs and projects of the State Coastal Conservancy, contact the Conservancy at the address or telephone number above.

**A**utomobiles are so much a part of coastal California that it is hard to imagine a scene without people in cars— young people with surfboards sticking out through the sun roof of an old VW, families in station wagons, seniors in campers and large sedans, four-wheel-drive trucks tearing across sand dunes. But it has not been thus for very long, and may not be for much longer.

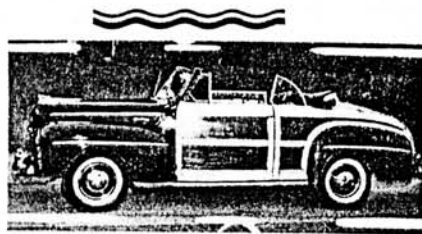
In the 1920s, Los Angeles had one of the biggest and best electric trolley systems in the nation. It carried more than 100 million people a year over 1,000 miles of tracks. In the San Francisco Bay area, 50 ferry lines plied the waters, linking communities by frequent runs.

It was in the 1930s, when the Bay Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge were built, that major ferries were abolished to pave the way for automotive vehicles. Between 1936 and 1946, General Motors, Firestone Tires, Standard Oil of California, and some others successfully conspired to wreck electric train systems in Los Angeles and over 40 other cities, and to replace them with gasoline-burning GM buses. The federal government brought a conspiracy suit in 1947 and nominal fines were levied, as CBS reminded on "60 Minutes" last December. But by that time the tracks had been torn out and the trolleys had been sold to more commonsensical European cities or had rusted in junkyards. In the 1950s, the federal highway program led to the demise of most American rail lines.

But now another era in transportation is on the horizon, forced into being by congestion on highways that were meant to be freeways and instead have degenerated into tedious corridors of chronic crawl. In San Diego, a new bright red trolley, built in Germany, connects downtown with coastal suburban communities all the way down to the Mexican border. It runs often, costs a reasonable fare, is highly popular, and is being expanded. Last year, an amazing 86.9 percent of costs were covered by fares.

Los Angeles is building the first phase of its Metro Rail line. Growing numbers of communities have instituted bus shuttles to carry beachgoers from inland parking lots to coastal attractions. In the San Francisco Bay area, where Marin and San Mateo counties have come to regret 1962 decisions not to go along with Bay Area Rapid Transit, a new BART line is in the works to link downtown with S.F. International Airport. New Municipal Railway lines are planned for San Francisco, and there is a growing clamor for restoring ferry service to take the tedium out of Bay crossings.

In the ensuing pages we look at some old and some new ways to go to the shore and along the coast, by land and by water; and we offer some notions on promising developments in public transit.



# Relief from Traffic Snarls

BY GAIL ODOM ROSEN

**I**T'S A HOT, SUNNY weekend morning. You decide to forget the laundry and spend the day at the beach. So you load the car with beach towels, chairs, food and drink, perhaps also the dog and your significant other, and you head for the coast. And then you remember what else you forgot: the traffic.

Eventually you arrive at the last intersection, wait through several green lights for your turn to cross, and are almost there. Now all you need is a parking space. The pay lot near the beach is full, of course, so you circle neighborhood streets until you realize only residents are permitted to park there. In nearby commercial areas you see 75 cents an hour meters. By the time you have finally shed your vehicle—several long blocks from the warm sand you had in mind—some of the morning's joy has worn away.

A familiar scenario. But there is an alternative, and it is increasingly popular on the California coast. More and more communities have introduced shuttle systems designed to get people out of their cars before they clog beach neighborhoods. Seven publicly operated systems now exist between San Diego and Santa Cruz. In addition, at Dana Point Harbor in Southern Orange County, a privately run shuttle is operated by the Dana Point Harbor merchants' association. Recent attempts to operate private shuttles in Redondo Beach and Manhattan Beach proved unsuccessful, however.

A successful shuttle service is reliable and runs often along popular routes. Fares are low or free. Parking is provided near the boarding stop, also at low price or free. The service is locally supported and viewed locally as necessary. It is aggressively and imaginatively promoted. It exists in coastal communities where traffic congestion and lack of parking near the beach have made driving an unattractive alternative. The seven public shuttle systems here described are all successful in their own unique settings. They have operated from one to ten years, mainly in the summer. (See accompanying charts for more details.)

## **Santa Cruz Shuttle**

Santa Cruz is famous for its swimming and surfing, and also for its colorful boardwalk amusement park. Just west of the boardwalk and beach, the Santa Cruz wharf is also a major attraction with restaurants, shops, and fishing spots.

But getting there is a matter of navigating "between a zoo and a gridlock," says Spencer Wyant of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District. "It's an incredible mess." Therefore, for 9 of the past 12 years, the city of Santa Cruz has operated a beach shuttle. The shuttle runs from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend.

The 45-passenger bus starts at the government center parking lot and runs to the waterfront, stopping en route at the Metro transit center, in front of a retirement home across the street from the Boardwalk, and at other well-chosen spots.

Of the 23,000 shuttle passengers in 1986, three-fourths were headed for the Boardwalk, and 89 percent said their main reason for riding was to avoid parking problems. A surprising 53 percent were local residents.

Shuttling to the beach is attractive for several reasons: metered parking is 75 cents an hour near the waterfront and is scarce. Parking availability has been further diminished by the start of a resident permit parking program in the vicinity of the beach, and by elimination of parking along congested routes during peak use hours to create shuttle lanes. The shuttle now can move quickly, even in dense traffic.

This summer, the city has cut the interval between shuttle runs to 10 to 15 minutes by adding a third bus. A separate free shuttle service also runs from a remote parking lot, for wharf employees and visitors.

Service was improved this year through the efforts of a new Beach Shuttle Task Force, composed of public officials and business people, which raised funds by introducing day sponsorships: a business or organization may pay the cost of a day's service (\$300), and

in exchange may promote products, events, or its name on buses that day by putting up signs or passing out samples.

The Seaside Company, which operates the Boardwalk, sponsored the shuttle one day in May during a special corporate event. Sponsors of the Wharf to Wharf race in July will run the shuttle free, with extended service, on the day of that event.

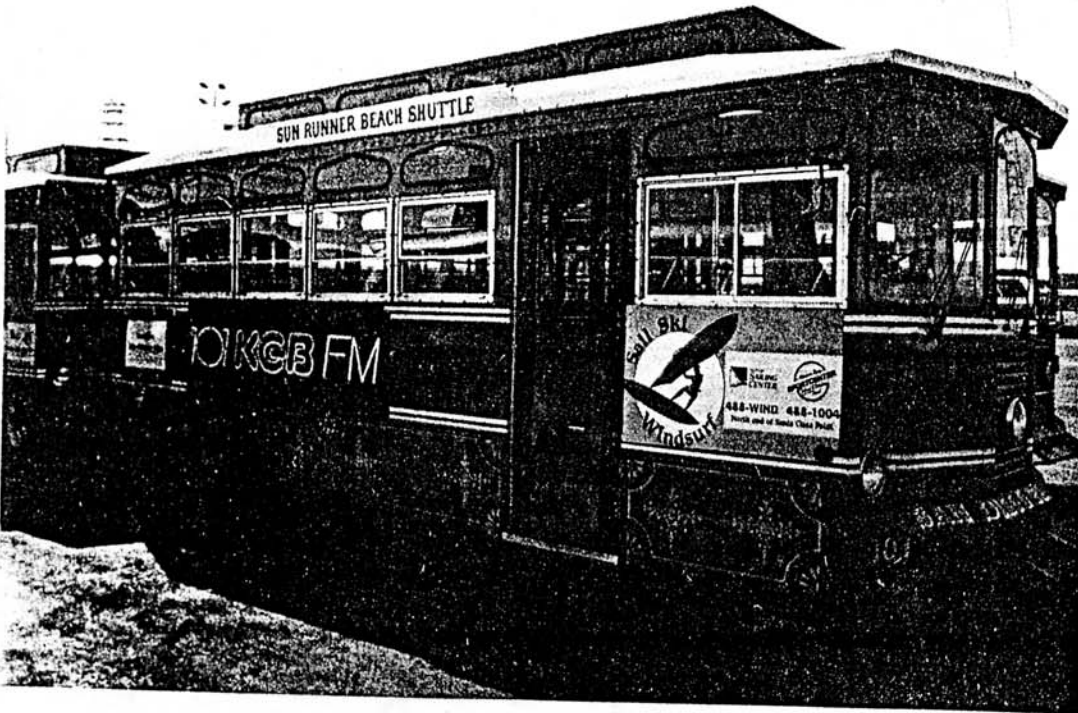
The 1987-88 operating budget of \$29,500 includes \$17,600 from the city's hotel tax, \$4,400 from fares, and \$7,500 from business and service organizations through sponsorships. The business community has also pledged additional funds for more promotion.

Since it was launched in 1976, the shuttle has been operated by the city of Santa Cruz under contract to the Metropolitan Transit District. But the City Council has urged a shift to wholly private funding and operation by 1991. As a first step toward becoming an independent body, the task force will be transformed into a board of directors.

### Capitola Beach Shuttle

Just south of Santa Cruz on Monterey Bay, the small beach city of Capitola, said to be the oldest seaside resort on the Pacific, offers excellent family swimming beaches, surf sports, and picturesque Victorian buildings. The wide esplanade, lined with benches facing the ocean, leads to a sandy beach and a municipal fishing wharf. Capitola is so delightful that, according to City Manager Steve Burrell, "some residents don't want to encourage more tourists by providing more . . . facilities."

Visitors, however, bring revenue. The city receives \$85,000 a year in hotel taxes, \$25,000 from the village business license parking assessment fee, and \$300,000 from parking meters. The shuttle is one way to welcome visitors while at the same time diminishing negative impact on residents. Burrell estimates that up to 30,000 people rode the shuttle last year, about the same number as in 1986.



The buses run daily in summer months and on winter weekends, winding from the free parking lot through outlying residential areas and the thriving commercial district, to the esplanade. Signs visible from Highway 1 direct visitors to the parking lot adjacent to New Brighton Beach State Park.

As in Santa Cruz, congestion was the catalyst for starting the service ten years ago. Installation of meters in the commercial area aggravated parking problems on residential streets. Then parking permits for neighborhood residents were introduced, further stimulating interest in better ways to get to the shore. A young man from Merced recently chose to ride a shuttle, for instance, because he had received a \$30 parking ticket for leaving his car on a residential street.

The first shuttle was a horse-drawn wagon that carried only a handful of people and had limited success. The city then contracted with the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District for a more conventional approach. The \$75,000 cost is met from the city's general fund. Costs are \$75,000 a year.

The shuttle has helped to control peak conditions at the beach. To provide more con-

venient access at other times, in 1985 the city bought a mobile home park near the beach and redeveloped half of it as a metered parking lot, doubling available parking space in the beach area.

### **Monterey Free Shuttle**

Cannery Row . . . is a poem, a stink, a grating noise, a quality of light, a tone, a habit, a nostalgia, a dream. Cannery Row is . . . sardine canneries of cor-



COURTESY MONTEREY SALINAS TRANSIT

GAIL ROSIN



rugated iron, honky tonks, restaurants, and whore houses, and little crowded groceries, and laboratories and flophouses.

The nostalgia is about all that remains of the Cannery Row John Steinbeck described in a 1945 book by that name. Canneries and houses of ill repute have been replaced by hotels, shops, and a unique aquarium. But the crowds that flock to Monterey have continued to grow, drawn by both history and by present attractions.

In 1984, the instant success of the Monterey Bay Aquarium led an astounded mayor to say nobody had expected such traffic and parking problems. In response to the crush, city officials contracted with Monterey-Salinas Transit to operate a free shuttle service linking downtown, wharf, Cannery Row, and the aquarium. Long-term parking was provided at a city garage for \$3 a day. The garage is close to several hotels and to the wharf, making it easy to board the shuttle.

Buses run daily during the summer, every 15 to 20 minutes. The ten-minute ride offers stunning views of the bay and attracts residents as well as visitors. One recent afternoon, an elderly Pacific Grove couple was aboard, having taken a long walk to the waterfront and now riding part-way home. About 20 percent of the riders are locals.

The shuttle works because it is free, frequent, and fun. Its success has exceeded all expectations. An amazing 87 percent of its operating costs are covered by parking revenue from passengers who leave their cars at city garages.

Promotion has been a major key to success, according to Jo Lyons, administrative assistant in Monterey's Public Facilities Department. She said most riders learn of the service from on-street signing. Many others find out at hotels, motels, or by radio. Signs posted along major roads entering Monterey direct visitors to listen to a local AM station for up-to-date shuttle information.

Here as in Capitola, however, the successful effort to get people out of cars has been affected by the provision of new and inexpensive parking space near the beach. Interim parking lots at the south end of Cannery Row offer 350 parking spaces and charge 50 cents an hour. The city has announced it will reduce winter shuttle sched-

ules. By December, a 1,000-car parking lot will open two blocks from the aquarium in Cannery Row, and shuttle service will be discontinued. The city may find that it has to reinstitute the shuttle as Cannery Row continues to develop.

### ***Santa Barbara Shuttle***

Further down the coast, Santa Barbara shoppers and visitors can ride minibuses for ten blocks along State Street, the city's main artery, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. daily, every ten minutes. There are stops, upon request, at every block. The Santa Barbara Transportation Corporation operates this shuttle under a city contract.

This downtown-oriented service began in 1985 as a commuter shuttle between two commuter parking lots and downtown and was expanded to run on State Street in 1986. The city plans a further extension to the waterfront and the popular Stearns Wharf after a highway underpass construction project is completed.

Annual operating costs of \$222,500 are met mainly by city general funds, though parking lot revenue contributes 29 percent of the total cost. The city is exploring additional funding sources. Last winter, local business sponsors paid to repaint all four buses in a holiday theme. Each business' employees then rode them in the downtown Christmas parade. The shuttle is also promoted on radio, in newspapers, posters, and brochures.

Angela Dukes, transportation management coordinator for the city, attributes the shuttle's success to effective marketing, community support, high visibility, attractive and comfortable vehicles, personable shuttle drivers, and reliable, convenient service.

### ***Agoura Hills/Malibu Beach Bus***

If you're a teen-ager in the Greater Conejo Valley, one place you'll almost certainly want to go is Malibu. But how to go? Until recently the only way was to drive.

This made the city of Agoura Hills think of providing a shuttle as a safer alternative, modeled after a successful one already running in the Topanga Canyon area of Malibu, 15 miles from Agoura Hills.



GAIL ROSEN

**A Capitola beach shuttle stop.**

A shuttle bus operated by a private contractor now makes five round-trips daily, Monday through Saturday, June 27 through September 3, stopping at Agoura High School and four other locations. Riders under 18 without an adult companion need a picture pass to board. The pass, instituted to ensure appropriate behavior on the bus, is available upon application by parents.

This shuttle costs a modest \$30,000 annually and is funded from the city's share of Proposition A, the county transportation tax (earmarked for transit in Los Angeles County), and \$6,000 from fares. Audrey Brown, recreation supervisor at the Agoura Hills Parks and Recreation Department, which manages the shuttle program, said the beach bus has met their expectations. Westlake Village, another Valley community, has launched a similar program.

### **DASH Venice**

What Greenwich Village is to New York, Venice is to Los Angeles—a picturesque district with a bohemian tradition and plenty of local color. High rents have driven many of the artists who made Venice famous out to obscure locations, but the mystique remains and Venice Beach remains an attraction.

In 1987, parking and traffic congestion prompted the city of Los Angeles to develop DASH ("Downtown Area Short Hop") Venice, a shuttle running from Washington and Venice boulevards to the beach every 15 minutes.

"The service was very successful last year. It is a good system," said Helene Jacobs, transportation planning associate for the city's transportation department.

There is a \$3 shuttle parking fee, which allows all occupants of the car to ride the shuttle free. Round-trip fare is 50 cents. Fees from parking and the shuttle, both operated by private contractors for the city, offset 33 percent of almost \$30,000 in operating expenses. The balance comes from the LA County half-cent sales tax for transit.

Dedicated parking is vital to the success of DASH Venice. Planned construction of 120 parking spaces for shuttle passengers may increase ridership.

### **San Diego Sun Runner**

Pacific Beach and Mission Beach are densely populated residential beach communities with frontage on the ocean as well as on Mission Bay. In the 1920s, the Belmont Park amusement center was constructed at Mission Beach to stimulate real estate sales. A large swimming pool, the Plunge, remains open, and the roller coaster is being restored. Crystal Pier in Pacific Beach, opened in 1926 to attract land buyers, is the only West Coast pier that provides lodging over the ocean. The communities are connected along the ocean and the bay by promenades popular with strollers, bicyclists, and skateboarders.

Beach traffic is a concern for the Pacific and Mission Beach communities, and parking spaces are in short supply. In 1982, the city of San Diego initiated a private jitney beach shuttle during the peak summer months. The fare was \$1 each way—and only 14 passengers chose to ride on an average day.

In 1983, at the city's invitation, San Diego Transit launched the Sun Runner, with a 25-cent fare. More than 10,000 people rode it the following year. In 1985, small, easy-to-manuever trackless trolleys were introduced, with strong promotion, and the route was tailored to beachgoers' needs. Ridership jumped to 17,000.



## Beach Shuttles

	Santa Cruz	Capitola	Monterey	Sta. Barbara	Agoura Hills	Venice	San Diego
Route	Dwtn-beach	Lot near Hwy 1-beach	Dwtn-Cannery Row-wharf-aquar	Dwtn along State St.	High school - Malibu beach	Venice Blvd - beach	Pacific beach-Mission beach
1988 Schedule	Summer wkends 11am-6pm 10-15 mins	Apr-Sep wkends 9am-10pm 15 mins	Summer daily 9am-10pm 15-20 mins Fall-irreg'ly	Wkdays all year 10am-4pm 10 mins	6/27-9/3, M-Sat 8:15am-6:40pm 2 hrs	Summer wkends, hols 9am-7pm 15 mins	Summer, Wed-Sat 10am-6pm 20 mins
Round-trip Fare	50 cents	Free	Free	Free	\$1.50	Free w/pd prkg; 50 cents	50 cents
Shuttle Prkg # of Spaces	Free 750-850	Free 150	\$3/day 850	\$20/month 324	Free 328	\$3/day 130	Free 300
Riders/Service Hour	78	63 (summer) 14 (winter)	192	29	20	132	46
Riders/Service Day	511	570 (summer) 130 (winter)	2,500	432	200	1,184	368
Future Plans	More routes	Summer only	Ends 12/88	To wharf and beach	---	Expanded routes	---

## Shuttle Funding Characteristics

	Santa Cruz	Capitola	Monterey	Sta. Barbara	Agoura Hills	Venice	San Diego
Annual Operating Budget	\$29,500	\$75,000	\$155,000	\$222,500	\$30,000	\$29,200	\$36,400
Program Funding (\$1000s)	17.6 Hotel tax 7.5 Private 4.4 Fares	75 Gen fund	135 Prkg 10 City 10 Aquarium	65.4 Prkg 157.1 Gen fund	20 County transit tax 6 Fares	19.7 County 1/2¢ tax 9.5 Parking	30.5 Hotel tax 5.8 Fares
Fare Box/Parking Fee % Coverage	15%	0%	87%	29%	33%	33%	13%
City-owned Shuttle Parking Lots?	Yes, & one from county	w/bank loan; refin w/city bond issue	Yes--City bond issue	Yes--Redev funds	No--School dist allows use of lots	Yes	No--School dist allows use of lots
Parking Meter Fines? (shuttle area)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Beach Resident Permit Prkg?	Yes	Yes	Yes--Dwtn	Yes	No	No	No
Contact Person & #	Matt Farrell 408 429-3621	Steve Burrell 408 475-7300	Jo Lyons 408 646-3770	Angela Dukes 805 564-5392	Audrey Brown 818 889-9114	Helene Jacobs 213 485-4695	Linda Walker 619 238-0100

The Sun Runner illustrates the importance of marketing: promotion diminished in 1986 and ridership flagged. (The weather was also less favorable than usual.) The following year, a major promotion effort was mounted. Route maps were displayed at shuttle stops. Posters went up in shop windows in the beach area; flyers were distributed. A print

ad urged: "Don't leave for the Beach Without It." And behold, ridership in 1987 was 20,220—a 66 percent increase over 1986. To Linda Walker, the transit company's promotion specialist, this gain is phenomenal and shows that the public will use the shuttle when it is readily available and when the automobile has become an obstacle.

The 1987 operating costs for the Sun Runner were \$36,400. The city contributed \$30,500 in hotel tax funds, and fares brought in \$5,800. This year, the city approved slightly more than the estimated cost, for promotion. "We expect ridership to be the same as last year or better—unless we have a lot of bad weather. When it's grim, people don't come," Walker said.

### **Recipe for Success**

What do all of these shuttles have in common that is essential to their success?

*Local Need and Support for a Shuttle System.* Each of the coastal areas described is popular and crowded. Streets are heavily congested and parking is tight. In some cases, resident permit parking programs and parking meters further discourage parking near the beach, motivating visitors to ride the shuttle. Local residents, business owners, and government officials recognized that these conditions existed and had the local political will to begin a shuttle system.

*Shuttle System is Well-Conceived and Well-Operated.* Shuttles have to be reliable, run frequently, and operate on routes when and where people want to go. Adequate parking must be available in a garage, at a lot, or on the street, since most patrons will drive to the shuttle stop.

*Shuttle System Must be Aggressively Marketed.* Potential patrons need to be informed about the existence and advantages of the shuttle. Signs are important in directing motorists to the shuttle parking and to shuttle stops. Route maps at shuttle stops may be helpful. Some cities have produced written material and have made it available at the Chamber of Commerce and local hotels and motels. Publicizing the shuttles in the local media and other obvious marketing efforts can attract riders. Flyers at local events and posters in merchants windows have been used. Shuttle promotion is one area where creativity can be used to the utmost advantage.

*Shuttle System Must be Financially Supported by Community.* The annual costs of the shuttle systems examined here range from \$29,200 to \$222,500, though only three of the systems cost more than \$45,000. The Monterey

FreeShuttle, the second most costly at \$155,000, has the highest fare box coverage. An amazing 87 percent of costs are reimbursed by parking garage revenue. Having this extent of fare box coverage is certainly helpful, but Capitola has operated its shuttle for ten years without any direct fare box coverage at all. Each system has a unique formula for paying for operating and promotion costs. In addition to fare or parking fees, other sources of public funding include hotel tax revenue, general fund revenue, parking district revenue, and special transportation taxes. Santa Cruz has also relied in part on contributions from the businesses that benefit from having the shuttle service.

### **Future of Shuttle Systems**

The Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara, and Venice shuttles will be adding new routes to meet community demand. Capitola has reached a good level of service after many years of operation and, with the recent development of a large metered parking lot, will only operate its shuttle in the summer. The Agoura Hills and San Diego systems anticipate no changes in the near future.

Unfortunately, Monterey will cease operation entirely in December, when the 1,000-car parking garage opens near the aquarium in Cannery Row.

Will other communities initiate new shuttle systems? The success of these seven systems and the continuing growth in coastal development and recreation seem to suggest that the answer is yes.

*For more information on shuttle operations, contact Conservancy Urban Waterfronts Program staff at (415) 464-1015 or the contact people shown on shuttle funding chart.* □

*Gail Odom Rosen is a project analyst for the Conservancy's Urban Waterfronts Program.*