



UNION STATION'S VISIONARY HEAD KEN PRATT TRAVELS BACK TO THE FUTURE TO RESTORE L.A.'S CROWN JEWEL TO ITS FORMER GLORY

Native Angeleno Ken Pratt has vivid childhood memories of one of his older brothers intently restoring the burgundy finish of a classic '40 Ford Woody.

It may not be a '40 Ford Woody but now the apple of the 66-year-old Pratt's intensely gazing eye is something equally iconic and "transporting"...Los Angeles' renowned Union Station.

A place where indeed, millions are transported. He wants it to also be a place that is not only a gateway to other cities but a gateway to the best of Los Angeles.

Without leaving the station.

As Metro's 2012 handpicked Director for Union Station Property Management overseeing the overall management and operation of the landmark, the fiercely determined Pratt is set on re-imagining the iconic bustling transportation center in the heart of Los Angeles, into the actual cultural heart of Los Angeles. Metro's vision is one of arts, entertainment and culture -- forged into a vital new connection with a community of over eight million Angelenos.

That's a long way from a building that had fallen into disrepair and was a bit of an afterthought to the city. And a bit further then being actively engaged in the development and execution of Metro's long-range master Plan, created to enable the station to better handle the growing number of transit riders and high-speed rail.

As a philanthropist and committed advocate for children, serving on the Board of Directors for the Orange County Council of the Boy Scouts of America, and leadership roles with the Santa Ana Boys and Girls Club and the Character Education program of the Orange County Learning for Life, Pratt sees another opportunity to give something back to the community.

“We want the station to become something extremely special to residents,” Pratt said. “We’re bringing back Union Station as a real destination – a place for fun adventures in art, design and performance arts for the public to enjoy. We want it to re-introduce itself with the elegance of the past and the vibrancy of today.”

Pratt brings four decades of experience in real estate property management to Union Station. In those 40 years of being associated with massive developments, high rises and retail destinations one thing became clear to Pratt: “You see what preceded the project, what it became and what it is to become,” he said. “Often it can be very challenging. I wanted the station to be elegant again and all it could become.”

Pratt’s CV includes stints traveling throughout the country with such development-related companies as Old Republic Commercial Title, Merrill Lynch Realty, North American Title, Sperry Van Ness, Marcus & Millichap and Peninsula Investment Real Estate.

But long before his leadership roles at Metro and those companies, in the 1950s, the Station was a familiar place to Pratt’s family. “We came regularly to hop on the ‘San Diegan’ train and visit relatives in Orange County.” he said. “The magnificence, grandeur and scope of it was really quite spectacular,”

“Future generations deserve to feel the same energy,” he said.

The same energy exuded by brother Norris’ shimmering 40 Ford Woody. “I just want more people to be able to step inside this time,” Pratt said with a grin.