BART opening goes smoothly for AC Transit

AC Transit shifted smoothly into a new bus system on Monday, September 11—"Day One" for BART operations in the East Bay.

There were no real problems in re-routing and rescheduling bus lines to serve the ten BART stations in the District's operating area between Fremont and BART/MacArthur, according to General Manager Alan L. Bingham.

A total of 69 bus lines serve BART stations. Four new lines were inaugurated; 23 were rerouted; 35 were rescheduled to make good connections with rapid transit trains; one line was abandoned.

The switch in service—one of the largest and most complicated in bus transit history—went off with complete efficiency, Bingham said.

All buses made their schedules, although the change-over came at one of the busiest times of the year for AC Transit.

Along with BART's opening, Sept. 11 was the first day of school. The District had a new system sign-up—the time when operators may change lines on the basis of seniority. This also was the annual period when drivers could change operating divisions—and many did.

Despite this combination, operations went off without a hitch.

Supervisors were at each BART station to check on operations and to answer the public's questions about service.

Other AC Transit personnel, including training instructors, distributed "I WAS THERE" buttons which observed BART's "Day One." The buttons carried AC Transit and BART emblems, along with the date.

Although the public used buses to BART only for a portion of the day, AC Transit collected 1490 transfers. Passengers using BART can ride free, within one fare zone, on AC Transit buses by obtaining transfers before they leave BART.

In addition to regular service, AC Transit operated a horsecar in Hayward and a motorized cable car in Oakland to commemorate the historical significance of a new transit era. Both vehicles carried full loads most of the day.

Records for phone calls to AC Transit's information center received 5175 calls on Sept. 11 and 4601 calls the next day, compared to a normal count of 3500 to 3700.

Most of the calls concerned BART operations, including fares, travel times, schedules, and where and how to transfer to and from buses. More than 1000 written inquiries were received, most of them concerning new bus schedules.

With the opening of BART, veteran riders recalled curious events of yesteryear:

"I was on the first electric car entering Hayward in 1932. The trip was halted by a 6 by 8 inch timber projecting onto the rails. A good man with an axe appeared and cut off 2/6 feet of the timber to the applause of the excited car-load." Arthur L. Jordan, Alameda.

"The 'fighting conductor' is what they used to call me when I was boxing under the name of Jack Davis and working for Key System. I fought 'Battling Nelson' from San Leandro." Herman J. Whitaker, Palm Springs.

"The old electric cars used to shake more than today's busses. There was a big dance hall at the end of the line in Hayward where people used to go on Saturday night to have fun." Mrs. Mary F. Silva, Hayward.

"We used to snitch rides on the back of horsecars when we were kids around University Ave." Harry Borcher, Pleasant Hill.

"My father could afford a car and he never understood how a street car ride could be so fascinating to a little boy." W. H. Arnold, Castro Valley.

"I rode on the first Key System electric train to the San Francisco Ferry. At the end of the pier it got so stuffy people broke the windows out so they could get some air." Mrs. Elsie Culver, Oakland.

MEMORY BUTTON — Arthur Jordan, of Alameda, gets a "Day One" button at the opening of the BART Fruitvale station from AC Transit Supervisor Herman Drinkard. Jordan, who was an honored guest at the ceremonies, is no newcomer to public transportation. He was on hand in 1892 for the first run of the Oakland, San Leandro, Hayward's Electric Railway Company. His uncle, an electric car conductor, arranged for the then 16-year-old Jordan to be one of the first passengers.

Walter R. Martin, 36, of Concord has been appointed Assistant to the Controller-Treasurer for AC Transit. Martin formerly was a financial analyst with Lone Star Industries of San Francisco.

A graduate of St. Mary's College, Moraga, with the class of '55, Martin served in the United States Air Force as an airman.

Martin, his wife, Mary, and their six daughters, ranging in age from three to 15, live at 3715 Hillsborough Dr., Concord.
AC Transit will hold the line on property taxes this year at the former rate of 31.1 cents per $100 assessed valuation. The tax rate, adopted late last month by the Board of Directors, is a consolidation of the 30.9 cents levied in Alameda County and the 32.2 cents levied in Contra Costa County. The rates are different to equalize different assessment ratios in the two counties.

The board also adopted a revised operating estimate of $28,528,036 for the 1972-73 fiscal year. The new estimate forecasts a $12,516,836 deficit which the board expects to fund to local property tax and Federal and State monies.

The board authorizing the filing of a claim for $4,736,117, from state gasoline sales tax money generated within AC Transit boundaries, to meet the deficit, help purchase 85 new coaches and fund other capital needs.

### Bridge toll for buses reduced

Tolls for buses crossing the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge will be reduced from 50 cents to ten cents per round trip, as the result of action taken this month by the California State Toll Bridge Authority.

Also, buses and car pools will get a “green light” to pass through the toll plaza under a new traffic signal plan.

Long range plans approved “in principle” by the Authority call for eventual demolition of the Transbay Transit Terminal and construction of facilities for bus operations, plus an office building.

The latest toll reduction, the fourth in six years, will be effective within the next few months.

AC Transit, which now pays bridge tolls of $137,000 per year, will save about $110,000 a year.

The savings expectantly will be used to improve service, to attract more motorists out of their cars and into buses to help relieve auto congestion on the span.

The Bridge Authority's first toll reduction on Sept. 1, 1966, was from $1.50 to $1 per round trip.

On April 1, 1970, tolls were cut to 65 cents per round trip.

On Oct. 1, 1970, the current rate of 50 cents per round trip went into effect.

### Innovative new buses being built

Innovative new buses—quieter, more comfortable, and which will emit substantially less smoke and odor than coaches in use today—are being developed by three major manufacturers under a unique federally-sponsored competition.

The program, sponsored by the Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration, calls for the building of nine advanced prototype urban transit buses.

The best design will be incorporated into an industry standard for future buses purchased under UMTA's capital grants program.

Subcontracts, totaling $18 million, have been awarded to Rohr Industries of Chula Vista, California; AM General Corp. of Wayne, Mich., and General Motors Truck and Coach Division of Pontiac, Mich.

Each manufacturer will build three buses of a similar design—with slightly different construction details. Propulsion systems will vary in cost.

Rohr, with a $5.1 million contract, includes a regenerative gas turbine engine.

General Motors' design, under a $7.2 million contract, includes a regenerative gas turbine.

All propulsion systems will be virtually smokeless and odorless, with emission levels below the 1973 California Heavy Duty Vehicle Standards, considered the toughest in the nation.

The buses will have a top speed of 70 miles per hour for freeway travel.

One model of each prototype will contain advanced designs to provide easy access for individuals in wheel chairs. Extra wide doors, improved lighting and low, single-step entries will accommodate the needs of the aged and the handicapped. Each bus will be nearly one foot lower than present transit vehicles.

Noise levels are to be reduced by 50 percent or more.

Passenger area improvements include padded seats, increased knee room, improved climate control, tinted shatterproof windows and a smoother ride.

The first prototype is to be delivered by mid-1973. The overall program will require about two years.
Federal government approves Super Bus project; Freeway Train was springboard for study

A new super bus project, which may change the pattern of future urban transportation, moved into action this month with the award of a $226,080 grant by the U.S. Urban Mass Transportation Administration.

AC Transit’s successful experimentation with its articulated bus, the Freeway Train, acted as a springboard for the nation-wide project.

The grant to National Transportation Center in Pittsburgh, Pa., will allow analysis of the feasibility of using high-capacity buses, such as articulated buses or double-deckers, in American cities.

AC Transit, which—since March, 1966—has operated the only modern double bus in urban transit in the United States, is one of seven transit properties participating in the feasibility project.

Others include: Dallas Transit System; Port Authority of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh; City of Chicago; Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority; Southern California Rapid Transit District and the New York Transit Authority.

Together the agencies carry one-half the nation’s revenue passengers.

Alan L. Bingham, general manager of AC Transit, is chairman of the National Consortium of Transit Operators which will supervise the study and make decisions regarding layout and components.

The program has the goal of developing a bus with a substantially larger passenger carrying capacity.

The first phase will be concerned with vehicle specifications. After two prototypes are built and tested, plans call for a pre-production fleet of up to 100 vehicles which would be distributed to participants.

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, in announcing the grant, said the project was an unprecedented example of intergovernmental cooperation because of the financial and management involvement by the transit agencies.

UMTA Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal pointed out that high capacity buses will help eliminate rush-hour overcrowding by providing a seat for every passenger.

“This project may well take a page from the past, rewrite it to modern specifications and provide a major advance in comfort and convenience for bus riders in most of our big cities,” Villarreal declared.

July figures down from last year

Revenue and patronage figures for the month of July showed drops in all categories, compared to the same month one year ago, but there was one less workday in July this year.

Total passenger revenue for July was $1,132,915, 2.8 percent below the $1,165,908 collected during July, 1971. East Bay revenue was $589,721, 3.8 percent below the $613,021 dropped into fare boxes a year ago. Transbay revenue of $543,194 was 1.8 percent below the $552,887 collected one year earlier.

Commute book sales totaled $250,165, down 0.9 percent from sales of $252,492 during the same month a year ago.

AC Transit buses carried 3,687,839 passengers during July, 2.9 percent below the 3,796,981 carried during the month of July, 1971. East Bay buses carried 2,652,192 riders, 3.3 percent below the 2,722,424 who rode during the same month a year earlier. On transbay lines, patronage for the month totaled 1,055,647, 1.8 percent below the July, 1971, figure of 1,074,557.

Operating costs during July were $1,978,035, 2.4 percent above year-ago expenses of $1,931,284. The system operated 1,985,817 miles of service, 1.9 percent below the July, 1971, mileage of 2,024,328.

Total income, including anticipated revenue from the new State sales tax on gasoline, was $2,276,507, leaving a surplus of $93,974 — sufficient to cover operation costs, depreciation and bond debt requirements.

The District anticipates a surplus early in the year to provide funds to offset additional expenses to be incurred later in the year as new services are operated to BART stations.
Actions of the Board

At an adjourned regular meeting Aug. 30, the Board of Directors:

- Awarded contract for supplying destination sign material to The Nycal Co., Inc., on motion of Director Daughtry.
- Awarded contract for furnishing bus stop signs to Kresky Signs, Inc., subject to concurrence by Urban Mass Transportation Administration, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Awarded contract for supplying destination sign material to The Nycal Co., Inc., on motion of Director Daughtry.
- Awarded contract for furnishing bus stop signs to Kresky Signs, Inc., subject to concurrence by Urban Mass Transportation Administration, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Adopted revised operating estimate for fiscal year 1972/73 on motion of Director Daughtry. (See story, Pg. 4)
- Adopted a consolidated tax rate of 31.1 cents per $100 assessed valuation, on motion of Director Daughtry.
- Authorized General Manager to file a claim with Metropolitan Transportation Commission for 1972/73 for gasoline sales tax funds in the amount of $4,736,117, subject to further meetings with BART to achieve concurrence, on motion of Director Daughtry.
- Approved plans for promotional activities relating to commencement of BART services, including no-fare operation of horsecar and motorized cable car, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Approved new labor agreement with International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 1245, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

Seven qualify for board election

Seven men qualified last month as candidates for the board of directors. Three directors on AC Transit’s seven member board will be elected at the Nov. 7 General Election for four-year terms beginning in January, 1973.

Candidates qualifying for Ward I are incumbent Claude Daughtry and Roy Nakadegawa, a civil engineer. Both men live in Berkeley.

Candidates qualifying for Ward II are incumbent William E. Berk and businessman George Dabney, Jr., Richmond.

The three candidates who qualified “at large” are incumbent Ray Rinehart of Oakland, industrial process planner J. Howard Arnold and business school official Richard Ivey, both of Berkeley.