Record ridership recorded
As more people use buses
New buses to be purchased
To meet growing ridership

AC Transit has telescoped its long range two-year equipment plans into a single year because of an unprecedented increase in ridership.

The bus system originally projected a need for 42 new buses this year and 78 buses in 1975. However, increased patronage resulted in a decision by the Board of Directors to seek 120 new coaches immediately, bringing the total AC Transit fleet to 933.

Bids on the new buses were opened late this month and were referred to staff for study and recommendation before award of contract.

The expected delivery date of the new buses has been projected before the end of the year.

Board member Appointments

Directors of AC Transit will serve as chairmen of the same committees for another year so work can continue without interruption, according to William J. Bettencourt of San Leandro, president of the board.

Reappointments, announced by Bettencourt, are:


Ray Rinehart, Oakland, director at large, chairman Finance Committee.

Roy Nakadegawa, Berkeley, representing Ward I, chairman Legislative and Land Committee.

Col. Robert M. Copeland, Kensington, director at large, chairman Personnel Committee.

William E. Berk, Richmond, representing Ward II, chairman Project Development Committee.

Bettencourt and Miss Kimi Fujii of Hayward, vice president, are ex officio members of all committees.

The new coaches are expected to ease the pressure caused by the increase in patronage.

On a week-to-week comparison with a year ago, overall ridership is up more than 16 percent. Transbay riding to San Francisco is up 21.3 percent and East Bay riding is up 14.1 percent.

Even more startling statistics can be seen when looking at specific services. The shuttle bus operated from BART/MacArthur rail station to San Francisco jumped from 284 patrons on the initial morning run eight months ago to 1,300 currently.

Sunday service to San Francisco is up 43 percent, while Sunday riding on the east side of the Bay is up 34 percent.

THE COVER—One of the busiest spots in the public transit picture is at BART/Hayward, where 3260 riders board AC Transit buses each day.

‘Pony Express’
For racing fans

The “Pony Express” is back.

Not the cross country mail service which operated a century ago, but AC Transit’s special bus service to Golden Gate Fields in Albany.

Racing got underway for the spring meeting Feb. 8, and fans traveled to the oval track on Line 94, which starts at Center St. and West Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, with a pick-up at the BART/North Berkeley station and direct service to the grandstand.

San Francisco fans catch their own “Pony Express” at the Transbay Transit Terminal for a 20-minute, direct non-stop ride to the track.

Last year during the racing season at Golden Gate, AC Transit buses carried a total of 228,701 riders.
PBX/Information expands Emeryville office space

The PBX/Information center has expanded its facilities by more than double to take care of an increasing number of telephone calls.

The center averages more than 4,500 calls each day, with many days peaking at 5,000 or more requests for information.

Calls in 1973 increased by 11 percent over the previous 12-month period, with 1,319,014 requests for assistance in 1973, up 134,616 calls from the 1,184,425 received the previous year.

In addition to the increase in number of calls, each request is taking longer to process. The average time has tripled, indicating many questions are coming from new riders who are unfamiliar with the bus system.

About 1,100 square feet of space has been added at the Emeryville information center to accommodate the 33-member staff.

The space was made available last month when the scheduling department was moved from Emeryville to the general offices at 508 16th St., Oakland.

The expanded department will also provide offices for a senior clerk and a training supervisor.

"We really needed the additional room," says Mrs. Zada Malinak, customer service supervisor. "With the increased interest in public transportation, we have been swamped with requests."

With the expanded area, PBX/Information will be able to have four wheels - tables which are specially constructed by carpenter Walter T. Malek under the direction of Carl A. Knutson, building maintenance foreman.

The wheels, or informational tables, are partitioned and have space for six information clerks to work simultaneously at each wheel.

Currently there are two wheels, a third is under construction, and space is available if it becomes necessary to produce a fourth.

Pocket schedules in record demand

Distribution of pocket timetables for AC Transit buses has jumped by more than three-quarters of a million in the last year.

In 1972, 2,000,000 schedules were printed and circulated. During last year, 2,683,000 pocket timetables were given out, an increase of 677,000.

The schedules provide information covering AC Transit's 133 basic lines.

The increase in demand for timetables has been exceeded only by an increase in the cost of production.

In 1972, AC Transit spent $23,381.92 to have schedules printed. For 1973, the figure was $41,934.14.

Bigler and Holbrook die

After long transit careers

Erwin A. Bigler, a 20-year employee, and Willard E. Holbrook, a pensioner, died last month.

Bigler, a driver since July 21, 1943, was stricken by a heart attack Jan. 18. He was 57. Bigler is survived by his wife Ruth, of Oakland, and his daughter, Andrea Geis of San Leandro.

Holbrook had worked in public transportation for 33 years before his retirement on March 1, 1969. He was 69 at the time of his death, Jan. 10.

Holbrook is survived by his wife Ida, of Hayward.

Response to Dial-a-Ride bus

Reflects passenger enthusiasm

"My goodness, gracious, what have we got here?"

The remark, by an older passenger, may have been a little more exuberant than most, but it was a spontaneous response when she stepped, for the first time, into AC Transit's little Dial-a-Ride bus.

The bus, scheduled to go on a Dial-a-Ride system in Richmond, is being used in regular revenue service on various lines to test passenger response and driver reaction.

The small bus, cut down to 29 feet long from a standard 35 foot long bus and entirely remodeled inside, has carpeting, side paneling, wider seats and a large package rack up front.

Passengers definitely liked it. Some of the comments were:

Paul Cordell, Oakland: "Restful colors, bright but not annoyingly so. It's a very pleasant vehicle."

Elia Terry, Oakland: "Nice, very nice. I like the carpets and the seat arrangement."

Hannah Mott of Oakland said: "It's really nice! I like everything about it. It's really too classy for this line."

Clara Haskell of Berkeley enthused: "It's really great! I like the carpeting. I like the seating. I like the seat style. The package rack is a good idea. There isn't anything I don't like!"

Driver receives Praise for help

Driver D. L. Rostomily has been commended for his assistance in finding a 10-year-old Berkeley girl who did not arrive home after school.

Rostomily radioed a description of the girl to central dispatch and other drivers were notified to watch for her.

Rostomily located the girl shortly after the central dispatch report went out and saw that she arrived home safely.

All divisions beat Safe driving goal

All three divisions topped the District safe-driving goal of 13,250 miles per accident during the month of January.

Seminary operators led the way by traveling the most accident-free miles. They averaged 16,599 miles without a passenger or traffic accident.

Richmond drivers scored 15,799 miles of safe driving per accident, and Emeryville operators had an average of 15,410 safe miles per accident.
THE ART OF BUS RIDING—Fifth grader Cynthia Dawn Deyse of Franklin School in Oakland offered her rendition of traveling to school by AC Transit. Her work is part of a coordinated program between the Oakland schools and the bus system to teach elementary school students how to ride the bus.

Oakland elementary schools Develop bus riding project

A program designed to teach elementary school children how to ride the bus and use AC Transit services to the fullest is currently underway in the Oakland schools.

Co-sponsored by the Oakland Unified School District and AC Transit, the project involves establishment of good relationships between students and the bus system.

A series of slides are being photographed showing students using buses for educational and recreational use.

A tape recording will be correlated with the slides for showing to the school system’s 30,000 elementary students.

Oakland school administrator Ellis S. Raderman says of the project, “We have entitled it, ‘Utilizing AC Transit Buses.’ In this day of fuel shortages we should all be concerned with the fullest use of our public transportation systems.”

The slide show and tape recording is expected to be completed by the end of the current school year, with actual presentation to begin in the fall with the opening of school, Raderman said.

One of the side benefits of the current pilot program being conducted at Franklin School is the use of bus transportation as a subject for various parts of the curriculum, Raderman said.

“We have kids who are writing poems about buses, painting pictures on how to use the buses, and just generally getting interested in the field of transportation,” Raderman said.

Although the project has only been in existence for about a month, Raderman said he felt it was already a success.

Shelters being sought
For passenger comfort

Bids for 20 new bus passenger shelters, with an option to buy 30 more, are currently being sought by AC Transit.

The shelters will be located in various cities and unincorporated areas throughout the district for riders’ convenience.

The free standing, bronze colored shelters will have plexiglass window panels and a translucent white roof to allow light to pass through.

Two-thirds of the cost of the shelters will be provided by federal funds and one-third will come from local sources.

All the initial 20 shelters will be seven feet high, but depth and length will vary. Ten shelters will be 10 feet long and five feet deep; five shelters will be 12 feet long and five feet deep; and five shelters will be 15 feet long and six feet deep.

The shelters are expected to be installed by fall.

Record ridership increases were registered in December, reflecting an upward trend in passengers carried over the last nine months compared to one year ago.

Total passenger revenue for the month was $1,277,004, up $115,097 or 9.9 percent more than the $1,161,907 collected during December, 1972. East Bay revenue was $649,614, up $34,055 or 5.5 percent above the $615,559 last year. Transbay revenue was $627,390, up $81,039 or 14.8 percent above the $546,351 collected last year.

Commuter book sales jumped 13.2 percent above last year, increasing $31,008 to $266,809, as opposed to the $235,801 collected in 1972 during December.

Buses carried 4,291,166 passengers in December, up 9.5 percent or 372,465 riders from the 3,918,701 carried the same month of 1972. East Bay riders totaled 3,009,184, or 197,413 more than last year’s figure of 2,811,771, an increase of 7.0 percent. On transbay lines, patronage jumped by 15.8 percent with 1,281,982 patrons riding, representing an increase of 175,052 above the December, 1972, figure of 1,106,930.

Nationally, the transit industry indicated an increase of 0.47 percent in total passengers carried in December.

Operating costs during December were $2,524,224, up $441,746 or 21.2 percent above year-ago expenses of $2,082,476. The system operated 2,211,554 miles of service during December, an increase of 124,337 miles or 6.0 percent above the 2,087,217 miles operated in December, 1972.

Total income of $2,567,816 left a deficit of $184,865 after meeting full bond debt requirements.
Actions of the Board

At an adjourned regular meeting January 23, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized General Manager to attend ATA Management Conference, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Approved installation of up to five interior advertising frames in additional 167 buses, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized rerouting of Lines T, 15, 72, 83 and 88 in Oakland due to redevelopment project, on motion of Director Berk.
- Approved rerouting of Line 14 on motion of Director Berk.
- Approved extension of Line 16 along E. 14th St. and San Leandro Blvd. to BART/Coliseum, on motion of Director Berk.
- Authorized extension of special service for Adams Junior High students, on motion of Director Berk.
- Authorized General Manager to request bids on 120 51-passenger buses, on motion of Director Berk. (See story, Pg. 3)

At a regular meeting February 13, the Board of Directors:

- Referred bids for 120 51-passenger buses to management for evaluation and recommendations, on motion of Director Rinehart. (See story, Pg. 3)
- Approved minor rerouting of Line 65, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Engaged Arthur Young and Co. to develop improvements in data processing operations, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized advertising for bids for surveillance camera system in Treasury Department, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized exercising option to purchase 15 two-way radios and advertising for bids for 60 additional, on motion of Director Rinehart.

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Return Requested