Rider totals
Increased 6%
In past year
Ridership reaches new highs

Ridership moved to new highs on AC Transit bus lines during the past calendar year, with all services — East Bay, transbay and suburban — showing healthy increases.

Overall passenger trips for the year totaled 59,293,839, an increase of 6 percent over the record-breaking total of 55,913,802 passenger trips in 1975. It was the highest number of riders carried since 1952, when Key System Transit Lines had patronage of 81 million. The following year, 1953, a 76-day strike shut down the system and ridership dropped to 50 million.

Constant growth
Both East Bay local lines and transbay lines showed constant growth during 1976, growth that is continuing, Alan L. Bingham, general manager, reported.

Passenger trips on East Bay lines totaled 43,787,618, an increase of 4.2 percent over the previous calendar year. Transbay buses carried 12,823,928 passenger trips, up 4.3 percent compared to 1975.

The growth rate was even greater in

THE COVER — Afternoon non-rush-hour riders wait to board a Line 51 bus at Santa Clara Ave. and Park St. in Alameda. They are part of the daily stream of AC Transit passengers who, last year, pushed ridership to record highs. Passenger trips for the year increased six percent over 1975.

January, with transbay lines running 6.5 percent ahead of December in patronage. Ridership has increased particularly on "long haul" transbay lines from Hayward, San Lorenzo, Richmond and Berkeley and on intercity express lines, Bingham added.

Service in Fremont and Newark has far surpassed consultant estimations, with 1,077,113 passenger trips carried during the year, an increase of 35.1 percent over the 745,640 the year before.

East Bay urban bus passengers are setting new ridership records on AC Transit buses, surpassing even the energy-conscious gas-problem days of March, 1974.

The previous East Bay record was made on March 4, 1974, when 157,348 used local service.

Two records were set by local passengers during February. The highest, on Feb. 18, showed 159,768 trips on East Bay lines. On Feb. 4, 158,922 rode local buses. Both figures were above records established during the peak of the energy crisis.

Bus service operated by the transit district under contract with BART, carrying people from suburban areas to BART stations, also has shown a surprising increase of 43.2 percent, with 1,017,698 passenger trips in 1976 compared to 710,946 the year before.

Fuller loads
Other contract services were operating with fuller loads than projected, but did not have a full year for comparison.

The Concord bus system had 501,870 passenger trips during the year, with an average of about 2400 riders per day. Service in Concord was inaugurated Sept. 8, 1975.

Contract service in Pleasant Hill, inaugurated Dec. 8, 1975, had ridership of 112,290 during the year, while Moraga-Orinda, inaugurated Sept. 13, 1976, had a patronage figure of 43,122.

Three out of four divisions met goal
For safe driving in February tally

Three out of four divisions met the safe driving goal for the month of February. Each did better than the month's goal of 13,250 miles driven per accident.

Newark Division recorded 41,686 miles per accident; Seminary Division tallied 17,200; and Emeryville Division completed 17,216. District-wide average for the month was 16,872 miles.
Two Directors plan resignations

Kimiko "Kimii" Fujii, president of the Board of Directors in 1975 and 1976 and first woman to serve on the board, will leave the Bay Area this summer to marry Ray Kitayama, who is in charge of his family's nursery operation in Brighton, Colo., where the couple plans to live. She expects to resign from the board before the wedding, scheduled to take place in Hayward.

Long prominent in Hayward civic activities, Director Fujii was appointed to represent Ward 5 in 1972 to fill a vacancy created by the death of E. Guy Warren. She was elected vice president in 1973. Subsequently, she has represented Hayward, Fremont and Newark, and an adjoining unincorporated area.

Director Fujii is associated with the wholesale and retail florist business, located on Soto Road in Hayward, founded by her family — Hayward-area pioneers in that field. She was named that city's Distinguished Citizen for 1972 for her "tireless effort to make our community a better place and her willingness to serve mankind by involvement."

She is chairman of the City of Hayward Public Services Commission and serves on the St. Rose Hospital advisory board. Previously she was a board member of the Oakland-Southern Alameda County Branch of the American Red Cross, a member of the Alameda County Commission for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, and was president of the Hayward Human Relations Commission. In addition, she has been involved politically in the Democratic party and has worked with the Eden Township chapter of the Japanese-American Citizens League.

Chester C. McGuire, Jr., of Berkeley, Director at Large, has been nominated by President Carter for assistant secretary for fair housing and equal opportunity in the Department of Housing and Urban Development subject to confirmation by the U.S. Senate.

He plans to resign from the board at the time of his confirmation. McGuire will be moving to Washington, D.C., with his wife, Julie, and three children following later from Berkeley.

Elected Director at Large by voters in November, 1974, he began his term on the board in January, 1975. The term was due to expire in January, 1979.

Under Transit District Law, fellow directors have 60 days from the time a resignation is effective to appoint another person to the post. If the appointment is not made, the governor of the state shall make the appointment.

McGuire has been at University of California in the department of City and Regional Planning since 1970, serving as acting assistant professor and, more recently, as lecturer. He also is vice president of Berkeley Planning Associates, a consulting firm. From 1968 to 1970, he was general manager of a San Francisco construction firm. Earlier, he attended a management training program at Chicago's Inland Steel.

A native of Gary, Ind., where he received his early education, McGuire graduated from Dartmouth College in 1958 with a BA in English literature, later obtaining an MBA and PH.D. from University of Chicago. He served as a Lieutenant (j.g.) in the Navy from 1959 to 1962, with duty on the Atlantic.

Major Bay transit operators join
In efforts to improve services

The six major Bay area transit operators have joined together in a new effort to improve regional transit coordination and operating efficiency.

Participating systems include AC Transit, BART, Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans, San Francisco Muni and Santa Clara County Transportation Agency.

Transit operators have established six joint working committees in the areas of service and fares, procurement, public information, management systems, maintenance, and personnel, training and affirmative action.

Each committee presently is establishing its own program of work and priorities which then face approval of the chief executives of the six operations.

Executives of the six systems will sit together once a month as the board of control of the Regional Transit Association of the Bay Area to give guidance and direction to the committee work, according to Alan L. Bingham, AC Transit general manager.

Bingham has been serving as chairman of the group during its organizational phase.

Other participating transit officials include Frank C. Herringer, BART general manager; Dale W. Luehring, Golden Gate Bridge District general manager; John T. Mauro, SamTrans general manager; Curtis Green, San Francisco Muni general manager, and James T. Pott, director of Santa Clara County Transportation Agency.

As chairman of the six committees are: James Gallagher, director of marketing and communications, SamTrans, chairman of the Public Information Committee; William Hein, director of planning, BART, chairman of the Services and Tariff Committee; Glenn Andrade, buyer plant and facilities supervisor, Golden Gate Transit, chairman of the Procurement Committee; Gerry Dunckel, systems manager, Santa Clara County Transportation Agency, chairman of the Maintenance Systems Committee; George Duarte, Muni deputy general manager, chairman of the Personnel Committee, and Robert J. Shamon, AC Transit personnel manager, chairman of the Technical Action Committee.

In addition, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission has been invited to have representatives at the committee sessions to further assist regional coordination, Bingham said.

Dial-A-Ride moves into two new zones

AC Transit Dial-A-Ride bus service will be expanded into two new zones in Fremont April 3.

The two new zones providing door-to-door public transit will be in the Brookvale area bordered by Board Road, Fremont Blvd., the Alameda County Flood Control Channel and Peralta Blvd. (Zone 2), and in the area between Black Road and the Nimitz Freeway between Peralta Blvd. and Stevenson Blvd. (Zone 7).

Passengers in Zone 7 will also be able to travel on request to and from the Treasury department store in Newark.

The two new areas bring the total of Dial-A-Ride zones operating in Fremont and Newark to eight, with ultimate projected plans calling for full Dial-A-Ride in the two communities.

Passengers may transfer between DAR buses in Zone 2 and 5 near the courthouse in Centerville (or between other adjacent zones) upon request.

Kimiko "Kimii" Fujii

Chester C. McGuire, Jr.
Les Minear heads Terminal crew serving transbay commuters

There's a lot of transit history connected with San Francisco's cavernous Transbay Transit Terminal. And, appropriately, AC Transit's "man at Transbay,"—Assistant Superintendent Les Minear—can recall most of it, for his transit experience pre-dates the 1939 construction of the First & Mission Sts. landmark—the exclusive preserve of buses since train service was phased out in 1958.

His service, in fact, dates from November 18, 1930, when—while still a 17-year-old student at Oakland's former University High School—he became a collector on Key System trains, where his father, who had been a railroader since 1906, was a brakeman. Thus, the landmark—the exclusive preserve of Transbay, "—Assistant Superintendent Terminal staff those early years, has now become one of the System's most senior active employees.

Terminal staff

His current responsibilities at the terminal (which he assumed in early 1975) include supervision of the staff of seven who, operating in shifts from 6 a.m. to midnight, sell tickets and provide information to a riding public which is sometimes difficult to handle. The problems of the function lie mainly in this area—serving the public—with whom, says Les, "You can't be temperamental or touchy."

The most senior of the ticket sellers, though, are highly experienced at the job: one's service dates from 1942 and two others started in ticket sales in the early 50's.

The terminal's operations are geared to each day's two passenger peak periods—the west-bound flow of commuters from about 6:30 to 9 in the morning and the eastbound evening rush from about 3:30 to 6:30.

During these peak periods, 42 lines are operating, carrying about 15,000 passengers into San Francisco in the morning and a slightly lesser number back to East Bay in late afternoon and early evening. Mid-day runs shrink to 12 lines—the same number that serve the terminal on Saturdays and Sundays. This adds up to about 15 million transbay passenger-trips a year.

This compares to the terminal's feverish World War II heydays, exemplified by the 45 million passenger-trips (34 million by bus, 11 million by train) recorded in 1945. Les recalls working a six-day week during the war as bus driver, then, from 1943, as supervisor, without taking a single day off because of illness. He describes this war-time period as "a challenge, but a lot of fun."

"Moving people, then," he says, recalling the hordes of servicemen and shipyard workers who had to be served, "required ingenuity, particularly because we were always understaffed."

The periodic black-outs, when vehicle headlights had to be turned off, complicated matters also, he remembers. On a Treasure Island run, for instance, the main source of illumination by which to guide a bus during a black-out was the white caps of the sailors on the street or, sometimes, a little reflection from the weak-wattage bulbs behind the blanked-out destination sign.

Before war

Prior to World War II, Les, as a "Miscellaneous Employee," worked as watchman, switch tender, and searchlight tender before he "broke in" as a motorman on Key System trains in 1935. He had a very apt teacher: the veteran conductor of the first rail run into Berkeley. For several years during the late 30's, Les worked freight, serving as switchman, motorman, and even chalking up some hours on a steam locomotive. His last stint on trains was in 1940.

His later career with the Key System includes a period in Central Dispatch, from 1951 until he moved to Emeryville Division as Assistant Superintendent in 1956. In the same capacity, he transferred to Richmond Division in 1957, to Emeryville again in 1971, and to Seminary in 1973.

Les' family includes his wife, a System employee for 27 years; six grown children; and about a dozen grandchildren, ranging from infancy to age 16. His eldest son is an Air Force colonel, a veteran of 25 years in the service.

At his San Leandro home, Les has a collection of transit memorabilia, which he hopes someday to donate to a museum.
Committees to begin Studies on elderly, Handicapped needs

Committees are being formed and a consultant chosen for a planning program to identify unmet transportation needs of elderly and handicapped in East Bay communities and to recommend possible solutions.

A Technical Support Committee of 23 representatives of agencies and groups now providing or funding transportation service for elderly and handicapped people will be working with AC Transit to provide expertise and operational perspective for the program.

A Citizens Advisory Committee, with 62 members, has been drawn from interested members of the general public, including representatives of social agencies, to give the users' viewpoint.

The program, which has a Sept. 30, 1977, deadline, moved further into the work stage with the signing of a contract with Crain & Associates, a Menlo Park firm, to assist with the project.

The consultants, chosen out of eight firms, appeared before the AC Transit project development committee on March 8 to report on steps involved in the study. The board approved their retention at a meeting on March 9.

The consultants will collect data on the elderly and handicapped in the AC Transit urban service areas through surveys, self identification and social service agencies. Information then will be analyzed and alternatives identified.

Cost/benefit analyses will be made of all solutions.

Gardiner takes post Of senior planner

Gene Gardiner, who joined AC Transit in 1961 as a driver, has been appointed senior transportation planner, according to Donald S. Larson, manager of research and planning.

Gardiner had been a transportation supervisor since 1966. However, prior to his present appointment, he had been functioning as transit planner/coordinator, including system design work on the Fremont/Newark service. He is AC Transit's representative for Eastern Contra Costa Transit Authority's service in Pittsburg, Antioch, and Brentwood, to be inaugurated in June.

After studies at Northern Michigan University, Gardiner performed as tenor with a musical production group. His talents have been utilized for several years in AC Transit's annual Christmas show for commuters at Transbay Terminal. Gardiner has been talent coordinator and m.c. for these shows.

Riders in Fremont and Newark achieved a record figure of two million passenger trips, recorded on March 9, reflecting steady growth since the system went into operation in November-December, 1974.

Signs posted on coaches proclaimed, "Another Record! Your bus system now has carried more than 2,000,000 passengers...."

POUND EXPRESS RECORD — AC Transit's special service to Golden Gate Fields for race track fans hit a high March 5 when the $150,000 California Derby was the feature race. Passenger trips to and from the track registered 7,622.

Low-patronage trips cut

AC Transit is continuing its program of cancelling late night and early morning bus trips which carry three passengers or less. Low-patronage trips cancelled this month, with annual savings of $60,159, were on the following lines:

- Line 14-Brookdale-Adeline
- Line 18-Park Boulevard
- Line 53-Fruitvale Avenue
- Line 56-Seminary Avenue-90th Avenue
- Line 59/S-Montclair
- Line 63-South Shore
- Line 64-San Jose Avenue
- Line 67-Spruce Street-Colusa Avenue
- Line 68-Roosevelt-Garvin-Nevillier
- Line 69-6th Street-23rd Street
- Line 76-Carlson-13th Street-Rheem
- Line 79-High Street
- Line 83-E. 14th Street

If you see lights Blinking, it's OK; We're just testing

Electronics, as a sign of the times, may be a sign of the future on AC Transit buses.

The District is experimenting with a new electronic bus destination sign to determine public reaction and driver response.

The sign, manufactured by Luminator Division of Gulton Industries, Inc. after six years of research, flashes letters and numbers up to 16 characters. Additionally, the "memory" of the electronic package enables the sign to carry up to 336 different three-line destination announcements or other information.

The four-inch-high messages are activated by the driver from a control box inside the bus and flash in three announcement sequences every one and one-half seconds.

The prototype even has a sign which reads: "Emergency. Call Police."

Cost of the electronic destination sign unit has not yet been announced by the manufacturer. It is being tested on various AC Transit bus lines in the East Bay and to San Francisco this month.

Ferry Boat Captain Elling Bonde Dies at age 87

Capt. Elling Bonde, 87, who started as a deck hand for Key System Ferries and worked his way up to captain — he was skipper of the ferry boat Yerba Buena when it made its historic last run between Oakland and San Francisco — died March 6 at Washington Manor Convalescent Hospital, San Leandro.
Dedicated riders
Help sell service
To new passengers
What people actually are saying about AC Transit is giving a new lift to an advertising campaign now in high gear in the Bay Area.

Anchorman for the campaign is Phil Villapiano, seen by millions in jersey number 41 as linebacker for the victorious Oakland Raiders in the 1976 Super Bowl.

To increase viewer interest, the gorgeous Super Bowl champ is not identified in TV commercials, becoming AC Transit's on-camera mystery man.

Riders polled
The theme of using passengers to promote AC Transit also prompted on-street interviews of riders for newspaper advertising and 30-sheet outdoor posters.

The bus system's advertising agency employed an all-female team to glean patron opinion from throughout the District. Photographs were taken of those interviewed, with their pictures, initials and brief quotations to be used in newspaper ads.

Of more than 75 persons interviewed, all were familiar with AC Transit and, the ad agency reported, no one person expressed a negative comment.

The ads feature a picture and quote of Villapiano at the top followed by several accounts from car-owning citizens who prefer to use public transit.

Radio 'spots'
The TV spots using Villapiano aroused so much interest that it was decided to use him for radio commercials as well. In one radio spot, his first name is finally used; he identifies himself only as "Uncle Phil."

Villapiano interviews five AC Transit riders — all of whom own cars but have chosen to take the bus instead.

The five interviews chosen for radio broadcast highlight actual passengers stressing public transit advantages: fuel conservation, pollution control and financial savings.

Graphic displays of passenger quotations and pictures were produced and posted in all division sites and throughout AC Transit offices.

--- | --- | --- | ---
East Bay | 3,185,644 | 3,390,487 | -8.2
Transbay | 1,131,405 | 1,090,102 | 1.9
Fremont/Newark | 19,032 | 78,850 | 30.5

Contract Services:

--- | --- | --- | ---
BART | 31,171 | 24,580 | 27.3
Concord | 8,917 | 6,101 | 46.2
Pleasant Hill | 1,511 | 1,081 | 39.8
Moraga/Orinda | 1,611 | 1,051 | 50.8
Total | $1,959,503 | $1,275,873 | 53.7

Fare Revenue:

--- | --- | --- | ---
East Bay | $3,729,298 | $3,677,589 | 1.4
Transbay | 563,196 | 551,871 | 2.0
Fremont/Newark | 19,366 | 14,051 | 32.2
BART | 31,171 | 24,580 | 27.3
Total | $4,401,465 | $3,901,021 | 12.9

Service Miles:

--- | --- | --- | ---
East Bay | 1,423,280 | 1,421,136 | 0.2
Transbay | 785,171 | 785,551 | -0.4
Fremont/Newark | 114,738 | 68,572 | 67.3
BART | 134,212 | 132,671 | 1.2
Total | 2,522,359 | 2,456,317 | 2.8


January
Financial
Report
Total operating expense, including interest on bonded debt and principal on bonded debt, for January, 1977, was $4,642,024 while operating income was $1,615,105. Total income, including subsidies from property taxes, sales tax and Federal aid, amounted to $4,401,465 and left a deficit of $240,559 in meeting full bond debt requirements and operating costs.

Contract services are being paid for by the communities involved. Nationally, the transit industry showed a decrease of 2.79 percent in total passengers carried.

3 year passenger trip comparison
At an adjourned regular meeting February 23, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized advertising and seeking bids for printing of timetables, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Approved minor reroute and extension on Express Line D to BART via Crow Canyon Rd., returning via Bollinger Canyon Rd., on motion of Director Fujii.
- Approved operating hourly service on Line 91A, alternating with Line 95 in Hayward on week-ends, on motion of Director Fujii.
- Authorized rerouting on Line T on Yerba Buena Island, to provide more direct service to San Francisco, on motion of Director Fujii.
- Authorized implementation of two additional Dial-A-Ride zones (2 and 7) in Fremont effective April 3, 1977, and approved minor boundary changes, on motion of Director Fujii. (See story Pg. 5)

At a regular meeting March 9, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized agreement with Crain and Associates to conduct analysis of needs of elderly and handicapped and cost/benefit analyses, on motion of Director Fujii.
- Authorized advertising and seeking bids for purchase of water reclamation systems, subject to UMTA approval, on motion of Director Fujii.
- Adopted resolution that elderly and handicapped have same right as other persons to utilize mass transportation facilities and services and that special efforts will be made in planning and design of such facilities and service so that availability to elderly and handicapped of mass transportation which they can effectively utilize will be assured, within financial ability of District, on motion of Director Fujii.
- Authorized retitling of three positions and updating job descriptions of five positions in Public Information Department, on motion of Director Berk.
- Authorized board members and five management executives to attend APTA Western Conference, on motion of Director Rinehart.