During past year
The AC strike

The strike against the AC Transit system goes into its tenth day today, with no immediate hope of settlement. We agree with Oakland’s Mayor Lionel Wilson, who said the strike’s impact has had “an adverse effect on the business community and severely affects the employment of many citizens.” In addition to the obvious hardships inflicted on those people whose only means of transportation is the system.

At issue are wages and pensions. AC Transit has offered a full percentage cost-of-living increase which would bring the hourly pay from the present $8.03 to $9.99 by the end of a three-year contract. As to pensions — to which, incidentally the union members do not contribute — the district maintains the present plan is “more than fair and equitable.” It claims, for example, that six bus drivers who retired during the past year currently average, by exercising some options, $636 per month, higher than some unions which contribute to the pension funds receive. In addition, the district argues, retirees receive Social Security benefits.

The disruption in the daily lives of thousands of East Bay residents caused by the strike should not continue.

Pensions and the transit strike

When Oakland Mayor Lionel J. Wilson sent the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District a Mailgram seeking settlement of the bus drivers’ strike, transit district manager Alan L. Bingham replied:

“We would be glad to resume discussions, but with the knowledge we already have obligated AC Transit — and the public that pays the bills — as far as possible in the value of the package that was on the table.”

Bingham said the total package offer was more than $12 million over three years. In times of consistent inflation, people are going to expect a raise, but at some point public bodies will have to draw the line at the average the district pays for those drivers who retired during the past year, each with more than 25 years of service, is $616 a month.

The only remedy we can see for that is Proposition L in 1976. (Supervisor John Bingham said the average pension of six AC Transit drivers who retired in the past year, each with more than 25 years of service, is $616 a month.

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An expert on the subject tells us, for example, that San Francisco is paying 73.9 percent of payroll for police pensions and 61 percent for firemen. These figures will be reduced somewhat by the passage of Proposition L in 1976. (Supervisor John Bingham said the average pension of six AC Transit drivers who retired in the past year, each with more than 25 years of service, is $616 a month.

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Annual Report gives growth figures

AC Transit carried more passengers than at any time in the history of the system last year.

The District’s Annual Report, published early this month, noted that passenger trips reached 61,012,125 for the last fiscal year — the most since operations began Oct. 1, 1960.

This figure represents an increase of 4.8 percent over the 58,220,157 passenger trips registered in fiscal 1975/76, which also established a record. Transbay service reflected substantial growth from the previous fiscal year. The 11,090,432 trips recorded was an increase of 7 percent over the record high of 10,350,187 trips registered in fiscal 1974/75.

East Bay urban ridership — 44,533,730 passenger trips — showed a growth of 2.3 percent. Ridership growth in suburban areas was even greater. In District 2 — Fremont and Newark — ridership increased 32.4 percent.

Concord showed a ridership increase of 49.1 percent and Pleasant Hill, 137.4 percent. No previous year comparisons are valid, however, since service in the two areas didn’t begin until late 1975.

Concession trips from suburban areas to BART stations showed an increase of 28.9 percent.

Other highlights of the year, according to the Annual Report, included these:

- Operators achieved an all-time safety record, with accident frequency reaching a record low of five accidents per 100,000 miles driven. Passenger accidents decreased also, reaching an all-time low of 6.48 mishaps per one million riders.
- High achievement of the Maintenance Department was noted for the 15th consecutive year with receipt of the Fleet Owner Maintenance Efficiency Award.
- Eighty-two new bus shelters for passenger protection were installed, bringing the total number of shelters to 184.
- Affirmative action commitment resulted in the hiring of 177 new employees, of which 55.9 percent were minorities and 63.3 percent were female.
- The prefabricated structure will house the upholstery and sign repair shop, plus the upholstery and sign repair shop, plus the upholstery and sign repair shop.
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Transit Union Strike

Idled buses cripple area mobility

AC Transit passengers throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties were without bus transportation after a strike called by the union on the issue of more money for employees who retire in the future.

The membership of Local 192, Amalgamated Transit Union, did not vote on the District’s final offer, made before the strike commenced at 12:01 a.m. Nov. 21.

The District increased its earlier offer from $10 million to $12 million on Friday, Nov. 18, to give union negotiators time to take the improved package to the membership for a vote.

The last contract expired June 30 and negotiations for a new agreement had been underway since that time.

The final offer for a new three year contract contained a full percentage cost of living formula, keeping employees’ pay up with the rise in inflation. For example, if cost of living goes up six percent, earnings would go up six percent.

Space problems will Ease when Emeryville Gets portable building

AC Transit’s growing pains will be eased somewhat by the added work and storage space provided by a portable building, 30-feet wide by 80-feet long, to be erected at Emeryville Division.

The prefabricated structure will house the upholstery and sign repair shop, plus the upholstery and sign repair shop, plus the upholstery and sign repair shop.

The Board of Directors authorized solicitation of bids for the project early this month.

Substantial improvements were offered by the District in the pension plan. But the final unresolved demand of the union had to do with additional payments for employees who retire in the future.

It is the District’s position that the existing pension plan is more than fair and equitable, particularly with the modifications offered.

For example, during the past year, six bus drivers retired, each with more than 25 years of service. The average normal pension available for each of the six drivers was $56 per month. This amounts to over $17 per month per year of service.

There are options to AC Transit’s pension plan which vary payments according to request of retirees. Under options actually selected, the current average pension for each of the six drivers is $616 per month.

The only other driver who retired in the last year had 15 years of service. He was entitled to receive a normal pension of $283 per month for life. This amounts to over $18 per month per year of service.

All AC Transit retirees are entitled to receive Social Security benefits at age 65. The maximum monthly payment to a single person currently is $460, to a married person, $690.

The package would cost the District more than $12 million over the three year contract period.
Legislators ask lift data

Two California legislators concerned with transportation have requested an assessment of the effectiveness of 200 lift-equipped buses which Southern California Rapid Transit District expects to put into regular service on some routes before the end of the year.

Request for the data came from Walter M. Ingalls, chairman of the State Assembly's Transportation Committee, and Alfred E. Alquist, state senator. It was sent to A. Alan Post, legislative analyst.

Specifically, the legislators asked that information be compiled on degree of use of the wheelchair lift equipment, on degree of benefit to LA-area handicapped, on impact of the special service on general service, and on cost effectiveness comparisons between the wheelchair lift approach and alternate forms of handicapped-aid services provided by other state transit operators.

Year project to test Coach access devices

AC Transit is one of four properties which will participate in a one-year CALTRANS-administered research and development project to test wheelchair lifts and securement devices installed in standard coaches.

With each transit system providing one coach, plus needed personnel, the UMTA-funded project — expected to begin Jan. 1 — will proceed in two six-month phases. First phase will involve research, development, and in-service fitting of the lift package. Second phase will be devoted to evaluation and testing of the equipment, under actual operating conditions, with wheelchair users.

Participating properties have been matched with lift manufacturers chosen from six who submitted proposals. AC Transit will work with Vapor Corporation, AC and three other systems to begin lift test project

(Continued from page 6)

Chicago, to retrofit one of the Flxible 8000-series coaches used for BART express service.

Other systems included in the project are San Francisco Muni, Sacramento Regional Transit, and Southern California Rapid Transit. Also participating are the State Department of Rehabilitation and United Cerebral Palsy Association of San Francisco.

Project results are expected in late 1978.
Fratus assumes new Position in Finance

New assistant treasurer-controller is Richard A. Fratus, whose prior experience in the transit field includes over seven years with two Bay Area-based charter airlines.

Most recently Fratus was with World Airways, serving three years as assistant controller. Previously, he served for more than four years as director of accounting for Trans International Airlines.

Reporting to Lawrence S. Kurtz, treasurer-controller, Fratus will supervise operations of Data Processing, Payroll, Accounting, and Treasury. In addition, he will assume responsibility for compliance with Project FARE, the uniform system of accounts, records, and financial reporting required by federal law.

He has a B.S. in Business Management from San Jose State University.

Fratus and his family — wife Charlie and sons Robert, 11, and Matthew, 9 — live in Pleasanton.

Two drivers move up To supervisor posts

Wilfred Quinones — appointed to transportation supervisor — is a transit veteran, both civilian and military. Before joining AC Transit as a driver 17 years ago, he served with an Army Transportation unit in Berlin.

During his years as a driver, Quinones worked out of Seminary and Newark Divisions.

A native of Hawaii, he now lives in Hayward, sharing a home with son Leonard and their Doberman dog named Kimo.

Joe Middleton — also appointed a supervisor in Transportation Department — has completed his 13th year with AC Transit.

Middleton worked out of Seminary Division as a driver during his years with the District.

A native of Texas, he now makes his home in San Lorenzo with his wife, Frida. The Middleton family also includes two sons and a daughter.
Elderly/Handicapped

Board resolutions call for wheelchair access 
For new coaches, program to facilitate use

All buses purchased in the future will be accessible to wheelchair users, under a new policy adopted by the Board of Directors.

The board action is in conformance with federal regulations, State code and the policies of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

Directors adopted a resolution setting forth the policy following two public hearings which resulted in testimony by more than 50 disabled persons, most of them in wheelchairs.

Testimony generally followed the theme that is the right and privilege of handicapped persons and senior citizens to have total accessibility to public transit.

The Board has also allocated $28,000 for a package involving driver sensitivity training, priority seating for the elderly/handicapped, teletype equipment for a deaf transit information service, and an "outreach" program to aid the elderly/handicapped in using existing bus transportation.

In addition, the Board authorized formation of an ongoing advisory committee comprised of representatives from social agencies which deal with the elderly/handicapped, plus other interested individuals.

Estimated cost to equip AC Transit's fleet of buses with wheelchair lifts is approximately $8 million. Annual cost to maintain and replace the lifts is estimated at $990,000.

A six-month study, just completed, turned up 660 people out of a population of 1,133,000 residents in the cities from Fremont north to San Pablo who could get to a bus stop and use a wheelchair lift on regular AC Transit bus services.

The board action is in conformance with Federal regulations, State code and the Contra Costa County Courts.

Senior groups, prospective jurors receive bus information

Prospective jurors in Contra Costa County are receiving transit information in a cooperative effort between AC Transit and the Contra Costa County Courts.

More than 20,000 letters being mailed this month to potential jurors by the Jury Commissioner include a pamphlet prepared by AC Transit explaining how to get to the courts by bus.

An additional mailing will be made in January.

THE COVER — Size of AC Transit's Easy Bay service area is dramatically shown by this mosaic map from Pacific Aerial Surveys. At end of the last fiscal year (see Pg. 4 story), buses were operating through 13 cities along the East Bay shore to Fremont (lower center); Transbay lines carried riders across the Bay Bridge (left, center) and contract service extended beyond the hills to suburban communities.
At an adjourned regular meeting October 26, the Board of Directors:

- Awarded contract for furnishing automotive filters to Transit Equipment Manufacturing Co., in conjunction with Regional Transit Association joint procurement, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized service on Line 91B for Georgian Manor Mobile Home Park, Hayward, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized re-routing Lines 64, 72, and 78 to serve BART stations when Saturday train service begins Nov. 19, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized minor re-routing of Line 56 - Montclair - Bishop O'Dowd, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Adopted resolution that all buses purchased in the future be accessible to wheelchair users, on motion of Director Rinehart.

At a regular meeting Nov. 9, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized program of low capital improvements for elderly and handicapped, on motion of Director Holmes.
- Authorized advisory group for implementation of program for elderly/handicapped, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Awarded contract to Brandt, Inc., for one electro-mechanical counter/sorter, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Authorized General Manager to execute contracts with UMTA for a capital grant and grant amendment, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized contracts for office machines and equipment to lowest responsive bidders, on motion of Director Berk.
- Authorized General Manager to advertise and seek bids for purchase of one portable building, subject to UMTA approval, on motion of Director Berk.
- Authorized reimbursing Booth Computer Corp. an additional $3,000 upon completion of computer program conversion, on motion of Director Rinehart.

Daily Review editorial (Continued from page 3)

It's another point to remember before one gets too impatient with management to cave in to the union's demands.