Proximity to builder proves boon

Proximity of bus manufacturer to buyer — Gillig Corporation of Hayward to AC Transit — has proven to be a boon, according to System Directors, management, operating and maintenance personnel.

The advantages of having new coaches for AC Transit fleet replacement rolling off an assembly line so near Downtown Oakland headquarters and all operating divisions have been particularly dramatized since delivery began last month of the first of 141 buses ordered from the firm formerly famous as a builder of school buses.

Maintenance and transportation people have discovered how quickly production-line solutions can be agreed upon when it's possible to meet instantly with Gillig engineers to iron out problems right on the spot.

Since Environmental Equipment Corporation, which is furnishing the wheelchair lifts being installed on these buses, also is close by in San Leandro, the onsite problem-solving potential is further increased.

"In this case, too, their nearness is a definite advantage," according to General Manager Robert E. Nisbet. "When lift-equipment problems arise, we examine them jointly and hasten the solution."

There's also a dollar-saving benefit attached to this first-time situation of doing bus building business with an East Bay neighbor. Since the buses are driven just a couple of miles from the assembly site, the District pays substantially reduced delivery charges. This unit saving, multiplied by the total order of 141 coaches, adds up to nearly the purchase price of an additional bus.

For the East Bay as a whole, the Gillig order has meant several hundred jobs during a severe recession period in which Alameda County has been particularly hard-hit.

Also, as noted by Board President Jean Holmes, it's helpful to AC Transit's policy-makers to be able to "observe first-hand the process and the problems of building buses to meet the requirements of our System."

Says Nisbet, "With future acquisitions we'll have to see who comes in meeting specs and with a low bid. But this purchase has proven to be a boon to a local transit system, the local manufacturers, to local bus riders, and to the taxpayers."

THE COVER - A September 22 event marked the business link between AC Transit, Gillig, and Environmental Equipment Corporation which has present and future significance for East Bay public transportation and also provides a positive note in the recession-hit Alameda County employment picture. Among participants noting AC Transit's order for new buses from Gillig, with wheelchair lifts furnished by EEC, (upper left photo) were, left to right, Mayor Alex Giuliani, Hayward; Board President Jean Holmes; General Manager Robert E. Nisbet; Director William J. Bettencourt; and Gillig's John Olivera, vice president, and Dennis Howard, president. Nisbet (upper right photo) is shown with Kevin Adams, vice president, EEC. Organization officials, media, and guests gathered for the event (lower photo) in front of Gillig's Hayward manufacturing facility.
Candidates vie for four Board positions

Four seats on AC Transit's policymaking Board of Directors will be determined by November 2 voting. The balloting by District voters will take place in conjunction with the statewide general election of that date.

Board seats to be determined are those which represent Wards III, IV and V, plus one Director-at-Large constituency. Those Directors elected in November will serve four-year terms which will begin January 3, 1983.

Ward III currently is represented by John McDonnell, seeking re-election in competition with Cecilia L. Phillips and Myrna Ochoa Valdez. All are Oakland residents. Ward III comprises the cities of Alameda and Piedmont, and that part of Oakland which is south of Highway 24, northeast of the MacArthur Freeway, and south of 35th Ave. It includes the Elmhurst, Fruitvale, Melrose, Millsmont, Montclair, Oakland, Oak Knoll, Piedmont Pines, Seminary and Sheffield Village areas.

Ward IV is now represented by William J. Bettencour, San Leandro. The other candidate for the seat is Philip J. Adams, Hayward. Ward IV encompasses the city of San Leandro, the unincorporated areas of Ashland, Castro Valley, San Lorenzo, the portion of Hayward east of the Southern Pacific railroad tracks, and adjoining areas within Alameda County.

Ward V's current Director is Jean A. Holmes, who is not seeking re-election. Candidates for the post are Linda Shepard and James M. Swint, Jr., both of Fremont. Ward V is comprised of the cities of Fremont and Newark, that portion of Hayward west of the Southern Pacific railroad tracks and adjacent areas within Alameda County.

Roy Nakadegawa currently holds a Director-at-Large seat to be decided from a slate which also includes Lois Bozant, Clarence Randolph Fischer, Alan Laird, and Hector Reyna, all of Oakland. Constituency includes AC Transit's entire service area, from Richmond and San Pablo on the north to Fremont.

Bus service kicks off For UC football games

The Golden Bears and the bus fleet joined forces as of mid-September when AC Transit kicked off service to University of California, Berkeley, football games for the 1982 season.

Football fans can get to Memorial Stadium without traffic-hassles or parking headaches by using AC Transit Lines 40 and 51A. Shuttle service also is operated between Third & University and Bancroft & Piedmont for local riders and for blue-and-gold fans coming from San Francisco on regular Line F buses.

BART riders may transfer to Line 51 buses at BART/Rockridge or at BART/Berkeley.

Regular fares prevail for the stadium service. BART passengers pay half-fare by showing their bus transfers obtained within the paid area of the BART stations.

Two take new positions as Assistant superintendents

Don Myers and William F. Schmid are new assistant superintendents in the Transportation Department's Seminary Division.

Myers, a transportation supervisor for about 10 years, joined AC Transit in 1968 as a driver, making a dramatic switch from a previous career in banking. He lives in Antioch.

Schmid's span of transportation service -- 19 years with AC Transit, plus a brief prior stint with Key System -- has included responsibilities ranging from driver, transportation supervisor and central dispatcher to coordinating summer bus tours and helping establish the Bay Area Urban Transit Institute. His home is in San Leandro.

Fremont-Newark Study

Survey spotlights transit consciousness

Adults in Fremont and Newark -- bus riders and non-riders alike -- voice a strong sense of community concern about bus service in their cities. This was a key finding in a market survey conducted for the District.

The riders voiced substantial satisfaction with the bus service (as reported in the May, 1982, Transit Times), and they voiced considerable concern about maintaining present levels of service.

In the second phase of the two-part survey -- in-depth, 20-minute telephone interviews conducted with some 200 adult nonriders -- even those respondents who voiced little interest in using the bus service themselves expressed great concern about maintaining it for others in their community.

Although the non-riders responded favorably to possible service adjustments that they found personally attractive -- such as more frequent commute-hour bus service -- they voiced strong opposition to achieving such changes by 'trading off' service levels currently operated midday.

Both riders and non-riders gave top billing to close-at-home bus stops in expressing their attitudes about their local bus network. This coincides with AC Transit's own long-standing concept of the importance of bus stops near homes.

While riders gave second place to 'economy' among their five 'very important' reasons for riding buses, non-riders ranked public transit's dollar-saving potential as fifth among their concerns when viewing the bus-use option.

Important motivators for transit use, both groups agreed, are such factors as freedom from parking problems and good service to the workplace and to shopping centers.

The information gathered on awareness, attitudes and opinions of both riders and non-riders in the two cities is now being studied for incorporation into future service planning and transit information efforts.

Film project approved

A new transit operator training tool, consisting of a 15 to 20-minute film/slide package, will be produced this fall (for January, 1983, completion) under sponsorship of the Regional Transit Association and funded by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

AC Transit coordinated ground-work for the project, whose aim is aiding operators in awareness and selection of effective means and modes of resolving conflicts which are part of the day-to-day challenge of serving the public.
Rider information output is diverse

Increasing the public's knowledge of AC Transit services and operating details with the aim of making the bus easy to ride, even for rare or occasional patrons (see letter, Pg. 2), requires a broad range of informational materials, services, and communication modes.

Prior to any service/fare/schedule adjustment, for instance, onboard car cards and take-home flyers not only describe prospective changes but encourage patron attendance at legally-mandated public hearings on the subject. Other means of keeping patrons informed include rider-alert newsletters (a recent issue was distributed door-to-door as well as onboard in quantities approaching a quarter-million); display and classified newspaper ads; and media releases.

Timetables, route maps, and service information leaflets are revised and updated as required. Customer Services Representatives regularly visit a broad spectrum of community organizations to bring how-to-ride information to patrons and prospective patrons of all ages.

In addition, a valuable trip-planning asset utilized regularly or occasionally by thousands of patrons is AC Transit's Telephone Information Center, which provides not only customized how-to-get-there instructions but the latest information on fares, transfer procedures and other helpful data.

These efforts are the responsibility of AC Transit's Marketing Department which also coordinates surveys on subjects ranging from proposed service and schedule changes to the comfort of bus seats.

Board Actions
(Continued from back cover)

- Authorized General Manager to enter into contract with Spanier, Inc., to provide a Stress Management Program; authorized implementation of Employee Recognition Program, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

At a regular meeting August 11, the Board of Directors:

- Awarded contract to Motorola Communications and Electronics, Inc., for furnishing two-way radio equipment and accessories, on motion of Director Rinehart.

- Established position and salary range of Chief Labor Attorney, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

At an adjourned regular meeting August 25, the Board of Directors:

- Convened public hearing to receive comment regarding applications for two federal operating assistance grants.

- Adopted resolution authorizing filing of claim or claims with Metropolitan Transportation Commission for allocation of net toll bridge revenues in Fiscal 1982-83, on motion of Director Fajans.

- Authorized request to Metropolitan Transportation Commission for reimbursement of half the cost of BART-to-BUS transfers from regional discretionary funds, with specification that other half of said cost be paid by BART from a similar MTC disbursement, on motion of Director Rinehart.

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Death takes past-era transit 'pros'

William J. Meyers, 71, who was a Mechanic A in Maintenance Department at the time of his retirement in 1975, died July 11 in Oakland. His period of service to public transit spanned 39 years, beginning in 1936.

A resident of Oakland, Meyers leaves his widow, Florabelle, and six children: William, Paul, Steven, Matthew, Florabelle, and Janet.

John Chapman, 81, who had completed 48 years of transit service at the time of his retirement as an Emeryville Division mechanic in 1966, died August 26.

He was described when he retired as one of the District's genuine "old timers", since his experience dated from 1918 when he began work as an apprentice machinist for Key System, where his father was a long-time motorman and mechanic.

Later, Chapman became a foreman, in charge of various shops and service units before the 1958 cessation of transbay train service.

He is survived by his widow, Elda, and daughter Kathleen Crosby.

Marion H. Chappell, 83, who was a driver at Emeryville Division before his retirement in 1963 following a 40-year transit career, died September 5 in Oakland.

Before making the switch to bus driving in 1958, Chappell had worked for AC Transit's predecessor organization as motorman, brakeman, and trainman.

He is survived by his widow, Mildred, and two children, Ronald and David Hall. The family home is in Fremont.

Operator efforts meet mark

Summer brought a harvest of favorable safe-driving statistics, with all AC Transit divisions meeting the monthly bogey (13,250 miles per accident) in both July and August.

Newark Division’s averages were 54,985 miles per accident; July, 30,035; August, 30,393. Richmond’s figures for the same months were 19,961 and 21,994 miles per mishap; Emeryville’s, 14,264 and 15,886 miles; and Seminary’s, 17,600 and 15,886 miles.

District-wide driving totals during the two-month summer period amounted to 5,114,274 service miles.
At an adjourned regular meeting July 28, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized travel of one management representative to attend American Public Transit Association Operations Committee meeting and subsequent Regional Workshop in Las Vegas August 17-19, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Authorized travel of Board President to attend Urban Mass Transportation Administration Productivity Seminar in San Diego August 4-5, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Awarded contract to Moran Oldsmobile for furnishing 17 District automobiles, subject to compliance with specifications and bid documents, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Adopted resolution authorizing filing of application for a federal capital improvement grant to purchase approximately 58 buses with wheelchair accessibility; scheduled public hearing on the matter for September 8, 1982, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Authorized General Manager to amend current contract with Deloitte, Haskins and Sells (within a specified cost ceiling) to cover development and installation of Automated Inventory and Fleet Maintenance Management Systems, subject to UMTA approval, with costs, if feasible, to be shared with Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized General Manager to negotiate for purchase of a General Offices building site and to enter into discussions regarding proposal for financing, design, and construction of such a building, on motion of Director Rinehart. (Continued on Page 6)