Central Maintenance/Stores site: Construction project progresses
Report gives glum funding forecast

The cut-back in Federal operating assistance proposed by the Reagan Administration could result in a substantial reduction in AC Transit service, according to a report prepared for the District's Board of Directors in early March. The financial assessment foresees a six percent cut in bus service — with additional reductions in the following fiscal years — if the Administration's effort to phase-out Federal operating assistance is carried out.

AC Transit has been particularly dependent on assistance from Federal and State sources since 1978 and passage of Proposition 13 — the Jarvis-Gann Property Tax Initiative — which severely limited the District's local property tax support. Among Bay region operators, AC Transit was the most severely affected by that proposition; and, according to Nat Gage, assistant general manager for finance, the District would be the most severely impacted by the Administration's current budget proposals.

Dollar sources

At present, AC Transit depends on allocations of Federal and regional funds to cover approximately 55 percent of the operating budget, Gage says. Today, property taxes comprise less than 15 percent of the budget — compared with a level of support closer to 40 percent prior to Proposition 13.

To cope with the shifts in funding sources, accompanied by the rising costs experienced by all areas of the economy, the District has undertaken rigorous internal economies. In mid-1982, a reduction in force became necessary. District management and the Board of Directors also have sought out other means of reducing costs — particularly in comparison to other systems of similar size. For instance, the District's average net cost per passenger was 66 cents as of 1980, while the national average was 84 cents. And AC Transit's $2.30 cost per-vehicle-mile compares well with a national average of $2.95.

Since the farebox also plays a sizeable role in funding District operations, Gage notes the significance of AC Transit's recovery of approximately 35 percent of operating costs — well above the national average of 27 percent. The adult rider's individual share of the bus service burden has gone up 140 percent since 1978 as fares rose from 25 to 60 cents. Youth rates rose from 15 cents to 40 cents in the same period, and similar adjustments were made in other categories of fares.

However, the potential factors which the District can control — creative financing measures, farebox levels, and internal economies — simply would not suffice to offset the Reagan Administration's proposals. Gage emphasizes that any service reductions aimed at coping with further reductions in operating budget would have to be designed with great care. Curtailments that would minimize loss in operating revenues would affect most adversely the highly transit-dependent segments of AC Transit's ridership — lower-income workers, the unemployed, youth and senior citizens — for these are the groups least likely to have alternative means of transportation.
Fremont-Newark service

Board approves route adjustments

A sweeping set of service adjustments designed to achieve operational and productivity improvements in bus routes in Fremont and Newark gained approval of the Board of Directors in early March.

Elements of the program, which had been the subject of several public hearings and much discussion, included:

- Modification of the routing on lines 16, 19, 20, 22, and 29 to improve travel opportunity throughout the two cities;
- Schedule adjustments, including some curtailment, of relatively lightly-used weekend service on some bus routes;
- And changes in the way routes are 'interlined' as buses travel through BART/Fremont station, thereby making it easier to ride the same bus from one part of town to another without transferring.

The specific proposals were subject of several public forums, including one as early as April of last year. More recently, a refined set of proposed adjustments went before a public hearing convened by the Board of Directors January 29th. About 150 people turned out for that hearing, and more than one-third of those present addressed the Board on elements of the proposed program.

When voting March 9th on the service adjustment package, Directors voiced strong concerns about the problems raised by some speakers at the earlier hearings — particularly the comments about neighborhood impact of Line 28 and Line 30 buses. Thus, they mandated continued, vigilant enforcement of speed reduction on those bus routes — and all bus routes. The Directors also assured Fremont residents that the search for a practical small bus would continue, with the ultimate aim of employing smaller, quieter vehicles in residential areas.

The entire program of service adjustment and improvement will be implemented in June this year.

Out to the Ballgame

Steve Ageno (right), supervisor at Alameda County's Snedigar Cottage — some of whose residents are gathered around the bus (above) — accepts tickets for the youngsters to the first home game of Oakland's new USFL 'Innards' from Robert J. Shamoon, assistant general manager for operations. The program is described in the boxed item below.

Youths to get game tickets

Groups of too-often-forgotten East Bay youngsters will be going to football games courtesy of a joint effort on the part of AC Transit and the new United States Football League team, the Oakland Innards.

"Young people residing in shelters operated by Alameda and Contra Costa Counties will be our guests at the season-opener," Assistant General Manager for Operations Robert J. Shamoon reported to District Directors at the March 9 meeting.

He explained that the System will join the team in hosting groups of up to 50 young people at each Invaders home game. Also, Shamoon noted, AC Transit and the Bay Area's newest pro football team are joining forces in a business sense, too.

This includes the District's plans for not only providing special Line 57 bus service directly to all home games, but for displaying onboard posters (by the transit ad firm, TDII) to the Oakland Innards, announced on the launching of Oakland's own component of the USFL.

Route extension plan links Airpot/San Leandro BART

Direct bus service linking San Leandro with the Oakland Airport and Alameda got the green light from the Board of Directors at its February 23 meeting.

The Board's decision was to extend Line 61 — now operating to and from downtown Oakland via Alameda and the Oakland Airport's North Field and Main Terminal — to continue its route via Doolittle Drive and Williams Street to the San Leandro BART station. The change is to be implemented June 6.

"Given the growth of business and light industry in San Leandro and around the airport, there's a need for more transit service along the proposed route extension," noted Director William J. Bettencourt, who represents the San Leandro area.

Though approved as a six-month "trial" extension, the likelihood is, said Bettencourt, "that we'll find we've filled a gap in our existing, extensive network of bus service."

Trips between San Leandro and the airport will take about 10 to 12 minutes.
Farebox farewell

END OF LINE - Time and technology caught up with Farebox 3333 this month as it became the last of its kind to be removed and replaced by a sophisticated new electronic model, Dave Weikel, chief clerk, Newark Division, checks out the Cleveland chrome-plated, non-registering farebox from Coach 322 - the last of 865 to be replaced by Duncan Faretronics model (right). There may be more onboard service for the older fareboxes, however, since they are being offered for sale to transit organizations around the country.

Retirement round-up

- Joe N. Alder, Driver, Emeryville Division, 30 years.
- Duke E. Christian, Transportation Supervisor, Emeryville Division, 34 years.
- Worth E. Elliott, Driver, Seminary Division, 37 years.
- William T. Gauer, Superintendent, Richmond Division, 37 years.
- David F. Lackie, Driver, Emeryville Division, 29 years.
- William N. Martin, Maintenance Foreman, Richmond Division, 37 years.
- Charles L. McAdams, Driver, Seminary Division, 37 years.
- Jacob A. Sneed, Driver, Emeryville Division, 30 years.

Past-year safety stats shine

During the last fiscal year, AC Transit drivers logged more than 32 million miles of on-the-road service. In that same period, 1,030 driver awards were issued, noting a year of accident-free coach operation.

Coaches acquitted of damaging homes

Does bus traffic on lightly-built residential streets cause adverse structural effects to homes?

That's the question posed by a few residents in a suburban section of AC Transit's service area; and the District joined the City of Fremont in funding an independent study to provide a definitive answer. The study revealed that the effects of traffic - including bus traffic - are far below a level at which structural damage might result.

The written report states, "The strongest vibrations we measured were from the activities of the people living in the house." And in an oral presentation to District Directors, the consultant said the highest single reading of structural vibration resulted when the front door of one home was slammed shut.

In tests conducted last December, with experts from Earth Systems Consultants of Palo Alto monitoring sensitive test equipment, 40- and 35-foot standard city coaches were driven past the residences from which complaints initially came. A 25-foot 'mini-coach' also was tested, as was a loaded truck and a motorcycle.

The homeowners complained of bus-related structural damage to their residences. The study said it would take more than 10 times the effect of any of the buses tested, passing by a home, to cause such damage.

Actions of the Board (Continued from back cover)

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

- Authorized General Manager to negotiate and award contract to Foster/Warren and Associates for final design for reconstruction of Emeryville Division, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized travel of Board members and staff to attend APTA Legislative Conference and APTA Western Conference, on motions of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized General Manager to negotiate financial terms relating to the services of the District's Legislative Representative, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

Adopted resolution authorizing filing of federal capital improvement grants, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

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

- Authorized General Manager to advertise and seek bids for purchase of brake retarder assemblies, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized travel to attend "Bus System Safety Seminar", on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Adopted specific proposed elements of the District's ongoing organizational realignment project, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

Death takes two transit veterans

Guy R. Foster, 56, a retired Emeryville Division driver, died February 4 at his home in Oakland. Before closing-out his transit career in 1981, he had completed 21 years of service.

Foster is survived by his widow, Kwi Jo. Foster's home was in Alamo, and he is survived by two daughters, Roberta Blendow and Mrs. E. W. Broyles.

Charles Pehrson, 89, who retired from AC Transit's predecessor organization in 1959 following 37 years of service, died December 22 in Alamo. Prior to retirement, he had been a driver at Seminary Division.

Pehrson's home was in Alamo, and he is survived by two daughters, Roberta Blendow and Mrs. E. W. Broyles.
FOCUS: Transit People and Projects

COUNTDOWN — Operator Celso Dominguez (right) marks off his last trip on the O Line. Family, friends and passengers posted the sign on his last day of work after 26 years of service behind the wheel. A retiree after 28 years, Avonne Bradshaw (above) received congratulations and her pin from Richard Meyer, Attorney for the District, at a farewell gathering. A personnel analyst, Avonne had been on assignment in Legal Department for an extended period.

SAFETY VALVES — AC Transit has "the lead" both as co-producer and performer in a movie for training drivers in conflict resolution and security. The film, being made by Dave Parker Productions of San Francisco, uses dramatized situations to serve as guidelines to drivers in responding effectively and professionally when faced with potentially dangerous on-the-job situations. The film began production in January, funded through a grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Co-producers with AC Transit are Santa Clara County Transit District, SamTrans, Golden Gate Transit, and San Francisco Municipal Railway.

NEW YEAR RETIREE — When William T. "Bill" Gauer superintendent, Richmond Division, ended his transit career on the first day of 1983, he had completed more than 37 years of service to AC Transit and its predecessors. Sharing the congratulations offered him during a January 28 retirement party was Reba Gauer, whose 38 years of transit employment give the married couple a total of three-quarters-of-a-century of service to East Bay riders.

Then and Now: Maxine Staats (above, far left) in late-1940s celebratory group and (seated, left photo) upon retirement after 36 years.

FRIENDLY FAREWELL — Surprises galore awaited Maxine Staats at a retirement celebration attended by fellow workers in Finance and well-wishers from other departments. These included cake, corsage, and a color TV. Most unusual farewell gift, however, was her comptometer, transformed from business machine to bronzed objet d'art.
1926 letter describes one transit veteran's span in 'railroad game'

Deciding to commit to paper "a synopsis of my work in street car and railway services for the last 31 years", W.C. Bramstedt, then Night Foreman of the Mechanical Department, Central District, Key System Transit Company, wrote this career account, dated November 4, 1926 - the era of the photo below, taken on Broadway in Oakland.

I started work in the railroad game with the San Mateo Electric Lines of San Francisco. I might mention that this was one of the first electric lines to be operated in this city of San Francisco in the year of 1895. At this time I was 20 years of age.

This car house was located at Sunnyvale, where we housed 15 single truck and 15 double truck cars of the California type. My service with this company was for a period of 5 years, when they sold out and went to San Diego.

I was then forced to take a new position with the Southern Pacific Company in their West Oakland yards; however, I did not leave the railroad game and found steady employment with this company as a hand in the repair shops. I started in 1900 and remained with this company for a period of 2 years, and in 1902 I resigned my position and took up the railroad game again with the Key System Transit Company (it was then known as the Oakland Traction Company).

My first occupation with this company was as repairman under Mr. George St. Pierre, who was later promoted to a higher station. Owing to the remarkable expansion of the company and success, they found it necessary to increase the number of cars, and then I was sent to the Alameda car house in the capacity of night foreman.

With the steady growth of business we now had at this barn 44 narrow gauge cars of various types. Here I remained until 1906 when expansion required my transfer to the Central Car House, where I have worked for 20 years and 7 months under the supervision of Mr. W.P. Jackson, now Superintendent of Equipment.

I have noted the remarkable growth of this company in the past 20 years and see in the near future a great and unlimited field for expansion. At the present we have about 155 cars at this barn, an absolute proof that this company stands unquestionably the most efficient railway company in the west.

It is my desire to remain an employee of this cooperative and congenial company for another 20 years if I am spared to do so.

Drivers honored

Three others qualify for 25-year safe driving circle

FIFTY-YEAR FEAT - General Manager Robert E. Nisbet last month congratulated two veteran AC Transit drivers for achieving 25 years of safe driving. Benjamin F. Sillman (right) said he attributed his quarter-century achievement to "liking people and hoping they like me." Also, he remarked, "When you take a job at AC Transit, you take the responsibility of carrying your passengers safely." A Seminary Division driver, Sillman qualified for operator November 1, 1950. He and wife Margaret have four children and four grandchildren. At his presentation, Lawrence Brady (left), of Emeryville Division, the 45th recipient of the quarter-century award, offered this advice on achieving a solid safe-driving record: "You should be sure you play mostly defense, and very little offense." Brady, who qualified as a driver March 11, 1953, advised also, "Be sure to try to leave yourself a way out.

SAFE DRIVING MILESTONE - Operator James C. Polk (left) receives congratulations from Robert J. Shamoon, assistant general manager for operations, for achieving the 25-year safe driving mark. He is the District's 46th recipient of the award. Polk, of Seminary Division, qualified for driver on March 12, 1934. His advice to fellow drivers on how to reach this safe driving milestone: "Pay attention. If you don't watch what you're doing, you can get into a lot of trouble in a real hurry. Be alert at all times."
Actions of the Board

At a regular meeting January 12, the Board of Directors:

- Elected Michael H. Fajans President and Ray Rinehart Vice-President for 1983.
- Referred proposals for furnishing 134 diesel buses to staff for evaluation relative to life-cycle costs and per-unit acquisition costs, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Approved implementation of Line 52 service, Cedar Street, Berkeley, beginning March 6, 1983, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.

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At an adjourned regular meeting January 26, the Board of Directors:

- Convened public hearing on grant application to finance retrofitting 325 buses with brake retarders, and on filing of two amendments to existing grants.
- Authorized travel of two Board members to attend APTA 1983 Management Seminar in San Diego February 13-15, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Approved introduction of legislation to amend Transit District Law in connection with procedures for election of Directors, on motion of Director Shepard (see story, pg 4).
- Adopted Conflict of Interest Code amendments to be submitted to Fair Political Practices Commission, on motion of Director Shepard.
- Approved implementation of realigned service on Line 12/12C beginning March 6, 1983; established one-way fare of $1 for special service between downtown Berkeley and Golden Gate Fields via Line 94, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.

(Continued on Page 7)