Facility takes shape
At East Oakland site
Action Agenda, '84

GM sets top 1984 priority: Be responsive to customers

In this District, our first and most important task is to gain — and to keep — satisfied customers.

In affirmation of this, AC Transit is embarking this year on an organized program of strict, sweeping self-examination — of ourselves and of the service we provide the public.

We know we can improve the design of service and its implementation on the streets of the East Bay. And achieving this improvement in serving our customers is the top priority task on our 1984 agenda. To accomplish this, we will be seeking the assistance of our patrons and public in identifying avenues by which to reach our goal.

We have to look for new ways to serve a public that is changing in its make-up and its needs. One concern: the movement of residential concentrations into new suburban areas and establishment of new industrial parks and suburban work sites. To meet the mobility needs of people in these areas, we must carefully assess our market and then make service adjustments which the assessments indicate would be productive.

These changing patterns in the East Bay also will require closer coordination with other transit agencies — particularly BART, with whom we share the burden of providing public transportation in our geographic area.

All this means reexamination of decades-old assumptions about the bus service we operate. And above all, it means being sensitive to the needs and the requirements of every rider — and potential rider. It means listening to our patrons, learning from them, and responding to their input.

The great majority of AC Transit workers make every effort to do an excellent job every day, but there is still room for improvement in our collective performance. And we readily acknowledge that there have been instances when it’s taken patience and understanding on the part of patrons to help us identify and solve problems they have pointed out. In addition to their continued understanding, we will seek their active assistance in solving today’s problems and in helping us identify and create effective solutions to tomorrow’s challenges.

AC Transit has a hard-won reputation for excellence and for responsiveness; in rededicating ourselves to goals of excellence, we also commit ourselves to improving that reputation.

L.A. Kimball
General Manager

Long-time Directors named officers

Oakland businessman Ray Rinehart was elected president of the AC Transit Board of Directors at the first meeting of the year on January 11. He succeeds Michael H. Fajans.

Rinehart has been a member of the policy-making body since 1963, serving twice before as president of the Board. He and William J. Bettencourt, of San Leandro, who will serve this year as vice-president, were chosen by fellow Board members, who oversee operation of 800 buses in the District’s two-county, 620-square-mile service area.

Rinehart, a certified public accountant, is involved with transit matters on a national level through the American Public Transit Association. He is a member of APTA’s Legislative Committee, Financial Management Committee and the Governing Boards Committee.

Other affiliations include the American Arbitration Association’s National Panel of Arbitrators, the East Bay Chapter of the California Society of Certified Public Accountants, the Society of California Accountants, the State Society Professional Advancement Committee, and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Locally, he has been involved as a Director of United Cerebral Palsy, Providence Hospital Advisory Board, Oakland Serra Club, and a member of the Producers Associates Board of Directors for Woodminster Amphitheatre.

Bettencourt, who succeeds Rinehart, last year’s vice-president, has had a seat on the Board of Directors since its inception in 1956. He has served as president three times.

Bettencourt’s transit commitments include the APTA Marketing Committee. At the local level, he has long been involved with the San Leandro Chamber of Commerce and the San Leandro Development Committee. He has served also as executive secretary of the Catholic Charities Archdiocese of San Francisco; director of public relations, St. Joseph’s Hospital; director of public relations, Diocese of Oakland; and director of public relations and alumni executive director, St. Mary’s College, Moraga.

Both officers will serve one-year terms.
Developers to submit new GO plans

plans for a new AC Transit ‘General Offices’ facility in downtown Oakland moved closer to realization with last month’s conference for potential developers. Target date for completion and occupancy of a new headquarters is December, 1985.

Builders were called together to be given guidelines for proposals, to be submitted by February 2nd, for developing the structure on a site at 1600 Franklin St., between 15th and 17th Streets. Participants are being asked to propose creative financing packages for this project, according to Nat Gage, assistant general manager for finance.

“IT’s in the public interest and in the interest of possible developers that this General Offices facility be entirely financed with private capital,” Gage says. “No public money need be involved.”

AC Transit now owns the land, measuring some 43,500 square feet, which is currently a parking lot. It is proposing a lease-purchase arrangement, under which the District would continue to own the land while the building would be financed privately. “This provides both tax advantages and long-term financial benefits to all participants,” Gage explains.

Gage notes several important advantages to the site, which fronts on both Franklin and Webster Streets, providing easy access. Nearby, both 15th St. and 17th St. are easily used by vehicular traffic. The site is roughly equidistant from BART’s 12th St. and 19th St. stations, a walking distance of about 1,000 feet. And it’s close to the geographic center of AC Transit’s East Bay service area.

The structure to be developed would house all current operations now being conducted in the outgrown General Offices location at 508 16th St. Preliminary discussions indicate the new headquarters would be at least six stories in height and from 80,000 to 100,000 square feet in area. Although developers might choose to limit the structure to exclusive use of AC Transit, financial considerations might call for construction of additional office space for other tenants.

To aid in estimating floor space and design, potential developers were given the following possible organizational groupings:

The first floor could house Customer Services, Lost and Found, Senior Citizen and Handicapped Identification, Monthly

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The initial omnibus Regional Transit Association (RTA) information center now occupies a 40-foot-long wall inside the Transbay Transit Terminal in San Francisco.

Key to this cooperative effort was inclusion of over-sized route maps provided by each of the four operators serving the Terminal - AC Transit, Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans and MUNI. Similar data, though at a smaller scale, describes the nearby BART train service and other public transit systems in the region.

Also posted is frequency-of-service and hours-of-operation for all bus routes operated from the Terminal, plus most other connecting routes in the four systems. Developed by AC Transit, this prototype center is all-inclusive because of the volume of transit service available at or near the region's busiest transfer point - the Transbay Terminal.

RTA plans similar centers for other 'Regional Transit Connection' points.
FOCUS: Transit People and Projects

MAINTENANCE MILESTONES — Three Maintenance people with a combined total of nearly 113 years of service to East Bay transit were honored by fellow workers at a retirement party January 7 at the Fratellanza Club, Oakland. Guests of honor were Merle J. Hamilton, chief clerk, Maintenance, who began work for the System’s predecessor July 11, 1947; Ernest Passarella (left), body shop foreman, Emeryville, who joined on July 13, 1945; and Manuel L. Ramos, main diesel mechanic at the Transbay Transit Terminal, who started March 17, 1945. Approximately 200 fellow workers and friends joined in wishing the trio happiness and health.

JUST PRAISE — AC Transit Board President Michael H. Fajans presents commemorative plaque to John Zorman, who became, as the year ended, the first District driver to reach the 33-year safe driving milestone. The ceremony honoring Zorman took place during the Board’s first official meeting in December. Proceedings included passage of a resolution praising the veteran driver’s record-setting achievement. Guests at the event included Zorman’s wife, Mary, and daughters Sandra and Judy.

TOYS ARE US — A mysterious unicorn, a wacky bird, a buck-on-wheels, stuffed pillow pets of all varieties: AC Transit employees contributed these and other toys for needy families during the past holiday season. Helping to gather the gifts were (from left) Betty Carpenter, Wilma Gaines, Helen Lee, Mary Ann Constable, and Bernell Thomas. The annual project to provide cheer for children is conducted under direction of the Personnel Department.

NOEL NOTES — Proffering 1983 ‘Season’s Greetings’ to patrons in the Transbay Transit Terminal were songster Gene Gardiner (above left), Research and Planning, backed by Drivers Hollis Carr, Raymond Nix, Dave Stewart and Harvey Williams; Dispatcher Bob Turner; and Maintenance man Joe Santos. Also happily on hand: AC Transit’s own ‘Santa’, Treasury’s Jim McCracken (above and left), plus ‘elves’ Pat Davis and Connie Lowe, of Information.
Transit
Time-Capsule

1945 speech gives view
Of wartime problems
In operating transit

The following are excerpts from a speech by Alfred J. Lundberg, President of Key System (AC Transit’s predecessor organization), on the occasion of the opening of a new motor coach terminal at Alameda Naval Air Station. The date was March 7, 1945.

Key System, with the help of the 2,600 members of its family who are working long hours under trying conditions, is exerting every effort to maintain and to better its transit service. It is realized that in the beehive of war activity, transit service is essential to the war effort, particularly (since) restrictions on private automobiles have thrown additional load on public transit.

The problems which beset us are not peculiar to this area. However, this territory has had an unusually rapid growth, quick industrialization, and an unusually large number of military installations. Also, California had, before the war, the most automobiles per head of any state. In the territory served by Key System, conditions were unusually favorable for the use of automobiles.

The transit system had to be adapted to that condition; that meant the conversion of many former rail lines to motor coach operation. The modernization and adoption of motor coaches for the two decades before the war were in the public interest under peace time conditions — and, as you all know, we are not a warlike nation and we did not make war until we were attacked.

Just as great Air Station has been enormously expanded under war time conditions, so has every other military installation in the area, and many new war plants created besides. No new automobiles and very little new transit equipment has been manufactured. Government controls, difficulty in getting enough employees, government restrictions on the many materials we need have all complicated the problem. Key System is carrying more than twice the traffic for which it was designed and equipped. We are doing our level best.

With continued cooperation such as this new terminal here at the Air Station, I am sure that our public transit problems are on the way to solution.

District headquarters will rise at downtown Oakland location

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Pass and Ticket Sales, a lobby reception area and storage space.

The Board meeting room and offices, Marketing and Public Information, might be on the second floor.


Finance and Treasury was suggested as a fourth floor grouping, along with computer hardware.

Plans indicate that Operations might be on the fifth floor, including Transportation, Supervision, Central Dispatch, Schedules/RUCUS (run cutting and scheduling), and PBX/Telephone Information. This reflects the District’s intent to create a single Operations Center, consolidating functions currently being conducted at different locations throughout the System.

The sixth floor might house Executive Offices, Legal Department and conference rooms.

Gage points out that these suggestions “are all in the planning stage and subject to change.”

Cover Box - As time ticks away toward target-date for completion — this summer — the Central Maintenance facility takes clearer shape at the East Oakland site. As of mid-January, some areas looked like this: new bus bays (below, left), secure storage area (below, right), and employee patio (top). The $21 million project at East 14th St. and 105th Ave. will house all heavy duty maintenance functions plus Purchases and Stores, re-located from Emeryville.

Retirement round-up

- Russell F. Briscoe, Driver, Newark Division, 20 years.
- David Scott, Driver, Emeryville Division, 26 years.
- Willie D. Wade, Driver, Seminary Division, 15 years.

Rosemary Hudoba, the System’s first female mechanic “C”, checks car card announcing public meeting of Fremont-Newark Advisory Committee. Hudoba both lives and works in that area.
Actions of the Board

At a regular meeting November 30, the Board of Directors:
- Authorized travel of Maintenance technician to attend Motorola Radio Course, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Referred bids for furnishing coach and automotive batteries to management for evaluation and subsequent recommendation, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Awarded bid for furnishing brake retarder assemblies to Telma Retarder, Inc./Midwest Retarder, Inc., subject to compliance with specifications and to UMTA approval, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized General Manager to issue Request-for-Proposal for new General Offices facilities, on motion of Director Shepard.
- Accepted Annual Financial Audit, Fiscal Year ending June 30, 1983, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Approved award of contract to C. Overaa & Company for parking structure, Emeryville Division, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Authorized General Manager to enter into agreement with Travelers Insurance Company for medical/dental/prescription benefits program, subject to California Vision Service for vision-care benefits program, effective Jan. 1, 1984, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

At a regular meeting December 14, the Board of Directors:
- Authorized travel of Attorney for the District to attend APTA Legal Affairs Committee meeting and travel of Purchases and Stores Manager to attend APTA Purchases and Materials Management Administrative Committee Meeting, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Adopted resolution relating to coverage agreement with Travelers Insurance Company, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Adopted specified personnel requirements, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Adopted resolution commending Driver John Zorman for safe driving achievement, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (see story, pg. 8)