Officials gather for General Office Ground-breaking
The Bay Area will gain a million people between now and the year 2005, according to a study for the Association of Bay Area Governments. Almost 180,000 of them will live in Contra Costa County. The population of Alameda County will grow even faster, by 217,000 people, in the next 20 years.

The new residents, riding the crest of an expanding regional economy, will need housing and an array of services and facilities, from schools and day care centers to police and fire protection, sewers and adequate roads and public transit — the same things we demand today, only more of them.

Yet to focus on just one item on that menu of needs — public transit — will BART commuter trains, buses and other public transportation services be adequate to serve a bustling metropolitan area of 6.5 million people, all needing ways to get from one place to another?

Arguing that domestic programs must be cut to reduce the federal budget deficit and that it's time for states and local agencies to pick up the tab, the Reagan administration has proposed a 70 percent cut in the federal transit program in its 1985-86 budget.

The impact on Bay Area transit would be substantial. According to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the region's 16-year plan for new rail starts and extensions, including BART extensions to West Pittsburgh and Dublin, would be stopped dead in its tracks.

The MTC, which coordinates transportation planning and funding for all nine Bay Area counties, says the budget cuts would also mean an immediate 10 percent reduction in rail and bus service, increased transit fares and a crippled capital replacement program.

The end results? More pressure on the Bay Area's already gridlocked freeway system and local streets and roads as to local governments in their work to maintain adequate bus and rail transit systems. We look forward to working with you in making the case for a fair shake for transit in the coming budget.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

Alan Cranston
United States Senate

Senator states funding stand

Dear Mr. Kimball,

I appreciated receiving your message regarding the Administration's severe cutback proposals for transit. I disagree with these proposals, and I will be working in the Senate to achieve a more equitable transit budget, far more responsive to acute national needs.

The federal government must meet its commitment to California's needed new transit projects, which are already in advanced planning stages and which I strongly support, as well as to local governments in their work to maintain adequate bus and rail transit systems.

To test the proposition that bicycling and bus riding are an energy-efficient, workable combination, AC Transit is equipping certain Line T coaches with front-mounted racks to hold a pair of two-wheelers. This cooperative project of the System and the East Bay Bicycle Coalition will be kicked off May 19.

The bicycle-friendly buses will welcome cyclists at designated stops along a segment of Line T's route linking downtown Oakland with west Alameda, including College of Alameda and the Naval Air Station. Alameda-bound cyclists will pay local fares (60 cents or 40 cents, youth), while the bikes ride free-of-charge.

Details of the service, including rack-use rules and regulations, will be distributed prior to implementation date.

Bay Area poll

Transportation said to be #1 worry

People who live in AC Transit's part of Northern California consider transportation more significant than unemployment, crime, pollution, housing and overpopulation, according to a recent survey carried out by the Bay Area Council.

Also, the survey revealed that the number of people who believe that urgent attention should be given to transportation issues — including public transit — is growing.

The report, published this month, was based on a question-and-answer project sponsored in December, 1984, by the Council, a group of business-backed organizations which conduct research on public issues.

The 600 persons who participated were asked to identify “the most important problem facing the Bay Area today”. Transportation was cited by 28% of those polled, which represents an increase from the 18% who, in 1983 identified transportation as this area’s #1 concern.

Poll results also showed that people believe the transportation situation is not improving. More than half said that the highway system and local streets and roads were getting worse. However, those citizens surveyed expressed a more favorable view of public transit — 37% expressed the opinion that public transit was “better” than before. Transit’s status was judged “the same” by 19% of those questioned, and “worse” by 29%.

Other significant Bay Area problems cited by survey participants were: unemployment (11%), crime (10%), housing and overpopulation (9%) and unemployment (5%).
Construction round-up

District upgrade projects move forward

District Directors, management, and staff joined with the East Bay joint-venture development team and area public officials April 11th to break ground for AC Transit's new General Office building, which will rise soon at 1600 Franklin Street, Oakland.

The $14.5 million, 10-story structure will be constructed with no direct use of public funds because of an innovative financing package which includes a lease-purchase agreement. That agreement will result in eventual public ownership of the new headquarters building, whose downtown Oakland site is already owned by AC Transit.

Scheduled to be completed in about 18 months, the facility will house AC Transit's administrative, management, operational, and support functions. These activities are now carried out in overcrowded, leased quarters in Oakland's aged Latham Square Building, about two blocks from the new location.

Patrons and the public also are expected to benefit from new, roomier, more efficient layouts for dispensing the District's Monthly Passes, convenience tickets, discount I.D. cards, and lost-and-found services.

Meanwhile, work continues on other projects: rehabilitation work involving three long-time operating sites — Emeryville, Richmond, and Seminary — and on construction of the new Hayward Division, which will replace the existing Newark Division and ease current space problems at two of the other yards.

Driver, retirees meet deaths

The deaths of a driver and four retirees have been reported in recent weeks.

Driver Fred O. Cascadden, 64, whose transit career began in 1958, died April 12. He worked at Emeryville Division.

The 27-year veteran, who lived in Emeryville, is survived by his widow, Dorothy.

Carlton F. Purvis, 66, who had completed 27 years of transit service at retirement in 1984, died April 4 in Stockton, where he made his home. He had worked out of Seminary Division.

Purvis is survived by his widow, Patricia; a son, James Purvis; a daughter, Juanita Brock.

Ernest Burgess, who retired in 1967 after a 42-year period of transit service, died April 16 in San Leandro. He was a veteran of both streetcars and buses, and worked at the Transbay Terminal during his last decade of service.

He leaves his widow, Ruth.

Roy W. Stanhope, 79, who retired in 1967 after 30 years of service on streetcars, buses, and as driver of the District's original articulated bus — the "Freeway Train" — died March 17 in Hayward.

Stanhope is survived by his widow, Mary.

George J. Cook, 59, who retired as a Richmond Division driver in 1980, died March 16. A resident of Richmond, he had completed nearly 18 years of AC Transit service at retirement.

Cook is survived by his widow, Mary, and daughter, Sheryl Cook.
FOCUS: Transit People and Projects

EMPLOYEE AWARDS — First honorees in the quarterly Employee Recognition Program are Florene Braneon, senior PBX information clerk, General Office; Charles E. Powers, service employee-leadman, Emeryville; and Jafus J. Williams, driver, Newark. They were named, respectively, “Employee of the Quarter”, “Mechanic of the Quarter”, and “Bus Driver of the Quarter”. Braneon (right photo) receives congratulations from General Manager L. A. Kimball and Sharon Rodriguez, information center supervisor. Williams (bottom) accepts plaque from Sterling Stewart, Jr., transportation superintendent, while Gene Gardiner (center), operations center manager, and Frank Johnson, Division 6 general superintendent, observe. Powers (below) poses beside a bus with his Employee Recognition symbol.

Recognizing excellence

For the most part your drivers are very nice, and only on rare occasions have I seen them uncooperative or rude to passengers. There is, however, one driver who really deserves praise and, after many trips on his bus, I recently asked his number so that I might write to let you know what a joy it is to ride on Aubrey Whitworth’s bus.

He always has a smile and pleasant word for everyone — whether it is a toddler or a senior of 70, as I am.

Irene Macklin
San Ramon

I had the pleasure of riding the AC Transit bus last week from the BART station in Concord to the VA Hospital in Martinez. I would like to commend the young lady, Marlene Barrett, on the excellent job in performing her duties.

She was courteous and friendly; just a beautiful person to meet. She was careful not to jerk the bus when the handicapped and senior citizens boarded and were getting off. She was an extremely careful driver.

She is an asset to your company.

Charlie Ann Church
Oakland

I use a fold-up wheelchair, and the driver got off the bus and helped me and my chair to board. And did the same when I got to my destination. He was very helpful and kind, as the bus had no wheelchair lift.

Pat Thomas
Hayward

Director notes complaints

In answer to various letters and calls about long lines experienced last month by seniors and others applying for their new “Regional Transit Connection” discount ID cards, William J. Bettencourt, President of the Board of Directors, issued this statement: “All of us are keenly aware of the inconvenience and discomfort many seniors experienced as AC Transit was delayed by demand for revised cards. This occurred as the deadline approached, ending a six-month transitional period. We sincerely regret the situation.

Prior to this problem period, we had taken various steps to ease the process for our senior and handicap riders. A key step was sending our ‘Traveling ID Center’ (ten years in existence) to various sites throughout the East Bay. We also urged the other transit systems involved to take a more active role in card re-issue.

In the course of the extended change-over period, this District issued tens of thousands of the new cards, both on-and off-site. Indeed, we believe that AC Transit’s sometimes beleaguered staff was responsible for the great majority of discount cards issued in the entire region.

“We are keenly aware of instances, during that final sign-up period, when lines grew and, during the process seemed to fall and bog down from the weight of sheer numbers. We can only apologize to those affected and thank everyone who took the time to voice concerns.”

Retirement round-up

April/May/June

- Walter Anderson, Jr., Driver, Richmond Division, 23 years.
- Torben Brochmann, Driver, Emeryville Division, 26 years.
- Robert J. Gardiner, Driver, Newark Division, 21 years.
- William J. Goelz, Mechanic AA, Building Maintenance, 13 years.
- Paul L. Huntsman, Driver, Emeryville Division, 19 years.
- Raymond B. Nix, Driver, Richmond Division, 22 years.
- Raymond L. Peterson, Driver, Emeryville Division, 30 years.
- Alvaro T. Pinto, Service Employee-lead, Seminary Division, 25 years.
- Norris L. Walker, Driver, Emeryville Division, 13 years.
- Glen Witty, Driver, Richmond Division, 22 years.
At an adjourned regular meeting March 20, the Board of Directors:
• Adopted amended “Statement of Investment Policy”, on motion of Director Rinehart.
• Re-scheduled public meeting on Five-Year Plan Update, with specified inclusions and changes to be incorporated in that document, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.

At an adjourned regular meeting April 3, the Board of Directors:
• Authorized General Manager to guarantee District payment of specified cost of medical coverage for retirees during an interim period until July 1, with staff reports on the matter to be made monthly, on motion of Director Rinehart.

New publication debuts; Transit-Times honored
AC Transit added to its family of informational publications this month with introduction of “On the Move” — a quarterly, tabloid-size newspaper for and about District employees and retirees.
A joint project of the Marketing and Human Resources Departments, the publication covers employee programs and recreational/sports activities. Also, it honors various achievements within the work-force of 2,200.
Meantime, “Transit-Times” — first published in May, 1958 — has received honors in the annual, statewide communications competition sponsored by California Press Women, Inc.
Judged on selected 1984 issues, the monthly magazine earned awards in all three categories in which it was evaluated, receiving a “first” in page lay-out; a “second” in headline-writing; and a “third” in overall quality among competing publications in its category.