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ALAMEDA - CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



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TRANSIT CHIEF NAMED

Worthington Brings Wide Experience To District As First General Manager

The man chosen to guide the future direction of public transit in the East Bay counties must possess a proven experience in the field of transportation, and an intimate knowledge of the area's numerous and complex transit problems.

These were the principal criteria employed by Directors of the Transit District in their search for a general manager—a search that quickly and with obvious reason concluded with the appointment of John R. Worthington, widely known and regarded authority on urban transportation, both locally and throughout the State.

Worthington comes to the District as its first general manager equipped with solid transit experience acquired over a period of nearly 40 years. His thorough and long practical background extends into government processes and the administration of large scale operations. His postwar association with Key System Transit Lines, which he severed in 1954, has enhanced his close familiarity with the detailed transportation problems of the area so in need of prompt solution.

Vice President Wm. J. Bettencourt said of his personnel committee's unanimous recommendation: "Mr. Worthington's at-

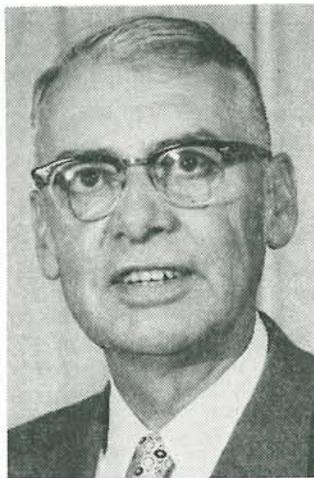
tributes are those we consider absolutely essential for the man who must supervise and guide the preparation of the District's new transit program and then assemble the extensive transit operation that we propose."

Further, Bettencourt noted that the new general manager "already has displayed and proven a highly competent ability" while serving the District since last March as its transportation consultant. In this capacity Worthington shared a large part in the development of a plan to improve and expand public transit in the two East Bay counties.

Worthington's reputation as an expert on transit matters wasn't created overnight. From the time he first joined Southern Pacific as a messenger in 1917, he was vitally interested and, later, directly concerned with bettering public transit.

As general superintendent of the entire bus and rail passenger operation of Pacific Electric Railway in Los Angeles, Worthington successfully managed a rehabilitation of the company's operations in the late "thirties" to meet fast-growing competition of the private auto.

In addition to his experience with the southern California transit firm—at that



John R. Worthington

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District Readies Public Showing of Transit Plan

An illustrated public presentation of the Transit District's program for improved and expanded East Bay transit soon will be available for scheduling by organizations in the area.

Titled, "A Transit Acquisition and Development Program for the East Bay Area," the presentation includes a series of descriptive charts and a commentary by a District representative pointing out the problems of mass transportation in the area and explaining the District's development plan for meeting this need.

Letters telling of the availability of the presentation, together with a new 20-page brochure describing the District and its program, have been mailed to more than 250 civic, business, community and other clubs and organizations.

The presentation will be available free of charge beginning next month for luncheon meetings as well as for groups holding their meetings during the morning, afternoon or evening hours, including Saturdays and Sundays. Any interested group may arrange for a presentation simply by contacting the Transit District.

Suit Involving District Is Nearer to Decision

Efforts by the Transit District to obtain an earlier date for trial of a taxpayers' suit against the District have resulted in a re-scheduling of the hearing.

The trial was advanced to August 12 from the original date of Sept. 16 in Marin County Superior Court at the request of Robert E. Nisbet, attorney for the District.

The suit charges that there was improper canvassing of absentee ballots in Richmond, San Pablo and certain unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County after the election that created the District, and it asks that those areas be excluded from the District.

Future of Downtown Stores Tied to Transit

Better Public Transportation Held Essential by Retailers

The fate of downtown retailing should be linked more strongly to the improvement of public transit rather than to efforts to increase parking facilities or frustrated attempts to alleviate city traffic congestion.

This was the theme stressed repeatedly in a public transit clinic held recently under joint auspices of the National Retail Merchants' Assn. and the American Transit Assn.

Throughout the one-day meeting, a distinguished line-up of speakers emphasized that downtown business relies on public transit to bring a substantial number of customers to its doors, that it is a physical impossibility for all shoppers to come by private auto, and that business men and transit companies—to insure the continued prosperity of downtown—must work together to make shopping-by-transit speedier, more convenient and more comfortable.

Progress Stymied

As desirable as off-street parking and better traffic flow methods may be, these improvements generally succeed only in influencing more people to drive their cars downtown, thus negating the progress in clearing up parking shortages and traffic congestion.

The need for an adequate public transit system to assure an economically sound downtown was underscored by Roswell F. Thoma, president of Niagara Frontier Transit System of Buffalo, N.Y.

"Transit's job has been made difficult," he said, "by the increased number and use of private automobiles, which not only have taken away a large segment of transit's passengers, but which compete with public transit for space on the streets.

"Speed of travel for bus passengers and motorists alike is reduced, and thereby both forms of transportation become less

Big Changes in Bus Design Planned by Manufacturers

A distinctively new bus model that will offer greatly increased eye appeal and added convenience and comfort for the passenger is being developed by equipment manufacturers.

Coach builders soon will have completed their designs and retooling for the new models, according to Jesse L. Haugh, president of the American Transit Assn.

Haugh told a public transit clinic in New York recently that progressive transit companies are alert to the need for making vehicles socially acceptable, especially with respect to women, who represent nearly two-thirds of transit riders.

"Such improvements add to the cost of a motor coach," he said. "But progressive transit managers are convinced they are worth the cost and are essential to attract new patronage."

attractive," he observed.

"Practically every responsible student of modern city life will agree that the continued growth and prosperity of our American cities as we know them today requires the encouragement of public transit use, and the discouragement of unnecessary automobile use in congested areas." He added:

"You as downtown merchants have a great stake in your local transit system. So, too, have all owners of downtown property—and the banks that hold the mortgages."

Speedier Transit

Transit executives attending the New York City conference indicated they are keenly aware that the way to increase riders is through making public transit speedier, more comfortable and more convenient, and by coordinating public conveyance systems with private auto parking facilities located outside of the city core.

Retailers were given a gentle rebuke for their lack of active concern in good transit by E. Willard Dennis, chairman of

time the world's largest inter-urban railway system—Worthington gained first hand knowledge of state-wide transit as manager of the California Bus Association. The association, which he organized following his termination of service with Key System, represents 140 companies throughout California.

Of the job that lies ahead, Worthington brings to his new position a firm conviction that substantially improved public transit is a necessity if the East Bay area is to continue its great population growth and enjoy maximum prosperity.

He believes that public transit will, indeed, share a larger role in the movement of East Bay residents, but that this goal can only be attained with a revitalized and expanded operation.

Upon accepting the general manager appointment, Worthington said his first consideration will be the assurance that planning for the District is "progressive, proper, and in the best interests of the people. Our program, in addition to being highly attractive to the area's citizens, must be financially sound."

the NRMA downtown development committee. He said:

"Strangely enough, retailers, who stand to gain the most from good public transit, have heretofore shown too little interest as a group in the whys and wherefores of an inadequate transit system. They have overlooked the decided advantages to be gained by downtown merchants through an efficient bus service and other forms of public transit."

Joseph J. Myler, a Rochester, N.Y., business executive, said that what retailers need to bring downtown is people, not automobiles.

"The plain truth is that cities cannot afford the space needed to park the cars of all the owners who prefer to drive downtown in their own cars," he said. "What we need to do is to get more persons to use the buses . . . To preserve the downtown stores, we must preserve our public transportation system."

"The greatest possible aid to retailers in their present plight is fast, comfortable public transportation at reasonable fares," he said.

Hearing Set on Request to Withdraw from Transit District

Directors of the Transit District have scheduled Sept. 10 to hear petitions requesting exclusion of approximately 50 square miles of northern Contra Costa County from the District.

The petitions, containing 95 signatures representing the heavy industrial section of the county, contend the area will not benefit from remaining in the District. The hearing will be held at 8 p.m. at the Claremont Hotel.

What the Editors Say About Transit

Contra Costa Petitioners Urged To Consider Population Growth

Reprinted from the San Francisco News:

A group of East Bay taxpayers is circulating petitions to withdraw a 50 square-mile area from the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District.

The area, in northern Contra Costa County, contains some heavy taxpayers. Should they be able to pull out, the District's tax base would be strongly affected.

There are a number of aspects to the problem and it is possible the petition circulators can make a case for themselves, but we think they are acting a little prematurely since the engineering plans for transit in the area haven't been completed.

The petitioners appear to be looking at transit needs as they are today and forgetting what they will be tomorrow with population doubled.

This is just one of the obstacles to be overcome before rapid transit becomes a reality, but we are confident the Bay Area will meet the challenges, one by one, as they arise.

Another Copy?

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