

# report

GENERAL MANAGER'S



## Strength in Numbers

"Strength in numbers" is much more than just a slogan; it embodies the practiced art of coming together for the District's shared success. This principle is at the core of New Bus Operator (NBO) training, which runs every month of the year. The Training & Education Center has earned a renowned reputation for transforming unskilled recruits into a collective force far stronger than any individual effort alone.

As the new calendar year begins, NBO recruiting, and certification are progressing at a rapid pace. In February, 18 Professional Bus Operators were certified and are now ready to serve East Oakland-Division 4. Currently, three NBO classes, totaling 51 candidates, are in training, with one certification scheduled each month. Staying true to our proud tradition, a standing-room-only crowd gathered at the TEC to celebrate the latest graduates, who proudly stood ready for their new roles.



Members of New Bus Operator Class 150 are now ready to step into their new roles as full-time Bus Operators at East Oakland-Division 4.

## what's inside

- An 'Accidental' Entry That Made Rodeo 2025 Unforgettable
- Driving Excellence: Celebrating Our Outstanding Bus Operators
- AC Transit is Leading the Way for California
- Restrooms Reimagining Richmond Parkway Transit Center

*After several years without fare adjustments, depleted emergency funds, and an unexpected fiscal update, our transit district faces a significant budget shortfall. These new fares aim to sustain bus service while minimizing financial impacts on our valued riders.*

## Board Approves Fare Adjustments, Effective July 1, 2025

In a 4 to 3 vote, the Board of Directors approved a two-phase fare adjustment, raising the local adult cash fare by .25¢, from \$2.50 to \$2.75, and increasing the Transbay cash fare from \$6.00 to \$6.50, effective July 1, 2025. A second .25¢ increase will bring the local cash fare to \$3.00 on July 1, 2026.

The Board ultimately determined that the fare adjustment protects our service while minimizing financial impacts on our valued riders.

AC Transit has not raised fares since January 2020, despite the Board of Directors' five-year plan for gradual increases, which began with local fares in 2018 and Transbay fares in 2019. However, the pandemic's severe impact on service and ridership led policymakers to postpone fare adjustments. As a result, emergency grant funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) was used to stabilize operations and sustain service levels.

With emergency ARP funds now depleted, six years of stagnant fares, and an unexpected fiscal update from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), AC Transit – now in its 65th year – faces a looming budget shortfall.

The projected four-year gap has increased by 55%, from \$149 million to \$231 million, beginning in the next fiscal year with a shortfall of \$45 million. The shortage will grow to approximately \$72 million in FY 2026-27.

To help mitigate this significant deficit, the approved fare adjustment is expected to generate \$4.1 million in revenue in the coming fiscal year. By the end of FY 2026/27, the additional fare revenue is projected to reach \$7.9 million.

AC Transit understands that any fare increase is difficult, and we are keenly aware of the financial pressures everyone currently faces. However, inflation continues to drive up the cost of operations, and ridership remains significantly below pre-pandemic levels. As a result, our transit district is considering more than fare increases to avoid unwanted impacts on service, including finding efficiencies within our operations to reduce costs. Additionally, we are working closely with regional partners to identify alternative funding sources that can help address the budget shortfall.

AC Transit remains actively involved in the MTC-managed Clipper START discounted fare program. Through START, eligible low-income riders now enjoy a 50% discount on AC Transit fares. Participation has seen significant growth, with recent reports showing that AC Transit's START program riders saved over \$136,000 from the 50% discount in the final three months of 2024 alone.

AC Transit will also continue the .25¢ discount for Clipper and mobile fare payments. Pass prices and discounted fares will also adjust based on their existing multipliers, ensuring a fair and consistent structure for all riders.

# An 'Accidental' Entry That Made Roadeo 2025 Unforgettable

In February, the Bay Area's weather can be a hostile foe. Rain, wind, chill, and fog can pose not only challenges to our service delivery but also create a formidable backdrop for an outdoor competition.

Despite this frightful forecast, the District pressed forward and asked our Bus Operators, Mechanics, and Service Employees to stand up and be recognized as true champions in the 2025 Local Bus Roadeo: the annual competition of endurance, precision, reflexes, and memory, and it is all a white-knuckling test against the clock.

Yet, in the waning days this February, the Bay Area experienced weather whiplash. On Roadeo Saturday, February's atmospheric river subsided, giving way to balmy conditions. Under unseasonably sunny skies, over 50 employees and teams navigated the sprawling serpentine course and maintenance bays at the Training & Education Center.

Perhaps it was the weather? Maybe it was serendipity? No matter the source of the fortune, this year's Roadeo was a showcase of veteran expertise and emerging talent, all vying to make District history or, for the top-ranked competitors, secure a spot to represent the District at April's International Roadeo in Austin, Texas.

Roadeo 2025 competitors understand that this year's skills challenge was no walk in the park. AC Transit's long-standing tradition of excellence is a testament to that fact, with seven APTA Overall Excellence (Best of the Best) titles or top honors earned every decade from 1986 to 2024.

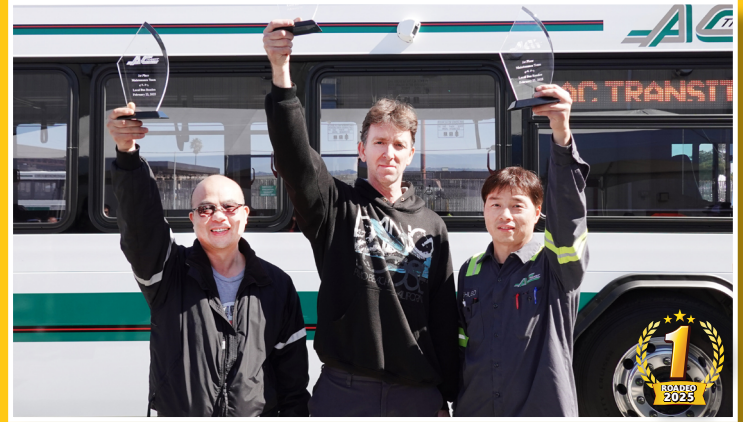


Uncovering hidden defects in just 7 minutes got the heart rates of each Maintenance team racing. Meanwhile, Bus Operators discovered that during the Diminishing Clearance challenge, winning Roadeo is decided by a matter of inches.

Few truly grasp the heart-pounding pressure and dilated pupils that come with taking a 30-minute written exam, followed by uncovering hidden defects during the USSC vehicle inspection, Bendix air brake board, vapor door, and New Flyer Multiplex Module - to name a few - all in under seven minutes.

The exceptions are Sean Burr and Alvin Tan, both Hayward-D6 Journey Level Mechanics with 26 and 25 years of experience, respectively. Sean "embraces the thrilling challenge that the pressure of competition delivers," which may explain why

he's been part of the number #1 team in diagnosing Local Roadeo's hidden low power, excessive smoke, and harsh shifting defects. He has also represented the District in four International Bus Roadeos.



The first-place Division 6 Maintenance team—Alvin Tan, Sean Burr, and Shubo Liu—is bound for Austin, TX, in pursuit of AC Transit's eighth APTA Best of the Best title.

Alvin has been Sean's troubleshooting teammate in three Local and International competitions, including their Best of the Best honors in 2019. For Alvin, the magic of the International Roadeo never gets old. He enjoys competing for more than just titles, he says, "(I) enjoy connecting with transit professionals and attending vendor expos, which helps me stay updated on new technologies."

Maintenance competes as a trio, and this year, our team aiming to secure another title features Roadeo newcomer Shubo Liu, an 11-year D6 Journey Level Mechanic. When asked, why he competed this year, Shobu says, "I signed up for Roadeo to enhance my skills and learn more." Shobu thrives on the competitive atmosphere and is excited to see the talents of other participants from across the nation.

Roadeo also crowned 2nd Place honors to Chris Souza, Lai Troung, and Victor Mora from Hayward-D6, while Benjamin Kong, Kyin Kyu, and Carlos Lopez from East Oakland-D4 took home the 3rd place award.



Second-place Maintenance honors went to Division 6's Victor Mora, Chris Souza, and Lai Troung. Third place was awarded to Division 4's Kyin Kyu, Carlos Lopez, and Benjamin Kong.

If you think gripping the steering wheel tightly while crossing the windy Bay Bridge is intense, you can only imagine the grip required for Bus Operator competition. Terms like "left hand

reverse," "offset one lane," and "diminishing clearance" might sound like a foreign language, but they represent just a few of the 13 challenges faced during Roadeo. The Bus Operator who demonstrated the best judgment stops and other crucial skills, with judges observing from behind the yellow line, was Emeryville-D2 Bus Operator Moises Frias. You've heard of the film and novel "The Accident Man?" Well, Moises' rise to #1 Bus Operator and his first-time Roadeo competition - both local and international - was a success that also came about by accident.

"It was my first Roadeo. I participated because I completed the wrong form. I only wanted to volunteer and enter the car show. Once I realized I was signed up (for Roadeo), I didn't want to disappoint my daughter."



Moises is thrilled to represent AC Transit at the International Roadeo in Austin, TX, sharing that his career with the District has 'provided me and my daughter everything for the last 10-plus years.'

The judges sat behind the yellow line, evaluating "smoothness" and "right hand reverse" among more than 30 Bus Operators. Nathaniel Deleon from Emeryville-D2 earned the 2nd place title, while newcomer ChengJun Fu from Hayward-D6 secured the 3rd place honors.



The second-place Bus Operator award went to Nathaniel Deleon from Division 2, and third place was earned by ChengJun Fu from Division 6.

At the end of the day, our fleet of buses return to Divisions to be prepared for the next operating day. The Service Employees are the driving force behind our elevated safety standards, and for the second year in a row, they demonstrated their behind-the-wheel skills during the competition. Taking the top spot on the Roadeo awards podium was Dinieri Parker from Richmond-D2, with Trevor Zenon from Emeryville-D2 securing 2nd place and 3rd place honors going to Art Hernandez from East Oakland-D4.



Dinieri Parker from Division 3 secured first place in the Service Employee category, followed by Trevor Zenon from Division 2 in second place and Art Hernandez from Division 4 in third place.



Employees showcased their best rides off the course, with Brenda North-Clark (TEC) taking 1st place in a 2017 Chevrolet Corvette, John James (D4 Bus Operator) securing 2nd place with a 1972 Chevrolet Chevelle, and Chris Rovillos (D3 Mechanic) earning 3rd place in a 2012 Nissan GTR.



The Best of the Best at Roadeo also featured motorcycles, with Sheila Bagby (D2 Bus Operator) earning 1st place with her 2007 Custom Harley Davidson, Raymond Martinez (TEC) taking 2nd place with a 1954 Hydro Glide Harley Davidson, and Jose Oseguera-Garcia (TEC) securing 3rd place with a 2014 Dyna Harley Davidson.



Participants and guests capped off a day of competition with a performance by Thee Olde Country, featuring Marketing Administrator Andrei Pasternak on electric guitar.

# Driving Excellence: Celebrating Our Outstanding Bus Operators

Achieving a behind-the-wheel safety driving record of 20 years or more is a remarkable career accomplishment that speaks to the dedication, skill, care, and professionalism of our Bus Operators. Imagine navigating the hustle of downtown Oakland, the shifting traffic of San Pablo Avenue, the uncertainty of the Bay Bridge, and the ever-changing construction from Fremont to Richmond, all

while prioritizing passenger safety. The following Bus Operators epitomize exceptional focus and precision, showcasing not only personal discipline but also the effectiveness of our training and safety programs. Their milestone is a true testament to excellence in public transportation.

## Over 20 Years Safe Driving



Niambi Denis-Gordon, D3.

**Niambi Denis-Gordon** will celebrate her 20th anniversary with AC Transit in just three months. While she currently operates Lines 72R and 74 from Richmond-Division 3, Niambi takes pride in having served riders across both Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Passionate about public service, she is dedicated to delivering excellent transit experiences and mentoring new Bus Operators, helping them develop the skills for success. Outside of work, Niambi is a talented licensed cosmetologist and enjoys bike riding. Her commitment to both passengers and colleagues makes her a valued member of the AC Transit family.



Baldev Gill, D6.

**Baldev Gill** started his transit career in September 2002, during the time our nation was marking the first anniversary of the September 11 attacks. He began as a Maintenance Employee but soon realized his true passion was behind the wheel. Baldev quickly transitioned to a Bus Operator, where he has flourished. Now based at Hayward-Division 6, he operates Lines 60, 97, and 99. In addition to serving Hayward riders, Baldev is known for mentoring new Bus Operators, helping them smoothly transition into their roles. His journey reflects his dedication to personal growth and the success of his colleagues.

## Over 25 Years Safe Driving



Donald Keys, D6.

**Donald Keys** has invested the past quarter-century to serving the riders of the East Bay. As a Bus Operator at Hayward-Division 6, he drives Line 97, ensuring the safe commute of passengers from Union City to San Leandro. Over the course of his career, Donald has been an active representative for ATU-Local 192 and Division 6, participating in various committees. He is also a member of the D6 Drivers Committee, where he collaborates with the District to improve safety and routes for both frontline employees and riders.



Madjid Ouramdane, D2.

**Madjid Ouramdane** began his AC Transit career in August 1999, the same year NASA launched the Mars Climate Orbiter spacecraft. Based at the Emeryville-Division 2, Madjid takes pride in driving Line 57 between Emeryville and Oakland. He is known for his outstanding customer service, ensuring every rider has a safe and pleasant commute. Off the road, Madjid also mentors new Bus Operators, aiming to contribute to the District’s future success. Outside of work, he enjoys rock and roll music and watching international soccer, bringing the same passion to his hobbies as he does to his work.

## Over 30 Years Safe Driving



Ronnie Blaylock, D4.

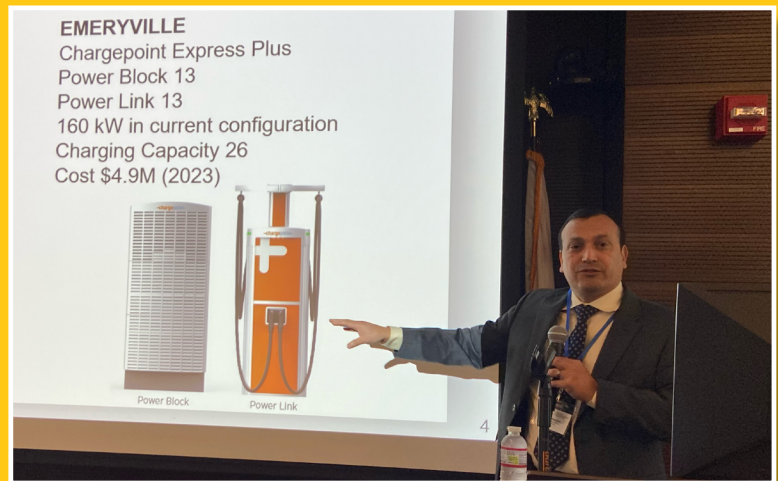
**Ronnie Blaylock** exemplifies AC Transit’s “Gold Standard.” With over 35 years of dedicated service, he has been a part of AC Transit since February 1987. Now based at East Oakland-Division 4, Ronnie operates the Transbay Line NL between Oakland and San Francisco. In addition to his outstanding service on the road, Ronnie is a knowledgeable resource and a mentor to aspiring operators. He is known for his generosity in sharing his expertise, offering guidance, and fostering the growth of newer operators. His commitment to excellence and mentorship has made a significant impact, strengthening both the team and the quality of service AC Transit provides.

## How AC Transit is Leading the Way for California

In February, the District took a quantum leap forward in its two-decade-long zero-emission bus program, marking a significant milestone in our commitment to sustainable transit. As the featured transit agency at the prestigious 2025 National Electric Vehicle Consortium Conference, we had the unique opportunity to showcase our groundbreaking efforts in advancing green transportation and workforce development.

The National Electric Vehicle Consortium's (NEVC) annual conference is an event focused on advancing the development, adoption, and infrastructure of electric vehicles (EVs) in the United States. The conference brings together industry leaders, policymakers, manufacturers, researchers, and other stakeholders to discuss the latest technologies and challenges in the EV sector.

This year’s theme, "Let’s Learn from California," centered on the successful partnership between Chabot College and AC Transit. During the main presentation, Director of Maintenance Cecil Blandon highlighted the foundation of our expanding zero emission fleet and the essential infrastructure needed to support it. Training and Education Manager Michael Flocchini followed with the critical role of workforce development, labor-management partnerships, and career ladder opportunities in sustaining new technologies. Their collective presentations showcased



Director of Maintenance Cecil Blandon emphasized the foundation of our growing zero-emission fleet and its essential infrastructure.

the innovative steps AC Transit is taking to ensure that our bus fleet and workforce are prepared for the future of clean transportation.

Being in the spotlight at such a high-profile event celebrates AC Transit's progress and equally recognizes the transformative partnership between AC Transit and Chabot College as the U.S.'s first transit-collegiate collaboration.

This year's conference was a "who's-who" of over 200 post-secondary academics, leaders from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, and experts from across the state. It brought together energy and industry specialists, including leaders from the California Energy Commission, creating an unparalleled gathering of minds. Funded by the National Science Foundation, NEVC fosters collaboration among academic, agency, and industry experts across all-electric vehicle disciplines. This interaction is essential to securing the nation's EV workforce pipeline, and AC Transit's roadmap, shared at the conference, exemplified how it's not only possible to create career and academic opportunities in the EV sector but also how we are transforming the very communities we serve through these initiatives.



Training and Education Manager Michael Flocchini highlighted workforce development and career growth's role in sustaining new technologies to 200 attendees.

## Restroom Upgrades Reimagine the Richmond Parkway Transit Center

AC Transit recently completed a series of upgrades at the Richmond Parkway Transit Center aimed at improving Operator convenience and streamlining parking fee collection. Included in these improvements was the construction of a permanent two-unit Bus Operator restroom. Given the demanding nature of their work, which often involves long hours behind the wheel, having access to clean, well-maintained restrooms supports the overall well-being and safety of our frontline team.

The new restroom facility consists of a two-unit building with complete utility connections. Each unit features the standard restroom fixtures, along with a dedicated sink providing both hot and cold water, and an electric air hand dryer. Capital Projects consulted with several internal stakeholders, including the Operator Restroom Committee and ATU-Local 192 members, for an inclusive design approach. The result is a building's entrance secured by a fence and a locking gate, which will be equipped with card reader badge access. The card readers restrict entry to authorized frontline employees



The entrance to the two-unit restroom is secured by a fence and a locking gate, which will be equipped with card reader badge access.

only, ensuring a higher level of safety around the clock. For added safety, each restroom will be equipped with a card reader badge access security lock on the entry door.

The Richmond Parkway Transit Center, built in 2004, saw its parking surface deteriorate after 20 years of use. To address this, the blacktop has been resurfaced, extending its lifespan and ensuring continued convenience for riders connecting to AC Transit. In addition, parking stalls have been restriped and numbered, while ADA-compliant pathways, ramps, and dedicated parking spaces have been installed and clearly marked.

As part of this project, AC Transit negotiated a renewed and updated agreement with Caltrans, the property owner, to secure long-term use and ongoing maintenance of the transit center. The previous agreement expired in 2009, and since then, AC Transit has been operating under a month-to-month extension.



All blacktop has been resurfaced, ensuring continued convenience for riders connecting to AC Transit.

# Human Resources Personnel Report

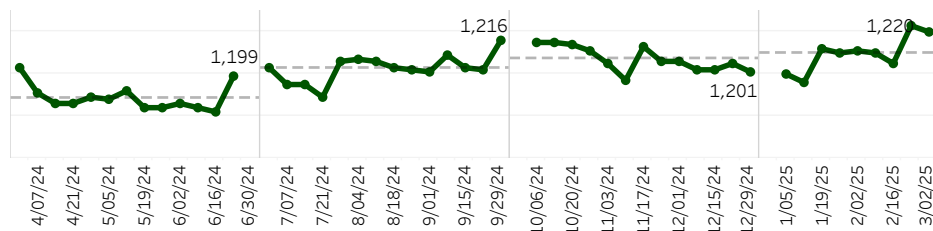
## WEEKLY | Bus Operator Headcount | [as of: March 9, 2025]

Budgeted Headcount	Operator Count (Employment)	Long-Term Leave (LTL)	LTL Chg (from prior wk)	Avail Workforce	Training	Division Workforce
1,380	1,399	129	0	1,270	51	1,219

### Division Workforce

**1,219**

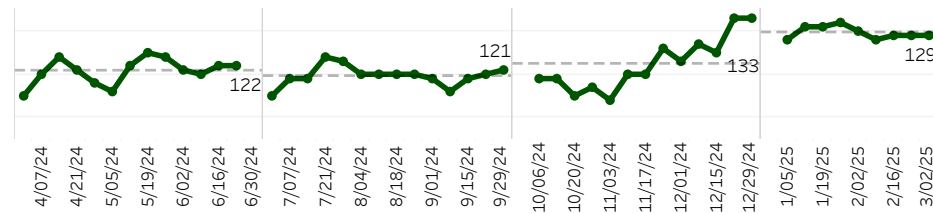
[as of: March 9, 2025]



### Long-term Leave

**129**

[as of: March 9, 2025]



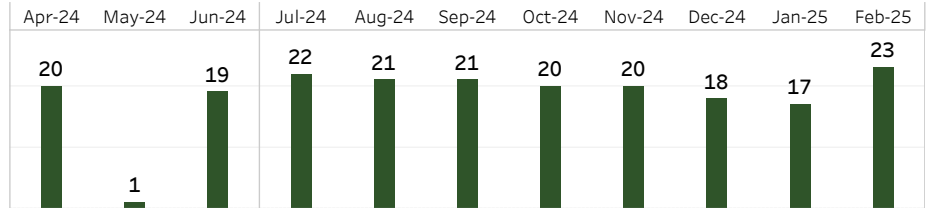
## MONTHLY | Bus Operator - Hiring & Workforce Trends

### WORKFORCE CHANGE

#### Hiring

**23**

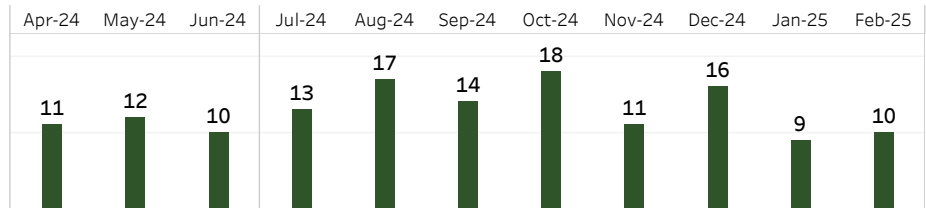
[YTD FY 2025 | February]



#### Separations

**-10**

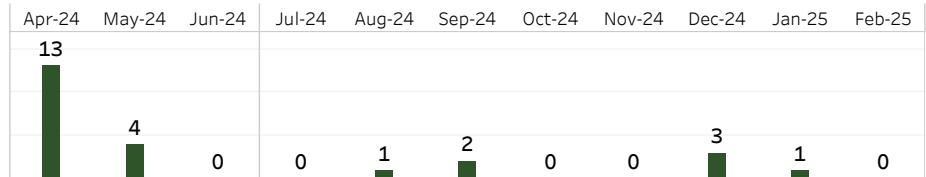
[YTD FY 2025 | February]



#### Promotions

**-0**

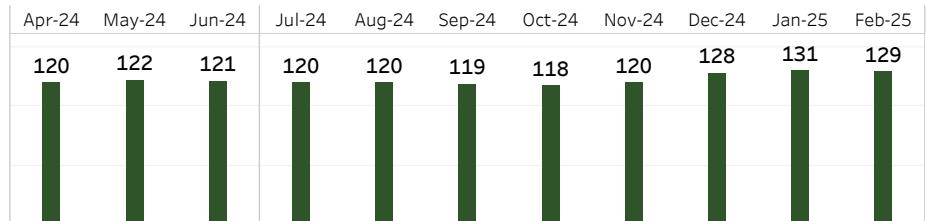
[YTD FY 2025 | February]



#### Long-Term Leave

**2**

[YTD FY 2025 February]



**FEB-25 NET GAIN: +15**

