

report

GENERAL MANAGER'S



The Defensive Driving Support Pilot marks the first time Training Instructors have stepped out of traditional certification roles to provide on-road support to every Bus Operator, regardless of tenure with the District.

AC Transit Strikes Messaging Gold Again

AC Transit continues its winning streak on the national stage, earning two first-place honors in the prestigious APTA AdWheel Awards. The District was recognized for excellence in Staff Interviews in a Social Media Campaign and Bus Exterior Ads for Operator Recruitment, showcasing creative storytelling and bold outreach. The social media series is now available on AC Transit's YouTube page.

This marks the seventh consecutive year AC Transit has secured a first-place AdWheel Award. As first-place winners, both entries now advance to compete for the coveted APTA Grand Award, to be announced at the 2026 APTA Marketing and Communication Workshop in Savannah. Notably, AC Transit enters the competition as a two-time Grand Award winner, underscoring the District's leadership in transit communications and marketing innovation.



Meet Brenda, a 35-year AC Transit Veteran

The Staff Interview social media series gives our riders the backstory of the staff members who make AC Transit's service possible.

Fully Staffed but the District is not Standing Still

There is a quiet yet powerful milestone that does not always get attention: being fully staffed. It's the result of months, and quite frankly, years of strategic recruiting, training, onboarding, and retention efforts. And the District is proud to say we have reached that mark.

Reaching full staffing is more than a numbers game; it has substantive meaning. It means runs are covered. It means frontline teams have the support they need. It means operations run more smoothly, customer service improves, and staff can focus on doing their best work without stretching beyond sustainable limits.

Behind this achievement is a deliberate commitment to workforce development: attracting talent, investing in training, and creating an environment where employees want to stay and grow. From HR's recruitment pipelines, Business Sciences' key performance data, and Operations-Training hands-on instruction, every step has been designed to ensure that when frontline employees enter our doors, they are prepared, confident, and supported.

All eleven newly certified Bus Operators have officially reported to Richmond-Division 3, completing the final step in achieving full staffing by filling the last remaining operator vacancies.

But being fully staffed doesn't mean standing still.

Much like the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic - when new Bus Operator classes were temporarily paused - reaching full staffing has created space to shift focus from recruitment to refinement.

continued on page 2

what's inside

- What the \$590 Million State Loan Means for AC Transit Riders
- Two Wheels. Four Wheels. One Shared Road
- AC Transit Helps Shape APTA's 2026 Technology Agenda



Eleven newly certified Bus Operators are officially rolling into Richmond-Division 3 and include Front Row (L-R): Antwun B., Alise C., Maninder S., Saah H., Amanda Z., Carlos C. Jr. Back Row (L-R): Oscar S. III, Dominick A., Jesse R., Romeo S., Delois W. Jr.

With vacancies now filled, Training staff is redirecting their expertise toward targeted service improvements. One initiative already underway zeroes in on safety along the Tempo corridor, particularly at high-risk intersections on International Boulevard: areas where data demonstrates the greatest concentration of collisions.

Guided by a deep dive into Business Sciences' performance data, Staff uncovered a pattern: during the AM peak, intersection collisions accounted for the highest concentration of incidents – most often involving vehicles turning left or right directly in front of buses.

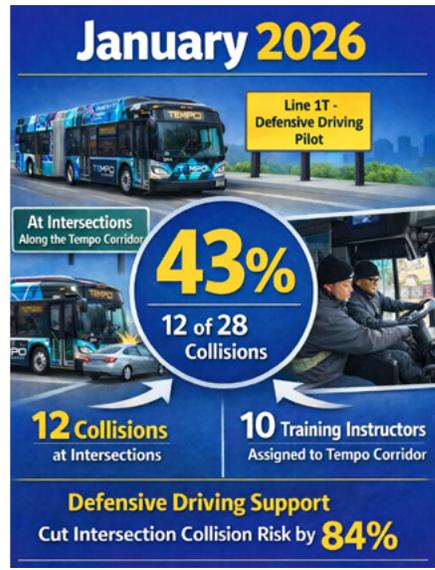
The District's response has been immediate and intentional.



Training Instructors ride alongside Bus Operators, coaching in real time, sharpening defensive driving skills, and helping prevent the collision types that matter most.

Training staff were reassigned. Today, instructors are riding alongside Bus Operators during designated peak hours, offering real-time coaching while buses remain in active service.

The objective is simple and strategic: reduce targeted collision types, strengthen defensive driving techniques in the moments that matter most, and ultimately enhance safety for both riders and our frontline staff.



In mid-January 2026, the Training & Education Department launched the Defensive Driving Support pilot, redeploying 10 Training Instructors to provide on-road support along the Tempo Line 1T corridor.

During the January pilot period, a total of 28 collisions were documented, with 12 (or 43%) occurring at intersections. Following the deployment of on-road Defensive Driving Support, intersection-related collisions dropped to 16% of the total, representing an 84% reduction in the likelihood of collisions at intersections.

Initial data suggest that targeted, real-time coaching can have a measurable and immediate impact on safety.



It's a strategic pivot, from building the workforce to strengthening performance, ensuring that stability translates into smarter, safer service on the streets.



AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, and SFMTA have secured a \$590 million loan package, providing temporary relief from severe service cuts amid ongoing financial challenges.

What the \$590 Million State Loan Means for AC Transit Riders

Governor Gavin Newsom, the state Department of Finance, and the MTC have agreed to provide a \$590 million loan to Bay Area transit agencies, including AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, and SFMTA/MUNI.

The funding offers temporary relief to agencies that have been nearing severe service cuts due to ongoing financial challenges. AC Transit alone is facing an operating deficit of \$74 million for the upcoming 2026-27 fiscal year. Without support, our transit district and other systems across the region were preparing for difficult decisions that could have reduced routes and service frequency for riders.

While the total regional package of \$590 million is significant, it is smaller than the \$750 million previously sought by local lawmakers. Even so, the agreement provides immediate stability at a critical time.

Under the proposed framework, AC Transit may draw up to \$55 million for operations no later than July 1,

2026. The District, in coordination with the other transit operators, selected loan terms that offer flexibility while easing short-term pressure.

The agreement includes an initial two-year interest-only period, meaning each agency will not begin paying down the principal right away. After that, there is a ten-year repayment window. The loan carries a variable interest rate tied to the State's Surplus Money Investment Fund (SMIF), which stood at 4.04% as of December 31, 2025. Since the rate is variable, it may adjust over time.

Importantly, this funding is not a grant, it must be repaid. It provides essential breathing room and AC Transit is grateful to Governor Gavin Newsom and his administration for enabling this creative use of TIRCP funds to help protect essential transit services, along with the many advocates who supported this effort.

We also extend special thanks to State Senators Scott Wiener and Jesse Arreguin for keeping transit funding front and center and for advancing solutions such as Senate Bill (SB) 63, which could pave the way for a regional funding measure to repay these loans and secure a more sustainable future for East Bay riders. In early February, the AC Transit Board authorized the General Manager to continue negotiations.

Fully Staffed & Focused... continued from page 2

Before the defensive driving support initiative ever rolled onto the street, Staff sat down with ATU Local 192 to align on its purpose and approach. Supporting Bus Operators while in service and doing so in a way that prioritizes safety for both employees and riders, requires trust, coordination, and capacity. It's an effort that simply would not have been possible during periods of heavy training demand.

Now underway, the program is entering its evaluation phase. Early data is being reviewed, with a formal assessment of effectiveness soon to come. Should the

results show measurable safety gains, this hands-on defensive driving support model could expand to other areas of our bus network, particularly where collision patterns or rider fall data demonstrate risks.

Unquestionably, operational needs can shift. Communities grow. Demand changes. That's why flexibility remains central to the plan. While current staffing levels meet today's needs, we retain the capacity to activate new training programs should future service demands or operational priorities require it. In other words, we're not just staffed for now, we're positioned for what's next.



TEC Staff gather with Justin Nguyen, Bike East Bay's Co-Executive Director of Mobility Justice, and Education Program Co-Managers Kelly Dunlap and Nancy Hernandez, following the Sharing the Roadways: Buses and Bikes Working Together refresher training session.

Two Wheels. Four Wheels. One Shared Road

Since 2022, AC Transit has embraced a simple but powerful idea: buses and bikes are not competing for the roadway. We're using the same stretch of blacktop to move people forward, together.

Four years ago, the District put that belief into action by launching Sharing the Roadways: Buses and Bikes Working Together. Developed in collaboration with Bike East Bay, the one-hour course was designed as part of AC Transit's annual Commercial Driver License (CDL) training, meaning every Bus Operator participates each year. It's why the District euphemistically calls Sharing the Roadways a "refresher."

The training goes beyond the rules of the road. It reinforces awareness, builds understanding, and strengthens the shared responsibility that keeps streets safe for everyone, whether they're behind the wheel of a 40-foot bus or riding on two wheels.

In January, representatives from Bike East Bay (Justin Hu-Nguyen, Kelly Dunlap, and Nancy Hernandez) returned to AC Transit's Training and Education Center (TEC) for an up-close look at the District's annual refresher course. Their last visit was in 2022, but despite the years in between, the conversation picked up speed quickly. The energy in the room was lively, candid, and collaborative.

From the start, Share the Road makes one thing clear: safely sharing roadways is not simply courteous, it's the law. The session puts key vehicle codes front and center, paired with practical, real-world guidance. Bus Operators review how to maintain proper clearance, set up safely for turns, position in lanes, and understand the predictable – and sometimes unpredictable – movements of bicyclists.

This year's refresher did not stop in the classroom. Participants headed to the TEC's yard, transforming controlled pavement into a living lab. On that stretch of blacktop, discussion turned into practice. Our guests explored bicyclists' signaling and intentions, appropriate bike lane usage, safe passing decisions, speed management, and how to anticipate common hazards – including the sudden swing of an opening car door.



What's in the mirror? Nancy Hernandez rides alongside the bus, giving participants an eye-opening view of what Bus Operators see, and don't see, through the outside mirror.

The result was more than instruction. It was perspective. Participants walked away with a stronger understanding of both bus and bicyclist viewpoints, reinforcing not only safety but also the customer service mindset that underpins every trip.

Looking ahead, Staff will continue working with Bike East Bay to expand similar training opportunities, ensuring that support for Bus Operators and bicyclists remains aligned, informed, and moving forward together.

AC Transit Helps Shape APTA's 2026 Technology Agenda

For two days in early February, AC Transit opened the doors of its downtown Oakland headquarters to something more than a meeting: the District hosted a national conversation about the future of public transportation.

For the first time in District history, AC Transit served as host agency for the APTA Research & Technology Strategic Planning Session. The milestone underscores AC Transit's growing national presence in innovation, data governance, artificial intelligence, and applied transit technology.



Over two days, transit innovators transformed the Board Room into a research and technology think tank that will guide North American public transportation in 2026 and beyond.

Over two days, senior technology leaders, federal research partners, and industry innovators gathered to shape the research and technology priorities that will guide public transportation across North America in 2026 and beyond.

Participants represented organizations including APTA, Via Transportation, Inc., Xpan, Gartner, Access Services, Clever Devices, SamTrans, Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit, Fresno Area Express, Driventic, LLC, as well as federal and research partners from FTA and TRB.

The session brought together representatives from 12 APTA subcommittees and working groups, reflecting the breadth of today's transit technology landscape, from cybersecurity and data governance to zero emission systems and artificial intelligence.

Officers collaborated to develop a comprehensive 2026 work plan outlining national technology conferences, webinar programming, and coordinated subcommittee initiatives. In sum, it was a forward-looking roadmap designed to strengthen collaboration, accelerate innovation, and ensure technology delivers measurable value to riders and communities.



AC Transit General Manager Sal Llamas welcomes participants, highlighting AC Transit's commitment to forward-looking technology and innovation.

As participants convened in Oakland, AC Transit's General Manager Sal Llamas and Chief Information Officer Ahsan Baig welcomed the group by reaffirming the District's commitment to responsible, forward-looking technology adoption.

Hosting the session in Oakland was also symbolic. It signaled that AC Transit is not only implementing innovation locally but helping define how transit agencies nationwide approach research, collaboration, and digital transformation.

As agencies across the country navigate fiscal constraints, workforce shifts, and evolving rider expectations, the conversations held in Oakland will influence how public transportation systems adapt to be smarter, safer, and more connected than ever before.

For AC Transit, the event marked more than a first-time hosting opportunity. It reinforced the District's position as a national contributor to the ideas, partnerships, and technologies shaping the next generation of public transit.



Discussions continued in nearby Jack London Square, where participants explored emerging challenges and opportunities in cybersecurity, data governance, zero-emission systems, and artificial intelligence.

Human Resources Personnel Report

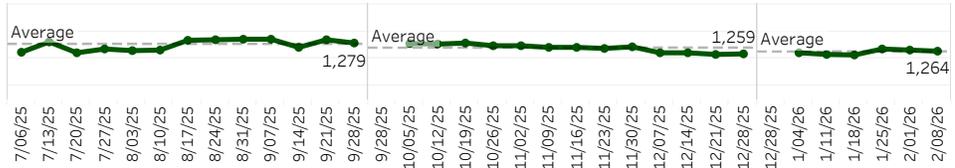
OPEN POSITIONS | Bus Operator: [Approved positions - Division workforce] as of February 8, 2026

Approved Positions	Division Workforce	Open Positions	Open Positions (%)
1,250	1,264	-14	-1.1%

Division Workforce

1,264

[as of: February 8, 2026]



Long-term Leave

138

[as of: February 8, 2026]
138



Training

0

[as of: February 8, 2026]



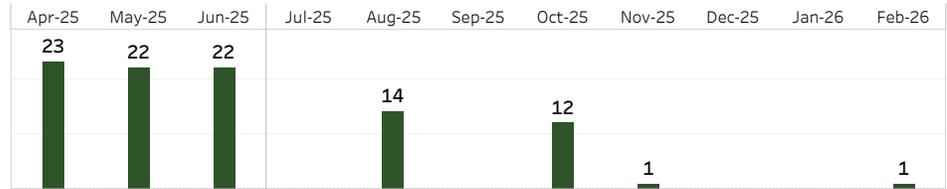
MONTHLY | Bus Operator: Hiring & Workforce Trends

WORKFORCE CHANGE

Hiring

0

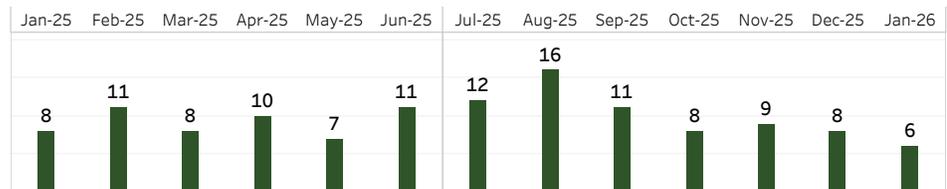
[YTD FY 2026 | January]



Separations

-6

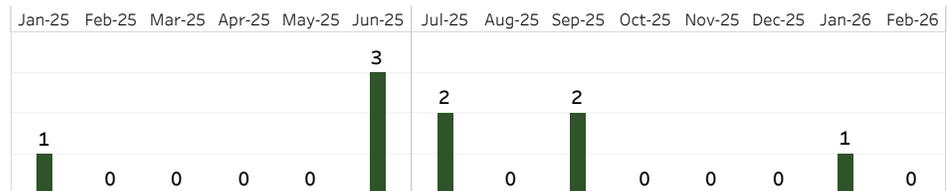
[YTD FY 2026 | January]



Promotions

-1

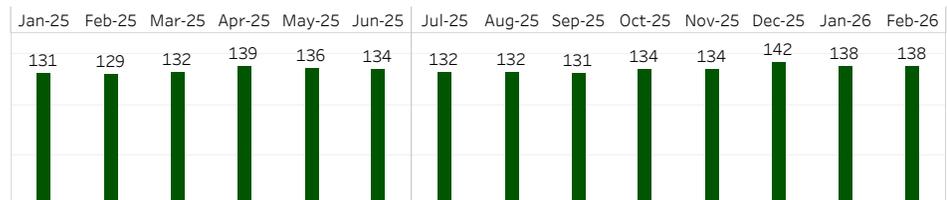
[YTD FY 2026 | January]



Long-Term Leave

+3

[YTD FY 2025 January]



JAN 2025 NET GAIN: -4

