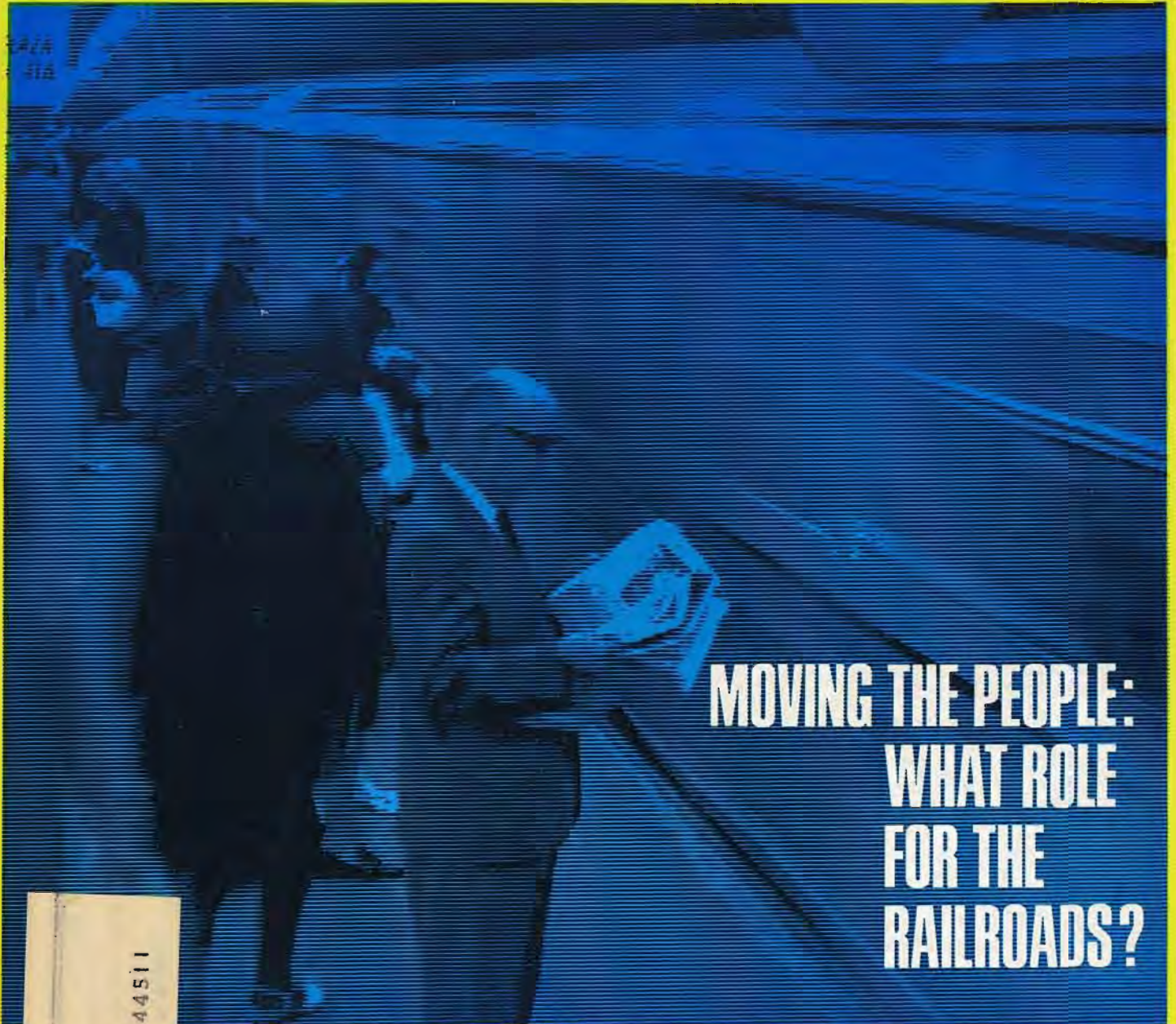


FREIGHT TRAFFIC: WHAT SHIPPERS WANT IN NEW FREIGHT CARS

September 29, 1969

RAILWAY AGE

THE TRANSPORTATION WEEKLY

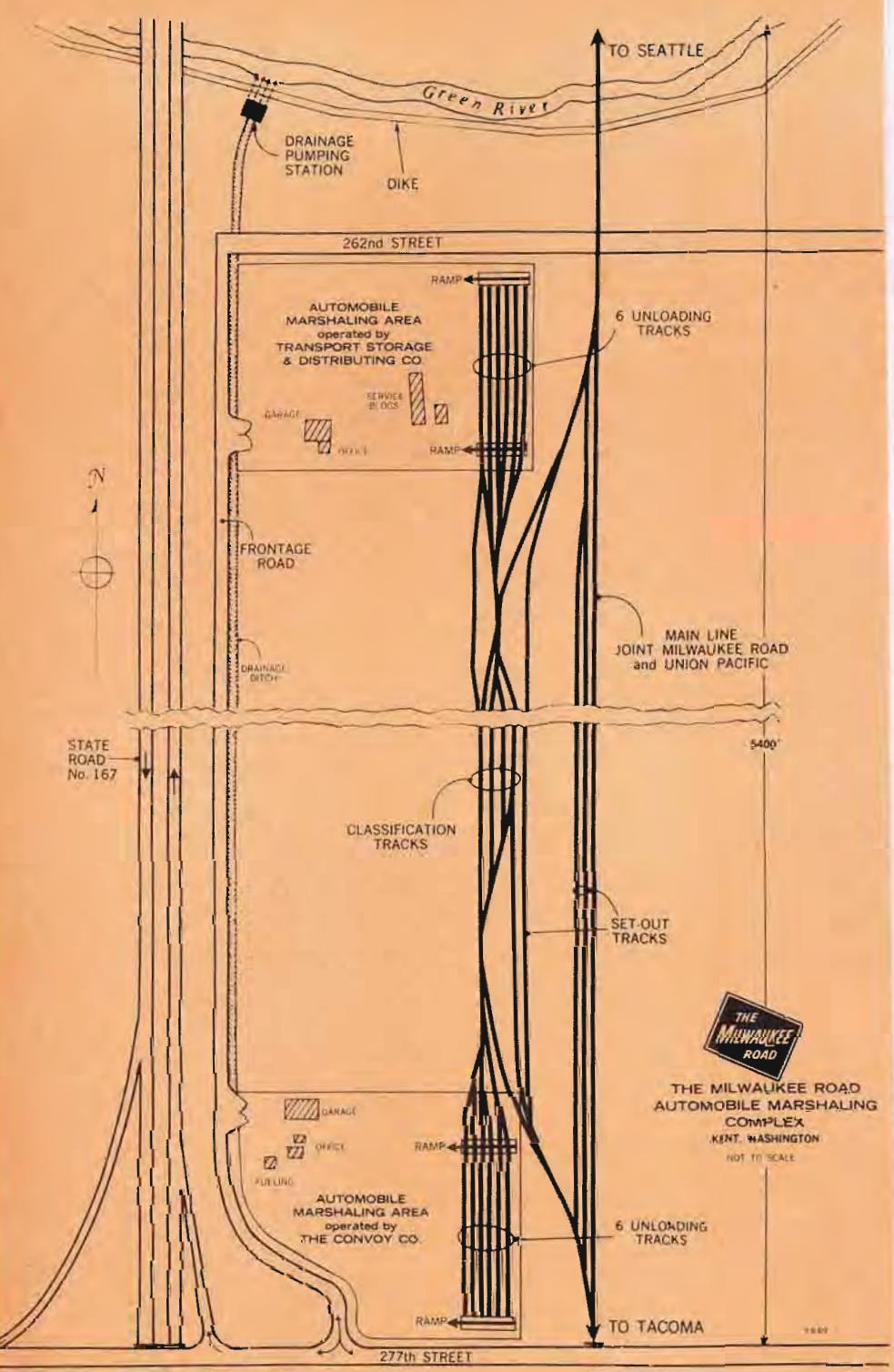


**MOVING THE PEOPLE:
WHAT ROLE
FOR THE
RAILROADS?**

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The yard that teamwork built



RACK-CAR RAMPS are 55 feet long—a damage



preventing concession to low-slung autos.



New rail/truck marshaling complex is the largest of its kind in the Pacific Northwest.

More than 75,000 new automobiles and trucks will be moving each year through a new rail/truck marshaling complex at Kent, Wash., midway between Seattle and Tacoma. And each one of those cars and trucks ought to sport a "Teamwork" bumper sticker, in recognition of the joint effort involved in putting the service package together.

Milwaukee Road built the facility, largest of its kind in the Pacific Northwest. It is to be used by two motor-vehicle distribution companies, handling cars and trucks produced by General Motors, Chrysler, International Harvester and Kaiser-Jeep. And on Oct. 1, a special Milwaukee Road train will carry 150 VIPs—led by President C. E. Crippen, Gov. Dan Evans of Washington, and top-level representa-

tives of the automobile manufacturers—from Seattle to Kent for the formal dedication of what is already an operating installation.

● **First, a tip.** It all started with Milwaukee's Traffic Department—and a tip from Detroit, through Manager-Automotive Sales John M. Fortman, that the major auto companies were facing expansion problems at two marshaling areas then being operated in and near Seattle. That news brought action from the Real Estate and Industrial Department—which prepared a brochure on a number of possible sites in Washington's Green River valley. Preliminary talks were held with the auto manufacturers and the haulaway companies. One site looked best and, as it turned out, Milwaukee was running in luck: The chosen site, an airport for private planes, was the only site that could be made quickly available.

From then on, things moved fast. Milwaukee optioned the property. Its Engineering Department went to work on preliminary development plans and estimates. A new proposal, covering only the Kent site, was prepared for the potential customers. The Operating Department looked at service possibilities, and came up with several major plus-factors. For one thing, the site would be served from a jointly-owned Milwaukee/Union Pacific main line (and UP is now in the process of exercising an option to pick up a half-interest in the improved part of the terminal).

Another service-plus came in connection with the switching which would be possible. Rack cars could be delivered to Kent, unloaded and switched out on a 24-hour-turnaround basis, and all-concerned liked the sound of that kind of equipment utilization.

● **The board comes through.** Now, it was time to consider money. Acquisition and development of the site would be a multi-million-dollar proposition. And Milwaukee's board of directors came through. It authorized purchase of the land last September and approved development in February and April of 1969—even though, at the outset, the road was working with less-than-firm commitments on site use.

Construction began in mid-March at the south end of the site on an unloading facility to be used by Convoy Co. for distribution of one major manufacturer's cars. With this commitment and with work under way, a second major auto-maker came in. Construction was soon begun at the

(Continued on page 66)

THE COMPLEX is served directly by jointly owned Milwaukee-Union Pacific main line.

The yard that teamwork built

(Continued from page 21)

north end of the terminal, where Transport Storage & Distributing Co. would be operating.

Throughout the negotiations, UP was kept informed of progress, and UP people participated in talks, with the automobile companies at various times. It was agreed, however, that development would be simplified if it were carried on by one company rather than by two. And so UP also agreed to delay exercise of its option until the project was well along.

● **How the teamwork worked.** Through much of the development period, Milwaukee's vice president-real estate and industrial development, Edward J. Stoll, was a long-haul commuter—shuttling back and forth between Seattle and Chicago and Detroit. With him on a number of occasions was the man who could tell the customers what kind of service they would get—L. V. Anderson, assistant vice president-operation and general manager.

And to B. J. Worley, vice president-chief engineer, went the task of delivering the terminal itself, on-time. K. E. Hornung was assigned as project coordinator, B. E. Daniels as project engineer—and they got the job done. There were problems—with a power-transmission line and a high-pressure gas pipeline on the property and with improvement of access to the site. But Milwaukee met its timetable. New cars began arriving in the yard in mid-August, and by Labor Day the facility was in full operation.

● **Ideal layout.** From a layout standpoint, the long-and-narrow airport property turned out to be ideal. Milwaukee was able to install a double-ended yard, with six unloading tracks at each end. Two set-out tracks were provided adjacent to the Milwaukee/UP main line, with a third set-out track positioned alongside the classification tracks in the center of the facility (see layout map on page 20).

In all, Milwaukee laid seven miles of track—most of it with relay rail lifted from a Chicago suburban line, transported to the Kent area and panelized. Two 55-foot ramps have been installed at each set of unloading tracks. The south-end tracks have been equipped with a traveling monorail

crane for use in unloading saddleback truck shipments.

Each marshaling area will have servicing facilities for the haulway rigs, as well as for automobile pre-delivery servicing. Ground storage space will handle 2,450 vehicles. Distribution from Kent will cover an area north to the Canadian border, south to Chehalis, Wash., and east as far as Ellensburg, Wash.

So far as Ed Stoll is concerned, the development at Kent came close to being picture-perfect in its execution. Industrial-development people are a patient lot, out of necessity—because more often than not, major projects can be delayed, snagged, held-up and problem-racked at any number of points along the line. The Kent project, by contrast, was a smooth operation, logically and speedily progressed. His comment, delivered with a sigh of satisfaction: "I've never seen a project of such magnitude go forward so rapidly."

And is Milwaukee looking forward to new developments in the auto-handling business, even as it opens the Kent rack-car complex? Indeed it is. One track has been set aside, with ample open space provided, for unloading from side-loading Vert-A-Pac automobile carriers. ■

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