From the beginning, through Metro's assumption of public transit responsibilities in 1973 and until the very end, the ethic was there: "Do better than promised."

It guided Metro and its staff for more than 35 years. It built a waste-treatment system and a mass-transit system, both among the best in the nation.

It instilled a sense of self-confidence, a spirit of determination and a commitment to quality that led to the deeply felt belief that Metro could do anything—and do it right.