Board Votes to Form Initial Operation Zone, Authorizes New Transit Study

Service Boundary to Exclude Most of Contra Costa County; Hearing Called for May 25

Most of Contra Costa County is to be excluded from the initial operations area of the Transit District under a new district board action.

The board of directors voted at a special meeting April 28 to establish a special service zone within the district boundaries.

The directors—taking their lead from the voting on a bond issue to set up the transit system last November—elected to exclude all except El Cerrito and Kensington from the operational area in Contra Costa County.

The zone will include all of Alameda County within the district boundaries except a 22 square mile agricultural district in the vicinity of Upper San Leandro Reservoir northeast of Castro Valley. (See map, Page 4.)

Only 43 per cent of the voters in Contra Costa County favored the transit bonds last November as compared to about 62 per cent in Alameda County.

In view of the result of the election, the district successfully sought legislation affecting changes in the Transit District law that permits exclusion of areas from its operating district. Once the district is in (Continued on Page 5)

District Engineering Plan To Be Revised Following Extensive Public Review

Funds not to exceed $20,000 have been appropriated by the Transit District Board of Directors to substantially revise district engineering plans.

Engineering consultants De Leuw Cather & Company will be employed by the District to revise the plan following an extensive review by the public of the initial transit plan prepared by the consultants last August.

Route changes and methods of financing the purchase of equipment will be studied, as well as needs for the new service area presently being established.

Suggested changes in the initial transit plan as recommended by the more than 100 East Bay municipal and civic organizations currently studying the plan will be fully considered in the revised study, according to Robert K. Barber, district president.

Barber said that the transit plan will be substantially revised after the comments and suggestions have been received from the public, and that the new bond issue proposals should be completed this summer.

No date for a bond election has yet been set by the transit board.
Reluctantly and with some misgiving, Directors of the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District are preparing to drop most of Contra Costa County from the District's initial operation area.

Coming at a turbulent time in the Topsy-like growth of the two East Bay counties—and at a time when the voice of the Freeway Revolt is beginning to be heard—this decision by the Directors would appear almost ludicrous were it not for the gravity of our complex transportation problems and the environment in which the decision was made.

Within the short span of 18 years, the number of people making their home in Contra Costa County has more than tripled—from 100,450 in 1940 to some 376,000 today. And within almost as many years, the population is expected to increase nearly three times again.

This phenomenal growth has spurred the development of freeway planning that could represent a highway investment in Contra Costa County over the next two decades approaching $400,000,000. These fast, new roadways, however, are not expected to carry the full anticipated traffic load. Public transit must shoulder a share of the transportation burden, according to highway engineers, if our roadways and downtown districts are not to become hopelessly mired in traffic entanglement.

Yet, the people of Contra Costa County have spoken. Sixty per cent of Contra Costans voting on the transit bonds last November opposed the measure.

A fairly good case probably could be made that a majority of these same bond and tax-weary voters would oppose just as conclusively any total exclusion from the Transit District. But, for the Directors believe they are nearing agreement that a satisfactory solution cannot be reached by highways alone. Worthington said.

Unless the people of the area and their community leaders take action now to improve our public transportation facilities, this is the consequence that most assuredly lies ahead,” he said.

The real answer must ultimately lie in a comprehensive urban transportation plan for the East Bay, inter-relating streets and freeways and mass transportation, Worthington said.

“There must be an integrated transportation system coordinating our freeways and mass transit facilities or the freeways will destroy the cities they were meant to serve, their productivity and the traffic revenues therefrom,” he said.

The transit official said that growth along planned, orderly lines, best suited for maximum economic development and ideal metropolitan living will eventually demand that the Richmond area become a part of the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District.

“During the 20 years between 1936 and 1956 the population of the East Bay doubled,” he said. “But the amount of transit service remained about the same or was even curtailed.”

As a result, Worthington pointed out, public transit riding habits in the East Bay have shrunk to almost the lowest of any major metropolitan area in the entire nation.

“We dare not allow this diminishing relationship to continue unless we are willing to push upon our downtown centers the blight of economic isolation,” he said.

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Key to Stop City Franchise Payments

Key System Transit Lines has served notice it will no longer pay city franchise taxes amounting to about $156,000 a year in nine East Bay cities served by the company.

First formal notice of the firm’s new policy was dispatched to the City of Alameda which last year received $9,828 in franchise payments.
Areas Outside Operations Zone to Keep Voting Right
(Continued from Page 1)
operation, service could be extended to other parts of the district as the public desired.

"Establishing this special service zone is necessary in order to fix our operational boundaries and proceed immediately with the planning for our next bond measure," Robert K. Barber, president, told the board.

Formation of the special zone will be given a public hearing at 8 p.m. Monday, May 25 in the supervisors chambers of the Alameda County courthouse in Oakland.

After the hearing, directors can declare the zone formed, unless a city, or county, acting for the unincorporated area, objects. If such a governmental body opposes formation of the special zone it can force an election within its boundaries on whether it would be included.

Basic purpose of the special service zone is to continue the present district intact but to provide transit facilities only for areas desiring the service at the present time.

Areas within the district but outside the operations zone would retain the right to vote for election of directors, and would be subject to a tax limited to 1 cent. Monies from this source would be used to finance continuing studies as to changing needs of the district and thus facilitate extensions of service in the future.

General Manager John R. Worthington emphasized that the ultimate aim of providing adequate transit service for the two counties requires the acquisition of routes, equipment, personnel and terminals. The contemplated five-county rapid transit system will not provide the two East Bay counties with a solution to its immediate transit problems and many of its long-range problems, he added.

"Ultimately most, or all, of Contra Costa County will want to come into the district due to geographical factors and population growth," Worthington said. "Therefore, I feel the 1 cent tax is not unreasonable or excessive in view of the plan for continuing district-wide studies and retention of the right to vote for district directors."
Community Officials Are Urged to Share Responsibility for Local Transit Planning

"Traffic congestion which threatens to grow progressively worse, affects everyone in the community. It is a community-wide problem. Its solution is a responsibility that must be shared by community leaders."

This was the keynote of an address by George M. Taylor, administrative officer of the Transit District, before a recent meeting of the Alameda Kiwanis Club.

It is incumbent on elected city officials and other civic leaders to help shape transit planning for their cities, Taylor said.

"Traffic congestion is becoming the East Bay's primary problem, and its solution must represent the best interests of each of the East Bay cities, including Alameda," Taylor said.

"Eventually, parking spaces will be in such short supply, freeways and thoroughfares will be so intensely congested, and so much tax money will have been expended without remedying the basic ill, that the public will demand that improved transit be provided," he said.

Taylor pointed out a substantially revised plan to provide the East Bay with a public transit operation that more of its citizens will ride is now under study and is expected to be completed in the next three months.

"In addition to the engineering studies which go into such a revision, we are seeking the assistance of city officials, civic, business, and industrial, property owners and taxpayers' association—over 100 in all—to help draft the revised plan."

"Municipal governments are beginning to weigh and to understand the economic advantages of encouraging mass movement of passengers in central city areas. It is to be hoped that they will follow through with what is required," Taylor said.

Missile Firm Discloses Plan to Build Monorail

Los ANGELES—A company that has concentrated on building missiles and supersonic airplanes, plans to build a mile-long monorail train in Seattle.

The four-car train would operate at 60 miles an hour from downtown Seattle to the site of the proposed Century 21 Exposition in 1961.

The cars, shaped like inverted U's, would straddle the tracks. T-shaped structures would support the tracks 20 feet above the ground. Time for a one-way exposition ride: 93 seconds.

Lockheed Aircraft Corp. was named by the Seattle Transit Commission as prime contractor to produce the system. The monorail line, a fair exhibit, will be torn down at the fair's conclusion.

Residents Dissatisfied With Public Transit According to Results of Alameda Survey

Public transportation was one of the most frequently mentioned community services needing improvement in a recent survey conducted by the Alameda Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Returns from a four-page questionnaire sent to one of every 35 homes in the city showed that 85 per cent of Alameda's residents are well satisfied with their city.

Survey recipients rated Alameda good on all but six of the 130 points covered, according to Donald Bruzzone, chairman of the Jaycee community survey committee.

Almost everyone checked one or more items needing improvement, an initial analysis of the survey disclosed. Among those most frequently mentioned were public transportation and traffic congestion at the Posey Tube.

What the Editors Are Saying About Transit

'The YEAR 1959 may go down in history as the time that the cities launched the Revolt Against the Freeways. There have been similar objections to freeway practices in Butte County and Santa Clara County."

The New York Times, after making a comprehensive survey, reports cities everywhere taking a second, questioning look at the freeways which they fondly embraced as a solution for urban transport problems. A Times reporter, Harrison S. Salisbury, after visiting Los Angeles, wrote: "I have seen The Future—and it doesn't work."

Despite its many miles and piled up layers of freeways, he says, an automobile cannot cross Los Angeles at the peak hour today any faster than a horse and buggy could cross it in 1900. And the system cannot work, he says, because freeways and parking areas devour scarce and valuable downtown property at a greedy rate that inevitably obliterates downtown.

Evidently, we have another of those agonizing reappraisals to face.

Freeway Bus Lines In L. A. Gain Popularity

Los ANGELES—Patronage on the new Freeway Flyer express bus lines continues to increase with the growth in popularity of the high-speed transit routes.

A report recently by the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority said that the number of passengers on the West Valley Freeway Flyer, for example, increased nearly three times during the first seven months of operation.
At a special meeting on April 28, 1959, the Board of Directors:

- Adopted a resolution creating Special Transit Service District No. 1, on motion of Director Deadrich. (Details, Page 1.)
- Called a special hearing on creation of Special Transit Service District No. 1 for May 25 at 8 p.m. in supervisors chambers of Alameda County Court House, Oakland, on motion of Director Deadrich.
- Heard from Director Deadrich, chairman of Committee on Program Planning, that a report on desirability of electric trolley coach operation would be presented at regular board meeting June 3.
- Approved allocation of $20,000 to employ De Leuw Cather & Company to review and update district engineering studies, on motion of Director McDonnell. (Details, Page 1.)

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At its regular meeting May 6, 1959, the Board of Directors:

- Instructed its attorney to return to the City of Walnut Creek a petition for exclusion from the District on grounds the petition was incorrectly prepared and did not conform with provisions of the law, on motion of Director Copeland.
- Decided to retain the position of administrative assistant during the interim it is to remain unfilled, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Requested the Committee on Public Information, Director Copeland, chairman, to consider a schedule of public hearings on the district preliminary transit plan and report with recommendations at the regular June meeting, on motion of Director Deadrich.
- Referred to the Committee on Program Planning, Director Deadrich, chairman, for recommendation on the question of the District's initiating a scientific public opinion poll to determine public attitudes toward the District's transit program and the advisability of conducting a special transit bond election this fall, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Adjourned meeting to May 25 at 8 p.m. for purposes of holding public hearing on creation of Special Service District No. 1, on motion of Director McDonnell.