District Ready to Buy New Bus Fleet

Specifications Drafted for Ultramodern 'Transit Liners;
Coaches to Mark Greatest Transit Improvement in 20 Years

Specifications for 300 streamlined, newly-designed motor coaches to be purchased by the Transit District have been completed and are now undergoing review by the transit board of directors.

The new city and suburban "Transit Liners"—many of them to be air-conditioned—will cost an estimated $8,000,000, and will be purchased during the first two years of district operation.

The ultramodern transit equipment will contain latest features in motor coach design, including large "picture windows," new air-ride suspension, wider seats, modern colors, lower entrance step, and bright, fluorescent lights. (See photos, Page 4.)

John R. Worthington, district general manager, told the transit directors this month that the purpose of the specifications is to provide a "new-look transit bus, sharply changed in appearance from the conventional design of past years."

"The new coach design, which makes a complete break with the past, is the first completely new bus design in nearly 20 years," he added.

Following study of detailed specifications, directors are expected to authorize the General Manager to call for bids on the new coaches early in March.

The new "Transit Liners" will provide basic service on all of the 73 lines to be operated by the District. Proposed acquisition of 276 used buses from Key System at an estimated cost of $2,800,000 will augment peak hour service during the first years of operation.

The used equipment will be replaced by new buses, containing other improvements as developed, beginning with the third year of operation.

Funds to purchase equipment were provided by a general obligation bond issue, approved by the voters last October. The District expects to commence operations July 1 of this year, replacing Key System in the area.
What the Editors Are Saying About Transit

‘New Look’ Buses Hailed as Major Transit Improvement

Reprinted from the Columbus (O.) Dispatch:

A WELL-OPERATED mass trans­
portation system is essential to the progress and growth of Columbus.

Consequently, it is gratifying to note that the Columbus Transit Company currently is taking steps to improve and expand its bus service. Next week, for example, 12 new 53-passenger vehi­cles will go into operation.

The buses are totally new in design, with many luxury and comfort fea­tures formerly found only in cross­country coaches.

The additional buses will enable the company to convert its Livingston Avenue line from trolley coaches to motor bus operation and to extend that line eastward to the numerous new

housing developments which have been constructed along East Living­
ston Avenue and Country Club Road north to Main Street.

Conversion of the Livingston line to motor bus operation will provide tran­sit service for the people in this area who wish to be transported directly to the downtown area and back home without the present inconvenience of transferring midway in their journey.

Improvement in the city’s mass transportation system should encour­age more Columbus people to avail themselves of this service, thereby helping relieve the traffic congestion problem which, in turn, will enhance the business potential of the downtown area.

Key Writes Check to Speed Rail Removal

The last of the abandoned Key System train tracks will be removed from East Bay streets within the next two months.

Key System, which had not scheduled completion of the track removal pro­gram until April of 1961, recently turned over to the City of Oakland a check for $193,344 to pay for the work still to be finished.

The removal program in Berkeley al­ready has been completed except for a portion of Shattuck Avenue. Key System gave a lump sum to the City of Berkeley several months ago to pay for the work.

The cash payment by Key eliminates any possibility that the Transit District might be held liable to complete the re­moval program when it replaces Key Sys­tem later this year.

Besides the cash payment, Key gave the City of Oakland salvage rights to steel rails, tie plates and switches, valued at more than $45,000.

Oakland City Engineer John A. Morin reports there are slightly in excess of seven miles of trackage remaining. In­cluded are a portion of the old B line on Grand Avenue, the C line to Pied­mont, the E line on 55th Street and Clare­mont Avenue and the F line on Adeline Street.

West Contra Costa Transit Alternatives
Narrowed; Committee Ready for Decision

Four months of study by the West Con­tra Costa Citizens Transit Committee ap­pears to have narrowed a solution of the area’s transit problems to two possibili­ties.

The committee, headed by former Con­tra Costa County Supervisor Ivan Goyak, was formed to develop a plan for local transit service in Western Contra Costa County.

The area faces the loss of local service when the Transit District replaces Key System this summer. As proposed, there will be no local district service in Rich­mond or San Pablo since the area is not a part of the District.

Alternates Considered

Committee members appear to be faced with making a recommendation that some private operator should receive a subsidy to provide service or proposing that the area obtain local service from the Transit District.

The committee already has received a statement from Beninger Transportation Service that it would require a public subsidy of $147,450 a year for it to pro­vide the same level of service now re­ceived from Key System.

The Alameda-Contra Costa Transit

District, which has proposed an expanded service for the area, has indicated to the committee that it would be able to oper­ate at existing Key fares without tax sub­sidy.

Subsidized Service

San Mateo Transit Company visited by a sub-group of the citizen committee, has indicated an interest in providing service for the area and was given to Feb. 15 to submit a proposal. The firm has made two tentative proposals, one that it man­age a local operation for a fee or that the local area provide equipment and the San Mateo firm operate it with a subsidy.

A sub-committee meeting to check the proposals was scheduled for Feb. 23. A meeting for the entire committee was scheduled for the following day to de­velop final recommendations for submis­sion to the Richmond and San Pablo City Councils and the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors.

A. Furrer, a leader in the Richmond Development Foundation’s efforts to modernize the downtown Richmond busi­ness district, is vice chairman.

Experiments on Downtown
Shopper Malls Abandoned

Experiments to attract more customers into the downtown area of two Ohio cities with the use of shopper malls have been called-off with practically no change in buying habits.

A research survey showed that 65 per­cent of those interviewed in Toledo felt the malls made shopping more pleasant, but that they made no significant change in shopping patterns.

Another shopping mall was abandoned in Middleton at the request of the mer­chants who originally proposed the plan.

Santa Monica Public Transit
Reports Revenues, Riders Up

SANTA MONICA — A net income of $196,317 has been reported by Santa Monica Municipal Bus Lines for the fiscal year ending last July 1.

Total revenues were $1,843,249, while expenses amounted to $1,646,932. In their most recent monthly report, passengers carried during November were totaled at 1,091,296, compared with 991,166 in the same month of 1959.
Welcome aoard! Welcome aboard!
TOMORROW'S TRANSIT LINER WILL SOON BE HERE

- Streamlined Design
- Large Picture Windows
- Air Conditioning
- Pleasing Modern Colors
- Bright Fluorescent Lighting
- Low Safe Entrance Step
- Smooth Air-cushion Ride
- Soft Wide Seats
- New Push-type Doors

Presented for Your Comfortable Travel
And Better Service
Suit Filed to Block Transit Bond Sale

A taxpayers' suit was filed recently in Alameda County Superior Court in an effort to block the sale of $10,500,000 in general obligation bonds by the District. The suit asks the court to declare that the District has no right, power or authority to issue or sell the bonds.

The legal action questions the validity of the urgency clause in 1959 amend-

ments to the Transit District Law and the creation of the district's special service zone.

Filing the suit was San Francisco attorney Marvin C. Hix who said he was representing Herbert B. Kincaid, San Francisco jeweler living in Berkeley, and Stanley E. Behneman, Oakland consulting engineer.

Questioned shortly after the suit was filed, Behneman said he had never authorized the use of his name and said he knew nothing about the suit. Hix later acknowledged he had not talked with Behneman, but said several people told him to put Behneman's name on the papers.

At one time Hix was secretary-treasurer of the Committee for Transit Action which, in 1958, urged defeat of the district's first attempt at a bond issue and also supported Kincaid who unsuccessfully sought election as a district director.

Attorneys for the Transit District have dismissed the suit as a "delaying tactic lacking any real foundation."

Barber Names Directors To 4 Board Committees

Assignments to standing committees of the Board of Directors for 1960 have been announced by Robert K. Barber, president of the board. The appointments are as follows:

Administration — Directors Paul E. Deadrich, chairman, and William H. Coburn, Jr., and Barber.


Program Planning — Directors Copeland, chairman, McDonnell and Coburn.

Public Information — Directors Bettern-court, chairman, and Deadrich and J. Howard Arnold.

Return to Transit' Begins in East Bay; Steady Postwar Drop in Patronage Broken

The steady nose dive taken by East Bay transit patronage since the end of World War II was broken last year with Key System Transit Lines showing an increase in riders for the first time during the postwar period.

Alan L. Bingham, district public information officer, recently told members of the Alameda High Twelve Club that for the last six months of 1959 patronage increased between 3 and 4 per cent, while East Bay local lines carried approximately 3 per cent more riders than in the previous year.

These increases compare with an 8 to 10 per cent drop in patronage that was recorded during 1958.

Average transit patronage throughout California also has increased for the first time in the postwar period, in keeping with a new, upward trend nationwide.

"The net result to Key System from the substitution of motor coaches for its rail lines across the Bay Bridge has increased the company's net earnings beyond any anticipation," Bingham said.

Operating Economies

These economies, he explained, resulted in a net earnings position of Key System of approximately $500,000 during the first six months of 1959 as compared to approximately $40,000 in 1958.

"While the actual figures are not available, it can be pretty accurately estimated that operating earnings before income taxes for the year 1959 will reach approximately $1,500,000," he added.

The Transit District plans to commence operation by July 1 of this year, replacing Key System with a program of new and improved services and equipment.

Bingham noted that Key patronage increases and greater earnings occurred last year without benefit of improved services or new, streamlined equipment.

"In light of Key's experience," he said, "it would appear that district estimates concerning increased patronage are extremely conservative."

District engineers have estimated that the District will attract an annual 3 per cent increase in riders during its first years of operation and can be operated without direct tax subsidy.

Speaker Programs Telling Progress of District Plans For Operation Available

Two educational programs have been developed by the transit district to keep East Bay citizens informed of the progress of plans to begin operation of a publicly-owned transit system.

Both speaker programs are available free of charge for luncheon meetings as well as for groups holding their meetings during the morning, afternoon or evening hours.

One utilizes a 25-minute color motion picture, "Let's Go to Town," which shows improvements that are taking place throughout the country with regard to public transit.

The second program consists of a series of descriptive charts which graphically describe the East Bay's problems of moving people and the steps being taken to solve them.

The district also publishes a monthly information bulletin, "Transit Times," which is available through the mail free of charge.

For further information, please contact the transit district at 700 Plaza Building, 106 15th Street, Oakland, telephone Temple 6-1808.
At its regular meeting February 3, 1960, the Board of Directors:

- Received progress reports from the General Manager on current negotiations with Key System concerning acquisition of Key facilities, and a study of technical problems relating to the protection of Key employee pension rights when the District takes over from Key later this year.
- Scheduled a meeting later in the month to review motor coach specifications before calling for bids, on motion of Vice President William J. Betencourt. (Details, Page 1.)
- Heard a report from the General Manager on preparations for the issuance of bonds. The General Manager said he hopes to have the initial sale of bonds ready for issuance by June 1 with proceeds to be available by July 1.
- Referred to the Committee on Finance a request to assist in development of a new Latham Square bus stop center at Broadway and Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, on motion of Vice President Betencourt.

Sacramento Transit Authority Boosts Income

SACRAMENTO—A surplus of $54,434 for the fiscal year ending last June 30 has been reported by the Sacramento Transit Authority.

The net operating figure for the municipally owned agency represents an increase of $16,632 over the previous year’s operations. Operating revenues were $1,489,953 compared with $1,451,577 for 1958.