CITIZENS TRANSIT INFORMATION COMMITTEE

TO THE RESIDENTS OF SAN PABLO, RICHMOND, EL Sobrante, ROLLINGWOOD, EAST AND NORTH RICHMOND, AND PARCHMENTS:

The findings of the four-month bus study by our area’s Citizens Transit Committee were reported in the March 1960 issue of Transit Times. Fortunately, we were able to obtain a supply of this issue and we are mailing it to you.

In discussing this Citizen study, three questions are most frequently asked:

1 - Question: HOW CAN OUR AREA ANNEX?

By voting “Yes” on Measure “B” on June 7. Our citizens who voted to annex in 1956 (only to have the Court reverse their vote when the absentee vote count was completed) now have a second chance, thanks to the City Councils of San Pablo and Richmond and the Board of Supervisors who have consolidated this measure with the June 7 state primary election.

2 - Question: IS THIS THE RAPID TRANSIT PROGRAM?

No. It is a bus program serving two counties only which would continue the present routes of Key System and Beninger with modern equipment and would extend them into new outlying areas not now served. The Rapid Transit program serves five counties and it proposed a high speed electric mainline rail service. Eventually, bus routes will tie in to the Rapid Transit program, much the same as local streets now tie into freeways. Another difference is that at present our area is within the boundary of the Rapid Transit District but is not within the boundaries of the Alameda-Contra Costa District.

3 - Question: WHAT WILL THIS COST?

If a majority in each of these jurisdictions vote in favor of annexation, we will be subject to a maximum tax rate of one cent. By agreement, the area would then be placed into the bus operating zone where the tax rate is without limit, as it would have been for any alternative solution. The District projects self-financed operation without direct tax subsidy dependence, plans to unify Key System and Beninger routes, and extend them to outlying areas within a year.

San Pablo and Richmond will not pay back taxes, will only pay whatever District-wide tax levy is made next year, and will divide a $10,000 payment to cover engineering and legal costs. Since money to buy modern buses for our area was in a recently approved District bond issue, we will assume a pro-rata share of bond costs.

J. Ed Galli, County Chairman
Manuel Mello, San Pablo Chairman
Al Furrer, Richmond Chairman

Very truly yours,

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Manuel Mello, San Pablo Chairman
Al Furrer, Richmond Chairman

approved terms of an annexation agreement with the District this month and called for a public vote on the matter at the June election.

Annexation Agreement

Only by the full cooperative effort of the three Contra Costa public bodies and the Transit District were the legal deadlines met to place the measure on the June ballot.

The committee, which was appointed by Mayors Leo Viano of Richmond and C. L. Blanton of San Pablo and Supervisor James Kenny, considered 10 different possibilities for providing service. The group narrowed the choice to establishment of an autonomous local district

The San Mateo-Burlingame Transit Company submitted a proposal for service which would approximate that now provided by Key System, but on a five day a week basis. It was estimated that a subsidy would cost from 4.8 to 27.6 cents.

Upon annexation to the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District, West Contra Costa would be subject to a tax limited by law to 1 cent. Residents also could vote on three of the seven members on the transit board of directors. Terms of two of the three directors expire the end of this year.

A simple majority vote would result in annexation.

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PEOPLE TO DECIDE

Citizens’ Committee Urges Western Contra Costa to Join Transit District

The return of western Contra Costa County to the Transit District has been recommended by a citizens’ committee of Richmond, San Pablo and unincorporated area residents.

The committee, concluding four months of study, asked the Richmond and San Pablo City Councils and the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors to allow residents of the area to vote on the question of annexation at the June 7 primary election.

West Contra Costa is faced with the loss of local transit service when the District takes over the operation of Key System Transit Lines October 1.

Acting upon the committee’s final report, the three Contra Costa public bodies approved terms of an annexation agreement with the District this month and called for a public vote on the matter at the June election.

Annexation Agreement

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The committee, which was appointed by Mayors Leo Viano of Richmond and C. L. Blanton of San Pablo and Supervisor James Kenny, considered 10 different possibilities for providing service. The group narrowed the choice to establishment of an autonomous local district or becoming part of the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District.

Richmond and San Pablo originally were part of the District, but were removed in 1958 by court action.

The committee heard two proposals involving a new local district and private operators.

Private Tax Subsidy

One came from Beninger Transportation Service of El Sobrante. The firm offered a service comparable to that which would be provided by the Transit District, but which would require a tax subsidy of from 13 to 55 cents per $100 of assessed value for the first year of operation depending on whether new or used buses were used.

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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-cushion suspension, wide seats, modern colors, low entrance step, new push-type doors, and bright, fluorescent lights.

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.

The new “Transit Liners” will provide basic service on all of the 73 lines to be operated by the District. Acquisition of used buses from Key System Transit Lines 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 October 1 of this year, replacing Key System and Beninger Transportation Service in the area.
Work was started this month on the Transit District's long range program to equip East Bay transit riders with comfortable, attractive waiting facilities.

The first official action occurred at a meeting of transit directors who approved an appropriation of $2,500 to help finance a downtown transit shelter.

The $33,000 project of the City of Oakland, with joint participation and contributions by business organizations, will be built in Latham Square at the intersection of Telegraph Avenue and Broadway.

Transit Director John McDonnell said he hoped other cities and merchant groups will join with the District in providing attractive and convenient shelters for their business and shopping areas.

The new Latham Square shelter will be of contemporary design, including a folded concrete roof, tiled columns, a colorful tile floor and landscaping of surrounding area and traffic islands.

John R. Worthington, general manager, predicted the facility will be "well-used and welcomed by transit patrons."

Bus shelters at principal transfer points as well as major transit terminals in East Bay downtown centers, including Berkeley, Hayward, Richmond and Oakland, are a part of the District's long range transit improvement planning.