The Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District rolled smoothly into operation this month, ending nearly a century of privately-owned transit in the East Bay. The change-over, from the long reign of Key System Transit Lines and predecessor companies to a publicly-owned system, went off without a hitch.

As far as the public was concerned, the only immediate difference was in signs and symbols. Greeting cards welcomed riders aboard buses and told them they were riding with AC Transit. The familiar Key System symbol was covered over by the emblem of the district and the buses sent out on their usual routes, with their usual drivers.

The take-over cleared the way for a $16,500,000 improvement program that ranges from an immediate drop in fares for children to establishment of new service and acquisition of 250 new city and suburban "Transit Liners."

"Transit Liners" on the Way

The first 40 of the new buses—all air-conditioned—will arrive in December, and the remainder will be delivered beginning in February through next June.

Symbolically, change-over day was a milestone for the 1,000,000 residents of the East Bay. It was 97 years ago, in 1863, that public transit made its first appearance, a steam train that took passengers from Seventh and Broadway to Oakland Point and ferry connections to San Francisco. In the years since, the East Bay has sampled horse cars, steam dummies, cable cars, the first trolleys, the more advanced electrics and the evolution of the bus.

In taking over operation of their own transit system, the public can expect a vastly improved system that will affect more than 300 miles of transit lines in the next few months.

Richmond and Western Contra Costa County will be among the first to benefit. New service will be established in a number of residential areas, tentatively set for October 23.

New Service Ready

As a result, some outlying districts will get their first bus transportation. Residents will have direct service to downtown business areas and to outlying shopping centers. Efficient commute service also will be provided.

Other areas can expect needed new routes, line extensions and more frequent service, with noticeable improvements as soon as new equipment wheels into operation.

Five new express routes will link cities between Richmond and Decoto beginning next February; 55 miles of new local lines also will be established in the months ahead.
Civic Leaders Witness Key Payment

The end of one transportation era and the beginning of another was completed at an East Bay civic luncheon where AC Transit handed $7,500,000 over to Key System Transit Lines in payment for its properties.

The payment, representing a major advancement towards assuring the area's future growth and development, was witnessed by some 150 city and county officials, state legislators and business leaders.

With the financial transaction, the Key System went out of business and a publicly-owned transportation system was put into operation, on the note of a "better, all-around operation."

John R. Worthington, general manager of the district, made the presentation in two checks to a nostalgic Glen L. Stanley, Key president, at the noon-time gathering at the Athens Club in Oakland.

One check, for $6,915,885, went to Bay Area Public Service Corp., as the holding company, and the other, for $584,115, to Key System, as operating company, for the total $7,500,000 agreed on after several months of negotiations.

Worthington told the assembled group that not only had the district purchased Key facilities at a "fair price," it had obtained "an excellent operating staff, 1300 of them. There can be no physical value placed on their worth—they are invaluable in conducting our business."

He added that the district was entering the field at an opportune time, while bus transportation was on the upswing. He concluded with the promise the district will ultimately furnish the "finest public transit service in the nation."

The luncheon was arranged by the Oakland Chamber of Commerce as part of the area's observance of the take-over.

What the Editors Are Saying About Transit

Oakland Tribune:

A New Era Seen in East Bay Transit

SATURDAY marks a new and hopefully better era in the history of transportation in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

At one minute past Friday midnight, the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District—now called AC Transit—takes over the Key System.

The historic changeover ends 97 years of various private ownerships and types of transport ranging from horse cars to diesel buses.

Saturday will mark the first day that the public has ever owned and operated its own transportation system in Metropolitan Oakland. The voters passed the bond measure necessary to buyout Key System on the recognition that fast transit is vital to the area. They judged it a public service that must be maintained, despite its costly initiation.

The public has high hopes of improved service, based on the engineering recommendations and studies ordered by the new transit district's elected board of directors.

LOWER FARES

Fares will remain the same, except for immediate cuts to a 10-cent straight tariff for children under 13, who now pay adult fares of 25 cents plus zone charges.

East Bay voters created the new transit district in 1956. In 1959 they approved a bond issue of $16,500,000 to finance the operation—out of which sum will come $7,500,000 to pay Key System for its yards, buses and holdings. A fleet of 250 new "Transit Liners" has been ordered at a cost of $7,700,000.

Directors of the district, however, have promised that revenues from passenger fares will be sufficient to retire the bonds, principal and interest.

While deliveries of the new buses will not begin until December—and completed by June—passengers can expect improvement of service soon.

Among the improvements planned are new express lines and new local lines into residential areas not now served by the Key System. Also more frequent service is planned on existing lines.

LABOR PEACE

The changeover from Key to AC Transit is expected to be smooth. All Key System workers have job protection and will work for the new district.

The new district will operate under a law providing for voluntary arbitration of any unresolved labor disputes, thus providing some guarantee against turbulence, which in 1953 led to a 76-day strike.

The seven elected directors of the new district face a tremendous task. They have promised improved service at existing fares without a tax levy to pay off the bonds. The public has given them the tools and the money. Now it is up to the management to carry out this mandate.

But even though the public has provided the means, it also faces a further responsibility. It must support this new service to its fullest extent. After all, the public has an investment to protect.
Ceremonies Roll First AC Transit Buses

Formal launching ceremonies, complete with champagne for the "prow" of a bus, sent AC Transit into operation this month on schedule.

The ceremonies were held at the Emeryville yards and served to get the buses rolling in a change-over that went as "smooth as silk," according to veteran Dispatcher R. E. Hawes.

Mrs. Robert K. Barber of Kensington, wife of the president of the transit district board, struck a bottle of champagne over the bumper of the first bus out of the Emeryville section, on a symbolic Treasure Island run.

John R. Worthington, district general manager, sent out driver Guy R. Foster with best wishes and the hope his first trip for the district would be "as successful as we believe the district will be in providing the best possible transportation at the least possible cost."

The first revenue passenger on the initial run was Martin Huff, auditor-controller for the City of Oakland and a transportation enthusiast.

First bus to roll under the new district banner got away from the Division Four yard at Seminary and San Leandro Boulevard just over the wire, at 12:01 a.m. It was driven by Edward G. Courant, former trainman, who has been with Key since 1946.

The first Division Three bus, on the No. 72 line, left the Richmond yard at 21st and Macdonald at 12:45 a.m., putting all divisions into operation within an hour after the official take-over time.
District, Union Draft New Labor Contract

Drivers to Receive 29-cent Wage Increase Over Two-year Period, Improved Working Conditions and Other Benefits

The basis for a new contract agreement, that will give transit district workers a wage boost and other benefits over a 25-month period, was approved this month by the district board of directors.

The proposals will cost the district $611,977 the first year and another $526,373 the second year, but can be financed from existing fares and tax incomes, according to John R. Worthington, AC Transit general manager.

The tentative settlement, designed to bring a long period of labor peace and stability to East Bay transit operations, was reached after six weeks of informal talks with officials of Carmen's Union.

The contract proposals, which also carry the recommendation of union spokesmen, are to be presented to the 1,100 membership of the union local for a referendum vote, tentatively October 29.

The two-step wage hike would give some 875 bus drivers a 29-cent hourly increase over the period, with comparative boosts for most other classifications.

It also provides for increased health and welfare benefits, recognizes Washington's birthday as an additional holiday and liberalizes vacations.

Under the agreement, bus drivers would get a 6.25 per cent pay boost the first of next month, raising their salaries from $2.40 to $2.55 an hour. They would receive another 5.5 per cent raise December 1, 1961, increasing wages 14 cents to $2.69.

Other employees, with the exception of top mechanics, would get the same percentage boost. Class A mechanics would get 32 cents an hour hike November 1 and 14 cents a year later, bringing their hourly rate to $3.14, as of December 1, 1961.

The settlement, which would extend to November 30, 1962, was cited by both district and union representatives as "fair and equitable" and was held indicative of the cooperative labor relations that will prevail with AC Transit.

Worthington said he was hopeful that the settlement would bring "labor stability" as well as "substantial economies" by reducing labor turn-over.

"With this contract, we are closely approaching parity with other California transit systems, which is a necessity if the district is to attract high-quality personnel and reduce labor turn-over, a serious factor in wage costs," he pointed out.

F. Vern Stambaugh, union president, told the transit board of directors that as result of "fairness and cooperation shown by the district we will do our utmost to give our full cooperation and effort in providing the finest transportation system in the nation."

New Transit Route Map Now Available

Transit riders can not only see how to get to their destination, they also can get some ideas on where to go sight-seeing through new route maps now available.

The gaily-colored maps, with informal illustrations, show the streets on which district lines operate, along with 45 points of interest, ranging from the Alameda beaches to Woodminster Amphitheater.

The folder, entitled "A Guide for Going Places on AC Transit," has an area map on one side and a Downtown Oakland detail map, with information on "places to go," on the other side.

Copies can be obtained at 1100 Broadway, Oakland.

Transit Fares for Children in East Bay Cut to 10 Cents, Zone Charges Dropped

Children under 13 are riding for a dime anywhere in the East Bay on Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District lines, as result of one of the first public services inaugurated this month after take over from Key System.

Under Key, children paid adult cash fares of 25 cents, plus additional zone charges, a price that added up to substantial sums for many a parent.

One-way fare for children riding between the East Bay central zone and San Francisco is 20 cents. Travel from Zones 2 and 3 is an additional 5 cents.

The new schedule, which went into effect at take-over time, will make it easier and cheaper for mothers, particularly, to take the youngsters with them shopping.

Also in the department of the younger generation, the District inaugurated an "emergency" school bus service October 3 to serve four East Oakland schools.

The new line, first to be started by the district, was hastily put together to take care of youngsters who were left at the start of the new school year without means of reaching Grass Valley Elementary School, King Estates Junior High School, Bishop O'Dowd High School and Castlemont High School.

Eight Seek Election to District Board

Eight candidates, including three incumbents, will be seeking election to the Board of Directors of AC Transit District on the November 8 general election ballot.

The surprise action of Incumbent J. Howard Arnold of Albany in dropping out of the race for re-election to Ward 2 and instead running for director at large leaves William Berk of Richmond unopposed for the ward representing El Cerrito, Kensington, Richmond, San Pablo, El Sobrante and Albany.

Berk, only candidate whose election is assured, is a Richmond business executive and community leader.

Arnold will be opposing Robert K. Barber of Kensington, president of the transit board of directors and a director-at-large.

Other candidates in the director-at-large race include George H. Adams of Oakland, a Southern Pacific engineer, and Leo Baum of Oakland, owner of a downtown Oakland pharmacy.

A contest in Ward 1 will see the incumbent, William H. Coburn, Jr., Berkeley attorney, opposed by Leo W. Brown of Berkeley, a mechanic, and Jack Gibbons of Oakland, a research consultant.

Board Adopts $10,106,000 Operating Estimate, Sets Up Workers' Jobs and Wages

The Board of Directors of AC Transit adopted a $10,106,000 operating estimate for the remainder of the fiscal year and created 100 job classifications.

The operating estimate was set on basis of $8,780,000 expected from revenue, as well as tax proceeds and other incomes, including interest on invested bonds.

An estimated surplus of $1,471,000 is anticipated for purposes of establishing a continuing fund guaranteeing availability of money for payment of bond interest and retirement each year as they become due.

The Board, in establishing 100 job classifications and corresponding salary rates, continued the schedule maintained by Key System Transit Lines. The classifications amount to a monthly payroll of $619,200.
At an adjourned regular meeting September 28, 1960, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized the General Manager to conclude execution of agreement for purchase of Key System Transit Lines, on motion of Director Coburn.
- Approved statement of operating estimates for remainder of fiscal year, setting budget at $10,106,000, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Established 109 job classifications and corresponding salary rates as required to employ Key System personnel and commence district operation, on motion of Vice President Bettencourt.
- Adopted Passenger Tariff No. 1, retaining fares charged by Key System, except for children, in which case fares were reduced, on motion of Director Coburn.
- Approved procedure for investment, deposit and withdrawal of district funds, on motion of Director Coburn.

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At the regular meeting October 5, 1960, the Board of Directors:

- Adopted recommendations of General Manager concerning proposals for a two-year labor contract negotiated by representatives of the district and Division 192 of the Carmen’s Union, on motion of Director Copeland.
- Authorized President Barber to attend the annual meeting of the American Transit Association in Philadelphia, on motion of Vice President Bettencourt.
- Approved change of official district address to 1106 Broadway, Oakland, on motion of Director Coburn.

**Patronage Climbs on New Freeway Express Bus Line**

Fort Worth—Time-saving, air-cooled express bus service established into downtown Fort Worth recorded a 50 per cent increase in patronage during the second week of operation.

The freeway express service, according to officials of the Fort Worth Transit Company, is expected to show further gains as additional area residents learn of the new service.