'Executive Car' Bus Service Proposed
Residents Queried in Piedmont on Use of Deluxe Commute Express to San Francisco Finance Center

A survey was underway this month to determine interest in the district's newest approach to commuting transportation — an exclusive "executive car" service.

The proposed self-supporting service would include such innovations as a continental breakfast, private radio-telephone facilities, soft music, wall-to-wall carpeting and a choice of newspapers at each reserved seat.

A stewardess would be aboard each trip to handle details of the service.

The innovation would add luxury to a speedy, express service direct to the heart of San Francisco's financial district.

Initial response to the proposed "executive car" was enthusiastic, including widespread approval in the Bay area press, both in news columns and in editorial comment.

Commuter Comfort

Four of the daily newspapers, for example, editorialized on the proposal — something of a record in itself — generally taking the view the plan to give the long harassed commuter greater comfort and ease was both timely and even perhaps past due. (See Page 3.)

If there is sufficient interest in the deluxe service, the district could put the "executive car" into operation by October or November.

A folder, detailing the "new concept in travel between home and executive office — the Financier," was sent to 3800 homes in Piedmont to sample reaction.

Piedmont was selected for initial study in the belief that a high income community would provide the greatest interest in the extra-fare service.

The same extra-fare plan, however, could be inaugurated in any area of the district.

Reserved Seats

Plans call for seats to be reserved by the month, with patrons billed at the end of the month for the charges, estimated at approximately $45. Subscribers would have identification cards which would entitle them to ride regular service if, for some reason, they occasionally desired to travel at an earlier or later hour.

Proposed innovations also include tables fitted to accommodate a foursome at cards, individual ash trays — smoking would be allowed — and name-plate seating. The district would convert present 45-passenger buses to a 34-passenger capacity, with a rounded lounge.

In giving the "executive car" service top priority, William J. Bettencourt, board president, explained:

"We have to keep looking forward. We have to make bus riding more attractive than the private car and I believe this is one of many ways to do it. This idea represents the ultimate in bus transportation. "If there is a demand for it, AC Transit should supply it."
Service to Oakland Airport Among Improvements Scheduled in East Bay

Direct transit service to the newly expanded Metropolitan Oakland International Airport and special football bus service for home games of the Oakland Raiders were among improvements authorized this month by AC Transit directors.

Inauguration of two new lines Sept. 2 will eliminate transfers for riders traveling from downtown Oakland and East 14th St. to the airport, Brookfield Village and other residential and industrial areas in the vicinity of 98th Ave.

New Line 83A will leave downtown Oakland on East 14th St., serving Brookfield Village and the International Airport via 98th Ave. and Hegenberger Rd. Line 83B will operate over East 14th, but will turn off at 98th in an easterly direction, proceeding to MacArthur. Line 83 will continue to operate via East 14th St. to 105th Ave. and Srobante Park.

'Football Special'
The 'football special' for Raider games at Youell Field will operate from two terminals — Grand Ave. and Broadway in downtown Oakland and from 1st Ave. and East 14th St. on the east side of Lake Merritt — to meet East Bay and transbay passengers. Service will be provided with a frequency up to every five minutes on Sunday afternoons, starting at approximately 12 noon, on the eight dates the Raiders have scheduled home games.

Other improvements include:
• Expansion of service on Line 60 in Colton Blvd. and Saroni Dr. area of Montclair.
• Relocating of Line 93 — Hesperian Blvd. to serve a wider area of San Lorenzo.
• Expansion of Line 69 — 23rd St. to provide night and holiday service to San Pablo business and residential areas.
• Rescheduling of the intercity Berkeley Express line to provide service along Broadway between downtown Oakland and Jack London Square every 7 minutes and improve transfer connections with Lines 7 and 67 in downtown Berkeley.
• More frequent evening service on Grand Ave. through schedule changes on Lines 12 — Grand Ave. and 18 — Lakeshore Ave.

New Ward Boundaries Adopted for Election

New boundaries drawn for the five wards in the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District were established this month in connection with the bi-annual election of transit district directors.

Transit district law requires that boundaries be redrawn every two years to conform with population changes.

The new lines generally follow the previous boundaries, except for the inclusion of all of San Leandro in Ward IV. Previously the southern part of the city was in Ward V.

New ward boundaries are as follows:
Ward I, Berkeley, Emeryville, northern part of Oakland; Ward II, Albany, El Cerrito, Kensington, Richmond, San Pablo and other sections of Contra Costa County within the district; Ward III, Alameda, Piedmont and the central section of Oakland; Ward V, Castro Valley, Hayward, San Lorenzo and other unincorporated areas of Alameda County within the district.

Terms of four of the seven members of the district's board of directors expire in January, 1963. They include William J. Bettenhausen, president of the board, Ward IV; Col. Robert M. Copeland, USA (Ret.), vice president of the board, director at large; John McDonald, Ward III, and E. Guy Warren, Ward V.

First day for circulation of nomination papers was set for Aug. 28.

What the Editors are Saying About Transit

San Francisco Examiner:

Luxury Commuting

WE FORESEE wider use, and wider appeal, in the East Bay's proposed executive commuter bus service than the first emphasis on its plush aspects seem to imply.

There is practicality here not measured by the girth of the patron's wallet. The $44 monthly charge, to be billed to the commuter, is little more — in some cases less — than the bridge toll and full day-time parking in San Francisco.

The whole tribe of one-car, one-man bridge riders — and the field is broad — should find the service attractive, not because they are rich, but because they know a bargain when they see it.

That rules out snobbery. If luxury goes along with the ride, who will fault it? As for the morning papers, continental breakfasts and beautiful hostesses, we think the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District is thinking fast and smart.

The commuter has been waking up out of transit nightmares too long: it is time for some of his more beautiful dreams to come true.

New Workers Join AC Transit Ranks

"Welcome aboard" was in order this month for another group of new workers who joined district ranks. They include:

Emeryville Division
Transportation: John Dwight McCrary, 635 Adams St., Albany, junior clerk typist. Schedule: Norman Carl Williams, 189 Vernon Terrace, Apt. 8, Oakland, stenographer clerk.

Richmond Division
Bus Operators: F. P. Cicala, 18 Madeleine St., Pittsburg; R. C. Le Bousc, 4317 Santa Rita Rd., El Sobrante; M. L. Mitchell, 4010 State St., Richmond.

Seminary Division

Free Guide Available

A free booklet, "Transit Trails," an illustrated sight-seeing guide to East Bay points of interest, has been made available by the district to encourage riders to go "adventuring by bus." Included with the booklet is a list of "Things to Do For Summer Fun with AC Transit."

Both are available at the district general offices, 1106 Broadway, Oakland, and the Transbay Terminal in San Francisco.

More Information

A note or phone call to the transit district—Olympic 3-3535—will place your name on the mailing list for Transit Times if you are not already regularly receiving a copy of the monthly newsletter.

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Old Tunnel Studied for Faster Bus Service

With work scheduled to start in September on reopening of the Northbrae tunnel in Berkeley, AC Transit will have available a faster route for transbay and intercity express service — and the chance to revive a tradition of 50-years standing.

The tunnel under Marin Circle, unique among most tunnels, was used by Southern Pacific’s “red trains” for 30 years and by the Key System’s transbay Berkeley line for another 16 years until commute train service was abandoned in 1958.

Opening of the tunnel to vehicular traffic will provide a direct arterial between the Thousand Oaks and north Berkeley hill areas and the main downtown business area.

AC Transit is studying the feasibility of rerouting the transbay F – Shattuck line and the 33 – Berkeley Express line through the tunnel, cutting both time and distance from present routes — a change requested by the Berkeley Planning Commission.

Major working plans for the project, prepared by the Berkeley Department of Public Works, include construction of a two-lane roadway and sidewalk. The job, to cost $92,900, will take about three months.

If buses use the reopened tunnel, they will be putting a final touch on an historic transportation war between the old Key Route and Southern Pacific that culminated with the S.P. “moving a mountain” to compete with the astute Key Route builder, Francis M. “Borax” Smith.

Smith had franchises on direct routes to the Thousand Oaks area, so, in 1910, the S.P. decided to go underground. Instead of digging a tunnel in the more usual way, however, they cut the hill down, laid a cement tunnel in the cut, then piled the dirt back on top.

Trains entered the tunnel near the intersections of El Dorado, Sutter and Hopkins Sts., ran northwest under The Circle at the foot of Marin Ave. hill, emerging near Contra Costa Ave. From there, they traveled through a wooded canyon and private right of way to an initial terminal on Solano Ave.

The first “red train” ran over the route on Dec. 23, 1911. After the S.P. abandoned its Shattuck Ave. line in 1941, the Key System extended its “F” line through the tunnel on December, 1942.

Approval Clears Way For Joint Study into Tri-City Transit Needs

With approval by the City Councils of Fremont, Newark and Union City, a study into the feasibility of extending AC Transit service into Washington Township was given the go-ahead this month.

The agreement approved by the three cities calls for Fremont to pay $2100; Newark, $600 and Union City, $300, toward cost of the study. AC Transit will pay the remaining half of the total cost which is estimated at $6000.

De Leuw, Cather & Co., a nationwide firm of consultants with offices in San Francisco, will begin the study following a preliminary meeting with representatives of the cities and the transit district. The firm has estimated the survey would take 45 or 60 days.

The study will include estimates on the transit needs of the tri-city area and a plan of bus operation, including local and express service routes, frequency, equipment needs and estimated expenses and fare box revenues.

Sunday Pass Sales Show Big Increase

Sale of AC Transit’s new Sunday and holiday “Summer Fun Pass” continues to spiral upward, after more than doubling during the first month the special rate tickets were made available to the public.

On the last Sunday in July, for example, nearly 1,000 passes were sold, more than twice the 441 purchased on the first Sunday.

Sale of the passes has boosted gross Sunday revenue as much as 8 percent over the corresponding Sunday a year ago, though the average Sunday increase for all of July amounted to about 4 percent.
More East Bay residents rode AC Transit in June than they did a year ago, but it was the smallest monthly increase in business since early in 1961.

Some 4,033,000 riders were carried during the month, an increase of 50,000 passengers or 1.25 percent. The small size of the gain was attributed, in part, to the recent tie-up of the Bay area construction industry, including its cumulative effect on buying power of midday women shoppers.

Transbay commute book sales for the month were up 3.7 percent, showing an increase of $5,500 to $151,900 for total book sales.

Total district income for the month of $1,042,000 was adequate to cover all operational costs, which were up 10.4 percent over June, 1961. Income also provided for amortization and depreciation of equipment, but was not sufficient for retirement of bonded debt and a portion of bond interest, leaving a deficit of $97,500.

Operating estimates for the fiscal year anticipated a monthly deficit, though a more favorable net operating result was experienced than originally projected.

Miles operated in June totaled 1,659,000, an increase of 73,500 miles or 4.1 percent over June, 1961.

"Murf" — officially it's Frank P. Murphy — has been driving in the Montclair area so long he's lost track of just when he started. But it's been long enough to become a popular and legendary figure.

He's Montclair's "own" — the man who knows all (well, almost!).

Hill area residents, back in 1955, picked "Murf" as driver of the month. He came in for recognition again this month when the Montclarion, neighborhood newspaper, chose him for a special feature story.

"Murf" has been driving in the Montclair area since before World War II — which makes it at least 20 years — and he hopes to stay right on Lines 59 and 76 until he turns in his badge a couple of years from now.

He likes the Broadway Terrace and Montclair lines for a simple reason: "I just like the people."

"Murf," who is bucking 63, is one of the old-timers with AC Transit. He started driving for N. P. Alevizos in 1932 when Alevizos — now superintendent at the Richmond division — was operating the former Oakland Bus Co. in West Oakland and the waterfront area.

Murphy moved along with the company into the Key System fold, then into the transit district.

In the couple of decades he has been driving in the hill area, he's seen a lot of the kids he used to wheel around — in a bus, of course — grow up and commence rearing youngsters of their own.

He knows most of his passengers, a bit about lots and houses and values and another bit about things that have happened along his routes.

Murphy and his wife, Caroline, have no children of their own, but rather a large family among his passengers. And he has no problems with his passenger youngsters, either — they all behave with Murphy.

The Murphys live at 431 38th St., Oakland, where he has a work shop and tools to fix almost everything.

"There's one thing I can't do," he's decided. "I can't fix broken hearts"...

Among them Jean Perry, 19, of 6287 Valley View Dr. He's a special favorite of hill area riders.

FAVORITE — Frank P. Murphy, who has been driving in the Montclair area for over 20 years, has seen a lot of his younger passengers grow up — among them Jean Perry, 19, of 6287 Valley View Dr. He's a special favorite of hill area riders.
ACTIONS OF THE BOARD

At an adjourned regular meeting July 25, 1962, the Board of Directors:

• Approved display of paid political advertising on district buses providing advertisements bear approved disclaimer and that space be made equally available to opposing candidates or sides of a ballot measure, on motion of Director Coburn.

• Revised district ward boundaries to reflect recent population changes, on motion of Director Coburn.

• Approved route revision and other operating changes to Lines 18 - Lakeshore Ave. and Park Blvd., 39 - High St., 60 - Snake Rd., 69 - 23rd St., 83 - East 14th St. and 93 - Hesperian Blvd., and authorized construction of a passenger shelter at San Pablo and Yerba Buena Aves., Emeryville, on motion of Director McDonnell.

At the regular meeting August 8, 1962, the Board of Directors:

• Approved operation of shuttle bus service to Frank Youell Field on occasion of Oakland Raiders professional football games, on motion of Director Coburn.

• Authorized contract agreement with De Leuw, Cather & Company for engineering study of possible transit service in Washington Township, on motion of Director Barber.

• Called election for four directors of the Transit District to be consolidated with general election November 6, 1962, on motion of Director Coburn.

Old-Time Employees Taken by Death

Deaths of the following workers was reported during the month.

W. E. Hanna, 83, of 5224 Miles Ave., Oakland, who entered service as a street car operator in 1915. He transferred to the Key System trains in 1948, working until he retired in 1957. Mr. Hanna, who died July 14, is survived by his widow, Florence.

E. C. Tripp, 69, who died July 15, worked on the trains from 1925 to 1944. From 1944 until he was pensioned in 1958, he was a ticket collector at the Transbay Transit Terminal in San Francisco. Mr. Tripp is survived by his widow, Irene, of 5413 Thomas Ave., Oakland.