Project 68
Study of East Bay bus-rail needs launched
At an adjourned regular meeting April 4, the Board of Directors:
• Authorized advertising for bids to supply uniform trousers, on motion of Director Coburn. (See Story, Pg. 6).
• Authorized termination of special service to Coliseum complex should buses be prevented from using direct route into grounds and be required to use loop road, on motion of Director Rinehart.
• Recommended extension of Line 51M to Berkeley fishing pier and rerouting of Line 12 to new West Grand Overpass, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 5).
• Adopted as policy view that functions of District are not responsibility of a regional government and District should remain a separate, independent, autonomous public agency, directly responsible to voters, on motion of Director Rinehart. (See story, Pg. 2).
• Approved legislative committee recommendations, including letter of commendation to Sen. Nicholas C. Petris for measure to support transit.

Transit advertising shows top gain

Advertising on AC Transit buses increased 20.3 percent in 1967, compared to 1966, putting it ahead of the experience tallied nationally.

Transit advertising usage nation-wide registered a 13 percent rise last year, growing more than twice as fast as any other major advertising medium. Among other media, only network television and outdoor advertising registered gains. Both advanced six percent. Other media logged decreases, the Transit Advertising Measurement Bureau reported.

Transit advertising is carried by more than 70,000 vehicles, including buses, throughout North America.

Riding in winner's circle

Transbay revenue records were topped twice in a row, pushed to new highs by fans making use of special service to Golden Gate Fields in Albany. The last high of $23,008.57 was reached Monday, March 18, surpassing a record of $22,648.45 set March 4.

Project 68

Bus network analysis underway

A massive overhaul of AC Transit's entire system was launched this month as management moved into the initial work stages of reshaping its extensive network of bus service.

The program, which has the designation of "Project 68," will lay the groundwork for meeting present and future transit needs, including coordination with future operations of the Bay Area Rapid Transit District.

An aim of the project will be to determine how individual East Bay neighborhoods can best be served by public transit.

Extensive survey

Among initial projects will be a look at all AC Transit routes and services. The study is expected to be the most extensive survey in the history of East Bay transportation — and one of the most complex.

"Project 68" includes six different tasks, beginning with the analysis of routes and services. The total project is to be completed by Nov. 1, Alan L. Bingham, general manager, told the Board of Directors at a special meeting.

"What we're doing is pulling the system together again. We will be analyzing what improvements we need to make today and what we need to do when BART goes into service.

"We will be studying modifications in routing — what lines we should continue to operate and what we should phase out."

"Our objective is to coordinate our service with train service to avoid unnecessary delay. We are planning an efficient, direct, streamlined operation geared to local, individual neighborhood needs."

"We expect to do a top job of providing service for residents who can best be served, transbay and locally, exclusively by AC Transit's network of buses." Project tasks include:

• Determination of vehicle, plant and manpower requirements.
• An "acceptable" fare structure for present and future operations, including inter-system rides; revenue estimates and possible arrangements for sharing joint fare discounts.
• An estimate of future operating financial results.
• Development of a convenient and efficient fare collection system.
• A plan for future joint administration of basic informational service.

BART Cooperation

Under the project program, the District will cooperate with BART in analyzing feeder service needs in areas outside of AC Transit boundaries, Bingham said.

He also reported that in determining future equipment needs, the District is giving careful consideration to what bus manufacturers "have on the drawing boards" — of vital concern in estimating useful life of present equipment.

In the program, the District will utilize information developed by a recent engineering report of the Northern California Transit Demonstration Project, and also a 1965 system-wide origin and destination study.
District role of autonomy upheld

As operators of neighborhood bus service designed to meet specific - and sometimes unique - transit needs in the two-county area it serves, AC Transit believes its present functions are not the responsibility of a regional government.

The District made this policy clear this month in appearing, with other agencies, before the legislature's Joint Committee on Bay Area Regional Organization in San Francisco.

Alan L. Bingham, general manager, said the District's Board of Directors took the view AC Transit should remain a separate, independent and autonomous public agency, directly responsible only to the voters within its boundaries and to the transit needs of the people it serves.

District Promise

He said the District was created by voters on a promise to do one job - serve its residents better, "with faster, more frequent and greatly expanded service; with newly designed and styled equipment; with friendliness, comfort, convenience and at reasonable fares.

Eight and one-half years have passed since the voters approved the bond issue which made it possible for AC Transit to become an operating entity, and so far as our Board of Directors and management are concerned, the theme has not changed," Bingham told the legislators.

Although AC Transit believes it is more subregional than regional in its characteristics, it realizes operations inter-relationship between AC Transit and the regional agency," Bingham said.

He pointed out AC Transit, Bay Area Rapid Transit and San Francisco Municipal Railway are now working on ultimate arrangements for coordination.

The general manager said it was incumbent upon AC Transit to provide the best service dictated by local circumstances and the District must turn to the citizens of its area for guidelines to the future.

"It is for this reason the board favors a directly elected governing body as being the most responsive to needs."

Bingham said directors also felt any regional organization established in the Bay Area should be a limited government, having sufficient authority to develop and carry out solutions to regional government.

To be effective, it should be financed adequately to perform each function assigned to it, directors believe.

Student bus service To Hayward studied

Studies were underway this month between California State College at Hayward and the District to determine if changes in bus service would make the college more accessible to minority race students in the Berkeley and Oakland areas.

The college is completing a survey to determine home locations of present students and methods of travel to classes. The District, in turn, is evaluating its bus service from Berkeley and Oakland to the college to see if elapsed travel and transfer time offers acceptable commute schedules.

The District also is checking into possibilities of special service from the two East Bay cities to the college.

Funding of such a service is being studied by the college.

New projects ahead For operators with Long District record

AMONG THE FIRST - Mrs. Laura Lee Rikli ends driving career after 25 years on bridge runs.

was so scared on my test I couldn't turn the wheel. But I finally beat it and got so I really liked driving the bus," Mrs. Rikli recalled.

She had a top safety record, with a row of gold pins proclaiming 16 years without a chargeable accident. Her retirement leaves the District with 39 women drivers.

Albert E. Corn, 56, of 734 23rd St., retiring effective June 1, will return to his home town of Morris, Okla., to "raise pigs." My brother has so many he can't count them, and he's doing all right."

Corn left farming to go to work as a mechanic for the Key System in 1941. He switched to bus driving in 1958, working out of Emeryville Division.

Rerouting to provide direct service

Visitors will be able to ride to the entrance to the Berkeley fishing pier, starting Sunday, June 2, with extension of Line 51-M to serve the facility. Buses will continue another four tenths of a mile to loop past the pier and the Marina Administration Building.

With opening of the new West Grand Overpass April 18, Line 12 Grand Ave.

W. 14th St. was rerouted to provide more direct service to the Oakland Army Base and U.S. Naval Supply Center.

Under the new routing Line 12 operates from 14th St. over Peralta St. and West Grand Ave. to the overpass. Service was eliminated on 14th St. west of Peralta, and on Wood St., between 17th St. and Grand Ave.
A contract for supplying new uniform trousers for approximately 1,000 bus drivers was put out to bid this month after the District was unable to negotiate acceptable terms with present suppliers. Under terms of the labor contract ratified last year, the District is to place one pair of trousers on a replacement basis for operators with two or more years of service, effective June 1.

Joseph A. Peters, 82, of 311 Lester Ave., Oakland, member of a well-known transit family, died on March 5.

He went to work for the Key Route in 1904 as inspector of electrical equipment and spent 26 years at the pier terminal before leaving to take another job in 1930. He counted among his most memorable experiences his role in picking up the first package of airmail from an Oakland and Antioch train and handing it to a ferry boat employee for delivery to the post office in San Francisco. The plane carrying the mail had been forced by fog to land at Concord, an Oakland and Antioch train and handing up the first package of airmail from

Frederick C. Osborne, 78, of 861 54th St., Oakland, pensioned June 1, 1958, from Division 1 as a towerman, died March 25. He entered service as a motorman in 1925.

Arthur J. Hogan, 69, of 1609 Curtis St., Berkeley, who started as a conductor on the trains in 1941 and moved over to buses in 1958, died March 26. Mr. Hogan, who retired Nov. 1, 1965, from Emeryville Division, spent most of his driving years on Line 88.

New District workers are:

General Office

Accounting: Joseph P. Priolo, South San Francisco, accounting supervisor; Sandra Lee Gavillo, Oakland, and Naomi Jean Romero, Oakland, junior typist clerks.

Emeryville Division

Information/PBX: Vonna L. Moore, Oakland, information clerk.

Purchases and stores: Rebecca L. Obregon, Oakland, typist clerk.

Maintenance: Claude D. Parker, Hayward, mechanic A-carpenters.


Richmond Division


Serminary Division

Maintenance: William M. McCombe, San Pablo, service employee.

Bus Operators: W. H. Waldenmair, Hayward; Eddie Levy, Jr., and C. M. Lozada, Oakland; W. A. Demerson, San Francisco.

Riding continues to show increase

Fare box revenue and the number of riders continued to show healthy growth during February on both East Bay and transbay lines. Passenger revenue for the month totaled $1,118,939, an increase of $41,307 or 3.85 percent over rider revenue of $1,077,423 collected in the same month a year ago. Revenue on East Bay lines showed a gain of 2.75 percent, while revenue on transbay lines was up 5.39 percent. Commute book sales totaled $188,614, an increase of 6.1 percent over year-ago sales of $177,883.

The number of passengers carried during the month reached 4,225,516, up 3.72 percent compared to February, 1967. East Bay riding showed an increase of 2.90 percent, while transbay riding continued its growth pattern with an increase of 6.02 percent.

Operation costs during the month totaled $1,331,284, up $107,365 or 8.77 percent over costs of $1,223,917 for February, 1967. The District operated 1,902,208 miles of service, an increase of 119,917 miles or 6.73 percent over the same month in 1967.

Total income of $1,533,104 was sufficient to cover operational costs, depreciation and bond debt requirements.

The transit industry nationally indicated a riding increase for February of 2.42 percent.
Veteran head of maintenance announces Retirement; new manager appointed

Everett A. Towers, who worked his way up from machinist apprentice to general superintendent of maintenance for AC Transit, announced his retirement this month after 50 years in East Bay transportation.

A. R. “Tony” Lucchesi, assistant to Towers since 1963, was appointed new manager of maintenance by Alan L. Bingham, general manager.

Towers, of 324 51st St., Apt. 2., Oakland, will work his last day May 10. His retirement is effective July 1, the day before his 68th birthday.

One of the “old time mechanics” who knew the insides of every piece of moving equipment—and how to fix it—Towers went to work for the San Francisco, Oakland Terminal Railway in 1918, but broke his seniority for 57 days in 1920.

In the 1930’s, Towers was in charge of converting the two-man street cars to one-man operation and later, transformed skeleton frames into the articulated train units which carried commuters across the bridge until 1958.

Member of a pioneer Amador County family, Towers was born in Sutter Creek, but lived in Berkeley from 1908 until 1957. He is married to the former Mildred Gabrielson, whom he met while both were working at Emeryville shops.

Lucchesi, 52, of 8009 G St., Oakland, has 35 years on the property, going to work for Key System in 1933 after turning down a chance to play for a pro baseball team.

“Tony” played memorable baseball and basketball at Castlemont High School and continued in the “Casey Stengel” fashion, coaching the Little League in Hayward and managing the Southern Pacific Stores, semi-pro team which won Northern California championships in 1956, 1958 and 1960. “Tony” goes to bat now at bowling and golf.

Richmond does it again

For the second month in a row, drivers at Richmond Division beat the safety goal and won free coffee and doughnuts. Their March record of 13,796 miles per accident, compared to the goal of 12,900 miles per accident.