Rides on air

Personal transit vehicle tested


**Actions of the Board**

At an adjourned regular meeting Feb. 26, the Board of Directors:
- Authorized General Manager to attend conference of American Transit Association and manager of Purchases and Stores to attend conference of District expenses higher than estimated

AC Transit also is interested in studies concerning improved access between the airport and East Bay areas which could not be effectively served by a BART-airport link.

- Adopted resolution setting forth District policy relative to urban transportation financing in Bay Area, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 3)
- Adopted resolution pertaining to financing of new buses, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Approved appointment of Touche, Ross, Bailey & Smart to perform audit for 1968-69 fiscal year, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized advertising for bids for operator's uniform shirts, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Approved attendance of Manager of Maintenance at National Fleet Owner Conference and to accept maintenance efficiency award, on motion of Director Coburn.
- Adopted resolution setting forth District policy relative to urban transportation financing in Bay Area, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 3)
- Adopted resolution pertaining to financing of new buses, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Approved appointment of Touche, Ross, Bailey & Smart to perform audit for 1968-69 fiscal year, on motion of Director Rinehart.

**Transit team to plan BART-airport link**

A study team was at work this month tackling one of the most significant new developments in East Bay public transit— a high-speed, express link between Metropolitan Oakland International Airport and the future Bay Area Rapid Transit system.

The task force is working to prepare a plan for developing transit services which would link the airport with the BART station near 77th Ave. and San Leandro St. 

**Transit link**

The link also could provide access to BART from the Coliseum complex, nearby hotel and motel developments and the expanding industrial complex along Hegenberger Rd.

Fast public transit service between the airport and the BART station would place much of the Bay Area — including San Francisco — at the doorstep of the Oakland airport, according to studies made by BART.

Traffic projection indicate the Oakland Airport's current 1.8 million air passengers annually will increase to 12 million by 1975 and to nearly 24 million by 1980.

AC Transit also is interested in studies concerning improved access between the airport and East Bay areas which could not be effectively served by a BART-airport link.

- Of further District interest are plans for interim airport service pending construction and operation of the ultimate transit link with BART.
- Participating in the study group are representatives of BART, AC Transit, the Port of Oakland, City of Oakland and Coliseum management. Invited to join is a representative of Alameda County. Attending sessions as an ex-officio member is State Sen. Lewis Sherman (D-Berkeley), member of the Senate Transportation Committee and chairman of a sub-committee on airports.

**Drivers top safety goal**

It was coffee and doughnuts "on the house" for Emeryville and Seminary Divisions this month as operators topped the February safety goal. At Emeryville, the tally was 13,124 miles per accident, while at Seminary, drivers won with 13,661 miles.

**District expenses higher than estimated**

A report on the first seven months of operation has shown District expenses running $209,809 higher than originally projected.

- Continued passenger growth, with revenue from other sources, may help offset the financial deficit, directors were advised this month.
- The District is operating on an estimated budget of $19,748,000 for the current fiscal year.
- Expenses have increased beyond early estimates, with labor costs jumping slightly higher than anticipated, Alan L. Bingham, general manager, reported. Unusual non-recurring items, such as expenses of inaugurating "Ready Fare" plan and settlements of several heavy claims were other contributing factors, he added.

Exceptionally adverse weather, protracted over a long period of time, also has been a factor, Bingham said.

Ray H. Rinehart, chairman of the finance committee, noted that under terms of the collective bargaining agreement with union workers, additional wage increases are scheduled this year and every means will have to be explored ways of raising additional funds.

Increasing wage costs have not kept pace with growth in passenger revenues, although the District showed one of the highest riding increases in the nation in 1968.

Bingham told directors management already is at work on estimates for next year's budget, including an analysis of the fare structure and ways of providing additional revenue.

**State aid sought for mass transit**

The State of California should participate in the financing of urban mass transportation, just as it does for highways.

This policy of AC Transit's Board of Directors, concurred in by other area transit agencies, was before the Bay Area Transportation Study Commission (BATS) this month as a matter of vital importance to the public and the transit industry.

BATS is scheduled to make recommendations to the State Legislature with respect to the future of Bay Area transportation financing, planning and operation.

A resolution adopted by the board urges the State Legislature to give full thought to providing a mass transit fund similar to that provided for highways. The provision should be made on a statewide or regional basis, the resolution declared.

The people should be permitted to determine relative merits of expending public funds for mass transportation, as well as for highways and other forms of transportation, the resolution stated.

Mass transportation facilities cannot continue to accomplish their role by relying on fares and the local taxpayer— until such time as there is major state-wide tax reforms— other means of financing urban mass transit must be found, directors said.

Such financial assistance should be on a continuing and on-going basis, available to all who operate transit, whether it's intercity, feeder or local service.

**State aid needed**

William J. Bettencourt, the District's representative on BATS, said transit properties no longer can rely upon fare box revenue or the Federal government alone to support systems of transporting the public.

"The State must take local transit into consideration and help with financing, just as they do with highways," he declared.
FUTURE TRANSIT? — Vehicles, using air cushion pads for support, could operate on guideways in this fashion, moving laterally for docking.

Personal transit vehicles, running automatically on guideways, may offer solutions to transportation needs in almost every East-Bay community and urban area.

Howard R. Ross, manager of advanced planning at Transportation Technology, of Warren, Mich., appeared before the Board of Directors this month to describe a low-cost distribution and collection system which offers privacy, security and imaginative convenience.

His presentation was in line with District investigation of future mass transportation potentials.

A system under test at the Transportation Technology facilities since last October involves small vehicles using air cushion pads for support and suspension, Ross said. Propulsion is provided by linear induction motors, which have their energized portion in the guideway.

Ross said it is possible to design, build and operate self-contained, family-size vehicles, which have nearly all the characteristics desired in a personal transit system.

Larger capsules, carrying up to 20 to 24 passengers, could be designed to mix with small vehicles, to handle a greater number of riders during rush hours. During off-peak periods, the privacy and security of a personal capsule would be available.

Such systems could be designed now for campuses, such as California State College at Hayward and University of California, Ross declared.

It could be utilized to link Metropolitan Oakland International Airport with the Bay Area Rapid Transit District's Coliseum station and the Coliseum complex. Or it could be used to provide transportation from neighborhoods or communities to BART stations.

It can move people about in central business districts, running in and out of buildings. Or it could be effectively used in industrial parks or shopping centers.

Ross, former staff member at Stanford Research Institute, said one of the nation's first tracked air cushion vehicles, a five-passenger unit, has been tested on a guideway at the Transportation Technology Michigan facility. Plans now are underway to extend the track several times its present length of 200 feet.

Two systems which have been under study are considered near to “technology maturity,” Ross added.

One consists of vehicles traveling on scheduled, 40-second headways in a loop, with deterministic arrival, loading and departure times. The vehicles could operate singly or in trains. Loops could be designed to serve individual needs, the speaker said. Total system cost was estimated at about $1,000,000 per one-way mile for the application studied.

The other study involved a low speed personal transit system—which could become a high speed system.

It includes a unique docking maneuver where vehicles move laterally from a siding onto a short spur for loading and unloading. Passengers could enter at will, pick out their destination and be automatically ushered into the guideway, docking again at the end of their trip.

The result would be personal transportation, with security and privacy, in a public transit system, Ross declared.

Design-wise, it is possible to think of vehicles carrying as few as two passengers or as many as 200. Speed can range from 30 miles an hour to 160 miles an hour—or more—in advanced systems.

The sled-like vehicles are noiseless, with no air-pollution or vibration. They offer low maintenance, can negotiate grades up to human comfort, present a low profile and are attractive. Guideways could be in a subway, at ground level or elevated, Ross said.

Because there is no contact between the air-supported vehicle and the guideway, wear is minimized and construction costs are considered low.

Linear motor

Use of linear induction motors for electric propulsion provides a “rugged simple unit with few moving parts,” Ross said. He described the linear motor as “in the nature of a rotary, squirrel-cage motor which has been split down the middle and stretched out horizontally.”

Transportation Technology, a division of the engineering architectural firm of Sverdrup & Parcel, was organized to design advanced systems of ground transportation. A major part of their resources has been focused on personal rapid transit as the concept with the greatest long-range potential.

Ross said they expected to have a system operating in a year or two.

FAMILY SIZE — Test vehicle, shown below, was designed to carry five passengers. It could be scaled upward or downward. In simulated system, passengers would select designation, board a vehicle and travel non-stop to desired point.
Retirement lures workers to new interests

Mexico has reached out a sunbeam — and a fishline — and snared H. L. Parsons, 59, of 295 Jayne Ave., Oakland, whose retirement as a bus driver will be effective April 1.

Parsons, who has been on sick leave, went to work as a conductor on the trains in 1945. Two-and-a-half years later he became a motorman and traveled across the bridge until the trains rolled into the yard for the last time.

He’s remained on the bridge, however, as a bus driver, spending most of his time on the C and E lines.

Parsons has made a number of trips to Mexico in his camper and plans to take off again, after he and his wife sell their home — fishing and following the water. And soaking up the sun.

C. E. Kassing, 65, of 1458 Madison St., Oakland, retiring at the same time from Emeryville Division, expects to continue managing an apartment house and enjoying his hobby of woodworking.

A driver on bridge lines for the past 18 years, he came on the property as an operator in 1943, after driving bus in Nebraska.

J. D. Hammond, 61, is leaving his home at 1550 - 162nd Ave., San Leandro, to move to Exeter, near Visalia, with his retirement effective May 1.

Hammond came to work as a bus driver in 1942, left for five months and returned in 1943. He has been driving out of Seminary Division.

“I’m going to see my United States,” is the plan of Lazaro “Larry” Martinez, 65, upon retirement from the maintenance department at Emeryville Division.

Larry, who lives at 5422 Walnut Street, Oakland, plans to start with trips around California and some “picture taking” and then expand his travels. He went to work in 1945, on the tracks, and moved into maintenance as a mechanic in 1946.
Death comes to former workers

Garfield Martinez, 66, of 624 Mangels Ave., San Francisco, pensioned from Emeryville operating department April 1, 1968, died Dec. 25. He went to work as a motorman in 1945 and pulled the last B train from Trestle Glen to the yard when the trains went off in 1958. He switched to bus driving at that time.

Adolph A. Messke, 68, who retired at the same time as his boss, T. F. McLean, April 1, 1967, from Seminary Division, died last Dec. 29. He worked on the trains as conductor and motorman from 1949 until 1958, spent most of his bus driving time on the Dutton line in San Leandro. His home was at 5439 McLaughlin Ave., Newark.

Richard C. Stambaugh, 66, of 3128 63rd Ave., Oakland, pensioned Sept. 1, 1963 from Seminary, died Dec. 1, 1968. He entered service in 1924 as a conductor, transferred to brakeman in 1930, became a bus driver in 1932 and a supervisor in 1943. He returned to driving in 1944.

Charles V. Green, 89, of 4141 39th Ave., Oakland, one of the "old-timers" in Key System transportation, died January 17. He started at Central Division May 1, 1911 and was pensioned from the transportation department, Division 5, Nov. 1, 1947.

William C. Jenkin, 84, of 45 Galloway Dr., Concord, another veteran, who entered service March 4, 1912, and retired April 1, 1957, died on Feb. 18. He commenced working at Western Division, was promoted to inspector in 1941 and returned to bus driving in 1949, working out of Emeryville.

George K. Bowman, 78, 2948 Carmel St., Oakland, died Feb. 20, a little over 13 years after he was pensioned from the transportation department, Division 1, as a towerman. He started work July 5, 1922, at Western Division, transferred to the mechanical department in 1923 and became a towerman in 1929.

B. H. Van Dyke, 83, pensioned in 1949 as a trainman, died Feb. 29. He entered service in 1915 at Eastern Division, transferred to Central and then to Division 1. His home was at 873 Castlemood Dr., Los Gatos.

If you want to buy a train, see Bob

Others have hobbies, Robert L. Goforth, 26, leadman in Kardex Control in Purchases and Stores department, is considered a "tycoon."

Bob buys and sells "railroads," an outgrowth of what happened when he found himself with 68 model railroad engines and 400 model train cars—and only one garage for a network of rails.

Goforth started on his hobby of building train equipment as a youngster—and at a time when he could only buy one piece of track at a time. He keeps a few trains running now for his own children, but he's enlarged his interest to include collecting fixing and bartering in anything that deals in "railroading."

"Trains are not for kids," according to Bob. "It's a grown-up hobby and you have to know your field. There are thousands of known model railroaders—and some of them are beating a path to my door, looking for that rare something to add to a collection."

"I try to find it."

Bob, whose own cars are H.O. scale, electrically powered, makes his home at 926 Curtis St., Albany. He has worked in stores since Oct. 1962.
Steam bus
To roll again

Passengers will be taking part in the most advanced study of its kind in the nation when they step aboard an AC Transit bus powered by a steam engine early next year.

But it won't be the first time East Bay riders have sampled steam powered street transportation.

A bus, with a steam power plant, operated briefly on the streets of Berkeley 40 years ago—and some residents remember taking a ride.

General Motors ordered the bus "evaluated for a test," according to William Besler, one of the men whose work with steam development goes back to the days when the Doble Steam Motor Co. of Emeryville was turning out the "finest steam cars ever made."

Steam in Berkeley

A Doble engine was installed in a coach and the bus operated over Key Route lines on Ashby Ave. and in North Berkeley, Besler remembers. Passengers were carried and the bus operated a week or two, but nothing came of the experiment.

Buses actually have been running on a head of steam since the early 1800's, Besler reports.

Over a century ago, they were ruled off the highways of Britain because their speed frightened horses. A law was passed which required a little boy to run ahead of the bus, waving a flag. That ended that phase of transit, although buses had been making scheduled runs at the unheard of speed of 15 miles an hour.

When the first steam-powered bus glides out of Emeryville Division to participate in a government-sponsored test of a potentially more economical, more attractive and smog-free public transit vehicle, it will be traveling over well-strewned territory.

The former Doble plant is an Emeryville neighbor, five blocks away at 4053 Harlan St. This was the home of the famous "Rolls Royce" of all steam cars, the Doble DeLuxe.

Newspaper reports on the first public performance in July, 1923, attest to the power and capabilities of the Doble. It shot up the Oakland Ave. hill east of Grand Ave., then reversed itself under power, scattering crowds at the bottom.

It did everything it was supposed to, illustrating "perfect control and quick pick-up."

The speed proved too much, however, for the passenger, Police Sgt. Jim Flemming.

As he eased his 300 pounds out of the machine, the newspaper account quotes this declaration:

"Mr. Doble will have to drive alone. I would make too much of a splash if anything happened."

Besler and other veterans of steam power are working at the site of the Doble plant now, putting a steam plant in a car, under a contract with General Motors.

Involved in the project is Bernard Becker of 3241 Rodgers Ave., Walnut Creek, who owns a Doble DeLuxe-car number 14—and who went to work at the Doble plant as a welder in 1927.

He worked on the boiler on the first steam plant installed by the Detroit Motorbus Company just after he went to work.

The company's experience with the first bus was so "phenomenal and so vastly improved over standard equipment," a second steam power plant was ordered.

Passengers wondered why the company didn't order more steam buses, a report on the project stated.

The next two years finally may provide an answer.

NEW STEAM ENGINE — Industrialist William P. Lear shows a mock-up of the steam-powered engine he proposes for use on District buses.
District welcomes new Chief trial attorney

Dennis Boaz, 29, joined the District this month as chief trial attorney and to also work in the field of labor relations.

Boaz, of 5010 Manila Ave., Oakland, graduated from the Boalt School of Law at University of California in 1965 and previously worked in the District Attorney's office in Contra Costa County.

An avid handball and tennis player, Boaz also is an ardent skier — a family sport enjoyed by his wife, Mona, a medical technologist, and his son, Jeffrey, 10.

All is not law and sports in his background, Boaz admits. He's also worked as a dockhound and as a "bouncer".

Bouquets handed out by news columnists

Two newspaper columnists gave pats on the head last month to AC Transit.

Henry J. Kelliher, in his column, "Henry Sez", in the Neighborhood Journal, circulated in East Oakland, answered his own question:

"How often do you see a broken down AC Transit bus?

"The first I can recall in months was a dead one being worked on out on East 14th St. a couple of nights ago. As a former Army Transportation and Maintenance officer and knowing full well the problems and difficulties of keeping hundreds of vehicles on the road I can only compliment the service personnel of AC Transit for a tough job being well done."

Bob Kahn, in his "Pro and Kahn" column in the Orinda Sun, commented in this fashion on further District two-way radio installations:

"These installations - plus the willingness on the part of the drivers to involve themselves in events around them - are resulting in community service that is far-reaching. The number of stories of "good deeds" and apprehension of "wrong doers" is growing each week."