New buses join fleet
At an adjourned regular meeting Mar. 18, the Board of Directors:
• Approved operation of a sightseeing tour in 1969, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story below)
• Approved service improvements to Lines 56-C, 67, 68, 79, 90-92 and 93A, with other revisions, including rerouting of intercity express Line 31 in downtown Oakland, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 4)

**Actions of the Board**

Buses arrive to meet equipment needs

The first of 45 new buses rolled into service this month, putting extra “Spring” into the District’s fleet.

Delivery of 30 coaches, earmarked for March, was being made as fast as freight cars could be rounded up for the cross-country trip.

As the buses arrived, they were assigned to Seminary Division for service on high mileage 80 lines.

In turn, 10 of the larger “new look” buses were being released for use on Line 57 – MacArthur Blvd. and 20 for transbay service.

With delivery of the 30, the District will have a fleet of 686 buses, 447 of them “new look.”

Another 15 buses are on order for Fall, bringing the count to 462.

The initial delivery will permit the first major retirement of older equipment since the last gasoline-powered buses were sent to pasture in 1965.

A $389,025 federal grant, awarded at the beginning of the year, covers half of project costs of $1,178,050, including the 30 buses and pending purchase of 160 radio units, with other equipment necessary to link the coaches into the present two-way communications system.

The second order, at an estimated cost of $314,800, will make up the “slack” which occurred last year, when the District purchased only 15 buses pending projections on future equipment requirements.

**Sightseeing tour to Show scenic East Bay**

Visitors and residents again will be introduced to attractions of the East Bay in a sightseeing tour scheduled by AC Transit for the summer.

Tour buses will operate from June 15 to Sept. 1, traveling through Oakland, Alameda, Piedmont and Berkeley.

It will be the third year in a row for the scenic project, operated in cooperation with the Oakland Chamber of Commerce as a community effort to bring visitors to the area.

WINGLESS AIRPLANE – The supported monorail, depicted in this artist’s concept, is among travel modes suggested for use in the East Bay. This design makes use of a median strip in a downtown area.

**Monorail developments described**

East Bay commercial and transportation centers, including Bay Area Rapid Transit stations, could be linked by lightweight trains, traveling on a flexible, supported monorail system, AC Transit directors were told this month.

The system could make use of median strips and existing rights-of-way to provide relatively economical and efficient transit to downtown areas, industrial parks, campuses and BART stations, according to a presentation made by representatives of Universal Design Ltd. of Miami, Fla.

**Automatic Couplers**

The trains, looking much like “wingless airplanes”, could have automatic train couplers and computer control, according to designs now in the fabricating stage, according to C. D. Phipps and E. F. Darnell. The firm already has designed and constructed a number of small monorail systems for expositions and amusement parks in different parts of the country.

The presentation was the latest in a series arranged by the District to establish the East Bay as a “transit laboratory” for testing and evaluation of new modes of transportation.

The monorail, supported by slender concrete or steel piers which require a minimum amount of land space, was depicted as economically feasible for areas of medium population density, contemplating feeder operations to a rapid transit system.

Particularly, it would provide a highly efficient, coordinated connection between Oakland International Airport, the BART coliseum station and the coliseum complex, the speakers said.

Automatic train couplers would permit cars to be coupled or detached in a matter of seconds, substantially decreasing time and manpower costs in the making up of trains, he added.

Computerized control would be a key factor in providing fast and efficient service.

Under development is a switching mechanism that would be effective from the car, eliminating any movement in the structure itself.

A 30-passenger car now being manufactured could operate over a system singly – or coupled in trains – carrying 6,000 to 12,000 persons an hour, according to Phipps.

The cars are powered by electricity and can negotiate a 12 percent grade and attain speeds to 80 miles an hour. Pneumatic tires assure a quiet and smooth ride. The air-conditioned trains feature a round shape, described as simple for manufacturers, offering the least resistance for maximum inside space.
New service for family of riders

Buses rolled into new neighborhoods this month, bringing the first transportation to an area west of East 14th St. in East Oakland and boosting service to the Kaiser Hospital complex in Hayward.

Improvements, approved by the Board of Directors, included rerouting and extending Line 56C-58th Ave., to link Tas safaronga Village, San Antonio Village, Lockwood Gardens and Palo Vista with business districts and main trunk line service.

Additional service for the hospital complex was provided by extending Lines 90-Santa Clara Ave., Line 92-Cala roga Ave. and Line 93A-Hesperian Blvd., giving south county residents direct transportation to the complex.

The hospital already was served by Line 91-Tennyson Rd.

The addition resulted in 30 minute service from downtown Hayward on weekdays and Saturdays and hourly service from San Lorenzo and Hesperian Garden areas during the week. The improvement also provided connecting service for residents of Washington Manor, Bonaire and Floresta Gardens, avoiding a long, round-about detour.

An additional early morning trip on Line 93A was delivering students to Chabot College in time for 8 o'clock classes.

Richmond, El Cerrito and Albany commuters heading for the upper Broadway and Kaiser Center areas were saving up to 10 minutes in traveling time as result of a change in routing for Line 31 intercity express in downtown Oakland.

Instead of entering the downtown area at 6th St. and Broadway, the express was making use of MacArthur and Grove-Shafter Freeways to travel via 27th St. to Telegraph and Broadway, providing faster and more convenient service for a majority of riders.

Other improvements included:

- Four additional stops on Line R-Fairway Park express, on East 14th St. at 170th Ave., 167th, 164th and on 164th at Helo Dr., for convenience of Ashland commuters.
- An additional morning and evening extension to Line V-Skyline Blvd. for commuters in the Sequoyah Rd.-Hans on Dr. area.
- Extension of two morning trips on Line 79-High St. to Mc Carrney Rd. and Ver demar St., Bay Farm Island, for early morning workers and students.
- Addition of five new buses to Line L service to accommodate increased patronage from Richmond, El Sobrante and San Pablo areas.
- Two new morning trips were added to Line K-Havenscourt and a new evening trip added to Line R-H Dutton Ave., keeping pace with continuing growth in commute travel.
- Steady increase in “park and ride” commuters switching to public transit resulted in addition of third new schedule to Line E-Claremont Ave.

Champion bell ringer Turns out own models Of cable car memory

If the East Bay should have a cable car again, much like it did 80 years ago, there’s one transit veteran who can ring the bell with a champion’s “rapid fire technique.”

Anthony Campagna, 70, of 4320 Nevin Ave., Richmond, who worked as a conductor on the cable cars in San Francisco for 37 years, was champion bell ringer in 1936 — and has his own bell in his garage to keep in practice.

He has a double interest in the District’s consideration of having a cable car, built to boost charter revenue and revive a cherished and historical form of transit.

Campagna makes model cable car lamps as a hobby, exactly duplicating the cars he worked on for almost four decades. His son-in-law, A. W. Duboise, is chief clerk at Richmond Division and he has his own interest in District feasibility of producing a replica of the cable car which operated on Broadway and San Pablo Avenue between 1886 and 1897.

Along with being “Muni Man of the Month” in the same year he was judged the best of bell ringers, Campagna was honored in 1962, playing a prominent role in a San Francisco celebration. For one week, he was the conductor on a restored “Iron Horse” — a street car of 1912 vintage — and collected the five cent fare of memory as it traveled over the C car line.

Campagna started to work in 1917 on United Railroads, but moved to Oakland in 1918 to work on the San Francisco and Oakland Terminal Railways.
Veterans say good-bye to work

Louis A. Cooper, 74, the "walkingest" man on the property, has retired from the building maintenance department, but not to a welcomed rocking chair.

"I've got to find me something to do, as soon as I feel a little better," Cooper admits. "It's hard to sit down after 47 years of working."

Cooper walked track for over 27 years, inspecting every inch of Key System rails. Most memorable of all, he walked the Bay Bridge from the day the first train ran on Jan. 15, 1939, until the last train crossed in April 1958. When they took away the trains, he learned to drive a pick-up truck and had been "driving in style" since.

Cooper was active in veterans affairs for a number of years, took a "busman's holiday", drilling and blowing a bugle on off hours, after walking miles of track in the day time.

"It was all the same gait," he explained.

TIME OUT - Lazaro "Larry" Martinez, center, left, retires after party at Emeryville maintenance department. Louis A. Cooper, right, hangs up coveralls for last time.

="I didn't get tired. I just lost my 'blow' when I lost my teeth."

Mexico, with its excellent fishing, has beckoned to another transportation veteran, L. F. Driver, 1325 Via San Juan, San Lorenzo.

Driver, 61, on sick leave because of an old back injury, can travel in his camper "if I don't have to drive too far."

He's been going to Mexico for 18 years and plans to return.

"If I don't have to drive too far."

A former motorman on the trains, Driver switched to buses in 1958 and worked out of Seminary Division. He started with Key System in 1945.

S. M. Nichols, 65, who was shot in a 1961 hold-up, but returned to driving, is retiring from Emeryville Division June 1. He went to work in 1945 on the trains and moved over to buses when the trains stopped running. He kept to a familiar route, however, driving the bridge on transbay lines. His home is at 1948 Marin Ave., Berkeley.

N. R. Delacour, 58, also retiring from Emeryville, worked as a conductor on the trains before becoming a driver in 1958. He had military service in the air force during World War II.

Delacour lives at 3810 Ardley Ave., Oakland.

Business activity shows decrease

Fare box revenue and riding showed a decrease during February, although passenger revenue on transbay lines continued its growth pattern.

Rider revenue totaled $1,105,210, a drop of $13,729 or 1.23 percent compared to revenue of $1,118,939 collected in February a year ago. Revenue on East Bay lines was $617,597, a decrease of 4.18 percent over year-ago revenue of $644,529. On transbay lines, fares collected totaled $487,613, up 2.78 percent over income of $474,410 for February, 1968.

Commute book sales for February totaled $290,805, an 11.2 percent increase over year-ago sales of $188,614.

Passengers carried during the month reached 4,036,866, down 4.46 percent compared to the count of 4,225,516 made in the same month in 1968. East Bay riding showed a decrease of 5.8 percent, while transbay riding was down 7.6 percent.

Operation costs during the month totaled $1,374,328, an increase of $43,044 or 3.23 percent over costs of $1,331,284 for the same month a year ago.

The District operated 1,896,439 miles of service, a decrease of 5,769 miles or .30 less than mileage of 1,902,208 operated in February, 1968.

Total income of $1,549,980 covered operational costs and depreciation, but left a deficit of $12,965 in meeting full bond debt requirements.

The transit industry nationally indicated a riding decrease for the month of 5.37 percent.
Contract awarded for New uniform shirts

Some 850 bus drivers, with two or more years of service, will be eligible for annual replacement of one summer and one winter shirt effective June 1, under terms of the labor agreement.

Contract for supplying the shirts was awarded to Oakland Pants Factory, 1940 San Pablo Ave., pending approval of legal qualifications. The low bid was $4.34 for the long-sleeved, heavier shirt and $3.83 for the short-sleeved, lighter shirt. Total cost to the District was estimated at approximately $6,800.

A TOP JOB — For the seventh consecutive year, AC Transit's equipment maintenance received national recognition, winning the Fleet Owner Maintenance Efficiency Award for 1968. In selecting winners, judges considered the high level of maintenance performance attained at a cost consistent with demands for the type of service performed. A. R. "Tony" Lucchesi, manager of maintenance, who accepted the award at the annual National Fleet Owner Conference, shows the plaque to Noel White, left, and Hilton Gartman.