Pattern of future
Freeway link to speed service
Transbay riding on increase during past Year, experience reverses national trend

Boosted by a continuing increase in transbay riding, AC Transit maintained its growth during the past fiscal year, successfully weathering the change to a ready fare plan of riding.

Revenue on transbay lines totaled $6,348,454, up 4.77 percent over last year. The number of passengers carried transbay was 14,624,633, an increase of 2.23 percent over the 1967/68 total.

The new high is the largest number of transbay passengers carried since 1952, prior to the 76-day strike which idled Key System Transit Lines equipment. The figure represents a gain of 62 percent since 1959, the last calendar year Key was in operation.

East Bay riding held its own, despite the inconvenience of having exact bus fare. Revenue on East Bay lines totaled $8,156,083, up .82 percent over the previous year. The number of passengers carried was 37,753,524, a decrease of .82 percent below last year.

Revenue on both transbay and East Bay lines came to $14,504,537, up 2.51 percent. The total passenger count was 52,378,157, a gain of .01 percent over the previous year.

Operating revenue totaled $15,692,429, up 3.4 percent. Proceeds from the District's consolidated tax rate of 19.2 cents came to $4,340,376, giving the District total income of $20,032,805. Total expenses, including depreciation and repayment of the bonded debt, were $20,177,643.

The net deficit of $144,838 was attributed by Robert D. Tough, treasurer controller mainly to increases in cost of living, expenses of inaugrating ready fare and increases in insurance costs.

The District remained one of the few major transit properties to maintain growth. Passenger riding nationally was down 2.14 percent for the past fiscal year.

As a vigorous and forward-thinking property, AC Transit has won national attention and support for its endeavors to pilot research and development that can attract more riders and encourage greater efficiencies, General Manager Alan L. Bingham said after returning from a conference in Washington with government transportation leaders.

"There is growing concern about the future of public transit if expenses continue to rise and if revenue continues to fall short of meeting costs.

"The government is looking to progressive properties to change this picture and is extending its financial help to advanced ideas—some already under study here—which will increase patronage and yet effect operating efficiencies," Bingham said.

"To do the job, the government feels service must be made more attractive and convenient. Methods in increased efficiency must be introduced to hold down costs," the general manager reported.

Steam engine bus Experiment gets new Timetable, more funds

A new timetable for installation of steam engines in two AC Transit buses and two coaches of S.F. Municipal Railway has been announced by Scientific Analytic Corp., administering the project under contract with the California State Assembly.

The power plant is to be developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation to initial grant of $450,000 to fund the project.

Grove-Shafter link New freeway to speed bus service

Back in the heyday of train-ferry commute service, passengers boarded the Claremont line below the Claremont Hotel and settled back for a 44-minute ride to San Francisco— if they were lucky.

Starting Sept. 8, peak-hour express service provided by transbay Line E buses from the same area will make the trip in 25 minutes—a time saving of 19 minutes.

It will be the fastest ride in history for workers in the Claremont-Rockridge districts and for Contra Costa County drivers, who park in the area and switch to buses for the rest of their ride to San Francisco.

Every other bus in the morning and evening peak will observe the Hudson St. stop, then move to Grove-Shafter and MacArthur Freeways for a direct run to the bay bridge and San Francisco. Local coaches will follow regular routing to Yerba Buena and Peralta Aves., making the crossing in 30 minutes.

The Grove-Shafter link also will permit the District to expand its concept of bus transit which serves neighborhoods, then makes use of freeways to offer transportation of a type which competes favorably with automobiles.

ON THE WING—Transbay Line E express buses leaving from traditional Claremont Hotel stop, will cut 10 minutes from travel time of train-ferry commute days.

Line 33-Oakland Berkeley express will start using the freeway on the same September date, to provide faster service for intercity riders. The speedup will result in addition of new morning and evening peak-hour trips for Alameda passengers using Line 33-A to and from Oakland and Berkeley.

At the same time, San Francisco students will get their fastest ride — by the fastest route — direct to University of California campus with inauguration of the "Sather Gate Ltd.

The bus, first direct service to the campus from San Francisco, will travel to Bancroft Way, stopping at College Ave., Bowditch St. and Telegraph Ave. In the 1920's and '30's, commuters boarded the Claremont train behind the Berkeley Tennis Club. The train ran to 43rd and Linden Sts., where it was coupled to the Northbrae train to roll as one long unit to the Key Route pier. The trip was 9.84 miles long.

Express buses will travel 11.4 miles during their 25-minute trip.
State takes action to study funding  
Of local transit for senior citizens

The California State Legislature took action this month to study possible sources of financial aid to help meet local transit needs of senior citizens.

A resolution, passed by the State Senate, requested assignment to an appropriate committee for interim study the subject of the need, desirability and funding of local transportation assistance for senior citizens in the state.

Mobility need

The resolution was introduced by Senators Nicholas C. Petris, D., and Lewis F. Sherman, R., of Oakland. It cites the necessity of providing mobility for the elderly whose incomes have been hit by escalating costs and who depend on public transit.

It further points out that transit systems, similarly faced with rising expenses, have in many cases been required to raise fares.

Legislative action was endorsed by the AC Transit Board of Directors as an appropriate step, since the problem is of statewide concern, with state and counties holding basic responsibilities for determining how funds for aiding the elderly are to be spent.

Senior citizen groups have requested the transit district to consider a 10-cent fare and the staff is studying whether relief can be granted without jeopardizing obligations to taxpayers and riders.

Alan L. Bingham, general manager, said the District is sympathetic to the needs of elderly residents and would like to recommend reduced fares, but had to feel confident of the economic result.

Guidelines are expected from a current Chicago Transit Authority study.

Keen awareness of the problem was expressed by Robert Finch, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, in responding to an inquiry from the general manager.

District concern

Bingham emphasized the District's great concern and asked if federal programs were available to assist transit industries in extending special fares to senior citizens.

Finch reported Title III of the Older Americans Act authorized funds to help support a variety of programs for the elderly, but were not sufficient to fund transportation subsidies for a reduced fare program.

He added his department was very aware of the need and currently is exploring various methods of easing the problem, including funding of demonstration projects now underway analyzing transportation programs for the aged.

Concrete benches tested at bus stops

Experimental concrete benches are being tested by the District at two bus stops to determine if they have long-range practicability, as well as pleasing, aesthetical looks.

Handsome and modern, the benches are reinforced with iron and hopefully will prove impervious to vandalism and weathering, with no need for repainting.

The experiment is expected to determine if the decrease in maintenance costs will offset the higher price of the benches. They already have won approval from the public as to appearance and comfort.

One bench is placed at Jack London Square, where it forms a harmonious park of park-like landscaping. The other is installed at Yerba Buena Station, 40th St. and San Pablo Ave., a heavy transfer point, where vandalism has been a problem.

Tests are being conducted at locations where bench advertising firms are not franchised to supply benches and where cities have no program of their own to furnish bus stop seating.

Finished in crushed, grey-green granite, the benches display the AC Transit emblem in plain raised cement at each end of the slab. The benches are eight feet long, two feet wide and stand a foot and a half off the ground.

NEW SEATING—Mrs. Linda Wilcoxen gives approval to new concrete bench.

Driver turns out ships in spare time

Some people go to sea. Some like dry land better.

Harry Hall, 36, driver at Emeryville Division, figures he has a little "bounding main" in his blood, but he's anchored firmly to the land. As result, he has a hobby of making ships that are considered "museum pieces."

Hall, who lives at 720 31st St., Richmond, had a father and an uncle who went to sea, so it seemed natural, as a youngster, to start constructing ship models.

"I worked on those until my thumbs got clamped. Then I started building from my own plans," Hall said.

He can talk now in terms of frigate, sloop and man-of-war, made to 1/8 or 1/4 inch scale. It's exacting work, complete to copper bottom and carved figurehead. And it keeps his feet firmly on the ground.
There's a busy world out yonder

Glen D. Fowler, 63, who at 250 pounds has been considered the "biggest" of District operators, inched out from under the wheel for the last time this month to sample the "carefree, go-where-you-want-to-go" life of retirement.

Fowler, who has so many hobbies he isn't sure what he'll tackle first, has been a driver since 1944, working first at Richmond Division, then Emeryville Division.

Particularly, Fowler has been admired for the miniature horse trappings he makes as an offshoot of a major interest in fashioning articles from leather. Drawing on his own memories of what a harness looked like when his father had a rural mail delivery route in Kansas, Fowler makes scaled-down rigs for toy horses used to pull the covered wagon lamps he sells.

Along with leather work—which includes countless hand-tooled wallets, purses and gunbelts and holsters—Fowler has an extensive variety of woodworking tools.

His wife shares another hobby, model trains, and the village and "town site" he plans to set up in his shop at his home, 621-43rd St., Richmond.

They also plan to travel some in a new trailer. Fowler, who officially retires Sept. 1, wound up his driving career on Line G-Albany.

A trip back to the Philippine Islands has top priority with Stanley A. Cerezco, 2108 Russell St., Berkeley, retired from the maintenance department at Emeryville Division.

Cerezco, born in Binnaley in the Philippines 63 years ago, came to this country in 1928. He went to work in 1946 as a truckman, shifting cars in the railyard, and became a mechanic two years later.

He was a coach inspector and lubricator for 31 years, coming to Richmond in 1953. He was made foreman on Jan. 1. Branco lived at 1223 Lucille St., San Leandro, with his wife, Isabel.

Branco was promoted through different categories to leadman for engine rebuilding in 1953. He was made foreman on Jan. 1. Branco lived at 1223 Lucille St., San Leandro, with his wife, Isabel.

General unit room gets new foreman

John Ramos, 52, of 3129 Dominico Dr., Castro Valley, is the new foreman in charge of the general unit room at Emeryville Division.

Ramos took over after Abel V. Branco, 48, died suddenly of a heart attack on June 29. Branco had been in charge of the unit room for six months.

The new foreman was employed by Key System in Nov., 1946, after World War II service in the Army. He worked in the train department, then transferred to the Unit room, where he has been since.

Branco, a native of Hawaii, worked for East Bay Transit Co. as a truckman from 1939 until he resigned to enter the Navy in 1942. He returned to work in 1946.

Branco was promoted through different categories to leadman for engine rebuilding in 1953. He was made foreman on Jan. 1. Branco lived at 1223 Lucille St., San Leandro, with his wife, Isabel.

Division dispatchers—unsung heroes of District operations—were given the spotlight this month.

Separated by walls and activity from the congeniality of the gilly room, they could take a bow for lining up the work day and seeing that a bus and a driver is on hand—and on time—for each run and any emergency.

It's to dispatchers that operators come for answers and it's the dispatcher who sees that each driver picks up his work padles, defect card, portable signs, block number and transfers.

It's the dispatcher who's responsible for taking accident reports and checking them for complete information.

Dispatchers keep wheels turning

Chief Dispatchers—From left, Fred Kurtz, Emeryville Division; A. E. Phillips, Seminary; Carl Matous, Richmond.

Emeryville—Dispatchers on this shift include, from left, A. R. Lindsey, E. F. Hokanson, A. L. Lemons. At window are retired workers H. L. Parsons, left, and C. E. Casing.

Richmond—Setting up runs are, from left, Brad Harriman, Carl Matous, Charlie Farrell and O. B. Whipple. Dispatchers make sure there's a driver on hand for each trip.

The "bible" of the department is the list of runs, time due out and time checked out. If the operator doesn't show or calls in sick, it's the dispatcher's job to fill the shoes and get the wheels rolling.

It's a busy department and one which works closest with drivers. It knows the biggest sin is to get out late or get cancelled.

It's a matter of pride and practice to do a job and do it well, dispatching men and coaches so that, pieced together, they make the best possible utilization of manpower and equipment and roll smoothly as a system.

It's a busy job of top importance.
Old Key System days

Family trip to railway museum planned for Sept. 28

Street cars and trains are going to run again, screeching around curves like they used to.

For one day—on Sunday, Sept. 28—it will be "Old Key System days" once more, a time to meet old friends and to put the razz on bus drivers who never learned to shift gears on a controller.

The event is a family excursion to the California Railway Museum, operated by the Bay Area Electric Railroad Association at Rio Vista Junction, in Solano County.

Ninth anniversary

It will commemorate the ninth anniversary of the date AC Transit went into operation, Oct. 1, 1960. But the occasion really is dedicated to present workers, retired workers, their families, their friends—and memories.

Key System street cars, bridge trains, work cars and a locomotive will be there, to parade on the museum rails. There will be free rides for everybody—a memorable occasion for kids, who expectantly will be riding old-time equipment for the first time.

Officially, the outing has been set from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.—but there's stretching time at each end for those who want to stay longer.

Motorists will find it's an easy drive, by Highway 80 to the Fairfield turnoff, then via Highway 12 to the museum's well-marked roadside location, midway between Fairfield and Rio Vista. Just watch for a right turn in the center of Fairfield and follow Highway 12 signs.

Charter bus transportation also will be available, with coaches leaving Emeryville Division at 11 a.m. Reservations and payment for the $2.50 round trip charge per person must be sent to AC Transit Treasury Department, 508 16th St., Oakland, 94612, by Thursday, Sept. 25.

Buses will leave Rio Vista Junction at 3:30 p.m., returning about 5.

It's a day for picnics—so bring your own lunch and a blanket for sitting on the lawn. A few available picnic tables will be earmarked for retired employees. Coffee, soft drinks, ice cream and snacks can be purchased at the site.

Everything free

There is no admission charge. The railfans who make up the association have contributed their own time—and years of work—to preserve relics of the fading era of electric railroading. Volunteer contributions may be made to boost the work along.

A museum building has photographs and other mementos of the past. It also has postcards for sale and an outstanding collection of books and pamphlets on transportation.

The real stars, however, will be the equipment. The cars are being spruced up for the occasion and if they don't seem quite the same as they did 10 or 20 years ago, it will only be to those who count time by years, and not by memory.

Old-timers are expected to recognize No. 271, one of the "Lehigh" cars which came to Oakland Traction Company in 1904. It ran between Richmond, Berkeley, Oakland and Hayward and also served on the scenic Leona Heights line. Most of the cars were scrapped in 1933, but No. 271 remained a standby. She returned to full operation in World War II and after 45 years of service, was saved from the scrap pile in 1946 by BAERA.

Also on rails will be No. 987, last car built in the Key System's own shops in 1927. The car served on the K line in Berkeley and later, on other routes, until buses took over in 1948.

Two articulated bay bridge units, No. 182 and 186, were the "last word" when they were built in 1937. They served until April 19, 1955—and now are part of bay area transit history.

Among the oldest and most historic exhibits will be two cars dating from 1888, No. 844 and 899, elevated rapid transit cars produced for New York City's Manhattan Railway Co. Originally pulled by tiny steam locomotives, they were among first cars to receive electric motors and a revolutionary multiple-unit control system designed by Frank Sprague.

They became well known among today's transportation workers when they were purchased by the U.S. Maritime Commission in 1942 to serve the busy shipyards at Richmond.

Other "old friends" include No. 1001, electric freight locomotive built in the Key System's Emeryville shops to serve on Key and Oakland Terminal Railway freight spurs. Daily decorated, it pulled the special train of President Taft into Oakland for the laying of the new City Hall cornerstone. Other work equipment also will be on view, including No. 1215 shop switcher, built in 1939, and No. 1011 wrecker car, built in 1906.

FAVORITES - No. 1001, electric freight locomotive at left, served from 1910 until end of Key System rail service in 1939 and had one glorious moment pulling the special train of President Taft. No. 987, veteran of "K" line in Berkeley, carries museum visitors.
Happy Birthday

Mrs. Nettie Dixon of 369 Colusa Ave., Kensington, gave herself a birthday present this month. A busload of passengers came to the party.

Mrs. Dixon, active and used to doing things alone, took the District’s sightseeing tour to celebrate her 82nd birthday. Fellow riders applauded and added their “Happy Birthday” when tour hostess Mary Thornton presented Mrs. Dixon with a corsage.

The real highlights of the day came, however, as Mrs. Dixon saw sights that she had never seen before. "I had never seen the Mormon Temple. I never thought there were two tubes through the Mills College campus. In Richmond Annex, then in Grass Valley after her late husband retired from Standard Oil. Although she no longer drives a car, she keeps active and is a member of the Senior Citizens group in Albany.

The tour, operated with the Oakland Chamber of Commerce, has been running with good loads during August and mid-month, had an average of 20 passengers a day.

Mrs. Dixon said Sather Gate didn’t surprise her.

"I’m used to seeing hippies in Berkeley. But there weren’t many out during the tour."

After she returned, Mrs. Dixon treated herself to dinner in Albany and decided she had a fine day.

She previously lived in Richmond Annex, then in Grass Valley after her late husband retired from Standard Oil. Although she no longer drives a car, she keeps active and is a member of the Senior Citizens group in Albany.

The tour, operated with the Oakland Chamber of Commerce, has been running with good loads during August and mid-month, had an average of 20 passengers a day.

Executive secretary to assume duties

Thomas J. Aievoli, 32, graduate in business administration and former secretary to executives of the Union Pacific Railroad, assumed duties this month as executive secretary to Alan L. Bingham, general manager of the District. Aievoli succeeds Walter J. Oeding, who retired.

The new executive secretary left California Blue Shield in San Francisco, where he was methods analyst, to return to the transportation field.

Previously he was secretary to the assistant traffic managers and before that, to the general traffic agent, of Union Pacific. He also has been executive and personal secretary to the publisher of Railway Age and secretary to the vice president of personnel and industrial relations, United Parcel Service.

Aievoli, who lives at 147 Laidley St., San Francisco, graduated Cum Laude from Golden Gate College in January with a bachelor of business administration degree, with major in management. He will resume night studies at the same college next month toward a master’s degree in the same field.

Aievoli graduated with honors and an associate of arts degree from Goldey Beacom Business College, Wilmington, Delaware. He also attended St. Peter Chanel College and Hunter College.

Business activity brisk during June

Passenger revenue and riding were on the upswing in June, with transbay travel again showing healthy growth. East Bay riding also was up for the month.

Passenger revenue for June totaled $1,203,026, up 59,215 or 5.18 percent over the June, 1968 figure of $1,143,811. Revenue on transbay lines was $536,815, an increase of 7.83 percent compared to the year ago total of $497,846. East Bay revenue totaled $666,211, an increase of 3.13 percent over revenue of $645,965 for June of last year.

The number of passengers riding during the month was 4,247,941, up 1,96 over year-ago passengers of 4,166,451. On transbay lines, riding showed a boost of 4.90 percent, while on East Bay lines, the increase in passengers was 32 percent.

Commuter book sales for June showed one of its highest gains, with sales of $233,355, an increase of 24.4 percent over year-ago sales of $187,536.

Operation costs during the month totaled $1,522,386, a hike of $111,012 or 7.86 percent over costs of $1,411,374 for June, 1968. The District operated 1,980,357 miles of service, an increase of 63,767 miles or 3.33 percent over year-ago mileage of 1,916,590.

Total income of $1,657,539 was sufficient to cover operational costs and depreciation, but left a deficit of $61,411 in meeting full bond debt requirements.

The transit industry nationally indicated a riding decrease for the month of 1.00 percent.
Actions of the Board

At an adjourned regular meeting July 23, the Board of Directors:

• Adopted resolution, supporting legislative study on possible funding to help meet local transportation needs of senior citizens, on motion of Director Coburn. (See story, Pg. 4)
• Adopted service revisions and improvements, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 3)
• Authorized General Manager and staff to confer with government officials on transportation development, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

At a regular meeting August 13, the Board of Directors:

• Approved additional service improvements, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

TOP DRIVERS—Richmond Division operators, who drove 17,109 miles per accident, collect coffee and doughnuts for safety achievement. Safety goal is 13,100 miles.

Safest drivers

ON THE HOUSE—Instructor Cecil Gross does the honors for drivers at Emeryville Division, who topped the safety goal with a tally of 13,175 miles per accident.