Progress on bus-rail coordination

Coordination of future Bay Area transit services was moving ahead this month. Deliberation was under way on three related fronts.

- A joint committee of AC Transit and Bay Area Rapid Transit District personnel was working—with progress—on future coordination of the two systems in the East Bay service area.
- Possibility of coordinating Marin County bus and maintenance services with AC Transit operations was being explored.
- Consideration also was being given to joining with BART on a study of future feeder services in areas outside AC Transit boundaries.

Route considered

The AC Transit-BART committee was considering each of more than 100 routes presently operated by AC Transit to develop recommendations for future locations of lines to serve BART stations. The committee also is working on plans for frequency of service for each of the lines and hours of operation, to assure tight coordination between the two systems.

This phase will require additional months of work before completion, Alan L. Bingham, AC Transit general manager, told a recent meeting of East Bay chamber of commerce officials.

When tentative agreement is reached on these matters, development of equipment and manpower requirements can be determined.

"AC Transit then will develop its estimated operating costs and revenue to establish a base for discussions on revenue sharing and inter-agency discount fares," Bingham said.

Discussion has been going on as to the most practical method of transferring passengers between the systems, but agreement has not been reached as to procedure, according to Bingham.

Never before in the history of the country has such an extensive rail system been superimposed on an existing operating system, Bingham added, stressing the magnitude of the challenge in coordinating the two properties.

More than 250,000 run assignments now are being operated by AC Transit bus drivers in a year's time. Most of these are expected to be affected by BART.

Bingham said it was the District's intent to establish a coordinated system that would encourage the maximum use of mass transit facilities.

"We are determined to provide fast and convenient service—as close to homes and other destinations as possible—whether the rider uses AC Transit buses, a combination of AC Transit and BART or a combination of the two systems and the S.F. Municipal Railway, the transit executive declared.

Marin service

Meanwhile, the Board of Directors of Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District authorized General Manager Dale W. Luchring to work with AC Transit to determine whether mutual advantages and savings might result through some degree of coordination of bus operations and maintenance.

Negotiations were to include hiring of consultants by the Golden Gate district to work with Greyhound concerning phasing out of Greyhound Marin commuter operations and the phasing in of AC Transit bus operations.

The study of BART feeder service would be expected to cover the Concord-Walnut Creek area; Livermore-Pleasanton region and Fremont, Bingham said. The study group also would explore feasibility of local transit.

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Travel grows, new buses added

HOW FAR—"Red Cap" bus stop signs, posted along route of new Line N-1 Freeway Flyer, give passing motorists comparison between driving time and riding the bus.

AC Transit, which expects to add 500,000 miles to operations this year, is continuing its program of shifting unproductive miles to service expected to do most good for most people.

New commuter express service was inaugurated by the Line N-1 MacArthur Freeway Flyer to give residents of Grass Valley and Mountain Blvd. areas of East Oakland first direct bus transportation to and from San Francisco.

"Red Cap" bus stop signs were posted on lines: Line 17—Alcatraz; Line 18—Park Blvd.; Line 53—Fruitvale Ave., Line 54—38th-35th Aves, and Line 54/79 combination; Line 79—High St.
Computer to record safe driving records

Safe driving experiences of AC Transit drivers may go on the computer after Jan. 1, to keep accurate records of professional safe operating abilities. Plans call for a change in recording pertinent information in connection with the new safety award program, which starts with the first of the year, G. G. Wadsworth, safety engineer, said.

By making use of the District's computer, the safety department will have impersonal and accurate data as to "at fault" accidents and how much time is lost in work, over and above the grace period of 15 working days allowed each year for causes including industrial injuries, illnes, temporary non-driving assignments and leaves of absence.

Under the program, the day on which a driver first qualified for AC Transit service is considered his anniversary date. A driver will qualify for three Safe Driver shoulder emblems a year later--the same date--unless it is changed by an at-fault accident or too many absent or non driving days.

The shoulder emblems will indicate the year the driver qualified and number of safe driving years. They are to be worn on uniform shirts and jacket.

A wallet-size certificate, showing years of safe driving and qualification date, also will be presented.

After five safe driving years, a jeweled gold lapel pin, designed to be worn on civilian clothing, will be awarded. Pins will be given for succeeding five-year periods, with stone combinations indicating total years of safe driving.

The computer will keep individual records, printing off anniversary dates so awards can be made each month to qualifying drivers, Wadsworth said.

If a driver experiences an at-fault accident, his anniversary date will be changed to that date--by the computer.

During the first part of January, division superintendents will be presenting over 3,000 shoulder emblems and more than 150 pins, earned in the past three years by drivers on the property. Another recognition program was in effect before 1967.

Radios on order for Rest of modern fleet

Radios soon will be installed on AC Transit's entire modern bus fleet, giving coaches operating in every city the advantage of "instant communications."

Contract for an additional 160 radio units was awarded to Motorola, on a low bid of $139,236. A federal grant covers one-half of the cost.

One of the pioneers in equipping buses with radios, the District has 300 coaches with a "voice." The additional units will increase the radio-equipped fleet to 460. The fleet of 32 supervisory cars and service trucks also will be radio equipped.

The District's traditional efforts to extend holiday greetings to all brought the best of all gifts this year--a warm and happy response.

A decorated bus, "Santa's Toyland," rolled on major trunk lines; thousands of free candy canes were distributed; a party was held for commuters at Trans-Bay Transit Terminal, San Francisco.

Bus drivers were given over 10,000 cards to distribute to customers. The card featured a drawing of Oakland's first horse car on Telegraph Road in 1869, in tribute to 100 years of transit progress.

The District's own St. Nick--Nicholas P. Alevizos--helped usher in the holiday season when he arrived in his own sleigh, on top of the decorated bus, in 11 different communities.

He found, as he has in the past, that nobody was too old for Santa or too glad to exchange a happy message.

While St. Nick climbed down a ladder to talk to crowds of youngsters at pre-announced stops, two women drivers in red and white costumes, Mrs. Adele Bosco and Mrs. Priscilla "Pat" Grap saw to it that nobody was missed on candy canes.

The two women rode regular service during the month to distribute candy canes and bus traveling information.

All were in costume for the party at the terminal, held in the tradition of ferry boat parties of decades ago. The terminal was decorated and young accordion players, the "Clo-tones", repeated their hit playing of last year. Commuters also received candy canes as an added treat.
Medicare cards will be considered the usual identification for senior citizens, 65 and over, who can ride for 10 cents on AC Transit buses during off-peak hours, starting Jan. 1.

Residents without Medicare cards can obtain a special AC Transit identification card, certifying the bearer as a rider entitled to the lower rate.

Of the 130,000 elderly people in the District's service area, approximately 3,000 are expected to be without Medicare cards. They should take the same proof of age required by social security regulations to one of two dozen designated locations in East Bay cities.

Volunteers will check the proof of age and issue the I.D. card which will allow them to ride for reduced fare during the prescribed periods: from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 3 a.m. on week days and around the clock on weekends and specified holidays.

Cooperating in the I.D. distribution will be senior citizen centers and other service locations. Cards also may be obtained at the District's general offices, 508 16th St., Oakland, and at the Richmond office, 21st St. and Macdonald Ave.

The special I.D. card is designed for new arrivals in the United States, some retired civil service employees and others covered by private health plans.

The fare reduction has been authorized for a one-year experimental period.

How oldsters Can ride buses At 10-cent fare

Checks distributed For past stock time

Separate pay checks were distributed this month—two times for Christmas stockings—to 1026 operators for retroactive stock time dating back to the Fall sign-up of Sept. 8, 1968.

Total payment of approximately $20,900 was made as result of an arbitration decision which ruled the District is still liable under present contract for allowed time to replenish stock, even though the time is not being used by drivers under the Ready Fare plan of riding.

Checks for back time ranged from as little as 30 cents to $75.

Fare box revenue shows increase in October

Passenger revenue from East Bay and transbay lines showed an increase during October, although total number of riders carried declined slightly during the month.

Fare box revenue totaled $1,409,978, up $96,344 or 7.33 percent over year-ago revenue of $1,313,634. Revenue on East Bay lines was $788,667, an increase of 4.45 percent over the $755,046 collected in October, 1968. Transbay revenue totaled $621,311, a boost of 11.23 percent compared to last October's figure of $558,588.

Commute book sales were $285,994, up 17.2 percent compared to $243,936 in sales for October, 1968.

The number of passengers carried during the month totaled 4,805,370, down 1.17 percent compared to the year-ago count of 4,862,102. Transbay riding showed a slight increase of .08 percent, with 1,307,333 passengers. East Bay lines had a riding total of 3,498,037, down 1.62 percent below the 3,555,770 who rode in the same month a year ago.

Operation costs during the month came to $1,613,382, an increase of $117,437 or 7.85 percent over operation expenses of $1,495,945. The district operated 2,171,809 miles of service, an increase of 30,867 miles or 1.44 percent over mileage of 2,140,942 in October, 1968.

Total revenue of $1,949,311 was sufficient to cover operational costs, depreciation and bond debt requirements.

The transit industry nationally indicated a riding decrease for the month of 1.87 percent.
Actions of the Board

At an adjourned regular meeting Nov. 20, the Board of Directors:
• Confirmed canvass by Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors of Sherwood Forest special annexation election, on motion of Director McDonnell.

At an adjourned regular meeting Nov. 26, the Board of Directors:
• Reiterated policy of AC Transit on requesting transit representation on ABAG Transportation Planning Committee, on motion of Director Copeland.
• Adopted resolutions declaring Sherwood Forest annexed to AC Transit and designating it as part of Special Transit Service District No. 1, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 3)
• Approved hours for 10-cent senior fare; method of identification; elimination of zone charges and limitation of reduced fare to one year experimental period, on motion of Director McDonnell. (See story, Pg. 6)

At a regular meeting Dec. 10, the Board of Directors:
• Authorized General Manager to execute contract with Federal government for $180,242 grant, two-thirds of estimated costs of computer project; execute agreement with Kent State University concerning project; execute equipment lease for data conversion and transmission; prepare specifications and advertise for bids to furnish 36 data collectors and recorders, on motion of Director Rinehart.
• Authorized management to make preliminary inquiry concerning Federal grant to reduce vandalism on buses, on motion of Director Rinehart.
• Authorized replacement of fleet automobiles and trucks, on motion of Director Coburn.
• Awarded contract for 160 mobile radio units to Motorola, on low bid of $139,236, on motion of Director Coburn.
• Approved personnel and salary changes in schedule department, on motion of Director Copeland.
• Established seniority date for News Bureau Editor, on motion of Director Rinehart.

Richmond drivers on top
Drivers at Richmond Division topped the safety goal in November with a record of 13,922 miles per accident.