State reduces bridge tolls again

For the second time within the year (and the third time in four years), the California State Toll Bridge Authority has reduced round-trip tolls for buses on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

The latest reduction, from 65 to 50 cents per round-trip, will save the District approximately $39,000 per year.

The action came on Sept. 15 after E. R. "Mike" Foley, chief engineer of the Division of Bay Toll Crossings, told the State board that operational savings and new revenue made the reduction possible. The new, lower rate went into effect on October 1.

The first reduction, on Sept. 1, 1966, was from $1.50 per round trip to $1. Then, on April 1, 1970, tolls were cut to 65 cents per round trip. The annual savings to AC Transit from the three reductions is approximately $245,000.

In addition, the State Legislature has reduced fuel taxes for buses from seven cents to one cent per gallon. The combination of the fuel tax and bridge toll reductions has resulted in a savings to AC Transit of approximately $500,000 per year.

At the Toll Bridge Authority meeting, members of the board expressed the hope that, eventually, the Bay Bridge will become a toll-free operation.

Low-smog fuel injectors considered

AC Transit expects to have the cleanest burning bus fleet in the nation, as the result of steps instituted this month.

The District, already a leader in efforts to reduce air pollution, plans to convert its basic fleet of 462 coaches to a new, improved fuel injector.

The U.S. Department of Transportation will be asked for a capital grant of $50,000 to finance half of the $100,000 conversion program.

The Board of Directors this month approved proceeding with the project, which will make AC Transit one of the first systems in the transit industry to take such extensive measures to minimize smoke, odor and exhaust emissions.

The property already has ordered initial installation of Environmental Improvement Program Kits on 15 new buses, due for delivery this Fall. The kits will decrease vehicle noise as well as reduce exhaust emissions.

Use of the highest grade of diesel fuel, proper engine speeds at time of transmission shift, frequent check of timing and a rigid preventive maintenance program has resulted in bus operations well under local air pollution standards.

The new fuel injector, coupled with the above, will significantly reduce smoke, odor and emissions because the design reduces the residual volume of fuel left to leak into the combustion chamber late in the combustion cycle, General Manager Alan L. Bingham told the board.

Smoke reduction

The injector, called the Low Sac Needle (LSN) injector, can reduce smoke emissions as much as 91 percent, according to tests. Odors also have been reduced to as little as 1/10th of those produced by present injectors.

At the same time, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen also were greatly reduced, when coupled with top grade of fuel, proper timing and engine speed.

Under the program, AC Transit plans to have its present injectors rebuilt to furnish improved performance.

Rail service to airport proposed

A high speed rail line has been proposed to link Oakland International Airport with the future regional rapid transit network of BART.

The rail line would traverse the corridor between the BART Coliseum station and the airport, 35 miles away, providing speedy, sophisticated access compatible with projected growth.

The airport system also would serve the Coliseum Arena, Port of Oakland Industrial Park and North Airport.

A pedestrian walkway would connect the BART station and the Coliseum.

The airport connector, which could be operating in five years, would use modified BART vehicles compatible with the main line system, under preferences voiced by the Board of Control of the Oakland Airport Access Task Force.

The board, representing six public agencies, adopted these proposals in a report by Kaiser Engineers. The report concludes a $90,000 study on development of a fast transit system to serve the airport. A federal grant financed two thirds of the Phase I study costs.

The agencies, AC Transit, BART, Coliseum, Inc., City of Oakland, County of Alameda and Port of Oakland, will have an opportunity to decide on proceeding with detailed engineering work under Phase II.

The six agencies could own the airport line. BART would operate it.

The system would use two or five car trains, which could travel up to 75 or 80 miles an hour. The trains would be controlled by the BART system and would be serviced and maintained in the Southern Alameda County BART yard.

The connector system would cost $47 million. All but $16 million expectedly would be obtained in grants from the Federal government. Local or state sources would make up the remainder.

The system, as planned, would pay operating costs, but would not allow repayment of the capital costs.

The study also calls for extension of AC Transit Line 57 to the Coliseum and airport as an interim measure and possible future extension of bus service from Alameda to the airport.
What the Editors are saying about transit

Tribune Editorial Page

Ten years ago this week AC Transit went into the local bus business, taking over a company that traced its corporate roots back to horsecar and steam passenger trains in Oakland.

Today, the people of the Eastbay have one of the most modern and well-managed bus systems in the nation, one that has become a model. Good management has been a major reason. But the people of the Eastbay who have tied themselves to underwrite a growing deficit should receive most of the credit. They have been willing to pay for good transit. Because of that, we have a much-needed alternative to private cars.

Without AC Transit service, Eastbay auto traffic perhaps would be at a virtual standstill.

The disadvantages of extensive use of autos are well documented: They are an inefficient mover of people, poison the air with exhaust fumes, occupy land which otherwise could yield substantial tax revenues and make life hazardous for pedestrians. An effective transportation network requires a large number of alternative modes of travel. Planners call it "a good transportation mix."

AC Transit has provided a valuable balance to the transportation needs of the Eastbay. AC Transit has made good almost every promise it made in the troubled 1950's, when the privately-controlled Key System Transit Lines was curtailing Eastbay transit service and driving thousands of commuters to private automobiles. AC Transit's success is evidence that it is possible for the public to take hold of a problem and solve it. Today is the day to congratulate ourselves.

Tenth anniversary

Decade of District operations

There were 10 candles on AC Transit's birthday cake this month, marking a decade of operations.

Time has gone by quickly. But accomplishments of the system and its phenomenal record of growth have become a legend in the transit industry.

It was a decade ago, on Oct. 1, 1960, that AC Transit rolled smoothly into operation, ending nearly a century of privately-owned transportation in the East Bay.

The change-over, from the long reign of Key System Transit Lines and predecessor companies to a publicly-owned system, went off without a hitch.

The only immediate difference was in signs and symbols. Greeting cards welcomed riders aboard buses and told them they were riding with AC Transit. The familiar Key System symbol was covered over by the emblem of the District and buses went out on their usual runs with their usual drivers.

The take-over cleared the way for a $16,500,000 improvement program that included establishment of new service and acquisition of new buses. The first of the new equipment made a spectacular appearance in a Parade of Progress that rolled through East Bay cities. The buses also were put on public display.

New service was established in a number of areas—bringing the first bus transportation to different sections. Express service was inaugurated—and expanded.

Today, under a continuing equipment renewal program, the property has 462 new buses—and 15 due for delivery.

AC Transit has reversed the steady nose dive in patronage experienced since the end of World War II. The property's success in moving people is apparent in growth of transbay commute bus patronage. In a decade of operations, transbay bus riding has increased 100 percent.

Innovations in public transportation—in better ways of doing things with greater efficiency—has become the key word for the District. Along with improved operating capabilities, AC Transit can expect possible expansion to more than triple its present size by providing service in areas now outside District boundaries.

There are busy days ahead—and prospects of another decade as challenging and rewarding as the past.
AC Transit employees were saddened by the deaths last month of two co-workers—Louise E. Masone, a PBX information clerk, and John W. Hacking of Central Dispatch.

Pensioner Winthrop N. Spring also died during September. Hacking, 52, began work as a bus driver 23 years ago. Four years later he was promoted to assistant dispatcher. In 1962 he became a transportation supervisor and moved to Central Dispatch in 1965. Hacking died on Sept. 23 and is survived by his widow, Aleta, of 21033 Times Ave., Hayward, and a son, Kenneth, of Oakland.

Mrs. Masone, who died Sept. 25 at the age of 49, started with Key System in 1951. She quit in 1959 but, after one week, changed her mind and came back to work. She is remembered fondly as one of the most friendly voices at the switchboard.

Employees, pensioner, taken by death

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Mrs. Masone, who lived at 1044 45th St., Emeryville, is survived by her husband, John, and a daughter, Mrs. Linda Malby, who continues to work the PBX board for AC Transit.

Spring, who also died Sept. 25, was a motor coach operator from January, 1941, until his retirement on Nov. 1, 1965. He was 54 years old at his death and lived at 5439 Princeton St., Oakland.

Alfred Nidever retires

After 26-year career

"Keep smiling, keep cool and keep busy" about sums up the life philosophy of driver Alfred W. Nidever of 918 Richmond St., El Cerrito, who retired Sept. 1 after 30 years of service. Nidever, 62, has no retirement plans beyond "spending lots of time at home, taking care of my house and my family," which now consists of two boys, 17 and 15, and a girl, 6.

"I'll miss AC Transit," he says. "They've always been nice to me. There's a good bunch down there—just I intend to keep smiling."

And busy.

SPECIAL REPORT

A new era of transit investment loomed with congressional passage of a $3.1 billion transit aid bill for improved bus and rail system over the next five years. What will this mean to the man in the street traffic jam? What will the public really be able to count upon in the years ahead?

These excerpts present the opinion of U.S. Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, voiced at a recent meeting of the American Transit Association in Boston.

"Fringe parking lots, where drivers may deposit their cars and take the bus or rapid rail into town, will become common. We will see the spread of reserved freeway lanes for buses, and bus drivers will be able to control traffic signals in their favor to expedite rush hour travel. I expect further that some form of refined demand-actuated bus systems will gradually make their appearance in the less congested urban and suburban neighborhoods. Rapid rail transit will become a common means of airport access.

More communities—such as Atlanta, St. Louis, Baltimore and Seattle—will be relying upon commuter trains to get people downtown.

"What's more, there is every prospect that the Tracked Air-Cushion Vehicle will play a prominent part in moving people through high density corridors where stops need be made only at 3 or 5 mile intervals or more. The first TACV will be placed between Los Angeles International Airport and the Sepulveda Dam Recreation area (we're aiming for late 1973) and will be pushed up to 175 miles-per-hour by a linear induction motor. Later models, to be tested at our recently dedicated proving ground in Pueblo, Colorado, will reach 300 miles-per-hour and bring a new era of high-speed, medium-distance commutation between the hubs of our emerging linear cities, supplementing our overburdened highways and airways.

"And new technologies such as this will certainly lead to basic and profitable refinements of our inner city circulation systems. We are in an era that recognizes technical spinoffs, and we are certainly prepared to utilize the great amount of expertise at our command.

"Public transportation, as I see it, is the great untapped resource for making the city conform to human needs. The average citizen today spends far too much of his valuable time trying to get where he has to go. Tomorrow it will be different. Travel will be a pleasure. The modes will be integrated.

"Public transportation will be safe, clean, comfortable, stylish and efficient. We will have practical, alternative access to the commercial and cultural centers of urban life.

"I want to make one thing clear, I am not anti-automobile. Freeways have a vital job to do in the countryside, and in certain well-planned urban locations.

"No one who sees the big picture today is going to try to downgrade or dis­pose with such a great national asset as the interstate system.

"What this country needs now—and is going to try—is a balanced system of transportation in which each mode does its job and where the consumer gets to exercise a little choice, instead of having one mode forced upon him.

By working together, we can speed that day. And in so doing, we will set an example for the world of how reasonable men can muster urban forms, save the environment, and make a better life for all mankind."
NEW EMPLOYEES

AC Transit welcomed these new workers in July, August and September.
Haven't you just about had it?

Go AC Transit

Traffic scene brings message
To motorists: "Go AC Transit"

Haven't you just about had it?

AC Transit asked that question this month in an advertising campaign featuring a photograph of bumper to bumper traffic on Nimitz Freeway.

The eye-catching scene— all too familiar— expectantly will make bus riders out of additional motorists.

The ad points out "smart people ride the bus" because they avoid traffic driving and parking problems; save money and still enjoy convenient, fast, clean and safe transportation.

The same practical themes will be stressed in future advertising.

AC Transit has switched to prime morning and evening commute time on major radio stations to carry the same selling points to motorists while they are in the car, facing traffic irritations.

Operators break safe-driving records

For the second month in a row, two of AC Transit's three operating divisions have broken their safe-driving goals.

As part of its continuing safety-behind-the-wheel drive, AC Transit has established a program of rewarding drivers who help to keep the accident rate low.

A "miles between accidents" goal, or "bogey" as it is called, is set and each month, if the bogey is bettered, the District supplies coffee and doughnuts.

Because the old bogey of 13,100 miles was consistently being broken, it was raised to 13,250 on July 1. In July, all three divisions exceeded the bogey and, in August, the Richmond and Seminary divisions went over the top again.

Seminary drivers won their reward with 13,300 miles per accident while Richmond operators scored a whopping 17,436 miles.

The District average was 13,005.

Revenue, riding continue decrease

Box revenue and passenger riding continued to show a decrease during August.

Passenger revenue during August was $1,156,633, a decrease of $103,058 below year-ago revenues of $1,259,691. On East Bay lines, fare box revenue was $603,168, a drop of 11.33 percent compared to the $680,272 collected during August, 1969.

On transbay lines, revenue was $553,465—down 4.48 percent from revenue of 579,419 collected during the same month last year.

Commute book sales were up 3.3 percent with a total of $249,610, compared to sales of $241,720 during August a year ago.

The number of passengers carried was 3,768,065, down 278,668—6.99 percent below last year's August count of 3,946,733. On East Bay lines, 2,595,144 rode AC Transit buses, a decrease of 221,277—off 7.86 percent from the August, 1969, figure of 2,816,421. Transbay routes carried 1,112,941 passengers, down 57,391 or 4.90 percent from the year-ago total.

Nationally, the transit industry indicated a riding decrease of 7.56 percent for the month.

Operation costs during August were $1,672,665, up $115,109, or 7.39 percent above year-ago expenses of $1,557,556. The system operated 1,999,975 miles of service, an increase of 23,262 miles, or 1.18 percent more than the mileage of 1,976,713 in August, 1969.

Total income of $3,299,359 covered operational costs and left a surplus of $29,927 after meeting full bond debt requirements.
Actions of the Board

At an adjourned regular meeting Sept. 30, the Board of Directors:
- Approved exercising option to renew present lease with Latham Square Building for additional two-year period, on motion of Director Rinehart.

At a regular meeting Oct. 14, the Board of Directors:
- Authorized Assistant General Manager for Personnel to attend meeting of Transit Data Summaries Group, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Directed General Manager to execute amendment to Computer Project grant contract with Federal government, increasing grant to $225,242, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Approved extension of Line 15-Grove St. and Line 54-35th-38th Ave. to serve new campus of Merritt College, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Adopted resolution authorizing filing of application with U.S. Department of Transportation for grant to purchase and install LSN injectors on 402 new-look coaches, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 2)

Buses drive children From hill area fire

Two AC Transit buses, two drivers and the Charter Department manager figured prominently in the rescue of 134 elementary school children during the furious fire which swept through the Oakland hill area Sept. 22.

During the fire, as flames began to work toward Kaiser Elementary School, Principal Mrs. Alice F. Burnett phoned and asked for help in evacuating the children.

Within 15 minutes, two buses, driven by Billy R. Kelly of Oakland and Alvie C. Johnson of San Pablo, arrived at the school door. Leading the rescue effort was Russell L. Beninger.

According to a letter from the assistant superintendent of the Oakland School District, the AC Transit trio "contributed immeasurably to a safe and calm evacuation during a most stressful period."

The children were taken to safety at another school a mile away.