Prototype of future?

Mini-car proposed for short transit trips
Government grant to provide for new Buses and improved fuel injectors

AC Transit will have 30 new buses—as well as one of the cleanest burning bus fleets in the nation—as the result of a new government grant.

The grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation allocates $708,635 to the transit property, according to Congressman George P. Miller (D) of Alameda. The grant covers half of project costs totaling $1,417,270.

It can be expanded to include another $236,211 when regional planning requirements for this area are met, under government regulations.

The grant not only covers purchase of additional equipment, but will help pay costs of converting the basic fleet of 462 coaches to an improved fuel injector. The project 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 new fuel injector, coupled with the use of high grade diesel fuel, a rigid preventive maintenance program, proper engine speeds at times of transmission shift, plus frequent checks of timing, will significantly reduce smoke, odor and emissions.

The newly designed injector reduces the residual volume of fuel left to leak into the combustion chamber late in the combustion cycle.

In announcing approval of the application to the Board of Directors, Alan L. Bingham, general manager, said the project might be modified to acquisition of 15 smaller buses and 20 larger buses, rather than 30 buses of the current 51-passenger size.

The property now has a fleet of 723 buses in operation, 492 of them “new look” and 223 older models. In addition, eight older model buses are being held in storage for BART connector service needs.

Mini-car transit fleet proposed

A fleet of 30,000 electric-powered mini-cars has been proposed by consulting engineers to help solve the complicated public transit problem in central Contra Costa County.

The publicly-owned system of tiny cars would be the first of its kind.

Two multi-million dollar studies dealing with the concept have been financed previously by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development department.

Experimentation and tests of such a system could be started now, according to James Schmidt, project manager for DeLeuw, Cather & Company, consulting engineers.

The mini-car fleet was among proposals described by Schmidt before the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. The report concluded a joint transportation study on methods of providing rapid transit feeder service and public transportation in central Contra Costa County.

The $150,000 federally financed study was done for the Contra Costa County Transportation Board, comprised of representatives from the county, AC Transit and BART. The area is outside AC Transit’s service district.

Three-part plan

The mini-car fleet was among three proposals described by the engineer. Also suggested was inauguration of some conventional bus service and a doorstep dial-a-bus system for extensive use by the many elderly, handicapped and non-drivers living in the central county area.

Federal funds would be expected to help underwrite costs of the transportation systems.

The mini-cars would be located at 4,000 curbside stations and would be able to carry up to three passengers to nearby BART stations. They also could be used for school and shopping trips of short distances.

Summer sightseeing tour planned

An interesting mix of attractions—ranging from Piedmont mansions to the “free-thinking” scene at Berkeley’s Telegraph Ave. area, has been put together in the sightseeing tour which AC Transit will operate again this summer.

Air-conditioned buses again will leave Jack London Square in Oakland at 1 p.m. every day except Monday for the 2½ hour trip through Oakland, Alameda, Piedmont and Berkeley.

The invitation to take the special bus to “explore the East Bay” is not only extended to visitors, but is also suggested for residents who may find new discoveries on the other side of the bus window.

The tours, operated in cooperation with the Convention and Tourism Bureau of the Oakland Chamber of Commerce, are scheduled June 15 through Sept. 6.

Beginning at historic Jack London Square, the bus wends its way past Oakland’s Victorian style buildings, the Kaiser-Orldway complex, and around Lake Merritt.

In Alameda, points of interest include historic homes, the South Shore area, and one of the narrowest buildings in California—a one-room-wide home.

Also on the tour itinerary are stops at the Mormon Temple, with its view of the entire Bay Area, and at the Sather Gate entrance of the University of California at Berkeley.
“Sissy” Gavello
Trains horses for Fun and trophies

HORSEWOMAN — Sandra Gavello astride “Peyote Peak” prepares to receive trophy from Clark Miller of the 49ers. The occasion was a memorial at Sequoia Arena for Charles E. Back, Senior Resident Engineer of the State of California, and a great horseman.

As an equestrian who schools horses, “Sissy” has spent much of her time in rings with other people’s horses, but she also has owned her own, 92 at one time. She acquired the 92 as a horsetrader in the East Bay and Red Bluff.

“I went broke in four months. Those horses ate a ton of hay a day,” “Sissy” remembers.

Horses develop bad habits, usually from the people who own them, AC Transit’s horsewoman says. She can break the habit, but knows the horse will return to it if he returns to the same owner.

“Horses know what they can get away with. They’re just like kids. You can almost hear them saying, ‘Oh, boy.’”

“Sissy” was Western Girl Champion, Fifth Region, State of California, and has American Horse Show medals for both English and Western riding.

Retirement begins for transit veterans

Two long-time employees, both of whom had original starting dates in the mid-20’s, have entered the ranks of AC Transit pensioners.

Antone P. Ecovich, 65, started with Key System on June 18, 1925, and left in 1931. He returned on Nov. 15, 1945, as a mechanic and retired Mar. 18, 1971.

Mrs. Geneva M. Mullenbrouck, a highly respected senior account clerk, dates her original service from Jan. 2, 1926. However, she, too, left during World War II, returning Jan. 13, 1947.

Mrs. Mullenbrouck was honored by her fellow employees with a retirement party on May 12.
What the Editors are Saying about Transit

Of all the facets of our existence destined for the most change in the next decade or so, transportation would seem to lead the list.

Concerned about smog, about crowded highways, about the growing difficulties of just getting from one place to another in urban communities, people impatiently look for some positive sign of activity to help relieve their anxieties.

The man who drives across the Bay to work each day may be alarmed by the smog he sees hanging over the hills while coming home, but he won't admit his own auto is an ogre to be destroyed.

Rather, he maintains his confidence, albeit somewhat uneasily, that technology and imagination can make his environment wholesome without returning all of us to the horse and buggy era.

At long last, Detroit's auto makers are applying their technical skills to finding a solution within a reasonable time of much of our air pollution problem, and governments are paying rather belated respect to many other forms of transportation.

Mass transit, as the mode of the future, easily gains the most attention, not only with the attendant promise of massive federal aid for local systems, but with the formal recognition at the state level that indeed there may be "more than one road to Rome."

Last week, Governor Reagan announced that freeway planning henceforth will be a "partnership" process wherein local governments will be asked to work with the state to determine highway needs.

Alternatives to freeways—specifically mass transit systems—will be weighed in relation to highways, and if there are joint decisions for the former, then there will be no state attempt to mandate freeway construction in the objecting localities.

As an early dividend from the new policy, future Interstate 5 highway construction in Los Angeles and Orange counties is expected to have lanes reserved exclusively for high speed bus service.

While the governor was specific in noting that state highway funds cannot be diverted to rapid transit (such action is prohibited by law), there appears to be another feasible route available for helping local communities develop or improve their transit systems and services.

The Legislature is now actively considering several similar bills to add a five per cent sales tax (about two cents a gallon) on all gasoline purchases.

About $150 million would be raised each year under the plan, and most of the money would be returned to local transit agencies. The money thus available could be used on a matching fund basis to gain sizable federal grants to buy equipment, lay track or even to provide free rides.

Under the Federal Urban Mass Transportation Assistance Act, a total of $10 billion in federal funds will be available to assist local communities during the next 12 years.

It is significant that communities with as little as 100,000 population are being encouraged to participate in those federal programs and get some of that money. For population projections suggest that in many cases the medium-sized population areas of today are destined to gain metropolitan status in the decades ahead. So the proper planning for all types of transportation is needed now.

Further, present population centers with their acknowledged and immediate transportation requirements, need not preempt all transit planning activity nor reserve to themselves all the federal or state dollars that may become available.

Though ostensibly unrelated, the governor's new program and the proposed gasoline sales tax legislation can be meshed to form a solid foundation for a balanced and equitable state-wide transportation policy.

For massive as they may be, urban transportation problems of this state are amenable to solution, not in an "either-or" choice between mass transit and highways, trucks and autos, but in a natural and balanced mixture that uses the best talent and ingenuity available from private industry and from all levels of government.

Maintenance Award

For nine years in a row, AC Transit maintenance crews have earned the "Fleet Owner" Magazine Maintenance Efficiency Award. Crews from each of the three divisions, from left, Seminary, Richmond and Emeryville, celebrated the receipt of the award with coffee and doughnuts.

Balance in urban transportation urged

Tribune Editorial Page

Their Reward - For nine years in a row, AC Transit maintenance crews have earned the "Fleet Owner" Magazine Maintenance Efficiency Award. Crews from each of the three divisions, from left, Seminary, Richmond and Emeryville, celebrated the receipt of the award with coffee and doughnuts.
**BART coordination**

AC Transit moves along on line changes

More than $300,000 of new money will be needed to finance coordination of AC Transit and BART and to link Metropolitan Oakland Airport by bus with rapid transit service.

Board of Directors faced this need this month as they considered final recommendations for realignment of the first bus lines to coordinate with the opening of the Hayward-Oakland leg of BART next January.

Directors have considered 18 of the existing bus lines which will be rerouted to provide connector service to BART stations in the south County area.

**New mileage**

More than $300,000 a year will be required in new mileage to realign the buses to BART stations, W. E. Robinson, transportation engineer, told directors.

Initial rerouting would increase the property's annual mileage by 342,754 miles and require 10 additional buses and 15 more operators. Mileage costs and wages, at the current labor rate, would total the $300,000 figure.

Preliminary estimates indicate an additional $300,000 a year will be needed to reroute buses into BART stations with the opening of the Richmond and Concord lines, Robinson said.

Much of this expense will be offset with partial abandonment of AC Transit transbay bus service when BART becomes fully operative.

**Board action**

Concerned over placing additional financial burden on passengers or property taxpayers, the board took this action:

- Directed that BART board of directors be requested to share part of costs of the rerouting program.
- Directed similar consultation with Port of Oakland to help pay for costs of new bus service which would be provided between the Coliseum BART station and Metropolitan Oakland Airport.

This additional service is estimated to cost more than $100,000 a year.

- Endorsed pending State legislation extending the state retail sales tax to include gasoline, to support the operation of mass transit systems. This could amount to $9,000,000 to systems in this area and underwrite optimum bus service to BART stations.

**Lines rerouted**

Directors first heard recommended rerouting of 10 lines which have previously been studied and generally agreed to by civic governments, improvement clubs, Chambers of Commerce and BART.

At a second meeting this month, the board was to consider another eight lines, including four local lines and four intercity express lines.

In the meantime, committees of directors from AC Transit and BART were continuing to meet on a regular basis to consider projects affecting coordination of the two systems.

Both boards have agreed to the principle of a new planning project concerned with coordination, but have not agreed to a work program.

AC Transit has said it is against using additional taxpayer funds for other engineering projections to "replow" ground already "plowed over and over again."

**Actual analysis**

Alan L. Bingham, general manager of AC Transit, said actual operation of the Hayward-Oakland rail line should be used for extensive marketing analysis into effectiveness of all phases of coordination, developing actual information on patronage, equipment and improvements needed.

BART management contends another technical study is needed to update previous engineering studies and to determine alternate recommendations regarding routes, headways, hours of service and finances.

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**Our 'Stockholders' Write**

I know one is always receiving letters of complaint, but I wanted to take time to say "Thank-you" to all your staff.

I feel I am an authority on bus riding. I travel more than 10,000 miles per year to different cities and have been commuting on buses for 25 years. AC Transit rates Number One in my book.

I only hope your employees appreciate working for such a fine company.

Sandra S. Simonian

Oakland

Would you please convey thanks to your outstanding driver, Ronald W. Johnson, on our recent trip to Sacramento.

His assistance to the teachers and 5th grade class was "beyond the call of duty" and was greatly appreciated.

The Anna Head School

Mrs. Alden Peterson

Oakland

Your driver, Mr. Joseph G. Montanez, is always most cheerful and pleasant to one and all. The passengers who board his Line "H" bus at Bancroft Way and Sacramento St. want you and him to know that he brightened our day, as we boarded the bus, with a pleasant "Hello" or "Good morning," and cheered us on our way as we left with "Have a good day."

Mrs. Chris Roberts

Berkeley

...can't help but wonder why, on Line 32, the bus leaves West Grand and Broadway at 3:58 p.m.? All of us who get off work at 4 p.m. just see the tail end of the bus at 16th and Broadway across from Rhodes, and then have to wait from 18 to 20 minutes for the next one.

We just stand around and watch all kinds of other buses going by.

E. E. Sklinchar

San Lorenzo

(Improved traffic conditions have made scheduled adjustments practical and buses now make a meet.-Ed.)

I think that AC Transit should be aware that Marjorie Ezell is an exceptional employee.

Two weeks ago, on a very stormy night, Miss Ezell stopped on one of the off-ramps of the bridge and, with every concern to the safety of her passengers and others on the road, she handed a lighted flare to a car stranded in the middle of the highway. She explained to the man in distress how to use and dispose of the flare. Everyone on the bus was so pleased by such a thoughtful act.

Miss Ezell is consistently a credit to your concern, and if any employee of AC Transit deserves a commendation, I nominate Marjorie Ezell.

Corrine Menietti

Oakland
Drivers honored for Community involvement

Four AC Transit bus drivers were honored this month for community involvement which aided fellow citizens.

Three of the operators received Radio Alert Certificates of Appreciation from the Oakland Police Department in the first official recognition program.

Out of 38 police alert calls received by the department during March, 14 or 40 percent—came from AC Transit drivers by relay from Central Dispatch.

AC Transit's own Community Service Citation was given to another operator, for efforts to prevent a fatal stabbing.

The drivers honored by Oakland police included:

John J. Ward, 43, of 1333 Madison St., Oakland, who observed a cab driver who had been assaulted and robbed. He aided the driver and notified Central Dispatch to call police.

Dwight O. Franz, 40, 5121 Clinton Ave., Richmond, who saw a man robbing a woman, gave aid to the woman and used his radio to call for help. As a result, police recovered the woman's purse.

Donald R. Hebel, 33, of 747 Lewelling Blvd., San Leandro, who restrained a man from assualting a woman rider.

All work at Emeryville Division.

Mehdi "Mike" Khashabi, 36, from Richmond Division, received the property's Community Service Citation for trying to aid a recruiting sergeant in Berkeley.

Khashabi and his brother, Massoud, heard noises over the cafe they own and ran upstairs to become involved in a struggle between a recruiting sergeant and a knife-armed assailant. The assailant was held for police. The recruiter, Staff Sgt. Roger D. Mobley, died of his wounds.

Richmond drivers continue To break safe-driving record

Operators at AC Transit's Richmond Division are in a rut—and everyone hopes they stay there. For the tenth month in a row, Richmond drivers have exceeded their safe-driving goal of 13,350 miles per accident.

During April they scored an impressive 15,523 miles per accident.

Seminary Division also topped the goal; but their mark was a closer 13,253 miles per accident.

Gains registered during March

Gains in all categories except East Bay revenue were registered during the month of March.

Total passenger revenue for the month was $1,373,342, up $16,129 or 1.19 percent above the $1,357,213 collected during March, 1970. East Bay revenue was $714,187, down $15,964 from the $730,151 dropped into fare boxes a year ago—a decrease of 2.19 percent. Transbay revenue for March was $659,155, up $32,093 or 5.12 percent above revenue of $627,062 collected during March, 1970.

Commute book sales totaled $303,581, up 8.4 percent above sales of $280,094 during the same month in 1970.

AC Transit carried 4,676,219 passengers during March, up 82,518 or 1.80 percent above the 4,594,201 carried during the month of March, 1970. East Bay buses carried 3,330,406 passengers, up 12,529 or .38 percent above the 3,317,877 who rode during the same month a year earlier. On transbay lines, patronage for the month totaled 1,346,313, up 69,989 or 5.48 percent above the March, 1970, figure of 1,276,324.

Operating costs during the month were $1,849,139, up $229,673 or 14.18 percent above year-ago expenses of $1,619,461. The system operated 2,231,453 miles of service, an increase of 94,076 miles or 4.40 percent above the March, 1970, mileage of 2,137,377.

Total income of $2,129,759 covered operational costs, depreciation and bond debt requirements, leaving a surplus of $80,181.

The transit industry nationally indicated a riding increase for the month of 2.73 percent.
At an adjourned regular meeting April 28, the Board of Directors:

• Endorsed preliminary plans for a joint technical study by AC Transit, BART and Metropolitan Transportation Commission to determine effectiveness of transit service coordination, on motion of Director Daughtry.

• Approved operation of summer sightseeing tour, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 2)

• Recommended abandonment of Saturday service on Alameda portion of Line 79, due to lack of riders, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

• Approved future realignment of 10 lines to serve BART stations and voted to seek financial assistance from State and Federal levels and from BART and Port of Oakland to help offset added costs of service extensions to BART stations, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 8)

• Supported pending State legislation to establish a retail sales tax on gasoline which would be used to assist publicly-owned transit systems in state, on motion of Director Berk.

At a regular meeting May 12, the Board of Directors:

• Authorized Safety Engineer to accept nomination of executive committee of transit section, National Safety Council, on motion of Director Copeland.

• Referred Contra Costa Transportation Needs study to Project Development Committee for analysis and report (See story, Pg. 3)

• Adopted Transit Coordination Committee recommendation that a technical study, with a proposed budget of $180,000, with local contribution of $30,000 in cash and services, be approved in principle, provided a mutually satisfactory work program is developed, on motion of Director Copeland.

Trial attorney named

Richard W. Meier, 29, former deputy district attorney for Stanislaus County, has been appointed chief trial attorney for AC Transit.

He attended St. Mary's College and received his law training at Boalt Hall.

He joined the Stanislaus County DA's office after passing the Bar examination.