Concord service ready to start
Transit giant
Harold Davis
Ends career

In sum and substance, as Harold Michael Davis might say, the time comes when it’s attractive to leave the problems to somebody else.

So, HMD will put away the labor contract and hang up his track shoes Dec. 1 to retire to the pleasant life of rustling palm trees, lounge chair and tinkling ice. The pleasant life part will start August 25, when he leaves on accumulated vacation time.

Davis, 62, has had a long busy career in the transit industry.

Began in Lost and Found

His experience goes back to 1938, when he went to work for the Los Angeles Railway in lost and found, progressing to ticket clerk.

During World War II he served in the U.S. Navy as a chief yeoman. When he returned to his transit job in 1945, Los Angeles Railway had been gathered into the fold of National City Lines and Davis found he was working for Los Angeles Transit Lines in public relations, handling recreation.

Assistant to president

During his 15 years with NCL, Davis bounded up the ladder, working as secretary to the manager, in maintenance, in industrial relations and, from 1953 until 1960, as executive assistant to the president. He moved to the East Bay in 1947, after NCL bought out Key System.

His tenure with AC Transit started in 1960, when Davis was one of the few executives from Key System Transit Lines to remain on the property.

As assistant general manager for personnel at AC Transit, Davis has worn a variety of hats.

He has had responsibility for coordination and administration of the personnel department, safety and training, employment and labor negotiations and also directed maintenance of building and grounds.

Davis’ most notable achievement as far as fellow workers are concerned has been as head of the District negotiating team. He has led the team through a variety of negotiations and has been on the firing line constantly during labor disputes.

Pension board chairman

His proudest experience was serving as chairman of the board which administered the employees pension fund since AC Transit went into operation in 1960.

“T’m real proud of that,” Davis said. “But now I want to get out while I still feel good enough to enjoy it. Let some of these younger people do the hassling.”

Plans ahead include some traveling — and the decision of whether to go touring in Ireland first or to Mexico or to Maui or the other way around.

Community of Concord awaits
City’s inaugural day festivities

Gala celebration plans are progressing for inauguration of Concord’s first local bus system, with coaches primed to roll Sept. 8.

Some 800 posters have been posted throughout the community urging patrons to “Step Aboard!” a system which will bring public transit to within a quarter mile of 75 per cent of residents.

V.I.P.’s to travel

A morning of festivities are planned for first day service.

At 9 a.m., civic leaders of Concord will gather outside BART/Concord to officially open service.

AC Transit Board Members have been invited to attend as have BART representatives.

A band will play and a bus will take V.I.P.’s for a short cruise around town. All of the buses will carry banners announcing Concord’s first local bus service.

Timetables will be available from the Chamber of Commerce, City Hall and various businesses.

Seven routes

Seven basic routes are planned for the city of 94,000.

Six of the lines will zero in on BART/Concord, providing commuters with economical and easy access to trains. One line, from the Ygnacio Valley section of Concord, will operate to BART/Pleasant Hill during peak hours.

All of the buses will provide transit service to major destinations, including schools, parks, medical and dental facilities, shopping centers and individual business establishments.

Some of the bus lines will continue during midday hours to Sun Valley, adding another major shopping center to commercial sites.

On weekdays, buses will operate every half hour during peak periods, 5:30 to 9 a.m. and from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., and hourly from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday service will operate hourly from approximately 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Drivers are currently undergoing training for the new routes and Transit Information operators began receiving calls asking about the new service a month before start-up date. A toll-free number, 938-7654, went into operation Aug. 1.

Regular fares, for persons between 18 and 64 years-old, will be 25 cents. Senior citizens and handicapped will ride for 10 cents, with identification.

Youth fare

Youths between six and 17 years, and students with identification, will pay 15 cents. Children under five will ride for free when accompanied by a paying passenger, with a maximum of two children.

Fares and routes are set by Concord with the counsel of the District.

Riders will be able to transfer free between local bus lines.

THE COVER—Headsigns are completed for use in Concord’s new bus system which begins rolling Sept. 8 amid Opening Day celebrations.

Bus passengers en route to BART, however, pay regular fares on both systems. Upon returning from BART, patrons will obtain a transfer from transfer issuing machine in the paid area of stations for free rides on local Concord buses.
Public speaks on system design

AC Transit consulted with the public this month to obtain input into a final system design for expanded bus service in Fremont and Newark.

Public hearings were held in both cities by the District Board of Directors to obtain reaction to one of the knotty problems faced by the District.

While Dial-A-Ride was being phased out in Richmond Sept. 5 as being too costly, the District was facing inauguration of a zonal Dial-A-Ride system in Fremont and Newark.

The dilemma facing the AC Transit Board of Directors is the substantial lack of funds to pay for the full Dial-A-Ride system as originally promised to the voters.

Dial-A-Ride wanted

Campaign workers and political spokesmen stressed at the public hearings they had promised Dial-A-Ride in getting out the vote and the public would not settle for less than Dial-A-Ride, at least in off-peak hours.

Directors of AC Transit agreed, during informal discussion at the Aug. 13 board meeting, some sort of demand responsive service should be operated in the two cities.

Management, meanwhile, was continuing planning and analysis of alternate systems that could be operated within financial limitations.

Under funds available, there is not enough equipment to operate Dial-A-Ride during commute hours.

Consultants, who were engaged by the two cities to plan the original system, found in a second look it would take 58 percent more buses to operate in the commute than they originally planned.

Dial-A-Ride buses can carry only 5 to 7 people an hour.

Instead, the District proposed adding 12 mini routes to the current seven-line fixed route system, to carry passengers in scheduled operation during the commute.

Under this plan, present service would be more than doubled and bus transit would be brought to most areas presently without transportation.

Increased convenience seen

Although it would not be door-to-door, buses would be operating on fixed lines no more than a short walk away. And riders could be sure what time the bus would arrive to take them to their destination.

Initially there seemed to be general agreement on this portion of the bus system plan.

The District also proposed operating virtually the same system of combined fixed routes and mini routes during the off-peak hours for a six months trial period to determine if the passenger demand is low enough to be carried by the available buses and the financial support.

Opposition seemed firm against this proposal on the basis it was not what the public voted on and it was not what they authorized.

Patronage level the key

Ironically, if people are lured from cars in the numbers hoped for and indicated, buses won't be available to carry them and Dial-A-Ride will fail from over patronage. Alan L. Bingham, general manager, said.

Ridership on fixed routes during the peak already is reaching the capacity forecast by consultants.

Alternates were being considered for final acceptance before AC Transit directors set the tax rate in Fremont and Newark on Aug. 27. Voters in the two cities set a maximum of 33 cents for transit purposes.

Veteran claims adjuster Fred Clarrage leaves tales of woe for retirement

The District lost one of its veteran claims adjusters last month with the retirement of Fred Clarrage after 37 years in the business.

Few people in any industry have heard as many, or as strange, tales of woe — for it was his job to investigate claims against the District.

Claims come from people with all nature of maladies which they contend were inflicted upon them by the negligence or malice of the District, according to Clarrage.

With nearly 40 years spent in such investigation, Clarrage's discernment for sincerity or the fast con became finely honed.

He first started work with the old Key Route System as a claims adjuster in 1939 and was transferred to the Transit Casualty Co. in 1952.

Joining AC Transit shortly after District buses began rolling, Clarrage had continued his career with the District since December 31, 1961.

A resident of Albany, Clarrage and his wife, Mae, are looking forward to the relaxation of quiet retirement with occasional travels to friends and relatives.

Dozens of District fellow workers turned out for a farewell party held last month in his honor.
Transcoach tested for local use

The District is experimenting with a small bus in hopes it will prove to be "the coach that can."

The mini-bus may provide the answer for special transit needs for properties across the country.

Built by Transcoach of Chatsworth, Calif., the little bus is 22 feet long and seats 21 passengers. AC Transit is hoping to buy 43 small buses for neighborhood service in suburban areas.

It also is available in 23-foot and 25-foot lengths from the manufacturer and seating configuration can be altered.

District personnel worked closely with Transcoach to develop the prototype coach. It currently is being tested in regular revenue operation designed to obtain passenger reaction, driver response and maintenance feedback.

The bus is powered by a 453 Detroit diesel engine and has a model 540 Allison transmission, four speeds automatic. Complete air suspension is provided for easier riding.

A 54-inch door on the side provides easy entrance and exit for passengers. Air brakes with an electric brake retarder for better brake life have been installed. Air conditioning and custom seats provide comfort for riders. A heavy chassis was built especially for the prototype.

Seminary ties safe Driving record

Emeryville, Richmond and Seminary Divisions all topped the safe-driving goal in July, making it the third consecutive month for this all-Division achievement.

It was the 15th straight month Seminary has beaten the goal. The East Oakland Division is now tied with Richmond's 1971 record of 15 months.

With a goal of 13,250 miles driven per accident, Seminary recorded 17,477 miles while Emeryville scored 16,939 and Richmond achieved 13,597 miles.

McCullough retires,
First black driver

After almost 29 years of service as a District bus driver, Auston McCullough is looking forward to a well earned retirement with the last day of August.

McCullough was the first black driver to be hired by the District's predecessor companies. McCullough, 62, will be honored Sept. 13 by fellow workers at a party in the Emeryville Holiday Inn.

The Division 2 operator was hired on March 3, 1947.
Actions of the Board

At an adjourned regular meeting July 23, the Board of Directors:
- Awarded contract for fire extinguishers and equipment to lowest responsive bidder, subject to compliance with specifications, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Rejected sole bid on coin counter/liner and authorized the General Manager to negotiate on the open market, subject to UMTA approval, on motion of Director Berk.
- Authorized the General Manager to advertise and seek bids for purchase of office furniture, office machine and equipment, on motion of Director Berk.
- Extended special service for Oakland Raider games to patrons from District 2 with departures from BART/Fremont, on motion of Director Berk.
- Authorized additional trips from BART/Fremont on Lines 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26; express service between San Francisco and Richmond's Social Security Administration building on Line L; extending route of Line 12C-Oakland Army Base; Saturday service to Merritt College on Line 15 beginning with Fall term; re-routing Lines 81B and 81C, with extension of Line 81C into Paseo Grande area of San Lorenzo and direct routing of Line 92-Southland/Calaroga upon completion of Calaroga Ave. overpass, on motion of Director Berk.

District pensioner Joseph Montanez dies

Former District operator Joseph G. Montanez died suddenly Aug. 6, some four months after his retirement. Montanez, 51, became a driver on Dec. 29, 1954 and worked to April 1. He is survived by his widow, Angelina; and daughters, Robin and Norma, all of the Oakland home.