

Transport Central

THIS WEEK

- * Piggy-back buses
- * Surviving SEPTA streetcars
- * Baby Fishbowls
- * Merger Delay
- * Twilight for the Sleeper

Details in NEWSFRONT

TRANSIT JOURNAL

WEST BAY RAPID -- III

PLAN D IS THE MOST COMPLEX AND FAR-REACHING, AS FAR AS DEPARTURE FROM THE PRESENT SETUP IS CONCERNED. UNDER THIS PROPOSAL, A RAIL RAPID TRANSIT LINE WOULD REPLACE ALL OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC'S COMMUTER SERVICE IN SAN MATEO AND SANTA CLARA COUNTIES. FROM DALY CITY, THE ROUTE WOULD FOLLOW THE FORMER MUNICIPAL RAILWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY TO BURLINGAME, AND FROM THERE WOULD BE ADJACENT TO THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC TRACKS ALL THE WAY TO SAN JOSE IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY. THE LINE WOULD TOTAL 42 MILES IN LENGTH; 25 OF THOSE MILES WOULD BE IN SAN MATEO COUNTY. CROSS-COUNTY AND OTHER ARTERIAL FEEDER BUS SERVICE WOULD BE PROVIDED.

ESTIMATED COSTS FOR THE PLANS ARE (IN 1968 DOLLARS):

PLAN B	17.4 MILLION
PLAN C	120.0 MILLION
PLAN D	352.0 MILLION (IN SAN MATEO COUNTY ONLY)

PATRONAGE ESTIMATES FOR THE VARIOUS PLANS ARE:

PLAN	1975	1990
A	34,800	43,900
B	43,900	55,700
C	52,400	65,000
D	—	70,500

FIGURES REPRESENT DAILY AVERAGES, EXCLUDING SCHOOL AND AIRPORT TRAVEL.

FARES TO BE CHARGED TO DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO FROM SAN MATEO POINTS RANGE FROM 35¢ AT DALY CITY TO 90¢ AT MENLO PARK AS PRESENTLY PLANNED.

PLAN B HAS SEVERAL DRAWBACKS, THE MAIN ONE BEING THE NECESSITY FOR MAINTAINING SUBSIDIES NECESSARY TO KEEP FARES AT AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL. FURTHER DISADVANTAGES ARE THE SLOW SPEED OF OPERATION RESULTING FROM SURFACE OPERATIONS, TOGETHER WITH THE OBVIOUS SHORT EQUIPMENT LIFE. PLAN C IS REALLY A LOW-COST INTERMEDIATE VARIATION OF PLAN D, WHILE THAT PROPOSAL, ALTHOUGH EXPENSIVE, WOULD PROVIDE THE BEST LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR SAN MATEO COUNTY RESIDENTS TRAVELLING TO OTHER BAY AREA POINTS. AS WITH ANY SIMILAR FINANCIAL ESTIMATES, INFLATION MUST BE CONSIDERED, AND WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE A CRITICAL FACTOR IN PLAN D, WERE THAT PROPOSAL DELAYED IN STARTING.

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WBRTA IS NOW ENGAGED IN A SERIES OF COUNTY-WIDE MEETINGS EXPLAINING THE VARIOUS PLANS, THEIR COSTS AND BENEFITS TO THE CITIZENS OF SAN MATEO COUNTY. THIS PUBLICITY PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE UNTIL THE ISSUE APPEARS ON THE BALLOT IN JUNE. THE KEY POINT IN THE CAMPAIGN TO SELL RAPID TRANSIT TO SAN MATEO COUNTY (AND THAT WHICH SETS IT APART FROM OTHER PROPOSITIONS PUT TO THE PUBLIC) IS THAT VOTERS WILL NOT BE ASKED TO APPROVE ANY FINANCING OR SALE OF REVENUE BONDS. ONLY THE GENERAL CONCEPT OF RAPID TRANSIT (AND ITS FORM) WILL BE DECIDED UPON; IF APPROVAL IS VOTED, DETAILED COST ANALYSES WILL FOLLOW, AND ALTERNATIVE FINANCING PROPOSALS WILL BE DEVELOPED.

A STUDY OF SEVERAL FINANCING METHODS WAS MADE BY ARTHUR D. LITTLE, INC., OF SAN FRANCISCO, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THESE GUIDE LINES:

1. Provision for replacement of worn out or obsolete equipment, as well as initial capital investments.
2. The effects of inflation on all estimated costs covered.
3. The adjustment of fares to cover increases in operating costs.
4. The securing of maximum non-county funds from Federal and state sources.
5. The construction in 1970 and thereafter far in advance of actual need of grade separations to reduce inflationary costs.
6. A tax district in the area surrounding the line in which increased tax collections arising out of higher assessments based on greater property values due to the proximity of the rapid transit service would be applied to WBRTA revenues.
7. The possibility of using a combination of tax sources rather than any single one for revenue purposes.

THE COSTS OF FINANCING WERE THEN ESTIMATED TO BE:

PLAN	PROPERTY TAX ALONE	SALES TAX ALONE
B	13¢ PER \$100	0.02%
C	17¢ PER \$100	0.25%
D	28¢ PER \$100	0.44%

THE FIRM RECOMMENDS A COMBINATION OF AN 0.25% SALES TAX AND A 15¢ PER \$100 OF ASSESSED VALUATION RATE TO FINANCE PLAN D. DUE TO UNCERTAINTIES IN CONSTRUCTION COSTS, THE LATTER MIGHT BE AS HIGH AS 30¢ OR 40¢ PER \$100, BUT THE COMPANY FEELS EVEN THIS TO BE A GOOD VALUE. A CHOICE BETWEEN REVENUE BONDS AND GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS WAS DEFERRED UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION AND A MORE SPECIFIC CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE IS OBTAINED.

THE FINAL DETERMINATION NOW RESTS WITH THE VOTERS IN SAN MATEO COUNTY.

--HARRY R. PORTER

(The author wishes to thank the Communications Coordinator of the West Bay Rapid Transit Authority for invaluable assistance in the preparation of this series of articles. Further reports on WBRTA will be forthcoming in the months ahead.)

MISCELLANY

RECOMMENDED READING -- NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE HAS BEGUN A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON THE PROBLEMS OF THE CITY IN A NEW URBAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT. THE NEW DEPARTMENT MADE ITS DEBUT IN THE CURRENT (MARCH 17) ISSUE...THOSE OF OUR READERS INTERESTED IN SUCH THINGS ARE REFERRED TO THE NEW TRAIN WATCHER'S GUIDE TO CHICAGO, AVAILABLE AT \$3.00 FROM JOHN SZWAJKART, 3334 ELM AVENUE, BROOKFIELD, IL 60513....A FEW MEDALLIONS COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD ARE STILL AVAILABLE FROM THE ROAD'S FOOD AND SERVICE DEPARTMENT, 135 E. 11TH PLACE, CHICAGO 60605.

NEWSFRONT

METROPOLITAN REPORT

Milwaukee's Traffic Engineer, Martin E. Bruening, has recommended that the county's Mass Transit Technical Committee study the possibility of piggy-backing buses on flat cars attached to the "Cannon-Ball", the city's only commuter train, operated by the Milwaukee Road. Bruening would also like to see Milwaukee explore steam-operated buses....BARTD General Manager B. R. Stokes predicts that the California legislature will pass a measure aimed at providing the \$144 million necessary to complete the system in one month....Philadelphia's SEPTA isn't saying for the record what will happen to the city's rather extensive streetcar system. Insiders report, however, that for the present SEPTA will seek the abandonment of two and one-half lines, and beyond that will attempt to operate the trolleys as long as possible. The trolleys in Philadelphia (especially those operating on the wider thoroughfares) are faster than buses and still quite popular. The city's transit chief, Edson L. Tennyson, opposes the replacement of any streetcars, even the lines SEPTA wants to convert. The Authority wants them discontinued largely because they traverse narrow streets....Capitol Hill is not entirely pleased with the appointment of Carlos Villareal of Los Angeles to be the Nixon Administration's Urban Mass Transportation Administrator. Villareal is said to have neither knowledge of nor experience in urban transit, and is regarded of the "new technology" philosophy, which holds that by its very existence all present technology is outdated.

TRANSIT LINES

This is former DOT Secretary and new IC President Boyd speaking, "We have about \$4.5 billion a year going into the highway trust fund. On the other side of the scale, we have \$175 million going into mass transit and \$65 million for airports. We have a bucketful of money for highways and only a medicine dropperful for the rest."...General Motors is finally to produce a small (33 passenger) New Look coach beginning in late summer; price will begin at just under \$19,000....CTA's request for funds to defray the cost of pupil transportation has met with initial approval in the Illinois legislature; the Authority has asked for some \$12 million for the next two years....When Sears' new downtown office building on the site of the once-proposed new Greyhound terminal at Jackson-Franklin opens in a few years, the company will provide shuttle bus service to its large West Side complex, located in the heart of the Lawndale ghetto....CTA is expected to offer convenience tokens (at 40¢) when its exact fare plan goes into effect later this year; the Authority is to purchase 3000 new fare boxes for the purpose....Although Secretary Volpe favors a special federal trust fund limited to mass transit projects (as is provided for highway construction) it is not considered likely that Congress will concur....Even with continuation of a temporary fare increase imposed last year, the Waukegan-North Chicago Transit Company will still lose better than \$15,000 this year. W-NCT revenues have dropped since the company lost the lucrative O'Hare run to Continental Air Transport last year....Vienna has finally begun construction on a subway system that is expected to be in operation in 1977.

DOT DOLES

To Flint, Michigan: \$263,277 to absorb increased labor costs in FTA's home-to-job direct service demonstration project; To Lancaster (Penna.): \$22,566 to help finance an area transit study; and to Fairfax County (Va.) to study the transportation needs of "new town" Reston. The 11 square mile area is expected to have a population of 75,000 when fully developed in the early 1980's....An esthetically pleasing aerial structure linking the new rapid transit route in the median strip of the Dan Ryan with CTA's present elevated facilities is one of the engineering innovations being incorporated into the two new rapid lines.

MERCER MEMOS As hinted in TC (28 Feb 69), the U. S. Supreme Court has decided not to review the Burlington Northern case until its fall term....The New York, Susquehanna & Western has ended plans to continue efforts to be included in Penn Central because of legal costs and the poor prospects for a favorable decision in the near future....and the L&N/Monon merger hearings have been resumed in Washington.

DOWN GRADE L&N wants to discontinue its portion of the Gulf Wind, 11-12 Flomaton (New Orleans)-Chattahoochee (SCL connection) effective April 5....The Milwaukee Road plans to discontinue coach-only trains 55-58, Chicago-Minneapolis, April 17 pending ICC consent....N&W wants to discontinue the City of St. Louis, 209-210 St. Louis-Kansas City with Missouri PSC permission if possible....UP has discontinued through coach and sleeper service between Kansas City and Portland on the "City" trains named following Idaho's refusal to allow discontinuance of sleeper service on the Portland Rose....Penn Central has filed under Section 13a(2) to discontinue 24-33, the Juniata, Philadelphia-Pittsburgh following denial of its petition to the Pennsylvania PUC; the same carrier has received a "reduction of sentence" on 70-71, Chicago-Cincinnati, following new evidence showing that loss of headend revenue would leave the train with insufficient revenues to avoid undue burden and may therefore re-petition the train now instead of after September 11....The Rock Island has renamed the Peoria Rocket, last of a long line of "Rocket" trains, to the Peorian....Upper and lower berth sleeper service in the U.S. is now down to just three trains: UP's Portland Rose and Butte Special and the Burlington's 41-42, Omaha-Billings; the latter train is operating only because of a court injunction preventing ICC-approved discontinuance.

AIR/LINES A Convair 990 from Modern Air Transport of Miami recently flew a 26-day journey over both poles....Lear Jet Industries has become the first business jet manufacturer to deliver 200 planes....Delta is offering direct DC-9 service from Chicago to Hot Springs via Memphis and Little Rock....April 21 will see Ozark begin direct flights from Waterloo, Peoria and Champaign/Urbana to New York and Washington....Autair International Airways has ordered five BAC 111-500s....The first Boeing 737Cs (Cargo-Convertible) have been delivered to Wien Consolidated of Alaska... Collegians have literally bombarded the CAB with protests over airline proposals to abolish youth fares; American, Continental, Delta and TWA are in favor of retaining the special tariffs. Most other majors are not. ...Charter carrier Universal Airlines of Detroit has announced it will acquire its third convertible DC-8 in April....Mohawk has ordered three 727-200 stretchouts....TWA President Charles Tillinghast has stated that the city of Chicago should provide a string of general aviation airports to relieve the pressure on its two major commercial airports, O'Hare and Midway....The Post Office Department has asked the Civil Aeronautics Board to authorize additional scheduled airline service linking points in North Carolina with New York City, Chicago and Miami. The Department avers that present service in the markets has not been able to meet postal needs.... A flap is brewing over the directions plans for expansion of O'Hare are to take. The city claims the various carriers want to develop their own facilities at the field themselves, while it feels a comprehensive design for the future must be developed as a single unit....Representatives of cabin attendants aboard airliners are preparing a series of recommendations that may bring a Washington review of cabin storage and evacuation standards by the federal agencies involved. Most of the proposals apply to the new jumbo jets....The White House is spurring legislation designed to prevent the takeover of any air carrier by a non-carrier; other modes of transport may also be involved in the legislative proceedings.