

# The Bulletin



**Electric Railroaders' Association, Incorporated**

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## The Bulletin

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## This Month's Cover Photo:

WLB (Wiener Lokalbahnen)  
T2500 #414 (Bombardier  
Transportation, 2009) +  
GT8ZR #123 (SGP-  
Simmering-Graz-Pauker,  
1993) at Karlsplatz, Wien  
(Vienna) on May 10, 2019.  
Jeff Erlitz photograph

**In This Issue:**  
**MTA Closes on  
its Purchase of  
Grand Central  
Terminal  
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## R-179 TROUBLES CONTINUE



**R-179 test train at Alabama Avenue 4 station on the first day of revenue service testing, November 19, 2017.**  
Max Diamond photograph

The MTA pulled all 318 R-179 subway cars from its fleet after reports of two cars suddenly uncoupling south of the Chambers Street A station on June 3.

There were no injuries among the ten passengers on the train, the MTA's interim President of NYC Transit Sarah Feinberg said in a statement.

The train in question, the 0002 A Far Rockaway-207th Street, consisted of (N)

3297-3296-3295-3294-3293+3292-3291-3290-3289-3288 (S). The pull-apart occurred between the sixth and seventh cars, 3291 and 3292.

"At this time, we believe this to be an isolated incident, however, I am launching a full investigation, and out of an abundance of caution, the entire R-179 fleet is being pulled from service until further notice. We have

*(Continued on page 2)*

**R-179 Troubles Continue***(Continued from page 1)*

redeployed additional spare cars and minimal impacts to service are anticipated,” Feinberg said in the statement.

The MTA has previously pulled 298 of its stock of the issue-plagued R-179 cars made by Canada-based Bombardier Transportation as recently as six months ago. In December, 2019 and January, 2020, two reports of subway doors coming loose from locking mechanisms and sliding open triggered the removal of the R-179 cars from the system for inspection. They were returned at the end of January after examinations by a third-party firm, Bombardier, and NYC Transit.

Last year, City Comptroller Scott Stringer released an audit of Bombardier, which supplies the city with many of its subway cars, and its \$600 million contract that included the 298 trains then-under review. The Comptroller’s audit found that “Bombardier consistently failed to produce acceptable work, meet project milestones,

and correct critical structural defects in a timely manner – resulting in a three-year delay” as well as failures of oversight by the MTA.

The new issue with the R-179 cars, which serve the **A**, **C**, and **J/Z** lines, also arose on the cusp of New York City’s anticipated Phase 1 of reopening on June 8.

Subways were running on a more frequent schedule by June 8, when manufacturing, construction and some retail businesses reopened under the first phase of the state’s plan. The subway system has continued to shut down between 1 AM and 5 AM to allow for a nightly cleaning of the trains.

“This marks the latest unacceptable issue with one of Bombardier’s R-179 cars,” Feinberg said in her statement. “Customer and employee safety is New York City Transit’s North Star. We will not compromise one inch on safety. We will not return the fleet to service without certainty and validation that all cars are fit for passenger service – period.”

Bombardier told Gothamist/WNYC it was investigating the incident. (Gothamist, June 3)

## **MTA CLOSES ON ITS PURCHASE OF GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL AND THE HARLEM AND HUDSON LINES, WHILE ALSO PAVING THE WAY FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF 347 MADISON AVENUE**

### **by Subutay Musluoglu**

Lost among the onslaught of pandemic-related news are two significant developments critical to the future of the MTA. While not as high profile as the ongoing recovery of the MTA service region and the uncertainty surrounding the agency’s long-term financial outlook, they are nonetheless bright spots to be acknowledged.

In March, the MTA finalized its outright purchase of Grand Central Terminal (GCT) and the Harlem and Hudson Lines (H&H) for \$35 million. As we reported back in the December, 2018 *Bulletin* (page 8), the MTA had entered into negotiations at that time to exercise an option under its long-term lease to purchase GCT and the H&H. It may have come as a surprise to many, but the MTA had actually been leasing GCT and the H&H since 1972, initially from American Premier Underwriters, the insurance company which inherited the assets following the bankruptcy of GCT’s owner, the Penn Central Transportation Company. In 1994 the MTA secured a 280-year lease to run through February 28, 2274, paving the way for the terminal’s comprehensive rehabilitation, completed in 1998, as well as all subsequent work since. Ownership of the lease later passed to Midtown Trackage Ventures, LLC, in the early 2000s, and included the option for this purchase.

The window for exercising the option began in April, 2017 and expired in October, 2019. By entering into negotiations for purchase in late 2018, the MTA was able to avoid the much higher costs of putting it off into

the future. The MTA will now enjoy the significant benefits of ownership by securing the substantial financial investment it has already made over the last 35 years in terms of capital investments at GCT and along the H&H rights-of-way. It also protects the MTA from having to “pay twice” for any future capital expenditures. Metro-North Railroad (MNR) will have full operational control of its environment, while the Long Island Rail Road will enjoy similar benefits as it works towards the 2022 completion of its East Side Access terminal underneath GCT.

In addition to GCT, MTA’s ownership will encompass the Hudson Line to a point 2.2 miles north of the Poughkeepsie station, or Milepost 75.76 as measured from the bumping blocks at Grand Central. North of this point the right-of-way is owned by CSX Transportation, with MNR handing off control of train movement to Amtrak. On the Harlem Line, MTA ownership now includes the entire line to Milepost 82.41 just beyond the Wassaic station. The MTA had previously acquired the segment of the line from Dover Plains to Wassaic in 1990 when MNR extended Harlem Line service northward over this five-mile segment.

Ownership of the H&H rights-of-way will also give the MTA the ability to capture the full value of future real estate development rights, through transit-oriented development, public-private partnerships, and the outright

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**MTA Closes on its Purchase of Grand Central Terminal**

*(Continued from page 2)*

sale and disposal of unneeded property. There is tremendous potential for generating much needed new revenue that can be used to fund the railroad's future capital needs. It should be noted that Midtown Ventures will continue to retain GCT's air rights, which can be transferred for the future redevelopment of the commercial properties that surround GCT in midtown Manhattan. These air rights had been separated from the lease prior to 1994.

And then in early April, the MTA and the City of New York reached an agreement to redevelop 347 Madison Avenue, the East Midtown Manhattan building which had previously served as the MTA's headquarters. The real estate development firm of Boston Properties has been conditionally designated to lease the site, with the intention to clear it and build a Class A commercial office skyscraper.

Utilizing an approach known as a "site-specific value capture strategy," the redevelopment plan is expected to net over \$1 Billion over the life of the ground lease, of which \$600 Million represents a portion of the City's \$2.66 billion contribution towards the MTA's 2015-2019 Capital Program.

Originally built in 1917 as the Equitable Trust Building, 347 Madison Avenue was part of the original "Terminal City" collection of commercial office buildings and hotels which grew up around Grand Central Terminal (GCT) in the decades following the terminal's opening in 1913.

The agreement actually covers three separate buildings at 341, 345, and 347 Madison Avenue, which collectively occupy the entire western half of the block bounded by E. 44th Street, E. 45th Street, Vanderbilt Avenue, and Madison Avenue. The block also includes a recently completed ventilation structure on the 44th Street side of the block, to serve the LIRR East Side Access concourse directly below; and the Yale Club and the Vanderbilt Concourse Building at 50 and 52 Vanderbilt Avenues, respectively, which together represent the eastern half of the block.

347 Madison Avenue is linked to GCT via an underground corridor known as the Roosevelt Passageway.

The passageway was accessible from the main lobby when the MTA was in occupancy, as well as from the south side of E. 45th Street through a penetration in the building's north façade. While this entrance is currently open to the public, it is not yet clear if access will be maintained during the demolition of 347 Madison Avenue and the construction of its eventual replacement.

The MTA originally purchased 347 Madison Avenue in 1979, and later acquired the neighboring buildings at 341 and 345 Madison Avenues. The MTA occupied space in all three buildings, and when MNR was created in 1983 the railroad also established its headquarters in 347 Madison Avenue, while using 345 for several of the railroad's departments.

In the late 2000s, MNR began to move its personnel out of 345 and 347 Madison Avenue and eventually consolidated most of the railroad's management on the other side of GCT at the Graybar Building at 420 Lexington Avenue. The MTA also gradually reduced its presence at the three buildings until 2014, when it completed the consolidation of all of its headquarters staff at 2 Broadway in Lower Manhattan.

Boston Properties is expected to take advantage of the various tax breaks and zoning exemptions outlined in the East Midtown Rezoning Initiative. In exchange for funding much-needed transit and public realm improvements, developers are granted the right to redevelop the aging commercial properties on the blocks surrounding GCT with towers of increased bulk and mass over what is allowable under the city's zoning code.

Thus, a multi-year rehabilitation of the Grand Central subway station was paid for by the developers of the soon-to-be-completed One Vanderbilt Avenue, while the current project to replace the JPMorgan Chase headquarters building at 270 Park Avenue will fund even further improvements at the GCT complex. When their new tower rises on Madison Avenue, Boston Properties will be widening and improving the aforementioned Roosevelt Passageway and more importantly, provide a distinct signature entrance directly to the LIRR East Side Access concourse.

The redevelopment of 347 Madison Avenue is the latest step in the MTA's effort to divest itself of redundant property holdings and generate funding for its capital expenditures, needed now more than ever during the most challenging times in the agency's history.



The MTA's three property holdings in East Midtown – from left to right: 347, 345, and 341 Madison Avenues. They will be demolished and replaced by an office tower to be developed by Boston Properties. When completed, the new tower will include a new entrance to the LIRR East Side Access terminal below that will feature prominently on Madison Avenue. In the upper right hand corner, the soon-to-be-completed One Vanderbilt Avenue Tower is seen here under construction.

*(Subutay Musluoglu photograph, February 28, 2019)*

## NEW YORK CITY SUBWAY CAR UPDATE

Following the (partial, mostly) restoration of weekday subway service as of June 8, the only route which continued to be suspended through a week later was the **S** Grand Central Shuttle and its assigned R-62A fleet. The **5** was then re-extended from Bowling Green to Flatbush Avenue-Brooklyn College, while **2/3** and **5** trains are generally scheduled for approximately 8-minute headways; the **1** and **6** locals for 4-6 minutes; and the **7** local for about 5 minutes each. Express versions of the **6** and **7** do exist on weekdays as well, but their schedules have not been separated within the overall public timetable. With the 42nd Street Shuttle not operating, some of its single R-62As have been wandering into work service here and there, but for sure (why they were selected was unknown) linked singles 1943, 1944, 1947, 1948, and 1949 were shifted from Westchester to Livonia on April 28 for that very reason. As usual, the summer season was begun in the Covid-19 Spring during May and as usual R-62As have been married with or substituted for the usual Refuse Train (EPO) motors for the coming weeks and months. Otherwise, R-142 link 6711-6715 was shifted from E. 180th Street **5** to 239th Street **2** on May 26 as an effective replacement for the 6346-6350 link destroyed in the March 27 fire at Central Park North (110th Street).

On Subdivision "B," a similar resumption of service was in place as of June 8, which yielded a "more-or-less blanket" service level of 8-10 (or 12-) minute headway for lines **A B C D F G J L M N O R S** (Franklin Avenue) and **W**, with a most apparent exception of the **E**, which shows a 5-minute headway during peak periods (though there still isn't practically a discernible true "rush hour" as were known in times previous). **Z** skip-stop operation is also back in force during (former) rush hour periods but it also is not separately publicized on MTA's on-line information page. Further, there is a CBTC installation project on the Culver Line **F** which can dampen operations further, along with other various localized projects, as do the implementation of plenty of "Light Riding" supplements which are designed to keep the terminals as fluid as possible given as circumstances are found to be week to week. As observed earlier in the *Bulletin*, NYCT's midnight operation was overall put in abeyance on May 6, and so remains into the middle of June. Some trains do still operate overnight nevertheless for emergency service personnel as previously arranged. Lastly, there were no other changes to equipment assignments as they had existed prior to the March start of altered operations.

Innocently enough in the fog of Essential Service, some notice had first arisen from the sudden transfer of 4-car R-179 link 3146-3149 from East New York **J** to 207th Street **C** on May 28. Just six days later, there was an accident on June 3 for **A**-assigned R-179s 3288-3292, which suffered an undesired uncoupling between units 3291 and 3292 while operating north-

bound into Chambers Street at approximately 1:12 AM. Once again, all 318 of the R-179 car fleet (3010-3049 and 3238-3327 from **A**, 3050-3145 from **J**, and 3146-3237 from **C**) were removed from revenue service by the middle of that same day. Replacement equipment was made available, in part, by the somewhat-less-than-full scheduling in effect and in part by the shuffling of rolling stock between the three services (**A C J**) that were principally impacted. Among these measures have been the loan of two CBTC-equipped R-160A-1 trains from East New York (mainly **L**) to 207th Street for use on the **C**: 8329-8332, 8341-8344, 8357-8360, and 8369-8372 beginning on June 4. While these might bring to mind the previous fleet of up to 108 R-160A-1s used on the **C** from 2015 to 2019 (8577-8652 and 9943-9974), every one of those have now been reserved for Queens-based CBTC operation and the **M** (as well as the non-CBTC **J/Z**), which pre-empts their availability for an encore assignment on the **C** to stand in for the R-179s. The **C** has been using approximately 16 R-46 trains to meet scheduled requirements, which makes the line a majority full-length (10-car) operation for the first time in its modern history.

Meanwhile, a handful of R-143 trains were added again to the **J/Z** operation (though another reason began to bring those back even before the "break-apart" issue with the R-179s began) as early as May 21. Through June 15, the R-143s were providing about half of the **J** teamed with both Queens and Canarsie CBTC-equipped R-160A-1s in the absence of R-179s. Importantly, however, there were up to 84 retired Phase I R-32s inspected at 207th Street and restored as required for a potential revival when scheduling or ridership on the **J** might necessitate the deployment of more equipment than the slightly reduced scheduling can accommodate. Shown below are those 78 R-32s as were initially readied through June 15, though not all were as yet on site at East New York. Some were still at 207th Street, while others had been or were still situated at the Pitkin facility as well: 3360-3361, 3376-3377, 3380-3381, 3388-3389, 3394-3397, 3400-3401, 3432-3423, 3436-3437, 3444/3777, 3454-3455, 3460-3461, 3488-3489, 3500-3501, 3512-3515, 3520/3891, 3574-3575, 3614-3615, 3646-3647, 3670-3671, 3706-3707, 3714-3717, 3772-3775, 3778-3779, 3792-3793, 3798-3799, 3804-3805, 3834-3835, 3840-3841, 3886-3889, 3894-3895, 3912-3913, 3928-3929, 3932-3933, and 3938-3939. Restoration efforts had also been initiated on three additional pairs (3414-3415, 3782-3783, 3810-3811) which evidently fell short of the overall objective and were later again withdrawn from prospective service. Prior to the June 3 R-179 outage, as many as a dozen or so of the retired Phase I R-32s had been used in work service, but by the end of May there were six (3444/3777, 3840-3841, 3894-3895) that had been spe-

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**New York City Subway Car Update**

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cifically renewed for future work service with 16 others eventually expected to be (lightly) refurbished for the same reason. Finally, to submit an omission from the last Update (as the withdrawal of Phase I R-32s was proceeding at a lightning pace at the time) the removal of cars 3410-3411, 3606-3607, 3621/3644, and 3820-3821 on February 7 was not then noted.

As for the **A** and its standing maximum requirement of 40 trains, once again the same leeway in the deployment of assigned rolling stock due to construction and/or reduced ridership enabled the extended “loan” of up to 220 or 230 of the (now) 1,200-car Jamaica-assigned R-160 fleet to provide about half of all **A** service. These trains have not been formally reassigned to Pitkin Shop for maintenance or repair, though that facility is available to respond to any issues otherwise. As such, this sequence of events was begun well before the R-179 outage on April 24 with the outright transfer of single Siemens R-160 link 8933-8937 from Coney Island (**NQW**) to Jamaica (**EFR**) after all 396 of Jamaica’s former R-46s had been marshaled at Coney Island while the whole fleet was somewhat reformatted in the wake of considerations for the Covid-19 era. In this vein, it is worth noting that the very last two R-46 quartets (5802-5805 and 5826-5829) were individually relocated to Coney Island on May 11, where every one of those last 28 R-46s had been at last incorporated into

passenger service on the **GNC** as of May 15, having attained a super-elevated standard of cleaning, as were the other 368.

Immediately after the R-179 fleet was sidelined, Siemens R-160Bs 8888-8892, 8938-8942, 8978-8982, 8993-8997, 9003-9007, and 9018-9022 were forwarded from Coney Island to Jamaica for maintenance purposes (on paper) on June 6 but in actuality they and 55 other various Jamaica R-160s were exported to service on the **A**, being joined by a total of up to 145 more by June 15. Not all remain on the **A** at the same time, as the R-160 trains are now being gradually swapped in and out to provide for the cars’ inspection and maintenance needs at Jamaica shop, where they usually will be returned to their intended use on the **EF** and **R** plus to support service on the **A** as long as needed. In addition to the 30 former Coney Island Siemens cars listed above, Jamaica R-160s operating on the **A** from June 6 through June 15 were: Alstom R-160A-2s 8658-8667, 8688-8692, 8708-8712; Alstom R-160Bs 8723-8727, 8768-8772; Siemens R-160Bs 8878-8882, 8893-8897, 8953-8957, 9013-9017; Alstom R-160Bs 9113-9117, 9128-9132 (Cuomo cars), 9163-9167, 9198-9202; Alstom R-160A-2s 9223-9227, 9268-9272, 9293-9297, 9328-9337, 9363-9367, 9408-9412, 9423-9427, 9453-9457, 9498-9502, 9503-9507, 9513-9517, 9533-9537, 9603-9607, 9628-9632, 9673-9677, 9688-9692 (Cuomo cars), 9723-9732, 9738-9742, 9768-9772; Kawasaki R-160Bs 9818-9822, 9843-9847, 9853-9857, 9873-9877, and 9903-9907.

**PRR DELIVERS NEW PASSENGER CARS TO HUDSON & MANHATTAN RAILROAD**

**by Bill Volkmer**  
**(Photographs by the author)**

*Editor’s Note: The Hudson & Manhattan Railroad received fifty new air-conditioned cars from St. Louis Car Company in the summer of 1958. The first thirty cars, numbered 1200-1229, were owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad and were class MP-52. These were lettered for the Pennsylvania, complete with PRR keystone logos. Of these, 1200-1205 were single units and 1206-1229 were married pairs. These cars were meant to be operated only in “joint” service between Hudson Terminal and Newark. The last twenty cars, 1230-1249, were all owned by the Hudson & Manhattan and were so lettered. These were all Class K cars. They had a stylized “HM” logo instead of the PRR keystone. Of these cars, 1230-1233 were single units while 1234-1249 were married pairs. All of these cars had the same light gray car body with blue doors and dark gray roof.*

September 13, 1959 was a crisp, not-quite-yet Fall, sunshiny Saturday. That day found me at the Cresson, Pennsylvania Engine House photographing the various coal mine branch locos that were, as usual, resting for the weekend. A passing eastbound freight on the main line almost went un-noticed until a pair of Fairbanks-

Morse Train Master units moved into view, shoving a pair of brand-new St. Louis Car Company rapid transit cars lettered “Pennsylvania,” including a Keystone on the front door!



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**PRR Delivers New Passenger Cars to H&M**

*(Continued from page 5)*



In order for the helpers to be cut off at MO Tower (in Cresson), the train came to a halt, allowing me to position for a better shot. PRR 8705+8706 are model H24-66 "Trainmasters," built by Fairbanks-Morse in September, 1956. Above two views were in Gallitzen.



Breaking a few speed limits in the process and mounting the steps to the Horseshoe Curve, I caught the PRR/H&M cars saying "Hi" to K4s 1361.



Finding a parking space at the foot of the 12th Street pedestrian bridge, I caught the PRR/H&M cars catching up with passenger train #54 (*Pennsylvania Limited*) in Altoona Station. The train was due there at 11:57 AM and depart with a new crew at 12:03 PM.



In 1959 the 12th Street Altoona Shop buildings were largely vacated with the exception of the Electric Shop, where train phone and cab signal equipment received maintenance by a small cadre of workers.



Another view in Altoona.

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**PRR Delivers New Passenger Cars to H&M***(Continued from page 6)*

A slightly earlier view taken outside of the Journal Square station in Jersey City, on August 13, 1958. H&M Class F 440 (American Car & Foundry, 9/1922) is coupled up to MP-52 married pair 1204-1205.

## ***Commuter and Transit News***

by Ron Yee, Jeff Erlitz, and Alexander Ivanoff

### **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

The MTA has put its \$51.5 billion modernization plan on indefinite hold — and may cut wages and jobs to cope with its \$10 billion two-year coronavirus-induced deficit, transit officials announced June 24.

“Our fare and toll revenues have literally tanked,” MTA Chairman Pat Foye said at the agency’s June 24 Board meeting.

The agency faces a \$10.6 billion deficit over the next two years with the virus crippling ridership numbers.

Amid the financial crunch, officials initially put a 60-day hold on the \$51.5 billion five-year capital plan — which includes sorely needed signal upgrades, thousands of new bus purchases, and billions for elevators and other accessibility upgrades.

But now the agency says it simply will not go through with those improvements unless it gets more financial support from the federal government.

“This is a four-alarm fire. We are facing the most serious financial crisis in the history of the MTA,” Foye told Board members.

“Without additional federal funding, our options are limited — and none of them are good.”

Riders Alliance spokesman Danny Pearlstein said the MTA’s dire straits underscore the need for action from the feds — in the form of both funding and the go-ahead for congestion pricing, which is yet to be approved by the Trump administration.

“Even as the MTA adjusts its capital priorities, state law now permits congestion pricing to help pay transit’s operating costs,” Pearlstein said.

“Congress should grant us the aid we need to keep running buses and trains through next year as well as permission to raise money locally to rebuild our infra-

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structure.” (*New York Post*, June 24)

**MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD**

Over the weekend of June 27-28, another milestone in the Main Line Third Track Project was accomplished when a new, three-track bridge was rolled into place at Glen Cove Road in the hamlet of Carle Place. The location is between the Mineola and Carle Place stations. This replaced the original two-track bridge, which had been constructed in 1942, there being a grade crossing up to that point.

The railroad had no service between Mineola and Hicksville stations. In its place, the following services ran:

- Penn Station to Mineola, relaying at East Williston (hourly)
- Hicksville to Huntington (hourly)
- Hicksville to Port Jefferson (bi-hourly)
- Hicksville to Ronkonkoma (hourly, but skipping Bethpage)
- Hicksville to Babylon via the Central Branch (hourly, stopping at Bethpage)

Oyster Bay service ran essentially normally, every two hours between Jamaica and Oyster Bay. Interestingly, the Mineola service ran with “East Williston weekend” train numbers (#7500s), which normally do not exist! Because of this, the Solari destination signs at Jamaica and Penn Station displayed these trains in “Oyster Bay” green colors.

On page 4 of the June *Bulletin* there was a picture of the existing bridge at Glen Cove Road. Back on May 17 when the picture was taken, only the west abutment had been modified and extended for the eventual placement of the new three-track bridge.



M-9 9031 (Kawasaki Rail Car, 2019) is seen leading Train #2055 from Ronkonkoma to Penn Station at the Glen Cove Road overpass west of the Carle Place station on Thursday, June 25. The concrete pieces above the abutments on either side of the steel girder on this side of the bridge still need to be cut away. Jeff Erlitz photograph



By 8 AM on Saturday morning, June 27, the old bridge had been cut away and was being moved out of position with the use of a massive “crawler.” Dave Morrison photograph



Original Glen Cove Road bridge with extended east abutment, June 25, 2020. Jeff Erlitz photograph



The view at 8:30 AM Saturday morning with no bridge in place. Dave Morrison photograph

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**Commuter and Transit News**

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**By 7 AM on Sunday morning, June 28, the new three-track bridge was in place over Glen Cove Road.**  
Dave Morrison photograph



**Looking east at the steelwork for the new pedestrian overpass at Carle Place station. The following day, the actual overpass was lifted into place.**  
Jeff Erlitz photograph



**Shortly thereafter, crews started bringing track panel sections up onto the right of way to be placed on the new bridge and the approaches to it.**  
Dave Morrison photograph

Meanwhile, taking advantage of the weekend outage from Mineola to Hicksville, 3rd Track Constructors, the contractor for the Main Line Third Track project, lifted the new pedestrian overpass into place at the Carle Place station. Back on May 17, when the photo was taken on Page 6 of the June *Bulletin* showing the steelwork on the new eastbound platform for that pedestrian overpass, there was no steelwork up on the westbound platform. That had all changed by Friday, June 26, as seen below.

In other LIRR news, during the third and fourth week of June, new train destination signs were placed in service at Jamaica Station. Made by Solari di Udine, these new indicators display each train's stops as a strip map instead of cycling through text lists. The main advantage is that all further stops can be seen at a glance instead of waiting for the list of stations to cycle through to your station.



**New Solari signs on the east mezzanine at Jamaica Station, June 26, 2020.**  
Sunny Zheng photograph

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**Commuter and Transit Notes***(Continued from page 9)*

The LIRR's Train Time "app" has been totally revamped, its first overhaul in six years. First introduced in 2013, it was updated in 2014 and has not seen any upgrades since. During the week of June 15, the newly redesigned and upgraded app was publicly launched. In addition to train number and operating status, new features include GPS tracking (updated every 2 minutes) with a fairly detailed map of the train's location as it travels along its route, as well as train consist with car numbers and passenger loading information in each car. The loading data is based on a sensor reading load information on the suspension system of the train. *(Editor's Note by Ron Yee: The package of software and sensors providing load information on each individual car, are nothing new aboard commuter rail cars. Even subway cars have load sensors that govern braking level applications and profiles (and on new generation EMU and DMU railcars, propulsion parameters). Sensor data measures how much more weight than the manufacturer's specified "tare" empty weight of a railcar is being supported by the suspension system of the car and translates that information into the braking systems to apply the brakes heavier to achieve a desired rate of deceleration regardless of passenger load. (Less braking for lightly loaded or empty cars and more braking effort for loaded cars). This prevents slack action and needless wear and tear on the couplers and draft gear if individual cars on a consist braked or accelerated at different rates. Essentially, a new algorithm is applied to the load measuring system, takes the total load, and divides it by a standard weight of an average passenger. From that, an estimate of passenger load can be determined and comparing that with the seating capacity of that model of railcar, a report can be generated indicating the percentage of seats filled or empty and translate that into the color-coded load factor displayed for each car.)*

On the M-9 cars, the passenger count information is generated from data provided by sensors mounted at each doorway (side and end doors), which maintains an accurate passenger count and translates it into occupancy levels. This Editor has tried the newly revamped app and found it easy to use. Unfortunately, the M-3 and diesel-propelled multilevel coaches do not have the ability to measure and translate the load information into passenger load data. The LIRR reports that this new feature was developed in-house by railroad staff for \$100,000. The app will indicate to passengers waiting to board a train as to where to find the least crowded cars of any equipped train. The Germans and Dutch have already taken this technology further toward a predictive mode that will encourage passengers to select other trains to ride if the desired train is going to become too crowded during their ride. As of press time, MTA Metro-North Railroad has not made any effort to provide similar technology aboard its M-7 and M-8 fleets to provide a matching feature for its app. (*LIRR Today*, June 18)

**MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD**

MTA Metro-North Railroad (MNR) implemented a new

schedule restoring about 61% of its normal weekday services on Monday, June 15. As a result, three M-3a consists are now included in the weekday equipment cycles, two consists originating each weekday morning out of North White Plains and the third consist originating out of Croton-Harmon. As of June 10 20,140 people rode on MNR trains, 10% of the pre-pandemic levels. As a comparison, 28,089 people rode LIRR trains, around 13% of the railroad's pre-pandemic levels. This schedule brings MNR from 24 trains during the morning and evening peak periods up to 50 trains arriving into GCT in the morning and 68 departing from GCT during the late afternoon/evening peaks. Off-peak, weekend, and holiday schedules remain hourly, and all trains are designated as off-peak fares. On June 22, MNR added 12 trains to its June 15 schedule: two AM peak and two PM peak trains on each of its three lines (the Hudson, Harlem, and New Haven Lines) in response to ridership increases as more businesses re-opened with Phase 2 in Westchester, Putnam, and Dutchess Counties and headed for Phase 3 and New York City headed for Phase 2 on June 22. (MTA press release, June 10)

**NJ TRANSIT**

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has cleared the way toward making a commitment of \$766.5 million by elevating the project to build a replacement Portal Bridge to the next engineering phase, clearing the way toward building the \$1.8 billion bridge to replace the existing but increasingly unreliable swing bridge that is over a century old and well past its design service life. Over 450 Amtrak and NJT trains carrying over 200,000 passengers pass over the structure each day. The state of New Jersey has already committed to \$600 million toward this project and Amtrak has made commitments to fund the balance of the cost of the new bridge as well. (NJ.com, June 19)

**AMTRAK**

Amtrak has issued notices to its employees that it is planning to reduce service frequencies on all of its long-distance routes in October to tri-weekly in response to drastically lower ridership levels due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a start, effective July 6, one of Amtrak's most lucrative long distance routes, the New York City to Miami *Silver* services (the *Silver Meteor* operating over the former Atlantic Coast Line via Florence, South Carolina and the *Silver Star*, operating further inland on the former Seaboard Line) will undergo a scheduling adjustment drastically affecting services connecting the Carolinas with Florida and all points along the Richmond-to-New York City corridor. The *Silver Star*, serving Raleigh, Charlotte, Columbia, Southern Pines, and cities and towns in between, will operate three times a week, departing New York on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays and Miami Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. The *Silver Meteor* will operate four times a week, departing New York Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays and departing Miami Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. To accommodate

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the combined ridership of both trains consolidated into one train per day, the consists of both trains will be increased to five freshly refurbished Amfleet II coaches (featuring new seating cushions, carpets, curtains, and LED reading lights), one Amfleet II Cafe Car, three Viewliner sleeping cars, and one Viewliner II Sleeper-Lounge, a car built as a dining car but repurposed into a lounge dining area for sleeping car passengers. *(Editor's Note by Ron Yee: With the schedule of the Star, connections can no longer be made with trains from north and west of New York City such as Chicago, Cleveland, Buffalo, Albany, Boston, and Providence unless a passenger makes an overnight stay in New York City or Washington, D.C.)* In addition, Tampa will only have actual train services on the days the *Star* operates. On the *Meteor* days, there will only be a bus connection from Orlando, and it may be unreliable. The only long distance train that will continue daily operations is the *AutoTrain*, whose business line operates at a profit. *(Editor's Note by Ron Yee: Various passenger rail support and advocacy groups have decried this move as a means to decimate ridership and hold it down due to inconvenient scheduling and as a first step toward route abandonments. Amtrak has vehemently denied this is the ulterior motive and has gone on record as stating the daily service would return as ridership demand recovers in 2021. If the tri-weekly plan is implemented, the public will have to wait and see if this turns into another SEPTA-style service suspension that never gets restored, e.g., Routes 23 and 15.)* (Amtrak press releases, June 15 and 22)

**OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS**

**CLEVELAND, OHIO**

The Greater Cleveland Rapid Transit Authority will substitute bus for rail service on the Blue and Green Lines east of Tower City for six weeks beginning at the end of June. From the 28th through August 8, the agency will work on a track construction project between E. 55th Street and Woodhill on the Blue Line and the Green Line.

RTA will use 67R buses traveling along a special route during the construction, and operate to/from Green Road via Van Aken Boulevard and Warrensville Center Road (see map below).



The buses will not stop at the Tri-C-Campus District Station, or at the E. 55th Street station, but those wishing to go to these areas can get there via the Red Line. The buses will stop, though, at Woodland-E. 55th

Street and Woodland-E. 79th Street. The Tower City stop is at W. Huron at W. 3rd. Street. Along the route, stops will be identified with 67R bus stop signs.

Rail service on the Waterfront Line will operate every 30 minutes during the closure, and regular Light Rail service will be restored on Sunday, August 9. (*Railway Track & Structures*, June 19)

**CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

The Chicago Transit Authority and suburban PACE bus system returned to fare collection and to front door boarding on their buses effective Sunday, June 20. (*Chicago Tribune*, June 19)

The Chicago Transit Authority has launched a ridership information dashboard to help passengers avoid traveling at the busiest times during the coronavirus pandemic.

CTA and the Chicago Department of Public Health have set capacity limits of 15 passengers on a standard bus and 22 on an articulated bus or metro car.

The first component of the dashboard at [transitchicago.com](https://transitchicago.com) covers CTA's 127 bus routes. The average ridership during the past two weeks and the established capacity limits on each route are used to produce a color-coded guide that indicates likely space availability by route and hour. The information is to be updated weekly.

A similar tool for urban rail services will be launched soon, and CTA is working on tools that would provide real-time information for the longer-term.

"As Chicagoans return to work and discover their 'new normal,' we welcome them back and encourage them to stay safe by planning ahead using the new dashboard tool and to continue to follow the new habits we've all embraced over the past three months," said CTA President Dorval R. Carter Jr. on June 15. "Social distancing is an important component of healthy travel on public transportation. It is my goal is to put as much information as possible into the hands of our customers, so that they can make informed travel decisions." (*Metro Report International*, June 18)

**MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE**

The Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA) purchased three heritage trolley cars from Charlotte, North Carolina as the first step in restoring trolley service to the city. Charlotte had ceased historic tram operations a few years ago when Phase 2 of the light rail line opened for service, unfortunately making vintage trolley operations with the increased service levels very difficult. The first of the cars operated on Main Street, heralding their return. Costing \$550,000, it is hoped that the three cars will enable the resumption of service on the Riverfront Line, the city's most popular route, in around two years. Service has been suspended since 2014, when two of the original historic car fleet of former Melbourne W-type trams caught fire in two separate incidents. A four-year repair effort commenced to fund the trolley line and subsequent investigation revealed that these cars' wiring had become old and grown brittle over the years to the point of failing and igniting a fire aboard. (Local24

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TV News, June 19)

### AUSTIN, TEXAS



Rendering of Austin's proposed light rail line.  
Capital Metro photograph

Austin officials approved a massive light-rail system, but will the voters?

A \$9.8 billion Project Connect system recommendation plan has been adopted. Officials are counting on a \$4.4 billion contribution from the federal government, but the rest of the finances will have to be generated from an 11-cent tax rate increase that will be on the November ballot.

The plan contains three new light rail lines and improvements to an existing commuter rail line. Perhaps the most important line will be the Orange Line, which will cost \$4.2 billion and will cut through the heart of the city of Austin with 22 stops. It will be a 21-mile route. The Blue Line will be 8.2 miles long and will have 11 stations at a cost of \$1.3 billion. The Gold Line will connect downtown Austin with major hospitals and the University of Texas. It will feature 6.4 miles of track and 10 stations and will cost \$700 million. A Green Line will cost \$370 million.

Connecting Orange and Blue lines will be a \$2.5 billion subway system in downtown Austin. The Gold Line also will be linked to the subway system.

Receiving an upgrade will be CapMetro's existing Red Line, which will be able to handle additional capacity. (*Railway Track & Structures*, June 16)

### SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

SFMTA plans to resume light rail service, including a resumption of service in the MUNI Metro subway under Market Street, in August. This will enable SFMTA to free up the fleet of buses that had been covering the light rail services during the peak of the pandemic. However, there will be significant changes to the routes serving the MUNI subway. In the past, the peak period scheduled up to 40 trains per hour while the signal system could only reliably accommodate a throughput of 35 trains per hour.

Compounding the problem was the fact the K and J Lines are limited to single car operations due to con-

straints of the streets they operate over while on the surface. The L operates one-car trains but is not physically constrained from operating two. Each J, K, and L Line train occupied a valuable time slot in the subway tunnels for just one car. The N, M, and T/Third Lines operate with two-car trains. To remedy this situation, SFMTA operations planners have redesigned the entire light rail network in an effort to resolve the congestion issues in the subway. The J, K, and L Lines will no longer operate in the MUNI subway. The J/Church Line will terminate at Market and Church with riders seeking to go downtown transferring to the subway at the Church Street station of the subway. The relatively low ridership K/Ingleside and L/Taraval Lines will be combined as a through-running route operating from the L terminal at San Francisco Zoo to West Portal and onward to the City College/Balboa Park station. Riders of both lines seeking service to downtown will transfer at West Portal for subway service. A new line, designated as the S, will serve as a shuttle service exclusively in the subway between West Portal and Embarcadero. Each S Line train will be a two-car consist and operate frequently to accommodate the riders transferring to and from the J, K, and L Lines. There are uninformed reports that the S Line shuttles can and may eventually be built up to three-car consists. The M/Oceanview and T/Third Lines will be combined and operate with the two-car trains. The N/Judah Line will be restored over its original routing with its two-car trains. The goal is to reduce the number of trains in the subway to 25-30 trains per hour, each train being two cars in length for added capacity and hopefully eliminating the former never-ending congestion and delays in the subway. With the redistribution of the car fleet, service frequencies will be increased on the J as well as the combined K and L Lines. (SFMTA press release, June 18)

New York City's Bombardier product woes have spread to the Bay Area as well. BART ordered increased inspections and scrutiny for its new Bombardier-built railcars after one of the new consists uncoupled itself while in service. A six-car train had coupled onto a four-car train at the Richmond station to form a ten-car train. However, as the train departed Richmond, the train parted. The mechanical portion of the coupler failed, allowing the rear cars to separate by up to 12 inches. Apparently, that separation and short distance apart was not sufficient to trigger the train's overall control systems to immediately recognize the uncoupling and stop the train's two sections. (*Editor's Note by Ron Yee: Unlike most rail equipment that has a pressurized air "brakepipe" running the entire length of the train, automatically causing a train's brakes to be activated automatically when air pressure sensors on the braking systems of each car detects a significant drop in brake pipe pressure, these new cars do not have such a time-proven and effective system and apparently its electronic replacement failed.*) (NBC Bay Area News, June 18)

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**Ribbon cutting ceremony on June 13.**  
*Metro Report International* photograph

The long-awaited extension of San Francisco’s BART metro network to Santa Clara County was opened for passenger service on June 13, after a ribbon-cutting ceremony the previous day.

Running from the Warm Springs/South Fremont station to Berryessa/North San Jose with an intermediate station at Milpitas, the ten-mile Silicon Valley Phase I extension has been built by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. It is owned by VTA, while BART is responsible for operations and maintenance.

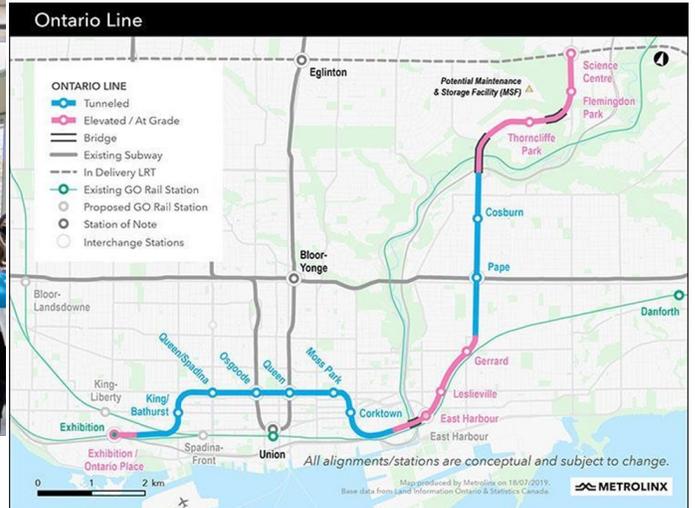
The extension has been funded using \$1.07 billion from the 2000 Measure A transport-focused sales tax, \$363 million from the state of California’s traffic congestion relief program, and \$900 million from the Federal Transit Administration’s New Starts program.

Santa Clara County opted out when the BART District was established in the 1960s to build the Bay Area rapid transit network. However, in the light of growing congestion along the I-880 corridor, a major investment study in 2001 identified the need for public transport improvements, leading to the promotion of a BART extension to Silicon Valley. In February, 2009 the VTA Board committed to building the extension in two stages, and a groundbreaking ceremony for Phase I was held in April, 2012.

Phase II is currently at the engineering design phase. This would extend the line by a further six miles through central San Jose, adding four more stations at 28th Street/Little Portugal, Downtown San Jose, Diridon Station, and Santa Clara. Interchange would be provided at Diridon Station with Amtrak, Caltrain, and Altamont Commuter Express services. Construction of this section is expected to start in 2022, with test running anticipated by 2028 and opening in 2030.

“Efforts to bring BART service to Santa Clara County have been decades in the making,” said State Senator Jim Beall, who represents the area where the Phase I stations are located. “The resulting mobility, environmental, and quality of life benefits of this extension, and

the next phase underway, will serve us well into the next century.” (*Metro Report International*, June 23)  
**TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA**



Map courtesy of Metrolinx.

Greater Toronto transport agency Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario have started the procurement process for the 15.5-kilometer Ontario Line, issuing a request for qualification for a 30-year PPP concession to equip, operate, and maintain the metro line, and a second covering one of the two main civil works contracts.

Running from Exhibition/Ontario Place to an interchange with the future Eglinton Crosstown LRT at Ontario Science Centre, the line will have 15 stations, including interchanges with Toronto Transit Commission’s east-west and north-south subway lines, as well as GO Transit commuter rail and TTC streetcar services. Half of the route will run in tunnel, with the remainder at grade or elevated.

The Ontario Line is to be procured under three separate public-private partnership contracts – one for the railway systems, rolling stock, operations, and maintenance, the other two for design and construction of the civil works for the northern and southern sections.

According to IO, splitting the project is intended to create “three separate contracts of manageable size and acceptable risk.” This would “encourage competition and active participation from the market to support innovation” and ensure the “best value for taxpayers.” Consortia responding to the RfQ will be shortlisted to participate in a request for proposals later this year.

The rolling stock, systems, operations and maintenance package has been structured as a 30-year design-build-finance-operate-maintain contract. It includes the trackwork, power supplies, communications and train control systems, passenger information, and ticketing, together with the depot and operations control center. The winning bidder would be expected to work “collaboratively” with TTC on the future operations and maintenance agreements, with TTC responsible for staffing and day-to-day operations. The fare collection

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equipment must also be integrated with the city's PRESTO smart card ticketing system.

The southern civil, stations, and tunnel contract covers design, financing and construction of a six-kilometer tunnel under the city center from Exhibition/Ontario Place in the west to the Don Yard portal in the east, including utility diversions and ground works. The concessionaire will excavate the tunnels and build the stations ready for fitting out by the RSSOM contractor. This section includes seven stations – one above ground “to be integrated with the existing GO Transit Exhibition station,” two underground interchanges with the TTC subway stations at Osgoode and Queen, and four new underground stations at King/Bathurst, Queen/Spadina, Moss Park, and Corktown.

An RfQ for the northern civil, stations, and tunnel contract is expected to be issued in early 2022. This will cover the route running north from Gerrard station to Ontario Science Centre, with seven stations, including a three-kilometer tunnel and an elevated viaduct section.

In addition to the three main PPP packages, IO expects to procure a series of early works projects for bridge, track, and other preparatory activities. This includes construction of the short central section from Don Yard to Gerard, where the Ontario Line will share the existing GO Transit commuter rail corridor. The first of these contracts will be tendered later this year.

“Our government is taking historic steps to expand subway service and reduce traffic congestion across the Greater Toronto Area,” said Ontario’s Minister of Transportation Caroline Mulroney when the bids were invited on June 2. “By issuing these first RfQs we are one step closer to realizing our transit vision and helping to generate economic activity and create tens of thousands of jobs as the province recovers from Covid-19.”

On May 28, the Ontario provincial government signed a “Transit Partnership Preliminary Agreement” with the Regional Municipality of York, paving the way for construction of a northern extension of TTC’s Yonge Street subway line from the Finch station to Markham and Richmond Hill. Along with the Ontario Line, the Yonge North extension is one of four priority projects in Ontario’s “New Subway Plan for the GTA” unveiled last year. “Our government is one step closer to delivering on its plan for more rapid, reliable and seamlessly-connected transit in the GTA,” said Mulroney. (*Metro Report International*, June 8)

### CUENCA, ECUADOR

Cuenca began passenger operation on the Tranvia light rail line on May 25, the first light rail line in the Ecuadorian city.

The 11 kilometer line runs northeast-southwest through the city center from Rio Tarqui to Parque Industrial via the airport, with 27 stops.

Transport is free for the first 60 days as part of a passenger orientation initiative, with eight LRVs operating at 10-minute intervals from 6 AM to 8 PM local time.

Passengers are required to wear masks on the trains and at stations, and vehicle capacity has been reduced to 30% to allow social distancing.

The initiative will also allow Cuenca Tram to adjust services as needed based on travel times, boarding and disembarking times, and other operational aspects.

Fares will be US\$1 per journey when using a ticket, or US\$0.35 and US\$0.30 when using a card or a multi-trip discount, respectively.

Cuenca signed an operation contract with Metro Tenerife in September, 2018. Under the US \$3.5 million contract, Metro Tenerife was responsible for managing the seven-month pre-operations phase as well as the commercial operation of the line for three years.

Testing began in July, 2018, when hundreds of residents lined the streets of the historic city center to witness the inaugural test run.

The project has been a long time coming, with a series of delays and new contracts required before the line was completed.

The Alstom-led GME Cita consortium, including CIM, Ineo, and TSO, was awarded a US \$142.6 million contract in June 2013 to supply an integrated light rail system for the city, with Alstom completing the first of 14 33-meter-long Citadis LRVs in 2015. However, the project came to a halt when the contract with the Cuatro Ríos de Cuenca Consortium (CCRC), which was also involved in the project, was terminated unilaterally by the Mayor’s Office of Cuenca for non-compliance.

The Autonomous Municipal Decentralized Government of Cuenca, Ecuador, selected the ACTN Consortium, comprising Alstom, Compagnie Internationale de Maintenance (CIM), and the NGE Group including its TSO track subsidiary, in September, 2017 to complete the civil works for the line.

The consortium was tasked with completing the construction of the new line, laying the track, electrification including the use of Alstom’s catenary-free APS system on a 2.1-kilometer section of the line in the city center, and building a workshop and yard.

At the time, the Mayor said that the new contract was awarded to “correct the biggest mistake the project had since the beginning” – the division of activities between two contractors, which required coordination between the CCRC Consortium and Cita. (*International Railway Journal*, June 1)

### AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam city transport operator GVB has awarded CAF a firm contract to supply a further nine Urbos trams to increase capacity on the network.

The order announced by the Spanish manufacturer on June 24 has been placed as the first option on a contract signed in September, 2016. This covered an initial 63 of the bidirectional low-floor trams for delivery in 2019-22, with options for up to 60 more. (*Metro Report International*, June 24)

### FRANCE

French National Railways (SNCF) has launched a

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multi-pronged program to reinvigorate TER regional rail travel, including offering two million tickets below €10, after passenger numbers dropped by around 80% during the Covid-19 crisis.



**Some TER routes to the beach that currently require a transfer will be replaced with direct services.**

Alex Profit/SNCF photograph

The TER de France collaboration between SNCF Voyageurs, the French regions and transport authorities will aim to:

- promote rail tourism in France
- make the TER more accessible
- extend regional tickets to cover all of France, and
- further promote rail travel

In order to promote tourist sites and activities accessible by rail, SNCF Voyageurs will create an online interactive national map, which will allow passengers to plan journeys as well as booking other amenities such as bicycle hire.

Capacity will also be increased on some services, such as the Yellow Train in Occitania, which will see a 67% increase. SNCF Voyageurs will also offer connections and timetables specifically targeted at carrying passengers to tourist sites such as zoos and adventures parks. The number of summer-only services will be increased with the addition of the Paris-Pontorson-Mont Saint-Michel service, and routes to the beach that currently require a transfer will be replaced with direct services.

More than two million tickets will be made available for between €1 and €10 in order to make rail travel more affordable, and the Center-Val de Loire, Nouvelle-Aquitaine, Pays de la Loire and the South Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur regions will offer multi-day passes.

The 130,000 passengers who hold an annual regional TER pass will be eligible for free travel on all TER lines in France during July and August. A TER De France youth pass will go on sale from June 19 for €29, giving passengers aged 12 to 25 unlimited travel during July and August.

To promote the new initiatives, SNCF Voyageurs will undertake a major promotional campaign, with a strong presence online, particularly on social networks.

SNCF says the program is designed to prevent a major switch to road transport.

“After this long idle period for regional trains, the time has come for recovery,” says TER General Manager Frank Lacroix. “From memory, never has such an operation taken place for TER, nationally in all the regions of France. It is unique. This TER de France operation will allow many French people to discover France as they may never have seen it, by traveling in complete freedom and serenity. I am pleased that we have managed to set up this operation in record time, to reward our loyal customers and attract new users to our regional trains, for more sustainable mobility.” (*International Railway Journal*, June 19)  
**BRESCIA, ITALY**



**Brescia Metro 113 (AnsaldoBreda, 2012).**

*Metro Report International* photograph

An account-based ticketing system has been rolled out on the Brescia light metro, which is used by 50,000 people each day.

The first deployment of Conduent Transportation’s technology in Italy enables passengers to use contactless credit and debit cards or NFC (near field communication)-enabled devices with digital wallets to pay for travel. Passengers can also use traditional ticket machines, text message ticketing or an app.

“Like Milano and Roma, the Brescia metro is leveraging technology to improve the commuter experience so it is faster and more convenient,” said Marco Medeghini, General Manager of Brescia Mobilità. “In just a few weeks, we have seen high acceptance of the new system by our metro users. And this is just the first step as we continue to modernize and enhance our overall transport system to meet the needs of all our users.”

The metro project follows a contract for Conduent to upgrade the city’s bus fare collection system. (*Metro Report International*, June 26)

**NAPOLI, ITALY**

Napoli regional transport operator EAV has signed a framework agreement with CAF covering the supply of up to ten six-car trainsets for the ten kilometer Arcobaleno suburban metro line between Piscinola and Aversa Centro.

The deal signed on June 22 includes a firm order for

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## SOUTHWEST UNITED STATES

by Jack May  
(Continued from June, 2020 issue)  
(Photographs by the author)

### Sunday, April 16

The sun was shining brightly as we embarked on the first part of our 12-day journey to Arizona and Utah at 9:45. We headed directly for I-10, which runs all the way to Phoenix, our first few nights' destination. But we were not going to our accommodations directly, as we would make a slight detour off our route to visit the Orange Empire Railway Museum (now the Southern California Railway Museum). And slight it was, as the preferred route to Phoenix is via I-10, California 60, and back on to I-10, and the museum is only a 14-mile detour via I-215 from its junction with the 60. There was relatively little traffic on the road and we made it to Orange Empire (83 miles) in less than an hour and a half.

It was a quiet Sunday and there were few visitors. I

have learned from experience to try to go to trolley museums when there are special events on their schedules, as otherwise too few cars are in operation. And that was the case today. There was but one unit on the standard gauge "PE" Red Car line leading northward from the grounds and only one on the narrow gauge loop used for LARy Yellow Cars.

There are more things to do there in addition to riding the trolleys, which include visiting the book/souvenir store, seeing the Fred Harvey museum, and inspecting the equipment in the carhouses, which kept us busy. See <https://socalrailway.org/> for more information.

Here are my photos of the two cars that were operating. First the Yellow, then the Red.



Type H-4 Los Angeles Railway car 1201 was built by St. Louis Car in 1921, and was the first of 250 all-steel units (1201-1450) purchased by the company. The last of these traditional cars was retired from service in 1958, after the system had been pared down to allow all 5 remaining 3-foot 6-inch gauge routes to be operated by PCCs. Earlier that year the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority had taken over Los Angeles Transit Lines (nee Los Angeles Railway). Those lines lasted for only five more years, as 1963 saw the end of legacy rail transit in the area (the last Pacific Electric line was converted to bus in 1961). The old-style traffic signals shown in the two views add some authenticity to an evocative scene of dual gauge track embedded in asphalt paving—a setting that could have been found on several streets in Los Angeles.

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an initial four 1.5 kilovolt d.c. trainsets, along with associated depot equipment and the provision of three years of maintenance.

The trainsets will be similar to 19 previously ordered by municipal operator ANM for Napoli metro Line 1, which is managed separately from the Aversa route. (*Metro Report International*, June 25)

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CAF Naples train set.  
Metro Report International photograph



**Southwest United States**

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Pacific Electric 418 is a 72-foot long "blimp" built by Pullman in 1913 for the Interurban Electric Railway. It first operated in the East Bay portion of the San Francisco area until the IER system was discontinued in 1941. These units, all equipped for multiple-unit operation, briefly ran over the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, along with cars from the Sacramento Northern and Key System. Their iconic owl-faced front windows are considered by many to be a Pacific Electric trademark, especially because blimps were a common sight on their fastest interurban lines after World War II, and these cars closed out ex-PE service in 1961 on the Long Beach Line. But the portholes did not originate with PE; the cars sporting them actually came to Los Angeles from other Southern Pacific properties, including the Portland, Eugene & Eastern (Oregon), the Northwestern Pacific and the aforementioned Interurban Electric Railway, arriving in Southern California after their previous operators abandoned their electric passenger services. Some were considerably shorter than 72 feet. In the left view, 418 approaches the museum platform after a round trip on Orange Empire's standard gauge line, while the right photo was taken when I asked the motorman to stop along the way.

To fill out the report, and especially because I really like the next three scenes, I have added some of my scanned slides from a 2009 sojourn to Orange Empire,

when I attended the Electric Railroaders' Association convention.



Blimp 418 flaunts PE's expressive paint job in this view.

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## Southwest United States

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The museum's volunteers operated two red cars on their Pacific Electric-like straightaway, and some of us took advantage of their kindness to have the cars posed to mimic two interurbans passing each other. We also took photos of 717 with its poles facing the other way, as both could be legitimate PE reenactments (a Long Beach car gaining on a Watts local?). In fact, I suspect similar views could have been taken with as many as four cars operating on the four-track speedway to Long Beach (plus San Pedro and Bellflower-Santa Ana) before the Watts local service was discontinued in 1959. Anyway, this opportunity served us well — and still evokes the wonderment of PE.



Brill-built 717 is an example of Pacific Electric's legendary Hollywood cars. Constructed for local and suburban service through the streets of the nation's film capital, some 160 (600-759) of these MU-equipped center-door units were built between 1922 and 1928 by St. Louis Car (110) and J. G. Brill (50). In 1921 service through this famous neighborhood, on streets with glamorous names like Sunset Boulevard and Hollywood Boulevard, ran at one to two-minute intervals during rush hours and every three minutes in between. Upon delivery these steel cars had a top speed of only 28 mph, but in 1939 their motors were rewound, improving their performance to about 45 mph, allowing their use on longer and less congested lines. After World War II most of the cars were converted for one-man operation and were renumbered into the familiar 5050 series. As the PE system was being dismantled, many of these cars were moved to other lines in the network, with the last being taken out of service on November 2, 1959, the date LAMTA eliminated its Watts local service.



Pacific Electric 1001 was one of a number of cars on display. The operable Jewett-built interurban (with Brill trucks) was one of 45 MU-equipped wooden cars (1000-44, although 1000 was converted into a business car) the company ordered in 1913 for the expansion of its interurban system. Known as the "Tens" because of their first two digits, they were delivered without motors, but had them installed in a timely enough manner so that the cars were able to inaugurate service on PE's 58-mile-long San Bernardino Line on July 11, 1914 (which ran under wire energized at 1,200 volts for virtually its entire route). Eight cars of the same type were built for Southern Pacific subsidiary Peninsular Railway in the San Jose, but when that line was abandoned in 1934 they joined the other Tens in L.A. as 1050-7. This particular unit was the only one of its type saved, as by the time the wooden interurbans were taken out of service and scrapped, after the abandonment of the Venice Short Line in 1950, it had been converted to a work car, and thus serendipitously was kept on the roster.



3001 was the first of 165 narrow-gauge PCC cars built by St. Louis Car for operation in Los Angeles. Part of an order for 60 air-electric units for the Los Angeles Railway, it arrived in 1937. 35 similar cars followed in 1938 and 30 more in 1943 (3001-3125). All were air-electric cars and were painted in an attractive yellow and orange livery. In 1945 the company was purchased by National City Lines and renamed Los Angeles Transit Lines. Three years later LATL, which had indicated its plans to convert all of the city's 3'6"-gauge lines to bus operation, surprised the public by ordering 40 additional cars from the same manufacturer. 3126-65 were postwar all-electric models, 8 inches wider (at 9 feet) than their predecessors, and sported standee windows as well as the NCL "fruit-salad" colors of yellow, green, and white. Rail transit service on the narrow-gauge system was discontinued in the wee hours of the morning of March 31, 1963. The last 24 hours of operation are described vividly in Ira Swett's book, *Die Day in LA*. The museum has four additional Los Angeles PCC cars in its collection, of which two are operable. Air-electric 3100 is in the fruit-salad colors, while all-electric 3165 sports the final two-tone green and white LAMTA livery.

*(Continued on page 19)*

**Southwest United States**

*(Continued from page 18)*



Type B Los Angeles Railway 665 was built by St. Louis Car in 1911 and sported a cow catcher and deck roof. Eventually the company had 747 of these familiar looking (Henry E.) Huntington Standards on its roster. Built as California-style cars with an enclosed center section and wire mesh screens along the sides toward each end, they were closed in during the 1920s. Some continued operating as late as the early 1950s.



Finally, this Brill-built Birney car was operated by Pacific Electric as car 332 between 1918 and 1941. The company's fleet of single truckers became surplus as its short local lines were being abandoned, with the large network in Pasadena falling to buses in 1941. At that time three of these units were acquired by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and I remember well the scene in the movie, *Singin' In The Rain*, when Gene Kelly jumped onto the roof of sister car 337 to get away from adoring fans. After its acquisition by the Orange Empire Museum in 1966, it was leased to the Old Pueblo Trolley in Tucson, Arizona, where it was renovated and repainted as Tucson car 10. The Birney was returned to Perris in 1995 after running on the heritage line for just under ten years. This view serves as a transition from the California part of this trip report to Arizona, to start next issue.

We got back on the road at about 1:15, Sig and Cathy indicating they enjoyed their visit. Sig grew up in L.A. and remembered both of the area's streetcar operations. We were getting a little hungry so our friends recommended that we stop at what is apparently a California icon, Hadley's Fruit Orchard in Cabazon, which allowed us to satisfy our appetites in a healthy manner. [https://www.tripadvisor.com/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g32134-d5597952-i128551550-Hadley\\_s\\_Fruit\\_Orchards-Cabazon\\_California.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g32134-d5597952-i128551550-Hadley_s_Fruit_Orchards-Cabazon_California.html).

Established in 1931, it is most noted for its "world fa-

mous" Date Shakes, but I think I like strawberry better.

We killed about 45 minutes there while we ate and got refreshed, and were back on the road at 2:45. Our next stop was not until a little before 7 o'clock, when we arrived at our digs at the Hampton Inn Phoenix Airport North, where we would spend the next three nights. We put 430 miles on the odometer and our driving time was just a bit over 6½ hours.

We found a nearby chain restaurant for dinner and turned in early.

*(Continued next issue)*

**Commuter and Transit News**

*(Continued from page 16)*

**CAIRO, EGYPT**



*Metro Report International* photograph

Hyundai Rotem has begun delivery of 256 metro cars ordered for Cairo Line 3, which is being extended to run 45.5 kilometers east-west across the city and serve the international airport.

The 433 billion won order was placed by the National Authority for Tunnel in February, 2017 using a financial package developed by the South Korean government and Export-Import Bank of Korea. Deliveries are scheduled to be completed in 2023.

The 80-kilometer-per-hour trainsets have been designed for local conditions including summer temperatures close to 50°C, drawing on the experience that Hyundai Rotem gained from supplying 180 cars for Line 1 under a contract awarded in 2012.

The 32 eight-car trains will have a capacity of 1,740 passengers, with inter-vehicle gangways so that riders can distribute themselves more evenly and reduce overcrowding. (*Metro Report International*, June 25)

**INTERBOROUGH RAPID TRANSIT COMPANY CAR DATA**

CAR NUMBERS	TYPE CAR	BUILDER	YEAR
2000 - 2059	Composite	Jewett Car	1903
2060 - 2119	Composite	St. Louis Car	1903
2120 - 2159	Composite	Wason Manufacturing	1903
3000 - 3039	Composite	Jewett Car	1904
3040 - 3139	Composite	John Stephenson	1903-04
3140 - 3279	Composite	St. Louis Car	1903-04
3280 - 3339	Composite	Wason Manufacturing	1903-04
3340	(ex car No. 1 "August Belmont")	Wason Manufacturing	1902
3341	(ex car No. 2 "John B McDonald")	Wason Manufacturing	1902
3342	First steel car	P.R.R. - Juniata Shops	1903
3344	Mineola	Wason Manufacturing	1904
3350 - 3516	H.V. Gibbs Modified Motor	American Car and Foundry	1904-05
3517 - 3649	H.V. Gibbs M.U.D.C. Motor	American Car and Foundry	1904-05
3650 - 3699	H.V. Deck Roof Modified Motor	American Car and Foundry	1907-08
3700 - 3756	H.V. Modified Motor	American Car and Foundry	1910-11
3757 - 3809	H.V. M.U.D.C. Motor	American Car and Foundry	1910-11
3810 - 3814	H.V. M.U.D.C. Motor	Standard Steel Car	1910-11
3815	H.V. Modified Motor	Standard Steel Car	1910-11
3816 - 3849	H.V. M.U.D.C. Motor	Standard Steel Car	1910-11
3850 - 3914	H.V. M.U.D.C. Motor	Pressed Steel Car	1910-11
3915	H.V. Modified Motor	Pressed Steel Car	1910-11
3916 - 4024	H.V. M.U.D.C. Motor	Pressed Steel Car	1910-11
4025 - 4036	L.V. Steinway Motor	Pullman	1915
4037 - 4160	L.V. Flivver Motor	Pullman	1915
4161 - 4214	L.V. Flivver Trailer	Pullman	1915
4215 - 4222	L.V. Steinway Motor	Pullman	1915
4223 - 4514	H.V. Trailer	Pullman	1915
4515 - 4554	L.V. Trailer	Pullman	1916
4555 - 4576	L.V. Steinway Motor	Pullman	1916
4577 - 4699	L.V. Motor	Pullman	1916
4700 - 4770	L.V. Steinway Motor	Pullman	1916
4771 - 4810	L.V. Motor	Pullman	1916
4811 - 4965	L.V. Trailer	Pullman	1916-17
4966 - 5301	L.V. Motor	Pullman	1917
5302	L.V. Collection Car	Pullman	1917
5303 - 5377	L.V. Trailer with compressors	Pullman	1922
5378 - 5402	L.V. Trailer	Pullman	1922
5403 - 5502	L.V. Motor	Pullman	1924
5503 - 5627	L.V. Motor	American Car and Foundry	1925
5628 - 5652	L.V. Steinway Motor	American Car and Foundry	1925
5653 - 5702	L.V. World's Fair Motor	St. Louis Car	1938

Note: All Composite cars transferred from Subway Division to Manhattan Division 1916.

4215 - 4222	Converted from H.V. Trailer		1929
4223 - 4250	Converted to H.V. Blind Motor		1952
4555 - 4576	Converted from L.V. Trailer		1929

Prepared by Public Information & Community Relations Department

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