



BULLETIN

Volume 65, Number 6 | June 2022

Another LIRR Main Line Third Track Project Milestone Reached

Over the weekends of May 14-15 and 21-22, the first section of actual Main Line third track was placed into service, along with a track reconfiguration located in the hamlet of New Cassel, between the Westbury and Hicksville stations.

In previous issues of the *Bulletin* we have shown how the additional track is going to be located on the south side of the existing right of way. This is true from the project's western limit, at the east end of the Floral Park station, to New Cassel, about 1¼ miles east of Westbury station, immediately west of the Urban Avenue underpass. Between New Cassel and Hicksville, however, the new track needed to be on the north side of the right of way.

There actually has been a section of third track west of Hicksville station since December of 1958. At that time, Tracks No. 1 and 2 were shifted one track space to the

south, from just west of the Wantagh Parkway overpass (actually located in New Cassel) to west of Hicksville station. That new track on the north side was called, appropriately enough, the North Siding. It was used to gain access to the Hicksville Team Yard (freight yard) and other freight sidings on that side of the right of way without fouling the main tracks as much as they used to.

The North Siding was equipped with third rail and it was placed into service for electrified operation on September 9, 1970, when the extension of electrification was opened to Huntington. In later years, the North Siding was used for some short-turning trips starting or ending in Hicksville.

The length of the North Siding was about two thirds of one mile. A project separate from the Main Line Third Track provided for the extension of this North Siding from its eastern end to Hicksville station, a distance of about one half of one mile. This extension was referred to as the Northside Maintenance of Way Track.

When it was placed in service on November 16, 2020
(continued on page 3)



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The *Bulletin* is published monthly and sent free to all ERA members.

Back Issues

PDFs of previous issues of can be downloaded at

erausa.org/bulletin

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A Note from the Editor

Some of our readers have been asking about the delivery schedule of the *Bulletin* since it changed format back in February. My goal, so far missed by only one day and with only that first issue, is to have it emailed out within the first week of every month. It could be on the first, the seventh or any day in between. When we go back to in-person meetings, that will provide a *minimum* of seven days delivery time for those members still relying on the paper *Bulletin* to see the meeting notice.

Keep in mind that the meeting notice is also posted on our website, usually *before* the first of the month.

Cover Photo

A truly "multi-modal" scene at the Williamsburg Bridge Plaza in Brooklyn. BMT B-Type 2371-2370-2369 (ACF, 1917) is operating on a Jamaica Local bound for 168th Street. Down below, B&QT 6091 (J. G. Brill, 1932) is on the Nostrand Avenue Line and is just beginning its journey across Brooklyn to Avenue U. Meanwhile, B&QT trolley coach 3122 (St. Louis Car, 1948) is on the B47-Tompkins route heading to Prospect Park. The date is March 31, 1951 Max H. Hubacher (1900-1989), photographer, via the New York Public Library

Donations

Message from President Bob Newhouser:

We are very pleased at the high turnout of viewers at our Zoom meetings. We will continue to supplement our great array of regular speakers with new speakers from around North America which our remote Zoom platform allows us. We deeply appreciate your donations to help us cover expenses for our remote meetings, the *Bulletin*, and *Headlights*.

ERA is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt corporation. Your donations are fully tax deductible and can be made either with your membership renewal or using our donation form on our website: www.erausa.org/donate. Your donation helps to maintain ERA's 88-year long tradition of traction education and entertainment!

Meeting

Our next Zoom Meeting is on Friday, June 17, 2022 at 7:30 PM

Presenting This Month: Kristen & Paul's Excellent Adventures: Trains, Trolleys, Tunnels and Tires

Our June Zoom program will be presented by Kristen Fredriksen of the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum and E.R.A. board member Paul Grether. They will be showcasing travels in the United States and the United Kingdom focusing on all things new, old, preserved, abandoned, obscure or otherwise interesting.

Kristen Fredriksen works in Pittsburgh as the assistant manager of visitor experience at the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum. Paul Grether works for a major North American commuter railroad.

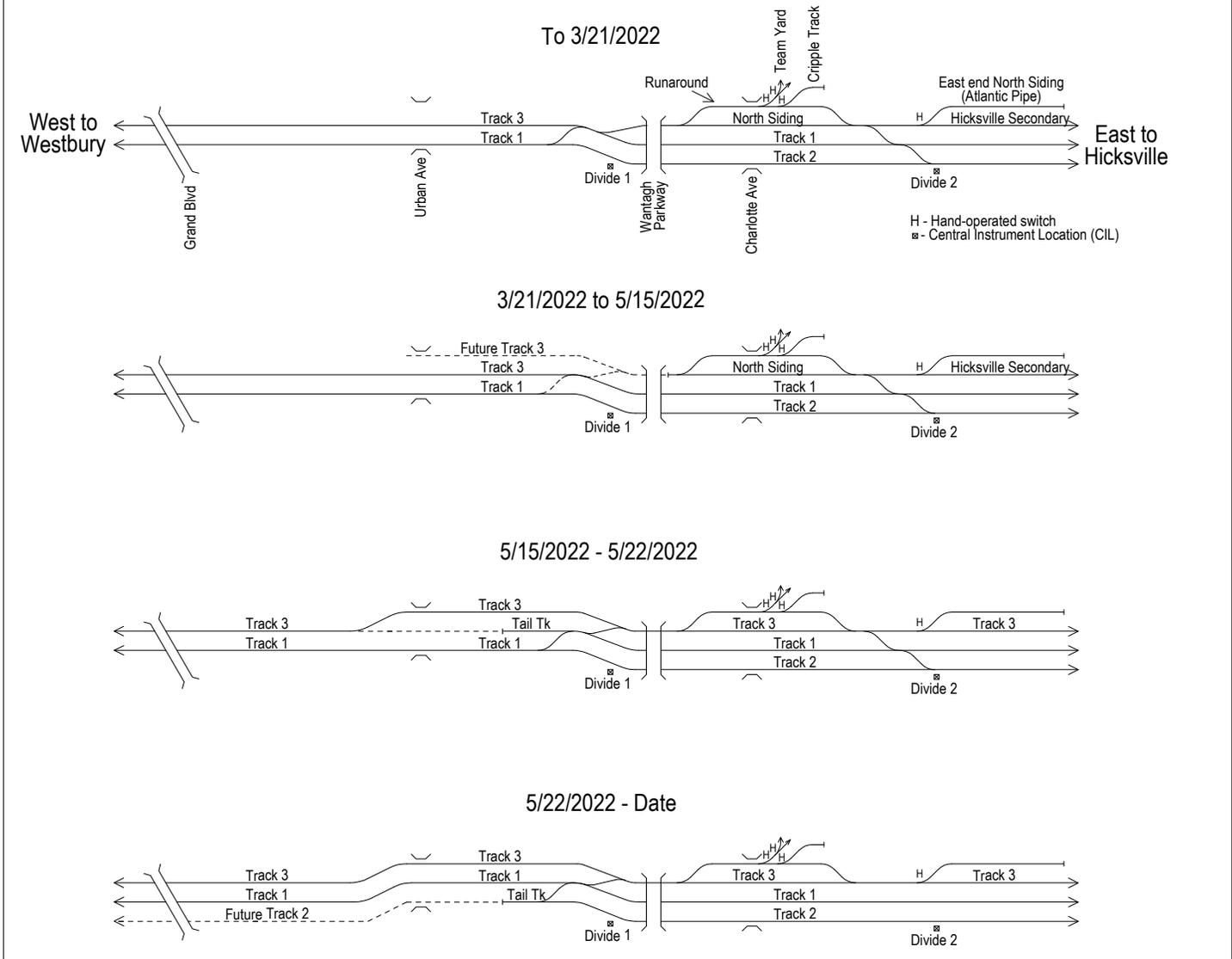
This promises to be a show not to be missed.

A reminder, there are no meetings in July and August! As the vocal group *The Tempos* so aptly put it in June of 1959, "See You in September."

How to Join Our Zoom Meeting

A Zoom login button will be posted on www.erausa.org about five days before Kristen and Paul's presentation. You can sign in at 7:15 PM. The show begins at 7:30 PM. If you have any problems, email Bob Newhouser at bnnyc1955@aol.com, or on the night of the meeting, text or call Bob at 917-482-4235.

Long Island Rail Road - Main-Line Third Track Project Track Reconfiguration in New Cassel (between Westbury and Hicksville)



it was re-designated the Hicksville Secondary Track. At that time it was not yet electrified and was used only for non-revenue moves.

In the meantime, the old North Siding was reconstructed with concrete ties, along with the Runaround Track. Since the North Siding had been used as a lay-up track for short-turning Hicksville trips, and it was going to become a main track, the Runaround Track was now going to need to be used for that purpose, hence its reconstruction. The Runaround Track now needed to be equipped with third rail so Hicksville lay-ups could use it.

On March 21 of this year, the Hicksville Secondary Track and the Runaround Track had their third rails energized. Over this same weekend, the facing point crossover between Tracks 1 and 3 at Divide 1 was removed. This was done in

preparation for the slight realignment of tracks within the confines of Divide 1 Interlocking for the new third track.

You will notice in the track diagrams above that the track numbers west and east of Divide 1 Interlocking do not agree in the top one, only partially agree in the third one and do agree in the bottom one. Effective February 28, 2021 Track 1 between Queens and Divide 1 Interlockings was re-designated Track 3. Track 2 between those same two points was re-designated Track 1. This was done in preparation for the eventual installation of the new third track which would be constructed on the south side of the right of way (at least west of Urban Avenue) and become the new Track 2.

On April 4 of this year, the west end of the North Siding and its switch into Track 1 at Divide 1 were removed.

Effective May 15 the new section of Track 3, from Divide

1 to just west of Urban Avenue was placed into service. At its west end it was tied into the existing Track 3 via a “hard-rail” connection, though a very high speed one with a maximum authorized speed of 80 mph. With that, the North Siding and the Hicksville Secondary Track were re-designated Track 3. Track 3 was now contiguous from Hicksville to Westbury. A 420 foot “stub” of old Track 3 was left intact from Divide 1 west and it was now designated the Tail Track. About 3092 feet of the old Track 3 west of the Tail Track was now temporarily out of service.



The following day, May 15, the new Track 3 and its connection into the existing portion is essentially complete. This “hard-rail” connection has no speed restriction on it, maximum speed is 80 mph. Jeff Erlitz photo

This track arrangement will now exist until the new Track 2 is installed and placed into service later this summer.

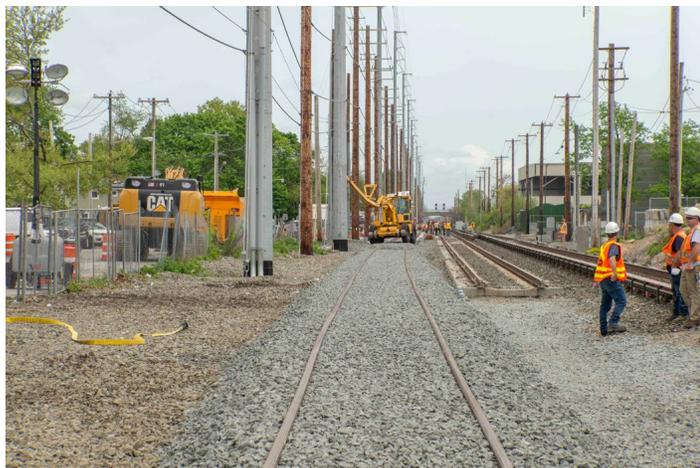


One week later, on May 21, its Track 1's turn to be cut and thrown over. Jeff Erlitz photo



The view east in New Cassel (between Westbury and Hicksville stations on the Main Line), just west of the Urban Avenue undergrade bridge. This is where both tracks you see will be “cut and thrown” over one track to the left. On the left is new Track 3, under construction. Existing Track 3 is in the center and Track 1 is on the right. This is on April 24, three weeks before the first of the track realignments. Jeff Erlitz photo

Finally, effective May 22 the Tail Track was re-designated Track 1 and it, too, was connected into the existing Track 1 west of Urban Avenue via a high-speed hard-rail connection. A very short 50 foot “stub” of old Track 1 was left intact from Divide 1 west and it was now designated the Tail Track.



It is now May 14 and new Track 3 is being connected to the existing Track 3. Jeff Erlitz photo



M7 7618 (Bombardier, 3/2006) leads train #1706 from Penn Station to Huntington through the new connection on May 26. Jeff Erlitz photo

Rail News in Review

New York Metropolitan Area

NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT (NYCT)

More R32s Shipped Out for Scrapping

Six of the recently retired R-32 subway cars sailed across the Hudson River on a barge to Jersey City where they were placed onto CSX freight trains for shipment to Ohio. The Port Authority's NYNJ Rail cross-harbor car float is the only harbor freight crossing of its kind in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area and is a key cargo movement option between New Jersey and Long Island, particularly for domestic cargo.



After being separated from their trucks, six R32s sit on flat cars in NYNJ Rail's Bay Ridge Yard. Marc A. Hermann/MTA photo

The cars had been disassembled at NYNJ's Bay Ridge Yard over approximately four days by separating the car bodies from the trucks.

MTA PRESS RELEASE, MAY 5

Clark Street **2** **3** Reopens

On Wednesday, May 4, following the replacement of all three elevators serving the station with new, state-of-the-art elevators, Clark Street returned to service. The closure lasted from Wednesday, November 3 through Wednesday, May 4. By replacing all three elevators at the same time, the duration of the project was dramatically accelerated, avoiding two years of service unpredictability.

Because Clark Street is a deep cavern station accessible only by elevator, subway service bypassed the station for the duration of the project. The closure lasted 183 days, and work was completed on schedule.

These elevator replacements were the latest milestones in the MTA's ongoing plan to bolster elevator reliability at

subway stations throughout the transit system as part of the Authority's 2020-2024 Capital Plan.

The elevators had been in service for more than 100 years and reached the end of their useful lives. In 2000, the station was bypassed for five months to replace controllers and cabs and repair three motors, but this most recent work constituted the first full replacement of the Clark Street elevator systems in over a century.

NYC Transit originally presented the community with alternatives that would have led to repair work lasting 22 to 24 months and would have attempted to maintain train service during construction work. Under these scenarios, technicians would have worked on one elevator at a time, leaving two elevators in service. But because two elevators are needed to safely maintain train service to this deep cavern station that lacks stairway access, crews would have had to suddenly and unpredictably suspend train service whenever one of the two remaining elevators was taken out of service.

MTA PRESS RELEASE, MAY 5

Switch Replacement Work at Broadway-Myrtle

Trackwork began Memorial Day weekend on the BMT Broadway-Brooklyn Line near the Myrtle Avenue **J** **M** **Z** station. This work will continue until the beginning of July.

J Train Service Changes

For four weekends beginning on May 27, shuttle buses will replace normal **J** train service between Broadway Junction and Marcy Avenue during the following times:

- 11:30 PM Friday, May 27 until 10:00 PM Monday, May 30 (holiday weekend)
- 11:30 PM Friday until 10:00 PM Sunday during weekends of June 3-5; June 17-19; June 24-26
- Train service will operate in two sections: between Jamaica Center and Broadway Junction and between Marcy Avenue and Broad Street

M Train Service Changes

For fourteen consecutive weekends beginning on May 27, shuttle buses will replace normal train service between Middle Village-Metropolitan Avenue and either Myrtle Av/Broadway, Flushing Av/Broadway or Marcy Avenue during the following times:

- 11:30 PM Friday, May 27 until 10:00 PM Monday, May 30 (holiday weekend) (Free Shuttle Bus Metropolitan Av – Marcy Av)
- 11:30 PM Friday until 10:00 PM Sunday during weekends of June 3-5; June 10-12, June 17-19; June 24-26 (Free Shuttle Bus Metropolitan Av – Marcy Av except June 10-12 when bus is Metropolitan Av – Myrtle Av)
- 9:45 PM Friday, July 1, until 5:00 AM Tuesday, July 5 (holiday weekend) (Free Shuttle Bus Metropolitan Av – Flushing Av)

- 9:45 PM Friday until 5:00 AM Monday weekends from July 8 through August 29 (Free Shuttle Bus Metropolitan Av – Flushing Av)

The free shuttle bus between Metropolitan Av and Marcy Av will run only the four weekends while the **J** is also out, May 27-30, June 3-5; June 17-19; June 24-26. On June 10-12, the bus will operate between Metropolitan Av and Myrtle Av. All remaining weekends, the bus will operate Metropolitan Av to Flushing Av.

MTA PRESS RELEASE, MAY 10

New Entrance at Times Square Opens

A new subway entrance at the 42 St-Times Square Station, the only one currently opening directly into the heart of Times Square, opened on Monday, May 16. The new 5,000 square foot mezzanine space is part of the broader 42nd Street Connection Project, encompassing a series of major improvements to the busy crosstown corridor in Midtown Manhattan. The celebration of this new entrance coincides with the resurgence of the Times Square District, as the peak Spring and Summer travel season approaches.



The press conference at the opening ceremony on May 16. On the left is Nick Cave's artwork. The new elevator is in the left distance. This view is looking north. Marc A. Hermann/MTA photo

The entrance allows passengers to directly enter and exit Broadway Plaza, the middle of the Times Square District that is visited by millions of riders every week. New subway entrance features include:

- **New Accessible Elevator:** A new elevator, the sixth at the station in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), is part of the ongoing private-public partnership with Jamestown and the company's \$500 million redevelopment of the iconic One Times Square building, the site of the New Year's Eve Ball Drop. The sleek, black-trimmed design of the elevator provides a modern feel and is complete with a new two-way communication system installed in the elevator cab for those with hearing and speech impairments, providing information to customers in case of an emergency. It will connect the

Times Square Station to Broadway Plaza between 42nd and 43rd Streets.

- **New Entrance and Exit Options:** The entrance includes a brand new, modernized canopy over the stairs, replicating sparkling Waterford Crystals which encompass the world-famous New Year's Eve Crystal Ball. The canopy displays a total of 238 triangular glass frames, which can be seen when looking up while using the stairs. The new subway entrance features a staircase which is 15 feet wide and provides an additional 450 square feet of space and additional circulation for the new station. Soffits located on the ceiling of the new entrance, on the mezzanine level, encompass historic plaster molding from when the station was originally built. A new historic panel was also installed at the bottom of the stairway, depicting notable events throughout the station's history.
- **New and Modern Turnstile/Mezzanine Level:** The new Times Square station entrance features energy-efficient LED lighting; four new digital information screens to keep customers updated on train arrivals and notifications; ten new turnstiles; two emergency gates, and ten glass barrier panels located between turnstiles and emergency exit gates. Eighteen CCTV cameras were also installed at the mezzanine level and two cameras were installed in the elevator, helping to boost surveillance at the highly trafficked station.
- **Two New MTA Arts & Design Mosaics:** Commissioned by the MTA's award-winning public arts program, two new mosaics by artist Nick Cave, referred to individually as "Each One" and "Equal All" are located near the new subway entrance and rebuilt 42nd Street Shuttle platform. The unveiling marks the completion of the expansive permanent artwork 'Every One, Each One, Equal All.' The third section is installed in the 42 St Connector.



View southwest of the new entrance from street level on Broadway. The elevator is just behind this entrance. Subutay Musluoglu photo

The new subway entrance at the 42 St-Times Square

Station is part of the MTA's investment into the 42nd Street underground corridor which included upgrades to Grand Central, Bryant Park and Times Square stations, focusing on redesigning passageways and platforms, adding new elevators, expanding stairways and transforming the 42nd Street Shuttle train into a fully accessible service.



Looking west at the elevator, the street stairs are just to the right.

Subutay Musluoglu photo

The opening of the entrance marks the completion of the three-year revitalization project that was completed on-time and below budget.

Approximately 640,000 customers pass through the Times Square subway station each weekday and has the highest ridership any of the 472 stations within the subway system.
MTA PRESS RELEASE, MAY 16

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD (LIRR)

Mineola Garage Opens

On May 9, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and village officials celebrated the grand opening of a 551-space commuter parking garage, west of Mineola Boulevard between Harrison Avenue and First Street, replacing the surface parking area. The new garage represents a net increase of 446 parking spaces serving both LIRR commuters and Downtown Mineola. The garage will be managed by Village of Mineola.

The garage is equipped with one elevator making it easy to reach the ground level and proceed towards the station platforms. There are Help Points on every level and it is located three blocks from Mineola Station.

The operation of this parking garage is consistent with Mineola's most recent parking study. The new Mineola Harrison Avenue parking structure will help accommodate a future increase in capacity on the LIRR.

MTA PRESS RELEASE, MAY 9

East Side Access Terminal to be Known as Grand Central Madison

On Tuesday, May 31, Governor Kathy Hochul announced that the 700,000-square-foot Long Island Rail Road terminal nearing completion below Grand Central Terminal and Madison Avenue from 43rd Street to 48th Street will be named Grand Central Madison. The new name references the station's location underneath Grand Central Terminal and the famed Madison Avenue commercial corridor. LIRR train service to the new terminal, representing the largest expansion of LIRR service in the 112 years since the original Pennsylvania Station and its East River Tunnels opened on September 8, 1910, remains on pace to begin before the end of the year.

The new terminal is the largest passenger rail terminal to be built in the United States since the 1950s, and the \$11.1 billion infrastructure project to connect the Long Island Rail Road to the East Side will provide many benefits for the entire downstate region and its visitors, enhancing seamless regional travel not just during rush hours but for reverse-peak, discretionary and off-peak travel in a post-pandemic environment.

The opening of Grand Central Madison, along with a new third track on the LIRR Main Line that is on schedule to be placed into service this year, will allow the LIRR to increase service system-wide by 40 percent on morning peak service, and dramatically increase reverse peak service. It will be the LIRR's first entry point into Manhattan that isn't shared with other railroads, meaning greater reliability because of less exposure to service disruptions, and more flexibility for trains and riders to work around any that do occur.

Grand Central Madison will reduce passenger congestion at Penn Station, affording the chance for trains from Metro-North Railroad to enter later this decade.

The new terminal will have eight tracks and four platforms on two new levels below the existing lower level of Grand Central Terminal, all designed with passive wayfinding to help orient returning users through subtle color shifts by location. All tracks and platforms are fully separated from Metro-North Railroad, ensuring that neither railroad causes delays to the other. The terminal will feature real-time digital signage, robust cell service and Wi-Fi, 25 retail storefronts, four new entrances to the street level along Madison Avenue between 43rd Street and 48th Street and two new entrances into the existing spaces of Grand Central and two to Grand Central's north end passageways at 45th and 47th Streets.

Crews from MTA Construction & Development, LIRR and contractors are testing systems including signals, switches, electrical power, customer service data, and HVAC to ensure all is working properly before train service begins, and the LIRR is instructing train operating crews about the layout and operations of the new terminal.

LIRR Releases Draft Timetables

On June 2, the LIRR will release draft timetables for every LIRR branch showing proposed system-wide service



following the opening of the LIRR's Grand Central Madison terminal. The LIRR will hold a series of virtual public information sessions next month to gather public input on the timetables.

Constraints that have long stifled LIRR capacity are being lifted thanks to a near doubling of track capacity to Manhattan, a third track on the Main Line, and the opening of Grand Central Madison.

System-wide Service Increases

The timetables propose to increase the overall number of LIRR trains by 40 percent. The number of morning rush hour trains would increase slightly more than 40 percent and the number of afternoon/evening rush hour trains would increase by nearly 65 percent. Reverse peak service would dramatically improve to Ronkonkoma, Huntington and all intermediate stops, as well as from Brooklyn, where service to Jamaica is increasing.

The timetables will improve the spacing of trains on many branches, reducing large gaps in service. During the off-peak hours of middays, evenings, and weekends, Huntington and Ronkonkoma will both have service to Manhattan every 30 minutes, with weekend Ronkonkoma Branch service doubling.

On the West Hempstead Branch, trains will run every hour during off-peak periods, twice as frequently as they do today, and the need to change trains at Valley Stream is eliminated. Stations in Queens will see service increases throughout the day, in both peak and off-peak periods.

“Change at Jamaica” Evolves

To reduce delays that can occur currently at Jamaica Station while trains wait for a connecting train, and to allow the LIRR to move significantly more trains through the station, trains will no longer have scheduled connections at Jamaica.

Manhattan-bound customers at rush hour on most branches, and all day on the busiest branches, will find plenty of options to take them to the terminal of their choosing without the need to change trains. For those who do need to transfer, all trains will now make station stops at Jamaica to reduce wait times. Once the schedules are finalized in the fall, the TrainTime app will be updated to provide transfer recommendations.

Service to Brooklyn to Increase by 28 Percent

In Brooklyn, trains will run approximately every 12 minutes in both directions during peak hours and every 20 minutes during off-peak hours for an overall 28 percent increase in daily trains. Every train will make stops at Nostrand Avenue and East New York. Most Brooklyn trains will originate and terminate at Jamaica using the new Platform F, but the LIRR will retain some through service with peak and off-peak trains on the West Hempstead Branch and peak trains on the Babylon and Hempstead Branches. Most customers on the Far Rockaway and Hempstead Branches, whose trains currently primarily serve Brooklyn, will now have direct

service to Manhattan all day.

LIRR to Hold Information Sessions on New Timetables

The LIRR will hold four virtual customer information sessions about the proposed new timetables at the following dates and times:

- June 23 - 6-7 PM
- June 30 - 6-7 PM
- July 7 - 6-7 PM
- July 13 - 6-8 PM

MTA PRESS RELEASE, MAY 31

METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (MNR)

Breakneck Ridge Station Reopens

On May 26 MNR announced the reopening of Breakneck Ridge station, which has been renewed and enhanced with safety improvements. Weekend service to the station resumed on Saturday, May 28. The station was closed for safety enhancements performed by MNR, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, NY-NJ Trail Conference, and Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail.

As before, Metro-North will make stops at Breakneck Ridge on weekends and holidays, with six northbound trains stopping at the station in the morning and five southbound trains in the evening. All trains are designed to give hikers multiple opportunities to reach and return from the trail each weekend day.

The enhancements include a new pathway that diverts hikers from the shoulder of Route 9D and provides a safe path of travel between the northbound and southbound platforms, a safety fence separating pedestrians from the railroad tracks, anti-trespass panels around the train platforms, and temporary way-finding signage to assist visitors in easily accessing the hiking trails.

State Assembly Member Sandy Galef, who represents Putnam and Westchester Counties, helped secure \$200,000 in funding for safety enhancements at the station, including the installed fencing.

Prior to the reopening, a visitor wishing to access the trail would have had to get off at Cold Spring and walk approximately two miles.

The station reopening was timed for NY-NJ Trail Conference Trail Stewards to be on site on weekends to help screen and orient hikers to ensure they are prepared for the hike. The Trail Steward program has been in place since 2014 and has greatly reduced the incidence of lost or injured hikers. The stewards will be on site from Memorial Day weekend through the beginning of November, and possibly longer this season.

The physical improvements at the station and trailhead are steps toward a comprehensive redesign known as the Breakneck Connector. The Breakneck segment will mark the first mile of the planned 7.5-mile Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail linear park slated to go to construction at the end of

2022. When construction begins, the Breakneck station will again close until the completion of construction in 2025.

The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail is envisioned as a linear park, spanning 7.5 miles along the Hudson River connecting the Village of Cold Spring and the City of Beacon. MNR, NYSDOT, and NYS Parks are among the many partners working together to make the Fjord Trail a reality, including local municipalities, governmental agencies, community groups, and regional conservation organizations, such as project lead Scenic Hudson.

Once the project is completed, MNR's Hudson Line stations at Cold Spring, Breakneck Ridge and Beacon will provide direct access to the Fjord Trail.

MTA PRESS RELEASE, MAY 26

SHORE LINE EAST

MNR/CDOT M8s Now Operate to New London

The train that rolled into Union Station on Monday came without a wisp of the diesel fumes that riders have grown accustomed to over the years.

The electric train, known as M8 Electric Multiple Units or EMU, made its debut on Shore Line East with an inaugural ride from New Haven to New London. The newer and quieter replacement for the diesel-powered trains starts on Tuesday.

Governor Ned Lamont joined a host of dignitaries for a news conference to announce the news at New Haven's Union Station earlier on Monday. Some then hopped aboard for a ride.

The M8 EMUs have been in service on MNR's New Haven Line for more than ten years. DOT officials said the delay for Shore Line East was in part due to work that had to be performed on the overhead electrical service that power the cars.

Waiting on the train platform was Department of Transportation employee Zigmund Korenkiewicz of Stonington, a regular rider of Shore Line East who makes the daily commute by train to New Haven for work.

He said the trains are newer, have more amenities such as power outlets at every seat and are quieter than their diesel counterparts. Korenkiewicz said the noise reduction is likely to be noticed in the shoreline neighborhoods the train rolls through. The trains, which emit no carbon emissions, have brighter interior spaces, updated restrooms, higher back seats and improved luggage racks, Shore Line East said in a statement.

With the new electric trains come new schedules. To view the current SLE schedule and check news and alerts, visit www.ShoreLineEast.com.

THE DAY, NEW LONDON, MAY 26

More Details on the M8 Operation on Shore Line East

Governor Lamont made it clear this was a priority for him. It has obvious environmental and community benefits and avoids replacing aged Mafersa rolling stock and diesels with

new diesel equipment when the State had already procured 24 of the M8s for SLE service.

Post-pandemic ridership levels on the New Haven Line remain low enough to assign the cars to SLE. The jury is still out on what to do if and when ridership returns to historic levels.



After arriving at New London as train #1610, M8s 9362-9363+9264-9265 (Kawasaki Rail Car, 9/2013, 12/2012) get ready to return to New Haven as train #1667. Randy Glucksman photo

A Task Force of the most senior staff from Amtrak, MNR and CDOT made this happen with weekly calls resolving a host of items, equipment had to be tested for mechanical performance to New London and for clearances, supervisory staff and crews had to undergo thorough training and qualifications programs, safety and operating plans had to be developed, reviewed and approved by the FRA, communications plans for First-Responders were developed and disseminated, bridge plates, keys for the equipment had to be acquired, equipment cycles and mechanical servicing procedures needed to be established, financial and operating agreements were either written or modified. There was more.

Trains are limited to four cars because of the phase-gap design at the Division Post in New Haven and traction power supply limits on the Amtrak system. Longer EMU trains had a higher risk of electrically bridging the gap and Amtrak would not accept it. Another traction power supply substation is likely needed between Mill River Junction and Old Saybrook.

Studies continue to develop a long-term solution.

Third rail shoes had to come off because of a thru-girder bridge clearance problem in East Haven. They cleared the girder tops by 1/2 inch!

A long-term fix is being evaluated.

NEW JERSEY TRANSIT (NJT)

Rail Service to Monmouth Park Begins

NJT is headed to Monmouth Park Racetrack this season with a great discount package! Rail service for the 2022 season begins with the return of live racing on May 7th. NJT passengers can take North Jersey Coast Line trains to Monmouth Park Station when the track is open for live racing. This year, live racing runs through September 18th.

NJT's Monmouth Park Package, which includes round-trip transportation, general admission, and an official racing program, costs only the price of the round-trip fare plus \$3.50, a total savings of \$6.50 off the face value if purchased separately.

Purchase the package from a Ticket Vending Machine (TVM) or any NJT train station ticket office, excluding Atlantic City Line stations.. Monmouth Park Packages cannot be purchased on board trains or with the NJT Mobile App.

NJ TRANSIT rail service to Monmouth Park will operate on the following days:

- Fridays: June 3 thru September 2
 - Saturdays: May 7 thru September 17
 - Sundays: May 8 thru September 18
 - All Mondays in August: August 1 thru August 29
 - Holidays: Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day
- NJ TRANSIT PRESS RELEASE, MAY 4

Other US Systems

BOSTON

Codman Yard Upgrades

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) announced that the construction contract for the Codman Yard Expansion and Improvements project has been advertised to bid, as part of MBTA's Capital Program and Red Line Transformation (RLT).

The advancements made to Codman Yard will increase capacity and improve the overall reliability and quality of service for all riders.



Looking northeast from the west end of Codman Yard. MBTA photo

In addition to storing the vehicles, yards also allow the MBTA to perform quality checks, make any necessary

improvements and keep the car interiors clean without disrupting regular service. Codman Yard currently has 16 storage tracks that can hold around 70 vehicles. The project consists of replacing the existing tracks and building six new storage tracks. Expanding the yard with these additional tracks will allow Codman Yard to hold over 100 cars. Other improvements include replacing the inspection pit, the Ashmont double crossover, vehicle wash, lighting and power throughout the yard to provide an expanded, improved and fully functioning railroad yard.

The MBTA expects to award the contract this summer and begin construction by fall 2022 with a projected completion in fall 2025. However, the Capital Transformation team is always looking for ways to accelerate the timeline and bring these much-needed improvements to the public sooner. Before any construction begins, the Red Line Transformation team will hold a public meeting to communicate the expectations prior to the builder mobilizing the site.

MASS TRANSIT, MAY 23

Orange Line Cars Return to Service

MBTA's new Orange Line cars have returned to service after they were temporarily pulled while an issue with one of the cars braking units could be investigated.

MBTA removed all new Orange Line trains on May 19 when a problem presented itself in one of the train's 48 braking units at Wellington Station "and it became disabled." MBTA says it removed all new cars "out of an abundance of caution" to allow its engineers and technicians to determine a cause of the issue. The authority notes the problem did not present a hazard to riders or employees.



1402 leads a southbound Orange Line train at Assembly station. MBTA photo

MBTA reports preliminary findings indicate a single bolt in one of the car's eight braking units had not been properly installed at the manufacturing plant.

CRRC MA Corporation was awarded a contract in 2014 from the MBTA to design and manufacture 152 new Orange Line trains, as well as 252 Red Line subway cars. The first of the new Orange Line trains entered service in August 2019.

The new Orange Line cars incorporated several new

features including more spacious interiors, LED lighting, automatic passenger counters, closed circuit cameras and video recording and on-board diagnostics for operators and maintenance staff.

MASS TRANSIT, MAY 24

CHICAGO

Station Rehab Project

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) is planning for extensive repairs and improvements for nearly 30 rail stations this year as part of ongoing efforts to provide new and returning riders with a safe and comfortable transit experience.

The work is part of Refresh & Renew—CTA’s ongoing station revitalization program, which last year was expanded and accelerated to target more than 90 percent of all rail stations.



In this view north on the Loop at Quincy station, 3442 (Morrison-Knudsen, 1994) is leading a Brown Line train bound for Kimball on October 18, 2018. Jeff Erlitz photo

Refresh & Renew is a year-round, cyclical maintenance program that was launched in 2019 and designed to help promote the safety, security and longevity of CTA’s rail stations and operational facilities. As part this program, crews also address behind-the-scenes needs and repairs to keep the stations in a state of good repair, including removal of outdated fixtures and equipment, repairs to utility and plumbing lines.

Last year, to help welcome new and returning customers as part of the city’s re-opening efforts, the CTA expanded and accelerated the Refresh & Renew program. In total, crews performed a variety of improvements at 127 rail stations, valued at \$3.5 million. Among those stations, 35 received more extensive work that included improved platform amenities (e.g., benches, trash bins, windbreaks, etc.), concrete repairs, updating or replacement of old or damaged signage, upgraded LED lighting throughout, permanent repairs and more. The remaining 92 stations received moderate improvements that included lighting upgrades,

repainting of surfaces (e.g., columns, walls, railings, fencing/gates, platform fixtures, etc.) and power washing.

Beginning in April and continuing through the end of 2022, Refresh & Renew crews will be performing extensive station improvement work, valued at \$2.1 million, at the following 28 locations:

- Red Line: Chicago, Addison, Sox-35th, Cermak-Chinatown, Fullerton, Roosevelt
- Blue Line: Addison, Oak Park, Harlem (O’Hare Branch), Washington, UIC-Halsted, Harlem (Forest Park Branch)
- Green Line: Oak Park, Ridgeland, 51st, Morgan, California, Central, Roosevelt, 35th-Bronzeville-IIT
- Brown Line: Kedzie
- Orange Line: Midway
- Pink Line: California
- Yellow Line: Dempster-Skokie
- Purple: Central, South Boulevard
- Loop Elevated: Harold Washington Library-State/Van Buren, Quincy

MASS TRANSIT, MAY 2

PHILADELPHIA

RFP issued for King of Prussia Rail project

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) has issued a Request for Proposals for the final design phase of the King of Prussia Rail Project. The project will extend the existing Norristown High Speed Line four miles into King of Prussia with five stations and will provide a transit connection between three of southeastern Pennsylvania’s largest employment centers in 45 minutes.



Rendering of the First & Moore/Valley Forge station. King of Prussia Rail Project rendering

KOP Rail entered the Project Development Phase of the Federal Transit Administration’s Capital Investment Grants program.

MASS TRANSIT, MAY 10

RFP for trolley vehicles

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was released by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

(SEPTA) for modern, accessible trolley vehicles to replace the entire existing fleet of trolleys.

This begins the trolley vehicle acquisition process with manufacturers — a major step forward for Trolley Modernization.

Trolley Modernization is SEPTA's program to transform its trolley network into an accessible, fast and easy-to-use system. It is a core component of SEPTA Forward, the authority's strategic plan, to create a "lifestyle transit network" — a transit system that can be easily used for any type of trip, not just traditional 9-to-5 commutes to work.

Together, SEPTA's eight trolley lines run for 68 miles and connect communities in West Philadelphia, Southwest Philadelphia, North Philadelphia and Delaware County directly with the region's two largest employment and healthcare centers, Center City and University City.

The current trolley vehicles have served riders since the 1980s. The new trolleys will be fully accessible to people with disabilities and have higher capacity to move more passengers. The new fleet will have low floors and ramps; wider pathways; audio and visual messaging systems to communicate upcoming stops and service changes; and designated open space for people with wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers.

SEPTA is building on-street stations to serve the new trolleys and rebuilding underground stations to be fully accessible. The authority is also making significant operational and infrastructure improvements and extending some trolley lines to key locations to make connections to other SEPTA services easier. SEPTA is working on new and improved maintenance facilities to serve the new fleet.

Funding for Trolley Modernization comes from the recently released proposed Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Budget and 12-Year Program, a record-breaking plan — the first to break the billion-dollar mark. In addition to Trolley Modernization, this Capital Program advances several other SEPTA Forward initiatives, such as Bus Revolution, King of Prussia Rail, station accessibility, and rail fleet replacements.

MASS TRANSIT, MAY 13

SEPTA Releases Options for Future of Regional Rail

Three potential options for a long-term vision for Regional Rail were released by SEPTA.

This marks phase two of Reimagining Regional Rail, SEPTA's project to make its rail system more useful for more people.

Reimagining Regional Rail is a key initiative of SEPTA Forward, the authority's strategic plan, to create a "lifestyle transit network" of all-day, all-week frequent service to destinations across the region.

The three options are based on extensive public feedback, which includes thousands of survey responses, pop-up events at locations across the rail system, a virtual public meeting and a comprehensive report on the state of the system and similar networks:

- Scenario 1: Focuses on consistent service throughout the

network, providing service every 30 minutes

- Scenario 2: Focuses on more frequent service (every 15 minutes) in some areas of the system where demand supports it
- Scenario 3: Focuses on faster and integrated service across agencies, providing express services across the system all day



Silverliner IV 175 leads train #566 at Downingtown station on its way from Thorndale to Doylestown on May 22, 2019. Jeff Ertlitz photo

SEPTA will collect feedback on phase two scenarios through a virtual tool that asks riders a series of questions and suggests a scenario that best fits their responses. Phase three will set the vision for the future of the system and develop a plan to implement short, medium, and long-term solutions later this year.

Along with Reimagining Regional Rail, SEPTA is advancing several transformative initiatives to achieve the goals set in SEPTA Forward, including Bus Revolution, which released two network options earlier this spring.

MASS TRANSIT, MAY 19

Extension to Wawa Delayed

At Middletown Township's Monday Council meeting, SEPTA updated council members on the expected opening of the Elwyn to Wawa extension of the regional rail line.

Joseph Connelly, SEPTA government affairs liaison, told the board the planned opening of the line has been moved back from July 1 to August 21 for the start of new passenger train service on the restored line.

While construction is on track for the completion of the structural aspects of the \$178 million project, including the new station and 600 car parking structure, they have run into supply chain issues for delivery of part of the signal system of the three miles from Elwyn to the new Wawa station.

The line, which once went to West Chester (*Editor's Note: And beyond, to Frazer on the Main Line*), was phased out beyond Elwyn in 1986. Work on Phase 1 of the project to restore service to the line began in 2010 with the present

Phase 2 work starting in 2018.

The new station at Wawa includes restroom facilities, a high-level center island platform and pedestrian underpass with accessible ramps and stairways connecting to the 600-car parking tower. The station will also have bus service for other lines.

The parking garage will hopefully take some pressure off other stations along the line that attract end-of-the-line parking. The new parking garage will be free until the end of December.



Rendering of the new Wawa station, looking east. SEPTA rendering

The project included replacement of the railroad bridge over U.S. Route 1, the construction of a new traffic intersection and access road connecting U.S. Route 1 to Wawa Station, improvements to the grade crossing at Lenni Road, and the replacement of the rail bridge over Lungren Road. The project also includes a new rail yard at Lenni.

There is also a plan for the extension to the Chester Creek bicycle trail which allows use of the parking garage.

Trains will begin running on the line in July as engineers are trained and signaling checked. Trains will move with technicians making sure the signal system activates properly. The first scheduled service would be August 21, with the first commuter day August 22.

SEPTA is planning a public rollout, with mailers sent to those near tracks which will include safety messages. SEPTA is also reaching out to local fire departments for emergency response training.

SEPTA is working to bring riders back to the system following the pandemic. Regional rail service saw a 98 percent decline in passengers from the previous month when COVID-19 hit in March 2020. The regional rail is now about back to 44 percent from that high while the transit lines are at 53 percent of rider usage.

Congestion on highways and roads are increasing which SEPTA believes will help encourage riders to look at mass transit. As numbers increase, SEPTA is servicing more people but they are taking fewer trips, Connelly said. He used the example of someone riding three days a week instead of five days a week.

DELAWARE COUNTY DAILY TIMES, MAY 24

PITTSBURGH

Red Line Reopens

The Port Authority of Allegheny County returned Red Line trains to their regular route on May 24 and will be ending the shuttle bus service that has been in place since the unexpected shutdown of the Saw Mill Run Boulevard Bridge on February 4.

Rail crews completed overnight testing of light-rail vehicles on the line in a process the authority called grueling. While the light-rail line is open, Port Authority says it will keep one bus shuttle running during the morning for people not aware the line has reopened.



LRV 4323 (CAF, 2003) has just come off the Saw Mill Run Boulevard Bridge and will momentarily arrive at the Dawn Avenue stop. PAT photo

The bridge, which hosts rail and bus traffic, was closed when engineers noticed an expanded joint on the deck of the bridge. Port Authority said the unexpected shift was caused by water penetration on a portion of the concrete support structure followed by freezing temperatures. The original cost of the repairs to the bridge was expected to top \$2 million and take up to 12 weeks to complete.

Crews worked during shutdown in traffic to reposition the section of the bridge that shifted and installed new supports, anchor bolts, rail joints and bearings. Buses were cleared to start using the bridge again on May 14. However, light-rail traffic remained suspended because Port Authority took advantage of the shutdown to accelerate two capital projects.

The two projects, Fallowfield Station repairs and nearby light-rail track replacements, were scheduled later in 2022 and would have required a shutdown of the Red Line. Performing the work now limited inconvenience to riders.

The work on Fallowfield Station in Pittsburgh's Beechview neighborhood includes repairing the concrete platforms and metal railings, replacing tactile pads, refurbishing overhead canopies and painting various areas of the station.

MASS TRANSIT, MAY 24

ST. LOUIS

Loop Trolley to Resume Service

August 4 is the day the long-dormant Loop Trolley will resume service, its new top operating official at the Bi-State Development Agency said on May 18.

But in a change, Bi-State CEO Taulby Roach said plans now call for the 2.2-mile line to operate only in warmer-weather months. It will shut down October 15 and probably crank up again next April, he said.

He said it's more likely that people will ride the trolley cars, which he described as a tourist attraction, during good-weather conditions. Moreover, he said, "the equipment simply doesn't work well" during colder times of the year.

Plans call for the line, which runs from the western end of the Delmar Loop in University City to the Missouri History Museum in Forest Park, to operate 11 AM to 7 PM Thursdays through Sundays.

Roach said a decision has yet to be made whether to charge a fare or let people ride free. He said one idea being studied is having businesses along the line hand out free tickets.

The trolley, which previously charged a fare, shut down regular service at the end of 2019 after only about a year of operations amid continuing financial and operational problems.

In February, the board of Bi-State, which runs MetroLink and the Metro bus system, agreed to take over trolley operations on a contract basis at the request of Roach and Mayor Tishaura O. Jones.

Jones since December has chaired the trolley's sales tax district. Bi-State is replacing the nonprofit Loop Trolley Co. as the line's operator.

Roach and Jones had warned that defaulting on the tens of millions of dollars in federal grants that helped build the \$51 million project could hurt efforts by the metro area and Bi-State itself to get other federal money in the future.

Mokhtee Ahmad, a regional Federal Transit Administration official, last December had warned that his agency might demand repayment of some of the \$37 million in federal funds used on the project if the trolley cars and tracks remained unused.

He had asked that the line begin service again on June 1. Roach said Wednesday that Bi-State needs until August to continue its technical evaluation of the trolley equipment and other issues.

But he said he has enough information now to be confident about the early August start date. He said Ahmad has not objected to it.

In its year of regular operations, the trolley was plagued by various operating problems.

As he said earlier this year, the line can start running using accrued and ongoing revenue from the trolley district's sales tax collected along and near the trolley route.

He has said a new \$1.26 million federal grant sought from the regional East-West Gateway Council of Governments is

needed for the line's long-term financial viability.

The council, which turned down a similar request last October, is expected to decide on the current grant application in August. The Bi-State board's decision to run the trolley was a reversal of its previous position.
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, MAY 19

SAN JOSE

BART extension to Downtown San Jose/Santa Clara

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Board of Directors unanimously approved for the general manager/CEO to execute the first in a series of construction contracts for the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Silicon Valley Phase II (BSVII) Project.

This first contract package for the tunnel and trackwork (CP2) is a progressive design-build contract with Kiewit Shea Taylor, a joint venture, in the amount of \$235 million.



Map of the BART extension to Santa Clara. SCVTA

CP2 will be carried out in stages with Stage 1 activities including investigation of innovations, engineering and design, open book cost estimates, and the work schedule. Stage 1 activities are anticipated to occur from May 2022 through approximately December 2023, setting the stage for major construction (Stage 2) which includes boring the tunnel under downtown San Jose.

Three other contracts to be considered in the future will be for the systems, stations and the Santa Clara Station and Maintenance Yard.

Santa Clara VTA's BSVII Project is a six-mile, four-station extension that will bring BART service from Berryessa/North San José through downtown San José to the city of Santa Clara, includes three stations with underground platforms (28th Street/Little Portugal, Downtown San José and Diridon), one ground-level station (Santa Clara), a train maintenance and storage facility at Newhall Yard and additional facilities. Five of the six-mile alignment is planned to be constructed in a large diameter single-bore tunnel,

with the remaining one mile at-grade rail.

The board also approved a request to review previously completed assessments comparing single and twin-bore tunnel methodologies, in a parallel track moving forward with the initial contract work.

MASS TRANSIT, MAY 9

SANTA ANA

Streetcar Construction Reaches Major Milestone

The Orange County Transportation Authority's (OCTA) construction of the OC Streetcar project reached a milestone as construction crews placed the final steel beam on the building that will house the streetcar vehicles.

Several staff members from OCTA, which is building the OC Streetcar, and from the contractor The Walsh Group, signed the final beam that was then lifted to the top of the building along with an American flag and a tree and secured into place at the top of the building.



It marked the completion of the frame for the OC Streetcar's Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF) in Santa Ana, which is where the streetcar vehicles will be stored, washed and maintained.

Construction of the track and stations continues along the route, including in Downtown Santa Ana, where crews are working on an expedited schedule and OCTA is working with the city of Santa Ana to minimize the effects of construction on local businesses.

The OC Streetcar vehicles are being manufactured by Siemens in northern California. Completing the MSF building will allow for the vehicles to be delivered and stored once they are finished. Delivery of the first streetcar vehicles is expected in 2023, with testing expected to begin shortly after.

The OC Streetcar, estimated to cost \$509.5 million with a majority of the cost paid with federal funding, will run on just over four miles of track in each direction through Santa

Ana and Garden Grove. It is scheduled to begin operations in early 2024.

The OC Streetcar route, chosen by the city of Santa Ana, will serve the city's thriving downtown and dense employment areas that include county and local government offices and courthouses in the Civic Center.

The streetcar will carry passengers between the busy Santa Ana transit center and a transit stop at Harbor Boulevard and Westminster Avenue in Garden Grove, running along Santa Ana Boulevard, Fourth Street and the Pacific Electric right-of-way and connecting with OCTA's busiest bus routes.

Six vehicles, with two spares, will operate daily, making stops at ten locations in each direction every 10 to 15 minutes. MASS TRANSIT, MAY 13

TEMPE

Streetcar Service Begins

Valley Metro welcomed the region's first modern streetcar line on May 20 with the start of service on the three-mile Tempe Streetcar route. The line provides connections to major employment centers, entertainment and event destinations, historic neighborhoods and the regional transit network.

The six Liberty NXT vehicles were built by Brookville Equipment Corporation. The hybrid streetcars will operate off-wire through downtown Tempe on Mill Avenue and feature a three-section car body with more than 70 percent low-floor standing area. The vehicles will operate as single cars with a capacity for 125 people. Current service is anticipated every 20 minutes, with frequency improving later this year with the addition of the final two streetcar vehicles. Valley Metro will not charge fares for the Tempe Streetcar service during its first year of operation.



Dignitaries and other invited guests cut the ribbon to inaugurate the Tempe streetcar. Valley Metro photo

Valley Metro also notes public art, created by five Arizona artists, is incorporated at all stops and reflects the culture, architecture and natural beauty of the surrounding area.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held for the 14-stop line in 2017 with significant construction beginning on the project in 2018. The \$200-million project was funded through a mix of federal and state funds, as well as a

public-private partnership with the city of Tempe, Arizona State University and more than a dozen employers and property owners along the route.

The project was awarded a \$75-million grant through the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grants Program in September 2019. The timing of the federal grant made the project eligible for additional funds provided in the American Rescue Plan. The additional \$17.4 million awarded through the American Rescue Plan will help enhance the long-term safety and efficiency of the streetcar.

MASS TRANSIT, MAY 23

WASHINGTON D.C.

7000 Series Cars to Return to Service

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) has completed installation of the first automated inspection system that will allow the authority to inspect wheelsets of its 7000 series railcars in real time. Earlier this year, WMATA noted the trackbed technology would support continuous wheel measurements.

The authority said engineers will begin configuration, testing and commissioning of the system as it targets a return to service later this summer of the 7000 series railcars. WMATA plans to install six of these systems.

Automated wayside inspection systems (AWIS), such as the one installed by WMATA at College Park MD, can monitor components, including wheels, using cameras and advanced algorithms to assess the components for potential issues or flaws.

About four hours after WMATA released information on the inspection system, the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC), which is responsible for safety oversight of the Metrorail system, stated in a series of tweets that it had no technical objections to the 7000 Series Return to Service Plan that the authority submitted late in the afternoon on May 19. However, WMSC says use of AWIS units are not included in the plan.

Per WMSC's December 29 order, WMATA is required to submit any revisions to the return to service plan for a 14-day review before implementation occurs. WMATA says it will submit a new plan later that includes use of AWIS.

WMSC highlighted elements that are part of the current plan including:

- New and improved manual inspection tools
- New and improved procedures with internal oversight and protections
- Increased frequency of manual inspections, including daily inspection before the cars return to service (WMATA previously stated it takes approximately three hours to inspect the wheels of an eight-car train)
- Adjusted criteria for wheelset failures
- New procedures to control the movement of railcars and ensure those put into service meet the plan's requirements
- Information technology updates to collect and validate data

- New training on the improvements for enough people, who are also provided the needed tools, to implement the plan
- Data analysis including proactive use of specific data captured by the 7000 series cars.

7000 series sidelined since October

The 7000 series fleet was removed from service in mid-October following an October 12, 2021, derailment. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) found in its initial investigation a wheelset was found to be out of compliance with specifications.

NTSB continues its investigation and has not named a probable cause of the derailment. WMATA notes the investigation has not found evidence of failures related to maintenance or manufacturing of the equipment. MxV Rail experts (formerly Transportation Technology Center, Inc.) are conducting spin tests and ultrasonic tests that look at vibration and wheel performance at various speeds and conditions as part of a root cause analysis. The results of which will help guide WMATA on what combination of issues will need to be addressed.

MASS TRANSIT, MAY 20

International News

BERLIN

U-Bahn Cars Under Construction

The construction of eight pre-series Type J and JK trainsets for the Berlin U-Bahn has started at Stadler's Pankow factory in the north of the city.



New U-Bahn cars under construction at Stadler's Pankow factory. BVG photo

Stadler won an €3 billion framework contract in March 2020 to supply up to 1,500 metro cars to Berlin operator BVG, with a minimum quantity of 606 vehicles of which 376 have so far been ordered.

The large-profile Type J sets for U-Bahn Lines 5 to 9 are designed with pairs of driving and intermediate vehicles that can be configured to form two-, four- or six-car

Worldwide Regional Rail, Metro and Tramway Openings in May

Date	Country	City	Segment	Distance (miles)	Rail/Metro/Tram
5/1	China	Guangzhou	Line 7: Guangzhou South Railway Station to Meidi Dadao	8.3	M
5/15	China	Hong Kong	East Rail: Hung Hom to Admiralty	2.9	R
5/17	Spain	Valencia	Line 10: Alacant to Natzaret	3.1	T
5/20	USA	Tempe	Marina Heights/Rio Salado to Dorsey/Apache	3.0	T
5/24	England	London	Elizabeth Line: Paddington to Abbey Wood	14.0	R
5/28	South Korea	Seoul	Shinbundang Line: Gangnam to Sinsa	1.34	M
			Sillim Line: Saetgang to Gwanaksan	5.0	M
	Denmark	Odense	T1: Tarup Center to Hjallesø Station	9.0	T
5/30	Almaty	Kazakhstan	Moskva to Bauyrzhan Momysheuly	1.9	M

URBAN RAIL NEWS WEBSITE, MAY 30: <https://www.urbanrail.net/news.htm#nowopen>

walk-through trains. The small-profile Type JKs for lines 1 to 4 will be two or four-car units that can run as six- or eight-car trains.

Stadler is initially building 12 pre-series cars of each type, with delivery to BVG planned for the end of 2022. The first 236 series-built large-profile and 140 small-profile vehicles are due to be delivered between the end of 2023 and 2025.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, MAY 9

HONG KONG

East Rail Line Cross-Harbor Extension Opens

Services on the cross-harbor extension of Hong Kong's East Rail Line began on May 15 after an inauguration ceremony the previous day. The extension enable passengers from the Northeast New Territories and Central Kowloon to travel directly under Victoria Harbor to the core business district on Hong Kong Island without changing trains.

The extension is the fourth cross-harbor line, and runs 2.9 miles from the former terminus at Hung Hom to Exhibition Centre and Admiralty with a journey time of seven minutes. The opening takes the full East Rail Line to 28.6 miles and 16 stations.

The cross-harbor extension is the second element of the HK\$90.7 billion Shatin to Central Link (SCL) program, following the completion of the Tuen Ma Line in June 2021.

The Hong Kong government approval procedures for the opening of the cross-harbor extension were completed on May 3, and MTR Corporation signed three agreements for its operation on May 10. Two of these amended the existing SCL agreements with the government. The third is a ten-year operating concession agreement with Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation, the former operator of rail services on what is now the East Rail Line. This includes an obligation to begin exclusive negotiations for an extension before the

current concession expires.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, MAY 16

ITALY

Metro and Tram Projects Allocated Funding

The national government has allocated a total of €4.7 billion from the 2022 national budget to fund metro construction in Milano, Napoli, Torino, Genova and Roma, and tram projects in Roma.

In Milano, €180 million has been allocated for the western extension of metro Line 1 from Bisceglie to Baggio, in addition to the €398 million previously committed. A further €420 million is being provided for an eastern extension of Line 4 from Linate Airport to Segrate, and €122 million for the expansion of Gallarate depot on Line 1.

In Napoli, €795 million has been allocated for the construction of the first two sections of metro Line 10 linking Piazza Cavour in the Center with Napoli Afragola station on the Roma – Napoli high speed line.

Torino has been awarded €1 billion towards the Novara – Politecnico section of metro Line 2, augmenting €828 million previously allocated for the Novara – Rebaudengo section.

In Genova, €398 million has been allocated to support the construction of a second automated metro line, linking Brignole to Molassana through the Bisagno Valley. Another €21 million is being provided for the ongoing extension of the Brin – Canepari section of Line 1.

In Roma, €610 million has been allocated for the completion of the Piazza Venezia station on metro Line C, and €990 million for the extension of the route from Venezia to Piazzale Clodio. Another €173 million will help fund the 4.6-mile cross-city tram Route 1, linking the main Termini station with Cornelia on metro Line A and Piazza Risorgimento near the Vatican with two branches.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, MAY 6

JERUSALEM

New Trams Begin Delivery

The first of 114 Urbos 100 trams for the expansion of the Jerusalem light rail network has left the CAF factory at Zaragoza in Spain. Deliveries are running six months ahead of schedule, which is expected to enable entry into service earlier than planned.

The Jerusalem tram network is operated by the Cfir consortium of CAF and local company Shapir Engineering under a 15-year concession which began in April 2021 and includes expansion of the Red Line.

The TransJerusalem J-Net consortium of CAF and Shapir has a separate Public-Private Partnership concession to build and operate the future Green Line.

CAF is to supply vehicles for use on both lines, and will refurbish the Red Line's current fleet of 46 Alstom Citadis trams.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, MAY 10

LAUSANNE

Street Running Replaced with Tunnel

Chemin de fer Lausanne-Echallens-Bercher's (LEB) 0.6-mile tunnel from the underground Lausanne-Flon terminus to Lausanne-Chauderon has been extended by 1.1 miles to Union-Prilly, replacing a street-running section of single track line along Avenue d'Echallens.



The new tunnel section in Lausanne on the LEB. LEB photo

The double-track tunnel has been built to increase capacity and reliability and avoid road accidents, part of a program to modernize the 14.7-mile long meter-gauge 1.5 kV DC line to form part of the canton's RER Vaud network. It is planned that services will be increased to run every 10 minutes by 2035.

Construction of the tunnel extension took five years with the SFr136 million cost funded by the national government

and the canton.

Work was undertaken by a consortium of SIF, Infra Tunnel, Gasser and Bertholet+Mathis, and the GIT-LEB consortium of Monod-Piguet, Karakas & Français, CSD Ingénieurs, Basler & Hofmann and Geste.

Revenue services started on May 15, after an inauguration ceremony the previous day.

RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL, MAY 20

LONDON

Elizabeth Line Opens

Elizabeth Line services began running on the Crossrail core route across central London on May 24, with an initial 12 trains per hour linking Paddington station in the west to Abbey Wood in the southeast.

The cross-city tunnel section had been formally opened by Queen Elizabeth II with a ceremony at Paddington on May 17, attended by around 500 VIPs including the Earl of Wessex, Mayor of London Sadiq Khan and the Commissioner of Transport for London Andy Byford.



View east of a Class 345 trainset at the Abbey Wood terminal on May 25. Irwin Markowitz photo

May 24 also saw the interim Transport for London (TfL) Rail services from Shenfield to Liverpool Street and Paddington to Heathrow Airport, Maidenhead and Reading rebranded as part of the Elizabeth Line, although passengers must still change between the three sections pending the start of through services later this year.

With would-be riders lining up at both Paddington and Abbey Wood to take the first trains at 6:30 AM, TfL reported that more than 130,000 passengers traveled on the Elizabeth Line by 10:00 AM on the first morning, of whom over half had used the new cross-city core.

Envy of the world

"We are the envy of the rest of the world," Khan said during opening celebrations at Woolwich station, enthusing over the Elizabeth Line's "cathedral-like stations" and fast air-conditioned trains. He hoped that the opening of the line would

incentivize more people to get back to traveling in and out of the city center, helping London's post-pandemic recovery.



Platform level at Canary Wharf station on May 25. All underground stations have platform edge doors. Irwin Markowitz photo

Asked about the final estimated cost of £18.9 billion and the three year delay to opening, the Mayor emphasized that the new line was a “piece of national infrastructure” which would provide a long-term incentive for businesses to invest in London. “The real prize is linking our financial center to our international gateways,” which would come with the start of through running.



The mezzanine at Canary Wharf station on May 28. Mike Bunn photo

“It is important to continue investing in infrastructure, not stop-start,” Khan continued. “This line will be here for the next 150 years.” However, he added, “it is really important to recognize that investment in London should not be at the expense of the north,” as other cities around the UK also needed investment in improved rail networks.

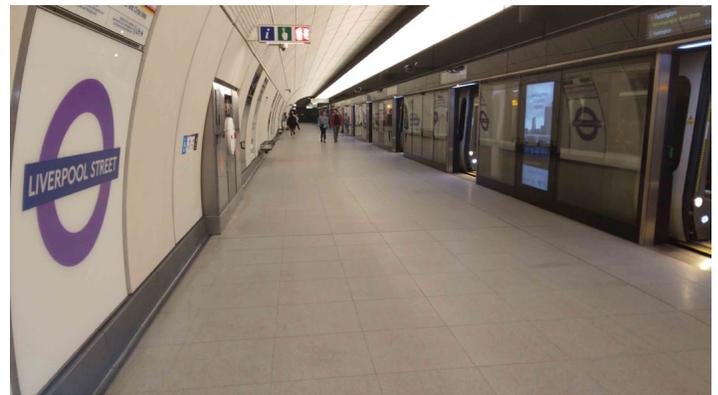
Phased ramp-up

Nigel Holness, Managing Director of operating concessionaire MTR Elizabeth Line, explained that 64 of the 70-strong fleet of Bombardier-built Class 345 EMUs were now required in traffic each day to work the three isolated sections. Some units are currently out of service being converted to nine-car sets from an interim seven-car formation, but this work

should be completed by November.

TfL has announced that there will initially be no Sunday services through the core section, other than over the Jubilee holiday weekend on June 5. This is intended to allow more time for final testing and software updates, as well as the completion of the delayed intermediate station at Bond Street.

Rail for London Operations Director Howard Smith told Railway Gazette International that following the opening of the core, the next step for the project team would be to work towards through running, although no start date for that has yet been agreed. Elizabeth Line trains from the western termini would then begin running through to Abbey Wood via Canary Wharf and Woolwich, while Shenfield trains would be extended to Paddington.



The westbound platform at Liverpool Street station on May 25. Irwin Markowitz photo

This stage with two overlapping services would be limited to a maximum peak service of 22 trains per hour pending the commissioning of the automated turnback facility at Westbourne Park, west of Paddington, Smith explained, adding that final testing of the technology is progressing well. The expectation is that six trains per hour from Abbey Wood would continue to Heathrow Airport, four to Maidenhead and two to Reading.

Smith hopes that services can ramp up to a maximum of 24 trains per hour through the core by May 2023, at which point the timetables would be adjusted to allow more through working between all of the end points. Running times on the Great Western Main Line would also be adjusted to reflect the performance of the Class 345 EMUs, potentially shortening some journey times.

Although proposals to develop a second Crossrail corridor linking southwest to northeast London were paused because of financial constraints, Byford confirmed that “the Prime Minister has asked us to dust off the plans for Crossrail 2, so I have told my team to do just that.”

RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL, MAY 24

Travels with Jack May

Britain and the Baltics-Part IV

by Jack May (Photographs by the author)

Wednesday, August 16

It rained heavily overnight, part of a pattern of some rain every day during my entire visit to the British Isles, but on the other hand, like my experience in Blackpool, plenty of sunshine occurred as well--in fact skies were Kodachrome blue for all of today's daylight hours. Andrew and Richard would spend the entire day in Nottingham, but my plan was to meet up with them in the afternoon, as I would ride the Midland Metro light rail line from Wolverhampton to Birmingham in the morning, and then continue on by train to join them at about 2:00PM for an afternoon of railfanning (to be covered in part five).



The rear of the Cross Country 220-series Voyager DMU (Bombardier, 2001) that I rode from Manchester, shown leaving Wolverhampton from the elevated concourse that provides access to the platforms.

I finished breakfast at 8:30AM and then headed for Manchester Piccadilly, where I had sufficient time to collect my ticket from the fare vending machine before boarding the 9:07AM Cross Country streamlined DMU. My reserved seat faced backwards and on top of that was located in a row with a blank wall instead of a window, but no matter, there were plenty of unoccupied places and I grabbed a good one facing forward next to a large clear pane of glass. The 62 miles to Wolverhampton were devoured in a little over an hour, and in fact the train arrived two minutes early at 10:11AM.

The tramway, or light rail line, between Wolverhampton (population about 250,000) and Birmingham, Britain's second largest city (with 1,100,000 souls), is called the Midland Metro. For the most part it uses the right-of-way of a portion of the Great Western Railway that had been deemed surplus, a line whose passenger service ran between the two cities until 1972. Apparently like many other lines that got

the axe during the Beeching era, it was needed after all, and the initial 12.5-mile-long replacement tramway connecting the two cities was opened in 1999. However, instead of continuing to the former Wolverhampton (Low Level) railroad station, its outer end was routed off the railway right-of-way onto street trackage to St. Georges, a terminal near the heart of the city center.



Pretty in Pink. CAF-built car 19 has just dropped the last of its passengers at the Midland Metro's temporary Priestfield terminal, and is shown gradually moving past the crossover, where it will change ends and head back to the inbound platform to pick up passengers.

Unfortunately, the initial ridership of 5 million per year did not live up to expectations, but a short (less than a mile) extension from Birmingham Snow Hill to the main railway station, New Street (the stop called Grand Central after the name of a shopping mall) on the lower end, which opened in 2016, has already increased patronage by 20 percent to 6 million. A further extension into the heart of Birmingham (a little over one additional mile), scheduled to open in 2021, no doubt will attract even more passengers. By 2020 a short branch (about a half-mile) at the outer end of the line, will be opened to the main Wolverhampton Railway station, which is where I arrived this morning from Manchester; in the old days it was called Wolverhampton (High Level). Both extension projects will integrate the Midland Metro into the national transportation system, as passengers will have direct access to the main railway and bus stations of the two cities (whose combined metropolitan area is the second largest in Britain, with a population of 3.7 million) at both ends. And, of course, the LRVs will soon reach the core of Birmingham's shopping district.

Midland Metro's original rolling stock consisted of 16 AnsaldoBreda T-69 two-section 70-percent low-floor

cars, but they only lasted for about 15 years, as the entire roster was replaced in 2015 with 21 CAF Urbos 3 5-section 100-percent low-floor units. The larger number and length of the newer cars (79 feet vs. 108 feet) take into account the expected increase in demand once the extensions are completed. (And even further expansion is planned for the future.)



Car 30 approaches the inbound platform of the Wednesbury Parkway stop. A third track, mostly hidden to the left of the outbound platform, is used by trams leaving the nearby carhouse and shop area (behind the photographer) to make their way to Wolverhampton.

Anyway, the Wolverhampton project and its associated track renewal resulted in the tramway being temporarily cut back two stations to Priestfield, and so instead of walking to St. Georges from the rail station (about 0.2 miles), my effort was cut in half, and I headed for the city's bus terminal via a pedestrianized walkway at 10:20AM, just in time for a route 79 departure (from "Stand" R) for Priestfield (see <http://www.urbanrail.net/eu/uk/bir/birmingham.htm> for a map). Since it was after 9:30AM I was eligible for a "Day Saver" ticket, which I purchased from the driver of the double-deck coach. The regular bus service on the 79 was supplemented by short turns for the 5 stops, where I (and a few other passengers) alighted for a short walk down a paved path to the tram stop. The bus traveled alongside the tracks on Bilston Road, and I was able to observe the construction, including the point where the line leaves the streets and enters the former railroad right-of-way. I had ridden the entire line on two previous trips to Birmingham, but aboard the Ansaldo T-69 cars, so as I trundled down the walkway from the bus stop, I obtained my first view of the new CAF cars, which were using a crossover to turn beyond the Priestfield stop. Thus, having ridden all the way to St. Georges before, I wasn't too disappointed that the street track was temporarily out of service.

The trams were operating every seven minutes, and that gave me sufficient time to pause at two way stations for photos.

The second photo stop was at The Hawthorns, a joint

station with the former Great Western Railway line from Snow Hill to Stourbridge, Kidderminster and eventually Worcester. Rail service through this station also had been discontinued in 1972 but restored again to a full schedule in 1995. From The Hawthorns to Birmingham Snow Hill the right-of-way now consists of four tracks, two for DMU operation and two for the Midland Metro's LRVs.



A Midland Metro train approaches The Hawthorns, while the original Great Western line to Stourbridge Junction turns in from the left.

The Midland Metro originally terminated on a pair of sidetracks at Snow Hill (much like the Los Angeles Gold Line uses two tracks of Union Station), but when it was extended toward the city center, it was ramped onto a street that crosses the railroad on an overpass. I rode all the way to the Grand Central stop at New Street, Birmingham's principal station, and then, seeing I still had adequate time before my 12:49PM departure to Nottingham, walked back for some photos of the new street running section, which is mainly on pedestrianized streets.



First of two views at The Hawthorns, now a joint station and transfer point for West Midlands DMU service and Midland Metro electric trams.

In looking back at this morning's events, I couldn't help thinking of the times I rode Pittsburgh's "Jolly Trolley" PCC 1734, which was painted in a similar shade of Midland Metro pink. The start of my day was extremely successful, and I was soon aboard the 12:49PM Cross Country DMU, which left on time and reached Nottingham, 45 miles away at 2:03PM, in the prescribed 74 minutes after six intermediate stops. The narrative of the day's events continues in part five.

Editor's note: Since the creation of Jack's report, the livery of Birmingham's CAF rolling stock was changed from pink to blue and the system was renamed, "West Midlands Metro." The extension of the line into the center of Birmingham, as mentioned in the text, was duly placed in service, but the extension to the railroad station in Wolverhampton has yet to be completed. And significantly worse, the system was closed down entirely on several occasions because a large number of LRVs developed cracks in their trucks and underframes. It is currently out of service again. See <https://www.expressandstar.com/news/transport/2022/03/23/timeline-of-tram-disruption-as-west-midlands-metro-out-of-action-for-third-time-in-nine-months/> for a timeline and a photo of a car painted blue.



The second view view at The Hawthorns. Rail service on the 24-mile line to Worcester is frequent, but not often enough for me to have been able to achieve a photo of both types of cars in the same frame of my camera. Had I been spending the entire day in the area I am sure I could have gotten the juxtaposition. Also, I may have had the chance to ride to Stourbridge Town, on a branch where West Midlands utilizes the lightweight Parry People Mover. The DMU is a 3-car Bombardier-built 172-series Turbostar from 2010-11.

(Above and below) Two views along the recently opened extension of the Midland Metro in an urban landscape along city streets from Snow Hill station to New Street station. The area is very busy, so I had to wait a few headways to get photos without too many people. The upper photo was taken on Bull Street, just east of the Bull Street stop, while the lower view shows a car that has just left the Grand Central terminal and is approaching the Corporation Street stop.

