BULLETIN

Volume 68, Number 2 | February 2025

IND Rockaway Line Partially Closed for Four Months

The IND Rockaway Line suffered major damage during Hurricane Sandy at the end of October, 2012.

Though normal train service was eventually restored, starting with a shuttle service from Far Rockaway to Beach 90 Street on November 20, 2012, damage to the infrastructure on this line made it imperative to rebuild certain portions.

Starting Saturday, January 18, service on the Rockaway Line will be partially suspended for four months to do just that. Contract C-35327, Rockaway Line Resiliency and Rehabilitation, was awarded to EXP Services (designer) and Schiavone Construction Company (builder) in the first quarter of 2023.

This project has two main components, resiliency work and rehabilitation work. The resiliency work includes protection of embankments and hardening of infrastructure at stations throughout the Rockaway Line. Schiavone Construction began this work in the fourth quarter of 2023.

A segment of the resiliency work was going to be the construction of a new signal tower at Beach 105 Street Station. This work was going to include the installation of a single crossover switch at the east end of the station, with provision for a second crossover. In the event that Rockaway Park Station and Yard became inundated, train service would be able to operate at least as far as Beach 105 Street. It appears, however, that this part of the project has been deferred to when the Rockaway Line gets resignaled with CBTC.

The rehabilitation portion of this project comprises three parts, Hammels Wye Viaduct repairs, Rockaway Viaduct repairs, and Beach Channel Bridge repairs.

Continued on page 3

Electric Railroaders Association

Founded August 15, 1934 by E.J. Quinby
P.O. Box 3323
New York, N.Y. 10163
https://erausa.org

In This Issue

Worldwide Electric Railway, Metro and Tramway Openings	3
Rail News in Review	4
Book Review	24
Travels with Jack May	25

Front Cover Photo

Our eighth day of scheduled activities on the ERA's 2024 European tour took place on Monday, May 20. It was a very long day, as we journeyed from Brussels to Luxembourg, a trip of over three hours. When we arrived, half the group went on a city tour and the other half went to the transport museum. In the afternoon, we regrouped for a tour of Luxembourg's tramway operator (Luxrail) headquarters, maintenance, and storage complex, at the north end of line at Luxexpo. In this view, several of Luxrail's Urbos 3 (CAF, 2017-20) light rail cars are awaiting service. Luxembourg's new tramway opened for service on December 10, 2017. The line was extended south three stops from Rout Bréck-Pafendall to Étoile on July 27, 2018. It was extended four more stops to Gare Centrale on December 13, 2020, two stops to Lycée Bouneweg on September 11, 2022, and five stops to Stadion on July 7, 2024.
Jeff Erlitz photo

Donations

The ERA Board of Directors express their deepest appreciation for these member donations in January 2025.

$1000 and Above

Dennis Furbush

$100 to $199

Todd Glickman, Stephen Siegerist

$50 to $99

Richard Allman, Edwin Bacher, Meredith Caplan, Ronald Jackson, Anthony Reid, David Varnum

Up to $49

Christopher Adams, Eric Allen, Willie Butler, Jeffrey Freed, Norman Gates, Tony White

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 91-year long tradition of traction education and entertainment!

Monthly Zoom Meeting

Friday, February 21, 2025 at 7:30 PM.

Presenting This Month: Eric Oszustowicz

His program will be comprised of high-definition videos and still images taken by Eric and his wife, Mary. A feature of this presentation will be scanned images taken by Eric during early to mid-1984 of the Erie Lackawanna MUs. The presentation will also include freight and passenger trains in the Canadian Rockies, Amtrak, commuter, light rail, and trolley bus views in the Seattle and Vancouver areas, Canadian Pacific steam, Wrocław, Poland, and, of course, some behind the scenes operations of the New York subway system. Towards the end, we will see vintage photographs of the New York City subway system taken during the 1980s. If time permits, some views taken in the Boston area from 1985-1987 will be shown.

How to Join Our Zoom Meeting

The Zoom registration link for this meeting is: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/poeVywVGQROBdy-5aOvJgxQ. 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.

Trip Notices/Save the Dates

April 24-26: Motor Bus Society Spring Convention, Jacksonville, Fla.
August 9-13: Motor Bus Society trip to Toronto area
August 26-31: ERA convention in Kansas City and St. Louis
October 8-11: Motor Bus Society Fall Convention, Indianapolis and Louisville
April 29-May 13, 2026: ERA International trip to Northern England, Scotland and Isle of Man

At Hammels Wye, elements of the steel and concrete substructure will be repaired and rehabilitated. The Rockaway Viaduct repairs involve repairing, removing, and replacing various deteriorated elements of the structure west of Hammels Wye toward the Beach 116 Street Station and east of Hammels Wye towards the Far Rockaway-Mott Avenue Station. To minimize impacts of construction, Schiavone will use small mechanical and pneumatic tools to chip concrete and prepare surfaces for repairs. The majority of the work will take place below the viaduct. Parts of the Rockaway Freeway roadway under the viaduct will be closed for work staging areas, which will be kept as small enclosed areas that will open to the public after construction is completed. Schiavone Construction began early work in September 2023.

The third element of the rehabilitation work will take place on the Beach Channel Bridge. This bridge suffered extensive damage from Hurricane Sandy and, while initial repairs were made to bring the bridge up to working condition, the bridge's infrastructure needs significant attention. Also being replaced are the electrical and mechanical systems to address state of good repair needs.

Beach Channel Bridge serves as the main channel for barges carrying fuel to JFK Airport. Because of aging infrastructure, the bridge experiences malfunctions. When the bridge gets stuck, the Coast Guard mandates the bridge remain open to vessels, which restricts subway service and causes extensive delays.

Channel closures are being coordinating with the Coast Guard and mariners. There will be a 10-week marine channel closure within the 17-week 24/7 line shutdown.

The MTA will be providing alternative services to help mitigate the impact of no A and S trains to the Rockaway peninsula. These include:

- Q97 shuttle bus running non-stop between Howard Beach and Far Rockaway via the Nassau Expressway
- Q109 shuttle bus from Howard Beach to Beach 67 Street via Broad Channel and Beach 90 Street
- A fare-free S shuttle train on the peninsula between Far Rockaway and Rockaway Park
- A $2.75 fare (less than the current subway or bus fare) on the LIRR from their Far Rockaway Station to Manhattan and Brooklyn

The project is scheduled to be completed on Friday, May 16.

CONTRACT SOLICITATION NOTICE AND PROJECT OVERVIEW, July 15, 2022
PROJECT WEBSITE, December 3, 2024
MTA PRESS RELEASE, January 15

Worldwide Suburban Electric Railway, Metro and Tramway Openings in January 2025

Date	Country	City	Segment	Distance (miles)	Railway/ Metro/ Tram
1/1	China	Hangzhou	Line 5: Jinxing to East Nanhu	1.0	M
1/2	"	Chongqing	Bitong Line: Bishan to Tongliangxi	23.3	R
1/5	India	Delhi	RapidX: Sahibabad to New Ashok Nagar	8.1	R
"	"	"	Magenta Line: Janakpuri West to Krishna Park Extension	1.2	M
"	Saudi Arabia	Riyadh	Orange Line: Jeddah Road to Khashm Al An	24.7	M
1/6	Qatar	Doha/Lusail	Turquoise Line: Lusail QNB to Loop	0.5	T
"	Turkey	Eskişehir	Otogar to Opera	1.6	T
1/7	Finland	Tampere	Route 1: Santalahti to Pyhällönpuisto	2.9	T
1/10	China	Ningbo	Line 4: Cicheng to Cicheng West	1.1	M
1/19	Japan	Osaka	Chuo Line: Cosmosquare to Yumeshima	2.0	M
1/25	Italy	Florence	T2: Fortezza to San Marco-Università	1.1	T
1/27	Brazil	Sao Paulo	Line 9: Mendes-Vila Natal to Varginha	1.1	R

URBAN RAIL NEWS, JANUARY 31

Rail News in Review

New York Metropolitan Area

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)

MTA Fast-Tracks Interborough Express

As congestion pricing chugs along, another big MTA project stands to move forward with financial support from the Manhattan toll plan: a new Brooklyn-to-Queens train that will potentially transform city travel as outer-borough commuters know it.

Dubbed the Interborough Express (IBX), the proposal for a light rail line connecting the two boroughs would bypass Manhattan and run 14 miles from Jackson Heights, Queens to Bay Ridge, Brooklyn along an underused freight line. It would dramatically transform many NYC commutes, especially for the nearly one million who live within walking distance of the proposed IBX route.

Rendering of the Roosevelt Avenue terminal, at the north end of the proposed line. MTA

The plan has been in the works since at least 2022, but has not made much progress until now. According to MTA officials, the agency is putting IBX into high gear again with a request for proposals to begin the preliminary engineering phase of the project, which is featured in the agency's 2025-2029 capital plan.

Governor Kathy Hochul supports the project, too. She highlighted it on November 14, 2024 as part of a list of major transit projects for NYC when she announced the activation of congestion pricing with a lowered $9 base toll from $15 that took effect on January 5.

According to an article in Crain's New York Business, the IBX project will be completed in two phases. The first phase would include demolishing existing structures, constructing new tunnel and bridge structures and repositioning existing freight infrastructure.

The other phase would consist of installing the light-rail system, constructing stations and an operation center, ordering light-rail trains, and taking other steps before putting the railway into service.

At a cost of approximately $5.5 billion, the IBX would transform a "lightly used" freight railway into a light-rail passenger line that would connect to 17 subway lines, more than 50 bus routes and the Long Island Rail Road.

According to the project's description, the proposed railway will significantly cut travel times between Brooklyn and Queens. An end-to-end commute is expected to take 40 minutes.

The only way New Yorkers can currently travel by subway between Brooklyn and Queens without going into Manhattan is on the G train.

The MTA reported that early environmental analyses have already begun in anticipation of the federal government's approval to formally begin the National Environmental Policy Act environmental review process.

In the meantime, several public meetings have been held about the project to gather community input with more to be announced in the future, including public hearings associated with the environmental review process.
QNS.COM, January 26

NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT (NYCT)

Platform Edge Barrier Update

Work to install platform edge barriers at various stations continues, with two more installations completed on the BMT Canarsie L Line.

Over the weekend of January 25-26, the barriers were installed at Lorimer Street. Barriers were installed at Wilson Avenue over the weekend of February 8-9. For both locations, the northbound platform was done on Saturday and the southbound platform on Sunday.

From midnight to noon on each day, trains bypassed the stations while the work was underway.

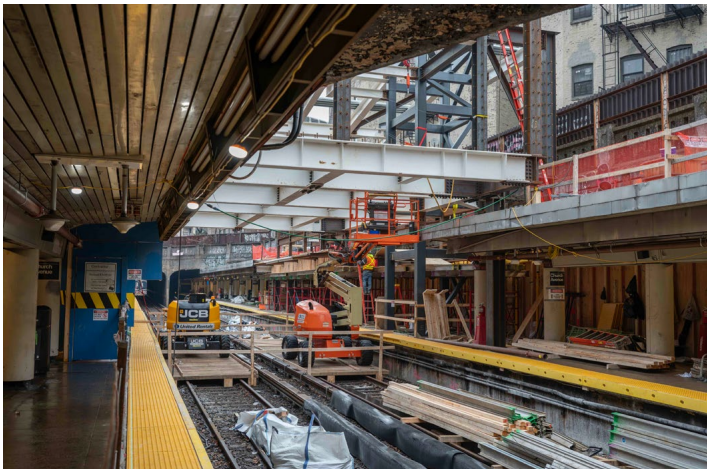
Church Avenue D Q ADA Work Progresses

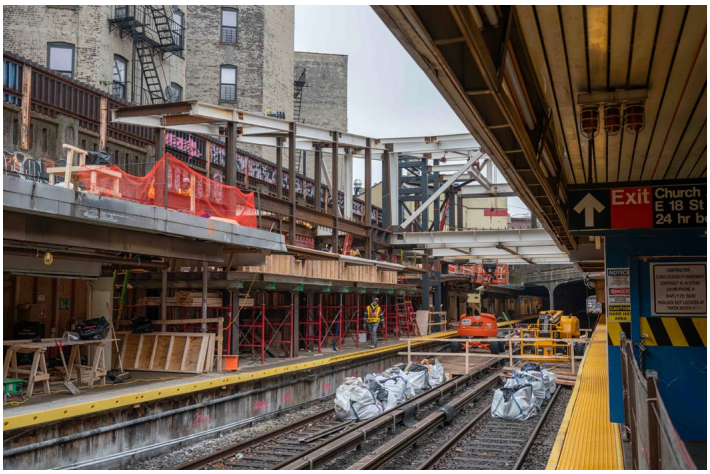
As we have been reporting in the *ERA Bulletin*, work has been ongoing at Church Avenue Station on the BMT Brighton Line

for several months.

Your Editor had the opportunity to visit the work site on January 31 and was surprised at the amount of additional new steelwork that is required for this elevator/ADA upgrade.

Here are two views of the construction taken from the southbound platform. As you can see, most of the new steelwork is over the express tracks.





(Above) Looking northbound and (below) looking southbound. Jeff Erlitz photos

Two More Stations Now Accessible

Three new elevators went into service at the Westchester Square-E Tremont Avenue 6 Station on January 15, making that station fully accessible. In addition to the new elevators, crews upgraded platforms, replaced existing and built new staircases, and created new ADA boarding areas.

This station, which serves 3,800 daily riders, is the first subway station to be made accessible in 2025.

The project included one new street-to-mezzanine elevator and two new mezzanine-to-platform elevators, four new platform stairways, and eight refurbished stairways. New lighting and tiles were installed, concrete, steel and paint defects were repaired, and platforms were refinished with new tactile edge strips.

A number of safety enhancements were made in the station, including a new fire alarm system, CCTV cameras and upgraded communications systems.

The elevator from the mezzanine to the northbound platform at Westchester Square on January 15. Marc A. Hermann/MTA photo

New artwork at the station by artist Shervone Neckles honors the area's early native inhabitants. *The Land Between Open Water* (2024) refers to Snakapins, a large village inhabited by the indigenous Siwanoy population, a band of Munsee-speaking Lenape, who lived for centuries in the area now known as The Bronx. The artwork commissioned by MTA Arts & Design consists of eight full-height, painted steel panels set within the walls of the station at the platform level. Inspired by items found during archaeological excavations, *The Land Between Open Water* features such items as a box tortoise shell and antlers used by the Siwanoy to make jewelry, bowls, and other tools. Patterned backgrounds pick up lines and marks from fragments of indigenous earthware and pottery. A scene featuring a modern cityscape atop an earth pit, or underground storage used by the Siwanoy, is a nod to another artwork at the station: Romare Bearden's faceted glass artwork *City of Glass*, installed in 1993. Four images repeat on both the southbound and northbound platforms, also visible from the street. Gold accents inset on the black metal panels enliven the surfaces with a soft glow. This artwork is intended to offer present and future generations a tangible way to connect with the past.

The approximately $122.5 million project included $98.6 million in federal funds. The project's contractor was MLJTC2 Joint Venture, and the elevator manufacturer and installer was Modern Elevator.

Then, on January 24, the elevators at the Woodhaven Boulevard J Z Station were placed into service. This was the final station included in ADA Bundle 2.

The project included two new street-to-platform elevators, two new stairways, and four replaced stairways to enhance passenger circulation, and new ADA boarding areas with platform edges and tactile warning strips. In addition, a new fire alarm system, CCTV cameras, upgraded communications systems, and digital information screens were installed. Crews also installed six new turnstiles, upgraded mechanical,

Looking south along Woodhaven Boulevard towards Jamaica Avenue on January 24 of the street-to-Manhattan-bound platform elevator.
Marc A. Hermann/MTA photo

electrical and plumbing systems, and performed extensive state of good repair work including replacing platforms and windscreens, and made steel and concrete repairs.

Woodhaven Boulevard was the first accessibility project built to bypass an existing mezzanine, using direct to platform elevators. This design allows passengers to reach the platform with only one elevator, simplifying and speeding up the trip. It also allows the MTA to build one fewer elevator compared with past station designs, saving time and cost. As part of this improved accessible design, the project created two new entrances on the east side of Woodhaven Boulevard, with new fare control areas and new staircases. The new entrances allow passengers to access the station without crossing the many lanes of traffic on Woodhaven, a further improvement.

By utilizing two direct to platform elevators, the project delivered more direct access to the station. This approach also saved approximately $40 million from the project budget before construction even began by avoiding the need to construct a third elevator and perform extensive structural reconstruction of the existing mezzanine. Once the project entered construction, efficient project management delivered another $8 million in construction savings, bringing the accessibility project and station renewal in for a total $140 million.

The project was made possible by support from the Federal Transit Administration in the form of a $177 million grant. The surplus funding from that grant will be redirected to support other capital projects across the MTA.

The project's contractor is a joint venture between MLJ Contracting Corp and TC Electric, LLC., and the elevator manufacturer and installer was Modern Elevator.

Commissioned by MTA Arts & Design, *Points of Observation* is an expansion of artwork by Kathleen McCarthy, installed at the station in 1990. Thirteen new glass panels by McCarthy, an artist and ecologist, contain imagery of diamondback terrapins and cross sections of a pine seedling and a corn stem that juxtapose the original metal sculptures: three large-scale head forms. McCarthy's original work titled *Five Points of Observation* (1990) is one of MTA Arts & Design's (at the time, MTA Arts for Transit) earliest permanent commissions. The artwork was comprised of five copper mesh heads placed at varying angles at five stations on the BMT Jamaica Line. With this reconfiguration, placements at 111 Street and 104 Street Stations remain, while the forms from Cypress Hills and 75 Street Stations have been transferred to Woodhaven Boulevard Station to join the existing sculpture. The new imagery takes the installation beyond the singular human focus. Transparent areas in both glass and metal mediums offer riders interesting points of observation between the platform and streetscape, giving new life to a well-known work.

MTA Press Release, January 15
MTA Press Release, January 24

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD (LIRR)

Long Island City Station Entrance Moved

The entrance to the Long Island City Station, for passengers and employees alike, was moved from the east side of Second Street around the corner to the south side of Borden Avenue. This was done on Monday, January 13.

This work was done as part of the completion of the "Long Island City Yard Phase 3B Resiliency and Restoration" project. The south side of Borden Avenue is where the entrance to station had been located before this project started.

Many decades ago, the entrance to the station was on Second Street, back when there was an actual, and very large, station building.

New Radio Channel

On Monday, January 20, a new radio channel, Channel 5, was introduced on the Grand Central Branch of the railroad. This new channel is in use from the east portals of the tunnels, just outside of Harold Interlocking, to Grand Central Madison.

Babylon Station Work Progresses

On Monday, January 27, the east halves of the platforms at Babylon were returned to service following reconstruction work. With that, the west halves of both platforms were closed so that the work could commence on those sections.

METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (MNR)

Major Investment in Hudson Valley Rail Service Proposed

As part of her 2025 State of the State address, Governor Kathy Hochul proposed a major investment in Hudson Valley rail service that would increase capacity, reduce delays, and cut potential travel times by up to 15 minutes each way for certain

trips, as well as shorten "super-express" Hudson Line trips to less than 90 minutes. The proposal includes planning, evaluation, and design for a set of rail infrastructure capital improvements between New York City and Poughkeepsie, including projects such as a third track at Spuyten Duyvil, interlocking, signaling and trackwork at Croton Harmon, and capacity improvements at Poughkeepsie Yard. In addition, the MTA will execute a signaling redesign near Yonkers and climate resilience investments in the most vulnerable and highest ridership segments of the Hudson Line.

As part of an allocation anticipated to be available for regional investments in its 2025-29 capital plan, the MTA will evaluate and design other potential rail improvements, such as adding a third track to the Harlem Line or connecting Hudson Line service to Penn Station for a one-seat commute to Manhattan's West Side. In partnership with NYSDOT, the MTA will also establish a regional rail working group with New Jersey, Connecticut and rail partners, to promote better coordination on interoperability, ticketing, schedules and customer interfaces. This group will also develop plans to make travel by MNR or LIRR to MetLife Stadium as seamless as possible for the 2026 World Cup and explore future opportunities to further integrate regional travel.
MTA Press Release, January 5

NEW JERSEY TRANSIT (NJT)

Service Adjustments During PATH Hoboken Shutdown (See Next News Item)

Effective Monday, February 3 and continuing through Friday, February 28, the following service changes are being implemented to select trains to enhance capacity and travel options for passengers:

Train 337, the 5:42 PM departure from Hoboken, will be replaced by Train 6351 departing at 5:34 PM from Penn Station New York. Train 6351 will make all local stops to Maplewood, and terminate at Summit.

- Train 337 passengers who continue to travel through Hoboken may use Trains 807, 433, 881, or 339
- Train 433 will add stops at Brick Church and Orange
- Transfer will be available at Newark from Train 433 to Train 6351

Train 6651, the current 5:34 PM departure from Penn Station New York, will depart at 5:42 PM. This train will not stop at Secaucus or Newark.

- Train 3727 adjusted to depart one minute later

Train 334, the 6:47 PM departure from Summit, will be replaced by Train 6368 to Penn Station New York.

- Train 334 passengers who continue to travel to Hoboken may transfer at Newark to Train 858, arriving Hoboken at 7:36 PM
- Train 6248, the 4:21 PM departure from MSU to Penn Station New York, will not operate
- Hoboken passengers may use train 6246 and change at Newark to Train 330
- Penn Station passengers may transfer at Newark Broad St to Train 6670 arriving at New York at 8:29 PM
- Train 6612, the 6:13 AM departure from Dover, will go from 9 cars to 10 cars
- Train 6616, the 7:04 AM departure from Dover, will go from 9 cars to 10 cars

Train 246, the 4:08 PM departure from Montclair State University to Hoboken, will be replaced by Train 6246, departing at 4:17 PM to Penn Station New York.

Train 6264, the 7:22 PM departure from Montclair State University, will be replaced by Train 264 operating on the same schedule and terminating in Hoboken.
NJ Transit Press Release, January 27

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON (PATH)

Hoboken Station Shuts Down For Repairs

The PATH Hoboken Station will be closed from 11:59 PM Thursday, January 30, to 5:00 AM Tuesday, February 25, as part of the agency's two-year $430 million PATH Forward program. The closure was first announced in October 2024.

During the closure, the Port Authority will carry out safety repairs and improvements across several elements of the 117-year-old system. The full station closure enables the agency to complete track and station work on an expedited basis that would otherwise necessitate severe schedule reductions and service suspensions repetitively over a prolonged period. The work includes:

- Replacement of Hoboken Interlocking and tracks in the station
- Track repair and maintenance work: 4,500 linear feet of track in the two tunnels leading into the station will be repaired.
- The concrete walking surfaces in public areas throughout the station will be replaced, as well as four staircases between the station's mezzanine and platform levels. The Port Authority coordinated the rehabilitation with the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office and the Hoboken Historic Preservation Commission.

The agency planned the closure during a time of year that traditionally sees lower daily ridership levels. During the closure, several travel alternatives are being offered, though passengers may still experience crowding and lines. Alternative travel options include:

- Cross-honored ferry service:
  - Additional peak period service departing every 10 minutes from both Hoboken ferry terminals (PATH/NJT terminal and 14th Street), with service to Manhattan via the Brookfield Place/Battery Park City terminal and via Midtown/West 39th Street terminal
  - Expanded NY Waterway crosstown bus service from Midtown/West 39th Street terminal
  - Extended operating hours until 10 PM weekdays and 12 AM weekends at both Hoboken terminals
  - Additional weekend route, offering service to Midtown/

West 39th Street from both Hoboken terminals
- Free shuttle bus service connecting Hoboken to continuing PATH service at Newport and Exchange Place stations
- NJT to increase frequency of the No. 126 bus route, connecting Hoboken station with the Midtown Bus Terminal
- Additional PATH trains to serve expected additional passengers at Newport and Exchange Place Stations to/from World Trade Center and 33 Street. The additional service will result in trains arriving at Newport every two to four minutes and trains arriving at Exchange Place every five minutes or less during rush hours.
- NJT will provide additional service on the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail weekdays between 6 to 10 AM and 3 to 7 PM, connecting riders to/from continuing PATH service at Newport and Exchange Place.

PORT AUTHORITY PRESS RELEASE, January 24
NY WATERWAY PRESS RELEASE, January 29

Other U.S. Systems

BOSTON, MASS.

Planned Service Outages

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) announced its planned construction schedule for the first half of 2025. MBTA will continue proactive track maintenance to prevent slow zones recurring. In 2025, the focus will shift to upgrading other infrastructure, including signal systems and improving accessibility across the network.

Key initiatives slated for 2025 include:

Signal Modernization

The MBTA will focus on the $285 million project to modernize its signal system across the Red and Orange Lines, with the goal of reducing congestion and delays and providing operational flexibilities. The new upgraded signal system will allow for more frequent service, improved scheduling, and enhanced safety.

Annual Programmed Maintenance

As part of its long-term sustainability plan, the MBTA will carry out annual programmed maintenance across its system, addressing routine needs and ensuring that all infrastructure remains in peak operating condition. This maintenance will include inspections, adjustments, and repairs to keep the system safe and running smoothly throughout the year.

Green Line Train Protection System (GLTPS)

The MBTA will begin implementing an added layer of safety to the Green Line. The GLTPS system will use safety monitoring equipment to transmit data to the train as it moves along the tracks. Using onboard alerts and communications, the system will notify the operator when another vehicle is detected, when the vehicle is speeding, and can automatically stop the train at stop signals. This safety system can also improve travel times by reducing unplanned stops.

Accessibility Enhancements

The MBTA is dedicated to ensuring that its services are accessible to all riders, including those with disabilities. Planned improvements in the second half of 2025 will include upgrades to station entrances, platforms, and elevators, as well as enhancements to communication systems to provide real-time updates to riders with hearing or visual impairments. There will be a large focus on improving accessibility on the Green Line. This will include the installation of elevators at Symphony Station to ensure that all passengers can access the platform and board trains with ease. The MBTA is also looking forward to enhancing Ruggles Station along the Orange Line, which includes making a fully accessible Columbus Avenue entrance.
MBTA PRESS RELEASE, January 17

Red Line Speed Increase

Speeds on the Red Line's Braintree Branch were restored from 40 mph to 50 mph, where feasible, a result of the Track Improvement Program, which also eliminated the many slow-speed sections. The MBTA's Maintenance of Way team within the Operations Division, presented their results and strategies during the MBTA Board of Directors meeting at the end of January.
MBTA PRESS RELEASE, January 27

01821-01820 (Bombardier Transportation, 1993-94) lead an Alewife-bound Red Line train into Charles/MGH on July 22, 2023.
Jeff Erlitz photo

CHICAGO, ILL.

CTA President Retires

Dorval R. Carter, Jr. announced that he will retire from leadership of the nation's third-largest public transit agency, effective Friday, January 31. Carter's retirement ends a

40-year career in public transportation that has included nearly 10 years as CTA president.

Carter began his CTA career in September 1984 as a staff attorney and has worked at the agency for a combined 26 years. During that time, he served as acting president, executive vice-president, chief administrative officer, and in a number of legal roles as well. His public transit career has also included nearly 15 years in senior leadership roles at the United States Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration.

CTA Press Release, January 13

KANSAS CITY, MO.

Streetcar Extension Testing

Kansas City's long-anticipated Main Street Extension has officially entered its critical testing phase, marking a major milestone in the project's journey toward passenger service. For the first time since 1957, streetcars will travel along Main Street through Midtown and to the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Testing begins with clearance checks and progresses to fully integrating all new systems. This phase of testing will be followed by extensive operator training, covering every aspect of the streetcar's operation on the new extension.

The integrated testing process began the week of January 13 with clearance testing. During that phase, a specially designed cart was used to replicate the streetcar's "dynamic envelope," ensuring sufficient clearances along the entire route, including platforms, overhead traffic signal mast arms, and nearby signage. With these verifications complete, streetcars are then introduced to the route, operating under full electrical power to conduct comprehensive functional evaluations.

Urbos 3 No. 803 (CAF, 2016) has just left the southern terminal at Union Station on Main Street on May 7, 2016.
Jason Doss photo via Urban Electric Transit

Over the coming months, comprehensive testing of vehicles, tracks, substations, and systems will take place along the extension. Key testing components include platform interface, train control system validation, train to wayside communication interface, track switch operations, ride quality checks, speed tests, and more. Motorists and pedestrians are asked to exercise caution during this testing period. Pedestrians should use designated crosswalks, and motorists are advised to stay alert for changes in traffic control around the area. Additionally, motorists are advised not to park in the designated streetcar transit lanes or on the streetcar tracks. Anyone found parking in those areas will be ticketed and towed.

The current phase, known as Systems Integrated Testing, will take several months to complete and will be followed by the Pre-Revenue, or Pre-Passenger, Operations phase. During this stage of testing, streetcar operators will undergo extensive training and familiarization with the new route to prepare for passenger service later in 2025.

The KC Streetcar Main Street Extension is a 3.5-mile extension of the KC Streetcar System that will connect the current southern terminus at Union Station to the University of Missouri at Kansas City at 51st Street and Brookside Boulevard. The City of Kansas City, Mo. serves as project manager of the Main Street Extension design and construction and is the grant recipient of the federal Capital Investment Grant helping to fund this project. The extension is fully funded with a combination of these federal funds and new local funding approved through the voter approved Transportation Development District.

Construction is being led by the KC Streetcar Constructors, a joint venture between Herzog Contracting Corp. and Stacy and Witbeck and supported by Burns & McDonnell and JE Dunn Construction. The project is overseen by the joint partnership of the City of Kansas City, Mo., the KC Streetcar Authority and the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority.

KC Streetcar Media Alert, January 22

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

Foothill Gold Line from Glendora to Pomona Reaches Substantial Completion

The Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority (Construction Authority) announced that the $1.5 billion, four-station Foothill Gold Line light rail project from Glendora to Pomona reached substantial completion on time and on budget. The design-build contract was completed by Kiewit-Parsons, a Joint Venture (KPJV), over the last five years and included all elements of the 9.1-mile light rail project. The $906.5 million contract included design and construction of the four new light rail stations and associated multi-modal parking facilities, the new light rail systems (including track, power, train control, communications and safety equipment), nine miles of relocated freight track that initially sat in the middle of the now-shared rail corridor, 19 bridges (including four new light rail bridges that span major city streets and intersections in Glendora and San Dimas), 21 at-grade street crossings, 10 miles of decorative sound and retaining walls, corridor-wide fencing to prevent trespassing, testing of the line and new

systems, and much more.

Reaching substantial completion means that the Foothill Gold Line from Glendora to Pomona, which is adding new Metro A Line stations in the cities of Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, and Pomona, is now ready to be turned over to Metro for final testing, training of operators and other crews, emergency and safety preparations, pre-revenue operations and simulated revenue service, and final approvals by the California Public Utilities Commission, among other tasks that will take place in the months ahead. This milestone follows months of testing of the new systems by the Construction Authority and KPJV, and determination that the new extension is safe to operate. An opening date has not yet been determined; Metro will announce the date in the future.

The design-build contract for the Foothill Gold Line from Glendora to Pomona was executed in October 2019, and major construction on the project began in July 2020 after several months of final design work. Over the last five years of design and construction, the team logged more than 2.6 million work hours and completed the project with an excellent safety record.

LA County's Measure M half-cent sales tax provided the majority of funding for the project, along with nearly $100 million of residual funds from the Measure R half-cent sales tax not used to complete the now-operational Pasadena to Azusa segment. Additionally, the project was awarded a nearly $300 million grant through CalSTA's Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) in 2018. The majority of the TIRCP grant funds have been used to complete the Glendora to Pomona segment, with approximately $40 million set aside for the final project segment from Pomona to Montclair. In 2021, the project was also awarded a $650,000 grant from CalRecycle to use tire-derived aggregate as part of the project. As a result, approximately 548,200 tires were recycled and utilized to reduce noise in areas along the project corridor where noise impacts were identified and could be reduced through this effort.

FOOTHILL GOLD LINE PRESS RELEASE, January 3

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Rail Lines Renamed

SEPTA's Metro transition is underway, the goal being to make the system easier to use and simpler to navigate. A key element of this process is streamlining the way we refer to our different services – all bus lines will be indicated by numbers, and all metro lines will be identified by letters. These changes will be seen starting with the new schedules that will go into effect February 23-24. This kind of transition takes time, and riders should expect to see both old and new language and signage used through the transition.

The renaming of the Metro lines are:

- Market-Frankford Line is becoming the L
- Broad Street Line is becoming the B. The Local is the B1, the Express is the B2, and the Spur is the B3
- Subway-Surface Trolleys are becoming the T. The 10 is the T1, the 34 is the T2, the 13 is the T3, the 11 is the T4, and the 36 is the T5
- Route 15 Trolley is becoming the G
- Media-Sharon Hill Line is becoming the D. The 101 is the D1, and the 102 is the D2
- The Norristown High Speed Line is becoming the M.

SEPTA PRESS RELEASE, January 27

PITTSBURGH, PA.

Temporary Service Changes on Rail Lines

Detours related to the closure of the Mt. Washington Transit Tunnel are among the key changes in the service adjustments scheduled for February 23. The Mt. Washington Transit Tunnel will be closed for approximately eight months to allow repairs to the tracks, roadway, and overhead electric lines inside the tunnel.

During this period, rail service will be adjusted, as follows:

- Red and Blue Lines: Weekday light-rail service will detour via the tracks along Warrington and Arlington Avenues in Allentown
- Silver Line: On weekdays, service will operate between Library Station and Washington Junction to minimize congestion in Allentown. Riders can transfer to the Red and Blue Line at Washington Junction
- Weekend Rail Service: Red, Blue, and Silver Lines will operate via Allentown
- Temporary "Subway Local": PRT will introduce a temporary rail route connecting Station Square to Allegheny Station

Station Square will be included in the Free Fare Zone from February 23 until the project is complete.

PRT PRESS RELEASE, January 24

PORTLAND, ORE.

New Cars Enter Service

The first riders hopped on board TriMet's new Type 6 MAX trains on Thursday, January 16.

Two of the new vehicles, paired together to create one train, rolled out of TriMet's Ruby Junction Rail Operating Facility at 6:06 AM to meet riders for the morning commute. In total, 30 new vehicles will enter service in the months ahead, operating on all five MAX lines. As TriMet's most advanced trains, the Type 6s are part of an overall effort to boost reliability and rider comfort.

The Type 6 trains hold a notable first. They're the first that are not entering service alongside an extension of the MAX system. That has been the norm since TriMet introduced the MAX system in 1986. Testing took place after hours, during regular service, and during a short disruption in June 2024.

On the outside, the newest MAX trains look similar to our last generation of vehicles, the Type 5, introduced in 2015

Type 1 No. 101 (Bombardier Transportation, 1986), the "class leader," is seen leading SD660 No. 311 (Siemens, 2003) down SW 5th Avenue at SW Market Street while operating a trip on the Green Line on June 22, 2017. Jeff Erlitz photo

when the MAX Orange Line opened. Both are manufactured by Siemens Mobility. They're the same length, 96 feet, 11 inches, and the same width, 8 feet, 8 inches. They're also both blue with orange stripes. But look closely on the inside, and it's a different story.

On the ceiling are digital destination displays, enhanced by graphics and video. Not only do they show the station the train is approaching, they're capable of displaying special messages and video packages. By using improved accessibility features, riders will have more information available to them as they ride.

New LED lights around the doors indicate when they're available for boarding and getting off trains. The lights will display in green when a door is ready for use, red when it's closed and cannot be used, and flash yellow when the doors are operating to provide better visual aids for riders. Improved temperature controls will help the trains stay cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

One thing riders may not notice, at least not at first, is the ability to use predictive maintenance to improve the trains' reliability. Sensors in the trains will communicate digitally with the maintenance teams, giving them better information to troubleshoot and solve issues before they occur.

On board security cameras are better, too. They will provide clearer pictures and feature wireless data for remote downloading of footage.

Introduction of the Type 6 means our first generation MAX trains, the Type 1s, will retire. They have been a reliable source of transportation for riders across the MAX system since 1986, a 39-year period where some of the trains have surpassed two million miles.

The decommissioning process for the Type 1s began when the first Type 6 trains began arriving for their extensive testing period. TriMet will continue phasing out those vehicles in 2025. Not only have the trains exceeded their lifespan, parts for the vehicles are no longer available.

TriMet plans to donate one of the Type 1 trains to the Oregon Electric Railway Museum in Brooks, Ore., for preservation.
TRIMET NEWS, January 16

SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

Service Changes

Starting Sunday, January 5, light rail service to all Folsom area stations resumed. Beginning the following day, Monday, January 6, weekday light rail service frequency will be improved to operate every 15 minutes at Folsom stations, made possible by the completion of a new passing track at the Glenn/Robert G. Holderness Station.

Construction on the passing track began in January 2024 and was completed in December 2024. SacRT had to finalize track testing and get California Public Utilities Commission approval before service could resume.

On weekdays, trains will serve Folsom area stations (Historic Folsom, Glenn/Robert G. Holderness, Iron Point, and Hazel) every 15 minutes from 6 AM to 11:30 PM, ensuring greater convenience and flexibility for riders. Weekend service will continue to provide 30-minute frequency at all Folsom stations.

The redesigned Glenn/Robert G. Holderness Station now features boarding from both sides of the platform for enhanced accessibility and efficiency. This will be a new boarding process for people used to boarding trains at the original station prior to construction.
SACRT PRESS RELEASE, January 3

SAN FRANSISCO, CALIF.

BART News

BART fares increased January 1, to try to keep pace with inflation so that the agency is able to pay for continued operations and to work toward restoring financial stability. BART's current funding model relies on passenger fares to pay for operations.

Fares will increase 5.5 percent. The increase is tied to the rate of inflation minus a half-percentage point. It's the second such increase, the first took effect January 1, 2024.

The average fare will increase 25 cents, from $4.47 to $4.72. BART's fare calculator and Trip Planner have been updated with the new fares.

The fare increase is expected to raise about $14 million per year for operations. Combined with the previous year's fare adjustment, BART will use this $30 million per year to fund train service, enhance cleaning, hire additional police and increase unarmed safety staff presence, and capital projects such as the Next Generation Fare Gates project.

Speaking of the Next Generation Fare Gate project, installation work continues. Work began on January 3 at South Hayward, Embarcadero on January 10, and Downtown Berkeley on February 3. These installations usually take about two weeks to complete.

In other news, regular train speeds returned to the Oakland core service area at the end of January following the repair of a power substation. Last summer, the substation located near 19th Street Station failed after experiencing a fault, requiring BART to realign power distributions from nearby redundant substations while repairs were being made. This configuration required BART to run trains at slower speeds in the areas approaching MacArthur, 19th Street, and 12th Street stations. Trains were also metered into these stations, causing frequent but short train holds. This service plan caused delays of about three minutes, but those delays could compound when other incidents occurred in the system.

Crews have been working to get the substation back to full operations, and late last week, the substation was successfully brought online. Over the weekend, normal speeds were restored. Trains no longer need to run at 27 mph through the area and are now traveling up to 70 mph.

2025 will be an important year for fortifying and expanding BART's power substations. Another substation located east of the Transbay Tube is being fully renovated, and two new power substations located near Civic Center and Montgomery will also be coming online this year.

BART Press Release, January 1
BART Press Release, January 2
BART Press Release, January 15
BART Press Release, January 27

SEATTLE, WASH.

Link 2 Line Service Begins May 10

Sound Transit announced that two new stations on the Link 2 Line in Redmond will open for passenger service on May 10.

The 3.4-mile Downtown Redmond Link Extension includes two new stations in southeast Redmond, at Marymoor Village and Downtown Redmond. Two-car trains will run every 10 minutes, 16 hours a day. The initial segment of the 2 Line between South Bellevue and Redmond Technology Station opened on April 27, 2024, with first-day ridership of 35,000.

The full 2 Line is expected to open in late 2025 with the completion of the I-90 segment of East Link. When completed, the I-90 segment will add the Mercer Island and Judkins Park stations to the 2 Line and connect to the 1 Line at the International District/Chinatown Station in downtown Seattle.

Starting May 10, the 2 Line will serve the following stations:

- South Bellevue
- East Main
- Bellevue Downtown
- Wilburton
- Spring District
- BelRed
- Overlake Village
- Redmond Technology
- Marymoor Village
- Downtown Redmond

Service will run from 5:30 AM to 9:30 PM seven days a week and will connect with the regional transit network at South Bellevue, Bellevue Downtown, Redmond Technology, Marymoor Village and Downtown Redmond stations.

The Marymoor Village station includes a new 1,400-stall parking garage. Parking also is available at South Bellevue, BelRed and Redmond Technology stations. Several stations are accessible from the Eastrail corridor and the regional trail network. Secure bike parking is available at every station.

Sound Transit Press Release, January 30

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Automatic Train Operation Issues

Metro launched its Automatic Train Operations on the Red Line in December. According to the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC), things have gone well overall.

During a WMSC public meeting of the Commissioners on January 28, there were some station overruns, which is when a train stops partially beyond the designated platform point and doors are inaccessible.

The WMSC said it recently conducted its second inspection of the automatic train operation system.

As of January 28, there have been a total of 133 station overruns on the Red Line. WMSC said it's been looking into why the overruns keep happening. They believe the train stop and cancel button could be the reason for some of the hiccups.

The WMSC director of system and engineering stated that one pattern identified from data on station overruns was that train operators were pressing the "stop cancel" buttons, judging the train would not stop at the platform. That causes the train to lose station stopping profile, meaning the train won't stop on the platform. Ice, snow, and rain could also be contributing factors.

WMSC said it will continue to monitor and make adjustments, including more operator training on the stop and cancel button.

WUSA9.com, January 28

International

CAMPINA GRANDE, BRAZIL

New Trams in Service

The Ministry of Transport has signed an agreement for the transfer of 15.5 kilometers of moribund railway to the municipality of Campina Grande for the development of a light rail service.

The R$170 million project covers the reconstruction of a cross-city section of the meter-gauge Transnordestina railway through Campina Grande.

Running on a broadly north-south alignment, the proposed light rail route would serve 10 stops serving schools,

universities, hospitals and the Presidente Joao Suassuna Airport. An interchange hub is to be built at the former Nova rail station in the center.

Works are scheduled to begin in the second half of this year. R$100 million is to be provided by the Ministry of Transport and the remainder of the funding would come from the municipality.

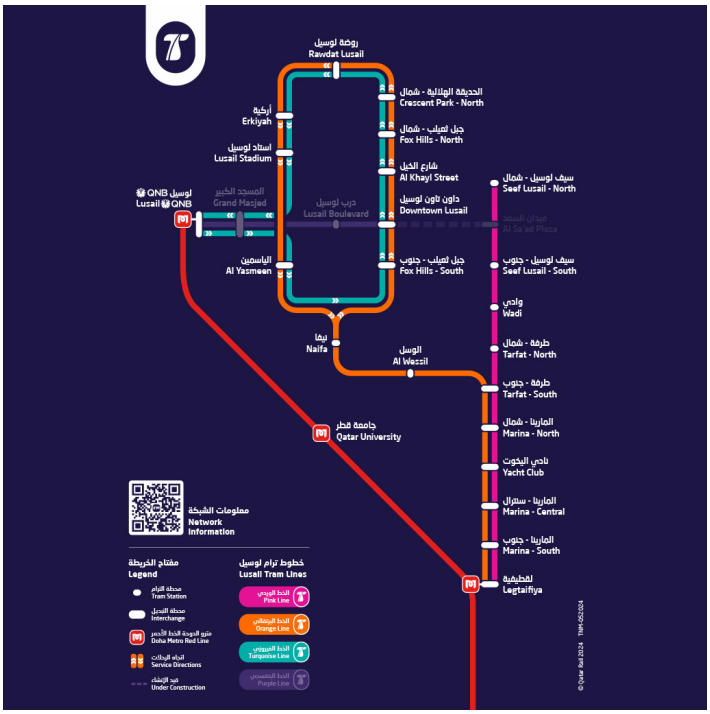
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 17

DOHA/LUSAIL, QATAR

New Tram Line in Service

Revenue-earning Turquoise Line tram services in Lusail, north of Doha, began on January 6.

The Turquoise Line is the third element of the Lusail tram network to open, and services make extensive use of alignments that are already open. Trams run eastwards over 600 meters of dedicated alignment from the Lusail terminus of the Red metro line. They then follow a loop anticlockwise via Downtown Lusail and Rawdat Lusail, sharing tracks and nine stops with the Orange Line, before returning to terminate at the metro hub. A stop at Grand Masjed is yet to open.



Map of the Lusail tramway network as it now stands. Qatar Rail

Services run daily from 5:00 AM to 1:30 AM on weekdays, except for Friday when it operates from 2:00 PM to 1:30 AM.

The next segment of the light rail network to open will see an east-west Purple route created to link Lusail station with Al Sa'ad Plaza, which is currently served by Pink Line trams running north-south along the Lusail waterfront.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 15

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Metro Blue Line

Dubai's Roads & Transport Authority has awarded the contract for construction of the metro network's Blue Line to a Turkish-Chinese consortium comprising civil works contractors Mapa and Limak with railway systems supplier CRRC. The project is valued at 20.5 billion dirhams, with construction to begin in April 2025 for opening on September 9, 2029, the 20th anniversary of Dubai's first metro line. The international tender attracted technical and financial proposals from five alliances comprising 15 companies, and three consortia advanced to the final stage.

Metropolis No. 5129 (Alstom, 2020) approaches Creek Station, one of the Green Line terminals, on February 25, 2024.
Dmitry Sagdeev photo via Urban Electric Transit

The 30-kilometer Blue Line will have two routes totaling 15.5 kilometers of underground and 14.5 kilometers of elevated alignment, including a 1.3-kilometer-long bridge across the Dubai Creek. One 21-kilometer route branch with 10 stations will start at Al Khor Interchange on the Green Line in Al Jaddaf and run through Dubai Festival City, Dubai Creek Harbour, and Ras Al Khor to International City 1, Dubai Silicon Oasis and Dubai Academic City. The nine-kilometer second route with four stations will begin at Centrepoint Interchange on the Red Line in Al Rashidiya and run through Mirdif and Al Warqaa to International City 1.

The Blue Line will have a capacity of 46,000 passengers/direction/hour with trains every two minutes. It is expected to serve nearly 200,000 passengers/day by 2030, rising to 320,000 passengers/day by 2040.

The Dubai Creek Harbour station, designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, would be distinguished by its unique architectural design that embodies Dubai's forward-thinking vision. International City 1 will have the largest underground interchange station on the metro network, with a capacity of 350,000 passengers/day.

The project includes a depot in Al Ruwaiyah. The Blue Line

is projected to yield 2.6 dirhams in economic, social and environmental benefits for every dirham invested by 2040, including savings in time, fuel consumption, accident-related fatalities, and carbon emissions. It is predicted to reduce traffic congestion on key corridors by 20 percent and boost the value of land and properties surrounding its stations by up to 25 percent. It will be the first transport project in Dubai to comply with platinum-grade green building standards.
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 6

GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN

New Trams in Service

Gothenburg Tramways began putting its longer and higher capacity Alstom trams into passenger service on Route 11 on January 19, following a preview trip for invited guests two days before.

Regional transport authority Vasttrafik ordered 60 Type M34 trams in two batches in 2021-22. They are being produced at Alstom's Bautzen factory in Germany for entry into service over the next two years.

M34 Flexity Gothenburg No. 601 (Alstom, 8/2024) at Rantorget Depot on September 18, 2024.
Niklas photo via Urban Electric Transit

The 45-meter-long Type M34 is 12 meters longer than the M33 trams ordered in 2016, increasing capacity from 220 to 319 passengers, and providing more space for wheelchair users and baby carriages.
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 27

HELSINKI, FINLAND

Tram System to Expand

Sweco has won a framework contract to provide design and engineering services for expansion of Helsinki's light rail network. Projects cover up to 30 route-kilometers, including the Malmin-Jakomaen network serving northeast districts of the city. Helsinki's Urban Environment Committee discussed the plans on November 26, and if approved by the city council construction would take place in 2028-32.

The 15.2-kilometer project aims to serve an area of significant population growth, with the current 46,000 inhabitants along the route expected to more than double by 2050.

The first phase covers a core route and western branch to Malmin, costing approximately €339 million. Diverging from the central tram network at Kumpula, the 8.6-kilometer core route parallels the Lahdenvayla motorway northeast via Viiki before turning northwest to cross the highway to reach Malminkentta at the southern edge of a former airfield now being redeveloped. Journey time from Kumpula would be around 18 minutes. The Malmin Line would then continue for 2.6 kilometers west via the main line station to terminate at Malmin hospital.

ForCity Smart Artic MLNRV3 No. 465 (Škoda, 6/2019) is operating on Route 6 at the Bulevardi stop on June 26, 2022.
Artjom photo via Urban Electric Transit

A second phase covers the four-kilometer Jakomakaen Line, costing a further €99 million. This branches off at Malminkentta to head north across the airfield before turning east to Jakomaki and terminating at Kuussilta in Vaarala.

As well as running through from Helsinki's legacy on-street tram network, the core route would offer interchange with the Jokeri orbital light rail line at Viiki.
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 20

HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

New Metro Opens

Ho Chi Minh City's 19.7-kilometer Metro Line 1 opened for commercial service at 10:00 AM on December 22 with free travel for 30 days. The southwest-to-northeast line runs from the Ben Thanh market in the city center to the densely populated suburb of Suoi Tien, serving 14 stations. Only 2.6 kilometers and three stations are underground, while the remaining 17.1 kilometers and 11 stations have been built on an elevated alignment. Maximum speed is 110 km/h on the elevated section, and 80 km/h in the tunnels.

Ho Chi Minh City Metro Line 1. HCMC metro photo

Works began in August 2012, and the line was originally scheduled to be completed in six years. Delays were partly due to a funding shortage from the Vietnamese government; multiple budget revisions needed to be re-approved by the national parliament. Total project cost was US$1.7 billion, exceeding the national government's initial estimate of US$1.1 billion. The line was financed through Official Development Assistance and preferential loans provided by the Japan International Co-operation Agency. Single tickets cost between 7,000 and 20,000 dong.

Initially, nine trainsets are operating each day, from 5:00 AM to 10:00 PM at eight to 12 minute headways. An end-to-end journey takes 29 minutes. Hitachi Rail has supplied 17 three-car aluminum-bodied trainsets, as well as track, electrical and mechanical systems under a under a ¥37 billion contract signed in 2013. Each 61.5-meter-long trainset has a capacity of 930 passengers, 147 of which are seated.
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 7

LILLE, FRANCE

More Metro Trains Ordered

The city of Lille has awarded Alstom a €210 million firm order to supply 15 more rubber-tire automated light metro trainsets, following on from 27 ordered previously. The trainsets in the latest order will replace the current Siemens VAL208 trainsets from 2028 onwards, enabling Line 1 to be operated exclusively with the latest generation of trains.

This forms part of a much-delayed modernization of the network which includes new rolling stock and the first deployment of Alstom's Urbalis Fluence control system, which the manufacturer said is based on direct train-to-train communication and embeds the system's intelligence into the trains, making them more autonomous and improving the system's overall performance.

Trains will run every 66 seconds during the peaks. The 52-meter-long four-car trainsets with wide gangways will have a capacity of 545 passengers. Features will include multimedia displays, CCTV, and a dedicated area for people with reduced mobility.

Lille metro trainset being assembled at Alstom's Valenciennes-Petite Foret site. Samuel Dhote/Alstom photo

Six of Alstom's sites in France will be involved in production: Valenciennes-Petite Foret (studies, design, train assembly, testing, and approval), Le Creusot (trucks), Ornans (motors), Tarbes (powertrain equipment), Saint-Ouen, (automation and the development of Urbalis Fluence), and Villeurbanne (onboard computing and passenger information).
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 22

LONDON, ENGLAND

Elephant & Castle Designer Appointed

Dragados UK has appointed AECOM as lead designer for the first stage of the construction of passenger tunnels to increase capacity at London Underground's Elephant & Castle station.

Elephant & Castle tube station, Interchange level, view from unpaid side of gateline. TfL Image

In September 2024, Transport for London awarded Dragados UK a contract to design and build 135 meters of tunnels to link a new Northern Line station box at the station with the existing platforms and overbridge. This will

significantly increase capacity, with footfall expected to rise by up to 40 percent by 2041, and will provide step-free access to the Northern Line.

AECOM will lead on engineering, as well as environment and stakeholder engagement services. WW+P Architects and Dr Sauer & Partners will provide architectural services and tunneling expertise under AECOM. Excavation is to begin this year for completion in 2027. AECOM previously worked with Dragados UK on the Bank Station Capacity Upgrade project.

The Elephant & Castle Station Capacity Upgrade project includes provision for the long-proposed but currently unfunded Bakerloo Line extension to Lewisham via Old Kent Road and New Cross Gate.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 7

Southeastern Class 376 EMU fleet

Contracts have been awarded for a mid-life refresh of the Class 376 electric multiple-units used on Southeastern's London suburban services since 2004. The work is being undertaken in collaboration with leasing company Eversholt Rail and Alstom, the successor to Bombardier Transportation which originally built the 36 five-car third-rail EMUs in Derby. Exterior work to be undertaken at Ashford will include a blue livery and LED lighting, with the first EMU to return to service this spring.

Rendering of refreshed Class 376 exterior. Southeastern

In the summer, work will begin at Grove Park on an interior refresh. This will include a full repaint, replacement flooring, refurbishing the seats, and fitting USB/power sockets. The first completed EMUs are to return to service before the end of the year. There was currently no funding to retrofit toilets or air-conditioning to the Class 376 fleet. The procurement of new or upgraded trains to replace Southeastern's Networker EMUs is ongoing.

RAIL BUSINESS UK, January 8

MADRID, SPAIN

Metro Line 6 to Go Automatic

Metro de Madrid has awarded Alstom a contract to upgrade the signaling on Line 6 to make it the city's first driverless metro line. The 23.5-kilometer circular line with 28 stations is the busiest on the network. Automation is expected to enable an increase in train frequencies and thus capacity, improve resilience and save energy.

Arganzuela Planetario station on Madrid's Metro Line 6. Alstom photo

Under the contract announced on January 20, the current Alstom communications-based train control will be upgraded from Grade of Automation (GoA) 2, where the driver is responsible for operating the doors and starting the train at stations, to GoA4 unattended driverless operation. A new supervision system will enhance monitoring and control. The project will be led by Alstom's signaling center of excellence in Madrid.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 21

MINSK, BELARUS

New Trams Delivered

Type T811 on December 28, 2024. Metro Report International photo

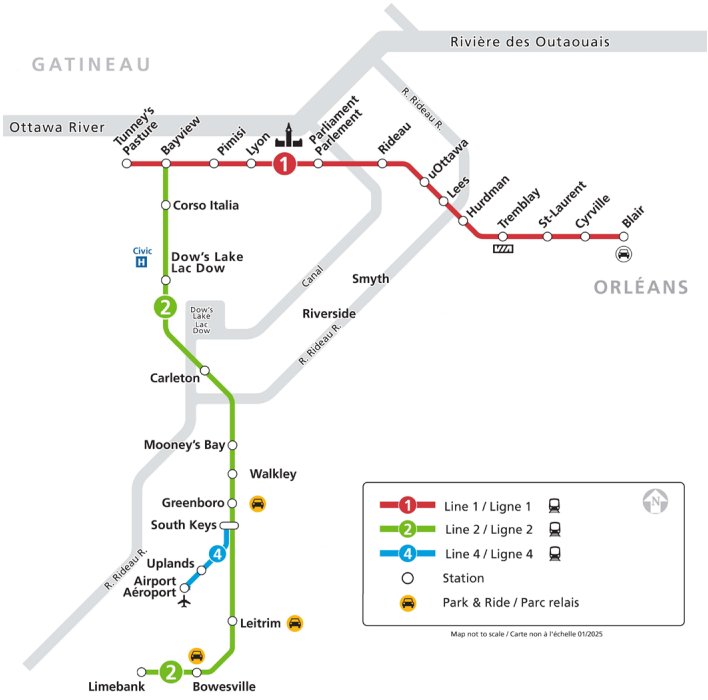
Belkommunmash has delivered 20 Type T811 low-floor four-axle trams to Minsk transport operator Minsktrans. The order, placed in 2024, had been planned for several

years but was postponed as BKM was busy with orders from Russia. The trams have a capacity of 159 passengers and a design speed of 75 km/h. They have a metal frame with corrosion-resistant composite glass fiber and aluminum panels which are expected to give a life of at least 30 years.
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 13

OTTAWA, CANADA

O-Train Lines 2 and 4 Open

OC Transpo has opened O-Train Lines 2 and 4. The January 6 launch of the lines is the first phase of the planned launch. The initial launch is just for weekdays, as the lines will expand to Saturdays and Sundays in the following weeks. OC Transpo notes each phase will last a minimum of two weeks and has been carefully planned to ensure smooth, safe and reliable operations. To start, service will be open Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to midnight.



Map of Ottawa's LRT system, with new Routes 2 and 4. OC Transpo

Line 2 stretches 19 kilometers (11.8 miles), connecting key neighborhoods like Carleton University, Little Italy, and Riverside South. Line 4 offers a direct connection to Ottawa International Airport, making travel easier for flyers and visitors.

Both lines feature bigger platforms and updated designs that OC Transpo says will make boarding easier for all riders. New and updated station features include tactile wayfinding, wide entryways and double elevators to ensure smooth travel for riders with strollers, mobility devices or luggage.

Line 2 has Stadler FLIRT trains that can accommodate up to 420 passengers while Line 4 has Alstom LINT trains that are compact and efficient. OC Transpo notes LINT trains will also be coupled at times and run on Line 2.

Parts of the lines run on single tracks. Along Lines 2 and 4, there are passing sidings that allow trains to pass each other. Many Line 2 and 4 stations also have two tracks, enabling trains going in opposite directions to serve the station at the same time.

There are five areas on Line 2 where trains can pass each other:

- Six kilometers (3.73 miles) of double track from north of Leitrim Station to Limebank Station
- Bayview Station to south of Corso Italia Station
- South Keys Station
- Carleton Station
- Brookfield siding: The rail section between Mooney's Bay and Walkley stations

OC Transpo notes that occasionally during a ride on one of the lines, a train will sometimes slow down or briefly stop on the passing tracks to allow a train heading in the opposite direction to pass.
MASS TRANSIT, January 7

Tramway to Gatineau?

Technical and environmental studies are to begin this spring for the TramGO project to develop a 24-kilometer tramway connecting western and central Gatineau in Quebec with Ottawa in neighboring Ontario.

The federal and Quebec governments have allocated C$163.5 million to plan the Quebec section of the route, and in December the federal government confirmed C$31.6 million over three years for the Ontario section.

In December the Quebec side's local transport agency STO awarded Groupe Porteur a C$114 million contract to provide multidisciplinary professional and technical services for its section of the route. Groupe Porteur comprises Systra Canada, Egis and EXP, working with Richez_Associes and Provencher_Roy. It will produce detailed work plans and schedules for public consultation, and provide technical and environmental studies, support procurement and supervise construction and commissioning.

The tramway will have two kilometers in Ontario and 22 kilometers in Quebec. The National Capital Commission has approved in principle at-grade running on Ottawa's Wellington Street, although a tunnel under Sparks Street may also be considered.

The Y-shaped line would cross the River Ottawa on the Portage Bridge, before dividing into a 7.5-kilometer north branch along Boulevard Saint-Raymond, Boulevard du Plateau and Chemin Vanier as far as Vanier itself. Meanwhile, a 10.5-kilometer southern branch would run along Chemin d'Aylmers, Boulevard Wilfrid-Lavigne and boulevard des Allumettieres to Eardly. There would be 37 stops including four multimodal hubs.

Opening is planned by 2035, boosting public transport capacity between Gatineau and Ottawa, promoting sustainable mobility throughout the National Capital Region and contributing to economic and social development.
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 16

PARIS, FRANCE

RER NG Trains Launched on Line D

The renewal of the rolling stock fleet used on the RER suburban network around Paris is continuing, with the latest generation RER NG trainsets entering service on Line D in December.

The RER NG fleet comprises two subclasses, Z58000 for Line E and Z58500 for Line D. The first of the EMUs entered service on Line E in November 2023 as part of the renewal and extension of the route under the Eole program. Now they are being rolled out on the busy Line D which runs north-south through the heart of Paris, linking Nord and Lyon stations along its route.

The partly double-deck EMUs are being produced by Alstom with nine of its plants involved in their assembly: Valenciennes-Petite Foret, Crespin, Ornans, Tarbes, Le Creusot, Petit-Quevilly, Villeurbanne, La Rochelle and Saint-Ouen.

The layout is designed to maximize passenger comfort while recognizing the different journey types that are made across the extensive RER network. The end cars of both variants are single-deck, while the other cars offer seats on two floors; the doors are also wider than on previous designs to facilitate faster passenger ingress and exit.

The seven-car Line D sets are slightly longer than the six-car Line E trains at 130 meters. They have a capacity of 1,861 passengers, of which 606 can be seated, while also being equipped with retractable steps to serve Line D's low-height platforms.

RER NG No. Z58035. Jeremie Anne photo

Work is being undertaken along Line D to reinforce power supplies and modify platforms to accommodate the new trains, of which eight are currently in use on off-peak services as they get worked in. Eurobalises are being fitted along the infrastructure to control selective door opening functions.

No less than €900 million has been allocated to modernize the key rolling stock depots at Joncherolles and Villeneuve. Deployment of the RER NG fleet will be gradual, with the next steps being operation on peak-hour Line D services. A total of 32 trains is expected to be delivered by the end of this year.

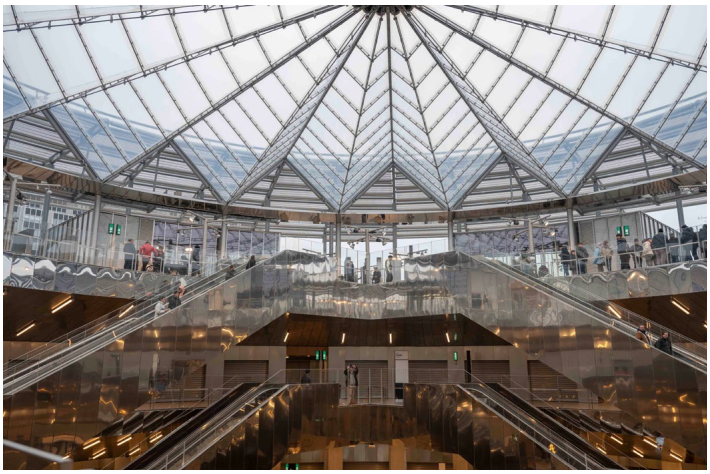
(Editor's note: The arrival of additional cars under the previous order has now allowed Line E to expand to a more full service on the extension to Nanterre, instead of the shuttle they have been running since the opening last year.)

RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL, January 10

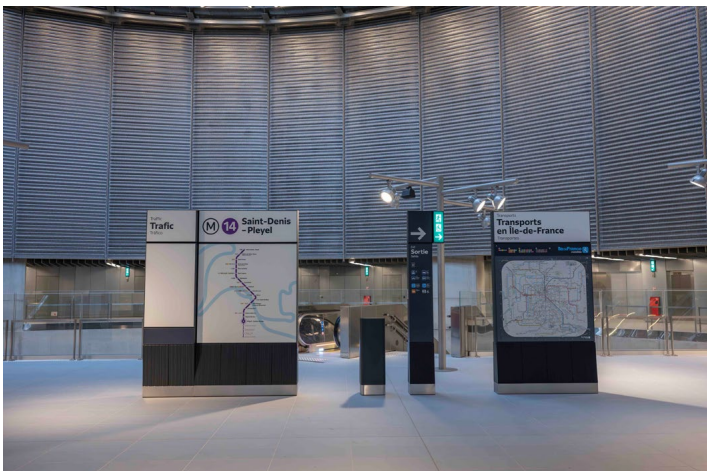
"Infill" Station Opens on Line 14

Metro Line 14 was extended south from Olympiades Station to Orly Airport (Aeroport d'Orly) on June 24, 2024, in time for the Olympics. The same day, it was also extended one stop to the north, from Mairie de Saint-Ouen to Saint-Denis Pleyel.

On that southern extension, one station was not yet ready for revenue service at that time. That station, Villejuif-Gustave Roussy, opened to the public on Saturday, January 18. As luck would have it, your Editor just happened to be in Paris on that day and was able to attend the opening ceremonies.



View north from the uppermost mezzanine level (-1) on opening day, January 18. The station entrance is a large atrium Jeff Erlitz photo



The spacious lower mezzanine (level -6) with some of the signage showing the newer graphic standard. Jeff Erlitz photo

The station is quite deep, located seven levels below street level. This station will become a transfer point later this year

when Line 15 South (part of the Grand Paris Express scheme) opens for revenue service. The platforms for Line 15 are located two levels below those of Line 14. We should mention that several of those levels are not open to public and are for various station mechanical and fire/life safety functions.

All of the station signage conforms to the newer Ile-de-France Mobilites graphic standard, which is different from the former RATP (Paris Metro) graphic standard.

ILE-DE-FRANCE MOBILITES PRESS RELEASE, January 18

POZNAN, POLAND

Second-Hand Trams Acquired

MPK Poznan is buying the approximately 30-year-old Duewag/Siemens NGT6D trams (also known as type R1.1) from Stadtwerke Bonn. The purchase agreement, worth approximately €2.2 million was signed on December 13, 2024.

The transfer of the 24 vehicles will take place in the course of 2025. The vehicles will gradually be replaced by new Skoda vehicles, the first of which entered service in December.

Poznan is interested in the vehicles in order to increase the share of vehicles with barrier-free access within its fleet at a favorable market price. In addition, MPK wants to have greater flexibility in operations and in the event of diversions thanks to the bi-directional design. Currently, 78 percent of the MPK fleet is low-floor.

One of Bonn's R1.1 trams, No. 9453 (Duewag, 3/1994), is shown at the Hauptbahnhof while operating on Route 62 to Oberkassel on April 2, 2022. S. Franke photo via Urban Electric Transit

The conversion of the Bonn trams and the adaptation to Polish requirements will take several months. For Poznan, these are by no means the first foreign second-hand trams; in the past, trams from Düsseldorf, Frankfurt/Main, Prague, and Amsterdam have been sent to Poznan for further use. Individual Duewag bi-directional trams from Frankfurt are still in service today.

URBAN TRANSPORT, January 4

New Trams Arrive

The first of 30 Moderus Gamma LF 04 AC BD trams that operator MPK Poznan's in-house manufacturer Modertrans is supplying arrived at Franowo depot on January 21.

The vehicles are being built at Modertrans' plant in Biskupice northeast of the city. The 100-percent low-floor, three-section, bidirectional vehicle is 32 meters long and has a capacity of 240 passengers, 46 of which can be seated. The tram features large windows, air-conditioning, and ramps to enable level boarding for wheelchair users and baby carriages.

Test running of the vehicle is under way and it is expected to enter revenue service this spring. Deliveries of the remaining 29 vehicles are scheduled to be completed by mid-2026. MPK Poznan is expecting to receive 215.5 million zloty in co-financing for 85 percent of the order value from the European Union.

Gamma LF 04 AC BD No. 941 being delivered to Franowo depot on January 21. Moderus photo

The city of Poznan plans to purchase 30 more trams with deliveries by 2029. For this order, it is expecting a 175 million zloty co-financing agreement under the EU's European Funds for Infrastructure, Climate, Environment 2021-27 program. Modertrans has to date built a total of 104 new trams for Poznan and refurbished many more older vehicles. Currently, 78 percent of the operator's 230 trams have a low-floor entry to support enhanced accessibility.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 31

PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

Tram Network Grows

The first ForCity Plus 52T tram for Prague is now on test at Škoda Group's Plzen factory, 13 months after the signing of the order and eight months after the start of production.

The December 2023 framework contract covers up to 200 trams worth KC16.6 billion, with a firm order for an initial 40 to be delivered in 2025-26. More than 230 sub-suppliers are working on the project, of which 76 percent are from the

ForCity Plus 52T No. 9501 (Skoda, 2024). Skoda Group photo

Czech Republic. The 100-percent low-floor trams are designed to offer higher comfort than current vehicles, with a more spacious interior, wider gangways, full air-conditioning, and a modern information system. Electromechanical brakes and energy recovery are intended to lower maintenance costs and energy consumption.

Testing of the first tram in Prague, including calibration of the anti-collision system, is expected to begin in April. The trams will be commissioned and maintained at the rebuilt Hloubetin depot.

DPP has recently received planning approval for two tramway extensions, both approximately two kilometers long and scheduled to open in 2027. The first is planned along Pocernicka ul from the intersection with Vinohradska to the intersection with Drevcicka, where a double-track loop is planned. Another will run from Olsanska to Habrova using the corridor of the disused railway from Prague-Malesice to the former Zizkov freight terminal which is being redeveloped as a residential district.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 28

RESITA, ROMANIA

Trams Return

Tram services restarted in Resita on December 20 after a hiatus of more than 13 years. The city's sole route links Kaufland in the north to Resita-Montana in the southeast, a distance of nine kilometers.

The tramway in Resita was inaugurated in 1988, but services ceased in August 2011 because the city could not afford to renew the aging infrastructure and rolling stock. The line ran from RENK, 250 meters north of current terminus Kaufland, to Stavila, which is one kilometer east of Resita-Montana. The 1.25-kilometer-long outer sections are not expected to reopen.

After three years of discussion, the decision to restore tram operations was finally made in 2019 as the city was able to secure EU funding to support rehabilitation work.

Panoramas Nos. 3 and 6 (Durmazlar, 2023) at The Boulevard of the Republic stop on reopening day, Friday, December 20, 2024. Yury Maller photo

Austria's Porr was awarded a 268 million lei contract in April 2022 for reconstruction of the infrastructure. Its scope covered the renewal of the tracks, stops, the depot, and the power supply system, as well as the provision of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The end-to-end journey on the truncated line takes 30 minutes and trams operate at headways of eight minutes in the peaks.

Turkey's Durmazlar has supplied 13 twin-section trams under a 135.4 million lei contract awarded in June 2020. Their purchase was underwritten by the EU's 2014-20 Regional Operational Program. The 18-meter-long, 2.4-meter-wide bidirectional trams have a capacity of 135 passengers, 33 of which can be seated.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 24

RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA

Orange Line Opens

The last of the six metro lines in Riyadh opened on January 5 when services began on Line 3, the Orange Line. An initial five stations have opened, at Jeddah Road, Tuwaiq, Al Dawh, Harun Al Rashid Road and An Naseem. A number of intermediate stations and an eastern extension are to follow in the coming weeks.

Riyadh Metro Orange Line. RCRC photo

The Orange Line will be the longest on the network, running 41.1 kilometers from Jeddah Road in the west to Prince Saad bin Abdulrahman Al-Awwal in the east and including 11 kilometers of tunnels when fully open.

It has been built under a US$5.21 billion contract awarded in 2013 to the ArRiyadh New Mobility consortium of Ansaldo STS (now Hitachi), Bombardier Transportation (Alstom), Salini-Impreglio (Webuild), Larsen & Toubro and Nesma.

It has a fleet of 47 two-car Innovia automated trainsets. In other Riyadh news, a further three stations on the Blue Line also opened on January 5.

METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 6

ROME, ITALY

EMUs for the Lazio Region

The first of 38 electric multiple-units ordered by the Lazio region have been unveiled at Titagarh Firema's Caserta factory. The €282 million framework agreement signed in January 2021 covers the supply and 10 years of maintenance of 38 trainsets of three types for use by operator Cotral:

- 20 six-car 1.5 kV DC EMUs for Metromare services on the 28-kilometer Rome Porta San Paolo to Lido di Ostia line. These are 107.6 meters long with four doors per car side with a capacity of 1,200 passengers
- Six four-car 3 kV DC EMUs for the 102-kilometer Rome Piazzale Flaminio to Viterbo Viale Trieste line, 71.7-meters-long with two doors per car side and a capacity of 680 passengers
- 12 four-car sets for local services on the 12.8-kilometer Rome to Montebello section of the Viterbo line, 71.7 meters long with two low and two high doors per car side to suit different platform heights and a capacity of 800 passengers

Lazio region EMUs. Titagarh Firema photo

All will have a maximum speed of 100 km/h, aluminum bodies and 1.3-meter-wide twin-leaf doors and air-conditioning with natural refrigerant with a low environmental impact. The trains are an evolution of a type in service on the Catania metro since 2022.

RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL, January 21

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

Rail Network Keeps Growing

Further expansion of the urban rail network around Seoul is under way with another section of the Great Train Express metro network opening, a long-disused part of the suburban rail network being revived and a further extension of the legacy metro network being approved.

Revenue services started on the 32.3-kilometer north-western section of GTX Line A in the Seoul area on December 28. The Unjeongjungang to Seoul Station route is the second segment of the line to open. The first, 28-kilometer, southwestern section opened between Suseo and Dongtan in March 2024. A 22.8-kilometer-long section to connect the two sides is now under construction, along with lines B and C of the GTX network.

The Unjeongjungang to Seoul Station section serves five stations. Each of these are equipped with high speed elevators running at 150 meters/minute; these are capable of carrying 21 passengers. Trains travel at speeds of up to 180 km/h and complete the Unjeongjungang to Seoul Station journey in 21½ minutes. Before GTX, an equivalent journey took on average 46 minutes by metro and one hour-six minutes by bus.

Seven eight-car Hyundai Rotem trainsets are being deployed on the route, providing a 10-minute interval service from 5:30 AM to 1:00 AM daily.

Seoul GTX-A. KNR image

Meanwhile, the ministry approved plans for a 17.6-kilometer extension of Seoul Metro Line 9 north of the Han river on December 24. The newly sanctioned route starts at Gangdong, to where Line 9 is currently being extended from its VHS Medical Center terminus. The extension would then serve the Hanam, Namyangju and Jinjeop districts, serving eight

stations, including interchanges to the Gyeongui-Jungang suburban rail line, the future GTX-B and the Jinjeop Line suburban service. Total project cost is expected to be 2.8 trillion won and opening is planned for 2031.
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 28

STUTTGART, GERMANY

Refurbished S-Bahn Trains

The first three Stuttgart S-Bahn electric multiple-units to be refurbished have been unveiled by operator DB Regio and transport authority VRS ahead of their return to passenger service in February. The €200 million program to refurbish 215 Class 423 and 430 EMUs is being undertaken at the DB workshops in Nuremberg and Hagen and Alstom's sites at Hennigsdorf in Germany and Villeneuve in Switzerland.

Repainted exterior (above) and refurbished interior (below) of Class 423 EMU. DB Regio photo

Talbot in Aachen has repainted the cars with a gray livery which includes blue to highlight the multi-purpose areas for wheelchairs, pushchairs, and bicycles and yellow for first class.

Internal changes include upgrading the multipurpose areas with more space, improving passenger information and fitting power sockets. An automatic passenger counting system at the doors is designed to enable accurate predictions of loadings to be provided, enabling passengers to spread themselves along the train to reduce dwell times. Completion is scheduled for 2026.

The EMUs are also being equipped with ETCS and prepared for GoA2 attended semi-automated operation under the Digital Node Stuttgart program. In the longer term, VRS hopes to move to GoA4 driverless operation; it envisages that the section of route S2 between Vaihingen and Filderstadt could be used for trials.
RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL, January 23

TORONTO, CANADA

Historic Fleet Moves to Streetcar Museum

Railfans ask when or if the TTC will retrofit its historic streetcar fleet with pantographs so that cars can operate on the new pan-only overhead. That question is now answered with the move of these cars to the streetcar museum at Rockwood, the Halton County Radial Railway.

Peter Witt 2766 and PCC 4500 are already at the museum as of January 28. 4549 moved on January 29, and the CLRVs will move on February 3 & 4.

The latest news is that the TTC states that the historic fleet will return to Toronto following completion of reconstruction at Hillcrest Carhouse.
STEVE MUNRO TRANSIT & POLITICS, January 28

Class A-8 No. 4549 (Canadian Car and Foundry, 1951) sitting at Hillcrest ready to leave on January 27. Anonymous photo

VANCOUVER, CANADA

Capstan SkyTrain Station Opens

In partnership with the city of Richmond, British Columbia,

TransLink has completed the Capstan SkyTrain Station on its Canada Line. The station, which is now open to riders, will help to deliver more efficient rapid transit in the growing Capstan Village area of Richmond.

The new Capstan Station features:

- Larger platform waiting area
- Expanded street-level concourse
- Dual sets of escalators
- First all-digital station with enhanced display screens
- Future commercial retail space

Located between Aberdeen and Bridgeport Stations on the Canada Line, Capstan Station will provide transportation to a rapidly growing neighborhood, which is expected to soon be home to roughly 16,000 Richmond residents.

No. 117 (Hyundai Rotem, 2008) at Bridgeport Station on March 31, 2019. South of this point is where the Airport and Richmond-Brighouse branches of the Canada Line split and this is one stop to the north of the new Capstan station. Anton Evstigneev photo via Urban Electric Transit

The C$62 million (US$43 million) project was established through a precedent-setting funding model involving the city of Richmond and Capstan Village developers and included Concord Pacific, Polygon Homes, Pinnacle International, and Yuanheng. TransLink says C$32.2 million (US$22.3 million) in construction costs for Capstan Station came from developer contributions. TransLink worked closely with the city of Richmond on station design, with the community in mind.

The station also features interior art from local artist Howie Tsui that depicts aquatic life in the Fraser River estuary. The large mosaic spans more than 3,600-square feet and was created using over 3,500 custom-made glazed glass and metallic tiles.
MASS TRANSIT, January 2

VITORIA-GASTEIZ, SPAIN

Additional Trams Ordered

Euskotren has awarded CAF a €20 million contract to supply three more trams to Vitoria-Gasteiz in the second half of 2027. Announcing the contract on December 11, CAF said the additional vehicles would be same length as the seven-section Urbos trams it previously supplied to the city, which are 44.2 meters long. They will incorporate new features for accessibility, with adapted signage, colors to highlight priority spaces and no tip-up seats.
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 2

An example from the previous order of tram cars, Urbos 3 No. 603 (CAF, 12/2019) is on Route T1 at University Station on February 15, 2020. Ivan Shishkin photo via Urban Electric Transit

WARSAW, POLAND

Metro/Tram Extensions To Be Completed

An agreement has been signed for Warsaw to receive 2 billion zloty of co-financing from the EU for the completion of metro Line 2 and ongoing tramway projects.

The 1.1 billion zloty of co-financing from the European Funds for Infrastructure, Climate, Environment 2021-27 program is to go towards the completion of metro Line 2. The 3 billion zloty final phase includes finishing ongoing works on the 3.4-kilometer, three-station section from Bemowo to Karolin in the west, as well as the purchase of seven six-car trainsets. Completion is scheduled for 2026.

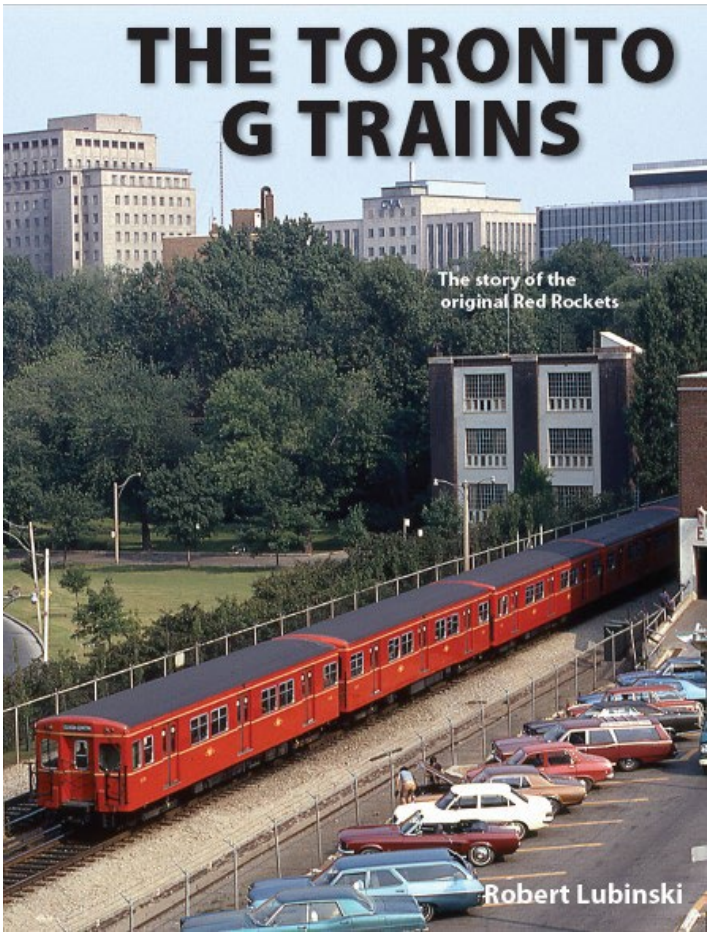
The remaining 900 million zloty of co-financing is to support the completion of various tramway projects with a total cost of 2.1 billion zloty. These include the Wilanow tram link; a 6.5-kilometer extension from Spacerowa to Miasteczko Wilanow opened in October but works are still under way to finish a one-stop branch from Sw. Bonifacego to Stegny.

The rest of the funds are to support the completion of a line from Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 on the existing network to Warszawa Zachodnia main line station, and a link between Pole Mokotowskie and Rakowiecka. New trams are also to be purchased and a depot built at Annopol.
METRO REPORT INTERNATIONAL, January 30

Book Review

By Paul Grether (ERA #6933)

TORONTO G TRAINS: The story of the original Red Rockets by Robert Lubinski, published by the Canadian Transit Heritage Foundation, Ontario, Canada in 2024, softcover, 264 pages, with extensive color and some black-and-white pictures. There are many diagrams and maps and the end includes various detailed appendices and a lengthy bibliography. Medium-format paperback. ISBN 978-1999204815.



The story of Canada's first subway is interesting, since it was developed after the Second World War, and designed under the influences of both systems in the United States and the United Kingdom. A key part of the efforts leading to the inaugural service under Yonge Street was developing specifications and ordering the first equipment. The so called "G-Trains" are unique since they are of British manufacture but constructed to North American scale, incorporating many design attributes from London Underground but also some PCC influences.

Lubinski's book covers the G-Trains in detail. As a result of being the first fleet and on the critical path to the schedule to open the first line, which occurred on March 30, 1954, the story also provides insights into the design, construction, and politics of the opening of the Toronto Subway.

The format of the book is well designed and profusely illustrated. Photographic reproductions are sharp, and the diagrams created for the book are detailed. Chapters include the details of the development of the specifications, selection of Gloucester Railway Carriage & Wagon Company over more traditional North American car builders offering PCC designs, the delivery, operations by decade, overhauls, and retirements. Appendices cover deep technical details, explanations of how the cars were operated, fleet roster, and even details on how the "Identra" coil destination system worked. The split of having more of the deep technical details included in appendices allows for the main chapter text to remain readable.

This book will appeal to those who have a general interest in subway vehicles, operations and design. This is a must-have book for those with an interest in Toronto transit. While there is significant technical detail included, the overall story of the Toronto Subway is seen from the perspective of the vehicle.

Link to book information:
www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=135977350

Views of Toronto Transit Commission Class G-1 pair 5098-5099 at the Halton County Radial Railway museum. This pair operated the inaugural trip on the Toronto subway and were acquired and preserved by the museum following their retirement in 1990.
(Above) Interior on July 28, 2024. Paul Grether photo
(Below) The pair outdoors on September 10, 1994. Ted Wickson photo

Travels with Jack May

Modern Streetcars in Three Midwestern Cities — Part 3

By Jack May (ERA #2275)

Thursday, September 29 turned out to be a beautiful sunny day, and we made the best of it. First thing after breakfast Dick rented a car, which allowed us a place to stash our bags between hotel check out and our late afternoon flights. Knowing there would be no good reason to chase the line by auto, since it could easily be followed by riding, we drove to the northern end and first visited the office/carhouse/shop, where we were treated royally. Then we deposited the car in a parking lot and spent the rest of the day riding and photographing.

Kansas City is a name that applies to two municipalities positioned across the Missouri River from each other, located in the states of Kansas and Missouri. I've met foreigners who confuse the two, but most Americans (at least those educated before the millennium) know that the smaller city is in Kansas (population 150,000), while the Missouri version is a real metropolis, the state's largest city, with a population just under a half million.

(Author's Note: St. Louis is now Missouri's second city, with only a little over 300,000 inhabitants. If one tallies population totals for official metropolitan areas, which include suburbs and points in Illinois for St. Louis and points in Kansas for Kansas City, St. Louis comes in first with just under 3 million, while Kansas City is just a tad above 2 million. The population of the City of St. Louis has declined from 850,000 in 1950, while the number of residents of Kansas City has remained pretty stable over the past 70 years.)

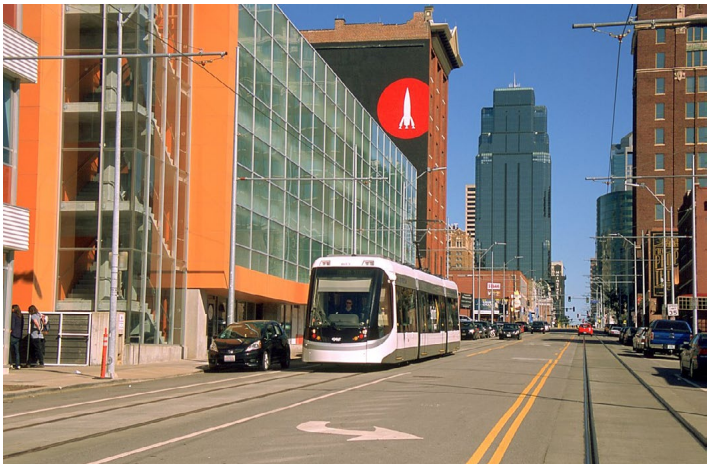
So, taking the liberty to modify Oscar Hammerstein's words from 1943, I'd say that Everything's Still Up to Date in Kansas City, and that certainly is reflected by the creation of the city's streetcar line. The line opened on May 6, 2016, and stretches for a little over two miles with 10 stops. From south to north the line starts at Union Station and then follows Main Street toward the Missouri River until after it crosses the barrier posed by Interstate highways I-35 and I-70, where it then operates in a counter-clockwise loop through a district called River Market, the location of its offices, carhouse and shop (see map at http://kcstreetcar.org/route/). Herzog operates the line under contract to the Kansas City Streetcar Authority. Rides are free and cars run on a 10-minute headway in rush hours and every 12 to 18 minutes at other times.

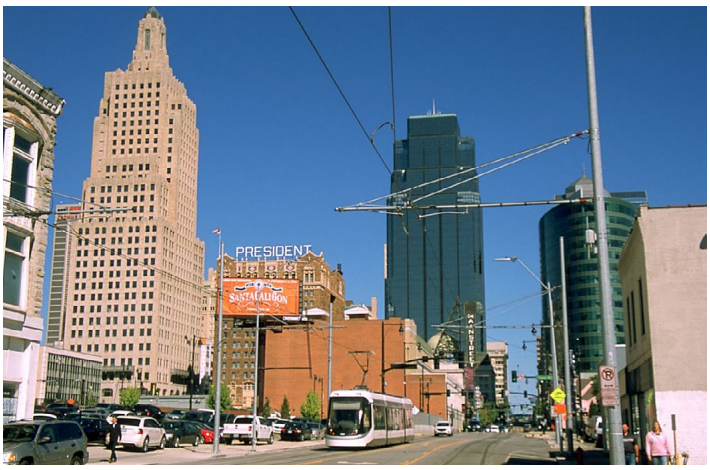
Like Cincinnati (see Parts 1 and 2), the line is served by 100-percent low-floor three-section CAF Urbos streetcars. KC has four of these units (as opposed to five in Cincinnati), numbered 801 to 804. And much in tune with the Ohio city, the car numbers picked up from the end of the last series of PCCs operated by the legacy company, Kansas City Public Service (No. 799 was the highest number assigned). KC's

(Above and below) Union Station is the southernmost point on the Kansas City streetcar. Upon its completion in 1914, the Beaux-Arts structure became the second largest railroad station in the U. S. With the decline of passenger train operations throughout America the building was repurposed, although it still serves one long distance train and two intercity runs to St. Louis. The renovated edifice is now a major traffic generator, hosting restaurants, exhibits, a large 3-D movie theater, a stage for live theater and a science museum with planetarium. Streetcars lay over under a pedestrian overpass at the station before crossing between sides of Main Street on a single track. Pershing Road and the National World War One Museum and Memorial Tower appear directly behind the streetcar in the upper photo.

streetcar system operated for a good six years longer than Cincinnati's, with abandonment taking place on June 23, 1957. Another similarity between the two river cities is that both operated air-electric (prewar) and all-electric (postwar) streamliners, and a large portion of the respective cities' PCC fleets were sold to Toronto. *(Author's Note: Tampico and Philadelphia were also beneficiaries of Kansas City PCCs, where they continued in service for many years. Interestingly, many*

of Toronto's ex-Kansas City cars were later sent to Philadelphia, where they spent the final part of their life with their brethren. Kansas City owned 184 PCCs, while Cincinnati had 53). But there is one important major difference between the two, as ridership in Kansas City keeps growing, and there are plans for extensions at both ends of the existing line. Right now, average daily ridership is about 5,500, quite a bit more than the 2,700 originally projected. Interestingly, patronage of the free service really booms on Saturdays, with ridership on the first day of every weekend consistently greater than 10,000.





(Above and below) These views of Kansas City's skyline feature four major buildings. The upper photo was taken at 18th Street, while the lower one involved the use of a wide-angle lens from Truman Road, three blocks further north and closer to the heart of the business district. From left to right on the lower photo: the 34-story Kansas City Power and Light Building constructed in 1931, the tallest building west of the Mississippi until 1962 (Space Needle--Seattle) or 1976 (One U. S. Bank Plaza--St. Louis). It now houses apartments. To its right is the Hilton President Hotel (1926-1980 in first incarnation; refurbished and reopened in 2006). The dark, brooding behemoth is One Kansas City Place, the city's tallest building (42 stories, 1987). Lastly, the circular building at right is H & R Block's World Headquarters, 17 floors, built in 2006. The vertical "Mainstreet" sign marks the location of today's Alamo Drafthouse Theater, a renovation of the 1921-built Mainstreet theater that was connected to the President Hotel by tunnel, which, it is said, allowed actors and prohibition-denied materials to move easily between the two establishments.

With Kansas City's skyline in the background, a southbound car is shown traversing the long viaduct that crosses over the Kansas City Terminal Railway, which serves all of the trunk lines running through the city and was the former owner and operator of Union Station.

(Above and below) Views of both sides of Main Street, from 13th and 12th Streets, respectively. The pedestrian overpass is at 11th.

Photos of the Kansas City Streetcar continue in Part 4.