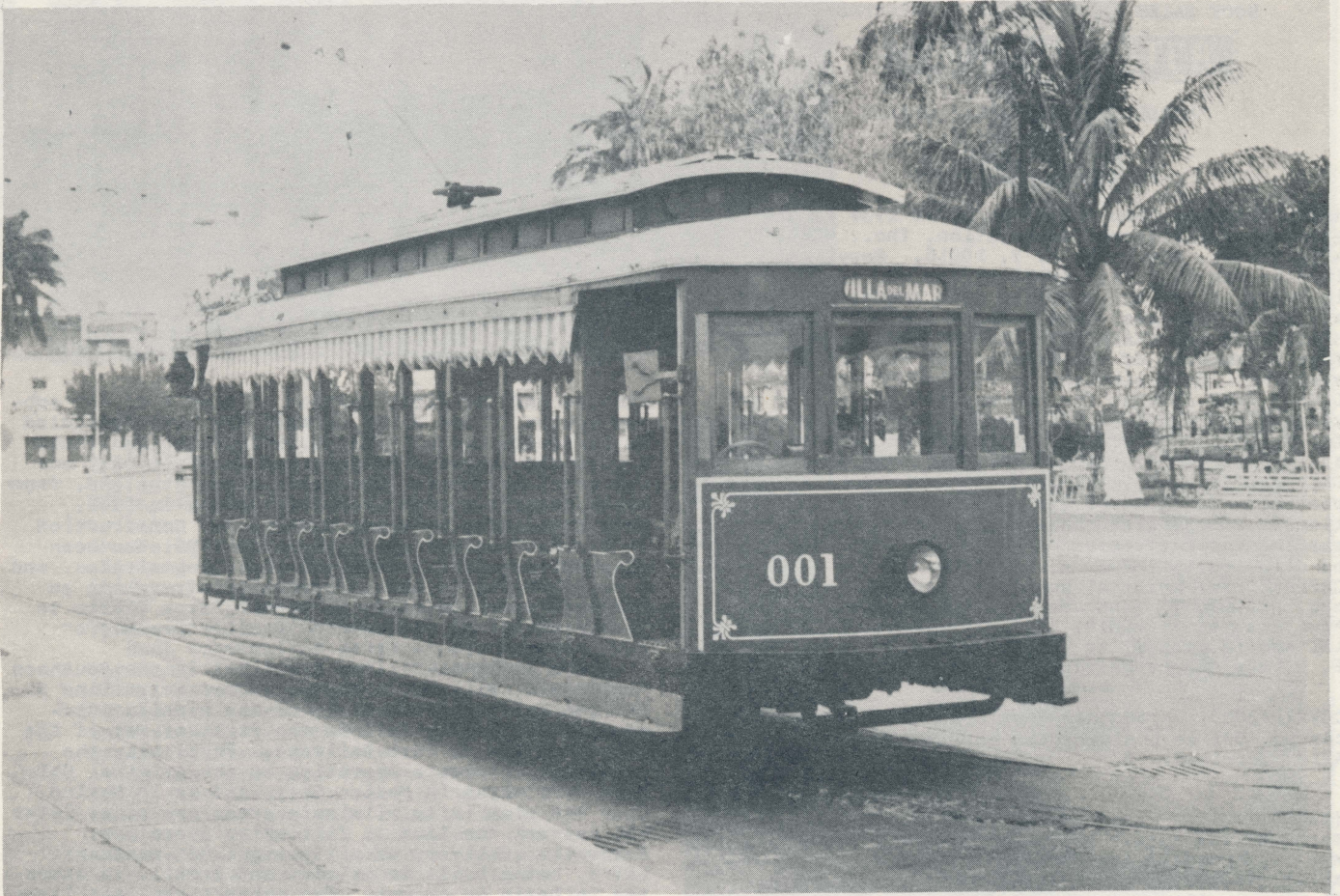




# HEADLIGHTS NEWS JOURNAL



June 1978



## Latin Update

The concept of "railfan" is still new in Central and South America, and the person who goes around photographing streetcars and trains south of the Rio Grande may be viewed with suspicion. But things are changing—especially in countries where tourism and the GNP have increased—and on the spectacular mountain ride between Curitiba and Paranaguá, Brazil your air-conditioned RDC now makes photo stops, and the engineer will tell you where to get the best shots.

Trolleys in Veracruz, Mexico, are alive and well, despite rumors to the contrary. Ten cars are operating on four routes. Wire is down, however, and some of the rail has been removed from the lines closed in 1976, ending hopes of restoring the downtown loop. All cars are now painted yellow with the exception of new open car 001, which is maroon, and which charges a special tourist fare of 2 pesos (US 10¢). Track is poor, but car maintenance is good, and railfans are welcome, even on

Sundays, to view the activity in the carbarn.

Mexico City is down to six lines: La Villa and Azcapotzalco on the north side of town, Valle and Mixcoac-Tetepilco on the south, and the two isolated lines from the Tasquena metro station to Tlalpan and Xochimilco. Construction has, ominously, not begun on the proposed track connection between the two streetcar systems. Tourist car "0" still runs every day on the Cine Mexico-Chilpancingo portion of the Valle line, and there is considerable trolleybus expansion throughout town. Photographers are welcome, except in subway stations.

4,500 miles southeast, streetcar expansion continues in Asunción, Paraguay. Route 9, the long suburban line to Villa Morra which was closed in 1973, has been reopened, and a wye installed on Avenida Boggiani to turn the single-end Belgian cars. Nine ex-Brussels trolleys of the 1500-1600 series are now in service, and trailer 603 and streamliner 9001 wait in the yards. A twelfth Belgian car, number 1610, was unfortunately destroyed in an accident on March 3. Double-end ex-Buenos Aires cars still serve Route 5 to Las Mercedes, where another wye is under construction two blocks

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COVER PHOTO: Brand-new Vera Cruz single-truck open car No. 001 as photographed earlier this year by Allen Morrison.

(LATIN UPDATE, continued from Page 1)

short of the former stub-end terminal. When this wye is completed the growing Belgian fleet will be able to operate the entire system, and the Argentine cars will presumably join Birneys 4 and 10 in retirement. Trolleys run 6AM till 8PM weekdays, but only until 1PM Saturdays, and never on Sundays. Photography is permitted everywhere except in the vicinity of the carbarn.

With the retirement of the Argentine cars in Asuncion, plans for a tourtram line in Buenos Aires, Argentina, have been revived. The Asociacion Amigos del Tranvia has Buenos Aires streetcar 2223 in the rapid transit shops at Caballito, and hopes to run this and other cars on the street trackage used by subway trains from Primera Junta. The Buenos Aires "subte" uses pantographs, so overhead is already in place, and the route forms a pleasant 16-block loop four miles west of the city center. The last Buenos Aires streetcar ran in 1962. The only other tourist tramway operation in South America is the Taquaral Park line in Campinas, Brazil, which was built new in 1972.

There is a little-known 100% trolleybus operation in Araraquara, Brazil—the only all-electric city in the world? No gas buses, except in intercity service. The Companhia Troleibus Araraquara runs thirty homemade units on five routes, and is stringing wire for a sixth.

The first section of the new subway in Rio de



Ex-Brussels single-trucker No. 1514 is shown here at the outer terminus of line No. 9 in Asuncion, Paraguay in March, 1978. --Allen Morrison

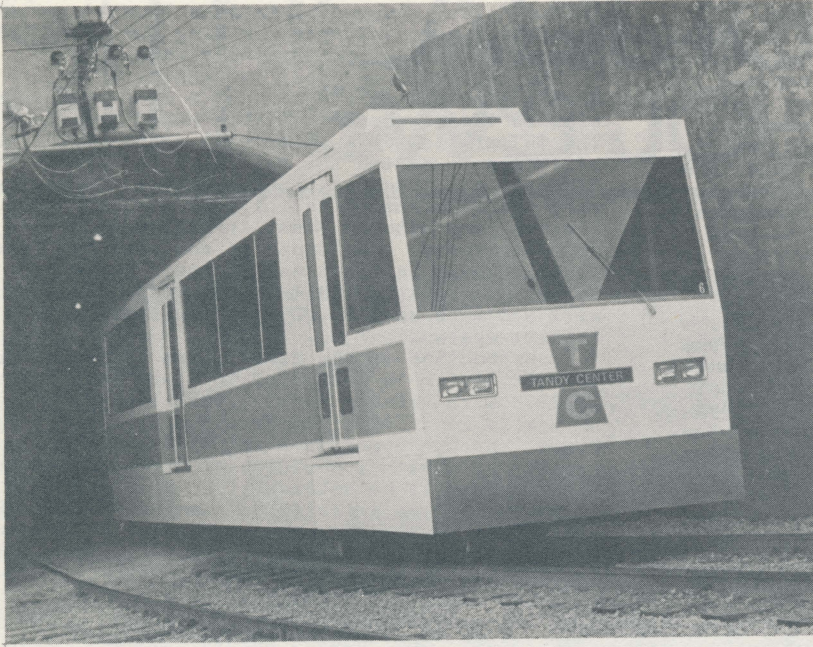
Janeiro and the first section of Line 2 of the subway system in Sao Paulo, Brazil are both scheduled to begin operation in March, 1979. The Sao Paulo segment is only a mile long and involves only one new station at Bras, but seven other stations, from Santa Cecilia to Tatuape, will follow in 1980. Work is already underway on Line 3. Construction in Rio de Janeiro, which began in 1970, has been plagued by numerous problems including strikes, and a workforce of 20,000 is currently struggling to complete seven stations of Line 1, from Gloria to Cidade Nova, and the entire 10-mile "pre-metro" route from Maria da Graça to Pavuna.

Rio's light rail line, the first in the Southern Hemisphere, will begin at the end of metro Line 2 and run on the median strip of the Avenida Automovel Clube, which follows the right-of-way of the abandoned Rio do Ouro Railroad. Physically the route will resemble operation on the original Calzada de Tlalpan in Mexico City, and as in Mexico City the plan is to eliminate grade crossings later and convert the line to full metro operation. Meanwhile, delivery of sixty-eight 325-passenger LRV's, being built in Belgium and Brazil, is expected to begin in August. Two other Light rail lines are planned in Rio, including a 22-mile route from Fundao Island across the northern suburbs, over mountains and valleys, to a new metropolitan center planned on the Atlantic Ocean at Barra da Tijuca.

The Santa Teresa trolley line is in Phase 1 of its rehabilitation; three miles of rail and overhead on Rua Almirante Alexandrino have been torn up (first renewal since the line was built in 1896), and the street is closed to automobiles. Trolleys run single-track from Largo Guimaraes to Franca, with buses beyond. Phase 2, announced on billboards, will involve digging the asphalt off the rail and re-stringing the wire on the Silvestre line which was closed in 1966. This scenic route provides a link between Dois Irmaos and the Corcovado rack railway and was part of a popular tourist excursion in the first part of the century. It will hopefully be one again. The cog line has been closed since March, 1977, and replacement of overhead and rail is nearly complete, with operation due to resume in June. A large facility has been built at Cosme Velho for the new Swiss trains, which arrived in January, and which will make the 2,000-foot climb to the Christ statue in twenty minutes.



# Fort Worth's Grass Roots Rapid



In conjunction with Tandy Corporation's \$150-million redevelopment project covering an eight-block area of downtown Fort Worth, the Tandy Center subway is currently being rebuilt and upgraded. The cars are being rebuilt from the frames up to the tune of \$60,000 apiece. All-new bodies are being fabricated to a modern design, and interior appointments make these the most elegant subway cars in the world!

Each rebuilt car sports thick carpeting, textured vinyl wall and ceiling covering, crushed velour or imitation leather upholstery, recessed fluorescent lighting, tape decks, air-conditioning, and leather straps by Tandy Leathers!

Of the nine cars currently on the property, five have been rebuilt to the new Tandy design, two were rebuilt directly from ex-D. C. Transit PCC's, and two remain in the former Leonards' configuration. Plans for the immediate future call for at least ten cars to be rebuilt to the new design.

--Both photos courtesy Tandy Corp.



(LATIN UPDATE continued from Page 2)

Phase 3 in Santa Teresa is new closed trams. Five designs have been submitted, including air-conditioned articulated units, which have received much publicity in the press and aroused hostility in the public. Placing picture-window streetcars in Santa Teresa is like replacing San Francisco cable cars with trolleybuses, and Elza Osborne, the influential Englishwoman who runs the district, and was responsible for saving the streetcars and aqueduct in 1975, says that despite all the studies that have been made and money that has been spent it will not be done, and that, if necessary, she will lie on the track to prevent it.

A ride on an open-air Santa Teresa *bonde* (pronounced "bone-jee") has become an integral part of

the tourist routine, and groups of Argentine and German and Japanese visitors can be encountered on almost every car. The snack bar at the station has trolley cars printed on its paper cups and Petro's Pizzeria at the south end of the platform has trolley cars on its napkins and tablecloths. The tables, which extend to the rails, are crowded with businessmen at lunch hours and with tourists at night. The station is surrounded by the lush gardens and fountains of the prestigious Petrobras Oil Company (which owns the terminal) and is an oasis in the bustle of downtown Rio and a railfan's paradise. Finally—in the center of Latin America—the most railfan-oriented spot on earth, and anyone without a camera may be viewed with suspicion.

--Allen Morrison



# ST. LOUIS

After twelve years of study, metropolitan St. Louis finally has a definitive plan for major improvements in its mass transit system. The proposed \$341.6 million plan calls for the building of three streetcar lines, as well as the establishment of seven expressway bus lines. The East-West Coordinating Council, a regional planning body made up of the area's top elected officials, adopted the plan on February 22, 1978. The recommended improvements would be in addition to a \$170.9 million program that the Bi-State Development Agency, operators of the local bus system, hopes to implement in the next five years to upgrade its service.

One streetcar line would run between East St. Louis and Clayton, a distance of 13.6-miles. From the East St. Louis business district the line would operate on surface streets, cross the Mississippi River on the historic Eads Bridge, thence proceed through downtown St. Louis in the old railroad tunnel under Washington Avenue and Eighth Street to Market Street. Emerging from the tunnel, the line would head west via Market Street and the Forest Park Expressway via a mixture of elevated, surface and depressed rights-of-way to Clayton, a former sleepy suburban community and seat of St. Louis County, now rivaling downtown St. Louis as the financial center of the sprawling St. Louis area.

Branching off the Clayton line at DeBaliviere Avenue would be a 5.2-mile rail service to Normandy. This line would follow the Norfolk and Western Railway tracks for most of its length.

The third streetcar line would be 21.5-miles in length. From Florissant, a large suburban community in North St. Louis County, the line would be built along the right-of-way of a proposed expressway (an extension of the current Innerbelt, state highway 725) via surface and elevated tracks to St. Charles Rock Road. From that point the tracks would shift to the right-of-way of the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis through the central suburban area, proceeding thence to the Frisco Railroad right-of-way southeast to I-55 in Lemay. A connection could be made with the East St. Louis/Clayton line at its Clayton terminus.

The seven freeway bus lines would run along with regular traffic on the various interstate highways criss-crossing the metropolitan area. Park-and-ride lots would be built in conjunction with the bus lines, but the planners felt that no bus-only traffic lanes would be necessary, even though rush-hour traffic currently moves at a snail's pace.

The federal government was expected to pay eighty percent of the capital costs, while local funds would have to be found for the balance.

The next step is the application to the Urban Mass Transit Administration for eighty percent of the \$300,000 needed to make the environmental impact study. The purpose of the study would be to pinpoint routes and service, consider alternative methods of propulsion, and evaluate the economic and social impact of the routes.

Area transit riders' hopes were frustrated somewhat, when, on March 17, 1978, Transportation Department officials indicated that, although the area would probably have little trouble obtaining funds for the impact study, there was little likelihood of obtaining any federal funds to help construct the system any time in the near future. There would just not be enough money earmarked for new construction in the \$14.8 billion that President Carter has requested of Congress for transit purposes during the next five years. The bulk of the monies would be used to subsidize and modernize existing rail and bus systems. --Berl Katz



# MIAMI

On March 7th, the voters in Dade County narrowly approved a referendum authorizing the construction of a rapid transit system for Miami.

The approval came just two months after the federal government agreed to fund a four-mile extension to the proposed 16.5-mile rapid transit line. The \$57 million UMTA grant will enable Dade County officials to extend the rail line into the City of Hialeah, add three stations and build a storage yard and maintenance facility in Hialeah. The original yard site at Miami Springs was the subject of controversy. Residents of the area had feared that it would be too close to their homes and too noisy. It is expected that the Hialeah extension will add more than 20,000 daily riders to the transit system.

Construction of the first phase of the rapid transit system is scheduled to start before the end of 1978 with revenue service planned for 1982. The 20.5-mile route will run from Dadeland south of Miami, through downtown Miami to Hialeah. Rapid transit cars with a capacity of about 75 seated passengers will be obtained. An estimated 200,000 daily riders are expected to use the new line which will operate mostly on a concrete aerial structure. Plans call for an expansion of the system to more than 50 miles by 1986.

Supplementing the rapid transit system will be a 3.7-mile people mover in downtown Miami. Small transit cars on frequent headways will be used on the people mover which will link the Government Center, shopping areas and a proposed convention center. A \$1.35-million federal grant for preliminary engineering studies on the people mover was recently approved and construction of this facility is expected to begin before the end of 1978 with revenue service scheduled for 1981 or 1982.



## Marseilles

Revenue service is now being operated on the first section of the Marseilles Metro. About four miles of the 5.5-mile Line 1 is in use. The first line will have twelve stations when it is completed. There will be four miles of underground operation, with 1.25 miles of line in the median of a future highway and a short section of operation on a viaduct.

Rolling stock on the Metro consists of 21 rubber-tired three-car train sets with a capacity of 136 seated and 216 standing passengers. Each set consists of two motor cars with an intermediate trailer. A fourth car with motors, but no cabs may be added to the consists in the future if the volume of ridership demands it. The trains have a maximum speed of 50 miles per hour and are powered through a 720 volt dc third rail.

A second Metro line is proposed which will bring the total Metro system to 15 miles.

The Metro will not affect service on the remaining tram route in Marseilles with its short section of subway operation. Plans call for the construction of reserved trackage in the street-running portion of that line. A two-mile extension of the tram route to Les Caillois is also proposed.

--International Railway Journal, Modern Tramway