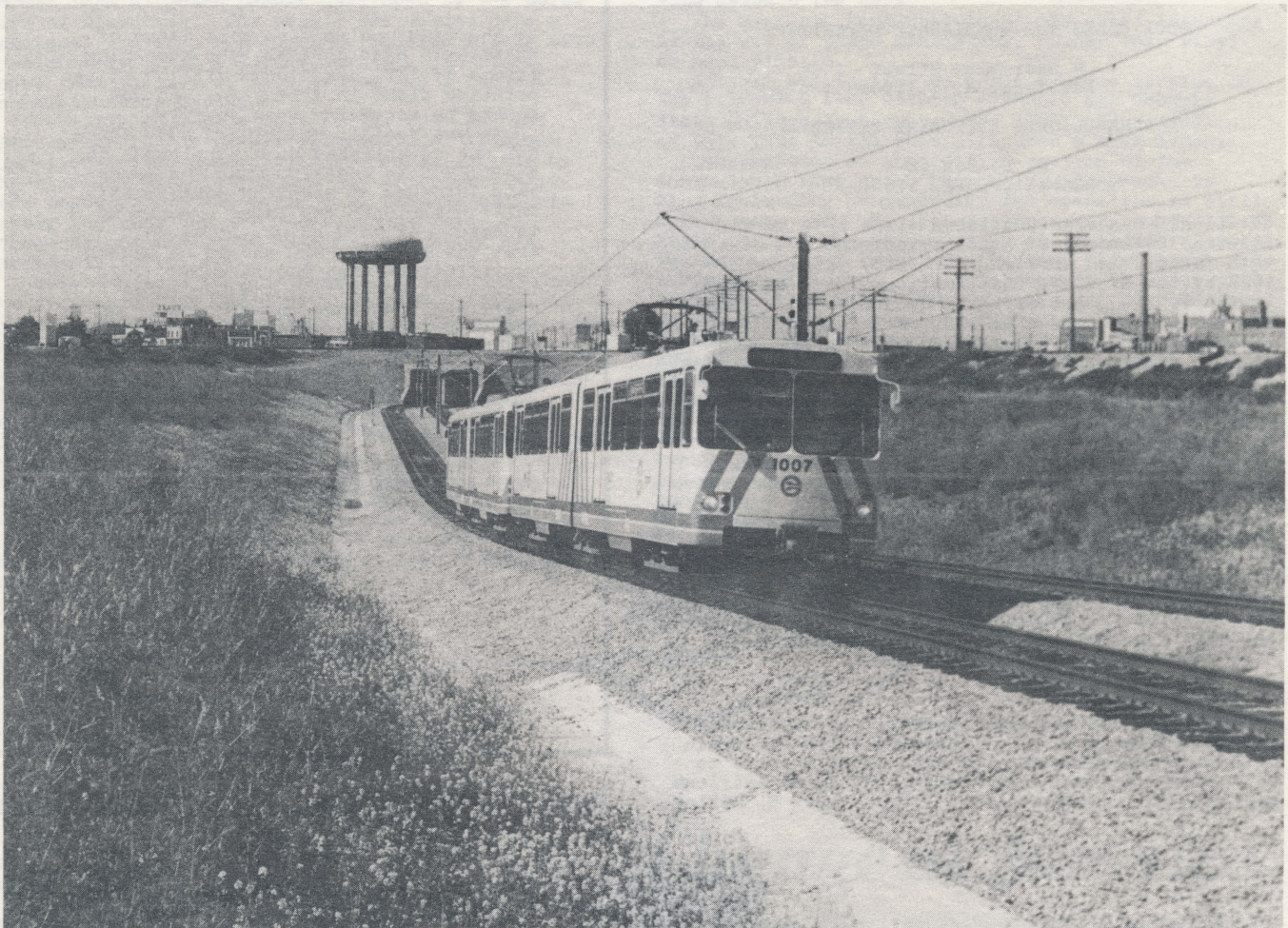




HEADLIGHTS NEWS JOURNAL



SEPTEMBER 1978



Edmonton Opens Light Rail Line

Light rail service came to Edmonton on April 23, with the opening of a 4.5-mile line serving the northeast section of the city. Built in only four year's time at a cost of \$65 million, the new transit facility runs for most of its length along a Canadian National Railroad right-of-way. There is about a mile of subway with two underground stations in the downtown area. Three stations are located on the surface portion of the line.

A fleet of 14 two-unit articulated cars was obtained from Siemens Canada-Duwag. Essentially they are the same as the U2 class of cars that was built by Duwag for Frankfurt, Germany. The Edmonton cars differ in providing floor-level loading and windows in the bulkhead of the motorman's cab. They also have facilities for wheelchairs.

About 100,000 persons took advantage of an of-

fer of free rides on opening day. This was well in excess of the 59,000 riders who turned out for the debut of the Washington Metro's initial 4.6-mile line in 1976. Edmonton's passengers, however, managed to escape the rash of breakdowns and erratic service that plagued the Washington system on its first day of operation.

The light rail service in Edmonton operates seven days a week from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m. A 15-minute headway is in effect on weekends and during off-peak hours on weekdays, with a five-minute headway operated during the rush hours.

Two days after the start of service, the Edmonton City Council approved a \$200,000 study of a ten-mile extension of the light rail line to the south.

September 1978



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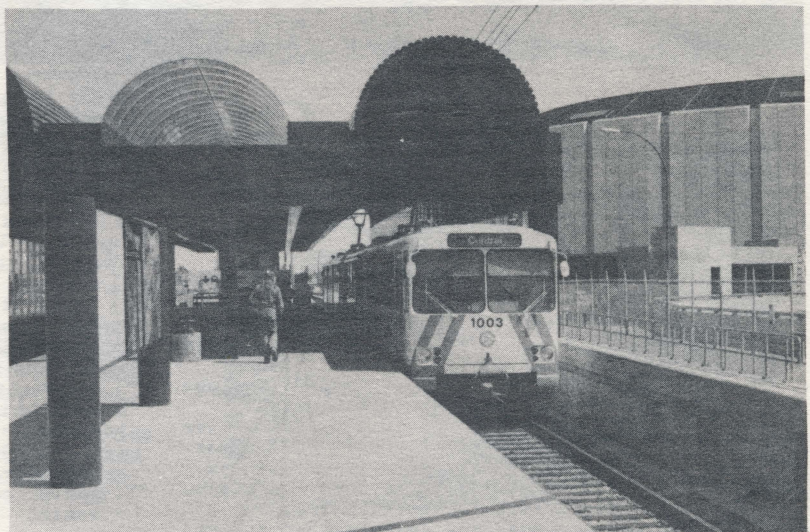
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COVER PHOTO: Having just emerged from the subway portal, Edmonton No. 1007 heads up a two-car train of Duwag lightweight articulated units enroute to Belvedere, northern-most terminus of North America's newest rapid transit line. --Frank S. Miklos

Belvedere-bound No. 1003 trails a two-car train about to depart Coliseum Station, adjacent to the Edmonton Coliseum. --F.S.M.

*About* HEADLIGHTS...

By the time you receive this issue of HEADLIGHTS NEWS JOURNAL, the remaining issues of 1977 HEADLIGHTS will be at the printing plant in Allentown, and you should be receiving them shortly.

As you recall, HEADLIGHTS NEWS JOURNAL was established as a supplement to HEADLIGHTS in order to keep the membership informed of traction developments while HEADLIGHTS was being brought up to date. At this point, it is felt that the NEWS JOURNAL should be phased out effective with the December, 1978 issue. At that time, the Lancaster staff will continue to work solely on the 1978 issues of HEADLIGHTS, while the New York staff will produce the 1979 HEADLIGHTS. It should also be noted that the typesetting for the majority of the 1978 HEADLIGHTS has already been completed, as well as certain layout work.

Once caught up, the editors will strive to keep HEADLIGHTS on the track and on schedule.

--R.L.F.

MARTA's East Rail Line Due to Open December 25

The sight of a rapid transit train running under its own power became a reality in Atlanta when the first test train was operated in MARTA's Avondale yard early in June. The initial run was limited to five miles per hour so that technicians and engineers for MARTA and the manufacturer could monitor the train's performance.

The car bodies were constructed at the Raismes, France plant of Societe Franco-Belge (SFBO) and transported to the United States by container ship. The 100-car order consists of 80 married pairs and 20 double-ended single units. The bodies are formed from extruded panels developed by the Swiss firm of Aluisse. The panels are welded onto a sectional skeleton framework to produce a body with a weight saving of 1.5 tons per car. An added bonus from the use of this method was a reduction in construction costs.

The extruded panels used in the body won the grand prize in the annual International Aluminum Extrusion Design Competition sponsored jointly by the Aluminum Association and the Aluminum Extruder's Council. It was noted that the use of these panels has made the new bodies about twice as strong as the WMATA and BART bodies, which are structurally similar.

While the body is made from Swiss aluminum, and the final assembly is done in France, all of the other essentials are American made. The motors and traction equipment are manufactured by Garrett Airesearch, of California. The air conditioning is by Safety; the brakes by WABCO; the trucks by Rockwell; the wheels by Standard Steel; the roller bearings by Timken. Ohio Brass is supplying the couplers and third-rail shoes. The automatic train control is being provided by GRS. The Vapor Corporation is responsible for the door controls and motors. Luninator is supplying the lights and some destination signs. Other signs are being supplied by Teleweld. The control panels come from Transit Control Systems and the batteries from McGraw/Edison.

Each car is 75 feet long, 10 feet, 6 inches wide and 11 feet, 10 inches high. The cars weigh 74,000 pounds and have four traction motors. They have a balancing speed of 70 miles per hour. Each of the married pair cars has 68 seats, while the double-ended cars seat 62 persons.

The exterior of the cars features a broad dark stripe along the side from the floor to the belt rail. This ends are painted with three horizontal stripes of orange, yellow and blue below the window line. The motorman's cab is located on the right-hand side and there is an end door to provide passage between the cars.

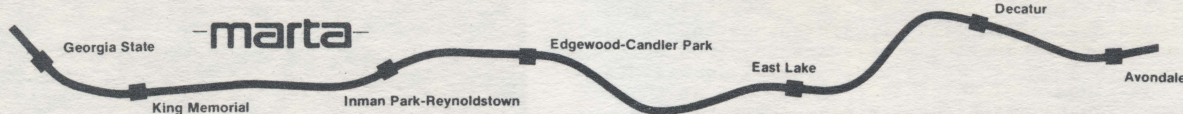
The most striking feature of the cars' interiors is the use of plush upholstery, rather than vinyl or hard plastic.

Atlanta still plans to begin revenue service on the 6.17-mile line between Avondale and Georgia State College on December 25, 1978. An extension of this line to the west will open a year later.

Construction on the initial section of the North-South line which is mostly underground is also proceeding on schedule, but operation is still a few years off. Controversy over alternative designs for the Peachtree Center station was resolved in favor of deep level construction leaving the surface undisturbed. In this manner, the disruptive effect of subway construction was averted for an important downtown shopping area.

With work under way to the limit of the available funds on all of the authorized sections of the system, MARTA is getting ready to apply for federal funds to build the next sections. These consist of two extensions to the North-South line, south from Garnett Street to Lakewood and north from North Avenue to Lenox Square, an important regional shopping center. The extension beyond Avondale will come at in a later stage. MARTA construction has been well managed and generally kept on budget, so if additional federal funds can be obtained at all, MARTA stands a good chance of getting them.

--William S. Gorton in PRMA Trolley Fare, and Cornelius D. Seon



San Diego Plan Defeated

A plan to build a light rail line coupled with an expanded bus system was defeated in a five to four vote by the San Diego City Council.

The compromise proposal was designed to overcome objections that the light rail line would undercut financial support for the San Diego Transit Corporation's bus system.

The \$83.1 million light rail system, proposed by the Metropolitan Transit Development Board, was to have run from the downtown area to San Ysidro, Mexico, along the right-of-way of the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway.

MTDB would have purchased the SD&AE right-of-way from the Southern Pacific Transportation Company which is seeking to abandon the line.

MTDB officials said after the vote that they would try to overturn the decision or move forward with the 16-mile light rail plan in another manner.

City council members who favored the line said its chances appeared dim, however.

The council's action leaves the future of some \$16 million in state gasoline taxes earmarked for a guideway transit system in the area up in the air. Accumulating at the rate of \$7 million annually, the money must be returned to the state highway department unless the city council changes its mind in some way.

--Passenger Transport

Change at Jamaica

On July 28th, Robert K. Pattison was dismissed as President of the Long Island Rail Road. Harold L. Fisher, Chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Mr. Pattison's boss), indicated that this action was, at least in part, due to the railroad's deteriorating performance, which has become an issue in the campaign challenges to Governor Carey's re-election. In truth, the railroad's performance has deteriorated, not only last winter, when numerous trains were cancelled or delayed, but even during periods of good weather. Impartial and long-time riders admit that the situation was much worse nine and ten years ago when the then-new M-1 cars were still unreliable and the still-operating old equipment suffered from years of deferred maintenance.

Mr. Francis S. Gabreski, Mr. Pattison's replacement, in his first public announcements indicated he would try to motivate all LIRR employees to work toward the purpose of providing the best service for the passengers. Mr. Gabreski comes to the Long Island from a senior sales position with Grumman Aircraft, but he has had a life-long interest in railroads.

--David L. Klepper

San Francisco

The LRV's may be on their way, but MUNI isn't taking any chances with its existing fleet. The city Public Utilities Commission has authorized spending some \$400,000 to refurbish the PCC's. The fix-up is part of a \$1-million plus systemwide maintenance "catch-up" funded with Federal Title II Local Public Works Employment Act money.

Under the plan the streetcars will have their insides and outsides repainted in the current MUNI paint scheme of white, gold and orange. Seats will be reupholstered. The ventilation systems will be repaired. Trucks and wheels, along with armatures and controller systems, will be overhauled. Finally, the interior lighting system will be rewired so the cars can use standard lightbulbs.

In addition, funds have been allocated to do repairs at Geneva carhouse as well as overhaul the line trucks which maintain the property's streetcar and trolley coach overhead.

As reported earlier, the repainting program has already begun, with another white-orange-and-gold streetcar joining the fleet each week. Other components of the maintenance program will get underway at Metro Center shortly.

Meanwhile, a mid-August date remains in effect for the prototype LRV to be delivered from Boeing Vertol. Two test cars that arrived earlier are to return to Philadelphia for modifications while the production model is used to test the subway signal system.

Whether MUNI will actually accept this production model remains in doubt. The two test cars, No. 1220 and 1221, performed poorly, according to the Public Utilities Commission. Recently, the PUC, in a special meeting, detailed complaints about 50

ways in which the cars had "design and hardware deviations from specified orders."

"Our views with respect to these substandard performance areas have been reflected to you continuously," PUC President John Henning wrote to Boeing Vertol. "Specific responses were sought as late as June 23, on your intentions to satisfactorily resolve the 12 most serious operational items...responses in terms of problem recognition and acceptance of responsibility have been unsatisfactory in areas including rail wear, doors and traction motors."

What this careful bureaucratese means is that "the cars just don't work," as one motorman said. There may well be a lawsuit down the road, more delays and an ever-receding opening date for the Muni Metro. (Current plans call for running the N-Judah into it next June.)

From this situation flows the logic of spending money on a group of vehicles that seemingly are at the end of their service life. The public posture has been that it will be "a few years" before Muni Metro is in full five-line operation, thus obviating the need for PCC operation along the surface of Market Street. Privately, the estimate is less optimistic, with one spokesman indicating the PCC's will be running for "at least" five years.

And, even after Muni Metro goes into full service, there are possibilities for continuing PCC operation in San Francisco. Support is growing for a surface streetcar line along the waterfront, replacing the existing 32-Embarcadero diesel. Land-use along the proposed route—most of it is private right of way with rails already in place—has been shifting rapidly. Once a center for shipping and light industry, the area has increasingly seen office development. A consultant is expected to take a closer look at the project. --Charles Rozema

A Tale of Two Cities

Ex-Birmingham PCC No. 2306 takes its place at the right of a lineup of cars at SEPTA's Luzerne depot. Its Toronto paint scheme survives as visible proof of the almost total lack of maintenance that these cars have received since they were acquired by SEPTA more than two years ago. The ex-Kansas City PCC cars that were obtained from Toronto at the same time were all refurbished by SEPTA and are now among the workhorses of the system. By contrast, the ex-Birmingham cars were shunned by SEPTA almost from the day they arrived on the property and only four of them remain in active service. The remainder sit idle on the outdoor storage tracks at Luzerne with little or no incentive on the part of SEPTA to put them back into operation.

Many excuses have been given for SEPTA's failure to utilize this equipment. The most common explanation is that the Pullman-built cars are incompatible with a fleet of cars that are otherwise products of the St. Louis Car Company. At the same time that 15 of the ex-Birmingham cars are laid up out of service, SEPTA has been operating buses on Routes 56 and 60 because of a car shortage. To do this SEPTA is forced to continue operating a fleet of old look GM buses which have seen more than 20 years of service or nearly double the accepted useful life for a bus. These vehicles are becoming increasingly costly to maintain because of their incompatibility with a fleet of 1960s-style new look buses.

Meanwhile back in Toronto, the ex-Birmingham cars continue to see daily service. Car No. 4704 is shown on the Dundas line during a track reconstruction job on Broadview Avenue in May, 1973. This was one of the cars not selected by SEPTA officials at the time they were given their choice of Toronto's ex-Birmingham PCC's. It can be seen that incompatibility has not been a deterrent to Toronto with its fleet of several types of PCC cars.

