# BULLETIN

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## Electric Railroaders Association

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## In This Issue



## Trip Notices/Save the Dates

**September 27:** Motor Bus Society trip to Allentown and Reading, Penn. Visit https://erausa.org/regional-trips/2025/09/27/ for all the details.
**October 8-11:** Motor Bus Society Fall Convention, Indianapolis and Louisville. Visit https://erausa.org/regional-trips/2025/10/08/ for all the details.
**April 29-May 13, 2026:** ERA International trip to Northern England, Scotland, and Isle of Man. Visit https://erausa.org/international-tours/2026/ for all the details.

## Other Rail-Related Zoom Meetings

Members are reminded that many other rail clubs/organizations meet virtually via Zoom. A full listing of these meetings can be seen at: https://railmeet.wixsite.com/zoom/

## Donations

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

### $1,000 and Above

Walter Keevil

### $500 to $999

Sidney Keyles, Dale Rothenberger

### $200 to $499

Robert Levin, John Urbanski

### $100 to $199

Judith Arbuckle, Randy Glucksman, Douglas Jacobs, Robert Osman, Stuart Seidel

### $50 to $99

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### Up to $49

William Closs, Charles Fischer, Mark Foggin, Paul Hraska, David Newman, Carl Rabbin, Peter Samson, Lawrence Sell, Edward Skuchas, Donald Spivack

*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: erausa.org/membership/donate/. Your donation helps to maintain ERA's 91-year long tradition of traction education and entertainment!*

## Cover Photo

**R-188 No. 7345 (Bombardier Transportation, 1/2001) leads the 1504+ 7 from Main Street to 34 Street-Hudson Yards as it arrives at 33 Street-Rawson Street on August 3. On June 23, southbound local Track 1 was removed from service from north of 69 Street to south of 33 Street to enable station renovation and structural rehabilitation work to proceed at 52 Street and 69 Street Stations. These temporary platforms were built out over Track 1 to enable southbound trains to platform at the three Queens Boulevard stations. Southbound 7 local and 7 express trains cross from Track 1 to Track M south of 74 Street and bypass 69 Street and 52 Street Stations. This work will continue into next year. A total of 380 R-142A cars (7211-7590) assigned to the IRT Flushing Line were converted to R-188s between 2014 and 2016. Newly-built R-188 cars, built 2012-2016, included 88 five and six-car units (7811-7898) and 38 single units (without cabs, 7899-7936).**
Jeff Erlitz photo

## Monthly Zoom Meeting

Friday, September 19, at 7:30 p.m.

### Presenting This Month: Harvey Laner

Harvey's program will be on the history of the British Columbia Electric Railway. This program was produced with movie films taken in the early 1950s by Canadian railfan Ken Hodgins. Forty years later, in 1990, Ken's films were edited and narrated to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the inauguration of interurban and streetcar services in southwestern British Columbia. Retired British Columbia Electric Railway interurban motorman Frank Horne narrated the BC Electric Interurban Lines portion of the video. Vic Sharman, former BC Electric Railway streetcar motorman, narrated the streetcar portions.

This is the most comprehensive film coverage of the British Columbia Electric Railway in the later years of streetcar and interurban passenger operations in the early 1950s. As tonight's presentation will not be recorded, you will not want to miss this!

### How to Join Our Zoom Meeting

The Zoom registration link for this meeting is: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/7-9xza7ISaiw_4Jfy8z-0A. You can sign in at 7:15 PM. The show begins at 7:30 PM. If you have any problems, email Andrew Ludasi at aludasi@gmail.com, or on the night of the meeting, text or call Andrew at 609-865-8770.

**Worldwide Suburban Electric Railway, Metro and Tramway Openings in August 2025**

| Date | Country | City | Segment | Distance (miles) | Railway/ Metro/ Tram |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8/3 | Japan | Hiroshima | Hijiyama-shita to Hiroshima Station | 0.7 | T |
| 8/6 | China | Nanjing | Line 5: Wenjinglu to Fangjiaying | 14.9 | M |
| 8/10 | India | Bengaluru | Yellow Line: Rashtreeya Vidyalaya Road to Delta Electronics Bommasandra (New line) | 11.7 | M |
| 8/22 | " | Kolkata | Line 2/Green Line: Esplanade to Sealdah<br>Line 4/Yellow Line: Noapara to Jai Hind/Biman Bandar (Airport) (New line)<br>Line 6/Orange Line: Hemanta Mukhopadhyay to Beleghata | 1.3<br>4.4<br>2.8 | M |
| 8/29 | China | Ningbo | Line 7: Yufan to Yunlong (New line) | 24.5 | M |

URBAN RAIL NEWS, AUGUST 31

# Rail News in Review

## New York Metropolitan Area

### METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)

#### Interborough Express Advances

The engineering and design phase of the Interborough Express (IBX) has commenced, the next step in the development of the transit project. On Wednesday, July 30, the MTA Board authorized the selection of a joint venture between Jacobs and HDR as the team that will oversee the design and engineering phase of the IBX. This represents major progress for the project, which will connect historically underserved communities in Brooklyn and Queens to the subway, bus and Long Island Rail Road, while significantly reducing travel times between Brooklyn and Queens, with an end-to-end run time of 32 minutes along the 14-mile line. In April, Governor Hochul approved $2.75 billion in funding for the project as part of the 2025-2029 MTA Capital Plan.

MTA PRESS RELEASE, August 1


**Rendering of the IBX station at New Utrecht Avenue. The BMT West End Line can be seen in the distance.** MTA

#### Improved Credit Rating

The MTA received an upgraded credit rating from Standard & Poor's Global Ratings, which improved the MTA's Transportation Revenue Bonds rating from "A-" to "A" with a "stable" rating outlook.

S&P took this rating action based on the six-month success of the Congestion Relief Zone tolling program. That provided

net revenues 8% favorable to budget, along with the state's new funding source to support the MTA's 2025-2029 Capital Plan by increasing the maximum rate of the Payroll Mobility Tax projected to generate an additional $1.4 billion in recurring annual revenues, and the MTA's balanced budget through 2026 with baseline increases in farebox revenue, toll revenue, dedicated taxes, and state and local subsidies. This allowed the MTA to maintain a sufficiently strong financial profile.

This upgrade follows Moody's Investors Service earlier upgrade of the Transportation Revenue Bonds credit to "A2" this summer and comes ahead of the planned issuance of the Transportation Revenue Bonds this fall. The Transportation Revenue Bonds are also rated "AA" by both Fitch Ratings, Inc. and Kroll Bond Rating Agency, LLC.
MTA Press Release, August 12

### Public Hearings on Proposed Fare Changes Held

The MTA held three hybrid public meetings on August 19 and 20 on the proposed fare and toll changes which were outlined July 30. The MTA Board will vote on these proposed fare and toll changes this fall, which would go into effect January 2026.

The 2025 MTA Operating Budget, approved by the Board in December 2024, assumed a fare and toll increase would occur in March 2025. The MTA delayed the fare and toll increase to January 2026 to align with the launch of full tap-and-go on subways and buses.

Some of the fare changes include:

#### NYC Transit

- The base fare for subways, local buses, and Access-A-Ride would increase 10 cents, from $2.90 to $3.00
- The reduced fare would increase from $1.45 to $1.50
- The 7-day rolling fare cap would become permanent
- The express bus base fare would increase from $7 to $7.25, with the reduced fare increasing from $3.50 to $3.60

#### LIRR and Metro-North

- Monthly and weekly tickets would increase up to 4.5%
- All other ticket types would increase up to 8%
- Peak CityTicket would increase from $7 to $7.25 and Off-Peak CityTicket would increase from $5 to $5.25. This change would also apply to the Far Rockaway ticket

#### Changes in NYCT Fare Policy

- Permanent 7-day rolling fare cap on subways and buses
- Tap-and-go required for all subway, local bus and express bus rides
- No more cash on buses

#### Changes in LIRR/MNR Fare Policy

- No more ticket activation
- All One-Way mobile tickets will auto-activate upon purchase and the ticket will expire after four hours
- Paper tickets will also expire four hours after purchase
- New Day Pass for unlimited travel will replace the Round-Trip ticket
- Reduced fare (seniors, people with disabilities, Medicare recipients) available all day, every day, even in the morning peak period

MTA Press Release, August 13

## NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT (NYCT)

### Long-Term Track(s) Out of Service

On Monday, August 4, and continuing to Friday, September 12, Track 51 in Westchester Avenue Yard is out of service for track renewal work.

Track 8 in 207th Street Yard was removed from service on June 30 to enable Infinity Construction Company, under contract C-33945, to enable the renewal and repair of the track inside the Overhaul Shop. The track was scheduled to be returned to service on August 15 but the work has now been extended to Tuesday, September 30.

### IND Crosstown Line Tower Closes

Over the weekend of August 1-4, Nassau Avenue Tower was permanently removed from service. This was done as part of the Crosstown Line's CBTC signal upgrade project.

The IND Queens Boulevard Line opened from 42 Street-8 Avenue to Roosevelt Avenue on August 19, 1933. That same day, the IND Crosstown Line opened from Queens Plaza to Nassau Avenue. E trains operated local from Chambers Street to Roosevelt Avenue and GG trains shuttled between Queens Plaza and Nassau Avenue.

The signal system for these segments of the IND were supplied by General Railway Signal Company (GRS) under contract S-2, but we do not yet know who the installation company was. This tower had a 24-lever GRS Model 5 interlocking machine, with 13 levers for signals, four levers for switches, two levers for traffic and five spare spaces.

On July 31, 1937, the remainder of the Crosstown Line opened, from Nassau Avenue to Bergen Street. Sometime before that date, three additional home signals and one approach signal were placed into service south of Nassau Avenue Station.

All of the track indications in the vicinity of Van Alst Avenue (21 Street today, the model board was never updated!) were modified February 7-23, 1998 by the joint venture of Impulse Enterprises and F&V Mechanical under contract C-20210. This was one phase of the 63rd Street Connection, and provided a new signal system at Court Square, which was going to be a full-time terminal for the Crosstown Line.

The weekend the tower came out of service, all of the home and approach signals were basically converted to automatic signals. The home signals became "manual key-by" automatics. After calling the Control Center for permission, train operators operate the same manual release lever that they would have done when the home signal was displaying a "call-on." The home signal at the north end of the northbound platform, formerly lever 20, was relocated 48 feet south of its former location and is now on the platform rather than on the catwalk in the tunnel. Metal mesh guards were placed over all of the lenses to deter vandalism.

Oddly, the interlocking machine's model board was moved

**The 24-lever GRS Model 5 interlocking machine in Nassau Avenue Tower, as seen back on December 19, 2024.** Jeff Erlitz photo

from the old tower to a temporary relay room, which was built at the north end of the northbound platform.

### Platform Edge Barrier Update

Work to install platform edge barriers continued during August. During July, the days and hours of the installations varied, though all the work was performed during midnight hours. In August, however, crews resumed the previous arrangement with the northbound platform being done on Saturday and the southbound platform on Sunday. From midnight to noon on each day, trains bypassed the station while the work was underway.

- August 16-17, 66 Street 1

### Clark Street 2 3 Station Briefly Closed

On Sunday, August 3, the concrete awning for the Hotel St. George, over the subway entrance on the Henry Street side of the Clark Street Station, collapsed onto the sidewalk. Luckily, no one was hurt, let alone killed.


**The collapsed awning over the Clark Street 2 3 Station entrance on Henry Street.** Steven Vago/NY Post photo

While crews worked to clean up the debris, 2 and 3 trains bypassed the station. After the debris was cleared and a new sidewalk shed installed, regular service resumed at 7:28 a.m. on Tuesday, August 5.

MTA Press Release, August 5

### BMT Sea Beach Line Service Improvement

In the March 2025 *Bulletin*, there was a news item about efforts to alleviate delays in southbound N service after the morning peak period caused by several trains that terminated at 86 Street and then were laid up to Coney Island Yard.

After that initial test, the revised operation for those three lay-up trips were made semi-permanent. The change started on Monday, July 7 and will continue to the end of the current pick, which is Friday, October 31.

To refresh everyone's memory, the 0747 R from Continental Avenue to 59 Street, the 0833 N from Ditmars Blvd to 86 Street and the 0918 N from Ditmars to 86 Street all operate via the West End Line from 36 Street to Bay Parkway, where they go out of service and lay up to Coney Island Yard. This operation gets these trips "out of the way" of regular southbound service, both on the West End and Sea Beach Lines.

### Station Renamed

On Sunday, August 10, 110 Street-Central Park North 2 3 Station was renamed 110 Street-Malcolm X Plaza.

At a ceremony at the station on August 10, Governor Hochul signed two pieces of legislation. The first renamed the station. The second one will empower the Council on the Arts to designate the Harlem Renaissance Cultural District as a region of cultural significance.

MTA Press Release, August 10

### More New Elevators

On Monday, August 11, three new elevators were placed into service at the Queens Plaza E M R Station. Queens Plaza had already been an accessible station but the elevators were in need of replacement.

MTA Press Release, August 11


**View southwest of the new mezzanine-to-street level elevator, on the corner of Queens Plaza South and Jackson Avenue.** Marc A. Hermann/MTA photo

### Second Avenue Phase 2 Progresses

At a special meeting of the MTA Board held on Monday, August 18, the second of four separate contracts was awarded.

Contract 2 is for the tunnel-boring portion of construction, which extends from the current north end of the existing 10-block Route 132A-Section 13 "cut-and-cover" tunnel at East 120th Street and Second Avenue, up to 125th Street and west to Malcolm X Boulevard (Lenox Avenue).

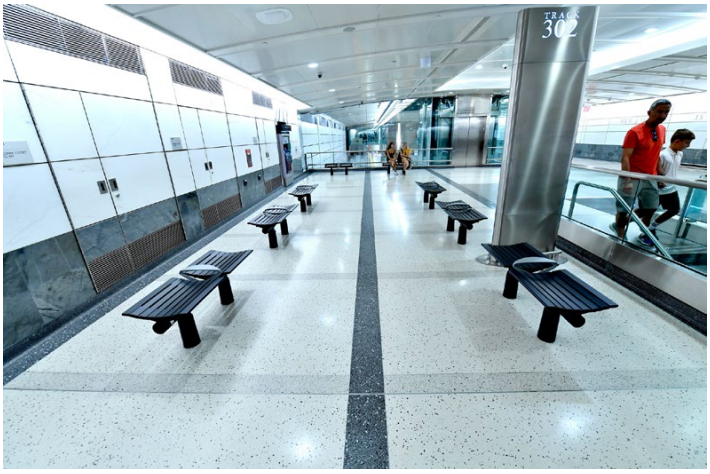
This contract also includes modifying a 2,500-foot section of the existing tunnel, from 116th to 120th Streets, into a station box. *(Editor's note: A portion of this older tunnel section was built for three tracks rather than two. The center track was going to be over an inspection pit, which was constructed.)* The 125th Street station cavern will be mined out and they will excavate and construct shafts for ancillary buildings and future entrances.

The winning bidder was Connect Plus Partners, a joint venture between Halmar International and FCC Construction. The bid price was $1.971 billion and the contract duration is 48 months.
MTA Press Release, August 18

## LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD (LIRR)

### Additional Seating at Grand Central Madison

Following passenger feedback, crews installed 28 seats on the mezzanine level of GCM near 47th Street in October 2024. This was in addition to the seating area on the Madison Concourse near ticket windows. Fourteen seats at 45th Street and 28 seats at 46th Street were installed this month for a total of 70 seats on the mezzanine level, close to platforms and trains.




**The new seating area.** Marc A. Hermann/MTA photo

The die-cast aluminum seats in the new seating area are built by Forms + Surfaces from its Tecno RS collection made specifically for high use areas such as public transit stations.

The 70 seats are available to ticketed LIRR riders with a 90-minute limit. *(Editor's note: It is not known just how the time limit would be enforced).*
MTA Press Release, August 12

### New Schedules

September 2 saw new timetables for all lines, with no major changes. The changes that did occur included the following:

- Midday Port Washington returned to hourly and further adjusted for Bayside to Great Neck single-tracking
- Weekday evening Brooklyn service back to every 20 minutes
- Most AM Peak trains get a minute added to improve Jamaica on time performance
- Midday Greenport busing returns
- Various weekend adjustments for Babylon station work
- Gate time implemented for westbound trains originating at Babylon, Huntington and Ronkonkoma

*(Editor's note: Gate time is the one minute difference shown for departures at terminals between the public and employee timetables. The departure times in the employee timetable are one minute later than shown in the public timetable. This has been the practice at large stations that actually have, or had, gates to the platforms for many years, for example, at Penn Station and Atlantic Terminal. Unbeknownst to us, "gate time" was added to the public timetables for Port Washington, Long Beach, Far Rockaway, Hempstead, West Hempstead, Oyster Bay, Montauk and Port Jefferson back in May.)*

## PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON (PATH)

### Another Hoboken Closure

From 11:59 p.m. Thursday, August 28, to 5 a.m. Tuesday, September 2, the Hoboken PATH station was closed for urgent repairs to the track and interlocking system.

The last eastbound train was the 11:40 p.m. 33rd Street-bound train that arrived at Hoboken at 11:56 p.m. Thursday, August 28, before the station closed for the interlocking repairs. The last westbound train was the 11:38 p.m. Journal Square-bound train that arrived at Hoboken at 11:57 p.m.

The interlocking, which was installed during the station's month-long closure in February, has experienced mechanical failures in recent weeks due to design issues. PATH made emergency repairs to partially restore service to the station, allowing trains to reach two of the station's three platforms at slower speeds and reduced service frequency out of an abundance of caution. Long-term repairs to the interlocking will enable the return of more frequent train service during peak hours.

This interlocking is a custom-designed component unique to its location outside the Hoboken station and the PATH system. Its location includes sharp turns and narrow tunnel walls, further complicating design and repair efforts. To complete long-term repairs, new parts needed to be fabricated and shipped by the interlocking's manufacturer. During the station's Labor Day weekend closure, new parts were installed and rigorously tested.

The new interlocking replaced an older 35-year-old slip switch that allowed trains to access the station's three tracks and was installed with the intention of improving flexibility and reliability for trains as they enter and exit the station.

Any failure of this new equipment is unacceptable and the manufacturer, installation contractor or any party if at fault for its failure will be held accountable.
PORT AUTHORITY PRESS RELEASE, August 8

## AMTRAK

### NexGen Acela Introduced

At long last, and after a few years of testing, Thursday, August 28, saw the introduction of Amtrak's NexGen Acela train sets in revenue service. Train No. 2153 left Boston at 5:55 a.m. and Train No. 2154 left Washington, D.C., at 6:51 a.m., one minute late. Unfortunately, this trip was delayed 25 minutes at Penn Station, New York due to equipment issues. It ultimately arrived at Boston 53 minutes late.

The trains incorporate four decades of Alstom's TGV technology and are destined to fully replace 25-year-old Acela equipment introduced in November 2000. Acela's revolution of Northeast Corridor travel was made possible a year earlier when Amtrak completed electrification of the former New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad tracks between its namesake city and Boston's South Station.

**Amtrak Train No. 2153, the first southbound trip with the NexGen Acela equipment, was caught across the Meadows in North Bergen, N.J., shortly after emerging from the Hudson River tunnels. View northwest from Patterson Plank Road.** Thomas Farmer photo

Amtrak touts that the new trains can reach 160 mph, or 10 mph faster than their predecessors. But the NextGen trains have been introduced on existing Acela schedules for now.

Adoption of faster schedules has more to do with the trains' ability to safely and steadily tilt through curves than their higher top speeds. The more that trains can tilt, the faster they can run through curves while maintaining comfort for passengers. Tilt technology makes this possible. Operating at a higher "cant deficiency" — the amount of tilt required over and above the track superelevation necessary for forces to be balanced — enables the trains to cut travel time.

The NextGen Acelas have debuted with 5 inches of cant deficiency, the same range as the original Acelas. But they are supposed to be capable of operating up to at least 7 inches, a figure that will cut times over the serpentine portions of the Northeast Corridor. Amtrak and manufacturer Alstom are working with the Federal Railroad Administration on increasing the trains' cant deficiency.

The new trains are the first to meet the Federal Railroad Administration's new Tier 3 crash impact management standards, which were not yet complete when Amtrak and Alstom signed the $2.35 billion NextGen Acela contract in 2016. Construction of the train sets in Hornell, N.Y., was under way when the standards were finalized.

Alstom says it tweaked the design to meet Tier 3 requirements, which ultimately affected the trains' performance during extensive testing. That, in turn, prompted additional minor modifications to the equipment, including dampers on the suspension of the trains' power cars, an independent source tells *Trains*.

Further complicating matters: The new trains ride on a TGV wheel profile, which is different from any other Amtrak equipment. The Northeast Corridor includes significant mileage shared with freight and commuter traffic, which raises tonnage beyond what TGVs experience on dedicated high speed tracks in France.

The debut of the NextGen Acela was four years late as Alstom worked to meet the new standards and evaluate extensive test performance data.

Five NextGen Acela train sets have been accepted from Alstom and several more should be accepted within the next few weeks. The two round-trips each day (one on Saturday) require two train sets.

*(Editor's note: As of now, the NexGen Acelas are assigned to the following trains, along with their equipment turns:*
- *Weekdays: 2154>2173, 2153>2170*
- *Saturday: 2250, 2251*
- *Sunday: 2248>2259, 2271>2258)*

TRAINS.COM, August 28

# Other U.S. Systems

## ATLANTA, GA.

### Streetcar Temporarily Suspended

The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) will suspend streetcar service beginning Monday, September 8, to accommodate underground utility repairs by Georgia Power. Scheduled infrastructure upgrades along the streetcar route will also take place during the shutdown. The service suspension is expected to last approximately three to four months. MARTA will continue to provide transportation along the streetcar route.

The work requires a lane closure between Courtland Street and Peachtree Center Avenue, where Georgia Power will excavate to repair underground electrical lines. For safety reasons, streetcars cannot operate alongside open construction areas. During this time, MARTA shuttle vans


**Westbound S70 No. 1002 (Siemens, 2013) has left the Dobbs Plaza stop on Auburn Avenue and is about to cross Jesse Hill Jr Drive in this view east on September 6, 2016.** Mark Evans photo via Flikr

wrapped to look like the streetcar, will provide service along the streetcar route.

In addition to Georgia Power's work, MARTA will take advantage of the closure to complete:

- Catenary inspection and repair
- Track maintenance
- Tree trimming
- Station refurbishment
- Signage and vehicle updates
- Deep cleaning along the route

Streetcar service will resume once all work and inspections are complete.

MARTA NEWS, August 26

### Garnett Station Closure

Trains will temporarily skip Garnett Station from September 13 to October 26 so construction crews can replace the 40-year-old platform pavers. Rail service on the Red and Gold Lines will operate as scheduled, but trains will not stop at Garnett.

The following work will be completed during the skip stop:

- Demolition of existing flooring, including cracked and missing pavers
- Installation of new tile flooring on the platform
- Staircase repair
- Replacement of worn windscreens to improve visibility and natural lighting on the platform
- Heavy cleaning and pressure-washing
- Sealing and applying graffiti-resistant coating to concrete surfaces

The Garnett Station Rehabilitation project is part of MARTA's multi-year, approximately $1 billion Station Rehabilitation Program designed to improve and enhance safety and aesthetics at all 38 rail stations.

MARTA NEWS, August 28

**View of Garnett Station.** Wikipedia

## BOSTON, MASS.

### Subway Service Improves

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) implemented improvements to subway schedules, which went into effect on August 24.

The service improvements include:

- Red Line frequency improved every day with the number of weekday trips increasing by 3% and the time between trains during peak hours on weekdays decreasing by about 30 seconds
- Orange Line frequency improved every day due to faster observed turnaround times with the new car fleet. The number of weekday trips increased by 9% with the time between trains during peak hours on weekdays decreased by about 30 seconds
- Blue Line frequency improved slightly on weekdays
- Weekend Green Line schedules adjusted slightly to better reflect actual trip times, and Mattapan Line schedules were adjusted to better reflect actual trip times every day

MBTA NEWS, August 1

### Blue Line Partial Shutdown

Blue Line service was suspended between Airport and Wonderland for nine days, from August 9-17.

During this nine-day service outage, crews upgraded the switches at Orient Heights, replaced ties, resurfaced track, and replaced nearly a thousand feet of rail.

MBTA NEWS, August 4

### Orange Line Speed Increase

Orange Line trains are now able to reach 55 mph on select portions of the line. Starting August 24, the new increased speed impacts stations between Oak Grove and Assembly Station. The previous maximum speed on the Orange Line was 40 mph. The segment between Assembly and Oak Grove was originally designed for 55 MPH, but as track infrastructure

declined, speeds were lowered for safety reasons.
MBTA NEWS, August 25

## DENVER, COLO.

### Fall Service Changes

The Regional Transportation District (RTD)'s Fall service changes took effect on August 31. RTD made changes to enhance reliability and connectivity of services, improve on-time performance and account for the next phase of the Downtown Rail Reconstruction Project.

The service changes on the rail lines include the following:

- The D Line ends at Denver Union Station instead of 18th/California Station during the Downtown Rail Reconstruction Project
- The H Line operates only between Florida and Southmoor Stations due to the downtown light rail reconstruction work; riders must transfer to the E Line to continue to destinations along the Southeast and Central Platte Valley corridors
- The L Line is suspended due to the Downtown Rail Reconstruction Project; bus Route 43 is available nearby
- The E, R and W lines have undergone minor schedule changes

RTD NEWS STOP, August 31

## KANSAS CITY, MO.

### Full Service Simulated Testing Begins

During the week of August 21, the KC Streetcar team began full-service simulated testing on the expanded route from the River Market to the University of Missouri-Kansas City. The simulation replicates full passenger service with seven to eight streetcars operating along the route. Testing takes place during regular streetcar service hours for several weeks.

This phase of testing evaluates arrival and departure times, streetcar spacing, streetcar schedules, turn back operations and layover time. The operations team will make iterative adjustments during this phase. While testing is underway, downtown streetcar service will continue without interruption, maintaining normal hours and service levels.

Simulated testing also provides an opportunity for ongoing operator training on the new alignment, ensuring that all streetcar staff are fully prepared for passenger service. In addition, the newly established KC Streetcar Operations Control Center has been activated for the first time. This


**Urbos 3 No. 812 (CAF, 2024) has paused at the Kaufmann Center stop on Main Street and 16th Street on its southbound trip to Union Station on August 26 during the ERA's 2025 Convention.** Sid Keyles photo

dispatch center will serve as the central hub for monitoring, managing and coordinating the entire streetcar system.

This milestone marks the final stages of preparation before the extended KC Streetcar route opens on October 24.
KCSTREETCAR MEDIA RELEASE, August 21

**(Below) Map of the extended KC Streetcar route with the six new stations from WWI Museum & Memorial to UMKC.** KC Streetcar


## MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

### Blue Line Extension Progress

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has signed the Amended Record of Decision for Metropolitan Council's Blue Line Extension's Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement. The Blue Line Extension project is a 13.4-mile light rail line that will connect downtown Minneapolis to North Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park.
RT&S, August 14

## PITTSBURGH, PA.

### Proposed Service Cuts and Fare Increases

Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) released the final summary of public feedback received during its public comment period regarding proposed service reductions and fare increases that are being considered because of a significant budget shortfall.

The report documents the voices of more than 4,800 individuals who submitted testimony during a nearly three-month process between March 31 and June 18 through

in-person hearings, online submissions, voicemail, U.S. Mail, and printed forms. Unsurprisingly, individuals overwhelmingly opposed the cuts and fare increases.

At the core of the proposal is a projected $100 million operating budget deficit for FY 2026, caused by stagnant state funding, rising inflation, and long-term ridership declines following the COVID-19 pandemic. Without new revenue, PRT has proposed deep service cuts and fare increases to remain financially solvent.

The proposed changes include:

- A 35% reduction in bus, light rail, and incline service, beginning as early as February 2026
- Elimination of 41 bus routes and the Silver Line light rail service
- Reduced frequency on dozens of other routes, with no transit service after 11 p.m.
- A 25-cent increase to the base fare, raising it to $3
- A 62% reduction in the ACCESS paratransit ADA-protected service area and an average 20% increase in ACCESS fares
- Closure of two PRT bus garages, the Wabash Tunnel and 10 park-and-ride lots
- Elimination of extra service, including before and after concerts and the 2026 NFL Draft

In analyzing the feedback, PRT found consistent themes around access to work, healthcare, grocery stores and childcare, as well as fear of isolation for people with disabilities, older adults and low-income riders. Public comments also highlighted how cuts to transit service could ripple through the region's economy, hurting employers who depend on service workers, increasing congestion and reducing air quality.

PRT has also emphasized that these cuts would cancel or delay other planned improvements, including the agency's Bus Line Redesign project, which would improve job access and service reliability for hundreds of thousands of residents without additional costs to the agency.

PRT continues to advocate for a long-term, dedicated and growing funding solution. The agency supports Governor Shapiro's proposal to increase the transit share of the state sales tax but notes that even this would only partially close the funding gap.

PRT News Release, August 4

## PORTLAND, ORE.

### Downtown Station Closed

TriMet sped up the MAX Blue and Red Lines through Downtown Portland by permanently closing the Skidmore Fountain MAX Station on Sunday, August 24. The TriMet Board of Directors voted to close the station last year, after a years long process of community engagement and outreach.

MAX had to make three stops to serve stations spaced closely together on 1st Avenue in Downtown Portland. As a result, trains moved slowly along this stretch, causing trips to take longer. With the Skidmore Fountain Station closed, trains proceed directly between the Old Town/Chinatown and Oak St/SW 1st Ave Stations. Those stations will remain open, continuing to serve riders along 1st Avenue.


**SD660 No. 211 (Siemens, 1997) leads a two-car train at Skidmore Fountain Station on the Red and Blue Lines back on November 3, 2018. Burnside Street passes overhead.** Ian Sane photo via Wikipedia

TriMet first proposed closing four stations on the MAX Blue and Red lines in 2018. The goal was to speed up trains and reduce travel times for riders in Downtown Portland.

Three of the stations — Kings Hill/SW Salmon, Mall/SW 4th Ave and Mall/SW 5th Ave — closed permanently in 2020. Skidmore Fountain was the fourth station considered for closure. Since TriMet closed the stations in 2020, trip times through Downtown Portland on the MAX Blue and Red lines have been about a minute and a half faster. Closing the Skidmore Fountain Station will save riders another 45 seconds every trip. In speeding up MAX service in Downtown, TriMet focused on stations that were less than 600 feet from another station. The Skidmore Fountain Station is just 500 feet from the closest station. For comparison, a two-car MAX train is about 200 feet long.

TriMet News, August 4

## SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

### 8th & O Street Station Platform Closure Extended

The Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) announced that the east platform (for travel inbound toward 8th & Capitol) at the 8th & O Street light rail station will remain closed through late 2026.

While major building construction by the California Department of General Services at 1416 9th Street is expected to conclude at the end of 2025, additional work is still needed at the station before full reopening is possible. The bus stops that were closed during construction efforts at 8th & O Streets and 9th & N Streets will reopen to riders on Tuesday, September 2, 2025.

Due to the construction fencing and site limitations, SacRT was unable to raise the east platform during the last phase of light rail station platform upgrades. The platform must be modified to meet the new height requirements for SacRT's modern low-floor light rail trains. A new construction contract

**Looking east along O Street at the 8th & O platform that is currently out of service, back on December 8, 2012.**
Pedro Xing photo via Wikipedia

for this platform work is expected to be in place by early 2026.

Until the work is complete, the east platform will remain closed. Riders should use Archives Plaza Station as an alternative for inbound service. The west platform at 8th & O Street Station (serving trains traveling outbound toward Archives Plaza) remains open.
SACRT NEWS, August 28

## SAN FRANSISCO BAY AREA, CALIF.

### BART Goes Tap and Ride

A new day for riders arrived on Wednesday, August 20, as BART became the Bay Area's first Tap and Ride system. Tap and Ride will provide riders the ability to pay adult fares at BART fare gates using physical contactless credit or debit cards or mobile payment methods such as Apple Pay and Google Pay. With Tap and Ride, riders will no longer need to use a Clipper card to ride BART. This will be a time saver for riders who can now use their contactless bank cards to ride BART with zero registration or setup process required.

When paying with a contactless bank card, riders will be charged full adult fares, and riders with eligibility-based discounts, such as Clipper START or youth and senior discounts, must continue using their physical or digital Clipper card. Transfer discounts will not be available with Tap and Ride until the feature is rolled out to the Bay Area's other transit agencies. Riders transferring from BART to a connecting transit agency are advised to use their physical or digital Clipper card to receive the current transfer discounts.

Each rider must pay with their own card or device, and they must use the same card or device to tap in and tap out of the BART system. If family members have the same credit card number but they are on different cards and devices, they will be able to use it.
BART NEWS, August 19

## SEATTLE, WASH.

### 1 Line Service to Federal Way Opening Announced

Sound Transit announced that passenger service will begin on the Link 1 Line to Federal Way on December 6. The 7.8-mile Federal Way Link Extension includes three new stations in South King County, serving Kent Des Moines, Star Lake and Federal Way Downtown. During peak hours, trains will operate every eight minutes.
SOUND TRANSIT NEWS RELEASE, August 28

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

### Metro Unveils Design for 8000-Series

After more than 20,000 votes from riders throughout the region, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) has selected a winning design as the new livery for Metro's incoming rail fleet.

**The winning design for the 8000-series cars.** WMATA

The exterior design of the new 8000-series fleet pays homage to Metro's past, but the interior is thoroughly modern. The cars feature wider aisles, increased digital signage and dynamic wayfinding, among other upgrades.
WMATA NEWS, August 26

# International

## BENGALURU, INDIA

### Yellow Line Opens

India's prime minister officially opened the 19.75-kilometer Yellow Line in Bengaluru on August 10 with passenger services starting the following day.

The elevated metro line runs southeast from Rashtreeya Vidyalaya Road, where it interchanges with the Green Line,

to Delta Electronics Bommasandra. The line has 16 stations, two of which will be interchanges with the future Pink and Blue lines. Trains operate automatically without drivers using Communications-Based Train Control (CBTC). The standard-gauge line is electrified at 750V dc third rail.

**India's prime minister, Narendra Modi, waves off the first Yellow Line train in Bengaluru on August 10.** India Prime Minister's Office photo

The line was planned to open in two phases, with the section from R V Road to Central Silk Board opening in December 2023 and the section from Central Silk Board to Bommasandra in June 2023. However, these dates were postponed due to delays in construction and the delivery of trains from China.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 18

## CATALONIA, SPAIN

### New LRVs Ordered

Catalonia Government Railways (FGC) has awarded Stadler a contract to supply seven Tramlink V3 LRVs for the first section of the planned 46-kilometer Camp de Tarragona light rail network west of Barcelona.

Including full-service maintenance over 15 years, the contract is worth €59.7 million. Deliveries of the standard-gauge LRVs are due to be completed within 36 months of the contract being signed. The five-section bi-directional LRVs will be 33.6 meters long and 100% low-floor, with six double doors per side. Each LRV will be able to accommodate up to 211 passengers, with 54 seats, 10 tip-up seats and two wheelchair spaces. There will be one multifunctional area with space for up to four bicycles.

With a maximum speed of 81 km/h, the LRVs will take power at 750V dc from the overhead supply. They will also be equipped with lithium titanium oxide batteries, giving a range of up to 9.9 kilometers on sections of the new network where overhead electrification equipment will not be installed.

Marking FGC's debut as a light rail operator, the 46-kilometer Camp de Tarragona network will serve a total of 47 stops, including 10 interchanges. Eventually connecting the cities of Reus and Tarragona and serving Reus Airport, it is expected to be used by 9.5 million passengers a year.


**Rendering of FGC's New Tramlink vehicles.** Stadler

The first phase of the project comprises a 14-kilometer section with 14 stops, running mainly on a disused railway alignment from the railway station at Cambrils to the station at Vila-seca. There will also be an interchange with heavy rail services at Salou-Port Aventura.

On July 2 the Catalan regional government awarded a €15.8 million contract to an undisclosed bidder, covering preliminary civil engineering work on the first phase. This includes utility diversion, earthmoving and structures such as a new 112-meter-long bridge over the A7 highway in Vila-seca. Work is due to start next month for completion within 20 months.

Later this year, tenders will be called for contracts covering civil engineering and railway systems work from Cambrils station to the center of Cambrils, and for the section from Cambrils to Vila-seca. A contract to build the fleet maintenance depot and control center for the Camp de Tarragona network at Vila-seca will also be tendered, following award of a design contract in November 2024.

Costing a total of €245 million, the first phase of the new network is expected to enter service during the first quarter of 2028. The regional government says that administrative work is in progress for the second phase, connecting Reus with Tarragona and serving Reus Airport.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 1

## COTTBUS, GERMANY

### New Trams Enter Service

New low-floor ForCity Plus 47T LRVs built by Skoda Group have entered passenger service in the German city. A launch ceremony was held at the Thiemstrasse tram terminus on August 15. The three-module LRVs are approximately 29 meters long and 70% low floor. They have capacity for up to 158 passengers. Cottbus has ordered a total of 22 vehicles under a contract agreed in 2021 by Skoda Group and the cities of Frankfurt (Oder), Brandenburg (Havel) and Cottbus. While the trams appear similar, they have been tailored to the needs of each city. In Frankfurt (Oder) type 46T vehicles entered service earlier this year while Brandenburg (Havel) is

**47T ForCity Plus No. 2 (Skoda, 12/2024), operating on Route 2, is heading south on Strasse der Jugend on Friday, August 15, the very first day of service for these new cars.**
Martin N. photo via Urban Electric Transit

expecting to launch operation of type 48T sets soon.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 27

## CZECH REPUBLIC

### New Trains for RegioJet

Czech private operator Regiojet is to order 34 electric-battery bi-mode multiple units from Skoda Group. The value of the deal has not yet been disclosed, but Skoda will provide 18 two-car and 16 three-car sets, all of which will include a small diesel engine for last mile operations and battery recharging.

The order follows RegioJet's win of a contract for fast train services between Prague and central and northern Bohemia. The 15-year contract will start with the timetable change in December 2029 and have a total annual volume of 4.5 million train-kilometers.

**A RegioJet multiple unit pauses at Usti nad Labem.**
Quintus Vosman photo

The selection by the Czech Ministry of Transport was based on price only. RegioJet made the lowest bid of Koruna 1.74 billion ($US 83 million), including a commitment to order new rolling stock. As there were no appeals from the three other bidders, incumbent Arriva, plus Czech Railways (CD) and Leo Express, the contract has been declared final.

The contract covers fast train services over the following routes:

- Line 14A: Liberec - Pardubice
- Line 14B: Liberec - Decin - Usti nad Labem
- Line 21: Prague - Tanvald
- Line 22: Kolin - Rumburk
- Line 24: Prague - Rumburk

Arriva currently operates all of these services apart from Line 24, which is new. They include lines either that are entirely or partially electrified and are currently operated using former DB-German Rail Class 845 and Class 642 Siemens Desiro two-car DMUs.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 29

## DENMARK

### Lokaltog Orders 10 More Battery Trains

Danish regional passenger operator Lokaltog has ordered 10 more battery-powered two-car Flirt Akku trains from Stadler. It has exercised the sole option from a contract signed in October 2024 for the supply of 14 trains. The additional trains are expected to enter service in Zealand from the first half of 2029.

**Rendering of Flirt Akku train set for Lokaltog.** Stadler

The new fleet will replace aging IC2 DMUs, in service since 1997, and supports Lokaltog's strategy to deliver emissions-free operations. The Flirt Akku has a range of up to 100 kilometers on battery power, recharging under overhead lines using a pantograph or via regenerative braking. In 2021, the Flirt Akku set a Guinness World Record by traveling for 224 kilometers without recharging.

The trains meet European accessibility standards, featuring low-floor entrances, automatic ramps to bridge the gap between train and platform and dedicated spaces for wheelchairs and bicycles. They will also be equipped with air-conditioning, free passenger Wi-Fi, and passenger information screens.

The new fleet will be manufactured at Stadler's plant in Siedlce, Poland.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 12

## EDMONTON, CANADA

### New LRVs Begin to Arrive

Edmonton, Canada, has received the first of 46 LRVs from Hyundai Rotem under a contract awarded in 2021.

This is the first time Hyundai Rotem has supplied LRVs to a North American operator. The first vehicle arrived at the Gerry Wright Operations and Maintenance Facility on August 1 and there are currently 16 LRVs at various stages of production at Hyundai Rotem's factory in Changwon, Korea.

The bi-directional, low-floor LRVs have a top operating speed of 80km/h. They have been designed specifically to cope with Canada's cold winter climate and Hyundai Rotem says they can operate safely at temperatures as low as -40°C. *(Editor's note: -40°C= -40°F).* This is due to the use of materials that can withstand the severe cold and an interior climate control system that can detect and adapt to temperature changes. Red and white LED lights, matching the Canadian flag, have also been added to the sides to improve visibility.

**Edmonton's first Hyundai Rotem LRV, No. 2021, on delivery.** City of Edmonton photo

The new LRVs will operate on the 14-kilometer Valley Line West, which is under construction, alongside the fleet of 26 Flexity Freedom LRVs supplied by Bombardier (now Alstom) on the 13-kilometer Valley Line Southeast, which opened in November 2023. Valley Line West is scheduled to be completed in 2028 and together with the existing line will provide a 27-kilometer cross-city connection.

The LRVs will now undergo up to 2,000 kilometers of test runs. Hyundai Rotem says that it plans to deliver all of the new vehicles to Edmonton by 2027.

Hyundai Rotem is also shortlisted alongside CAF and Siemens Mobility for a contract to supply up to 53 high-floor LRVs for use on Edmonton's Capital and Metro lines.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 12

## GERMANY

### ICE L Train Approved

German Rail (DB) has received approval to operate its fleet of ICE L push-pull trains in Germany. Talgo is currently building a total of 79 17-car trains, including driving trailers, and DB will officially unveil a set in Berlin on October 17, before four trains enter service with the timetable change in December.

The first sets are likely to work services between Berlin and Cologne. Earlier this year, the operator confirmed that it would deploy class 408 ICE 3neo high-speed trains on the Berlin - Amsterdam route, rather than ICE L sets planned, as insufficient numbers of the latter would be delivered by December. DB has yet to confirm when the cross-border services will begin.

Technical approval for the Talgo coaches, known by the manufacturer as Talgo 230, to operate in Germany was granted by the European Union Agency for Railways and Germany's Federal Railway Authority. Talgo is also working with regulators in Austria and the Netherlands to gain approval in those countries, as well as with the Swiss regulator for the short section between Basel Bad in Germany and Basel SBB in Switzerland. Talgo says all three approvals are expected in the near future.

**ICE-L (Talgo 230) in test service on Geislinger Steige, Germany, on November 10, 2023.** Raphael Krammer photo via Wikipedia

Type approval for the Talgo 230 trains in Germany will also assist with approval of a fleet of 16 trains, currently on order for Danish State Railways, and for an initial tranche of 30 trains ordered by German private operator FlixTrain earlier this year. All Talgo 230 trains are being built in Spain.

Although the ICE L coaches have been approved, it is likely that they will initially be hauled by Siemens Vectron locomotives, rather than the class 105 locomotives also currently being built by Talgo that are designed to operate with the fleet. Delivery of the class 105 is running late, with the first locomotives expected to be handed over to DB next year, assuming there are no issues with technical approval, which is being undertaken separately from the ICE L coaches.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 12

## KRAKOW, POLAND

### New LRVs Ordered

Public transport operator MPK Krakow has signed a contract worth Zlotys 558.5 million ($US 152.5 million) with Pesa Bydgoszcz for the supply of 30 bi-directional low-floor LRVs. The new fleet is due to be introduced between early 2028 and early 2029. The 33-meter-long LRVs will be equipped with air-conditioning, in-car CCTV and a passenger information system adapted to the needs of blind and visually-impaired passengers. Each LRV will have a dedicated wheelchair space.

Equipped with a cab at each end, the first bi-directional LRVs ordered for Krakow in recent years will be able to operate on current and planned routes without turning loops, also providing additional flexibility during line closures for track renewal work.

**Rendering of Krakow's new LRVs.** PESA

Purchasing the new fleet represents a significant financial challenge. This year MPK has signed agreements guaranteeing non-repayable subsidies of Zlotys 481 million from Krakow Public Transport Authority (KPO), and Zlotys 74 million from Poland's European Funds for Infrastructure, Climate, Environment program.

MPK has also applied for preferential loans from KPO worth Zlotys 750 million, which they intend to use to purchase more new LRVs. Earlier this year, MPK signed three separate frameworks with Pesa, including one covering the supply of up to 30 bi-directional LRVs.

The other frameworks cover the supply of up to 30 uni-directional LRVs over 43 meters long, and 30 uni-directional LRVs over 33 meters long.

INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 21

## LYON, FRANCE

### Metro Upgrade Project

Lyon public transport authority Sytral Mobilites has signed a contract with Alstom worth over €300 million to modernize Line D of the city's metro system in central southeastern France. The deal includes the supply of 26 new rubber-tired metro trains, worth €145 million, and the upgrade of the line's Urbalis automatic control system, worth €158 million. The delivery schedule for the rolling stock and systems has not been disclosed.

The new two-car MPL25 trains, which can each accommodate over 300 passengers, will be fully automated and compatible with the identical MPL16 trains deployed on Line B, enabling rolling stock to operate on both lines and in multiple to form four-car trains. According to Alstom, the new trains are 96% recyclable and will feature panoramic windows, air-conditioning, LED lighting and passenger information screens, with wide entrances and interior gangways. They will be equipped with regenerative braking which will significantly reduce energy consumption when compared with the earlier MPL85 fleet.


**At the south terminal of Line D, Saint-Genis-Laval, two sets of MPL 16 stock, Nos. 709 and 719 (Alstom, 2019, 2020), sit side-by-side on December 13, 2023.** Paletten Petry photo via Urban Electric Transit

The upgraded Urbalis communications-based train control (CBTC) system will improve reliability for the 300,000 passengers who use Line D each day, making it the busiest line on the city's network.

Seven Alstom sites across France will be involved in the design and production of the new trains and automatic control system, with a project team based in the Lyon area.

The contract also includes upgrading the MPL85 fleet to operate with the new control system. The existing Line D maintenance and stabling depot at Le Thioley will be extended and upgraded for the MPL25 fleet.

INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, July 30

## MUMBAI, INDIA

### Metro Line 4 Contract Awarded

Alstom has been awarded a contract to supply 39 six-car driverless trains and communication-based train control (CBTC) for Line 4 of the Mumbai metro network, currently under construction and also known as the Green Line.

Including fleet and CBTC maintenance over five years, the contract is worth "a few hundred million euros," according to Alstom, and has been awarded by overall project lead

Larsen & Toubro (L&T).

On June 24, the executive committee of the Mumbai Metro Regional Development Authority approved the award to L&T of an integrated systems contract worth Rs 47.9 billion ($US 546.2 million) to supply rolling stock, CBTC, telecommunications systems, platform screen doors, and depot machinery and plant for Line 4.

**Rendering of Metropolis train set for Mumbai's Line 4.** Alstom

The elevated line will run for 35.3 kilometers between Wadala in central Mumbai and Kasarvadavali in Thane, serving 32 stations. It is expected to relieve traffic congestion, while cutting journey times and reducing $CO_2$ emissions.

Equipped with regenerative braking, the new Line 4 fleet will be designed at Alstom's engineering center in Bangalore, Karnataka, and manufactured at the Sri City facility in Andra Pradesh. Traction equipment will be manufactured at Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu and trucks at Savli in Gujarat.

Urbalis CBTC developed at Bangalore will enable operation at Grade of Automation 4 (GoA4), supervised from the Line 4 operations control center at Mandale depot. A back-up facility will be provided at Mogharpada.

Alstom has previously supplied driverless trains and signaling for the Aqua Line in Mumbai, which opened in October 2024. It is also supplying signaling and telecommunications systems for Lines 2 and 7, and signaling for lines 7A and 9.

INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 26

## PARIS, FRANCE

### Line 13 To Go Automatic

Paris public transport operator RATP has awarded Siemens Mobility a contract to supply a new train control system for Metro Line 13. The upgrade will enable fully automated driverless operation at Grade of Automation 4 (GoA4) in order to increase capacity, improve reliability and optimize energy consumption.

Under the contract, the value of which was not disclosed, Siemens will supply CBTC-based ATO as well as onboard equipment and upgrade the operations control center for Line 13. The project is due for completion by late 2032, and the contract includes staff training as well as an optional maintenance agreement running for up to 30 years.


**MF 77 set No. 057 (Alsthom, 12/1979) is entering La Fourche on Line 13 on its southbound journey to Chatillon Montrouge on January 23, 2025.** Jeff Erlitz photo

The 24-kilometer Line 13 is one of the busiest lines on the RATP network, serving 32 stations and carrying over 550,000 passengers a day. It runs from Chatillon-Montrouge in the southwest inner suburbs via the mainline termini at Montparnasse and Saint-Lazare to La Fourche, where it separates into two branches, one running northwards to Les Courtilles and the other to Saint-Denis-Universite.

The Line 13 upgrade will begin in 2027 with the introduction of a new train fleet supplied by Alstom, and will follow by upgrading the current GoA2 ATO system, where the driver controls the train doors and safety functions, to fully-automated GoA4. This will enable the train service to be adjusted according to passenger demand, deploying additional trains as required. The new system will also enable passenger information to be provided onboard in real time.

Siemens was previously involved in the projects to convert Lines 1 and 4 to driverless operation. It also upgraded the train control system on the driverless Line 14 as part of the extension to Orly Airport, enabling up to 1 million passengers to be carried a day by services operating at headways as low as 1 minute-25 seconds. Line 13 will be the Metro's first steel-wheeled line to be automated.

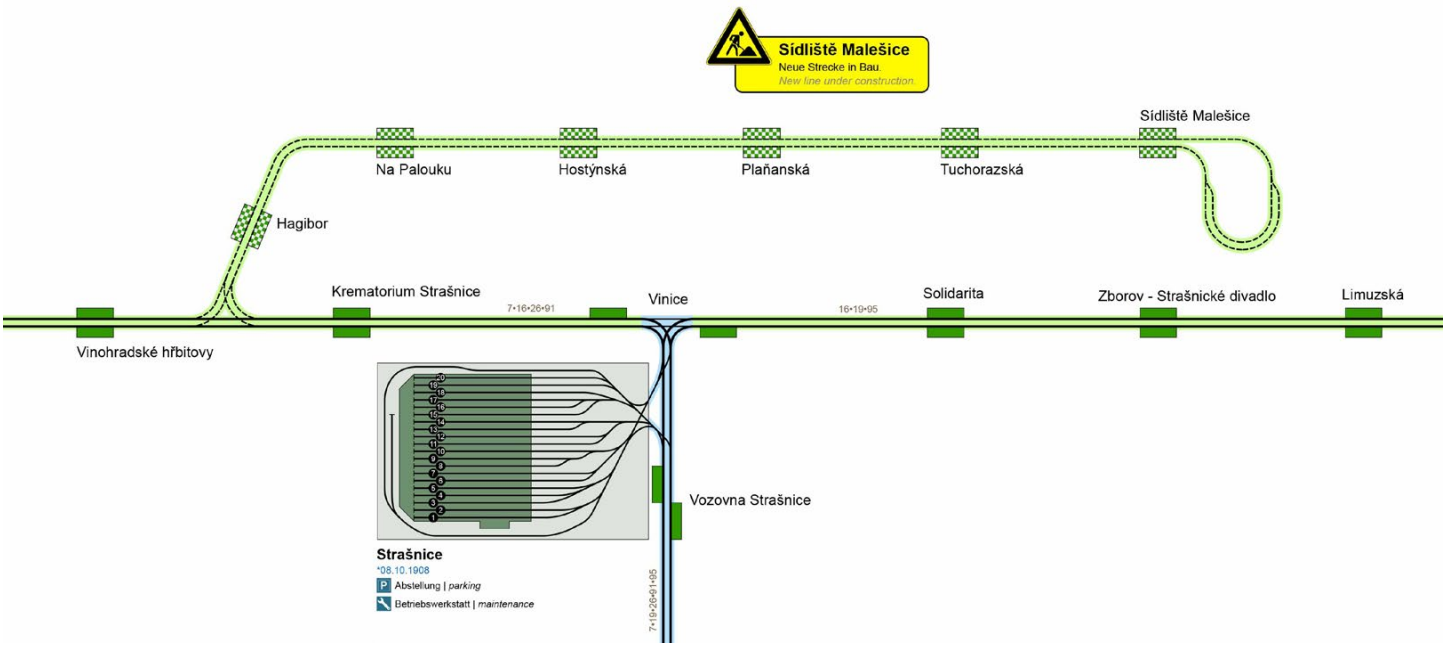
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 26

## PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

### Construction of New Tram Line Begins

The construction of a new tram line to Malesice has officially started. Once completed, there will be two lines operating this route. The new tram line will be built by a consortium of companies, Subterra, OHLA ZS and PRAGIS.

The line will be 2.4-kilometers long, running along the entire length of Pocernicka Street, from the intersection with Vinohradska (where current tram Routes 7, 16, 25 and night Route 91 operate) to the intersection with Drevcicka Street, where it will end in a loop. The construction period is 32 months. Prague Transport expects the start of test operations on the new line at the end of 2027.




**(Above) Track diagram of the new extension along Pocernicka Street.**
www.Gleisplanweb.de

There will be six stops built along this tram line: Hagibor, Na Palouku, Hostynska, Plananska, Tuchorazska and Sidliste Malesice. Three of them, Na Palouku, Plananska and Sidliste Malesice, will be combination tram and bus stops. DOPRAVACEK, August 5

## ROTTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

### Metro Fleet Tender Proceeds

The Hague and Rotterdam area regional public transport authority (MRDH) has given approval to Rotterdam's public transport operator (RET) to issue a tender for the purchase of 38 new metro trains, with an option for eight extra sets. The order has a value of €578 million and includes the delivery of spare parts and staff training.

The new 100km/h trains will be 90 meters long and have open interiors and full-width gangways throughout. The first trains will be delivered in 2029 and enter service in 2030. All trains are to be delivered within three years.

The new trains must be ready for the installation of automatic train operation (ATO) equipment, as ATO could be introduced to the Rotterdam metro network when existing signaling and train protection systems are replaced after 2035.

Most of the new trains (29) will replace older Class 5300 and 5400 vehicles, while the remaining nine will increase capacity on the existing network, notably on Line E, where service frequency will increase from every 10 minutes to every five minutes, in anticipation of an annual increase in ridership of 3% over the next few years. The option for eight extra metro sets is to meet potential ridership growth on Line C.

Introduction of the new trains will require modifications to the current metro depot at Waalhaven and MRDH has allocated €67 million to lengthening sidings for the longer metro trains. INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 4

**An example of Rotterdam's oldest current metro cars, Type MG2/1 No. 5341 (Bombardier Transportation, 1998–2001) leads a train about to enter the Rijnhaven station on Line E on August 29, 2019.**
Frantisek Vanasek photo via Urban Electric Transit

## STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

### Additional EMUs Ordered

Stockholm Transport (SL) has ordered another 10 EMUs from Stadler for use on the 65-kilometer, 891mm-gauge Roslagsbanan line which connects the capital with districts to the north and east. Each three-car train has 150 seats and has capacity for around 300 passengers. The deal is worth SFr 94 million ($US 116.82 million) and the trains are due to enter service in 2028. They will replace a fleet of

trains supplied by ABB between 1988 to 1995. Stadler has already supplied 22 X15P EMUs for the Roslagsbanan and the contract includes options for up to another 31 trains.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 27

**X15p No. 712 (Stadler, 2020) is seen operating a trip on Line 27 (Karsta to Stockholm Ostra) at Universitetet Station.** Stadler photo

## SWEDEN

### Additional EMUs Ordered

Swedish leasing company Transitio has ordered an additional 13 double-deck four-car Kiss EMUs from Stadler for regional services west of Stockholm. The deal is an option from a contract signed in 2016. The new 200km/h trains will be deployed on regional services operated by Malardal Traffic, taking its total Kiss fleet to 53 vehicles, boosting capacity following a recent expansion of service. The trains will be manufactured at St. Margrethen, Switzerland, and deliveries will commence in spring 2028.

**Stadler has already supplied 53 double-deck Kiss EMUs for use by Malardal Traffic.** Stadler photo

The EMUs will have 357 seats and will be equipped with onboard Wi-Fi as well as boosters to improve mobile phone reception. The trains will be adapted to operate in Nordic conditions, including enclosed equipment rooms, double-walled gangways, snow clearing equipment, and underfloor heating. Body shells will be constructed from aluminum, helping to reduce energy consumption.

Transitio originally ordered 33 trains from Stadler in 2016 and followed this with orders for eight and 12 trains. The original contract includes options for up to 100 trains. Malardal Traffic operates regional services in six Swedish counties: Orebro, Ostergotland, Stockholm, Sormland, Vastmanland and Uppsala.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 5

## TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN

### Metro Extension

An eight-kilometer extension of the Chilanzar Line of Tashkent Metro in Uzbekistan is to be built by Turkish firm Xvav Tapi. The new line will branch off the existing network at Pushkin Station and head northeast at surface level to the TTZ development zone, serving three new stations.

The transport minister had stated this summer that the project is costed at $US 110 million *(Editor's note: An amazingly small amount!)* and completion is scheduled by the end of next year, when it is expected to carry up to 85,000 passengers per day. A further underground extension of the line to Shah Station within the TTZ is under consideration.

**Type 81-717 (LVZ) No. 8645 (6/1985) is seen at the Hamid Olimjon Station of the Chilanzar Line on July 31. This is one stop south of Pushkin Station, where the new extension will branch off.**
Victor photo via Urban Electric Transit

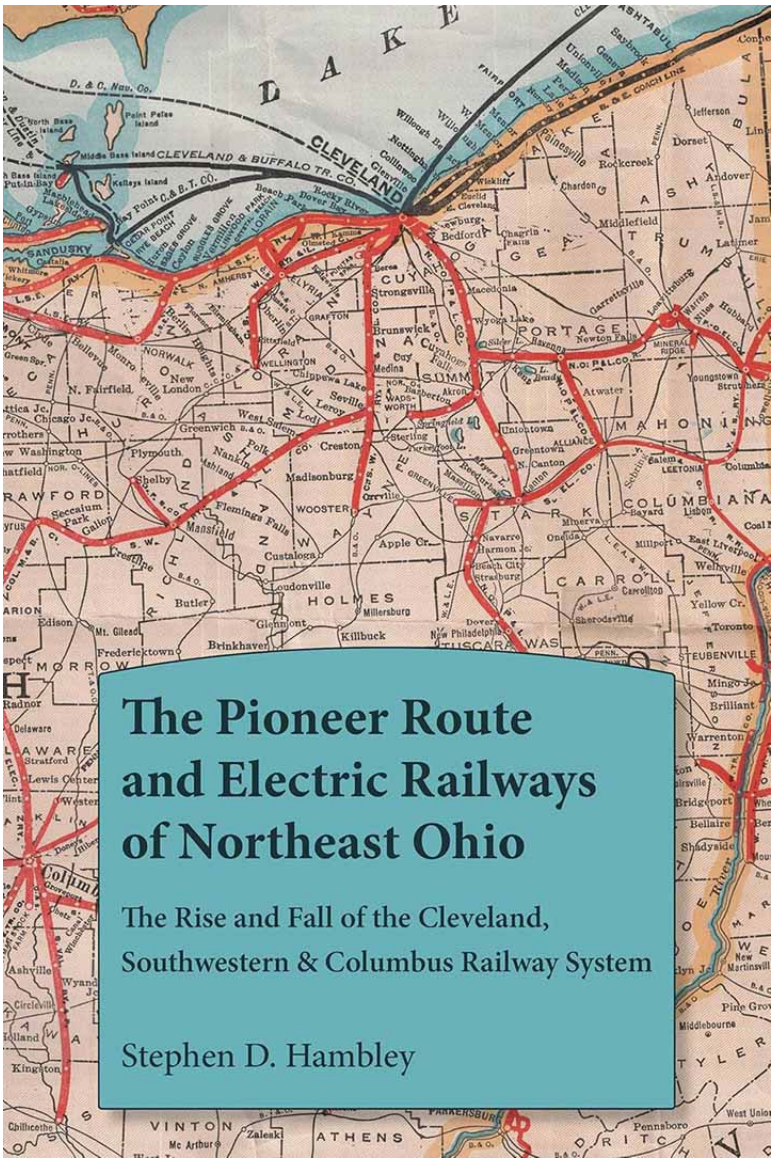
Earlier this year the Uzbek president reviewed plans for future development of the network and instructed the government and Directorate of New Tashkent to proceed with the design and construction of a new 22-kilometer line to the proposed urban area of New Tashkent. This will start from Dustlik Station on the Uzbekistan Line, will serve nine new stations and is expected to carry 230,000 passengers per day.

The first phase of construction at New Tashkent will see development of 6,000 hectares to provide new residential districts, as well as a new home for the city's administrative headquarters.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, August 27

# Paul's ERA Bookshelf

*By Paul Grether (ERA #6933)*

**The Pioneer Route and Electric Railways of Northeast Ohio: The Rise and Fall of the Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus Railway System** by Stephen D. Hambley, first edition published by University of Akron Press, Akron, Ohio in 2025, softcover, 233 pages. Included are detailed endnotes and index. Extensive black-and-white illustrations, maps and numerous charts and tables detailing trends impacting the history of the industry and the line specifically.
ISBN 978-1629222974.




The official slogan of the State of Ohio is "Ohio, the Heart of it All" which is certainly applicable to historical electric railway mileage. As Stephen Hambley points out, Ohio had by far the most miles of electric interurban railways of any state, with almost 2,800 miles in operation in the first half of the 20th century. The closest rival was Indiana, with just over 1,800 miles and then California behind that with almost 1,300 miles. Ohio had several well-known electric interurban systems, including Dr. Thomas Conway's Cincinnati & Lake Erie and the smaller but very significant Van Sweringen Brothers' holdings, including the Cleveland Interurban Railroad and the Shaker Heights Rapid Transit — "The Rapid" — today operated by the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority as the Blue and Yellow Lines. During the brief period of the Interurban Era, Ohio was home to a major part of the interurban supply chain including carbuilders, hardware suppliers and consultants.

While this book is titled as a history of the Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus Railway System, less than half of the book is a specific history of the system. Hambley, with a background as a history professor and elected official, sets a strong context for the growth and demise of this interurban system. Rather than just facts and photographs (although there are certainly many included), Hambley is able to provide detailed descriptions of why the events unfolded. Hambley does so by presenting the background economic, business and political factors influencing the Pioneer Line.

There is a wonderful history of the technology of electric [interurban] railways and then the build-up of the industry in Northeast Ohio, centered around Cleveland. As one of the big three interurbans serving Cleveland (in addition to the Northern Ohio Traction & Light and the Lake Shore Electric) the "Pioneer Route" had attributes that made it a "typical" interurban. It was financed and capitalized by a syndicate, it served a trolley park, it offered funeral car service, it sold electricity, and it had a significant freight business hauling goods between cities and rural areas. While initially competing with steam railroads (and other interurbans), ultimately revenues declined as customers gained access to roads, automobiles and trucks. Perhaps overcapitalized and overbuilt and therefore ill-equipped to handle a revenue decline, the Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus succumbed at the beginning of the Great Depression, like so many others.

While Hambley's work is academic, it has broad appeal and is very readable. Hambley's through research of the political and business factors behind the history of the Pioneer Route have applicability to electric railways everywhere during the North American interurban era. This is not a book for those specifically interested in equipment, technology, or a chronology of operations, but rather provides deep insights into the causes of the relatively quick boom and bust of an interurban line that connected rural Ohio with urban markets.

Link to book information: www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=147690347

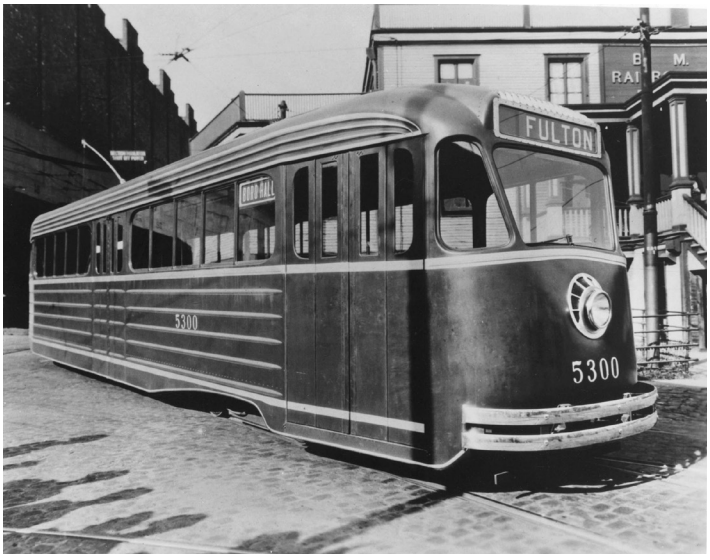
# A Dive in the ERA Archive

*An occasional feature of the Bulletin. The objective is to publish several times a year, as interesting content is made available and digitized.*
*By Paul Grether (ERA #6933)*

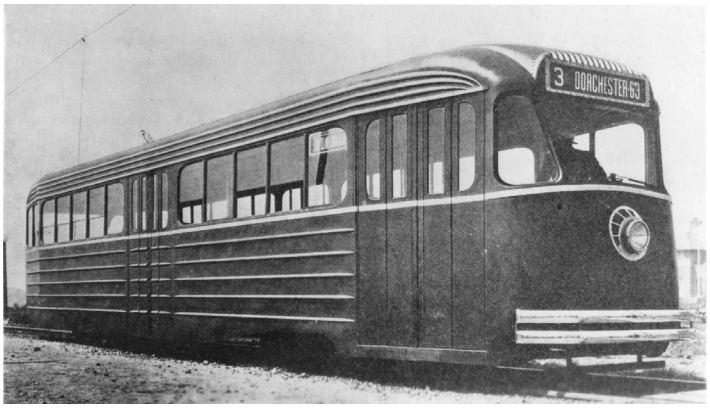
This month's feature comes from the same unmarked box from the previous column. A little background on some interesting pictures:

Not long after the Electric Railway Presidents' Conference Committee (ERPCC) developed the specifications for the PCC car, several prototypes were built and tested in operation. These prototypes were the result of funding provided through subscriptions paid by the various members of the ERPCC. In February 1934 an order was placed with Pullman for "Model B" as the first car built to the new specifications. It had a welded steel alloy streamlined carbody, and improvements in interior lighting, equipment configuration and heating and ventilation. It used General Electric propulsion equipment and controls. Note: "Car A" was a used Twin Coach streetcar, one of only three built by Twin Coach, loaned from the Brooklyn & Queens Transit Corporation (B&QT) to the ERPCC effort as a test platform. The Model B was built at Pullman's facility in Pullman, Ill. and was briefly tested (likely without a number) in Chicago Surface Lines service. It was shipped to Cleveland for display at the 1934 American Transit Association conference and then it went to the B&QT in Brooklyn where it was numbered 5300 and placed in service.

More information can be found in *PCC — the Car that Fought Back* by Stephen P. Carlson and Fred W. Schneider (one of a two volume set about the PCC car) - www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=63223590




**This photo shows Model B, in service with the Brooklyn & Queens Transit Corporation. It is numbered 5300 and is displaying a "FULTON" front route sign and a "BORO HALL" side destination sign. The location is outside the East New York carbarn and the view is looking about due north. A sign in the background reads "SECTION INSULATOR SHUT OFF POWER." There are no markings on the print.** Photographer and date unknown, ERA Collection




**Here is Model B with a temporary Chicago destination sign for Route 3 to the terminus at the Illinois Central electric commuter station at 63rd Street. The back of the photo is marked "CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY — SURFACE LINES DIVISION." Photographer and date (likely 1934) unknown, ERA Collection**

The next series of photographs depict Cleveland Transit System (CTS) line car #024, an example of a transit vehicle that would operate in service for almost 100 years. This car was built in 1914 by Kuhlman Car Company (a subsidiary of J. G. Bill Company) as a center entrance city car for Cleveland Railways, who numbered the car No. 1217. The center entrance low step design was modeled on the New York Railways Hedley-Doyle stepless design "hobble skirt" cars. In 1921 the car was sent to the Cleveland Interurban Railroad for service on the Van Sweringen brothers' Shaker Heights real estate development lines. Cleveland Railways ultimately sold No. 1217 to the Shaker Heights Rapid Transit in 1940. In 1960 the car was converted by CTS, now owner/operator of transit in Cleveland, to line car No. 024 for service not just on the Shaker Heights lines but also the new rapid transit line recently constructed to Hopkins Airport. The car passed in ownership to the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) in 1974 following the GCRTA takeover of transit in Cleveland. GCRTA would finally acquire a new line car, retire No. 024, and donate it to the Northern Ohio Railway Museum in 2013, where it is still used to install and maintain the museum's overhead lines.

More information can be found in *Cleveland's Transit Vehicles: Equipment and Technology* by James A. Toman and Blaine S. Hays (one of a two volume set about Cleveland transit history) - www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=63567635 and the Northern Ohio Railway Museum - https://www.northernohiorailway-museum.org/about/collection/024-cleveland-transit-system/.

**The three grayscale photos on this page show No. 024 in the CTS paint scheme at interesting locations on the system. One depicts the car along the shared right-of-way with the Cleveland Union Terminal railroad electrification. The next shows the car on the Cuyahoga Viaduct over the namesake river and the final picture shows the car at an unknown location on the new rapid transit line with a park-and-ride lot in the background. There are no markings on the prints.**
Photographer and dates unknown, ERA Collection



**Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority Line Car No. 024 at the Northern Ohio Railway Museum, Seville, Ohio, on August 16, 2025.**
Paul Grether photo

# Building the New York Subway System, A Photographic Journey

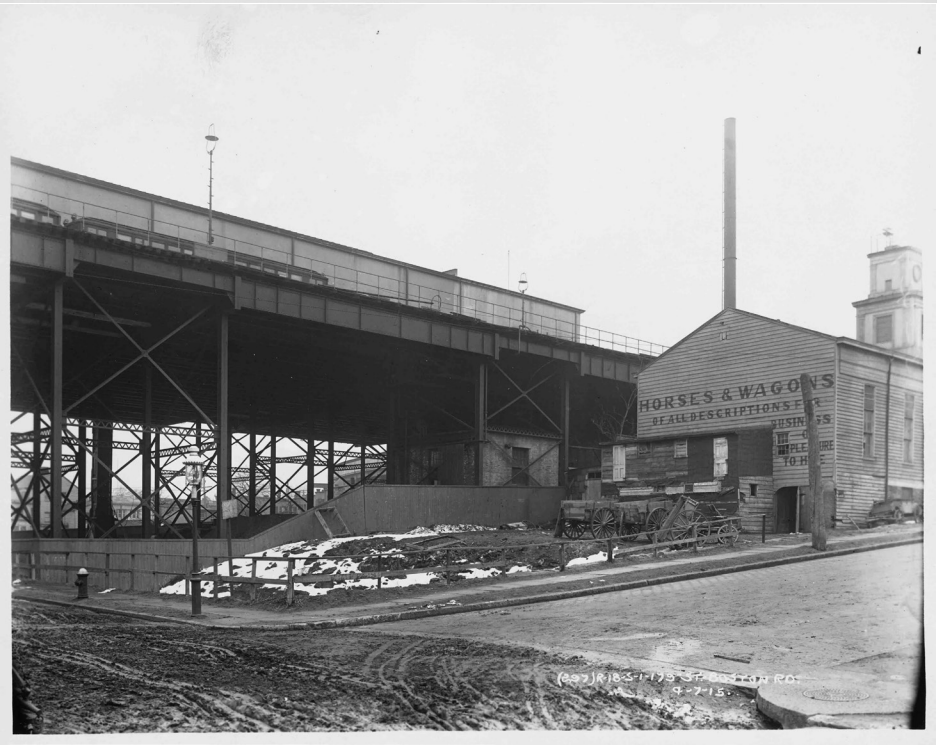
## Construction Route No. 18 — Part 2

*By Jeff Erlitz (ERA #3997)*

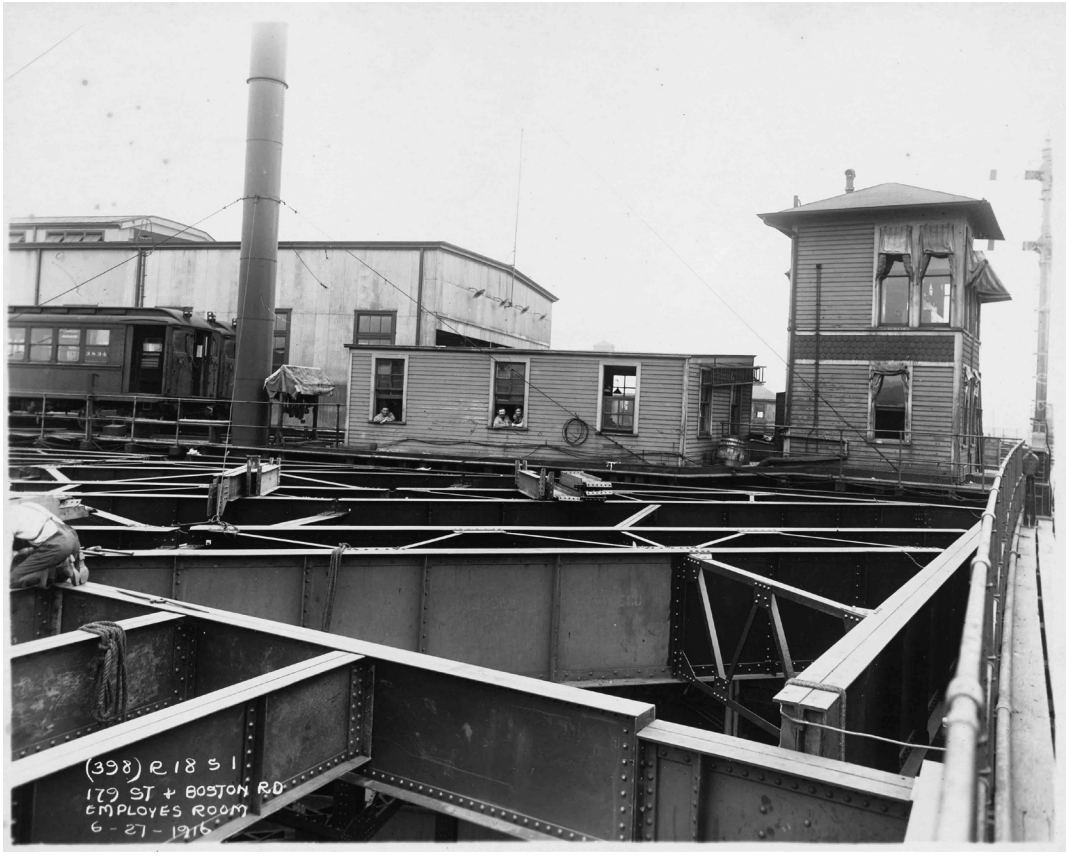
This month, we continue with Subway Construction Route No. 18, the IRT White Plains Road Line. We are still in Section 1, that portion from the connection with the original West Farms Branch of Contract 1 to north of Burke Avenue.

All of the photographs for this column are in the Subway Construction Photographs Collection of the New York Transit Museum via the New-York Historical Society.


**(Left) Looking south from the intersection of Boston Road and East 179th Street, north of today's East Tremont Avenue Station, on April 7, 1915. This photo and the one below show "existing conditions," before the construction started for the White Plains Road extension. Directly above the photographer, the original West Farms Branch is heading towards its terminus at Bronx Park. The structure on the left is the West Farms Stable, though it looks like it was a former church. This structure will need to be demolished to make way for the new elevated line. Directly above the middle of the photo, through the lattice girders, is the 179th Street Yard and inspection shed.**



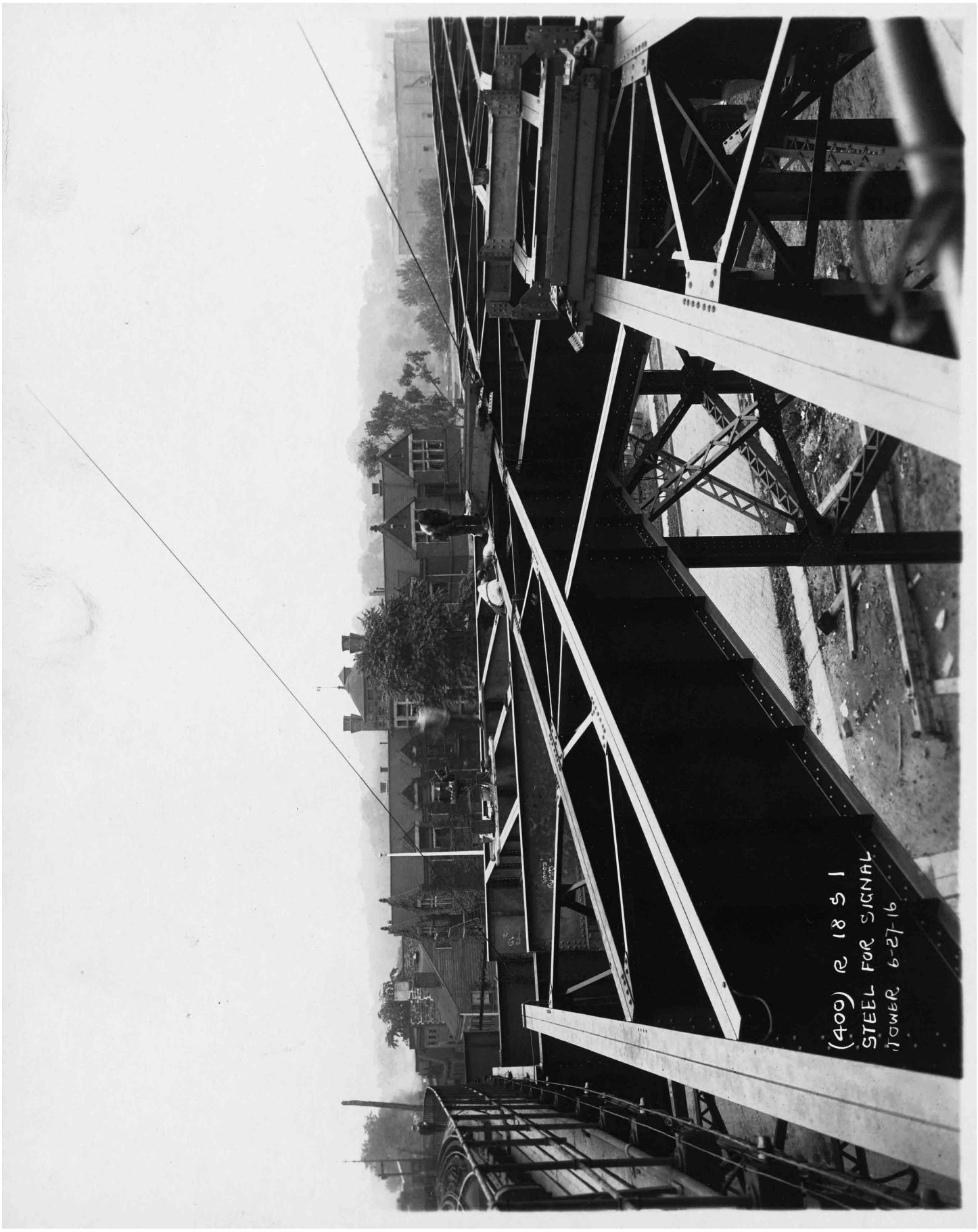

**(Left) Same date as above, looking southwest, with the 179th Street Yard high above the ground, which is descending towards the Bronx River from Boston Road. The back of the West Farms Stable is on the right. "Horses and wagons of all descriptions for business or pleasure to hire." Could be a predecessor of Hertz, Avis, Alamo or Enterprise car rental!**




**Over a year has passed since the photos on the previous page were taken and it is now Tuesday, June 27, 1916. The West Farms Stable has been demolished and the steelwork for the extension to East 180th Street has been installed. Hi-V No. 3834 (Standard Steel Car, 9/1910), resting on its midday layover between the rush hours, is on the left. The original 179th Street Tower stands on the right. The tower, and the employee room in the center, will need to make way for the new extension. The steelwork in the near foreground, perpendicular to the tracks heading towards the Bronx Park terminal, is for the new 179th Street Tower. The view is towards the south.**


**A closer view of the tower in the above photo. We can make out the interlocking machine in the tower, but not enough to positively identify it. We suspect it was a Union Switch & Signal Company Style E-P machine ("E-P" for electro-pneumatic). The Style E-P was a previous version of today's Model 14 machine. On the far right, a train has arrived at the 177th Street Station.**

**(Next page) The photographer has moved a little south, to the home signal shown in the picture to the left on this page, and is now facing north. The steelwork for the new 179th Street Tower is completely in view.**


(400) R 1851
STEEL FOR SIGNAL
TOWER 6-27-16