BULLETIN

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Electric Railroaders Association

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In This Issue

Trip Notices/Save the Dates

August 28–September 2: ERA National Convention in Chicagoland. We will visit the region's famous museums, e.g., Illinois Railway Museum, Fox River Trolley Museum, East Troy Railroad Museum, the heritage operation in Kenosha, Wis., the downtown Milwaukee streetcar, and last but not least, a trip on Chicago Transit Authority's historic "L" fleet. This is ERA's first visit since 2011. Visit https://erausa.org/conventions/2026/ for the details.

Donations

The ERA Board of Directors express their deepest appreciation for these member donations in March 2026.

$100 to $199

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$50 to $99

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Up to $49

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Monthly Zoom Meeting

Friday, April 24 (fourth Friday!), at 7:30 p.m.

Presenting This Month: Drs. Brian & Michael Doucet

History of Public Transportation in Greater Toronto: Their first presentation to the ERA, this presentation is a sweeping and accessible 90-minute journey through the history of Toronto transit from the 19th to the 21st century.

How to Join Our Zoom Meeting

The Zoom registration link for this meeting is: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/geBVltllTRm10BZVES-fLNw. You can sign in at 7:15 p.m. The show begins at 7:30 p.m. If you have any problems, email Bob Newhouser at bnnyc1955@gmail.com, or on the night of the meeting, text or call Bob at 917-482-4235.

Cover Photos

Front: On Thursday, March 26, the New York Transit Museum once again operated a train of "Redbirds" to the Mets' season opening game at Citi Field. R-33 Nos. 9207-9206 (St. Louis Car, 1963) led the eight-car consist, seen here approaching the 40th Street Station, up a 3.0% grade! Jack May photo

Rear: Not to be outdone, the New York Transit Museum operated two trains to the Yankees' season-opening home game on Friday, April 3. The first train was composed of Low-Vs, N-5292+5290+5483+5443-S. The second train, not pictured, was composed of R-33s, N-9307+9016-9017+9010-9011-S. MTA photo

Worldwide Suburban Electric Railway, Metro and Tramway Openings in March 2026

Date	Country	City	Segment	Distance (miles)	Railway/ Metro/ Tram
3/8	India	Delhi	Pink Line: Majlis Park to Maujpur-Babarpur Magenta Line: Majlis Park to Deepali Chowk	7.6 5.9	M
3/14		Chennai	MRTS: Velachery to St Thomas Mount	2.8	R
3/28	U.S.A.	Seattle	Line 2: International District/Chinatown to South Bellvue	8.0	T

URBAN RAIL NEWS, MARCH 31

Rail News in Review

New York Metropolitan Area

NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT (NYCT)

Proposals Sought For New Subway Cars

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is seeking proposals from rail car manufacturers for its largest subway car contract in history with a base order of 1,140 subway cars to replace the R-62 and R-62A fleets operating on the 1 3 6 Lines, and if an option to purchase the additional 1,250 cars is exercised, to replace the R-142 and R-142A cars on the 2 4 5 Lines.

In total, the contract includes 2,390 new subway cars, more cars than the Chicago Transit Authority subway fleet and Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's combined. The new cars, model R-262, will be funded by the MTA's 2025-29 Capital Plan, which received $68 billion in funding in the FY26 Enacted State Budget. This Capital Plan represents the largest investment in new rolling stock in the history of the MTA. The purchase also includes funds made available through the 2020-2024 Capital Plan, which is supported by congestion pricing revenues.

With a new Rolling Stock Program in place, the MTA has approached this contract differently, modernizing the terms and conditions and encouraging innovation by giving manufacturers greater flexibility to propose new ideas. More than 60 percent of the technical specifications are also now performance-based, rather than design-driven, and for the first time, the terms request proposers to submit total cost of ownership projections. These efforts result in a streamlined contract that adopts a balanced approach between the current challenges that contractors face and ensuring that the Authority retains the necessary tools at its disposal to ensure the timely delivery of quality cars that riders deserve.

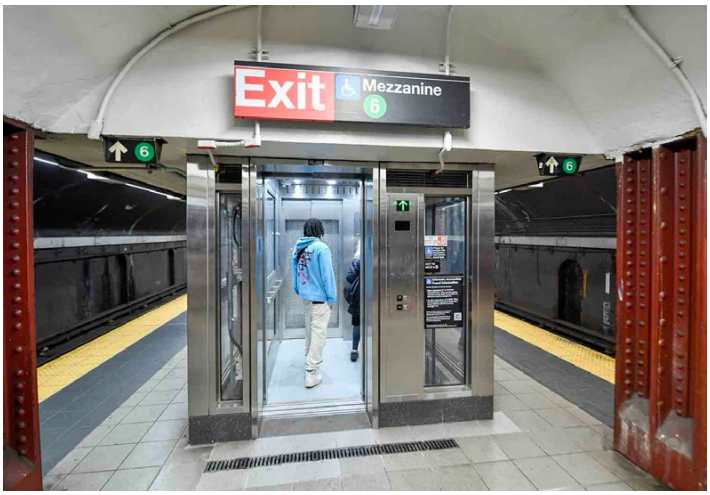
The new cars will significantly improve reliability with a higher mean distance between failure (MDBF) — a measure of how long a car can operate without issues, repairs or maintenance. The R-262 has an MDBF requirement of 200,000 miles, compared to the R-62 and R-62As' average of 89,000 miles.

Proposals are due September 8, 2026, and a contract is expected to be awarded by early 2028.

MTA PRESS RELEASE, March 19

Two More Elevators In Service

The MTA announced the opening of one modernized elevator serving the Lexington Avenue E F station and another elevator serving the Canal Street 6 station as part of larger accessibility and safety upgrades. The MTA has completed three elevator replacements so far this year, following a record 39 elevator replacements in 2025, more than double the previous record of 16 set in 2021.



The new elevator at platform level of the Lexington Avenue E F station on March 30. Marc A. Hermann/MTA photo

The new elevator at Lexington Avenue E F provides access from the mezzanine to the platform. The complex, which connects to the 51st Street 6 station, serves more than 47,500 weekday riders and has connections to nine bus routes. The elevator at Canal Street 6 station provides access from the street level to the downtown 6 platform. The station serves approximately 37,200 riders every weekday.

The elevator manufacturer and installer for both elevators is Mid-American Elevator Co. Work involved in the elevator replacement included:

- Full replacement of elevator cab and associated equipment within the cab, shaft and pit, along with new replaced

elevator headhouse glass and canopy at street level
- Modifications to the shaft and pit needed to accommodate new equipment
- Replacement and modernization of all elevator machine room, electrical and mechanical equipment
- Upgrades to the remote monitoring equipment, fire alarm system, intercom system and cameras to enhance security and allow crews to respond more quickly and precisely if an elevator goes out of service

MTA Press Release, March 30

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD (LIRR)

Spring Timetable Change

New schedules went into effect on all lines on Monday, March 23. There were only minor changes, as follows:
- Midday Greenport busing again
- Various midday adjustments on all branches driven by one of three tracks out of service between Mineola and Hicksville for track surfacing work, with Westbury midday service halved, to hourly
- Locust Manor/Laurelton/Rosedale stops moved from No. 856 onto No. 2756
- No. 1588 adds a Floral Park stop
- No. 869 adds a Rosedale stop
- No. 164 adds a Baldwin stop

AMTRAK/NJ TRANSIT (NJT)

Hudson Tunnel Project Resumes

The Gateway Development Commission (GDC) has fully resumed construction of the Hudson Tunnel Project following the full reimbursement of $205 million in federal funding that was needed to continue construction. The project was paused for approximately three weeks.

The GDC notes that while workers are back on the job for now, construction will have to pause again in two to three months if federal funding disbursements do not continue. In addition, contract awards for the Hudson River Tunnel and New Jersey Surface Alignment contracts remain on hold.

Since the start of 2026:
- GDC completed the Tonnelle Avenue Bridge & Utility Relocation Project. The project was substantially completed in late 2025, when the bridge structure was finished, opening space beneath Tonnelle Avenue for the tunnel boring machines (TBMs) to be assembled for launch. According to the GDC, the work completed since then included paving and striping the last section of the new road on top of the bridge and other tasks associated with closing out construction of the project
- Components of the first TBM that will be used for the Palisades Tunnel Project arrived at the construction site in North Bergen, N.J., and are being prepped for assembly
- The second TBM that will be used for the Palisades Tunnel Project shipped from the factory. The GDC notes components of this machine should begin to arrive on site in March
- GDC's contractor completed installation of the Hudson County Access Shaft slurry wall, which creates a watertight perimeter for the shaft below-ground, and will begin excavation this spring
- Installation of pipes and construction of an overwater platform for ground freezing work around the Manhattan bulkhead in preparation for future tunnel boring started
- The cofferdam in the Hudson River was shifted east toward Manhattan. Deep soil mixing to stabilize the riverbed for tunnel boring resumed within the cofferdam
- Concrete placement for the tunnel floor, known as an invert slab, of the Hudson Yards Concrete Casing – Section 3 tunnel box has been completed and installation of the walls is in progress. More than 11,000 cubic yards of concrete have been poured to date

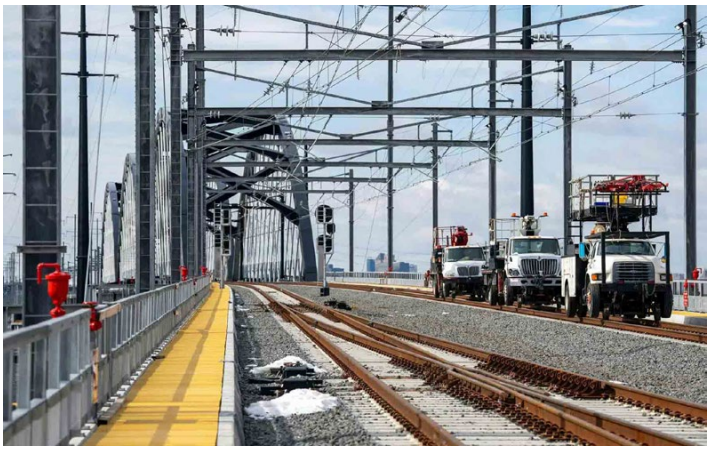
Mass Transit, March 13

Portal North Bridge In Service

A major milestone took place on March 12 at the new Portal North Bridge in Kearny, N.J. with a ceremonial first train over the bridge. The first track, of two, officially went into passenger service on Monday, March 16. The event marked an historic moment in transferring service from the current 116-year-old swing bridge, which has long been a source of delays. The second and final track will be moved onto the new bridge in the fall. The ceremonial first train was led by NJT's locomotive wrapped in graphics celebrating America's 250th birthday.

NJ Transit Press Release, March 12

Amtrak Press Release, March 12



View of the new Portal North Bridge. Amtrak photo

NJ TRANSIT (NJT)

Normal Rail Service Resumes

Regularly-scheduled rail service resumed on Sunday, March 15, concurrent with the placing into service of one track on the new Portal North Bridge in Kearny. Temporary schedules had been in effect since February 13 while NJ Transit and Amtrak service was single-tracked through the Portal Bridge work zone.

NJ Transit Press Release, March 12

R.I.P. Printed Timetables

NJT has followed the LIRR and MNR in that they are no longer producing printed timetables. Like MNR's, and unlike the LIRR's, NJT's downloadable PDFs are "printer-friendly," meaning they are all formatted to fit on Letter-sized, 8½" x 11" paper. The last printed timetables were the June 8, 2025 issue for all lines and August 24, 2025 for just the Northeast Corridor and North Jersey Coast Lines.

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON (PATH)

Planning For New Fare Gates

The Port Authority Board of Commissioners authorized $3.5 million to begin planning for the replacement of PATH's aging fare gates with modern next-generation equipment. PATH's current fare gates are over 20 years old and struggle to meet the needs of PATH and its passengers.

The authorization of $3.5 million will support the development of the project's scope and technical specifications, preparation of a cost estimate for the project, and the procurement process for the new equipment. PATH operates 341 standard and ADA-compliant fare gates across its 13 stations. The current gates have been in service for approximately 22 years, beyond the standard useful life of 15 to 20 years. The gates and their supporting infrastructure have become outdated for PATH's needs, with frequent breakdowns and growing maintenance obligations. Like many other transit systems, PATH has seen a rise in fare evasion in recent years, resulting in lost revenue for the agency and undermining the sense of equity for paying passengers.

Some of PATH's current fare gates. Port Authority photo

The new fare gates will be fully integrated with TAPP, PATH's contactless fare payment system that allows riders to pay using contactless credit or debit cards, smart devices, or the TAPP card. More than 75 percent of daily riders are now TAPPing into the system since TAPP's introduction in 2023.

The $3.5 million authorization will expand an existing agreement with consultant JHP, a partnership between Jacobs and HNTB. It also will fund Port Authority staff support services, station condition surveys and associated internal cost allocations. Planning work authorized by this Board action is expected to begin in the second quarter of 2026 and last through the second quarter of 2027.
PORT AUTHORITY PRESS RELEASE, March 19

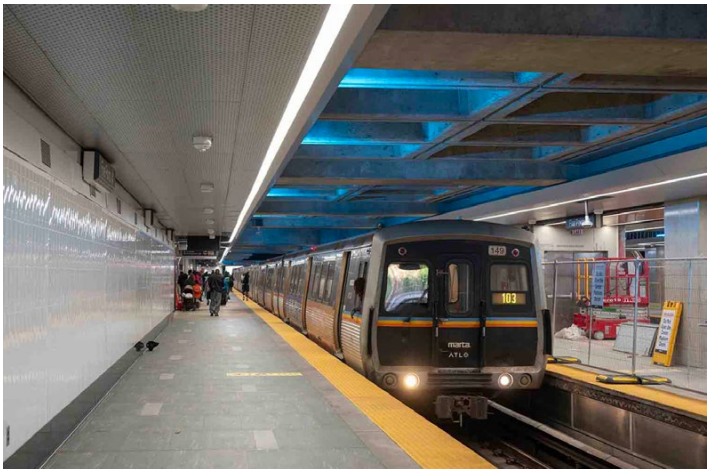
Other U.S. Systems

ATLANTA, GA.

A Better Breeze Goes Live

The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority's (MARTA) new Breeze fare payment system went live Saturday, March 28, and features flexible payment options, modern, touch-screen ticket vending machines and more secure faregates for a safer transit system.

The new, better Breeze system will have tap to pay where riders can tap a bank card or mobile wallet directly at the faregate or validator to pay for their ride. This type of payment system is used worldwide at restaurants, retailers and other transit systems. The better Breeze system also features new Breeze cards and a new app.



CQ310 No. 149-150 (Societe Franco-Belge, 1976-80) leads a six-car Blue Line train to Indian Creek at Five Points Station on November 15, 2025. Jeff Erlitz photo

From March 28 to May 2, both the old and new Breeze systems will be active to allow riders time to learn the new system and switch to the payment option that works best for them. During the transition, riders can still use their old Breeze cards and the Breeze Mobile 2.0 app at any existing old fare equipment, but old ticket vending machines will be turned off, and no fare may be added to old fare media.
MARTA NEWS AND PRESS, March 16

CHICAGO, ILL.

Project Funds Unfrozen

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) announced that

funding has been unfrozen for the Red Line Extension (RLE) and Red & Purple Modernization (RPM) projects following a court order lifting the suspension of funding by the federal government. Work on both projects will now continue without interruption.

A U.S. District Court judge issued a Temporary Restraining Order on Tuesday directing the U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to end its funding suspension on Friday, March 27. In compliance with Tuesday's Order, the FTA has reopened the reimbursement portal to allow CTA to submit invoices, effective immediately.

CTA has submitted invoices totaling $114.5 million in project expenses to the FTA portal. The portal has acknowledged receipt of the submissions, and the agency expects to receive funds next week consistent with ordinary processing timelines. The funding pause, which began in October 2025, had threatened to halt work on both projects. CTA remains committed to completing the RLE & RPM projects without further interruption.

CTA News, March 27

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

K Line Extension Approved

Metro's board unanimously approved a new route for a Los Angeles rail line that would extend service from South L.A. into West Hollywood, a mass transit milestone for L.A. that was struck after last-minute negotiations between Mayor Karen Bass and local leaders.

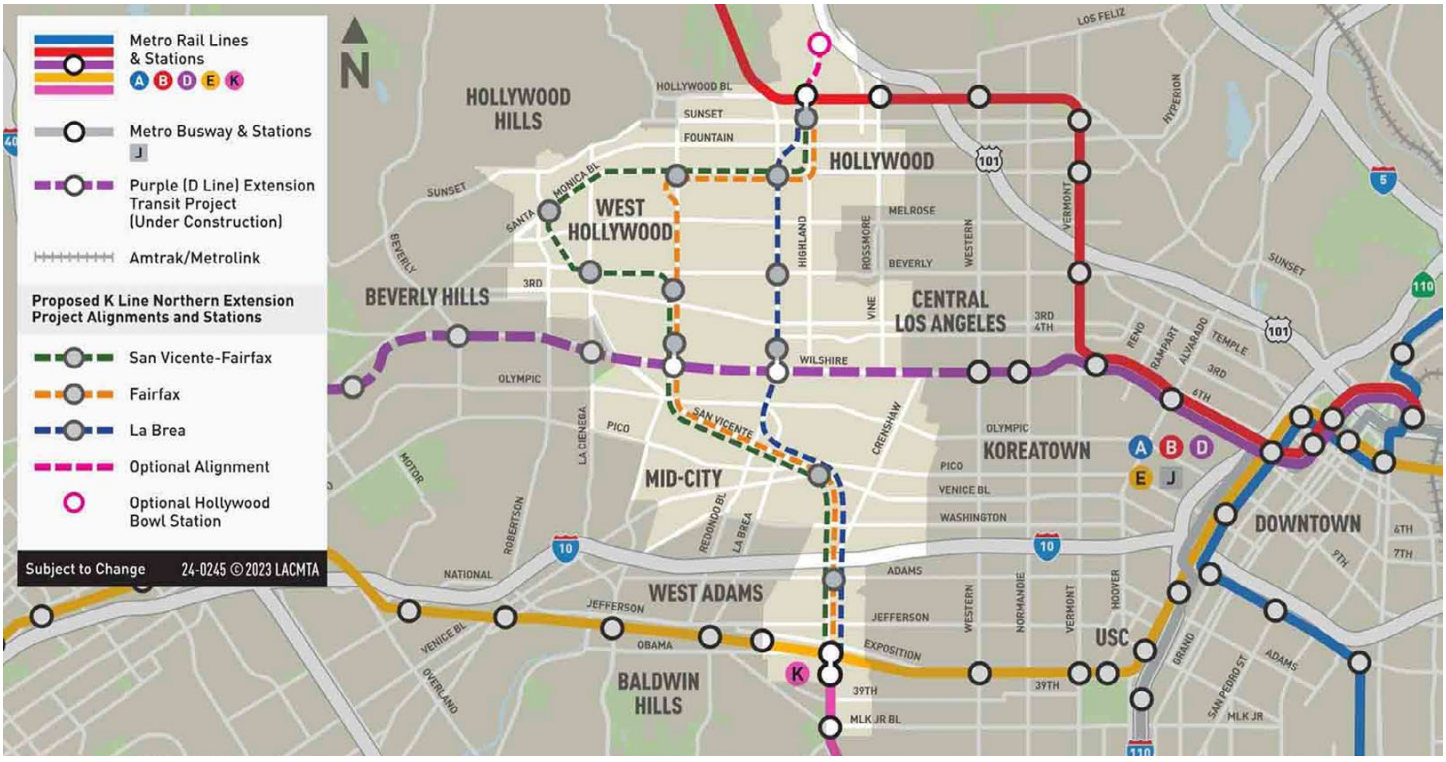
The K Line northern extension underground light rail project would link up with four major rail lines and increase the number of K Line riders up to 100,000 a day. Transit experts say it could finally create a vigorous mass transit culture in the sprawled region and make L.A. a national role model for modern U.S. cities that want to rebuild rail systems that can provide an alternative to the car.

But the project has faced strong opposition from a small but vocal group of Mid-City homeowners — many in historic, affluent Black neighborhoods like Lafayette Square — who fear tunneling construction could create disruption, safety problems and lower property values. In the days before Metro's board vote, speculation swirled among public transit advocates that Bass, a key member of the board who appoints three other members, might seek to delay approval for the project based on community concerns.

However, in the 24 hours before the meeting, Bass met several times behind the scenes with West Hollywood Mayor John Heilman, a major backer of the K Line extension, to come up with an amended motion that allows West Hollywood and L.A. County to work on securing funding that will allow the project to accelerate while also calling for additional study of the Mid-City section and community engagement. The new amendment, Bass stressed before the board voted in favor, would not delay the project or its funding.

Los Angeles Times via Mass Transit, March 30

(Below) K Line Northern Extension Project Study Area map. LACMTA



PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Norristown High Speed Line Rehab Project

SEPTA kicked off a major rehabilitation project on the M [Norristown High Speed] Line that will impact more than

one-third of the 5,600 weekday trips that passengers take on the line. Starting Sunday, Mar ch 29 through Saturday, May 9, shuttle buses will replace train service between Bridgeport Station and Norristown Transit Center. Train service will operate as normal between Bridgeport Station and 69th Street Transit Center.

SEPTA is making structural repairs to the Bridgeport Viaduct, which is the 3,525-foot-long bridge that carries the M Line over the Schuylkill River. Passengers make nearly 1,900 trips over the bridge every weekday.

One of the N5 cars (ABB, 1990) is seen crossing the Bridgeport Viaduct on March 27. SEPTA photo

When it was built in 1911, the Bridgeport Viaduct was state-of-the-art; however, after more than a century of service, it now requires major repairs to extend its life for decades to come. The estimated cost of the project is $55 million, including design, support, and construction. Third-party contractor J.D. Eckman will complete the work, which includes:

- Structural steel repairs
- Concrete repairs to abutments and piers
- Bearing replacement
- Concrete deck replacement
- Maintenance catwalk replacement
- Repainting of the entire structure
- Replacement of the Norristown Transit Center stairway

Construction will take about one year to complete, with future outages planned for later this year and early next year. SEPTA News, March 27

PITTSBURGH, PA.

PRT To Study Future LRT Ridership

The next step in rebuilding Pittsburgh Regional Transit's ridership will be studying three specific aspects of the light rail system, the part of the system that has been slowest to rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The agency announced plans Monday to refresh its bus route system by improving frequency on its most popular routes, establishing nine new routes and improving connections to Oakland and Pittsburgh International Airport as well as between neighboring communities. It plans to hold 60 public meetings through early summer, present a final plan to its board in September and make changes beginning next year.

It will follow up that work later this year with a study to determine whether it should keep the Silver Line to Library, reopen light rail service through the Allentown neighborhood on a permanent basis and begin regular service to Penn Station at the end of Grant Street in Downtown Pittsburgh.

The work is all part of PRT's efforts to bump up ridership that has been slow to recover from the pandemic, when many people were told to work from home to avoid human interaction. Transit ridership here and across the country changed dramatically in cities that had relied heavily on riders commuting to daytime jobs when many of those riders didn't return to the office five days a week.

Through the end of 2025, daily bus ridership of 94,123 remains down just over 40% compared to 2019. On the light rail system, the numbers are worse with daily ridership of 8,423, down just under 63% below the peak in 2019. The agency is projecting a 1% ridership increase in 2026. With bus route changes next year and a possible light rail jump after that, the agency is hoping for more substantial increases in future years.

Part of the problem with the light rail system has been a series of construction projects that have caused delays or rerouting to avoid closures. Most of last year, subway cars were rerouted through Allentown due to construction in the Mount Washington Transit Tunnel and there were weekend closures the past three years in Downtown Pittsburgh due to work on the plinth, the concrete base that supports light rail tracks. With most of that disruptive work ending, the agency wants to analyze where it can grow ridership on the system. That work will begin later this year but major changes are likely several years away.

The most productive change, reactivating the Red Line through Allentown, also would be the most challenging. The agency regularly shifts trains through Allentown when construction interrupts service between Pittsburgh's South Side and South Hills Junction. One major concern is that many of the stations in Allentown don't meet ADA requirements for passenger boarding and exiting. The agency has grant funds to upgrade stations through the regular service areas in Beechview and Brookline, but not Allentown.

Businesses and residents in Allentown would welcome full-time rail service, said a director of operations for real estate developer RE 360. The company rents and refurbishes dozens of properties in that area and recently circulated a petition that has drawn more than 2,000 signatures calling for returning service to Allentown. That service was eliminated when PRT had financial problems about 15 years ago. The business district saw the difference when there was regular service for more than eight months during last year's tunnel work.

What to do about service to the far end of the light rail system in Library has been a concern for the agency for more than five years. That portion of the system has the lowest ridership and the agency could be facing substantial costs to make upgrades to continue going there.

On a broader scale, the agency also is trying to figure out

how to pay for the replacement of about 80 light rail cars, many of which are several years past their life expectancy. New cars would cost more than $500 million and take five to seven years to manufacture.

The easiest change would be to make regular use of the Penn Station stop for the first time since it was built as part of subway construction in Downtown Pittsburgh. The station at the end of Grant Street was built as part of regular construction of the underground system in the late 1980s to provide service to the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, but it never had regular service. In recent years, it has been used temporarily when construction interrupts service between Steel Plaza and Gateway Center stations. Trains go to Penn Station, then shuttle buses take passengers to Gateway. The agency will look at whether sending several trains a day to that station would increase overall ridership. PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE VIA MASS TRANSIT, March 4

PORTLAND, ORE.

Type 1 Cars Retired

On Saturday, April 18, from noon to 3 p.m., TriMet will host a public celebration of the Type 1 trains before they go out of service forever. The event will be at Holladay Park in Northeast Portland, adjacent to the Lloyd Center/NE 11th Avenue MAX Station. Anyone can join in this historic moment and interact, possibly for the last time, with a piece of regional and national transit history. It's an opportunity to say goodbye to a train that has provided hundreds of thousands of trips over the past 40 years.

The Type 1s launched modern light rail in the Portland metro area in 1986. In doing so, the vehicles set a standard for other public transportation agencies to follow. After nearly four decades of service — providing millions of trips and traveling millions of miles — the remaining Type 1s are now 10 years past their due date, with their final days numbered.

Type 1 No. 116 (Bombardier Transportation, 1986) has just come off the Steel Bridge with SD660 No. 204 (Siemens, 1997) on a Yellow Line trip to Expo Center and are about to arrive at the Interstate/Rose Quarter station on June 23, 2017. Jeff Erlitz photo

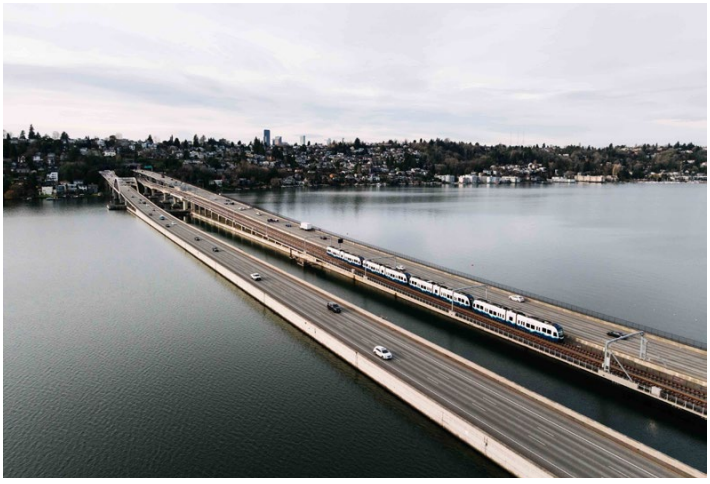
TriMet began decommissioning the vehicles — preparing them for recycling or donation — in 2024 as the newest trains, the Type 6s, began to be introduced. The Type 1s, among the oldest light rail vehicles still operating on a major transit system in the United States, had exceeded their lifecycle, and replacement parts for them had become difficult to source.

The April 18 event will celebrate the 40-year history of the Type 1 and the employees, current and retired, who helped keep these trains running amid a changing system. Riders wanting to take one final trip on a Type 1 have limited opportunities, but they're not out of luck quite yet. The final Type 1 will stop rolling later this spring. For dedicated train spotters, TriMet's interactive TransitTracker, featuring real-time locations of all of our vehicles, can give you a leg up. TRIMET NEWS, March 31

SEATTLE, WASH.

Crosslake Connection Opens

On March 28, the Crosslake Connection opened, with light rail vehicles carrying passengers across a floating bridge for the first time. This achievement completes the Link 2 Line, uniting the Eastside with Seattle, the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, Federal Way, Lynnwood and communities in between. The final seven-mile segment of the 2 Line includes new stations at Mercer Island and Judkins Park and connects to the 1 Line at the International District/Chinatown Station. The Link light rail system now spans 63 miles and includes 50 stations.



A four-car train is seen crossing Lake Washington on January 9 during a test run. Sound Transit photo

The opening of the Crosslake Connection completes the expansion of the Link system approved by voters in 2008 as part of the Sound Transit 2 ballot initiative. The 1 Line extension to Federal Way opened in December 2025, following the openings of the 2 Line to downtown Redmond in May 2025; the initial segment of the 2 Line on the Eastside in April 2024; and the 1 Line extension to Lynnwood in August 2024.

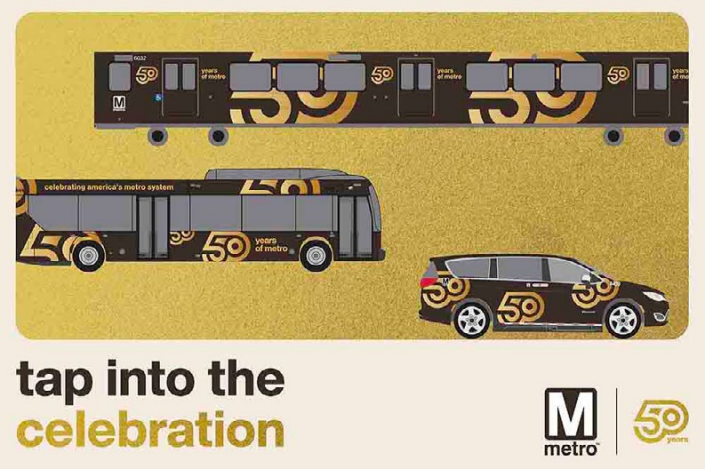
Service on both the 1 Line and 2 Line will run from about 5 a.m. to 12 a.m. seven days a week. Trains will run approximately every eight minutes at peak at the new stations, and between 10–15 minutes the rest of the day. Between Lynnwood City Center and International District/Chinatown stations, combined 1- and 2-Line headways will mean trains arrive every four to five minutes.
SOUND TRANSIT NEWS RELEASE, March 28

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Metro Turns 50

It has now been 50 years since WMATA first launched a new era of transportation in the National Capital Region, when on March 27, 1976, the first Metrorail trips began carrying passengers on the 4.6 miles of the Red Line between Rhode Island Avenue and Farragut North.

The Metro Rail system quickly transformed how the region moved. In the decades since, Metro became the backbone of the region's transportation network, with generations of riders relying on the system. Over the years, riders have taken more than 7 billion trips on Metro Rail, and more than 15 billion trips across Metrorail, Metrobus, and MetroAccess. Today, the system has grown into a six-line, 128-mile network with 98 stations. In 2025 alone, Metrorail delivered 147 million trips while playing a central role in the area's economy and daily life.



Throughout the coming months, Metro will celebrate its Golden Anniversary with special 50th anniversary Smart Trip cards, vehicle wraps, pennants, trading cards and merchandise. Riders can walk down memory lane at Metro50th.com, a dedicated website where you can see a timeline of our history and browse pennants and photos from years past. Later this year, a commemorative 50th anniversary coffee table book will be released.
WMATA NEWS, March 26

D.C. Streetcar Shuts Down

After a decade in service, the DC Streetcar made its final run along H Street & Benning Road on March 31. It's a sad end

Car No. 201 is seen operating east on H Street NE at 5th Street NE on the last day of operation, March 31. Andrew Grahl photo

for a mode of transportation that city leaders once wanted to expand throughout the District. Since February of 2016, streetcars have run a 2.2-mile route between the north side of Union Station and the edge of the RFK Stadium property, making eight stops in all.

The city spent $200 million and encountered numerous delays in launching the streetcar line. Over the last decade, the costs continued to pile up; the D.C. Department of Transportation (DDOT) said the city spent $12 million a year to keep it operating. Although the DC Streetcar was free and loved by some riders, others complained about how slow it went. Streetcars faced numerous delays due to being blocked by parked and stopped cars, as much of the line ran right next to street parking. Streetcars also had to share a travel lane with cars.

A 2010 DDOT document shows the city once planned to put eight streetcar lines totaling nearly 40 miles over many areas of the District. At the time, the streetcar system was projected to handle 147,000 trips a day by 2030. Not only did that never happen, but now not even one line will run anymore. When the DC Streetcar opened in 2016, it was the first time a streetcar had operated in DC since the original system stopped running in 1962.
WJLA.COM, March 31

International

BELGRADE, SERBIA

Turnkey Metro Contract Signed

State-owned public transport operator Belgrade Metro and Train (BMV) has signed a turnkey contract worth €915 million with Alstom for delivery of the initial phase of Belgrade's first driverless metro line. The first section of fully automated Line 1 will run for 15 kilometers between Makisko Polje in the south of the city and Karaburma in the northeast, serving 15 stations, with 11 kilometers of the new

line running underground.

Under the contract, Alstom will supply 32 driverless three-car Metropolis metro trains, signaling and telecommunications systems, traction power supply equipment, track, platform screen doors, depot equipment, a centralized operations control center and comprehensive cybersecurity systems. The line will be equipped with Alstom Urbalis CBTC, enabling fully automated, high-capacity operations, with headways of up to 90 seconds. The Metropolis trains will be manufactured at Alstom's Valenciennes site in France.

The project is being partially funded by the French government and Alstom has already started the design phase. INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 27

BELO HORIZONTE, BRAZIL

Metro Expansion Confirmed

The government of the state of Minas Gerais in Brazil has outlined plans to expand the Belo Horizonte Metro under an investment program worth approximately $US 1.8 billion.

The initiative builds on the 2022 concession awarded to Metro BH, which is responsible for operating, maintaining and expanding the network under a 30-year contract. Since assuming control in 2023, the concessionaire has begun introducing 24 four-car trains built by CRRC Changchun and in February opened the 1.7-kilometer Novo Eldorado extension to Line 1, the first addition to the network in 20 years. The total length of Line 1 is now 29.7 kilometers with 20 stations.

A 1000-series train (CAF, 2015) is stopped at the Waldomiro Lobo station of Line 1 on March 12, 2024.
Ladislau Fernandes photo via Wikipedia

The current phase of works focuses on the long-planned 10.5-kilometer Line 2, which will connect Nova Suica with Barreiro, one of the region's most densely populated areas, with seven stations. Construction is set to progress in phases through to the end of this decade.

The investment plan combines federal, state and private-sector funding, including resources provided by legal settlements and infrastructure funds, reflecting a hybrid financing model similar to other recent Brazilian urban rail concessions.

In parallel with Line 2, the government has confirmed a broader program of upgrades to Line 1, including capacity enhancements, modernization of existing infrastructure and the introduction of the new Chinese fleet to replace Class 900 trains which date from the 1980s. The first train arrived in Brazil in January, followed by another two on March 22. Two more are currently en route from China with 10 trains expected to be in service by the end of the year.

Alstom won a contract in October 2023 to supply a new signaling system for automatic train operation on Lines 1 and 2, as well install 48 automatic train control units on the CRRC fleet and construct a new operations control center. INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 27

BULGARIA

New EMUs Unveiled

The first two of the 25 EMUs that Skoda Group is supplying to Bulgaria's Ministry of Transport and Communications are due to begin testing on the national network. This follows the official presentation of the first train in Bulgaria on March 20 after the completion of dynamic and safety testing in the Czech Republic.

Skoda completed the first two trains 14 months after signing a contract that it says is worth over €500 million, including maintenance in Bulgaria over a period of 15 years. The manufacturer says adapting its RegioPanter platform for commuter and regional services in Bulgaria has included a newly designed interior, installing new onboard signaling equipment including ETCS Level 2 and providing additional safety features. Each four-car 25kV 50Hz AC EMU has over 300 seats and a maximum speed of 160 km/h. The partially low-floor design provides level boarding for all passengers, including those with reduced mobility.

Skoda's modified RegioPanter EMU for Bulgaria. Skoda photo

The first two trains will now undergo further certification and preparation for entry into service, a process that is

expected to take several months to complete.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 23

DELHI, INDIA

Two Metro Extensions Open

Two extensions to the metro network operated by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) opened on March 8. Line 7/Pink has been extended by 12.3 kilometers from Majlis Park to Maujpur Babarpur. The extension of Line 8/Magenta runs for 9.5 kilometers from Majlis Park to Deepali Chowk, providing interchange with Line 2/Yellow at Badli and with Line 1/Red at Madhuban Chowk. The extensions are the first new infrastructure to be completed under Phase IV of the Delhi Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS) project.

Alstom has supplied Urbalis Flo CBTC signaling for the Line 7 extension, designed for future operation at Grade of Automation 4 (GoA4). According to the manufacturer, Line 7 will be the longest metro line in India with unattended driverless operation at GoA4.

Under a €312 million contract awarded in November 2022, Alstom is supplying a total of 312 metro cars for Phase IV, entirely manufactured at the plant at Sri City in the state of Andhra Pradesh, which Alstom says is its largest urban rolling stock manufacturing site in Asia. Featuring high recyclability and low energy consumption, the trains are designed to operate at up to 85km/h.

In September 2025 DMRC awarded Alstom a 10-year contract to maintain 103 trains supplied by its predecessor Bombardier that operate on Lines 1 and 2 of the Delhi network. Including onboard signaling equipment, the contract is worth €42.1 million.

Alstom previously supplied signaling and train control systems for lines 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 9

DUBLIN, IRELAND

Light Rail Operating Contract Awarded

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and Ireland's National Transport Authority (NTA) have awarded a €1.3 billion contract to a 65/35 joint venture of Keolis and Amey to operate and maintain the 42-kilometer two-line Luas light rail network serving Dublin from September 1. The seven-year deal has on option to extend the contract for another six years.

Keolis and Amey will take over from Transdev, which has been responsible for operating and maintaining the network since 2019. TII says it expects the vast majority of Luas staff will opt to transfer to KeolisAmey in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings Regulations Law governing transfer regulations.

Under the new contract, an enhanced timetable will be introduced in 2027, with additional services at peak times. Keolis and Amey also plan to install remote monitoring equipment on the LRV fleet and infrastructure to detect and prevent faults.

Citadis 502 No. 5008 (Alstom, 2009) is at the Charlemont stop of the Green route on January 10, 2026. This car had been converted from a Citadis 402 in February 2020. Zxs91 photo via Urban Electric Transit

The Luas network carried 55 million passengers in 2025. A four-kilometer northern extension to the Green Line from Broombridge to Finglas is awaiting funding. Plans are being drawn up to procure new LRVs to replace the existing fleet and increase capacity.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 16

HONG KONG, CHINA

CBTC Deployed On Tsuen Wan Line

MTR of Hong Kong brought CBTC into service on the 16-kilometer Tsuen Wan Line on March 15, replacing signaling installed in 1996.

CBTC is also being retrofitted to three other metro lines in Hong Kong, with trials underway on the Island Line and implementation on the Tsuen Kwan O and Kwun Tong Lines expected by 2029. The new Tuen Mun extension and the Hung Shui Kiu projects are being built with CBTC installed from new.

Though not on the Tsuen Wan Line, this view shows an MTR Q-Train set, Nos. A756/A755, entering Kwun Tong Station (on the Kwun Tong Line) on February 14, 2023. LN9267 photo via Wikimedia Commons

All four of Hong Kong's 10 metro lines presently transitioning to CBTC are currently operated with older British-built M-Train rolling stock, but they will be replaced with new eight-car Q-Train EMUs supplied by CRRC on a line-by-line basis following introduction of CBTC.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 16

ISTANBUL, TURKEY

More Funding For Metro Project

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is providing a €110 million loan extension to Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality to fund completion of the long-delayed Umraniye - Atasehir - Goztepe metro line.

The new 13 kilometer line will serve 11 stations in the Asian side of Istanbul. It will connect major residential districts, business centers, including the rapidly developing Istanbul Financial Center, and a key healthcare institution.

The project is expected to significantly improve public transport provision by offering a fast, low-carbon alternative to the private car, relieving congestion and improving the quality of life for residents. The project also supports Istanbul's Green City Action Plan, which the municipality adopted in February 2025 with technical and financial support from EBRD.

Map of the new metro line, M12. RailTurkey

Construction of the Umraniye - Atasehir - Goztepe Line began in August 2017, with a joint venture of Gulermak and Nurol acting as main contractor. Due to budget constraints, work came to halt in January 2018. Construction later resumed, backed by a €97.5 million EBRD loan, with the bank providing an additional €75 million in 2022.

The project reached the testing phase in March 2024 with initial trial operations. Work came to a halt once again later that year, after the municipality was unable to make payments to Gulermak. Construction resumed in October 2025 and the new line is due to open in December.

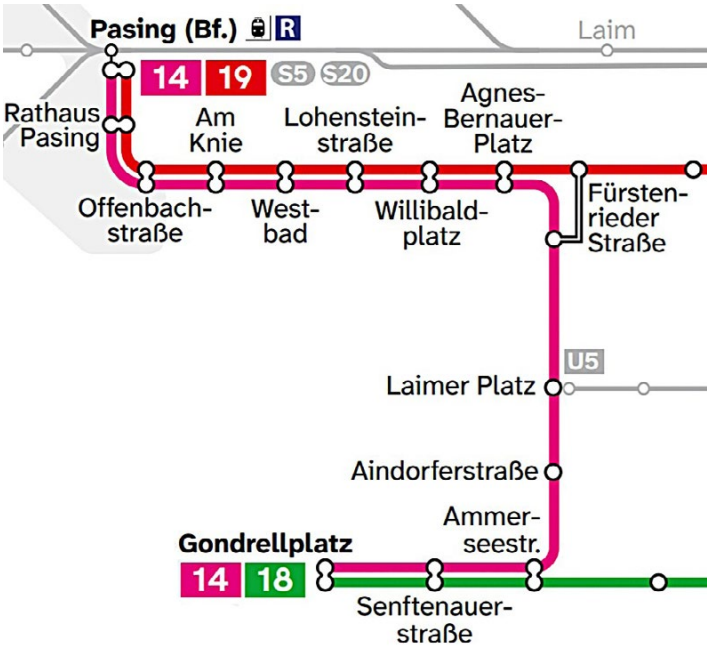
With the latest €110 million in loan funding, the total EBRD contribution to the project has reached €282.5 million out of a total estimated cost of €410 million.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 2

MUNICH, GERMANY

New Tramway Line Opens

Munich Transport (MVG) opened the first section of the city's 8.3-kilometer West Tangent Light Rail project on February 28. Approximately 1.5 kilometers of new infrastructure runs north-south between Furstenrieder Strasse and Ammerseestrasse, used by new Line 14 services, initially running between Pasing Station and Gondrellplatz every 10 minutes during the day and every 20 minutes at other times.

The new section includes two new stops, at Laimer Platz where there is interchange with metro Line U5, and at Aindorferstrasse. Construction is underway on the rest of the line that will serve the city's western suburbs, connecting Romanplatz in the north with Aidenbachstrasse in the south, where there will be an interchange with Line U3, via Laim and Holzapfelkreuth, where there will be an interchange with Line U6.



Map of the new tram Line 14, a portion of which traverses the new West Tangent project. MVG

MVG expects the next section, from Ammerseestrasse to Waldfriedhof and Aidenbachstrasse, to open in 2028. Completion of the line between Furstenrieder Strasse and Romanplatz depends on the completion of a tunnel at Laim S-Bahn station, which is being built by German Rail as part of Munich's second S-Bahn project. This is scheduled for 2028.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 2

PALMA DE MALLORCA, SPAIN

Second Metro Line Confirmed

The government of the Balearic Islands region of Spain has announced the construction of a second metro line in Palma de Mallorca, which will run for a total of six kilometers from Placa d'Espanya in the city center to Secar de la Real with four new stations.

Known as Line M2, the project has an estimated budget of €230 million, or €300 million including the purchase of five new trains. Line M2 services will make use of current Line M1 infrastructure from Placa d'Espanya in the city center to Jacint Verdaguer and Son Costa. From Son Costa there will be four kilometers of new construction, including the new stations at Son Hugo, Son Rossinyol, Son Espases — the site of a major teaching hospital — and Secar de la Real.

Presenting the project on March 25, the president of the Balearic regional government said initial approval of the chosen alignment is due shortly, enabling public consultation to begin. Construction is scheduled to start in 2029 and is expected to take around three years to complete, with Line M2 entering service in 2033. The estimated journey time from central Palma to Secar de la Real will be 11 minutes.

SFM Series 71 No. 71-09 (CAF, 2006) at the southern terminal station of Lines M1 and M2, Placa d'Espanya, on January 18, 2025. straightcelle photo via Urban Electric Transit

The government estimates that the new line will be used by up to 3 million passengers a year. With Line M1 and the Mallorcan Rail Services network recording just over 11.6 million passenger-journeys in 2025, the new metro line could increase total ridership by around 26% and roughly double the number of passengers currently using the Palma metro.

Line M2 forms part of a broader strategy to develop the rail network on Mallorca, which also includes the planned opening of a new line from Sa Pobla to Alcudia in 2031, and from to Palma to Llucmajor in 2032.

INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 27

PARIS, FRANCE

Line 8 To Be Automated

Paris public transport operator RATP has awarded a contract to Alstom to install its Interchangeable Communication-Based Train Control (I-CBTC) onboard automatic train control system on Paris Metro Line 8.

The contract comprises the onboard ATO system for operation at Grade of Automation 2 (semi-automatic with driver) and the train-to-trackside radio data transmission system.

The contract is part of RATP's Octys 2030 project, funded by regional transport authority Île-de-France Mobilités, to automate the metro to improve performance and reliability and to support the commissioning of the new MF19 trains, which will be introduced on Line 8 by 2029.

Alstom says I-CBTC complies with both the Octys 2030 specifications and the latest international standards for safety, cybersecurity and reliability.

MF 77 set No. 145 (Société Franco-Belge/Alsthom, 7/1981) rolls to a halt at La Motte-Picquet/Grenelle on a Line 8 trip to Creteil - Pointe du Lac on January 20, 2025. Jeff Erlitz photo

Alstom is currently supplying 147 steel-wheeled MF19 trains to RATP under a framework contract worth €2.9 billion agreed in 2019. The intention is to replace the trains currently operating on eight metro lines.

INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 17

POLAND

New EMUs For Private Operators

The province of Greater Poland has signed a €263 million contract with Stadler for 10 five-car Flirt EMUs with an option for an additional 10 trains.

The aluminum-bodied EMUs will be manufactured in Poland, and the first vehicles are expected to enter service at the beginning of 2028. The trains will be equipped with ETCS Level 2 and will have a maximum speed of 160km/h. Each five-car EMU will have more than 250 seats and will have a

maximum capacity of 632 passengers. The EMUs will have a high proportion of low-floor space and will be fully accessible for passengers with reduced mobility. They will also be fitted with defibrillators. The air-conditioned trains will be fitted with CCTV, a passenger information system and Wi-Fi.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 14

Rendering of Stadler's Flirt EMUs for Greater Poland. Stadler

ROMANIA

New EMUs For Private Operators

Romania's Railway Reform Authority (ARF) has handed over to InterRegional Calatori (IRC) the first of 13 Alstom Coradia Stream EMUs allocated to IRC to operate Public Service Obligation (PSO) services under the first contract awarded by ARF to a private operator.

In 2022 ARF ordered a total of 37 type RE-IR inter-regional EMUs from Alstom for €490 million, which are being allocated to the first three PSO contracts awarded by ARAF through competitive tender. The first of the six-car trains, each seating 315 passengers, was handed over at the Alstom depot within the Grivita workshops of Romanian Railways (CFR).

Alstom Coradia Stream RE-IR for InterRegional Calatori. ARF photo

IRC says that it will start to deploy the new Alstom fleet on services from Bucharest North to Brasov this month, and from the capital to Sighisoara and Cluj-Napoca in May. It will operate these services under its PSO contract running from 2025 to 2028, covering four routes in total. At the same time as IRC was awarded its PSO contract in December, incumbent operator CFR Calatori was awarded a contract covering four routes that it will operate with 12 of the new Alstom trains.

CFR Calatori has already received 13 of the new fleet to operate the first of the three PSO contracts awarded by ARF. ARF says that the main objective of tendering the three inter-regional PSO contracts is to improve connections between the capital with Romania's other major urban centers, cutting journey times and providing a better service for passengers. The project has a total cost of Lei 1.7 billion ($US 386.3 million), including a non-fund refundable contribution of Lei 1.2 billion from the European Regional Development Fund.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 11

SOFIA, BULGARIA

LRV Fleet To Be Modernized

Sofia's public transport authority, Metropolitan Electric Transport (EAD), has launched a tender for 40 new LRVs with a guide price of €102.3 million. The authority expects to launch another tender for a further 38 LRVs at a similar price for the Bulgarian capital's 1009mm-gauge network.

A pair of T6A5 cars, Nos. 4180+4181 (CKD-Tatra, 1995) have just left the western terminal of Route 22 at Krasna Polyana on Nikola Mushanov Boulevard on April 4, 2025. These 31-year-old cars will probably be replaced by the cars now being ordered. These two cars were purchased from Prague in November 2020. In Prague, they were Nos. 8630 and 8678. Adam735 photo via Urban Electric Transit

The new low-floor vehicles will allow EAD to retire the oldest members of its fleet. The authority previously procured 63 Swing LRVs from Polish manufacturer Pesa in four separate transactions, with the most recent delivery taking place in 2023. The deadline for bids for the current tender was March 27. Delivery of the new vehicles is scheduled within 36 months of contract signing.

Sofia's Municipal Council expects to purchase the vehicles

with loans totaling approximately €200 million and confirms that it is in talks with the European Investment Bank, but is also considering other options to finance the procurement.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 2

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL

Metro Project Launched

Israel's NTA Metropolitan Mass Transit System has officially launched the $US 50 billion project to build a 150-kilometer three-line metro in Tel Aviv by hosting a three-day event for potential bidders which started on February 23. NTA says the conference was attended by more than 550 representatives from around 60 infrastructure companies from 21 countries, wishing to bid for the metro's Infra 1 contract worth approximately Shekels 65 billion ($US 20.94 billion).

There are three initial phases for the project. Prequalification of bidders for the infrastructure works starts this year with a closing date for bids of April 29. This will be followed by the publication of tenders in 2027. Construction will be split into two stages, with Stage 1 expected to open in 2037.

The project will deliver a fully-underground, high-capacity metro network comprising three interconnected lines (M1, M2, and M3), totaling 150 kilometers and comprising around 300 kilometers of single-bore tunnels, 109 underground stations, four depots and seven major transport hubs. When fully operational, the driverless (Grade of Automation 4) network is expected to carry about two million passengers per day, which NTA says should significantly increase public transport usage across the Tel Aviv metropolitan area.

The metro project is designated as a national priority project under Israeli law, and will be funded primarily through the state budget, which means it will have long-term government support to ensure continuity and statutory backing regardless of changes in policy or other events.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, February 26

TORONTO, CANADA

Service Improves On Line 6 Finch West

Beginning Sunday, March 15, LRT service on Line 6 Finch West was extended to 1 a.m. Trains now arrive every six and a half minutes during weekday morning and afternoon rush hours, and every 10 minutes at all other times. With this change, late-evening replacement buses no longer operate after 10 p.m. along the Finch West corridor. The TTC's Blue Night bus service still operates from 1 a.m. until the start of train service at 6 a.m. Monday to Saturday, and 7:30 a.m. on Sundays.

Line 6 Finch West opened in December 2025 under temporary "soft opening" conditions, with early nightly closures providing the line's maintainers, Mosaic Transit Group, with an extended maintenance window, allowing staff to become more familiar with the line and monitor it for any issues while in full revenue service.

The move to full service comes as the City of Toronto is making changes to traffic signals at all intersections along the line to allow trains to move through intersections before left-turning vehicles. Additional transit signal priority measures are in the works and will be rolled out in the coming months, further improving trip speeds.
TTC NEWS, March 10

TURIN, ITALY

Metro Line 2 Contract Awarded

Hitachi Rail has signed a contract to supply rolling stock and signaling systems for the first section of driverless metro Line 2 in the Italian city of Turin. The contract has been awarded by Infra.To, owned by the City of Turin and formerly part of public transport operator Turin Transport Group (GTT).

The total value of the project is €481.6 million, according to Hitachi. This includes the €388.5 million Lot 1 covering the 3.7 kilometers from Rebaudengo to Porta Nuova with six stations. Lot 2 covering the 5.7 kilometers from Porta Nuova to Politecnico is worth €93.1 million and may be activated at a later stage.

The first section is planned to open by 2033. When fully completed, Line 2 will be 28 kilometers long with 32 stations, comprising the central 16 kilometers from Rebaudengo to Anselmetti with 23 stations, a six-kilometer southern extension from Anselmetti to Orbassano with five stations, and a six-kilometer northern extension with four stations from Cimarosa to Pescarito.

Hitachi says that it will supply 14 trains, each able to accommodate 336 standing passengers with seats for 68, two spaces for passengers with reduced mobility and four bicycle spaces.

When Infra.To announced on April 1, 2025 the start of tendering for a contract worth up to €500 million, it said that the steel-wheel trains must be under 60 meters long and 2.7 meters wide. Maximum speed was specified at 80km/h, with trains able to operate at a minimum headway of 1 minute-30 seconds.

Hitachi will also supply CBTC for Line 2 enabling operation at fully driverless Grade of Automation 4, with door operation completely automated. The Line 2 fleet will also be equipped with Hitachi's HMAX for Rail digital asset management system, collecting vehicle and infrastructure data in real time to enable prompt intervention when necessary.

Line 1 of the Turin metro features the rubber-tired VAL system supplied by Siemens. The first section opened on February 4, 2006.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 5

TURKEY

High-Speed Train Testing Begins

Testing is underway in Turkey of the country's first domestically developed 225km/h train, built by Türasaş. Turkish State Railways (TCDD) is set to procure another 14 of the eight-car trains by 2028. The testing program will assess the train's speed, braking and driving performance, as well as infrastructure compatibility.

The first high-speed train set built by Türasaş, No. HT 70000.
Türasaş photo

The eight-car aluminum-bodied train has capacity for 577 passengers. It is equipped with an automatic train protection system, fully automatic air-conditioning, fire safety systems and CCTV, audio and visual passenger information systems, Wi-Fi, vending machines and an onboard kitchen. The train control and management system and traction equipment have been developed in Turkey by domestic supplier Aselsan.

Construction of a new manufacturing facility to produce the 225km/h trains in Sakraya has reached the half-way point. Turkey is expected to require 81 trains comprising 648 cars by 2035, an average of 65 cars per year. TCDD already operates a fleet of 31 high-speed trains supplied by CAF and Siemens. With several new line projects underway, the country's high-speed network is expected to reach 17,287 kilometers by 2028 and 25,590 kilometers by 2053.
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL, March 9

A Midtown Streetcar Mystery

By Paul Grether (ERA #6933)

A mysterious symbol from the past has appeared on the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge (aka 59th Street Bridge). But first, some background information.

On about September 17, 1909, trolley operations began on the New York City constructed and owned Queensboro Bridge, first some test runs, then with revenue service commencing on about October 4, with a trolley shuttle replacing a bus service. On the Manhattan side of the bridge the city constructed an elaborate underground trolley terminal immediately east of Second Avenue to serve the various streetcar companies that paid the lease fees to use the bridge. Loop Track No. 1 in the terminal served Steinway Street cars, Loop Track No. 2 served Flushing and College Point cars of the New York & Queens County Railway (NY&QC) and loop Track No. 3 served Corona cars. Additional loops served the Manhattan & Queens Traction Company (Queens Boulevard Line). Near the Queens side of the bridge three short loop track sections on Jackson Avenue were equipped with both overhead wire and conduit to allow Third Avenue Railway cars coming from Manhattan to turn back west after crossing the bridge. Until 1919 there were two sets of tracks on the bridge, but the end of the first 10-year lease and refusal of the NY&QC to pay exorbitant fees to the city led to the removal of the inner set of tracks. This left the two lower level outside tracks in use.

NY&QC was owned by the Interborough Rapid Transit (IRT), which divested itself from the money losing trolley lines on Long Island in 1923, beginning long periods of receivership for all the streetcar companies. By 1937, due to financial and political pressure from Mayor LaGuardia and extensive track removal resulting from the construction of the Grand Central Parkway, the NY&QC was completely motorized with buses replacing trolleys. Steinway Lines followed in late 1939 by operating its last streetcars. This left about 1.64 miles of streetcar line in operation serving just the bridge, operated by the Queensboro Bridge Railway Company, Inc., a NY&QC subsidiary. A unique element of the operation was the stop, built in 1919 on the bridge, serving an elevator that connected to Welfare Island [formerly Blackwells Island and later renamed Roosevelt Island] below. The tight geometry of the bridge tracks and this stop prevented bus substitution. Finally, in 1953 a new automotive bridge was built connecting Queens with Welfare Island. The trolley shuttle held on for a few more years, but on April 7, 1957, the service was abandoned and the tracks removed.

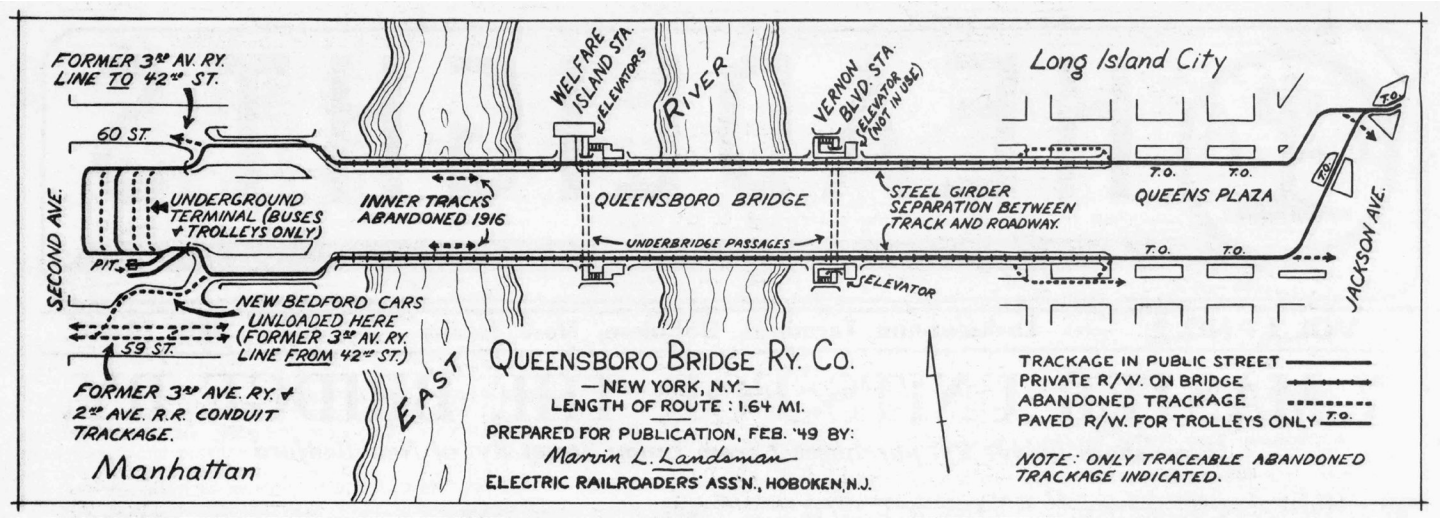
The former rights-of-way of the tracks, cantilevered off the sides of the bridge, are today the bicycle and pedestrian pathways respectively. The Manhattan trolley terminal also remains at the base of the bridge, with one of the former headhouses in place and restored, and another relocated as a visitors' center to Roosevelt Island. During a recent westbound trip over the bridge utilizing the bicycle lanes, a discovery was made. Hanging over the former track entrance to the Manhattan trolley terminal is a round "Queensboro Bridge Ry Co." herald!

It is unclear what the provenance of this sign is. Research in street view of online mapping services reveal that the herald was not there in the past 15 years or so and only appeared recently. Is this a replica? Is this something imagined by a New York City Department of Transportation employee who is a transit history enthusiast? Is this an old herald that has been replaced as part of a refurbishment of the bridge? Is it historically accurate? If any readers have any information, please contact the author at grether@mindspring.com so this mystery can be solved in a future *Bulletin*.

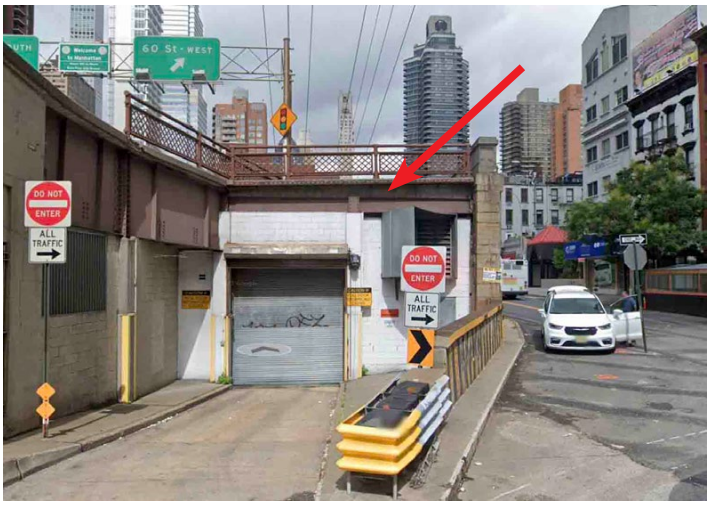
For further information:

New York and Queens County Railway and Steinway Lines 1867-1939 by Vincent F. Seyfried - www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=90115798 — see pp. 29-30 and 44-45.

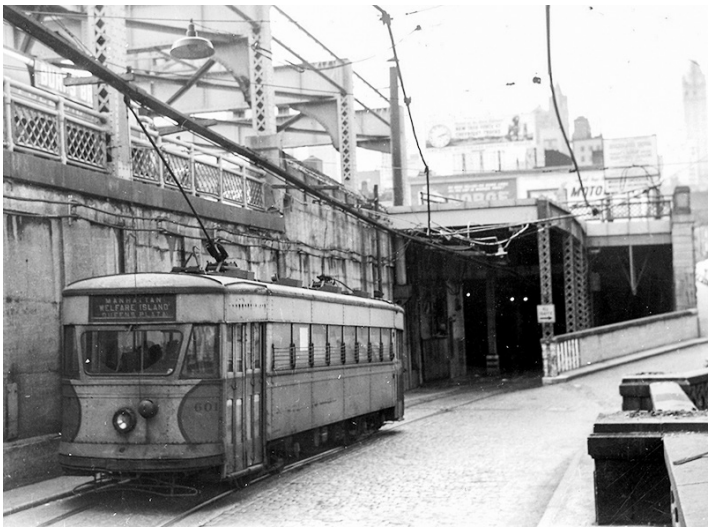
7 *Master Units for the Bridge Ry.* — Electric Railroaders' Association *Headlights*, February 1949, see pp. 1 and 2.



Track diagram of the Queensboro Bridge Railway from the February 1949 issue of *Headlights*.



In this September 2024 image, there is no plaque to the right of the center girder. Google Streetview



Queensboro Bridge Railway Master Unit No. 601 is about to duck into the underground terminal at Second Avenue in Manhattan in this undated photo, undoubtedly in the 1950s. Photographer and collection unknown

In this view taken on March 27, the railway plaque can be seen just to the right near the top of the center upright girder. Paul Grether photo

Closeup view of the recently-installed plaque above the terminal entrance. Paul Grether photo

From the Camera of Thomas C. VanDegrift, Jr. (ERA #794)

Thomas C. VanDegrift, Jr. lived in Detroit, Mich. and joined the E.R.A. before World War II. Recently, his son, Thomas VanDeGrift III, shared with us photographs his father took during the last couple of years of original streetcar operation in Detroit. In this installment, we present images from June 2 and 9, 1956, after streetcar operation ended.

PCCs Nos. 2265, 2200 and 2204, all repainted and renumbered for service in Mexico City with STE-Servicio de Transportes Electricos (Electric Transport Service). This view is looking southwest. All of Detroit's PCCs still operating at the end of service were built by St. Louis Car Company in 1949. They were only seven years old when service was discontinued.

PCCs 267 (waiting to be repainted and renumbered) and 2268 (already repainted and renumbered for Mexico City) in a view northeast on the south side of the Woodward Car House. In the background are the huge smokestacks of the Ford Motor Company's Highland Park complex. The Woodward Car House property is now all residential housing. Ford's smokestacks are gone now, as well as many of Ford's factory buildings.

Paul's ERA Bookshelf

By Paul Grether (ERA #6933)

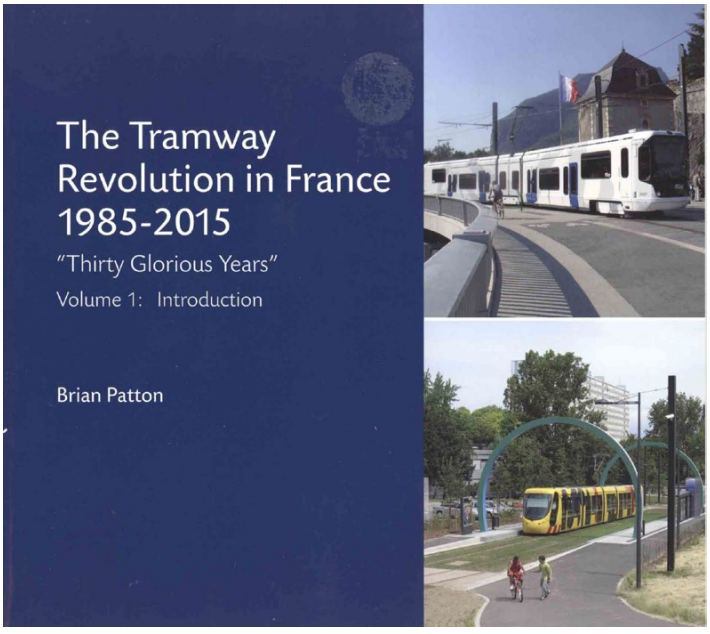
Tramway Revolution in France, 1985-2015 — "Thirty Glorious Years" A five-volume set by Brian Patton, self-published, Scotland, United Kingdom, between 2015 (Volume 1) and 2017 (Volume 5), softcover, each volume between 105 and 206 pages. Primarily high-quality color photos with detailed captions, but some text to introduce each volume and for certain chapters. Included in each volume is a list of abbreviations and a bibliography.

Volume 1: Introduction (105 pages)
Volume 2: Paris and Île-de-France (160 pages)
Volume 3: The Northern Regions (200 pages)
Volume 4: Central France (202 pages)
Volume 5: The Southern Region and The Tramway Revolution in Northern Africa (206 pages)

Much like the experience in North America, transportation policy in France following World War II favored investment in urban highway infrastructure, some Metro lines and almost complete abandonment of tram/streetcar systems. In the 1970s the combined shocks of the oil crisis and dramatic changes in urban economics resulting from traffic congestion and other negative impacts from "automobile first" policies caused changes. In 1985, Nantes opened the first modern tramway system in France. At the time, only Lille, Marseille and Saint-Etienne had tram systems that survived, of the 94 French systems that existed historically.

Nantes, followed soon by Grenoble, kicked off "Trente glorieuses" [30 glorious years] — the period from 1985 to 2015 during which 26 modern systems (plus 3 rubber-tired systems) have been built. All cities with a population of 300,000 or greater now have at least one tram line. This policy of transportation investment has dramatically changed French urban design and economics.

Brian Patton documents the 30 years in this series. Volume 1, the Introduction, provides a short but detailed summary of the context since World War II and the decisions to invest in tramways. Explanations are provided about how the policies and designs have led to an explosion in transit ridership that created a supply industry that has exported products and the lessons learned around the world. Subsequent chapters are organized like the rest of the series with photo essays documenting the topics. A sample of the topics include various aspects of design, construction, the vehicles, the politics (including anti-tram protests), stations, urban design and economic development. The bibliography of this first volume is a general overview of sources not specific to any one system.



Volume 1 is interesting as a stand-alone, each of the subsequent Volumes are a city-by-city in-depth photo essay organized geographically. Each city includes a system map and city specific bibliography including historical resources. Some cities, such as Mulhouse in Volume 4, include a detailed text write-up, in this case about tram-train operations. In Volume 5, which was published several years (2017) after Volume 1, Patton includes several updates of the latest developments in French tramways.

The photography and quality of the reproductions is high, despite being a self-published work. The text is very well written and edited, with most of the information included in caption format. This series will appeal to those interested in transportation/transit urban investment policy, photography of modern transit developments, and the design of new modern tramways to ensure success and high ridership. The format and content of this series have value both for professional practitioners as well as those with a more general interest.

Links to book information:
Volume 1: www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=154608966
Volume 2: www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=154304520
Volume 3: www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=154261720
Volume 4: www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=154261646
Volume 5: www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=158569849

Strasbourg, France, September 22, 2018. Paul Grether photo

Building the New York Subway System, A Photographic Journey

Construction Route No. 16 — Part 1

By Jeff Erlitz (ERA #3997)

(Editor's Note: Due to some production errors, some of the eight preceding parts in this series were erroneously numbered. Part 1 began in the August 2025 issue and Part 8 of the series was completed in the March 2026 issue. Going forward, each new construction route will begin with a Part 1.)

Having presented eight parts of Construction Route No. 18, the IRT White Plains Road Line, we now move on to Construction Route No. 16, the IRT Jerome Avenue Line. Both Route No. 18 and Route No. 16 were part of Contract No. 3, the IRT portion of the Dual Contracts.

Route No. 16 was constructed in two sections:

- Section 1: South of 161st Street to south of 183rd Street
- Section 2: South of 183rd Street to Woodlawn

Revenue service from 149th Street-Grand Concourse to Kingsbridge Road began on June 2, 1917. On April 15, 1918, service was extended to the end of the line at Woodlawn. July 1, 1918, saw the extension of the Ninth Avenue Elevated from 155th Street, Manhattan, across the Putnam Bridge over the Harlem River, to 162nd Street and River Avenue, where connection was made with the Jerome Avenue Line. Because the Lexington Avenue Line in Manhattan didn't open until July 17, 1918, the Jerome Avenue Line operated as a shuttle until through service to and from Manhattan began.

These photographs are in the Subway Construction Photographs Collection of the New York Transit Museum via the New-York Historical Society.

Looking south on August 22, 1914, south of the 161st Street station. This is the earliest view we currently have of Jerome Avenue Line construction photographs and was taken near the southeast corner of River Avenue and East 157th Street. From foreground to background we see the east footings for elevated bent Nos. 3, 2 and 1, the abutment at the north end of the ramp coming up from the subway, and the tunnel portals. Charles Manchester/PSC photo

(Above and below) Two views near the Beford Park Boulevard station on December 10, 1914. The upper view is looking northeast towards the south abutment of the embankment that carries the line on a private right-of-way west of Jerome Avenue. The lower view is looking slightly northeast just about where the south ends of the platforms will be in the future. The tall tower in the left distance is part of the High Pumping Station, constructed between 1901 and 1906 with the Jerome Park Reservoir, and is still standing. Pierre P. Pullis/PSC photos

It is now April 3, 1915 and we are looking northeast along Jerome Avenue towards the north end of the under-construction Mosholu Parkway Station. The trolley poles of the Union Railway's Jerome Avenue Line will soon give way to trolley wire ducts attached to the underside of the elevated structure. Granville W. Pullis/PSC photo

(Above and below) It is now April 14, 1915. The upper view is almost the same as the one on page 20, only this was taken a little east of River Avenue. The steelwork is being erected from the end of the ramp from the subway in a northerly direction. In the lower view, the photographer has walked to between 157th and 158th Streets and we see the steelwork stored on either side of River Avenue, waiting to be installed. Seven years and one month after this picture was taken, ground will be broken in the open field to the left for the first Yankee Stadium. Charles Manchester/PSC photo

Travels with Jack May

Scotland-Ireland 2018 — Part 6

By Jack May (ERA #2275, Photographs by the author)

Monday, May 21. The Z Hotel was rather interesting, and seemed to be designed to attract Millennials, or at least younger generations than ours. The building had been a printing plant but was beautifully repurposed and reconstructed into a striking facility with excellent industrial-style decorations and very fast elevators, the totality best described as "urban-chic." There were small tables in the lobby, which were used to serve a continental breakfast buffet (not complimentary) in the morning, but also for a free reception from about 5:00 p.m. to 8:00, with all sorts of consumables I don't particularly like (but Clare does), specifically wine, cheese, canapes, salads, etc., but it did hold one attraction for me, unlimited free chocolate bark. I had to handle it with care however, as it tends to melt in one's hands.

I made one major mistake when I chose the Z, I reserved a budget room that contained no windows. I had never felt claustrophobic before, but both Clare and I were a bit uncomfortable, and we won't do that again. The room itself wasn't too small, but there were no closets, instead plenty of hooks and coat hangers, and we had to put our bags on the floor (there was sufficient clearance to slide them under the bed if we wanted to). The bathroom was glass-enclosed! Everything was very stylish and looked and felt luxurious. As an example, the bathroom was stocked with lots of upscale toiletries and soft large towels.

Also off-putting was the young staff; they were very pleasant and accommodating, but tattoos and body piercing make me feel uncomfortable. Clearly, I'm getting old and am not willing to accept the youngest generation's culture (as if I had a choice). But also considering the Z's location a block away from Queen Street Station and close to the center of downtown, we'd go to that funky hotel again.

The first order of the day after finishing our breakfasts was to check the Lost and Found at Queen Street. Yes, Clare's cane was there, nicely wrapped, and we retrieved it after showing identification. The ScotRail lady at Inverness came through perfectly for us, an excellent end for some anxiety. Upon our return to the Z, Clare presented the walking stick she was given in Thurso to the desk clerk, who gladly took it and said she would put it aside for anyone who needed one in the future.

Today was museum day (as opposed to railfanning day), and so we headed by local bus to the Riverside Transportation Museum (what else?), about a half-hour's trip. The internet provided us with sufficient transit information to get around, and while I would have preferred taking a commuter train to Partrick, the closest station to the museum, I think the walk from there would have been a little bit too long, and we wanted to conserve our energy for this busy day, museums are work.

George Square, one of the most attractive public spaces in downtown Glasgow, and only about a block from our hotel. The large building is the City Chambers (City Hall), built in 1888, while the column, from 1838, is dedicated to author Sir Walter Scott. The equestrian statue at the left edge is of Prince Albert, who is clearly not in a can. *(Author's Note: I imagine many readers remember the joke: A child calls the local tobacco shop and asks, "Do you have Prince Albert in a can?" After the affirmative answer, he then says, "Well then, please let him out." Prince Albert was a popular pipe tobacco manufactured by R. J. Reynolds that came in a tin can that had a likeness of the prince on its lid. The prince in question, however, was not Queen Victoria's husband and consort (as in the statue above), but rather her son "Bertie," who became King Edward VII. The product is still being manufactured today, by Altria (Philip Morris)).*

The Riverside is fantastic, housing displays of Glasgow's transport history, including trains, trams and the subway. Its location along the River Clyde also allows it to host a "tall ship" and a ferry. There were also bicycles, motorcycles, buses and automobiles, even skateboards, in the architecturally exquisite and modern building (opened in 2011), and if we were interested in more than the rail exhibits, we probably would have had to spend the whole day, or even more, at this institution. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glasgow_Museum_of_Transport and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riverside_Museum, as well as https://thetallship.com for the water-borne displays.

On the tram side, the museum houses a wide sample of preserved rolling stock that portrays the progression of equipment operated by the Glasgow Corporation Tramways (*Author's Note: In American vernacular the name, Glasgow Corporation Tramways, would probably be best translated to City of Glasgow's Streetcar Department)*, from the earliest horsecars built the end of the 19th century to the last electric Coronation/Cunarder trams delivered in the early 1950s, with examples of all the important classes of vehicles. Unfortunately, it was just a little bit too dark indoors for me to take slides with my ISO

No. 103 and 5 are among the Scottish steam locomotives in the museum. The 103, one of fifteen locomotives designed by David Jones and built by Sharp Stewart & Co. in Glasgow in 1894, was one of the first locomotives in Britain to have a 4-6-0 wheel arrangement. Delivered to the Highland Railway, it was passed on to the London, Midland and Scottish in 1923, where it worked until 1934. On the balcony above it is the last locomotive from the Glasgow & South Western Railway. No. 9, an 0-6-0T (Tank), was built by North British Locomotive in 1917 in Springburn, about three miles north of Queen Street Station. It switched on the G&SW until 1934 and then was sold off to a colliery.

(Above and below) Horsecars were introduced to Glasgow in 1872. First operated by a private company, in 1894 the municipal government took control. No. 543 was one of several hundred double-deckers built at that time, but its length of service was limited to less than a decade, as soon afterward the lines were electrified and extended. The horses are not authentic. (CM)

100 film, but Clare had her digital along, so the photos marked "CM" were taken with her camera.

After we completed our survey of the Riverside, the same bus line, No. 100, carried us to the Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow's principal art gallery. (I should mention that we paid one-way fares, as the buses are privatized and drivers only sell day tickets for their own company.) Our visit filled the entire afternoon, including a stop for tea in the museum restaurant. One of the most interesting displays consisted of some of the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his wife, Margaret Macdonald, who were two of the most important architects and designers during the period surrounding the turn of the 20th century.

It was late in the afternoon when we finally finished our tour of the museum, and so we rode a bus back to our hotel. After a short nap we took part in the Z's daily reception in the lobby and then went out to have dinner. It was dessert first tonight (as it would also be tomorrow), as I consumed my heart's content of chocolate bark before the meal.

Our visit to Glasgow will be continued in Part 7.

Duntocher is not Scottish for Don't Touch, but rather the name of a village about eight miles northwest of the center of Glasgow. No. 1089 is an experimental single-deck tram from 1926 and was built for "high speed" operation to compete with bus service to the suburbs. It was not a success but remained on the roster until virtually the end of tram operation in 1962. (CM)

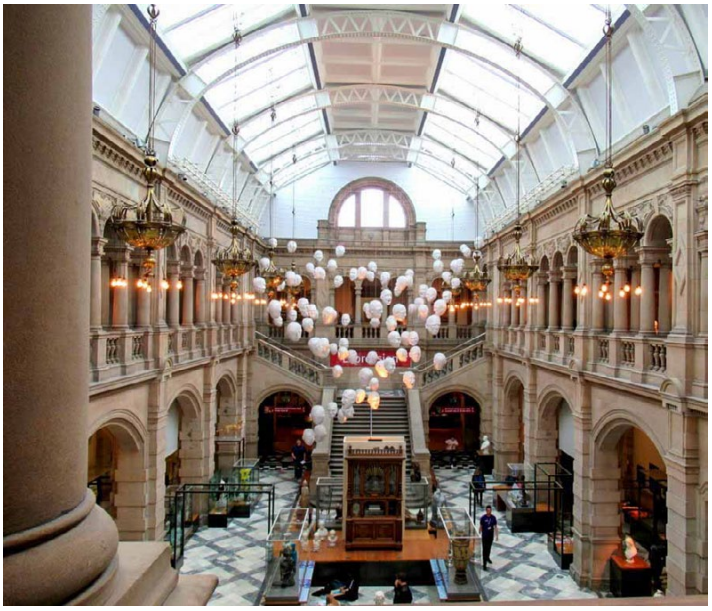
Deck roof No. 672 was constructed around 1898 for the electrification of the Glasgow Corporation Tramways. Modeled on some U. S. streetcars of the time, it has two sections. During that era much of Glasgow's housing for working families consisted of only two rooms, and because of the similarity, these cars were nicknamed Room and Kitchen Trams. Only 19 of these were built, and they lasted in passenger service only until 1907, when they were replaced by more desirable double-deck cars. Fortunately, the 672 was converted to a work car, which allowed it to survive.

Glasgow Coronation tram 1173, from 1938. Some 150 of these double-truck cars were built during the period leading up to World War II and even after its beginning. The class received its name because the cars began entering service at the time of the coronation of King George VI. Several of these trams have been preserved, including one in nearby Coatbridge, which will be one of the subjects covered in the next part of this report. (CM)

No. 779 is one of the earliest Glasgow "Standard" cars, having been built in 1900. Note that the 4-wheeler is equipped with a trolley pole. Soon afterward bow collectors became the standard for current collection, but single trucks remained the rule. (CM)

The success of the Coronation cars led to the construction of these larger Cunarder units. One hundred were built between 1948 and 1952, but the planned improvements embodied within the fleet, other than the slight differences in the body and trim, turned out to be just the opposite, as these trams were not considered as dependable or sturdy as their predecessors. No. 1392 was constructed in 1952 and ran in service for only 10 years, as the last of Glasgow's trams were replaced by buses in 1962. The name Cunarder was never official, (it was Coronation Mark II) and there are a number of theories of why these cars received that appellation, and there is probably some truth in all of them. Both the Cunard steamships Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth were built in the Glasgow shipyards and thus residents were very proud of them. Considered to be the ultimate in luxury, Glaswegians found some similarities between the ocean liners and the new cars, specifically the moquette fabric with leather trim used on the seats, the trams' rubberized flooring and stair treads, and the use of some Art Deco embossing. Staying with the ship analogy, but now along negative lines, riders found the ride to be erratic, with the trams tending to roll (some say alarmingly), just like an ocean liner in rough seas. Their Marley and Taunton trucks were apparently not up to the job of supporting the Cunarders' weight, especially on the under-maintained track that had not yet been corrected when the cars made their appearance immediately after the end of the war. Anyway, for whichever reason, the Cunarder moniker caught on with the public. [Thanks to David Craig for the explanation.]

The exterior of the Kelvingrove. The museum houses an art collection that ranges from old masters to the impressionists of the early 20th century.



The interior lobby of the Kelvingrove.

A table setting for a tea shop designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his wife, Margaret Macdonald, toward the end of the 19th century. Note the chairs, windows and drawings, all in the art-noveau style, which later evolved into art-deco. The museum devotes a great deal of space to the couple, who moved architecture and design into the modern era. Their story is especially appropriate, as it relates to the city of Glasgow, where Mackintosh was born. Glasgow was (and still is) a working-class city, somewhat known for its hard drinking, and as a result, it was a natural place for the temperance movement to make an impact. A Miss Kate Cranston opened her first tearoom, where people could meet to relax and enjoy non-alcoholic refreshments in a variety of different settings within a single building, in 1878. She eventually operated a chain of four such tearooms and hired the Mackintoshes to design their interiors. One was the Willow Tea Rooms, which has been restored and continues to offer patrons a venue that features Mackintosh's designs and furniture. Macdonald's sister, Frances, married James MacNair who was also an artist, and they became widely respected as the "Glasgow Four." More details can be obtained at https://daily.jstor.org/the-scottish-sisters-who-pioneered-art-nouveau/, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Rennie_Mackintosh and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margaret_Macdonald_Mackintosh.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