



IN THIS ISSUE:

CURRENT EVENTS

[World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Ends Another Great Show Season!](#)

[Latest on Brooklyn Modern Streetcar - Remembering and Modeling New York City Trolleys](#), by Edward Havens

[Transit Vehicles Making News](#), by A.J. Staley

[Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News](#), by Edward Havens

PROTOTYPE

[The Sun Link Streetcar - Doing It Right The First Time!](#)

CURRENT EVENTS.....

World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Concludes Their Show Season!

The folks at the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour (WGHoT) ended their 2016 Show season with the usual interesting achievements. The following five shows were presented:

LOCATION	DATES	ATTENDANCE
Indianapolis, IN	January 9-10, 2016	25,411
Schaumburg, IL	January 16-17, 2016	32,533
Saint Paul, MN	February 6-7, 2016	31,202
San Antonio, TX	February 20-21, 2016	15,417
Kansas City, MO	March 5-6, 2016	21,951

Their were some achievements at these shows that were noteworthy.

At the Schaumburg Show, Joe Montilla of Augusta Track built an HO scale tower with the intention of breaking the world record for the tallest toy track track. His track at that show achieved a height of 21 feet, 2 inches, breaking the old record of 17.32 feet. This show was the most attended model train show in the history of the state of Illinois.

Records of one type or another are often broken at these shows so when they come to your area, you should make arrangements to visit for one of the days. You do not know what you might miss!!

Also, the Great Train Expo announced their summer 2016 shows which will be held in the following cities on the following dates:

LOCATION	DATES	HALL
Tucson, AZ	June 11-12, 2016	Tucson Convention Center
Belleville, IL	July 23-24, 2016	Belle-Clair Fairgrounds
Pomona, CA	July 30-31, 2016	Pomona-Fairplex
Raleigh, NC	September 17-28, 2016	NC State Fairgrounds
Santa Rosa, CA	October 22-23, 2016	Sonoma County Event Center at the Fairgrounds

We always urge railfans in these areas to attend these shows. They are usually worth the effort!

Latest on the Brooklyn (BQX) Modern Streetcar! Remembering and modeling NYC trolleys!

By Edward B. Havens

New York City is serious about building a 16-mile waterfront area modern streetcar line to link Brooklyn and Queens. The city posted an advertisement to hire a streetcar project director, the "capital new york" website reported April 1. The manager selected will "plan and execute a comprehensive strategy" to create the north-south surface rail line, the ad listing said. It would be the first streetcar line in New York since Queensboro Bridge Railway was abandoned in 1957:



The new streetcar line, given the shorthand name BQX, would be the first in Brooklyn since 1956 when the city abandoned the last two PCC-operated routes inherited from Brooklyn & Queens Transit which bought 100 PCCs in 1936. The city kept them in service until their 20-year book life was written off the financial ledger.



The new car line is expected to operate in mixed traffic in auto lanes but critics have suggested that reserved right-of-way is needed to speed travel -- in much the same way the Phoenix, Ariz., Valley Metro LRT uses reserved track installed at street level in streets as shown in the artist's concept below:



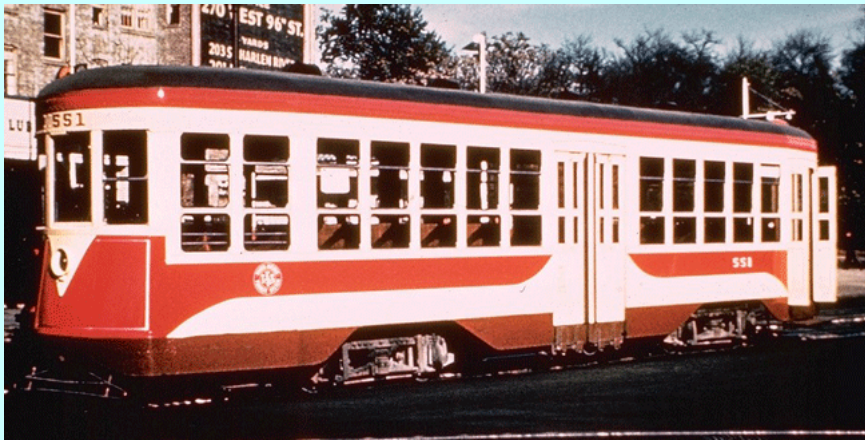
New York once had street railways -- both conduit-powered and collecting current from overhead wire using trolley poles -- across Manhattan, the Bronx, and as far north as Yonkers and New Rochelle. The car lines were bussed in stages from 1946 to 1952.



Trolley modelers have various options to replicate rolling stock of the Brooklyn & Queens and Third Avenue Railway System [TARS]. Ex-Richmond Railways, Staten Island, Osgood Bradley cars were used on the W-Webster Avenue line in the Bronx and HO brass models were imported by NJ Custom Brass:



Possibly the best known TARS streetcars were the Peter Witt, front entrance, center exit, cars built in the company shops in 1936-1937 and used almost exclusively on the Broadway line to Times Square.



Models of the Broadway Peter Witts were imported by Bert Sas' Model Tramways System in HO scale in brass in 1965 in both the fluted and riveted side versions. TARS used rivets for its aluminum "Huffliners" and fluted sides for the final steel versions. The cars were named after TARS President Slaughter Huff. Various brass import and resin cast prewar PCCs are available in HO scale for Brooklyn cars. Modelers may find some on eBay from time to time or at model traction shows.

O scale cars are limited but St. Petersburg Tram Collection sold models of the TARS 626-685 series as unpowered but museum quality models:



And Corgi imported diecast metal models, unpowered but finished, of the Birneys used by TARS during its "Steinway Sojourn." TARS operated but did not own bankrupt Steinway Lines on Long Island from 1922 to 1939 when buses replaced all routes except Queensboro Bridge.

Photo by Tony Tieuli



O scale 1/48 modelers can power the TARS or Steinway cars with Q Car components.

Transit Vehicles Making News!

by A. J. Staley

LOS ANGELES COUNTY...ON THE MOVE!

Los Angeles METRO continues to make progress on the Phase 2 extension of the EXPO line from Culver City to Santa Monica, and appears to be on schedule for opening on May 20, 2016.



Testing at the Bagley Crossing in Culver City.



Testing at the Military Crossing in West Los Angeles.



Landscaping along Colorado Boulevard in Santa Monica.

The \$1.5 billion, 6.6 mile extension will allow passengers to travel once again by Light Rail Vehicles (LRV) between downtown Los Angeles and the Pacific Ocean for the first time since the demise of Los Angeles County's extensive streetcar network's in the 1950's.

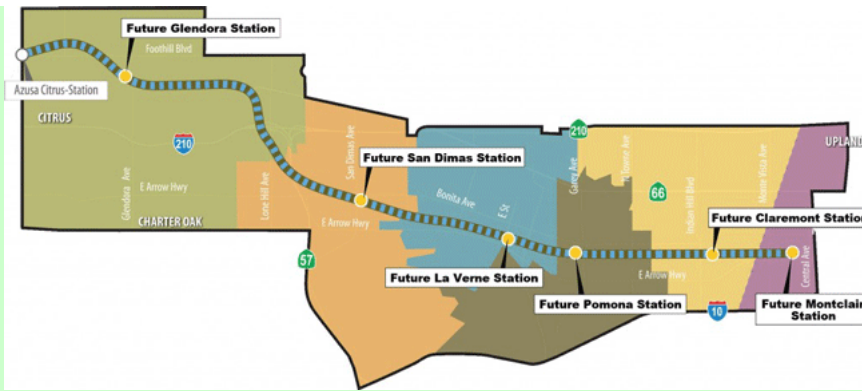


Expo 2 Map from Culver City to Santa Monica.

This will hopefully get passengers out their cars and onto public transportation to avoid the heavily traveled and often congested 10 Interstate. As reported elsewhere, trains started running without passengers from Culver City to Santa Monica on March 21, 2016.

As part of the celebrations for the opening of the Expo Line to Santa Monica on Friday, May 20, the Source, a Westside Los Angeles blog, reported that the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) will offer free rides on Friday and Saturday and will hold station celebrations on Saturday, May 21. The **free rides will be on the entire Expo Line**, from 7th St/Metro Center to Downtown Santa Monica. On Friday, **free rides** will begin at noon and will continue until the close of service. On Saturday, May 21, the free rides will **start at 4:42 a.m.** in Downtown Santa Monica and at 4:45 a.m. at 7th/Metro Center and will last **all day** until the end of service around 2 a.m. "We invite the public to join us on Friday and Saturday to celebrate the historic opening of the Metro Expo Line to Santa Monica," said Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington. "We encourage the community to enjoy this new light-rail line service and see for themselves how close to the beach Metro can get you." The station celebrations will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the following new stations: Downtown Santa Monica, 17th St/SMC, 26th St/Bergamot, Expo/Bundy and Palms. The Culver City Station that has been open since 2012 will be joining the celebrations. Entertainment, children's activities, food trucks, bike valet and bike-pit stops and information booths are among the activities.

The Foothill Gold Line has started preparation for Phase 3 which will extend that line east from Azusa to Montclair as shown in the next map.



The second phase from Pasadena to Azusa of the Foothill Gold Line, which opened March 5, 2016, has proven in the short time that it has been open to be very successful. Metro had previously projected that the ridership would grow to 13,000 per day by 2035. Since March 5th the ridership boarding's on the Light Rail Vehicles (LRV) has been running 4500 to 5000 persons per day, not to mention that the weekend boarding's have been heavy as well. If this trend continues it is estimated that the growth rate will exceed the projected rate long before 2035. A recent survey of the passengers who boarded the LRV's at the six new stations on the 11.5 mile extension found that over 70 percent riders are new to METRO and about 66 percent of them said they no longer drive to work.

In a recent interview with CEO Phillip Washington he stated "within the next 10 years it is expected that Los Angeles County will increase by 750,000 people". He spoke about a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for 100 years that is being drafted by METRO which may go on the Los Angeles, California ballot in November. The plan would add a 40 year half cent county sales tax, making the price tag about \$120 billion dollars. Voters will also decide whether to extend the current half-cent tax from transit on Measure R. The plan and measure is currently being worked on will be presented to the LA-METRO Board of Directors in June, and if approved, the measure will be placed on the ballot in November. Mr. Washington spoke of looking at existing transit corridors that already have rail lines and the busiest traveled routes. Examples given were the Vermont transit corridor, Sepulveda Pass, extending the Orange line possibly to Cal State University, Northridge (C-Sun), additional stations on some of the existing lines and other options. The approved funds will provide more rail, bus, and road plans, including a train tunnel under the 405 freeway. The traffic on Los Angeles freeways and interstates is heavily congested and the need for more rapid transit is desperately needed throughout the County. During the first 15 years of the plan, Metro would be working in 18 areas of the County. There will be meetings held throughout the County in different communities to determine the needs and desires in each area. Mr. Washington stated that Metro is committed to take into consideration all areas of the county and is determined that there will be something for the entire county. However, if the Board or the voters ultimately do not support the augmenting and extension of the taxes at this time, the 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) will be modified to stay within limits of the guideway lines currently in existence.

HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT!

The City of Honolulu has just completed the first 5 miles of guideway for Oahu's rail transit system which represents 25 percent of the 20 miles for the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project.



It is hoped that the mostly elevated system will help alleviate the substantial traffic issue affecting the state's most populous urban area, as well as providing a reliable transportation alternative for visitors and commuters in southern Oahu. "This is an important milestone," stated Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell. "This is a visual reminder of the fact that we are building our way to a better transportation future. As commuters drive by and look at the guideway, they know that an alternative to sitting in traffic is on the way."



The five miles of guideway includes more than 215 spans. Each span, which is the portion of guideway between two columns, typically consists of 12 segments. Each segment weighs about 50 tons. The first phase will link East Kapolei and Aloha Station and is scheduled to open in 2018. A second

phase of the project will continue the line from Aloha Station to Ala Moana Center in urban Honolulu and is slated to open in 2019. The first 2 LRV's for the Honolulu Rail Transit arrived on March 24, 2016, at Honolulu Harbor Pier 1.



The rail cars were trucked from the Hitachi Rail Factory in Pittsburg, California and then shipped over to the island of Oahu, Hawaii.

Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!

by Edward B. Havens

The city of El Paso in West Texas is building a heritage streetcar line to be operated by rehabilitated former El Paso, ex-San Diego PCCs and it will run from just north of the Mexican border to the University of Texas-El Paso campus. But the city already is exploring the possibility of extending the line south across the international border in Juarez, Mexico, KFOX-TV reported April 6. Sun Metro Director Jay Banasiak said there's no funding for it yet and Mexico's government still must be consulted. But Banasiak said many Sun Metro bus riders walk across the border and could use the streetcar to do the same thing. El Paso City Lines operated the ex-San Diego PCCs into Juarez until 1973.



The Maryland Board of Public Works gave its approval in April to a consortium to design, build, operate and maintain the 16.2-mile Purple Line light rail route between Bethesda and New Carrollton in the suburbs just north of Washington, D.C., The Washington Post reported. The \$5.6 billion, 876-page contract is for a public-private partnership [P3] with Purple Line Transit Partners supplying \$1 billion toward costs. Single unit C.A.F. articulated LRVs will supply service.



The "Greater Greater Washington" blog reported that the Purple Line LRVs will be the longest in operation in the U.S. at 136 feet, surpassing Dallas' 124 ft long Super LRVs. The five-section articulateds will have an open gangway, allowing riders to freely walk from one end of the car to the other.



The Kansas City Star reported that Kansas City plans to begin public service on its two-mile modern streetcar line from River Market downtown to Union Station on May 6. The fourth and final C.A.F. streetcar arrived in the Missouri city April 6 to begin testing. It was shipped from the C.A.F. assembly plant at Elmira Heights, N.Y., by highway truck trailer. Full service testing started the first weekend in April with three streetcars on the line every day between 7:00 AM and 10:00 PM. As is the case with the current Los Angeles Expo 2 Line full service testing program the streetcars will be making all stops and opening the doors, but no passengers will be allowed to ride.



Virginia Beach City Council voted 9-2 in April to move forward with an extension of Norfolk "Tide" light rail across city line to Town Center shopping plaza at the suburban seaside resort community, WAVY-TV reported. The vote clears the way for receipt of \$155 million from the state pending a citywide referendum in November. Virginia Beach is to buy three LRVs to operate the extension at an estimated manufacturing cost of \$19 million.



Waupaca Country News reported that a former Chicago streetcar discovered preserved in Wisconsin as part of a residential structure will become the first acquisition of a new museum in Michigan. The former Chicago Surface Lines car will be rehabilitated for Lost Railway Museum. The trolley is identical to the one in the Illinois Railway Museum collection shown in the final photograph.



The Herald newspaper reported on April 16 that HDR Consulting has been told by Rock Hill, South Carolina, to stop work on a proposed 1.5-mile streetcar line to link Wintrop University, a proposed Knowledge Park business plaza and downtown. The city of some 66,000 now believes a sports arena will be a sufficient economic development draw and the streetcar idea now is in limbo or dead. Rock Hill is 25 miles south of Charlotte, North Carolina, just across the state line. Charlotte already has a streetcar due to be expanded. The Little Rock, Arkansas, heritage streetcar network, shown in the next photograph, was considered a model for Rock Hill.



Grand opening celebrations were slated for April 22 for the public service debut of the Denver Regional Transportation District electric multiple-unit line from downtown Union Station to Denver International Airport, the "examiner dot com" site reported. The line will use Hyundai Rotem coaches similar to those the consortium built for the Philadelphia SEPTA Regional Rail system. Travel time from end to end is projected at 37 minutes.



An 11.8-mile starter light rail line is planned in southern Ontario between the cities of Waterloo and Kitchener and 14 Bombardier Transportation double-end Flexity LRVs as shown in the next photograph were ordered for the service. But The Record newspaper reported April 13 that delivery of the manufacturing order will be delayed. The first unit will be delayed by two months to October 2016 and the final LRV will be delayed by four months to May 2017. Bombardier already is behind behind schedule in delivering 204 single-end Flexity LRVs to Toronto Transit Commission for its streetcar lines in the urban core.



PROTOTYPE

The Sun Link Streetcar - Doing It Right The First Time!



For the last year or so, the Times has been talking to you about the new streetcar systems being developed and operating the United States. We have mentioned Cincinnati, Dallas, Kansas City, Oklahoma City, Portland And Seattle to name a few. But the closest one to our home base Los Angeles location was in Tucson, Arizona. Recently Eric Sitiko, Operations Manager for Sun Link-RDMT, the operator of the line, invited Trolleyville to visit his facility and we did so on April 22-23, 2016. Eric works for RDMT (Ratp-Dev, McDonald Transit, LLC), which operates the Sun Link Streetcar, under contract from the City of Tucson. This is a subsidiary of the same company that operates the famous Paris Metro (RATP) so no wonder they seem to know what they are doing. They are housed in a very nice, economical but completely functional building at 290 East 8th Street in Tucson, AZ, just one block west of the 4th Avenue and 9th Street Sun Link Streetcar Stop.

RDMT

RATP GROUP

Ratp Dev McDonald Transit, LLC

The four-mile streetcar line has 23 stops using 8 partially low floor modern air-conditioned streetcars made in Oregon by United Streetcar, a Division of Oregon Iron Works (now Vigor Industrial LLC). Their emblem is proudly displayed on the front dasher:



The Route connects five portions of the city, Mercado, Downtown, 4th Avenue Business District, Main Gate Square, The University of Arizona and the Arizona Health Science Center. See the map below:



The photo below shows a typical weekend evening downtown with the streetcar:



The next photo shows one of the cars on the section of the line running through the University campus:



The eight cars, numbered 101 through 108, are housed and maintained at the facility shown below that has a two-track yard and a three track maintenance facility, which included overhead cranes and a pit.



All eight of the cars are shown in the two-track yard with the maintenance facility shown in the background.



The management of the operation is also first rate. When they installed the fare collection system, they tested it with a group of local potential riders. The group told them what they thought and they adopted almost all of the suggestions, resulting in one of the easiest, friendly fare collection systems we have encountered. From personal experience, we can tell you that it is certainly much friendlier than the one currently used in Los Angeles Light Rail Lines.

	<p style="text-align: center;">Front Side</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><small>Sun Tran, Sun Shuttle and Sun Link are under no obligation to replace lost, stolen or damaged tickets. Ticket not accepted if improperly used or damaged. Terms & Conditions: www.suntran.com or (520) 792-9222 (TDD 628-1565). Ticket valid for 24 hours from time of first use and rechargeable up to 90 days.</small></p> <p><small>Sun Tran, Sun Shuttle y Sun Link no estan bajo ninguna obligaci3n de reemplazar boletos perdidos, robados o daados. Boleto no ser3 aceptado si esta daado o usado incorrectamente. Para terminos y condiciones: www.suntran.com o (520) 792-9222 (TDD 628-1565). Boleto valido por 24 horas desde el primer uso y recargable hasta 90 dias.</small></p> <p>110 05/14 05 0012 1419</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Back Side</p>
<p>Above is an example of the fare vending machine currently in use. This machine is smaller than most used on a typical light rail system, but still accepts cash, coin and credit card payments for day pass tickets.</p>	<p>Above is an example of a Sun Link fare card, this being a one-day ticket. Sandwiched between the front and back is a computer chip. Just pay your fare at the ticket machine at left and you get this card. Just touch this card to a reader located inside the car and your fare is paid.</p>

From the beginning, this line was planned and designed to be integrated into the community. This may be the one location where a museum trolley operation preceded the current modern streetcar line instead of vice-versa.

The Old Pueblo Trolley (OPT) started operation of antique cars along 4th Avenue to Downtown in April 1993 and ran until Halloween 2011. Operations began with a restored Birney Streetcar. The car was leased in 1985 on a ten year lease from a trolley museum. They had a Birney Streetcar, leased for ten years from a trolley museum. The car was fully restored by the volunteers, an effort that took eight years. The car ran in Tucson for two years before being returned to the museum. For the next 16 years, car 869 from Kyoto, Japan operated in the streets of Tucson. In 2002, Brussels car 1511 entered service. They currently have car 869 and car 1511 in their yard on 8th Street. Toronto PCC car 4608 was operated once in Tucson in March of 2003 and is still in the museum collection. Due to its single-ended nature, it did not fit into the operation and was stored pending the building of a loop at the

University end of the line that was never built. The museum has seven more cars (or bodies) in various states of preservation. The remaining collection is comprised of a large historic bus collection and even railroad equipment.

The one-mile line started operation from Downtown Tucson (west terminal) to University & Tyndall Avenue (east terminal), when service was suspended pending construction of the Sun Link Streetcar. The OPT is still in their old location preparing an antique 1900 era car for use on the line as shown below. This old car, shown below has been equipped with a pantograph for use on the line if that can be arranged in the future. OPT recently purchased a large property south of Downtown with plan to consolidate their bus division and restoration efforts. Currently the group is moving vehicles to the new site and expects to be fully moved in and open later this year. The new site contains a large building with space for restoration, storage, museum exhibit space and meeting rooms.



Meanwhile, here is a closer look at one of the fine modern streetcars. They are smooth, comfortable and easily accessible to everyone, including cyclists and wheelchairs.



Service is daily, 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday; 7:00 AM to 2:00 AM on Thursday and Friday; 8:00 AM to 2:00 AM on Saturday and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Sundays. Headways range from 10 minutes at peak mid-day (weekdays from 9AM to 6PM) to 30 minutes in the late night. The average non-peak service is 15-20 minutes on weekdays and weekends. Events draw a lot of extra service demand and extra cars can be inserted into service to meet service demand.

If you did not have any other reason to visit Tucson, and you like streetcars, you have now!

