



February 2017

ds of readers each month!! - Two major model train shows are returning to Southern California this month... F

IN THIS ISSUE:

CURRENT EVENTS

[Rail Graphics to Exit the Decal Making Field Later this Year!](#)

[Urban Commuter / Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!](#) *by Edward Havens*

[More Urban Rail Happenings!](#)

[Los Angeles Metro Announces Federal Funding for the Purple Line to Century City by 2028!](#) *by A. J. Staley*

CURRENT EVENTS.....

Rail Graphics to Exit the Decal Making Field Later This Year!

Custom Traxx reported to the Times early this month that they had received the following notice:

Dear Friends:

*This email is to inform you that Rail Graphics will **cease operation on December 31, 2017.***

We will not accept orders AFTER December 1, 2017.

We are notifying you now to give you enough time to find an alternative source for your decals.

We wish to thank you for your friendship and support these past 38 years.

We look forward to retirement.

Thanks, Ron Roberts Rail Graphics 847-742-5404

As many of you know, Rail Graphics has been almost the exclusive supplier of decals for Custom Traxx since 1996. Custom Traxx told us that they accidentally got into the decal business when Joel Lovitch of MTS Imports, Inc asked Custom Traxx to make some decals for his HO scale brass air-electric PCC car. Joel initially wanted only the small three inch numbers that were located in the fluted belt rail of the original silver cars. This evolved into a complete set for the Philadelphia PCC cars, set CN-2001 which has been available ever since.



George Huckaby of Custom Traxx first began business relations with Ron Roberts of Rail Graphics on March 20, 1996. The San Francisco Municipal Railway had just opened their F-line using fourteen ex-Philadelphia PCC cars of which 12 were already modeled in HO scale metal by the Bowser Manufacturing Company. During one of many trips to San Francisco at that time, the owner of the now closed hobby shop, Franciscan Hobbies, told Custom Traxx that he could sell as many models of those cars if they could be made available. George Huckaby then started to make arrangements with Bowser for the PCC cars and with Rail Graphics to provide decals. These would be simple decals with the numbers, destination signs, some striping and marking such as handicapped symbols. Over 100 of those models would be sold, most of them through Franciscan Hobbies. This involved adding the SEPTA operators window, a front trolley pole and trolley boards, front trolley catcher and a few other small details, finishing off with Rail Graphics excellent decals.

These cars were hampered by the use of the older Bowser 66 drive which had its issues. The Bowser 99 drive was in work but at least four years away. Bowser would eventually make Ready to Run HO scale models of all fourteen of the cars beginning in 2009. Ron is one of the few exceptions to our rule about hobbyists in business. He managed to enjoy both and keep them separate. This was made abundantly clear to Custom Traxx during their very first transaction.

Ron states that he fell in love with railroading, both real and model, as a toddler. He received an American Flyer set from Santa at age 5. He built his first HO layout before he was a freshman in High School. It was at that time he discovered painting and lettering of equipment. In 1979, he co-authored an article for Railroad Model Craftsman on how to design and print your own decals.

Thus, Rail Graphics was born. In the beginning all artwork was created with dry transfer Letraset and pen and ink. There were no personal computers. By 1987 Microsoft windows had appeared and he began using digital systems with the help of a great program called CorelDRAW. This changed the way he produced decals. No more darkroom or preparing art the old fashioned way.

As he prepares to exit the field, Rail Graphics is totally digital. After 38 years of producing decals he has decided that is time to retire. It's been a great run and he has become friends with many, many people in this great hobby, including Custom Traxx. And he states that it is all American Flyer's fault.

Good Luck Ron.....We will all miss you!

Urban Commuter / Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!

by Edward Havens

The Los Angeles Times reported on January 4th that the Federal Government has awarded Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority [LACMTA] \$1.6 million in grant and loan funds to extend the Wilshire Avenue heavy rail rapid transit subway in Phase II. That will add new stops at Beverly Hills and Century City. The ultimate destination of the project is the Veterans Administration Medical Center at Westwood. The Purple Line rapid transit route would provide a 25-minute ride between downtown L.A. and Westwood.



Seattle Department of Transportation has put on hold the proposed northward extension of the First Hill modern streetcar line, the "clean technica dot com" site reported on January 7th. Businesses along the route are raising questions about the project so the city will revisit the plan with stakeholders sometime this year. The agency's transit mobility director Andrew Hansen says the original plan will "gut access" to retail businesses.



Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority [MARTA] is seeking state legislative approval for a sales tax election in suburban DeKalb and Fulton counties for light rail and heavy rail rapid transit expansion projects that could cost \$5.5 billion. Voters within the city of Atlanta okayed \$2.5 billion in sales taxes last November for transit projects. If the Legislature okayes the new election, it could mean light rail in the Clifton Corridor which includes the national headquarters of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported on January 6th.



The proposed 17.7-mile Chapel Hill to Durham light rail line in North Carolina's "Triangle" metro area would cost \$2.47 billion but it's short \$175 million because of a cap that the state Legislature imposed on such projects. WCHL Radio reported Jan. 5 that the "GoTriangle" agency reevaluated the funding requirement and now believes that Durham and Orange counties now would need to provide the extra local funding if a "safety net" is needed for construction. The line might wind up looking like Charlotte, N.C., LRT.

A winter storm delayed the planned ceremonial groundbreaking for the Charlotte Gold Line streetcar expansion by one week until Jan. 14, The Charlotte Observer reported. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx, a former Charlotte mayor, was to attend the rescheduled event. He was due to be replaced as the nation's transportation chief by Elaine Cio, a former deputy secretary of transportation who is the wife of U.S. Senate Republican majority leader Mitch McConnell. The starter 1.5-mile Uptown streetcar line in North Carolina's largest city will be extended on both its east and west ends to a total length of four miles. The Gomaco-built replica double truck Birneys, shown below left, that launched Gold Line service will be replaced by Siemens S70 streetcars, the same type used at Atlanta and Salt Lake City, shown below right.



Philadelphia television station WPVI reported on January 5th that the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is investigating a slow speed, rear end collision on the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority [SEPTA] subway-surface Route 10 trolley line in West Philadelphia that hurt 46 people, all with minor injuries. The crash occurred about 1:30 PM on January 4th at 38th Street and Lancaster Avenue in the city's Powelton Section.



San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency held a media debut event on January 13th for the first delivery of an order with Siemens for new LRVs to replace the troublesome Breda cars now used on MUNI Metro subway-surface light rail lines, KTVU-TV reported. A ceremony was held at MUNI Metro East Maintenance Facility, showing car 2001. The first Siemens LRVs built at the company plant at Sacramento will debut in revenue service later this year.



Interior of San Francisco Muni 2001!

The new LRVs will have wider aisles and longitudinal seating as shown above. The manufacturing contract for the new fleet is worth \$1.2 billion.



Exterior of San Francisco Muni 2001!

Also in San Francisco, the mid-life rebuilding of the 13 ex-Philadelphia PCCs at Brookville continues with 1056 (Kansas City) and 1051 (San Francisco 1960s) already completed and back in San Francisco and 1055 (Philadelphia 1955), 1059 (Boston Elevated Railway*), 1060 (Philadelphia Rapid Transit 1938), 1062 (Louisville*) and 1063 (Baltimore*) are at Brookville in various stages of their rebuild process. Remember that those marked * are now scheduled to return looking much differently than when they left the city. See the January 2017 Trolleyville Times for more details.

Seattle-based Sound Transit held a groundbreaking ceremony on the same day for its next light rail extension: a northward line from the University of Washington campus to Northgate mall, the "sky valley chronicle" website reported. After the Northgate route is completed, it will be extended farther north to the suburban city of Lynnwood. Northgate Link Extension will have three stations and is expected to open to rail service in 2021. The university to Northgate route includes 3.5 miles of twin tunnels and an 0.8-mile final segment to an elevated terminal station. From Northgate, LRV riders will have a 47-minute trip southward through downtown Seattle to SeaTac International Airport.

Television station KLAS-TV reported January 12th that Las Vegas Regional Transportation Commission favors building a light rail line on Maryland Parkway, a north-south street parallel to the casino-lined "Strip" (Las Vegas Boulevard), to connect McCarran International Airport and downtown. The parkway LRT could cost \$750 million but officials expect federal funding will cover half. Maryland Parkway now is used by 30,000 motor vehicles daily and 10,000 bus riders and those numbers only will grow without rail relief, officials say.

New Orleans will be celebrating its tri-centennial and The Times-Picayune newspaper reported January 11th that the 6.5-mile St. Charles streetcar line, 182 years old this year, is part of the Big Easy's heritage. The car line uses original Perley Thomas rolling stock and is exempt from Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. The streetcars with distinctive olive green livery were built in 1923 and 1924. The St. Charles line was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.

Late delivery by Bombardier Transportation of Flexity articulated streetcars for the Toronto Transit Commission "legacy" broad gauge network in the urban core has forced the transit agency to cut service on some bus routes. That's because the Flexity rolling stock was to replace aging CLRV and ALRV streetcars. With some of those cars withdrawn from service, buses are needed to plug the gap, the "blog TO" site reported on January 6th. In addition, the 501-Queen streetcar line is closed for the next year for infrastructure upgrades to Humber Loop and Long Branch and buses are substituting west of Roncesvalles.

The "alpha news" site reported on January 20th that the Federal Transit Administration has approved engineering work for the Bottineau Corridor light rail line that will connect downtown Minneapolis with suburban Brooklyn Park to the north. It will be operated as a through routed part of the existing Blue Line which connects Mall of America with downtown. Bottineau is a 13-mile, \$1.5 billion project. A month earlier, the federal agency authorized the 14.5-mile, \$1.9 billion Southwest Corridor LRT line from downtown Minneapolis to suburban Eden Prairie. It will be through routed with the current Green Line from St. Paul to Minneapolis.

Oklahoma City, the capital of the Midwestern state, is beginning rail installation for its modern streetcar line at Bricktown, the "News OK" site reported on January 19th. The 2.3-mile Bricktown Loop will be joined by a 4.6-mile main line through the central business district with a formal groundbreaking set for February 7th. Utility relocation work already has started at Bricktown. The project is funded under the "MAPS 3," voter approved tax package for urban revitalization and is totally funded with local money. The next photo shows that rail delivered for the project during January 2017 is traditional girder rail, not the "T" rail that has been required under "Made in USA" rules for Federal Transit Administration-funded projects.



Kiewit Infrastructure, the firm that will build the Milwaukee modern streetcar line in Wisconsin's largest city, has started utility relocation in preparation for track laying, the "urban milwaukee" site reported on January 21st. Milwaukee expects delivery of its first Brookville Equipment dual-mode (battery and pantograph) "Liberty" model streetcar in December 2017. Four will be purchased for the starter line and one extra for the Lakefront branch which will be wire free to serve the Couture high-rise real estate development. Lakefront would be followed by a 4th Street branch to serve a proposed sports arena and entertainment complex for the Milwaukee Bucks NBA professional basketball team.



Valley Metro's governing board at Phoenix gave its approval on January 19th to hiring Stacy & Witbeck, the firm that built the Kansas City modern streetcar line, as the construction manager for the planned street railway at Tempe, the home of Arizona State University, the "mesa independent" site reported. The three-mile, \$177 million car line could open in 2020. Earlier, the "east valley tribune" site said the Tempe car line could be extended to serve the proposed Arizona Coyotes NHL professional hockey arena. A costly extension would be needed to serve the planned sports venue.

More Urban Rail Happenings!

BROOKLYN, NY: An MTA Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) train with 650 on board derailed at the Atlantic Terminal in Brooklyn early January 4th and injured more than 100 people. Reminiscent of the recent Hoboken disaster, the train failed to stop at the end-of-track-bumper. Fortunately there were no fatalities. The NYC Fire Department tweeted that there were 103 non-life-threatening injuries reported at the scene. Commuters experienced delays going into and out of the terminal due to the incident. The MTA is moving forward on getting sleep apnea testing for engineers responsible for driving crowded commuter trains. The engineer told investigators that he has no memory of crashing his train into the bumper and wall at the Atlantic Terminal. That engineer was later found to have sleep apnea. This is similar to the statement issued by the engineer in the deadly accident in Hoboken just four months ago. Meanwhile, Federal investigators were examining the engineer's sleep pattern, whether he had texted and what he may have consumed during the 72 hours prior to the incident, in addition to the normal standard screening for drugs and alcohol.



The Long Island Railroad is reputed to be the busiest commuter railroad in North America and as such Trolleyville is keenly interested in the results of the official investigation results and will pass them on when we get them.

Subsequent to the Long Island Railroad incident, Progressive Railroading reported that three U.S. Senators called on the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) to conduct a comprehensive study of all passenger railroads'

implementation of sleep apnea testing and inward facing cameras. Senators Bob Menendez and Cory Booker (both D-N.J.) and Senator Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) expressed concern that passenger railroads are not implementing the sleep apnea testing and inward camera installations fast enough. Menendez chairs the Senate's mass transit subcommittee. The senators' concerns are in reaction to the September 2016 New Jersey Transit accident that killed one and injured more than 100 people at the terminal in Hoboken, N.J. Operator fatigue and sleep apnea have been cited in the investigation as possible causes of the accident. And then there was the MTA Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) train engineer train in the Brooklyn, N.Y. accident, claiming he had no recollection of the crash. The NTSB has long recommended sleep apnea testing, comprehensive fatigue risk management programs and inward facing cameras. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the key regulatory agency on the practices, also has issued safety advisories on both of those issues, the senators noted in a press release. "What's even more concerning than the slow progress railroads are making, is an apparent growing trend of railroads pledging to implement sleep apnea testing and inward cameras only after a derailment has occurred on their system," the senators wrote in a January 8, 2017 letter to NTSB Chairman Christopher Hart. "Passenger railroads should be able to heed the lessons of other passenger railroads, and each of them should be taking steps to implement these two important provisions as quickly as possible." Also signing the letter were U.S. Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) and Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.). Menendez, Booker and Schumer wrote to FRA Administrator Sarah Feinberg in November 2016, urging her agency to adopt stricter operator fatigue guidelines and hold railroads accountable for failure to prevent future accidents. In October 2016, Menendez and Booker called on the U.S. Department of Transportation to investigate safety concerns at NJ Transit.

BOSTON, MA: The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) will let its commuter-rail operations contract with Keolis Commuter Services expire, local media reported late last week. The eight-year contract will end in June 2022, at which point the MBTA will propose a re-procurement process for another operator, according to NBC Boston. According to published comments, the move not to extend the current contract isn't a "reflection of Keolis' performance," Massachusetts Transportation Secretary Stephanie Pollack told NBC Boston, adding that she expects Keolis to compete again in the re-procurement process. Keolis won the \$2.7 billion contract in 2014.



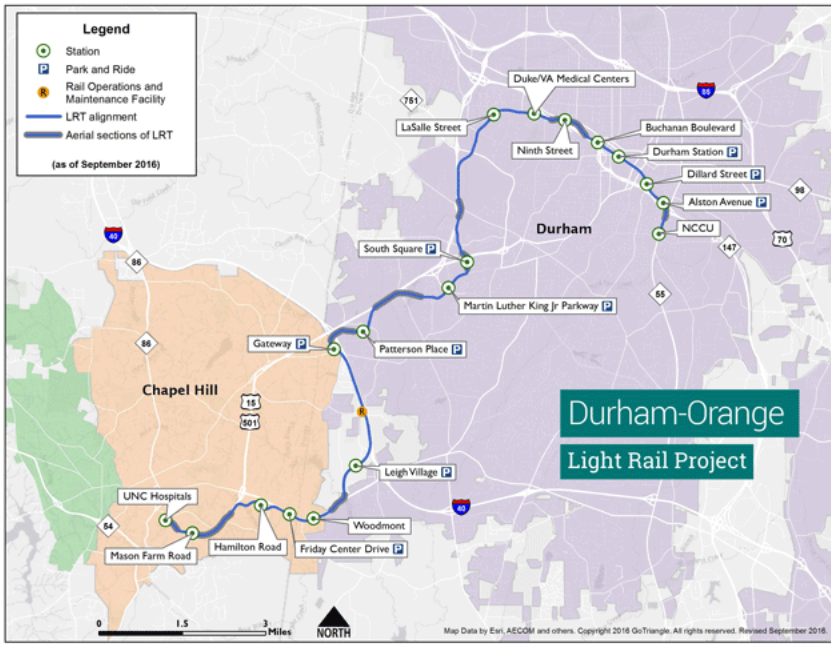
Boston Commuter Train.

DURHAM, NC: According to Progressive Railroading, GoTriangle announced during the first week in January that the Durham-Orange light-rail project in North Carolina won't require additional local sources of funding. During a financial update on January 4th, the agency's board learned that existing transit revenue is expected to cover the costs of the 17.7-mile, 18-station project and GoTriangle officials reported in a press release.



Artists rendering of the Alston Avenue station!

"Working with our financial adviser and financial modeler, we have been able to refine the financing plan to be able to fund the project with the existing, identified funds from the one-half cent sales tax," according to Danny Rogers, project director for the Durham-Orange line. "With their support we identified ways to structure project debt to better match revenues and expenditures." GoTriangle recently began working financial adviser The PFM Group to examine the project's budget. The agency has submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) an updated financial plan as part of its request to enter the engineering phase for the project. GoTriangle expects to learn more about the status of the request in late February. The FTA is expected to cover half of the project's costs, contingent on the remaining half coming from "existing dedicated transit funding and state funds," GoTriangle officials said. The FTA in February 2016 signed a combined final environmental impact statement and record of decision for the Durham-Orange light-rail project. The proposed route would run 17 miles from southwest Chapel Hill to eastern Durham and serve educational, medical and other key activity centers, according to GoTriangle and shown below:



HOUSTON, TX: The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) in Texas on Monday, January 9th, held a ceremony to mark the completion of the Harrisburg Overpass bridge, which will carry both Green Line light-rail trains and motorists over Union Pacific Railroad track. The bridge was the final component of completing the Green Line route. Elected officials, business and community leaders joined METRO leaders for a ribbon-cutting and inaugural ride over the bridge on Monday, agency officials said in a press release. METRO offered free rides through January 22.



Artists Rendering of the Harrisburg Overpass (Photo by MTA of Harris County)

METRO's Green Line now offers nine stops and links downtown Houston to the Magnolia Park Transit Center in the city's East End district. Before the bridge was completed, Green Line trains stopped short of the transit center, Houston Public Media reported. METRO is offering free rides on the Green Line through Jan. 22. "It's quite an accomplishment to be able to connect the Magnolia Transit Center to the rest of our system. It was an arduous project to get done. In the end, we kept at it and chipped away. We had a good project team," said Bruce Krantz, METRO's senior director of planning, engineering and construction, in a METRO blog post.

SEATTLE, WA: Progressive Railroading reported on January 10th that the average weekday rider ship on Sound Transit's "Link" light-rail system in November 2016 nearly doubled compared with rider ship in the same month in 2015. The system logged 66,237 average weekday boardings for the month versus 34,003 in the November 2015, marking a 94.8 percent jump. Total boardings surged 91 percent to 1,701,600. The increases came after Sound Transit opened new Link stations in both March and September of 2016.



Sound Transit "Link" Train built by Kinki Sharyo!

"Link's impressive rider ship gains are largely a result of the service extensions to the University of Washington and Angle Lake," agency officials said in a monthly rider ship report. Meanwhile, average weekday rider ship for the Sounder commuter-rail system slipped 0.8 percent in November 2016. However, overall Sounder rider ship inched up 1.4 percent year over year to 329,605 boardings.



Cincinnati CAF-built streetcar on Opening Day, September 9, 2016! (SORTA photo)

CINCINNATI, OH: Meanwhile, The Cincinnati Bell Connector streetcar has provided more than 330,000 rides during its first four months of service, Progressive Railroading reported on January 12th. The Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA) officials announced these figures on that day. As of December 31, 2016, the system logged 330,737 trips since it opened September 9th. Rider ship last month totaled 52,209 trips, according to unaudited results. The recently renamed Cincinnati Bell Connector operates on a 3.6-mile loop through the city's downtown area. The system is owned and funded by the city of Cincinnati, managed by SORTA and operated by Transdev.



SANTA ANA - GARDEN GROVE, CA: The Times has learned that the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) revealed that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a letter signaling its support for the Orange County Streetcar project to move into the engineering phase. This phase is the final stage before OCTA seeks a full funding grant from the FTA.



The Orange County Streetcar is proposed to operate on a 4.1 mile route between Santa Ana and Garden Grove, CA using mainly Santa Ana Boulevard and a former Pacific Electric right-of-way. It is estimated that it would carry about 7,500 passengers daily. Construction is planned to begin in 2018 with operations planned by 2020.



PHOENIX, AZ: The FTA has also granted environmental approval for Valley Metro's planned South Central light-rail extension, according to Progressive Railroading. See map below:



The FTA's "finding of no significant impact" allows Valley Metro and the City of Phoenix to proceed with final design work on the extension, which is slated for completion by 2023, Valley Metro officials said in a press release. The environmental review examines the project's impact on noise and vibration, air quality and historical and archaeological resources. Receipt of the FTA's finding is required before final design work can begin on projects the agency oversees. "Extending light rail to South Central Phoenix is vital to our long-term economic success," said Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton.



Artists Rendering of South Central light-rail extension (Valley Metro Photo)

"Phoenix residents told us they wanted to invest in transportation. With this approval, and with the FTA's consistent support for our long-term transit plans, we have moved closer to becoming a more connected city and region." The 5-mile South Central Extension will connect with the existing light-rail system in downtown Phoenix and run south to Baseline Road. The project originally was scheduled to be finished in 2034, but its completion was moved up to 2023 after Phoenix voters in August 2015 approved the "Transportation 2050" plan, which calls for a 0.7 percent sales tax to fund various transportation projects in the region.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA:

Daniel Niepow, Associate Editor, Progressive Railroading

San Francisco's Muni hack: A case study in prepping for ransomware attacks!!

San Francisco Muni Metro subway passengers got an unexpected treat one weekend in late November 2016: free rides.

But it wasn't exactly an act of charity on the part of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), which oversees the city's Muni light-rail system. Instead, the agency on November 25 took its Muni subway ticketing machines and faregates offline after a hacker attacked its office computers.

The attacker demanded 100 bitcoins — which at the time was estimated at \$73,000 — to relinquish his hold on the system. Although the hack didn't compromise the SFMTA's fare system, the agency decided to shut it down as a precautionary measure to protect passengers.

This kind of hack, which is known as a "ransomware" attack, is becoming increasingly common in the cybersphere, information security execs say. In a ransomware attack, a hacker infiltrates a system, locks users out and demands a sum of money — usually in the form of "cryptocurrency" like bitcoins — to restore the victim's access.

While ransomware attacks typically are "industry agnostic" — attackers target any companies or organizations that are likely to pay — freight and passenger railroads are lucrative potential targets, says Limor Kesseem, executive security adviser at IBM Security.

"There's more at stake for everyone when such organizations are paralyzed," Kesseem says. "With hampered or paralyzed operations, attackers are in a better position to pressure organizations to negotiate with them quickly and for more money, unless the victim has proper recovery plans in place."

In the case of the SFMTA attack, the agency restored its systems by using backed-up data. By Nov. 28, the SFMTA was able to get most of the affected computers back up and running.

"Thanks to the fact that we systematically back up our systems, the impact was minimal," said SFMTA spokesman Paul Rose in an email. "We don't want to provide a roadmap for any future attacks by detailing specific next steps, but we are reaching out to staff to further remind them of the impacts of clicking on links and opening emails from unfamiliar sources."

SFMTA execs never considered paying the ransom, agency officials said in an update after the attack.

Still, the agency may have lost up to \$50,000 in unpaid fares during the attack, according to Rose.

Companies can mount a better defense against ransomware attacks by frequently backing up their data on a cloud system or at a separate data center, says Scott Montgomery, vice president and chief technical strategist at Intel Security.

"Most organizations — critical infrastructure or not — fail to back up frequently enough to avoid some form of data loss," he adds.

Hackers also will look for holes in out-of-date database systems. So, organizations should ensure their software is updated with the latest patches, Montgomery advises.

The Muni hack came amid an uptick in ransomware attacks in 2016. Last year, there was a 6000 percent year-over-year surge in ransomware spam, IBM's X-Force research team found.

"There is an ease of use in ransomware that's rare in other types of malware," says IBM's Kesseem. "Once the victim is infected, the criminal does nothing but wait for the coins to come."

What's more, because hackers demand cryptocurrency like bitcoins, they can ensure they get their money anonymously and lower their risk of getting caught.

And many companies that are victim to ransomware attacks are paying up, according to IBM. In an IBM survey of 600 U.S. business executives, 46 percent said they had some experience with ransomware attacks; of that total, 70 percent paid a ransom to their attackers.

"With the increase in paying victims, more attackers moved into the ransomware arena, including organized cybercrime gangs using highly sophisticated malware codes to target users and businesses," Kessem adds.

Plus, many victim organizations may decide to simply pay the ransom and "keep mum" about it, says Intel's Montgomery. "I wouldn't be shocked if other organizations are being successfully attacked but not necessarily letting folks know," Montgomery says. "Because a lot of these organizations pay the ransom and change their systems after the fact, there's no breach reporting that they perceive they have to do."

Adequate preparation can go a long way toward helping railroads and transit agencies avoid these kinds of attacks — and rapidly recover if they do happen, says IBM's Kessem.

"I think the No. 1 factor that could increase preparedness for any organization, even more than employee education, is having an incident response plan in place — one that is regularly tested and gives teams some muscle memory to help them react quickly and effectively," she says.

Los Angeles Metro announces Federal Funding for the Purple Line to Century City by 2026!!

The New Year started off on a very happy note for Los Angeles Metro at the ceremonial signing on January 4, 2017, with the federal funding for the second phase of the Purple Line project. U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx (shown below right) was on hand as well as many other dignitaries including Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, and Metro CEO Phil Washington (shown below left).

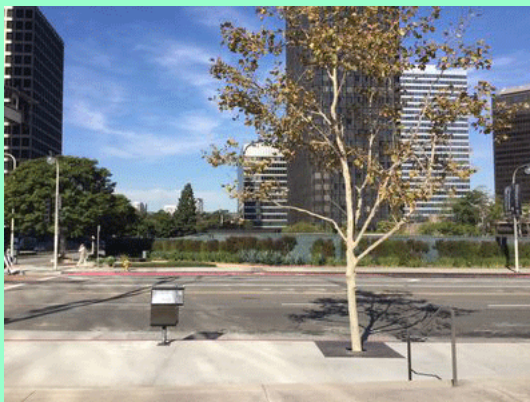


Phillip Washington, Metro CEO



U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx

The event was held at the site above what will be the future Century City Station.



The nearly \$1.6 billion grant is for the 2.6 mile second phase of the Purple Line Extension subway will run underground below Wilshire Boulevard between the Wilshire/La Cienega Station and Century City. The second phase will include two stations one at Wilshire and Rodeo in downtown Beverly Hills and second at Century City on the corner of Avenue of the Stars and Constellation Boulevard. The total cost of the phase two will be about \$2.4 billion to build.



The \$1.6 billion is made up from three federal sources. The Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program grant of \$1.187 billion, a \$307 million loan from U.S. DOT's TIFIA program that provides low-interest loans to help build infrastructure projects. The subway project is also receiving \$169 million through the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program. Funding for the second phase includes \$747 million from the Measure R half-cent tax approved by L. A. County voters in 2008. Bottom line: without the Measure R funds and voters passing Measure M in 2016, Metro would almost certainly not have received the federal funding.

Getting to this point has not been easy for L. A. Metro. Beverly Hills City officials and the School Board have spent \$10 million unsuccessfully trying to alter the course of the subway. The city wanted it to be built along Santa Monica Boulevard and did not want it to travel under Beverly Hills High School. L. A. Metro's studies showed that stops on Santa Monica Boulevard would put it in the cross hairs of too many earthquake fault lines, and it would also make it inconvenient for commuters to reach the towers of Century City.

After a thorough and extensive competitive bidding process, Metro's staff will recommend to the Board of Directors that Tutor Perini/O&G to be the contractor for the Purple Line Project. The recommendation is expected to keep the Purple line extension on schedule and on budget for Los Angeles County residents.

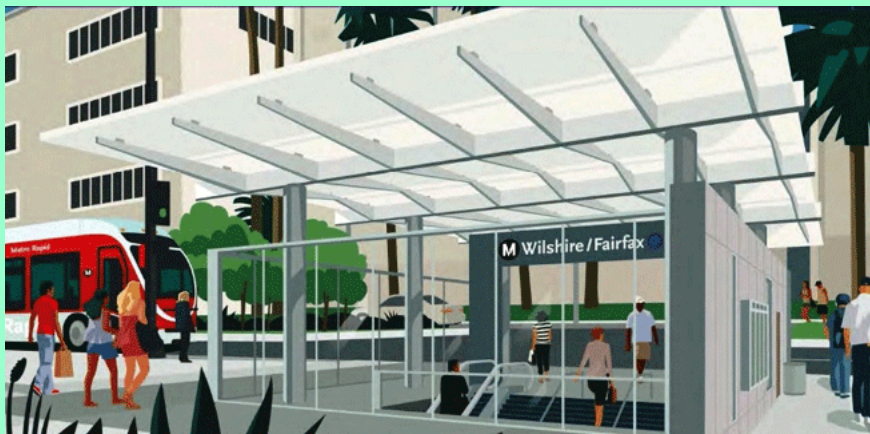
Tutor was involved in construction of the original Metro Red Line and experienced construction challenges on the second section, which led to schedule delays and cost overruns in the mid-1990's. However, this contractor did complete the third and final section of subway to North Hollywood six months ahead of schedule and within the project's budget.

"We can and must redefine our relationships with the contracting community to build Los Angeles County's transportation future." Said Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington. "With their modern history of delivering successful tunneling projects throughout the world, Metro is confident that this contractor will play a critical role in helping us build the world class public transportation system we have promised to voters."

Tutor Perini/O&G has delivered subway tunnel projects for the Central Subway project in San Francisco, the University Link in Seattle, the East Side Access project in New York and successfully helped construct the World Trade Center – Greenwich Street Corridor project for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Metro intends to implement a strong oversight plan with experienced staff to ensure the project is completed as intended and remains on time and on budget. That includes 'executive partnering' between Metro and the Contractor up to the CEO level to resolve project claims and changes. The agency will also pursue a collaborative approach to third-party issues.

Completion of the second Purple Line subway section is anticipated no later than 2026 per a funding agreement with the Federal Transit Administration and Metro is aiming to possibly finish the project at an earlier date. A third and final section will extend the subway to the Westwood/VA Hospital. Construction on this last section is planned to begin as early as 2019.



Artists Conception of Above Ground Portion of Wilshire /Fairfax Station.

Once completed Los Angeles residents will be able to take the subway from Little Tokyo in Los Angeles to Westwood/VA Hospital.