The Trolleyville Times

March 2019

› Trolleyville! We are continuing our efforts to get production of modern urban transit vehicle models in H

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CURRENT EVENTS.....

Urban Commuter / Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!

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CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA - Progressive Railroading reported on February 2nd that the province of Alberta and city of Calgary have reached an agreement to jointly provide CA$3 billion for the Green Line light-rail project, with an equal amount to be contributed by both governments. The funding will be provided over an eight-year period to support the first stage of the Green Line, which is the most extensive light-rail transit (LRT) project in Calgary's history, province and city officials said in a press release.

Alberta Premier Rachel Notley (at the lectern) helped announce the LRT funding agreement on January 30, 2019!

The Green Line calls for adding 28.5 miles of track to the city's existing 36-mile LRT system. The line will connect communities between Keystone and Seton to downtown and other Calgary destinations. The Green Line's first segment is projected to serve more than 60,000 riders daily and support new transit-oriented developments in Calgary. After the line is completed, daily ridership is forecast to reach an estimated 240,000 trips.

"Calgary is growing, it's dynamic, and this expanded transit project will help propel it into the future," said Alberta Premier Rachel Notley. The Alberta government has already committed more than CA$345 million to LRT projects in the city, including nearly CA$148 million for early work on the Green Line and nearly CA$197 million for such previously approved projects as the 17 Avenue Southeast Transitway. "The Green Line will … provide critical connections and support our city's growth," said Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi.

CHICAGO, IL - METRA will begin operation of a new "reverse-commute" service on the Milwaukee District North Line on March 4th. The two-year pilot project is a public-private partnership between METRA and Lake County businesses and governments that asked METRA in 2018 to begin a reverse-commute service. The businesses sought the service in order to recruit and retain employees living in Chicago, and reduce pollution and roadway congestion. "We are excited to launch this test of new reverse-commute service between Chicago and Lake County," said METRA Chief Executive Officer Jim Derwinski in a press release. "We are hopeful that this initiative will build our ridership, help local businesses to recruit top talent and have a positive impact on economic activity in Lake County.

This partnership also is an innovative way to test the demand for service to Lake County and potentially improve our infrastructure." AbbVie, Horizon Pharma, Trustmark Insurance, Tenneco, Northwestern Lake Forest Hospital, Lake County government, the city of Lake Forest and the village of Deerfield are participating in the agreement. The groups will evenly split the $1.4 million cost of operating one new reverse-commute train in each rush period as part of the two-year project.

They also will work on a definitive agreement to divide the $4.75 million cost of installing universal crossovers near Lake Forest, with the partners contributing $2.75 million, METRA contributing $1 million and local governments contributing $1 million. Under the new schedule, METRA will provide morning outbound express service, create an express service from Lake County and add a new train with later afternoon arrivals. Pending an agreement with Canadian Pacific — which METRA anticipates to receive soon — the morning outbound express service will be moved to an even earlier time slot. If the pilot project shows that the reverse-commute service is self-sustaining, the partners will fund the construction of new universal crossovers near the Lake Forest Station, METRA officials said. Constructing crossovers at Lake Forest would allow METRA to turn trains around at that location, which would create an opportunity for better service in the morning and evening rush periods if demand supported it.

COLESVILLE, MD - The National Capital Trolley Museum 1313 Bonifant Road, Colesville, Maryland. USA. hosted "DC Transit Days" on January 26 and 27, 2019. This event was held to commemorate 57 Years since the end of streetcars service in Washington DC. Den Haag HTM (Haagsche Tramweg-Maatschappi)1329 represents a unique success story of the American PCC car in Europe. Nowhere else in Europe did so many "American style" PCCs operate than in Den Haag. After the Second World War, HTM had, like many European systems, an urgent need for new equipment to replace war losses and worn-out stock. In the case of the capital of the Netherlands, many cars had been "requisitioned" by the occupying German forces in 1943-44 and shipped to the Reich to replace trams lost in Allied bombing. In its postwar planning, HTM adopted a progressive approach to its rolling stock and, unlike many European cities, Den Haag's relatively spacious streets permitted consideration of the American PCC car.

Two sample PCCs, HTM 1001 and 1002, were built in St. Louis by St. Louis Car Co. and shipped as bodies and parts, together with another unit, to La Brugeoise et Nivelles in Brugge, Belgium, for assembly. La Brugeoise became the principal Transit Research Corporation-licensed builder of PCCs in Europe while ACEC in Charleroi, Belgium, manufactured the electrical equipment. Delivered to Den Haag in July 1949, HTM 1001-1002 were very much like American all-electric PCCs, except for having a rear set of doors on the back platform as these were two-man cars. Their 2.54 meter *(100 inches)* width proved a bit too wide for clearances and in 1950 were split down the middle and narrowed to 2.20 meters *(87.5 inches)*. In 1952 they were reconfigured for one-man operation. In 1974 they were completely rebuilt to resemble the then new 1300s.

The final group of PCCs for Den Haag were HTM 1301-1340 and motorized trailers HTM 2101-2130. These were the first PCCs with solid state circuitry boards and HTM 1336-1340 also had chopper controls. HTM 1301-1335 were delivered by February 1971, and in October 1972 the first car with chopper controls, HTM 1336, was delivered. In body style, these cars were generally like HTM 1201-1240 but without the body moldings. As such, they were the last PCCs manufactured in the world that still retained much of the original PCC curvilinear body design dating back to 1936. The PCC era ended on 30 June 1993 in Den Haag with the last regularly scheduled PCC operation.

DC Transit #1101 is an air-electric PCC car that was built in 1937 by St. Louis Car Company. PCC car #1101 has just departed the museum on January 26, 2019 on its way out the line.

Reported by Bill Monaghan, SEPTA

HOUSTON, TX - Progressive Railroading Reported on February 6th that the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas (METRO) has ordered 14 light-rail vehicles (LRVs) from Siemens Mobility. The latest purchase marks Houston METRO's third order for Siemens Mobility vehicles, bringing the total number of S70 low-floor LRVs ordered to 51. The latest S70s will supplement the vehicles currently serving METRO's three light-rail lines.

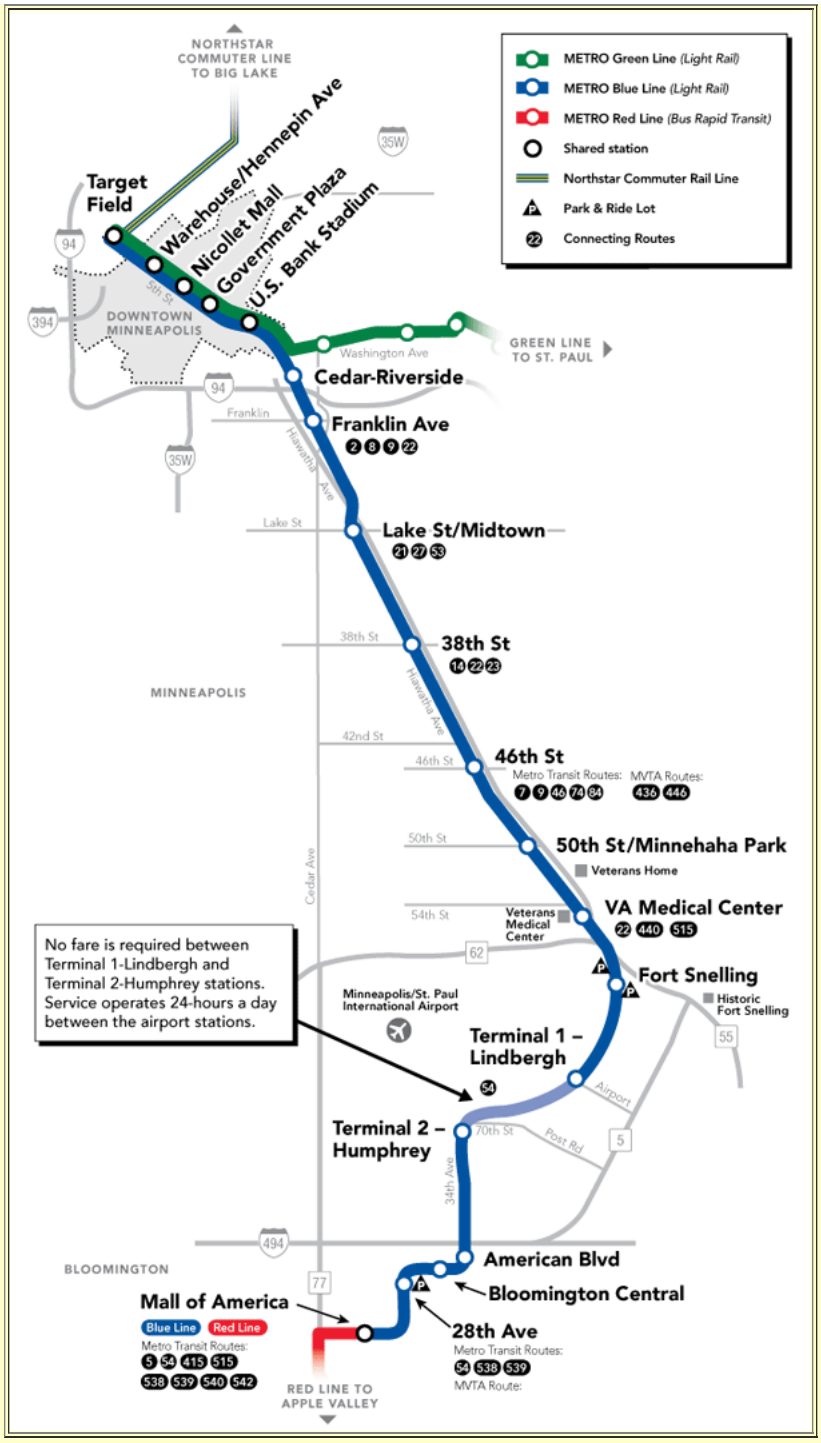
The S70s will feature a new-and-improved modern design, with a centralized low-floor configuration offering better access between all doors along the length of the vehicle, Siemens officials said in a press release. The LRVs will provide more accessibility, particularly for wheelchairs and strollers, and wider aisles will optimize passenger flow, they said. The vehicles will be Buy America-compliant and built at Siemens' Sacramento, California, plant.

Houston was the first agency to select the S70 low-floor LRV design, which was successfully inaugurated on its first 12-mile line in January 2004, Siemens officials said. Since then, more than 600 S70s have been ordered by 11 U.S. agencies. Siemens provides rail vehicles, locomotives, components and systems to more than 30 U.S. agencies, including those in Atlanta, Boston, Denver, Minneapolis, New York City, Philadelphia, San Diego, Seattle, St. Louis and Washington, D.C.

MINNEAPOLIS-SAINT PAUL, MN - Progessive Railroading reported on Feburary 12th that Metro Transit set ridership records on two light-rail lines in Minneapolis in 2018.

The **Green Line** *between Target Field and Union Depot* registered an all-time-high 13.8 million rides, up 5 percent from 2017's mark. Annual ridership now has risen each year since the line opened in 2014, Metro Transit officials said in a press release.

Meanwhile, ridership in 2018 on the **Blue Line** *between Target Field to the Mall of America* exceeded 11 million rides, setting a new annual record.



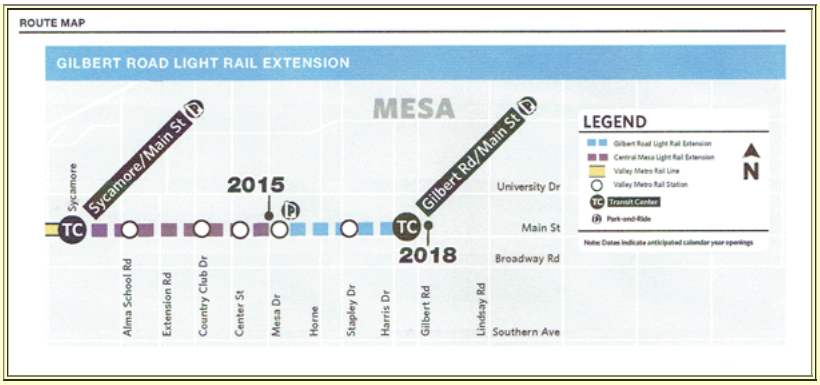
However, ridership on the Northstar commuter-rail service remained essentially flat year over year at about 787,000 rides. The Northstar Line runs between Big Lake and downtown Minneapolis, with stations in Elk River, Ramsey, Anoka, Coon Rapids and Fridley, Minnesota.

The ridership figures help show that investing in transit creates a stronger system that supports the growing region, said Nora Slawik, chair of the Metropolitan Council — which oversees Metro Transit — in a press release. "[But] with around 700,000 new people expected by 2040, we need to figure out today how we get in front of the significant increase in transit demand," she said. "Our region relies on a comprehensive transportation system that offers mobility options to all people, in order to remain economically competitive and connect people with opportunities."

Overall, transit ridership in the Twin Cities last year dipped 1.3 percent from 2017's level to 94.2 million rides, including bus, bus rapid transit and other modes. Local and express bus ridership — which account for more than 70 percent of total transit rides — declined 4.5 percent to 54.6 million.

"While ridership is down by just over 1 percent, reductions in ridership were expected given [our] fare increase combined with lower gas prices. Overall, ridership is better than anticipated," said Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra. "Still, future ridership growth requires long-term solutions to [our] budget challenges."

PHOENIX, AZ - Valley Metro began vehicle testing on the Gilbert Road light-rail extension in Mesa, Arizona, on February 14th, Valentine's Day to prepare for the 1.9-mile line's opening in three months.



On the first day of testing, a train will travel slowly along the alignment on Main Street from Mesa Drive to Gilbert Road as operational staff walk alongside it. Testing will cover vehicle clearance at stations, the overhead electrification system, traffic signal coordination and the operation of the line's switches. Trains will run sporadically as testing continues, but will operate more regularly as the May opening approaches, Valley Metro officials said in a testing announcement.

Kinki-Sharyo car 102, one of 50 built beginning in 2008, shown during an earlier testing program!

The more than $180 million Gilbert Road extension runs from Mesa Drive to Gilbert Road. The agency broke ground on the project in October 2016.

PITTSBURGH (WILMERDING), PA - WABTEC Corporation *(the name WABTEC derived from Westinghouse Air Brake Technologies Corporation)* announced on February 25. 2019 that it has completed its merger with GE Transportation, a former business unit of GE, currently headquartered in Chicago, IL with their main manufacturing plants in Erie, PA and Grove city, PA.

GE-built P40DC hauling the "Pennsylvanian"!

The merger combines WABTEC's range of freight, transit and electronics products with GE Transportation's equipment, services and digital solutions in the locomotive, mining, marine, stationary power and drilling industries, Wabtec officials said in a press release.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bring together nearly four centuries of collective experience to create a technologically advanced leader with a highly complementary set of capabilities to move and improve the world," said WABTEC President and Chief Executive Officer Raymond Betler. The combined company is expected to achieve revenue of more than $8 billion in 2019. "Our shared focus on innovation, collaboration and continuous improvement will enable us to unlock new value for our shareholders, customers, employees and the industry," said Rafael Santana, who served as GE Transportation's president and CEO and is now president and CEO of WABTEC's freight segment. Santana added: "Together

we are well positioned to take advantage of the opportunities created by industry trends toward efficiency and improved performance and, with the merger complete, we are focused on leveraging our complementary portfolios to spur growth."

On the very next morning, February 26th, less than a day after the plant became part of WABTEC, United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) announced that they've gone on strike at the former GE Transportation locomotive plant in Erie, Pennsylvania.

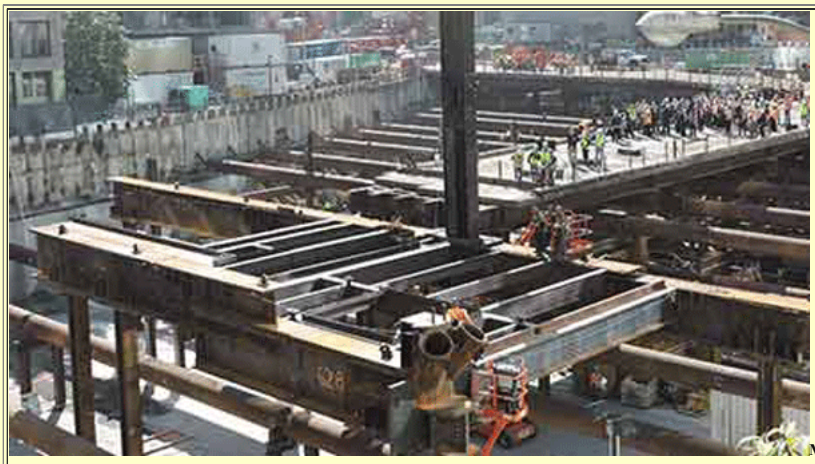
The strike involves UE Locals 506 and 618, which represent 1,700 workers at the WABTEC facility, according to a UE press release.

Yesterday, after WABTEC announced its merger with GE Transportation was completed, company and union officials returned to the negotiating table in an effort to reach an agreement. Despite working until the early hours of this morning, company and UE officials were unable to reach an "acceptable short-term agreement that preserves wages, benefits and working conditions negotiated with GE over the past eight decades," UE officials said. "We are extremely disappointed that the company could not see its way to agree to continue the terms and conditions that we have worked under for decades," said UE Local 506 President Scott Slawson. WABTEC's terms and conditions include the introduction of mandatory overtime and arbitrary schedules, wage reductions of up to 38 percent for recalled and newly hired workers and the right to use temporary workers for up to 20 percent of the work at the plant, according to the UE.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - Progressive Railroading reported that The Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA) announced in late February 2018 the Salesforce Transit Center (STC) will be closed indefinitely to address fractured steel beam issues. The transit center replaced the former downtown Transbay Terminal, which for years was the downtown terminal for the J, K, L, M, and N PCC-operated streetcar lines and the F-line when it originally opened in 1995.

The recently-completed one million-square-foot STC facility is used by Bay Area Rapid Transit, Caltrain and Amtrak passengers, and would become a stop for California's future high-speed rail line between San Francisco and Los Angeles, if it ever becomes a reality.

Steel plates are being fabricated and will be delivered to the transit center during this month for installation. Repairs are scheduled to be completed by the first week of June, but a reopening date hasn't yet been determined, TJPA officials said in a press release.
An independent peer review panel is overseeing the authority's review of thousands of shop drawings, inspection reports and design documents to determine if other inspections will be necessary before reopening the facility, they said.



Major Steelwork started on the Salesforce Transit Center in 2014!

The STC — which opened in August 2018 — temporarily closed in September 2018 after fissures were discovered in two steel beams on the ceiling of the third-level bus deck. Two shoring systems were installed, and additional inspections and continued monitoring have revealed no additional issues, TJPA officials said, Although the authority is eager to reopen the transit center, it's balancing that goal with its responsibility to undertake "an appropriately rigorous inspection and review protocol," as well as to cooperate with the independent review, said TJPA Executive Director Mark Zabaneh.

SEATTLE, WA- It has been reported also by Progressive Railroading that both Sound Transit and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are seeking public comments on route and station alternatives for the planned West Seattle and Ballard Link light-rail extensions. the West Seattle extension adds 4.7 miles of light rail service from downtown Seattle to West Seattle's Alaska Junction neighborhood and would include five new stations between the Stadium area and Alaska Junction and would be completed by 2030. The Ballard to downtown extension, planned for completion in 2035, would add 7.1 miles of light rail service from downtown Seattle to Ballard, including a new downtown Seattle rail-only tunnel and would include nine new stations between International District/Chinatown and NW Market Street in Ballard.

Sound Transit, called "The Link" , operates 62 vehicles made by KinkiSharyo, that are 70% low floor. They were delivered between 2005 and 2011 and are powered by 1500 VDC, rather than the more typical 700-750 VDC, to reduce the number of substations required. Additional vehicles from Siemens Mobility have been ordered and should begin arriving this year,

The feedback will help Sound Transit officials determine which alternatives to study in an environmental impact statement (EIS), which would be the next phase of project development. In May, the agency's board expects to identify a preferred alternative and other alternatives to study in a draft EIS.

Passengers shown boarding one of the KinkiSharyo cars!

Public comments will be accepted via mail, email or phone. In addition, Sound Transit held open houses Feb. 27-28 and will hold them on March 7th, and maintain an online open house until March 18.

To be completed in 2030 and 2035, respectively, the West Seattle and Ballard extensions will provide fast, reliable light-rail connections to dense residential and job centers, Sound Transit officials said in a press release. The projects also would include a new tunnel in downtown Seattle to help speed operations as light rail expands to Northgate, Bellevue, Redmond, Lynnwood, Federal Way, Tacoma, Everett and other communities in Washington.

After the agency's board identifies the alternatives to evaluate in the DEIS, the project will advance to the final EIS phase, which is expected to be completed in 2022. The board then will select the project to pursue and seek a record of decision from the FTA.

Sound Transit has also identified six potential sites in south King County, Washington, for a new operations and maintenance facility (OMF) that would accommodate the plannedr light-rail expansion in the Puget Sound area. The agency is seeking public input on the possible sites as part of an environmental impact statement (EIS) scoping process.

Comments can be provided online, by mail or email, or at public open houses, which will be held March 12th and 20th. Online and written comments will be accepted until April 1, 2019. Anticipated to open in 2026, the OMF would be used to clean, maintain and store cars.

To keep its entire light-rail system functioning, the agency needs to strategically locate such facilities that can operate 24/7, Sound Transit officials said in a press release. In May, the agency's board is expected to decide what alternatives should be considered as part of the preparation of an EIS, which will take about to two years to complete. After additional comment opportunities, the board is expected to select the site for the OMF.

Sound Transit currently operates one OMF in Seattle while another facility is under construction in Bellevue. An OMF also is needed in the North Corridor, agency officials said. Meanwhile, Sound Transit also has issued the first invitation for local governments to submit funding proposals under a new program aimed at make the region's transit services more accessible. The System Access Fund provides $100 million for projects that promote multimodal access to transit, such as protected bike lanes, shared use paths, and new pickup and drop-off areas.

To be awarded by the agency's board in summer, the first round of funds will target up to $10 million in each of Sound Transit's five geographic subareas. "The System Access Fund underscores [our] commitment to removing barriers for potential riders who would like to take advantage of the high-capacity transit system," said Sound Transit Chief Executive Officer Peter Rogoff in a press release. Cities, counties and transit agencies are eligible to submit applications by April 12 for the first round of funds. Sound Transit will notify entities by March 18th if their project qualifies for an application.

WASHINGTON, DC - Progressive Railroading reportwed on February 20th that President Trump's administration intends to cancel $929 million in federal grant funds yet to be paid for California's high-speed rail project, and also will explore legal options to seek the return of $2.5 billion previously paid for the project.

On February 19, 2019, Federal Railroad Administrator (FRA) Ronald Batory notified California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) officials of the FRA Batory's letter follows California Governor Gavin Newsom's announcement last week that the state would scale back its high-speed-rail program from its originally proposed Los Angeles-to-San Francisco route and focus instead on a shorter rail line in the state's Central Valley (between Merced and Bakersfield).

Following Newsom's announcement, President Trump last week called on the state to give back the full $3.5 billion in federal grants that President Obama's administration had allocated to the project. Newsom responded that the state would not return

the dollars. But in yesterday's letter to the CHSRA, Batory outlined the federal government's notice of intent to terminate the grant agreement effective March 5 and "de-obligate" the full $928,620,000.

"FRA has determined that CHSRA has materially failed to comply with the terms of the agreement and has failed to make reasonable progress on the project, significantly endangering substantial performance," Batory wrote. ,He said the FRA's decision was based on several factors, including:

- CHSRA's failures related to required state expenditures necessary to advance the project according to the project's schedule;
- The authority will not complete the project by 2022 according to its own board reports;
- CHSRA has failed to provide the FRA with timely financial reports and other information to demonstrate the authority is effectively managing the project; and
- The authority has failed, based on the FRA's oversight and monitoring, to make the appropriate corrections to ensure the project's delivery.

The letter also referenced Newsom's speech announcing the scaling back of the plan, which Batory said represents a "significant retreat from the state's initial vision" to build a system that connects the state's northern and southern regions.

"If you believe there is information showing that: (1) CHSRA has satisfied its commitments and obligations under the agreement; (2) is making reasonable progress to deliver the project; and (3) that the governor's announcement does not constitute a fundamental change in the purpose of the overall project for which federal funding was awarded, FRA will take that information into consideration," Batory wrote.

He gave state officials until March 5, 2019 to present such information to the FRA. Batory closed the letter by stating that the government is "exploring all legal options," including terminating the recovery of the federal funds the state already received under the original allocation That money is being used to finance construction of about 119 miles of rail line in the Central Valley.

Meanwhile, Dan Richard, who former Governor Jerry Brown appointed to chair the high-speed rail program, resiugned on the same day, as reported. Newsom nominated and the rail board approved Lenny Mendonca as the new chairman.

MODELING HINTS.....

Two Rail Or Overhead Wire Operation?

(Operate on Both!)

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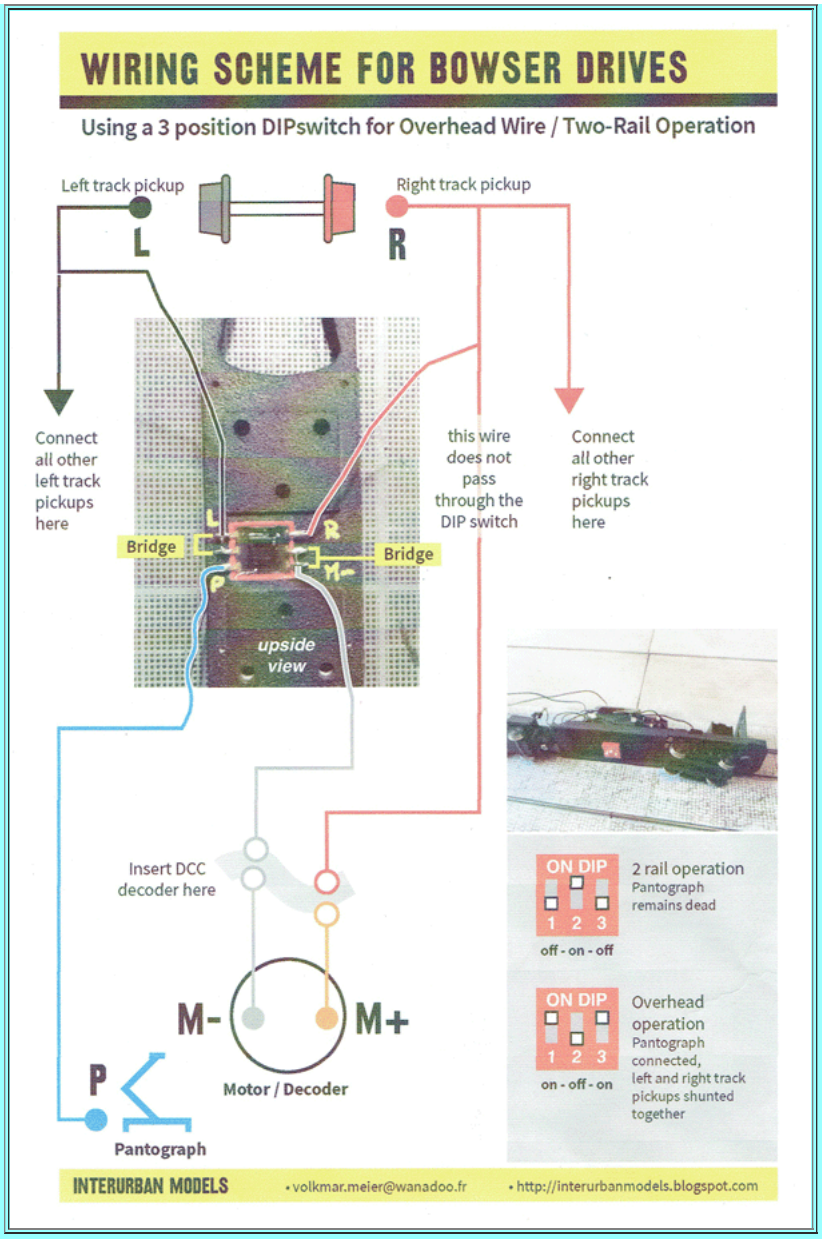
by the Southern California Traction Club

Many electric railway modelers are confronted with the same issue as soon as they get into the hobby. This has further been complicated by the introduction of electric locomotives and streetcars that already provide a switch to change from two-rail operation to overhead wire operation. Some of these items even have trolley poles and pantographs that will actually reliably collect current.

In the desire to get something running, the trend is to two-rail and then ad the "wire" later. When Volkmar Meier (Interurban Models) and Custom Traxx started experimenting with 3D printed Light Rail Vehicle models in 2015, Volkmar came up with the use of a three position dipswitch, that if installed during the assembly allowed the modeler to change back and forth between the two modes of operation as easily as one can do with the recent Bowser trolleys. In the case of the Bowser traction machanism, they located the dipswitch iunder the motor so the switch could be accessed without having to remove the body shell. West Coast Traction Models perovoided a sspace for the dipswitch in some of their Los Angeles LRV models. The attached diagram shows the installation in a typical Bowser traction mechanism:



Custom Traxx and the Southern California Traction Club are using this dipswitch in all of their models of San Diego Siemens S70, Los Angeles NipponSharyo P865 and Los Angeles Kinki Sharyo P3010 Light Rail Vehicles. onstallation of the dipswitch allows operation on both two-rail and overhead wire powered layouts. These dipswitches are available on eBay and may become useful when operating models of the new breed of modern streetcars, such as the Brookville Liberty, that can operate off-wire, if and when they become available.
