



August 2019

eyville! Our efforts to get production of modern urban transit vehicle models in HO scale may be getting s

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CURRENT EVENTS.....

Urban Commuter / Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!

BOSTON, MA - Starting July 8th, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) began track and signal work on the Green Line between the Newton Highlands Station in Newton, Massachusetts, and Kenmore Station in Boston. During construction, which is expected to be completed by December 20th, crews will replace track, ties and ballast; build new signal equipment; replace cables; and repair catenary poles, MBTA officials said in a press release.



The work is part of the Green Line's D-Branch track and signal replacement project, which involves replacing 6.5 miles of signal infrastructure and 25,000 feet of track. It also includes special trackwork between Beaconsfield Station in Brookline and Riverside Station in Newton. Crews also will centralize signal equipment at D branch stations, replace signal equipment with modern technology and replace jointed rail with continuous-welded rail.



Shuttle buses will replace Green Line service between certain stations during the construction.

August 2019

Bus shuttles replace train service between Reservoir and Riverside during these weekends:

- August 10 – 11;
- August 24 – 25;

September – December 2019

Bus shuttles replace train service between Newton Highlands and Kenmore during these weekends:

- September 14 – 15;
- September 21 – 22;
- All October weekends;
- All November weekends;
- All December weekends through December 22.



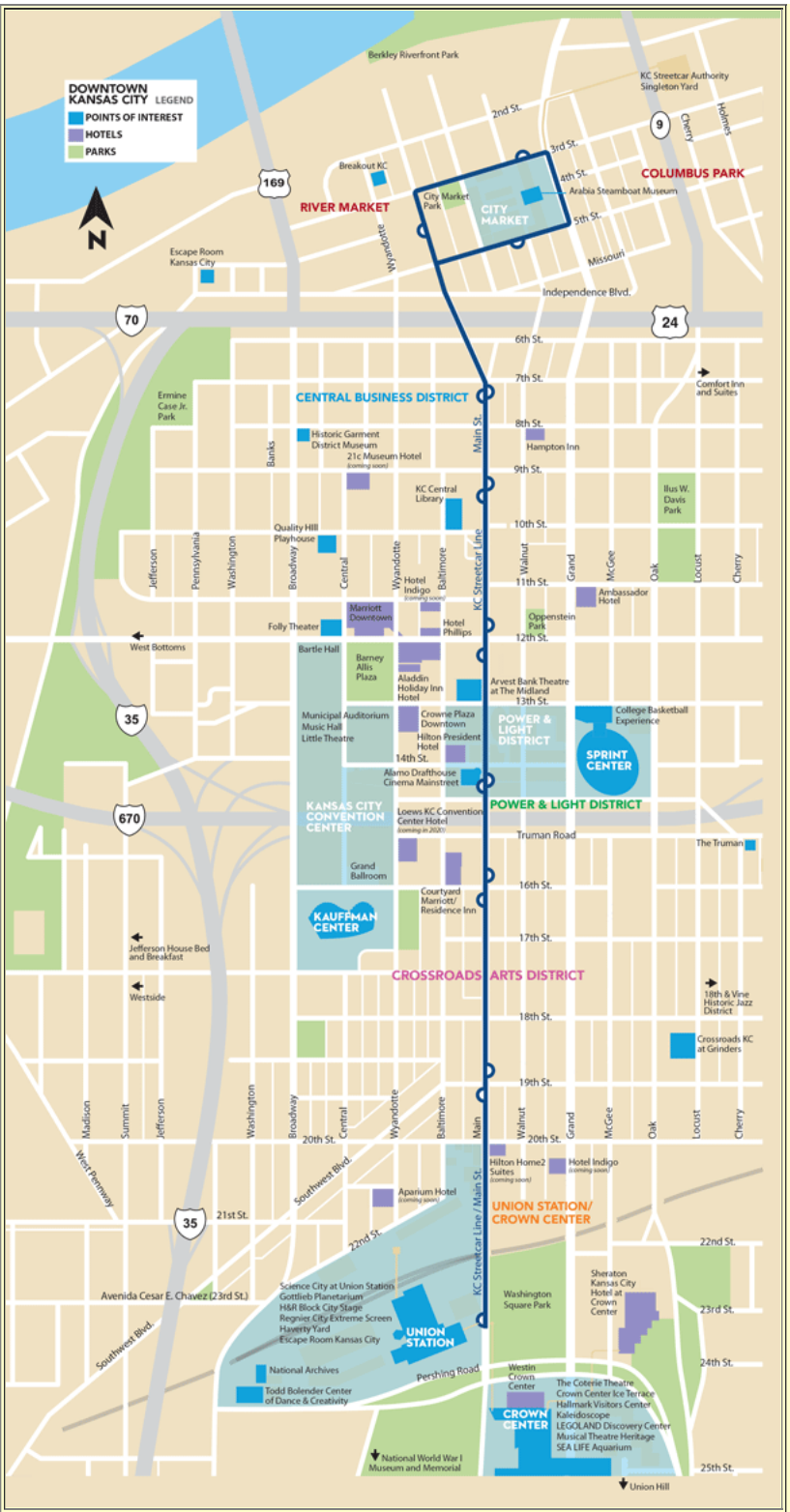
Car 3900, the first of 24 new CAF-built LRVs, joining 103 Kinkisharyo and 86 Breda cars already in service.

KANSAS CITY, MO - The KC Streetcar Team conducted an Emergency Exercise on Sunday, July 21 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. This full-scale emergency exercise tested the operational coordination and preparedness of the streetcar system and first responder personnel in the event of an incident involving a streetcar. Agencies involved include the KC Streetcar Authority, the Kansas City Police Department, the Kansas City Fire Department, first responders, the City of Kansas City, Missouri, Herzog Transit and the KC Area Transportation Authority (KCATA).



KCStreetcar #804 on Main Street in Downtown Kansas City!

The system opened for service on May 6, 2016 and is a currently free to ride 2.2 mile long line between the River Market and Union Station (see map below). It has stops about every two blocks and uses 5 CAF Urbos 3 model 100 low-floor streetcars. They are numbered 801-805 following the old Kansas City Public Service Company streetcar numbering system. The exercise was conducted at 2nd and Main street on non-revenue trackage connecting the line to the Maintenance Yard.



SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CA - The San Bernardino County Transportation Agency (SBCTA) began during July construction on the \$355 million Redlands Passenger Rail Project, a effort to construct a 9-0 mile regional route that will operate between San Bernardino and Redlands, California. To mark the milestone, SBCTA held a groundbreaking ceremony on July 19 in Redlands. Called the **Arrow**, this is a planned commuter rail[6] line in San Bernardino County, California, United States. It is planned to run between the San Bernardino Transit Center in downtown San Bernardino and the University of Redlands in Redlands, California and will be operated by Omnitrans. [



Artists concept of Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) lettered for Omnitrans, the local transit agency.

SBCTA awarded a \$21 million contract to Granite Construction Inc. to build a storage and maintenance facility for the line in San Bernardino. Granite's work will include building construction, underground utilities, demolition, earthwork, grading and concrete and asphalt paving, Granite officials said in a press release. Construction is slated to be completed in 2020, with rail service expected to begin in late 2021, according to the project website.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - The San Francisco Transportation Authority Commissioners unanimously approved more than \$1 million in public funding to complete the financing package to restore five irreplaceable 1920s streetcars, from Japan (Car 151 from Osaka), Portugal (Car 189 from Oporto), New Orleans (Car 913), Pennsylvania (Car 351 from Johnstown) and San Francisco itself (Car 798 from Market Street Railway), that haven't yet operated here, and that are essential to E-line service expansion. Almost another million dollars was approved for environmental and design updates for the track extension from the current terminal on Jones at Beach along Beach Street to reach the Maritime Museum past Polk Street, the first of two phases of the Fort Mason extension.



1928 Melbourne Tram 496 will continue to substitute for 1934 Blackpool (England) Boat Tram 228 on The Embarcadero Tuesday and Wednesday, July 16-17, while Muni maintenance crews analyze the problem with one of the motors or bearings. We will provide updates on the progress of fixing the boat tram as available. Muni Maintenance management tells us they will work to get the other Boat Tram, 233, operational for Muni Heritage Weekend, September 7-8, should the problem with 228 be worse than expected.

SEATTLE, WA - On July 18, Sound Transit marked the 10th anniversary of Link light-rail service that connects Seattle to SeaTac, Washington. Over the past decade, the Link has logged more than 134 million total boardings, Sound Transit officials said in a press release.

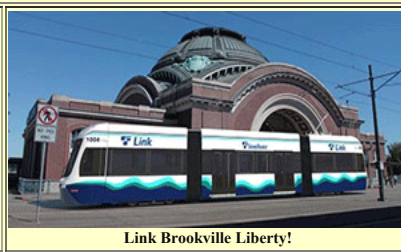


Two of the 62 KinkiSharyo cars, (numbered 101-162) currently operated by Sound Transit (Link)!
 Sound Transit purchased 35 cars in 2006-8 and another 27 in 2011!
 They also run 3 Skoda low floor streetcars (numbered 1001-1003)!
 They also have 52 S70 vehicles on order from Siemens and 5 low floor streetcars on order from Brookville!

On opening day in 2009, Link covered 14 miles of service between the Westlake and Tukwila International Boulevard stations. Since then, Link has grown to 22 miles and ridership has increased from about 15,000 weekday boardings to about 77,000, they said. Notable service additions in Link's history include new service to Sea-Tac International Airport in December 2009, to Capitol Hill and the University of Washington in March 2016 and to Angle Lake in September 2016. In the next five years, Sound Transit will add 22 stations to Link and expand it more than 50 miles.



Link Siemens S70



Link Brookville Liberty!

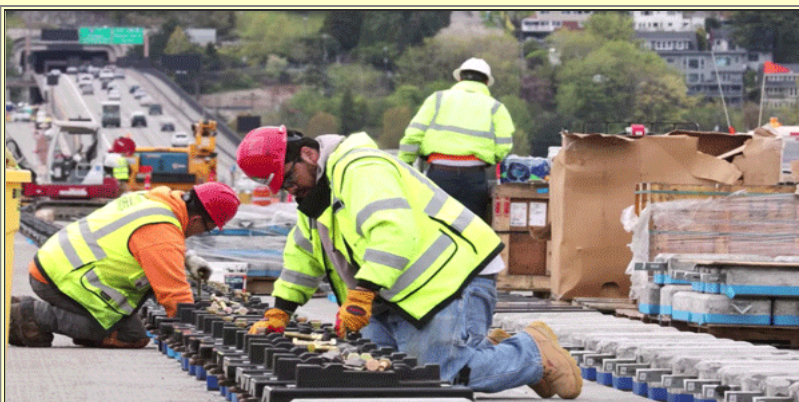
"Link's tenth anniversary comes at a time when we are expanding the network to the north, south and east," said Sound Transit Chief Executive Officer Peter Rogoff said. "By the time Link's 15th anniversary comes around, we expect that more than twice as many riders as we have today will have discovered the advantages of fast, effective light rail."

By 2026, Link's daily weekday boardings are projected to be 257,000 to 303,000.

Sound Transit announced during July that it will use specially engineered attachments to install light-rail track on the Homer M. Hadley floating bridge in Seattle.

To enable light-rail trains to transition from fixed track sections onto the floating bridge, the track construction requires special concrete attachments that minimize weight and isolate stray current from the electric system that powers the trains, Sound Transit officials said in a press release.

Almost 9,000 specially engineered and constructed lightweight concrete blocks are being affixed to the bridge deck using an epoxy called DexG. Track is then set on the blocks with steel tie bars placed between them to maintain gauge, similar to a standard railroad tie system, officials said.



Crews began installing track on the bridge in late 2018 after they completed post-tensioning of the bridge pontoons. The post-tensioning process reinforced the concrete with high-strength tensioned strains to enable the bridge to hold light-rail tracks and vehicles.

Furthermore, the project requires specially engineered track bridges that can compensate for lake motion. To date, crews have installed one of a total of eight track bridges. All track bridges are scheduled to be in place by end of the year.

To view a video of the installation process, visit Sound Transit's [YouTube channel](#).

Sound Transit's board late last month identified four preferred and other alternatives to study as part of a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) of the Tacoma Dome Link Extension project, which will extend light-rail nearly 10 miles between Federal Way and Tacoma, Washington.

The preferred alternatives were chosen after 18 months of public engagement with community organizations, agency partners, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians and local officials, Sound Transit officials said in a press release. The project calls for construction of four elevated light-rail stations in south Federal Way, Fife, east Tacoma and the Tacoma Dome.

The preferred alternative for the Tacoma Dome Station is near East 25th Street and west of G Street, which would be connected to the East Tacoma Station by a guideway. The East Tacoma station would be built in near East 26th Street or East 27th Street, near Portland Avenue and north of Interstate 5. Fife Station would be located north of 15th Street, while the South Federal Way Station would be built along Enchanted Parkway near South 352nd Street near I-5, according to the published board motions.

Sound Transit is coordinating with the Federal Transit Administration to prepare the draft EIS, which will be followed by a public and agency comment period in late 2020. By 2022, the board is expected to complete the final EIS. The agency is working toward a 2025 groundbreaking, with service to the Tacoma Dome Link slated for 2030.

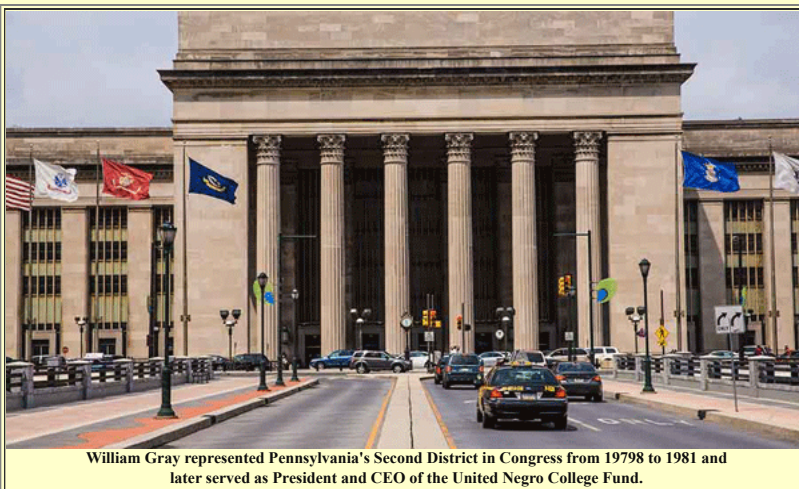
NEW ORLEANS, LA - The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (NORTA) planned to partially close the St. Charles streetcar line in mid-July as crews begin replacing poles that support the overhead wires. The poles must be replaced as a result of corrosion.



The above photo shows two of the fifteen poles that must be replaced due to corrosion.

During this work, the streetcar line will be closed from South Carrollton Avenue and Claiborne Avenue to St. Charles Avenues and Jenna Street in New Orleans, NORTA officials said in a press release. A bus service will service the closed section until repairs are completed in mid-September.

PHILADELPHIA, PA - During the first week of July, Amtrak began taking steps to officially rename the 30th Street (Pennsylvania Railroad) Station in Philadelphia in honor of the late William Gray III, a former U.S. congressman who died six years ago.



William Gray represented Pennsylvania's Second District in Congress from 1978 to 1981 and later served as President and CEO of the United Negro College Fund.

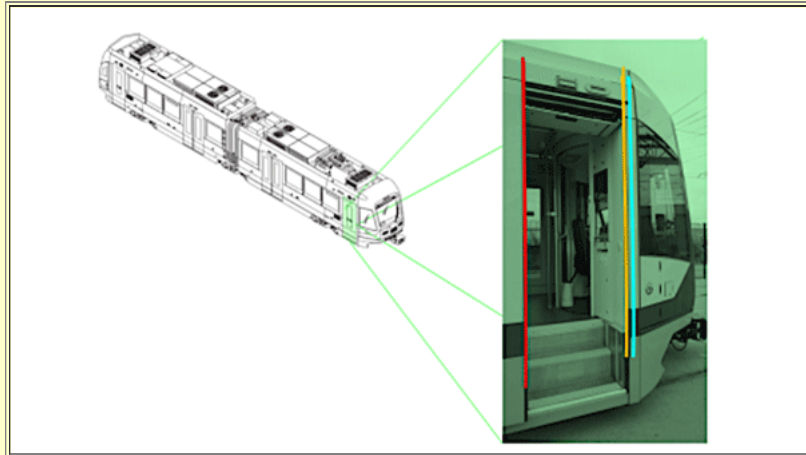
Legislation calling for the name change was passed in 2014. Gray represented Pennsylvania's Second District in Congress from 1979 to 1991. He later served as president and chief executive officer of the United Negro College Fund.

Amtrak has begun installing large signs bearing Gray's name outside the station on 29th and 30th streets.

"Though details will come together, to be determined by the end of this month, July 31, Amtrak will make space also for a representation of Bill Gray with a statue and memorial plaque capturing his legacy," said U.S. Rep. Dwight Evans (D-Pa.) in a press release. Among his many accomplishments, Gray broke barriers for African-Americans in Congress and fought for federal funding for Amtrak, according to Evans.

"Gray 30th Station will be a memorial to a great man, and it will symbolize the ethic of using one's personal station and power for good, as he always did," Evans said.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - Progressive Railroading reported on July 8th that the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) will resume two-car train service on its Siemens S200 light-rail vehicles after retrofitting all single panel rear (end) - doors with additional sensors.



Between November 2017 and April 2019, passengers were injured in three incidents involving the vehicles' rear doors. In the most recent incident, a passenger tried to hold open the rear (end) door and fell into the trackway at Embarcadero Station in San Francisco. Since then, Siemens developed an updated door design that provides two additional sensitive edges, including one on the exterior side of the single panel door. This provides increased sensitivity to account for a broader range of obstructions with the doors, SFMTA officials said in a press release.

"We are pleased to once again provide two-car trains and to reopen the back door on our new trains," said SFMTA Director of Transit Julie Kirschbaum. "We appreciate the patience of our customers as we worked through these issues, as we remain committed to rolling out these new trains that will have a significant positive impact on service across the city."

In addition, the train couplers have been modified to allow safe operation of two-car train service. In April, a two-car train with no passengers onboard experienced a coupler failure due to a design flaw that caused broken shear bolts. Siemens replaced the shear bolts after inspection. The company expected to replace all damaged coupler units by July 31.

MODELING HINTS....

Bowser Traction Units!

Bowser introduced its revised HO scale traction units in 1999 at the St Paul National Train Show that year. The units featured a horizontal can motor and they were available in the 6' 4" wheelbase with 26" wheels (125100), 28" wheels (125105), 30" wheels (125115), and 33" wheels (125120), and the price was welcome news to the trolley modelers that had been purchasing other traction power units available at the time. A few years ago a version with 4"10" wheelbase with 33" wheels (125130) was also released.

Over the years, the units have been very reliable with little problems reported. The few issues that have been found involve one part, #1291, Trailing Axle Wheel Center. This is the plastic cylinder that holds the two half axles together in the trailing truck. The part is designed so that when the wheel-axle sets are inserted and pressed together, they are in perfect gauge. A similar part but containing a gear is part #1258, which does the same function on the power truck.



1. Looking at the above photo starting at top right is a complete 30" wheel set with part #1291 in the center. This axle set is one of the original wheel sets with the two brass bearings that contacted the power pickups in the Bowser drives. The original offerings in 1999 did not have nickel silver wheels. North West Short line did provide them and many modelers opted to get those NWSL wheel sets and had considerable difficulty getting the bearings to reseal properly. Another issue was that they tended to get dirty and inhibit the flow of power and signal voltages in the later DCC-equipped units. so they were phased out.

2. In the lower right is part #1291 used on only trailing trucks on all traction units.

3. Bottom left is the gear, part #1258 used in all traction units.

4. Top left is a current 26" wheel set from a traction power truck with the #1258 gear and also the illustration of interest in this article. Custom Traxx and the Southern California Traction Club have been conducting testing on all these units since they were in the development stage. They even used the excellent layout that belonged to the late Michael Duberchin in Calabasas, CA has the final testing grounds.

Up to this point, the major problem with any of the units was traction power truck wheel slipping due to a locked axle in the trailing truck. Up to this point, this was always caused by a cracked part #1291. The tell-tale indicator was that one or both wheel sets could turn inside the part 1291. Sometimes you have to look under a magnifying glass to see the crack but it was there.

Up to this point when the wheel sets were pressed into the parts 1258 and 1291, they were in perfect gauge since there is a plastic between the two axle sets to prevent shorting in the two rail operation. If the axles are the correct length the wheel sets must be in perfect gauge....that is....unless...the axles have shifted in the wheel as shown in the *exaggerated position* as in this photo. We discovered this issue just recently despite the thousands of axle sets that we have checked.

So now when there is the problem of a locked wheel set, it is recommended that wheel gauge be checked and when pressing wheels into the 1258 and 1291 parts, do so by providing pressure to the axle and not the the wheel face exclusively.

Good Hobby Shop News!

There has not been a lot of good news in the "brick & mortar" model railroad hobby shop business these days but there are bright spots and one of the brightest continues to be Arnie's Model Trains in Westminster, CA. They are now featuring selected model railroad clubs with their operating layout displays during weekends at the store. You can go and enjoy model railroads in an air-conditioned environment without paying admission or parking.

In June, the Southern California Traction Club (SCTC) was on hand for a weekend displaying their unique 3D printed Los Angeles, San Diego and Boston light rail vehicles plus some Atlanta and Oklahoma City modern streetcars. This was reported in our previous issue.

The carpet indentations from the SCTC appearance were hardly gone when the President of the Orange County N'Gineers, Scott Kahle, made arrangements to show their layout at Arnie's. They appeared on July 6-7. Despite being as holiday weekend, they had a considerable number of visitors.

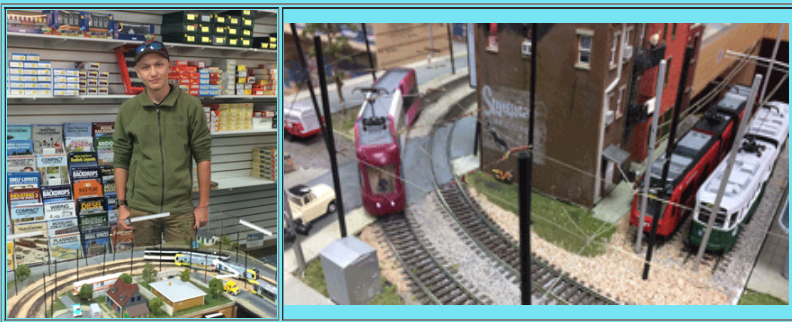


They had an 11' by 29" layout with two main line runs and a yard. When we visited the display, Mark Goodman, Bill Marecek, Roger McCarty, Bruce Parson and Paul Stoner, in addition to Scott were on hand to greet patrons and tell them about their club. Their modules are designed to be placed on a typical 30" wide folding utility table. Their module are all 12", 24" and 36" long with a standard depth of 13". They have end modules with 180 degree curves that are 14.5" by 29", allowing for backdrops between the back-to-back modules. they can set up quickly before the store opens and tear down very rapidly. While Trolleyville was at their display on Sunday, July 7, they ran several Custom Traxx items including 3D printed and Tomytec powered models of the San Diego S70 (shown above right) and a C&LE Lightweight along with some Bachmann Peter Witt and a KATO (Chicago) Metra Christmas commuter train.

For the past years, it was the trend of model railroad clubs to develop big layouts for the train shows which used to regularly visit the major cities. But these shows are not showing up as much as they used to so maybe clubs should be developing little layouts that can be displayed in a hobby shop, or a library or at selected community events such as the opening of a new rail transit line. They may find they have a better chance of obtaining members at these events.

Notice to local model railroad clubs: Having your club layout or a portion of it running at a place like Arnie's gets the club the opportunity to talk one-on-one with customers that could become potential members without constantly watching for those unsupervised youngsters found at train shows that seem to like to grab things. Youngsters going to hobby shops with their parents are normally under more control.

By the way, the SCTC will be back at Arnie's on August 24-25, 2019 with their unique 3D printed Los Angeles area light rail vehicles and may be conducting some workshops. The SCTC will also be at the Pomona Great Train Show on August 10-11, 2019. But check the Arnie's [website for full details](#) as we get closer to that date.



Arnie's Model Trains is located at 6452 Industry Way, Westminster, CA, phone 714-893-1015, and right next door is Milepost 38, a store devoted to toy trains such as American Flyer, Lionel and Large Scale (G scale) trains.