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BOSTON, MA -The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and Boston University (BU) officials earlier this week marked the opening of two new rail stations on the Green Line.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony highlighted the completion of the \$29 million B Branch Station Consolidation Project, which combined four stations into two. The Amory Street Station project combined the old St. Paul Street and BU West stations. The Babcock Street Station is a combination of the old Babcock Street and Pleasant Street stations.

Since April 2021, commuters using the B Branch had to use shuttle buses so the work could proceed 24 hours a day, seven days a week except for the Boston University commencement week in May 2022 when the LRVS returned temporarily.

The station consolidation project was completed six months ahead of schedule, MBTA officials said in a press release. The project also upgraded two intersections and renewed 5,000 feet of track on the Green Line.

The stations feature accessible platforms that are compatible with low-floor vehicles and other amenities as part of the Green Line Transformation (GLT) program. The B Branch is also now more efficient with less stops and a more accessibility-friendly design. Other upgrades included security, reliability and communications, as well as longer 225-foot platforms to accommodate the new Type 10 "supercars", which are now being procured. MBTA officials expect they expect the first super cars to be available in 2026. Note the conceptual double end, seven section, four truck car.



Program Next Steps

- Award PM/CM Team For Green Line Transition – Today
- Finalize Concept Vehicle Design Specifications & Award Vehicle Engineering & PM Contract
- Prepare detailed cost estimates for Phase II & III
- Complete Alternative program funding analysis



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In mid-November, MBTA officials announced intentions to roll out extra-long Green Line “supercars” to begin replacing most of its current fleet of aging trolleys in 2027, after the pandemic cast some uncertainties on the plans. “I can now say confidently that we have a strategy for moving forward with the Type 10 supercars,” Angel Peña, the MBTA’s chief of Green Line Transformation, said during a meeting on November 15.

Officials say the “supercars” will be more accessible and large enough to carry twice as many passengers on the country’s oldest — and often crowded — subway line.

The plans to introduce the fleet of extra-long trolleys on the Green Line have been in the works since 2018. As *The Boston Globe* reported at the time, the MBTA ultimately plans to use them to replace the roughly 200 older trolleys that were first introduced in 1986 and 2008, though the 24 newer cars the T has been adding to support the Green Line Extension would continue to be used.



Detailed Conceptual Analysis – Platforms

- Analysis of current platforms was conducted to determine impact of concept vehicles on stations



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However, the plans were slightly derailed amid budget cutbacks induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The MBTA originally proposed to order 165 supercars, with an option to buy 61 additional cars. Now, following discussions with the MBTA’s Fiscal Management and Control Board, officials say the agency is decreasing its initial planned order to 102 cars. MBTA spokeswoman Lisa Battiston noted that the revised contract includes an increased option to purchase more cars “to reflect the new base order quantity.”

Though the original plans called for running two of the two longer trains together, Peña said the base order focuses on running single supercars, with running two at the time “in the future.”

MBTA officials expect bid proposals to build the new cars to be submitted by July 14, a later-than-originally expected date due to the pandemic and “funding alignment,” Battiston said.

“We anticipate having good competition from multiple car builders and look forward to presenting more information at an upcoming Board meeting in mid-2022 after the proposals are received and evaluated,” Battiston said. Pena said the agency plans to award a contract to build the cars by next summer.

Under the time-line unveiled Monday, the design process will then stretch from mid-2022 into 2026, when the T plans to begin piloting its first supercars. According to Pena’s presentation, the agency plans to begin rolling out the cars into service from 2027 through 2032. That’s about three years later than the MBTA previously planned.

In the meantime, Peña says the agency will need to complete infrastructure work to accommodate the new trolleys, such as lengthening and raising certain platforms. At 114 feet long, the “Type 10” supercars will be 40 feet longer than the current 74-foot Green Line trolleys — enough room to carry 400 passengers, which currently would require two vehicles to carry.

They’ll also be designed to have low floors, which in addition to creating more space, will make boarding more accessible to riders with disabilities. According to Pena, the steps on the Green Line’s current trolleys — even the 24 new cars — “create challenges for accessibility.”

MBTA previously estimated that the supercars would cost \$1.34 billion, according to the Globe. However, officials did not give an updated estimate for their revised order. According to Peña, the MBTA plans to seek a Federal Transit Administration grant to fund the project.

The updated Green Line supercar plans were disclosed shortly after MBTA officials broke the news that the service on the Green Line Extension will be delayed by several months.

They also come amid the MBTA’s fledgling efforts to replace its Orange and Red line fleets. After the first few new Orange and Red line cars were pulled from service in March to address a mechanical issue, MBTA General Manager Steve Poflak said Monday that they hope to have them back on the tracks “this summer.”

SAN DIEGO, CA - The Metropolitan Transit System's latest trolley line extension, the UC San Diego Blue Line, opened to the public on Sunday, November 21st. The 11-mile extension adds nine new stops north of Old Town, and connects UTC to San Ysidro. “We’ve been working on it for about 20 years. Number one, I think that being a one-seat ride from the border, I think is really key to making this a success,” San Diego MTS Rail Division COO Wayne Terry said.

The first trial run of the project’s new tracks took place in June. The projected cost of the project was \$2.17 billion, but city leaders said they are going to come in under that mark. “Our total budget is \$2.17 billion dollars, and we are currently coming in about \$13 million under budget,” SANDAG Director of Engineering Sharon Humphreys said.

“For the first time in our history of 61 years we will be totally connected from literally the border, San Ysidro, to UTC and this will make us an integral part of the community and it will make the community an integral part of who we are,” UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep Khosla said.

The trolley began service on the extension at 5 am. on Sunday, Nov. 21. Service was free system-wide on Sunday.

MODELING NEWS:

Looks Like Trains Shows are Coming Back Soon!!

The COVID-19 crisis has devastated many businesses forcing many to close their doors permanently and unfortunately Train Show Inc. was one of those. It just could not survive over 12 months with almost zero revenue. The owner of Train Show Inc, Randy Bachmann, has embarked on a new career in the transportation industry.

Dave Swanson formed a new corporation to assume operation of trans shows nationwide, including the Great Train Show, Greenberg Shows, the Great Midwest Train Show and the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Shows.

The name chosen for this new corporation will be the Great American Train Shows, Inc. (GATS). The GATS name was chosen to honor the legacy that dates back to the first Midwest Train Show in 1971 to honor some founders of that Midwest Train Show that are no longer with us: Bob Brush and Bob Olsen.

The Greenberg Train & Toy Show resumed operation this past July.

The Great Midwest Train Show resumed operation this past August.

Great Train Shows also began their extensive schedule during August 2021.

The World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Shows will resume in January 2022.

Some of the shows coming up are:

Greenberg's Train & Toy Show - December 4-5, Timonium, MD, Maryland State Fairgrounds;
Great Midwest Train Show, December 12, Wheaton, IL, DuPage County Fairgrounds;
Greenberg's Train & Toy Show, December 18-19, Chantilly, VA, Dulles Expo Center;
Great Train Show, January 8-9, Sacramento, CA, Cal Expo;
Greenberg's Train & Toy Show, January 15-16, Virginia /Beach, VA, Virginia Beach Convention Center;
Great Train Show, January 22-23, Puyallup, WA, Washington State Fairgrounds;
Great Train Show, February 12-13, 2022, Costa Mesa, CA, Orange County Fairgrounds,.

This is by no means a complete list, check their website, www.TrainShow.com for a complete list.

Dave Swanson has over 50 years experience in the train show business and Bill Grove brings another 30 years experience so look for excellence while having fun. They will be managing the only coast-to-coast train show company with shows designed for the general public, modelers, hobbyists, families and the just plain curious. Come on Down!

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