



February 2022

The Southern California Traction Club's Light Rail Vehicle Display

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CURRENT EVENTS.....

Urban Commuter / Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!

KANSAS CITY, KS - Progressive Railroading reported that the Kansas City Streetcar Authority (KCSA) announced in early January that the service had crossed the 1 million ridership milestone. The streetcar provided 1,000,375 rides as of December 11, 2021.

The KC Streetcar is a streetcar system in Downtown Kansas City, Missouri. Construction began in May 2014. The system opened for service on May 6, 2016. The KC Streetcar is free to ride, as it is funded by a Transportation development district. The system currently uses 6 CAF Urbo 3 model streetcars.



KC Streetcar operating hours and service were increased following the pandemic's peak in early 2021 and the 2021 ridership recovered to nearly 60% of pre-pandemic levels.



The highest ridership day in 2021 was July 3, when 10,890 passenger trips were recorded with the following Independence Day weekend registering the highest weekend ridership weekend of the year. Summer was KC Streetcar's most popular time with the highest monthly ridership numbers recorded in July at 149, 713.

LOS ANGELES, CA - The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (L.A. Metro) resumed fare collection and front-door boarding on Monday January 10 due to increases in vaccination rates and a mask policy for riders. Fares will revert to pre-pandemic levels.

Front-door boarding was suspended in March 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic, with farebox and TAP ticket validation rules relaxed.

L.A. Metro offers a low-income fare program for those with an annual household income that's less than \$41,400. The agency also provides discount programs for students, seniors and people with disabilities.

SAN FRANCISCO AREA, CA - Progressive Railroading reported on January 24 that in late December Caltrain announced its electrification project will cost an additional \$462 million over the initial estimate, bringing the total price tag to \$2.44 billion. The electric line will run 52 miles from San Francisco's 4th and King Station to San Jose's Tamien Station on dual-alignment track.

The cost increase is a result of negotiations and a \$347 million contract amendment with contractor Balfour Beatty US that resolved commercial issues and additional costs related to the extended 2024 completion deadline, Caltrain officials said in a press release. The contract was approved Dec. 6, 2021. The settlement also established a shared risk pool to manage future potential problems and provide incentives for early completion of certain milestones, such as revenue service. The project began in 2017 and is on track to be completed in September 2024.

"With this agreement in place, which includes a mix of incentives and rewards for meeting the 2024 date, we are better positioned to complete this critical project," said Caltrain Acting Executive Director Michelle Bouchard.

Civil work nearly complete. The pandemic also had a significant impact on the project's progress, as well as utilities and real estate issues. The progress made so far has mostly been civil work — which is nearly complete — removing risk from the project. There were foundation issues discovered when drilling into the 150-year-old right of way, Caltrain officials said.

The agency is working with funding partners, including federal and state governments, to fill the funding gap. To date, Caltrain has received an additional \$52.4 million from the federal government and has access to \$150 million in financing credit, plus an additional \$60 million in Measure RR capital reserve. In addition, the recently passed federal infrastructure law and the upcoming California state transportation budget could provide additional funding for the project.

"While it hasn't gone as smoothly as we had hoped, we are confident that we are on track toward electrified service in 2024 that will transform how people commute throughout the Bay area," said Caltrain Chair Dev Davis.

Caltrain officials expect the new overhead catenary system to be installed by summer 2022. Nearly 95% of foundations are already installed and nearing completion. Traction power facilities are expected to be finished in early 2022, along with the first cars of the new electric fleet in the spring. All of these improvements are part of the agency's overarching goal of tripling capacity by 2040, making service more frequent and reliable. The new infrastructure will also be compatible with future high-speed rail on the corridor, Caltrain officials said.

The new 25kv AC overhead catenary system will serve as the electric trains' power source, replacing diesel trains to increase sustainability. Commuter-rail service will increase to six trains per peak hour per direction and train operating speeds will be maintained at up to 79 mph, Balfour Beatty US officials said.

"We will continue to work safely and sustainably to electrify and upgrade the service, capacity and reliability of the transit system on behalf of commuters in San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties," said Balfour Beatty US CEO Leon Blondin.

OTHER TRACTION ITEMS:

Bowser Initiates Some Traction Floor Production!

Prior to the introduction of their HO scale Ready-To-Run PCC cars in 2009, Bowser produced four metal-bodied trolley cars as kits for the traction modeler. These kits had been acquired with the purchase of Pennsylvania Scale Models. There was the 1948 model all-electric PCC, the 1906 Brill Suburban (semi-convertible), the Indiana Railroad Lightweight Interurban and a Jewett Interurban. All of these models used a truck mounted motor with an oval shaped magnet which allowed maximum turning for sharp radius curves. This motor, developed in the late 1940s was very innovative for its time but like many innovations, time caught up with it and the oval shaped magnets, which were the heart of the motor became unavailable.

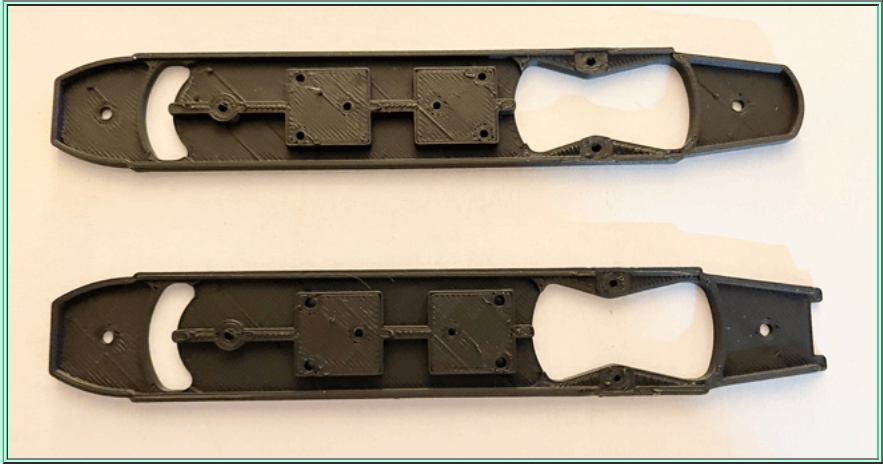
In the mid-1990s, Bowser had to abandon the oval shaped motor and redesigned the traction power unit that could be augmented with a Trolley Flywheel Kit made by Joe Delia's A-line. So the production of the four metal bodied trolleys continued with the revised power unit.

It started to become obvious that a ready-to-run, painted, equipped for DCC trolley was needed. Since these trolleys for the most part, were unpainted kits, Bowser decided to produce a ready-to-run PCC with the revised power unit. They partnered with Custom Traxx and decided to produce San Francisco's F-line PCCs many of which were carbon copies of the metal-bodied PCC cars that Bowser had been producing for years.

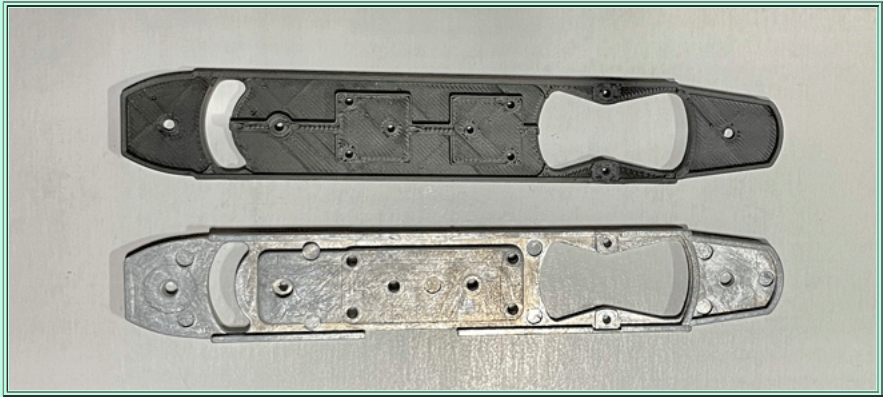
As the times now dictated, production would be shifted overseas and with that the capability to make metal floors with the new traction mechanism was soon lost. Then came COVID-19, and Delta, and Omicron

.....Many modelers were getting out items buried in the closet for many years, including the old Bowser metal bodied PCC bodies. Both Custom Traxx and Bowser started to get inquiries on a floor with the new mechanism similar to the old 125141 and 125142 mechanisms with floor that Bowser made prior to the introduction of the ready-to-run PCC trolleys.

Turning to the new 3D printing technology, Bowser has developed the floors shown in the next photo. The top floor is intended for the Bowser metal PCC shells while the bottom is intended for the ubiquitous Bachmann PCC shells. Both floors are designed for the Bowser 125100 mechanism with 26" wheels.



The next photo shows the 3D printed floor intended for the Bowser metal PCC shell compared to the metal floor, part #1283, made for that same shell. Looks like a winner so far!



So far plastic 3D-printed floors are close enough to production to have the following SKU (stock) numbers assigned:

Item	SKU
Plastic Floor for Bowser Metal PCC*	1410
Plastic Floor for Bowser Metal Brill Suburban	1411
Plastic Floor for Bowser Metal IRR Lightweight Interurban	1412
Plastic Floor for Bowser Metal LVT/Jewett Interurban	1413
Plastic Floor for Bachmann Plastic PCC*	1414
Plastic Floor for Bachmann Plastic Brill Suburban	1415

*shown in above photos

The MSRP for each floor is \$10.00 so we suggest that those of you with any interest in these floors, contact Lee English, Bowser CEO ASAP!