



May 2022

with other tractioneers. Send them to Trolleyville (trolleyvilletimes@customtraxx.com)!

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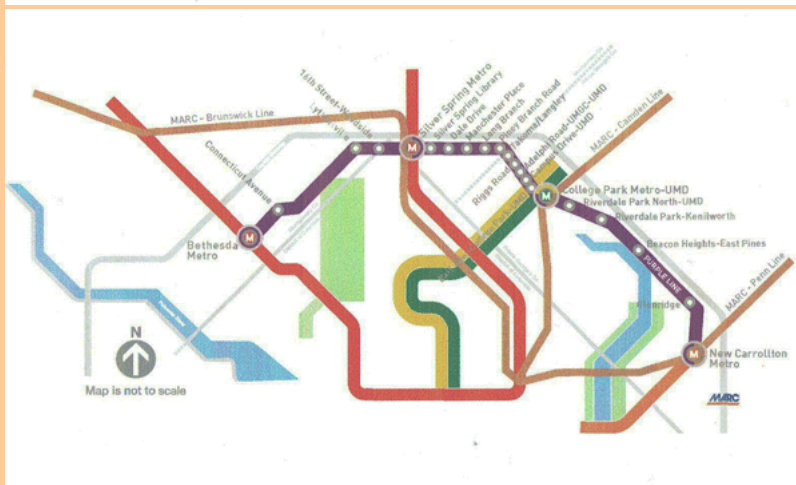
CURRENT EVENTS.....

Urban Commuter / Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!

BETHESDA, MD - The has provided a low-interest loan of up to \$1.76 billion to Purple Line Transit Partners for the in Maryland, the bureau announced today.



The loan will finance up to 33% of the \$5.9 billion in eligible project costs, bureau officials said in a press release. The bureau helps communities deliver infrastructure projects by providing Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loans and other types of innovative financing.



Now under construction, the Purple Line is a 16.2-mile, 21-station, east-west light-rail line that will extend from Bethesda in Montgomery County to New Carrollton in Prince George's County. Once the project is completed, five major activity centers — Bethesda, Silver Spring, Takoma-Langley Park, College Park and New Carrollton — will connect with 16 other stations that serve residential communities, commercial districts and institutional establishments.

CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA - It was reported by Progressive Railroading in early April that the city of Calgary, Alberta, has released a request for qualifications (RFQ) for the proposed Green Line light-rail project's first phase. The Green Line is a future light rail transit (LRT) line planned to run between north-central and southeastern Calgary, Alberta, Canada. When completed, it will be the third line in the CTrain system and will be known as Route 203, connecting with the existing Red Line and the Blue Line in Downtown Calgary.

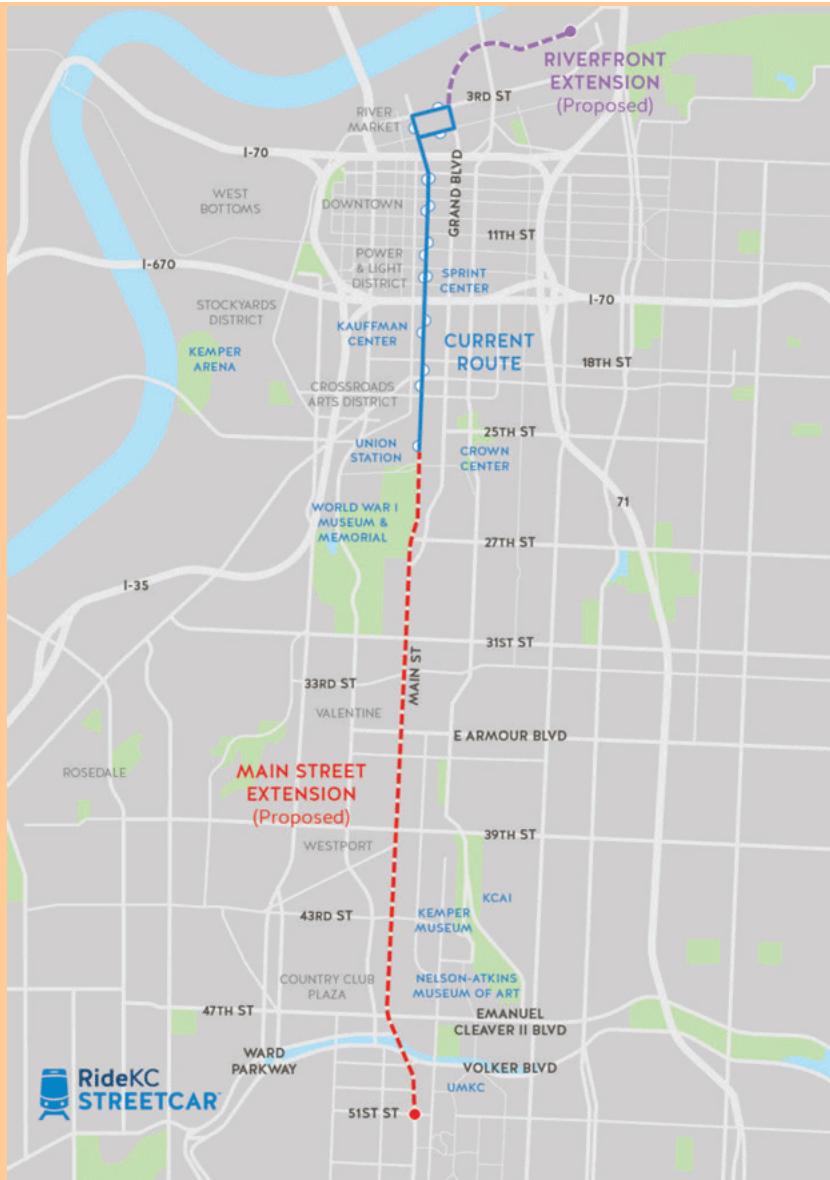
The line, which would run from the Shepard to Eau Claire neighborhoods, includes 11.2 miles of track with room for expansion. The Green Line would be the largest infrastructure project to be constructed in the city's history, Calgary officials said in a press release. It will also be the first to use low-floor cars.



The current project timeline estimates that the project board would select a development partner in early 2023 following the request for proposal stage. The development phase would take about a year.

The project also calls for 13 new stations, bridge structures, park-and-ride facilities and a maintenance storage facility for vehicles. "The RFQ is a significant step toward delivering this important city-shaping project," said Green Line Chairman Don Fairbairn.

KANSAS CITY, MO - Kansas City Streetcar Authority, federal, state and local officials broke ground on a \$351 million project to expand the streetcar system in Kansas City, Missouri.



Expected to take two years to complete, the project calls for adding 3.5 miles of track to the existing system. In attendance at yesterday's groundbreaking were representatives of the Federal Transit Administration, the city, KC Streetcar Authority, KC Area Transportation Authority and KC Streetcar Constructors.



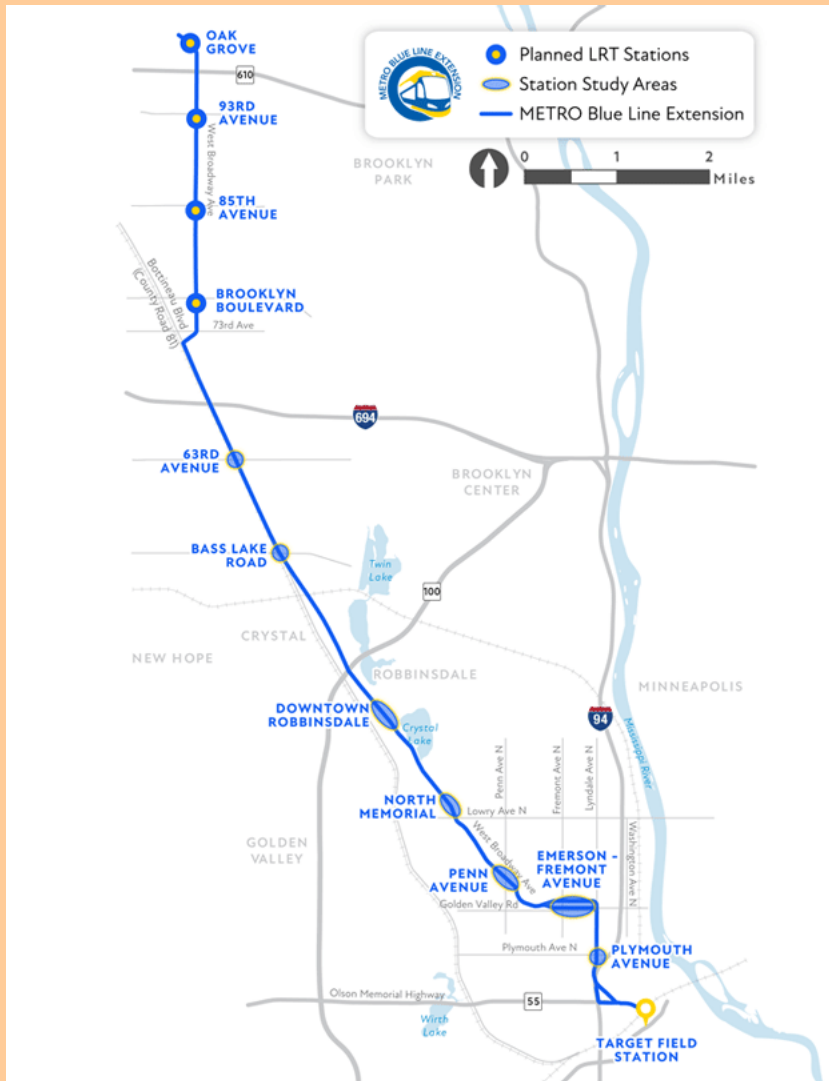
"The KC Streetcar Main Street Extension project will connect our city's largest employment centers and elevate the function of our system from a downtown circulator to the spine of an improved regional transit system," said KC Streetcar Authority Executive Director Tom Gerend.

The extension will connect the current southern terminus at Union Station to the University of Missouri-Kansas City at 51st Street and Brookside Boulevard.

Funds for the extension come from federal Capital Investment Grants program as well as local funding through the Transportation Development District. The extension will be passenger-ready in 2025. KC Streetcar Constructors, which is leading the construction, is a joint venture between Herzog Contracting Corp. and Stacy and Witbeck.

MINNEAPOLIS, MN - On April 18th, the Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County officials in Minneapolis announced the route recommendation for Metro Transit's Blue Line light-rail extension.

The recommended route would extend the existing Blue Line light-rail service from the Target Field station along West Broadway Avenue in Minneapolis to County Road 81 in Crystal and Robbinsdale, and along West Broadway Avenue in Brooklyn Park.



"The communities served by the proposed route are transit-reliant and racially diverse and have experienced historical disinvestment," said Regional Railroad Authority Chair Irene Fernando in a press release. "The proposed route will connect students to education, workers to jobs, patients to health care and families to resources, while connecting the corridor to the broader transit network."

Public comments on the recommendation are due May 18. Council and county officials will consider public input and technical analyses before approving a final route. After the council officially adopts a route, design work and an environmental review will advance.

OTHER TRACTION ITEMS:

DCC/Sound in the HO scale Bachmann Baltimore Peter Witt Trolley!

By now most traction modelers have realized that the Bachmann HO scale Peter Witt Trolley is a very accurate rendition of the Baltimore Peter Witt trolleys built by J.G. Brill in 1930. The other road names offered were various levels of fantasy. Custom Traxx came across the following article written some time ago by Fred Miller and thought our readers would find it interesting.

DCC Sounds for the Bachmann Peter Witt Streetcar Model

By Fred Miller



Author's model of HO Peter Witt Car

The Peter Witt Streetcar model released by Bachmann (Spectrum) in 2007 generated a lot of interest in both the trolley modeling community as well as with model railroaders in general. The model car is nicely done in most details and includes a Bachmann's E-Z DCC motor decoder. The frame for the car includes an enclosure for a 5/8" speaker, however no sound is provided in the Bachmann release.

Based on my earlier experience implementing DCC sounds in some of my other traction equipment, I decided to do a custom sound installation for the Peter Witt Streetcar model. An undecorated model was acquired since I would be painting the car in my own company colors.

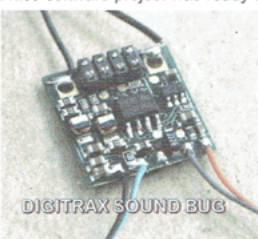


The next step was to acquire the appropriate sounds. In October of 2008 I visited the Baltimore Trolley Museum and recorded operating sounds from their Peter Witt car Number 6119. (I understand this was the actual car that the Bachmann folks used to develop their model.)

Although my earlier DCC "generic" traction sound project, implemented using the Digitrax SFX sound decoders, could have been used for the Peter Witt project, I wanted to get a bit more per-

formance (and sounds) included for this project. After the software was developed and the sounds were edited, a nice software project was ready to download into a Digitrax sound decoder. I decided to use the inexpensive Digitrax Soundbug™ (SFX004), which fits very nicely into the

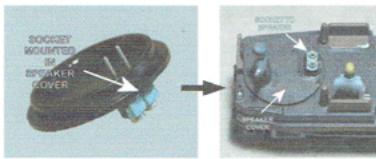
model right on top of the Bachmann E-Z motor decoder. The Digitrax Soundbug™ can be purchased from various retailers for less than \$45. Clipping off the extended pins on the 8-pin plug, normally used to attach the Soundbug™ to a 165 series Digitrax motor decoder, made the profile better to fit in the car. Power leads can be soldered to the two large hole pads as shown in the above photo. I did let the decoder's capacitor stick down into the car.



The provided speaker enclosure can only accommodate a 5/8" speaker. I tried various other speaker enclosures with larger speakers but to my ears, the improvement in sound wasn't worth the loss of the "look through" empty

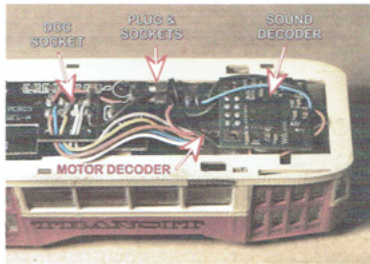
space in the car so I stuck with the provided enclosure. Most of the sounds I have implemented are at the higher frequencies so the small speakers do just fine. I used a 0.62 inch, 8 Ohm, 0.1-Watt speaker available from a number of DCC retailers for less than \$10. This speaker works nicely with the Digitrax Soundbug™

The Bachmann model comes with a speaker enclosure "lid" and holes at the bottom of the en-



sure for sound to come out the bottom of the car. To facilitate assembly/disassembly I installed a 2-pin socket in the "lid" so that I could unplug the Soundbug™ speaker lead during development.

I have also found that reading/writing CVs to a decoder is much improved if the motor decoder can be disconnected. The photo shows my plug and socket addition to the top circuit board to iso-



late either decoder when desired. One "track" lead is common to both decoders, while the other lead goes to the plug/pin. Both leads are simply tapped off the DCC plug.

The Sound Project I developed for my Peter Witt Streetcar includes a variety of sounds recorded from the prototype car at the Baltimore Trolley Museum. Throttle Function keys operate sounds for gongs, doors, passenger buzzer, and route rollup signs. Motor/track sounds are matched to the throttle "notch" and controller sounds are heard as the throttle is advanced or direction changed. Options can be set to sound two gongs automatically at startup (for the lazy motorman). Brake squeal and air release are automatic at stopping. Air Compressor sounds are initiated at selected time cycles as is an automatic passenger buzzer. Farebox coin clicks and voice an-

nouncements are randomly issued at door open/close cycles as well as automatic Conductor bells at door close. Track squeals can be played while the car is in motion. All sounds can be muted with a Throttle Function key (F6) and volumes for each individual sound can be adjusted by changing decoder CVs.

Throttle Function Key Definitions

- F0 - Lights (Only used by Motor Decoder)
- F1 - Continuous Warning Gongs (Sounds while F1 is ON)
- F2 - One or Two Trolley Gongs (depending on CV154)
- F3 - Open Door (F3-ON), Close Door (F3-OFF) or Track Squeals if car is in motion
- F4 - Passenger Buzzer (Sounds while F4 is ON)
- F5 - Route Sign rollup (Sounds while F5 is ON)
- F6 - Mute All Sounds

SFX Decoder defined CV's

- CV58 Master Volume 1-15
- CV132 Controller Notch Rate
- CV135 Volume when Muted
- CV140 Motor/Track Volume
- CV141 Gong Volume
- CV142 Controller Click Volume
- CV143 Compressor Volume
- CV144 Passenger Bell Volume
- CV145 Sign Rollup Volume
- CV146 Door Sounds Volume
- CV147 FareBox Volume
- CV148 Voice Announcements Volume
- CV149 Track Squeal Volume
- CV150 Time between Compressor Cycles
- CV151 Compressor Running time
- CV154 Number of F2 Gongs and Auto Start Gong
- CV155 Time between Auto Passenger Buzzer

Addendum—Installing Digitrax Sound Projects

Digitrax format Sound Projects include software to command the SFX sound decoder, sound clips in the standard Microsoft WAVE file format, and other control information. The Sound Project is loaded into the decoder using Digitrax Sound-Loader™ software and a PR-2 or PR-3 hardware interface between the decoder and the PC.

The Peter Witt Streetcar Sound Project (file name PeterWitt.spj) is loaded into a Digitrax SFX sound decoder. The file is available from my web site (www.fnbcreations.net/tractionfan). For those individuals not wanting to invest in the PR-2 or PR-3 interface I offer to load, without charge, my Peter Witt Sound project onto the individuals provided SFX sound decoder. Contact me at tractionfan@aol.com for further information.

The Rocky Mountain Train Show

Rocky Mountain Train Show™

April 2nd & 3rd, 2022
 Saturday: 10am – 5pm | Sunday: 10am – 4pm
National Western Complex
 4655 Humboldt St, Denver, CO 80216

Sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Division of the Train Collectors Association™ A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

April 2022 Manufacturers, Vendors & Sponsors

Approx. 3 Acres of Toy Trains - All Scales
 Over 750 Tables of Trains - 25 Operating Layouts
 Free Workshops & Clinics - TBD
 Hourly Train Set Giveaway

Admission: \$13 (valid for both days)
 Active Military, Scouts in Uniform, Children 12 and under FREE
 Free tickets will be available through VetTix for Veterans and first responders
 (quantities limited to 750 tickets)

Skip the lines and buy your tickets in advance at your favorite hobby shop or online at:
www.RockyMountainTrainShow.com
 Seller information: 303-364-0274

This was one of the first major train shows scheduled after height of the COVID-19 pandemic and we really wanted to "check it out". The opportunity came when Lee English, CEO of Bowser Manufacturing Co., asked George Huckaby of Custom Traxx to assist him at his dealer booth. Custom Traxx has served as the Project Coordinator for Bowser's HO scale model streetcars since 2009.

As you can see from the handout at left, there were many of not all of the major model railroaders represented at this show. Bowser did not commit to coming until after this poster was made so their logo is not present. The National Western Complex is a huge building capable of handling three or four shows independently, there is ample parking and plenty of refreshments.

The refreshment issue was the first thing noticed because within the show is a full scale restaurant serving breakfast lunch and dinner plus scattered within the show, not outside, were at least four separate refreshment stands offering everything from soda and hamburgers up to beer and pizza.



But one of the most interesting things at the show are the displays that the dealers spend lots of effort, time and money to build, pack, set up and tear down to show some of their new products. These new products will be in the magazines soon if not already, like Rapido's new HO scale Metrolink cars. I did not have a lot of time to discuss the new products because I was at the Bowser booth discussing their new RS-3 locomotive, equipped with ESU LokSound and the coming Kansas City Public Service All-electric PCC cars in HO scale.



ATHEARN BOOTH



BACHMANN BOOTH



RAPIDO BOOTH



SCALE TRAINS BOOTH

The one thing that I was really liked was a German N scale layout with what appeared to be operating catenary. A portion of this is shown below:



At least the pantographs were actually touching the wires. This will force me to do the same on the club N-scale layout.

The last thing that really stuck in my mind had nothing to do with trolleys. The hobby seems to have drifted into a fantasy scheme stage and I saw this in the Lionel Booth:



Don't miss the shows where the dealers are present.

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