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### CURRENT EVENTS.....

## Urban Commuter / Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!

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**BOSTON, MA** - Tramways & Urban Transit reported in their June 2022 issue that the first of the reconditioned PCC cars, car 3265, for Boston's Mattapan-Ashmont rail line went into service on March 21.



Anthony Tieuli provided these photos of the car at Mattapan. He also noted that although this car was built as an air-electric, it is now an all-electric. It rides like a new vehicle and can "burn the ballast" at speed. This is the first of eight cars that will be similarly upgraded for this line. The rebuild features among many things, new trucks from Brookville with resilient wheels, new solid state propulsion system and electronic gong. Car 3265 was originally ordered in January 1945 by Boston Elevated Railway and delivered late that same year and has been carrying passengers for almost 77 years.

**MEMPHIS, TN** - During the weekend of May 7-8, MATA officials were out testing ex San Diego U-2 #1035 for possible service on the city's streetcar system. The following shots were taken during the day Saturday and Sunday evening:





**PHILADELPHIA, PA** - During May, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority released a request for proposals for the replacement of its trolley fleet.

The RFP will begin the vehicle acquisition process with manufacturers, a major step of the agency's trolley modernization plan, SEPTA officials said in a press release.

The plan is part of SEPTA's capital program to transform the country's largest trolley network into an accessible, fast and easy-to-use system, they said. The agency aims to turn it into a system used for any type of trip, not just for work commutes.





The 141 car current fleet (112 single end versions for city lines, example above, 29 double ended versions for suburban lines) dates to the 1980s. The new vehicles will be fully accessible and have higher capacity, wider pathways, improved messaging systems and designated open space for people with wheelchairs and strollers.

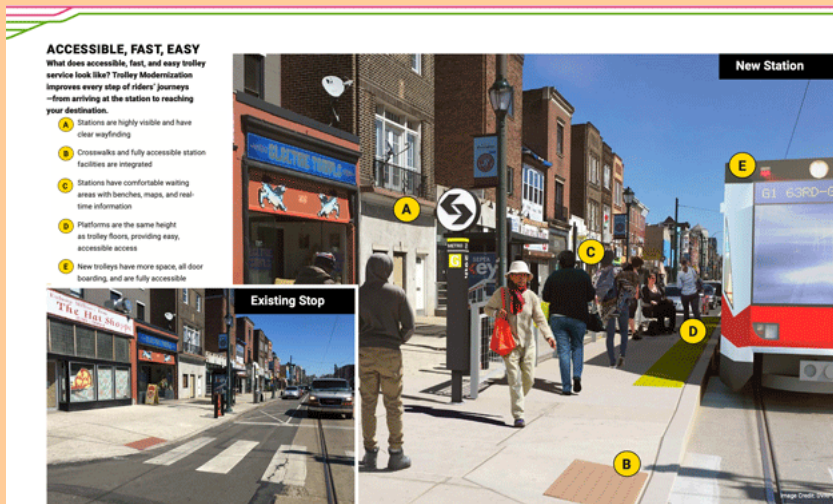
Additionally, SEPTA is building new on-street stations and rebuilding underground stations to become more accessible. The transit agency will make other significant improvements to operations and infrastructure to make connections easier, officials said.

Funding comes from the fiscal-year 2023 Capital Budget and 12-Year Program.

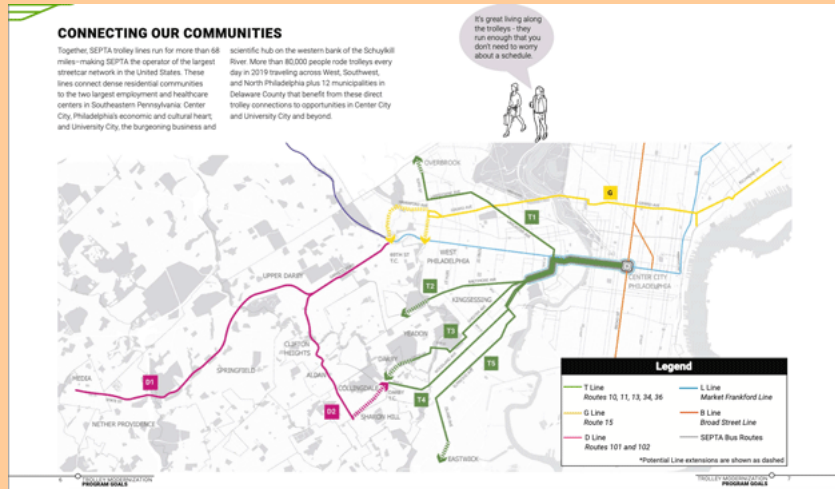
SEPTA's eight trolley routes operate over 68 miles of track to connect Philadelphia and Delaware County with the region's two largest employment and health care centers.



A few excerpts from the SEPTA Trolley Modernization Program Goals presentation show the above concept double-end vehicle similar to the Siemens S70/S700 vehicle now used in San Diego and other cities. It also seems to show plans to extend the pavement at trolley stops to reach the tracks, eliminating about 90 ft or 4 cars of parking spaces as shown in the next illustration.



We would assume that trolleys will no longer be stopping at every corner since that would eliminate enough parking spaces to start WWII along the lines. Remember the 59th Street parking fiasco when the trolleys returned to Route 15 after an over ten year absence. They are also renaming all the lines for some reason.



**COMMENT:** We will never understand why these people who are currently running transit systems insist on renaming routes that are well known to the riders, with the added expense of changing all the signs and associated literature. Los Angeles instituted the Blue line in 1990. After 32 years of knowing what it is, it was renamed the A Line and not one inch of track has been changed. Here, Philadelphia plans to do the same stupid thing, bordering on insanity. The trolley routes 10[T1], 11[T2], 13[T3], 15[G1], 34[T4] and 36[T5] have had their designation for over 110 years, running essentially the same routes. We also noted that they plan to extend what most Philly residents know as Route 15 to both the 63rd Street El station and 69th Street Terminal, and to do that they essentially put back a the rest of the old 41 trolley killed in 1957 by their predecessor, PTC.

**SANTA ANA, CA** - The Orange County Transportation Authority's (OCTA) streetcar project marked a milestone when crews placed the final steel beam on the OC Streetcar Maintenance and Storage Facility in Santa Ana, California on Tuesday, May 10th.

OCTA staff members and crew members from construction contractor The Walsh Group signed the beam that was lifted to the top of the building along with an American flag and a tree, OCTA officials said in a press release.

Construction of the rails and stations will continue along the route in downtown Santa Ana, where crews are working on an expedited schedule to minimize the effects of construction on local businesses.



Siemens Mobility is building the eight vehicles at its Sacramento plant. Delivery of the first streetcar is expected in 2023 with testing to begin shortly afterward. When the \$509.5 million project is completed, the streetcar will operate along a 4-mile line through Santa Ana and Garden Grove beginning in early 2024.





**SANTA CLARA, CA** - In early May, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's board authorized the first construction contract for the Bay Area Rapid Transit Silicon Valley Phase II project, which when completed will connect the San Francisco transit system to San Jose and Santa Clara, California.

The first contract package for the tunnel, trackwork and design build was awarded to Kiewit Shea Traylor Joint Venture for \$235 million. The work's first stage will involve innovations, engineering and design; cost estimates; and work scheduling. It will continue through December 2023 and prepare for major construction in the second stage, which will include boring the tunnel under downtown San Jose.

Kiewit Shea Traylor is a joint venture between Kiewit Infrastructure West Co., J.F. Shea Construction and Traylor Bros. Inc.

Three other future contracts being considered will be for the systems, stations and the Santa Clara Station and Maintenance Yard, authority officials said in a press release.

The project is a 6-mile, four-station extension to bring BART service from Berryessa/North San Jose through downtown San Jose to Santa Clara, including three stations with underground platforms and one ground-level station. A train maintenance and storage facility at Newhall Yard and other facilities are also planned. Five miles of the total 6-mile alignment will be constructed in a large diameter single-bore tunnel.



**SEATTLE, WA** - Progressive Railroading reported in early May 2022 that Sound Transit's light-rail extension project connecting Seattle and Eastside is experiencing major delays due to a concrete strike and other factors.

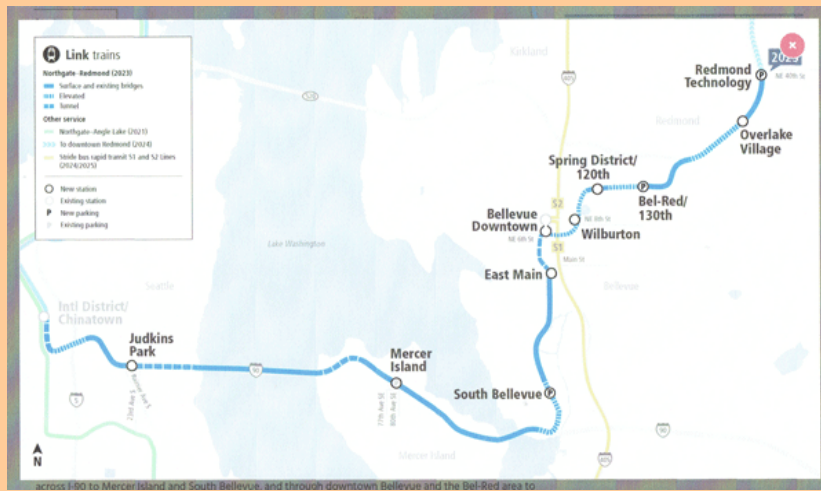
Concrete workers were on strike for four months until April 11. The workers' union, Teamsters Local 174, still has not reached an agreement with the transit agency. More than 300 concrete workers and drivers agreed to an unconditional return to work despite not finalizing a deal, reported Seattle's KING-TV.

The strike impacted four major light-rail extensions in King and Snohomish counties that were expected to add 34 miles to the system by the end of 2024. The agency will "do its best to minimize the degree to which the strike and other factors will delay the openings," said Sound Transit officials in a press release.

Other factors in the delays include the COVID-19 pandemic and quality issues on the Interstate-90 segment of the alignment between the Chinatown-International District and South Bellevue stations. Crews have identified defects in some of the plinths, the concrete blocks attaching the rail to the guideway structure. Some portions of the plinth will need to be demolished and replaced, KING-TV reported.

Sound Transit will prepare a quantitative risk assessment soon to look at outstanding risk factors and develop a revised timeline. Officials are still "optimistic" that the project will be within budget and adhere to safety regulations, KING-TV reported.

The [East Link](#) project is 14 miles long and currently on a \$3.6 billion budget. The project will link 10 stations between Chinatown-International District and Redmond. The extension was scheduled to open in summer 2023. Daily ridership is projected to reach 43,000 to 52,000 riders by 2026.



**TEMPE, AZ** - Valley Metro's new streetcar service began on May 20, with free fares scheduled during its first year. Service officially opened at 10 am. following a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The 3.1 mile route will transport riders to major employment centers, entertainment destinations, historic neighborhoods and regional transit network hubs, Valley Metro and city officials said in a press release.

The streetcar will offer two connections to light rail on with 14 sheltered stops. Each vehicle has a capacity of 125 people and will stop every 15 to 20 minutes. The vehicles are also accessible to those with disabilities and bicyclists, Valley Metro officials said in a press release.



The streetcar travels on Mill and Ash avenues from Rio Salado Parkway and Marina Heights to Dorsey Lane and Apache Boulevard. On Mill Avenue, the streetcar has an off-wire capability, powered by a hybrid battery. It is the first service in the Valley Metro fleet to have this capability, agency officials said.



Construction on the streetcar project began in 2018 and was funded by federal grants, regional funding from Proposition 400 and local public-private partnerships. The city funds operations. The transit agency might expand the streetcar system in the future, Valley Metro officials said.

#### OTHER TRACTION ITEMS:

### New Decal Set Coming from Custom Traxx!

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In keeping with their policy of providing decals for traction models made by 3D printers who work with them, Custom Traxx of Los Angeles, CA will be soon offering a decal set for the Atlantic City and Shore Railroad 1906 Stephenson-built 101-120 series cars, one of which is shown below. The decal set is based on a great deal of background information provided by Richard Allman and John Kennedy of the East Penn Traction Club.



These twenty cars were ordered in the summer of 1906 from the John Stephenson Company in Elizabeth, New Jersey, a subsidiary of the J.G.Brill Company of Philadelphia. Two were combines and for a time, one served as a funeral car named Absequam. They varied over the years with some having steel sides and ends added and different markings. These variances and the history of the line is documented in Bulletin 151 of the Central Electric Railfans Association. (CERA), *"Trolleys To The Boardwalk"* by James N. J. Henwood. This decal set will contain instructions that note these differences for the modeler along with painting suggestions. The set, CN-112, should be available by late June or nearly July.

