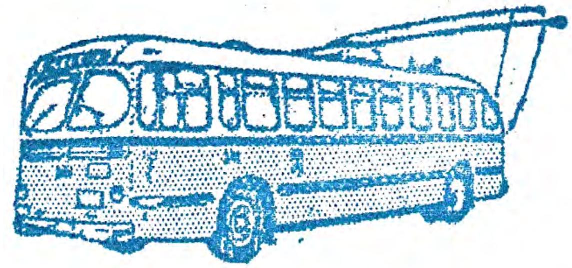
Bob Clark's *ELECTRIC* TRANSIT TALK



VOL. 51, OCTOBER 2025

Edmonton Radial Railway Society completes Restoration of Regina Streetcar

75 years have passed since the last streetcars ran in Regina, Saskatchewan. But one of them is now running at Fort Edmonton Park in Edmonton.

After over 23,000 hours of hard labour, volunteers from the Edmonton Radial Railway Society completed the restoration of Ex-Regina car 42 in June—an all-steel streetcar built in 1928 by the Canadian Car and Foundry in Montreal. Looking like new again, the car was returned to the rails in late June.

Regina car 42 was one of 9 steel streetcars to survive a disastrous fire in January of 1949 that destroyed a large portion of Regina's streetcar fleet along with a number of trolleybuses that had just recently been delivered. 14 of 27 streetcars, 17 of 23 new trolleybuses and 9 of 12 gasoline buses were lost in the blaze, crippling the Regina transit system and necessitating help from the Saskatchewan Transportation Company and other cities to permit the continuation of service.

Regina car 42 was used as a residence for a time after its retirement in 1950. The ERRS received it in the 1990's from the Saskatchewan Railroad Association, which had plans to restore it, but it had been sitting in the Regina Municipal Yards for some time.

"One of the things I am always surprised at is how passionate our members are in doing restoration. We want to get the cars redone as accurately as possible to what they were originally. In some cases, like with the Regina streetcar, we have photos from the manufacturer as well as blueprints," said Chris Ashdown, President of the Edmonton Radial Railway Society.

In its roster of operable cars and cars under restoration, the group also has five Edmonton streetcars, two Toronto streetcars, one from Osaka, Japan, one from Melbourne, Australia, and a Saskatoon maintenance streetcar.

[Sources: CTV News, June 20, 2025; edmontonstreetcars.ca accessed September 17, 2025; Colin K. Hatcher, Saskatchewan's Pioneer Streetcars (Railfare Publishers, 1971)]

Edmonton receives Vehicles for Valley Line West LRT

In early August, the first light rail vehicle for the Valley Line West LRT line arrived in Edmonton, Canada. The vehicle was shipped in two sections from Hyundai Rotem's facility in Changwon, South Korea. 46 such new vehicles are on order, slated to be delivered by 2027.

The vehicle underwent extensive testing before being loaded July 1 onto a ship designed to carry wheeled vehicles. The ship crossed the Pacific Ocean and arrived at the port of Tacoma, Washington on July 20. It was then moved by truck to Edmonton's Gerry Wright Operations and Maintenance Facility.

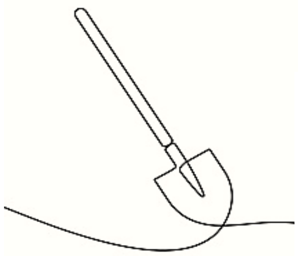
"Watching this train roll into Edmonton is a proud moment for our team and for the city," said Edmonton Valley Line West Director Brian Latte. "As Edmonton grows towards two million people, Valley Line West will change how we move, how we build and how we connect with one another."

The 46 new Hyundai vehicles will provide service on the Valley Line along with the 26 LRVs currently operating on the Valley Line Southeast. The City says both types of vehicles are designed to be fully compatible with the infrastructure of the entire 27-km Valley Line.

The elevated guideway above 87th Avenue for the Valley Line West was announced as complete on October 9th.
[Sources: City of Edmonton, August 7 and October 9, 2025]

Published by the Electric Traction Committee
of the Edmonton Trolley Coalition
www.trolleycoalition.org
Edited by Retired Employees of the Edmonton Transit Service

Shovels in Ground on Edmonton's Capital Line South LRT Extension



A groundbreaking ceremony for Phase I of Edmonton's 4.5-kilometre Capital Line South LRT Extension, which will see LRT service expanded into the southwest from Century Park to Heritage Valley, took place on May 29th. Among the attendees were Alberta Transportation Minister Devin Dreeshan and Deputy Mayor Michael Janz. The total project budget is $1.38 billion. Albertans will benefit from Phase 1 with more than 3,500 jobs and more than $300 million in wages.

"The Capital Line South LRT Extension is a vital project that will give Edmontonians a safe and efficient way to get to work, school, and around their city. Alberta's government is proud to invest $365 million to help make this project a reality," said Dreeshen.

Capital Line Design-Build Ltd., a member of the Ledcor Group of Companies, with AECOM as its design partner, has been awarded the Design-Build contract for Phase 1 of the project.

The extension will run along the west side of 111 Street from Century Park Station to the future Heritage Valley North Station at the Heritage Valley Transit Centre and Park & Ride north of Ellerslie Road.

The extension is expected to take four to five years to complete, followed by testing and commissioning.

This phase will include an LRT underpass at 111 Street and 23 Avenue, two new bridges at Blackmud Creek and Anthony Henday Drive, and two new stations at Twin Brooks and Heritage Valley North. Construction of the new Llew Lawrence Operations and Maintenance Facility south of Anthony Henday Drive and the purchase of additional Light Rail Vehicles are also included.

Deputy Mayor Michael Janz said that as population and transit ridership grow in Edmonton, it is crucial to build a city that is easy to move around in. [Sources: City News, May 29, 2025; Edmonton Journal, May 29, 2025; CTV News, May 29, 2025]

Edmonton Highlands Residents Lose Battle to Have Historic Streetcar Loop Preserved

Residents of Edmonton's Highlands community fought a lengthy battle to oppose the re-zoning of a heritage site in their community. In the end, it was to no avail.

In June, residents of the north side community received a letter from the City of Edmonton indicating a re-zoning application had been submitted. If approved, the Highlands transit loop at 61 Street and 112 Avenue would be demolished and the land sold at below-market value to an affordable housing provider.

Residents say the loop holds significant historical value to the community and they had hoped to see it preserved as a pocket park. "The Highlands streetcar played a significant role in the development of the Highlands — this was the end of the line for the streetcar," said resident Yvette Cioran. "It was an agreement between the Magrath & Holgate Real Estate Company and the City of Edmonton, a $20,000 deal that extended the streetcar line out to Highlands to serve this community in 1911, which was then a new suburb of Edmonton." Cioran says the community had even reached out to the Edmonton Radial Railway Society about placing a restored streetcar in the pocket park as a static display.

The Highlands is one of Edmonton's best-preserved historic neighbourhoods — there is even a walking tour to view homes and sites that have stood for over 100 years. Residents now consider the transit loop an important part of the community's history. When streetcar service to the Highlands ended in 1945, electric trolley buses used the loop in regular service until the Highlands line was extended to 50th Street in 1963.

"There are still residents here who remember riding the streetcars," said Cioran. "Two people I know — their father, their grandfather — they were conductors on the streetcars. So this is relevant. This is our living history."

Not just the residents of Highlands voiced concern. Edmontonians from across the city showed their support, saying they're not opposed to the much-needed affordable housing, but believe historical landmarks in heritage neighbourhoods are also worth preserving and investing in. "I heard about Highlands and this streetcar site, and I thought, you know what? This is how we protect," said Jesse Watson, Edmonton city council candidate for Ward Anirniq. "All we have is our identity, and I think it's so fundamentally important. As a heritage owner myself — I have a historic house, it's municipally designated, it's the Coates residence — we can't lose heritage." (con't on Page 3)

Electric Trolleybus News

Philadelphia seeks Tenders for New Trolleybuses

In April, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), transit service provider for Philadelphia, issued a request for proposals for the provision of new trolleybuses for the replacement of that city's current fleet. The authority is seeking to replace the electric fleet on a one-to-one basis, so a total of 38 new vehicles are required.

Trolleybuses currently serve three busy routes in northeast Philadelphia and operate out of SEPTA's Frankford Depot.

Philadelphia began operating trolleybuses in 1923 and has utilized the mode longer than any other city in North America. Worldwide, only Shanghai, China has operated trolleybuses longer; trolleybus service there began in 1914.

Prior to 2003, trolleybuses operated on five routes in two distinct areas of Philadelphia, dispatched from two separate transit depots. Various construction projects led to the conversion of the two routes in the southern portion of the city to diesel in 2002 and 2003. The conversion was to be temporary, but became permanent owing to a decision by the SEPTA Board in October 2006. Having been confronted with sharp criticism for this move at many levels, SEPTA later conceived the idea of using battery buses on the two southern routes as a pilot, and 25 battery buses were ordered in 2016. Although the battery buses went into operation in 2017, the battery bus pilot project was soon deemed a failure. By 2020, mechanical issues and cracked frames had sidelined all of the battery vehicles, and they have not seen service since.

In addition to electric trolleybuses, SEPTA successfully operates a large diesel-electric hybrid bus fleet. In order to test the performance of other new technologies, the agency also rolled out ten fuel cell electric buses on Route 23 at the end of May and during June. Midvale, SEPTA's largest bus depot, was equipped with a hydrogen fuelling station and a temporary maintenance station as part of the pilot project.

[Sources: Item 25-00098-AMJP SEPTA RFP issued April 23, 2025; Decarbonize, June 3, 2025; Wikipedia 'Route 29', accessed September 26, 2025; SEPTA News Release, May 30, 2025]

Former Trolleybus Routes Return in Dayton, Ohio

After being discontinued during the pandemic in 2020, Dayton's trolleybus Route 3 was reinstated on August 31st. The route has been combined with the old 5N that was also discontinued at that time. Although there was initially some confusion about the signage, the entire route is now designated as Route 3. Route 1 has been changed to terminate at Eastown Hub and is also now trolleybus operated. [Source: ETB News, Aug. 4, 2025; Photo D. McElrath Jr.]

HIGHLANDS LOOP (continued from Page 2)

Watson, a North Edmonton resident with a background in city planning, said the city should invest more into preserving its rich history. "I look at the city and the growth right now — we're booming," said Watson. "We have the most infill we've ever had in history. 95 per cent of what's being built in the mature areas is multi-family rental, which is important — we need rental — but the community is saying we're losing context. We're losing heritage."

"It's a little tiny site," said Watson. "It isn't big. It's probably going to have 12 housing units. But I think you can find space for 12 units elsewhere. You've got Northlands just up the road — it's acres and acres of land. I'm sure we could fit something in there."

Despite a number of presentations from area residents at a September 4th committee meeting and over 300 letters of support for preserving the streetcar loop and turning it into a pocket park, Executive Committee of Council voted on September 8th to transfer the land to the Jasper Place Wellness Centre for the nominal sum of $1.00 and offer them a $10 million grant toward a bridge housing project. Councillors Cartmell and Principe sought to delay the transfer until meaningful community consultation could take place, but their motion was not successful.

[Source: City News Everywhere June 28, 2025; CTV News, June 28, 2025; CTV News, September 8, 2025]

International Association of Public Transport releases 2025 Trolleybus Report

The UITP released its statistics report in May covering world trolleybus developments to the end of 2024. The report indicates that around 260 cities were operating trolleybuses in 2024, with about 22,137 vehicles in use worldwide. Beijing operates the largest network with 465 route kms of overhead wire, 31 routes and a fleet of 1,044 vehicles. Landskrona, Sweden operates the smallest network with a single trolleybus line and four vehicles.

The report indicates that the number of new trolleybuses put into service in Europe rose in 2024 to an all-time high of 372 units. It cites Prague, Naples, Arnhem, Tallinn, Nancy and Rome as examples of cities that have revived or are expanding their trolleybus fleets. 59% of new vehicles entering service in Europe were 12 metre (40 foot) vehicles, and 97% of the 372 units were equipped with battery propulsion for off-wire operation.

Worldwide trends show that many networks are integrating trolleybuses with battery offwire capability to increase route flexibility, and eBRT operated with trolleybuses is becoming popular. The report cites the 'trolebus elevado' in Mexico City as a prime example of the latter.

The report states that recent years have seen renewed interest in trolleybuses due to global pressures for greener transport solutions. The concept of In-Motion Charging, pioneered by Kiepe, has been transformative in the industry. The report forecasts growth in the trolleybus sector in the next few years, particularly in Europe, where aggregate data from 10 operators involved in a 2023 Bus Fleet Survey projects an increase in trolleybus fleets of some 120% by 2030. [Source: UITP Statistics Brief: Global Trolleybus Figures 2025, May 2025]

Prague Trolleybus System Expands

DPP Electrifies Routes 131 and 176

The expansion of the electrified public transport network in Prague continues apace. In addition to new tram lines, the city is increasingly turning to trolleybuses.

Prague's public transport operator officially began work on the conversion of bus Routes 131 and 176 to trolleybus in May with the installation of the necessary infrastructure. The estimated construction costs for Route 131 are about U.S. $12.9 million, while those for Route 176 are approximately US $17.1 million. In both cases, the work is expected to continue until the end of June 2026.

Once completed and operational, bus Route 131 will become Trolleybus Route 51, and Route 176 will be designated as Trolleybus Route 53.

Route 131 is particularly demanding and primarily serves residential areas in Prague, including Hanspaulka, Dejvice and Bubeneč. Part of the route follows the historical path of Prague's first trolleybus line, which began operating in 1936. The Bořislavka and Hanspaulka neighbourhoods therefore have a strong historical connection to trolleybuses.

Route 176 from Karlovo náměstí to Strahov Stadium runs continuously uphill from Smíchov to Strahov. It also has a historical link to trolleybus operations. Originally designated as route 53, trolleybuses ran along this route starting in 1948. In 1967, it was merged with Route 54 to form Route 51. It was the last trolleybus line to operate on Prague's previous trolleybus system when services ended in mid-October 1972. [Source: Prague Daily News, May 22, 2025]

Mexico City opens Elevated Trolleybus BRT

On May 18th, the "Trolebus Elevado" (Line 11) elevated trolleybus line went into service in Mexico City, marking a huge a step forward in the modernization and electrification of that city's public transport system.

The line connects the south-eastern urban area of Mexico City with the neighbouring state of Estado de México – and does so in an unprecedented way: fully electric and above ground on its own right-of-way, independent of private transport.

The 18.5 km line runs partly on a specially constructed 6.7 km long elevated route parallel to the busy Avenida Tláhuac and Avenida Ignacio Zaragoza and extends from the Constitución de 1917 metro station (Line 8) to the municipality of Chalco, a rapidly growing suburb. 13 stations serve the line and are located between two transport hubs that cater to millions of passengers every day. [Source: London Reconnections, June 10, 2025]

Tallinn, Estonia—a Leader in Sustainability

The Tallinn city government and AS Tallinna Linnatransport are investing in 30 more trolleybuses with offwire capability as part of a long-term strategy to modernize public transit and cut emissions. The decision follows on the heels of an order for 40 trolleybuses placed earlier this year.

Featuring energy-efficient technology, quiet operation and modern passenger comfort, the vehicles offer a sustainable alternative to conventional buses while meeting rising passenger demand.

The new trolleybuses are intended to improve service reliability and capacity on busy routes, particularly during peak hours. Together with Tallinn's bike-sharing scheme, walking infrastructure and tram network, the expanded electric trolleybus fleet will make it easier for people to combine different sustainable modes of travel. The investment shows how coordinated, eco-friendly transport planning can improve urban life, reduce emissions and build a resilient system that serves both present and future mobility needs.

The investment in the 30 additional vehicles will be partly funded by the European Modernization Fund, which has allocated €12.1 million (CAD $19.6 million) to finance 17 of the new buses. By upgrading its fleet, Tallinn is aligning with EU climate targets and reinforcing its role as a leader in sustainable mobility. [Source: Urban Mobility Observatory, August 28, 2025]

City of Zlin Renews Trolleybus Fleet

Zlin in the Czech Republic has begun the renewal of its Trolleybus fleet. In June, the Zlín and Otrokovice transport company signed a contract with manufacturer Škoda for the supply of up to 60 new trolleybuses. Funding will be provided through a grant from the European Union.

The trolleybuses will be low-floor and equipped with battery packs so that they can travel offwire for over 10 kilometres.

In operation since 27 January 1944, the Zlin network comprises 14 trolleybus lines and a fleet of 56 vehicles. The additional trolleybuses will allow an expansion of the fleet and an intensification of service. [Source: Sustainable Bus, June 11, 2025]

Yerevan, Armenia to renew Trolleybus Fleet

Tigran Avinyan, the Mayor of Yerevan, announced September 18th that the city's transport fleet will soon be entirely outfitted with new, state-of-the-art trolleybuses.

During a September 18th meeting, the Armenian government resolved to allocate 2 billion 137 million drams (US $5.5 million) to the municipality as a down payment toward the acquisition of 45 Yutong trolleybuses from China.

Avinyan indicated that the procurement tender for this batch has already been conducted. "In the recent past, 30 new trolleybuses were acquired, and with the addition of these new 45 trolleybuses, Yerevan's entire trolleybus fleet will be fully modernized," he declared.

He anticipates that all 45 trolleybuses will arrive in Yerevan and be operational by the first quarter of 2026. [Source: Arka News Agency, September 18, 2025]

We get Letters . . .

In our May issue, we ran an article about trolleybuses in Vancouver in which we mentioned the various makes and types of trolleybuses that have operated there, including an articulated Swiss-made demonstrator from Hess. One of our avid Vancouver readers, Dale Laird, wrote us to let us know there was also an articulated Neoplan dual-mode demonstrator that ran on the system there in 1986; EXPO '86 featured a transportation theme.

Dale says he drove the vehicle in trolley mode on Route 19 and in diesel mode on Route 401/406. It also ran on Route 10/14 Tenth/Hastings, where it was to be operated in trolley mode for about 90% of the route. Rewiring pans were temporarily installed on EB 10th Avenue at Blanca Street.

Dale says it was a great bus, but one of a kind.

One year, staff from Seattle METRO also drove one of their Breda dual mode vehicles to Vancouver to take part in a bus roadeo competition, but it was never operated in trolley mode while in Vancouver. As the Breda's top speed was 55 mph, it was no doubt a bit of a slow journey on freeways with a 60 mph speed limit.

ABOVE: Looking resplendent in the summer sunshine is ex-Regina car 42, as it emerges from the ERRS streetcar barn at Fort Edmonton Park in Edmonton, Canada after a complete restoration. (Story P. 1) [ERRS] BELOW: Built by Hyundai Rotem in South Korea, the first LRV for Edmonton's Valley Line West LRT arrives in the city and is unloaded. (Story P. 1) [City of Edmonton].

ABOVE: The German city of Eberswalde and its transit agency BBG proudly celebrated 85 years of electric trolleybus operation on September 13th with an Open House as well as rides on three vintage vehicles. [BBG] BELOW: Neoplan Dual-Mode demonstrator vehicle shown at the Oakridge Transit Centre in Vancouver when it was on test there in 1986. (Story P. 5) [R. Chew, TMS]

ABOVE: Manufacturer Alstom is working with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) to bring Citadis streetcars to North America as part of a project to modernize Philadelphia's streetcar system. Now in the final design phase, production of the new streetcars is expected to begin next year at a plant in New York State. The photo above shows the latest design. (Story P. 8) [Alstom]

ABOVE: Salzburg historic trolleybus No. 123 (shown) along with trolleybus No. 109, made trips on Route M and 85 on October 1st to mark 85 years of electric trolleybus service in the Austrian city. Coach 123 is a Henschel trolleybus manufactured in 1957; it originally operated in Solingen, Germany. The vehicles are maintained by the organization Pro Obus Salzburg, which has four operable historic trolleybuses and at least two more that are undergoing restoration. [Trolleymotion]

Rail News . . .

FTA approves West Seattle Link Extension Project

Sound Transit has received the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) approval for the West Seattle Link Extension project, allowing the project to advance into the design phase.

The West Seattle Link Extension will add 4.1 miles of light rail from downtown Seattle to West Seattle, serving the SODO, Delridge and West Seattle neighborhoods with four new stations and a bridge over the Duwamish River. It is projected to be finished by 2032. The extension will serve more than 24,000 riders per day, while cutting travel times from Alaska Junction to Westlake in half.

Meanwhile, the first Sound Transit Link light rail vehicle made its way across the I-90 floating bridge under its own power on September 8th, paving the way for a series of tests to commence in preparation for the opening of the extension of Line 2 to Mercer Island and Judkins Park in 2026. Work on the project has experienced some delays; the projected opening date is now set for late April of next year.

Link light rail comprises three lines with 45 stations serving the greater Seattle area and is managed by Sound Transit. Last year, the system logged nearly 31 million riders. [Source: Sound Transit, May 1, 2025, Sept. 12, 2025 and previous dates]

Caltrain Wins 2025 Sustainability Award for New High-Performance Electric Trains

In April, Caltrain received San Mateo County's 2025 Sustainability Award for its historic transition from diesel trains to a greener, faster, more frequent electric transportation network along the San Francisco Peninsula.

Caltrain is the oldest continuously operated railroad in the American West, having started steam train passenger service over 160 years ago. After 70 years of diesel trains, the Caltrain Electrification Project, with substantial Federal and State investment, introduced a new era of electrified service on the corridor.

The transition from diesel to electric trains has significantly reduced greenhouse gas emissions, comparable to taking tens of thousands of cars off the road annually. Additionally, it has created jobs in 36 states, fueling economic growth and innovation both within the local communities and nationwide. The collaborative effort to manufacture the electric trains and infrastructure shows a strong commitment to sustainability and job creation.

Since the launch of electric service, the agency has reported significant ridership gains. Caltrain saw ridership grow to more than a half million passengers in December 2024, a 41% increase over December 2023, and that growth continued into this year, with January seeing a 51% increase and February seeing a 48% increase over last year. In addition, the agency reports that regenerative braking on the new trains is generating and sending back to the electric grid approximately 23% of the energy consumed by the system. The first year of electric service is currently on track to have lower fuel costs than the previous diesel service. [Source: Caltrain Media Release, April 3, 2025]

Mark V trains enter service on Greater Vancouver's Expo Line

Mark V trains have entered service on TransLink's Expo Line in Metro Vancouver. TransLink says the new trains are the first of 47 that will bring more space, comfort and modern design to customers across Metro Vancouver by 2029. Originally purchased in December 2020, the addition of the Mark V fleet represents TransLink's largest-ever order of SkyTrain cars. TransLink says the Mark V trains will support the incoming Broadway Subway and Surrey-Langley SkyTrain projects.

The new vehicles are manufactured by Alstom in La Pocatière, Quebec, and then tested in Kingston, Ontario. The train cars then travel 4,600 km on flatbed trucks across the Trans-Canada Highway to Metro Vancouver.

The trains will add 25 percent more capacity for customers over current trains. They feature wider aisles with more standing room, handrails and leaning pads. There are multi-use areas for bikes, luggage, strollers, wheelchairs and other mobility aids. A mix of forward-facing and side seating allows greater choice and flexibility. The delivery comes as the agency is expecting a 20 percent increase in ridership on the Expo Line and a 50 percent increase on the Millennium Line during peak hours during the next five years. [Source: TransLink, July 10, 2025]

Electric Streetcar News

Philadelphia's Streetcar Modernization Project

SEPTA is now two years into its Streetcar Modernization Project, an undertaking which will introduce Citadis streetcar vehicles to North America. Alstom is providing the new streetcars as part of a complex, multi-year modernization project.

This phased project includes the construction of new platforms, improved signage for accessibility, the replacement of the existing traction poles with modern catenaries, and new maintenance facilities. The complexities surrounding Philly's 130-year-old network, originally designed for horse-drawn carriages and utilising Pennsylvania broad gauge, present significant challenges. A close working relationship between SEPTA and Alstom will maximize the potential of the historic network and implement the necessary technical adjustments to integrate it with next-generation Citadis vehicles. The project is now in the final design phase.

The streetcars currently operating in Philadelphia are 40-year-old Kawasaki cars from the 1980s. The modern Citadis streetcar is multi-articulated, bidirectional, fully ADA-compliant (*Americans with Disabilities Act)*, and features a 100% low flat floor for easy boarding. It also includes designated open spaces for wheelchairs, bikes and strollers, as well as USB ports and an audio-visual passenger information system.

The new streetcars are designed to reflect the city's historic character, combining clean lines with traditional elements inspired by the Liberty Bell. Essentially a European light rail car design adapted to American technical standards, the 130 Citadis streetcars will connect dense residential communities with the city's economic and cultural heart, business districts, health facilities and all the major universities. Production of SEPTAs new streetcars is slated to begin next year at a facility in Hornell, New York. [Source: Alstom Press Release, May 23, 2025]

Kansas City Streetcar Main Street Extension to Open October 24th

The Kansas City Streetcar's Main Street Extension to the University of Missouri Kansas City (UMKC) is set to open on October 24th. The extension adds 3.5 miles to the existing downtown route, connecting the current southern terminus at Union Station to 51st Street and Brookside Boulevard on the UMKC campus. With this extension, the system will span nearly six miles from the City Market to UMKC, providing an essential north-south transit spine through the heart of Kansas City.

Built at a cost of $352 million, the extension is fully funded through a combination of the U.S. Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant program and local funding. The expansion includes 15 new stops, enhanced public spaces, improved pedestrian access and the addition of eight new streetcar vehicles, bringing the fleet total to 14.

[Source: Kansas City Streetcar Authority, July 25, 2025]

Orange County, California unveils first OC Streetcar vehicle in Santa Ana

At an event in early May, Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board members and elected officials got a preview of the first streetcar vehicle that will operate on Orange County's modern, electric streetcar system. The S700 vehicle, manufactured by Siemens Mobility in Sacramento, is the first of eight to be delivered for the OC Streetcar as the project moves closer to its launch. The project is 92% complete now, with track and overhead all in place, and testing underway.

The OC Streetcar will run on a four-mile route between the Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center and Harbor Boulevard in Garden Grove, partially using old Pacific Electric right-of-way. It will serve some of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the county and connect with Metrolink rail service, regional bus services and OCTA's busiest local bus routes.

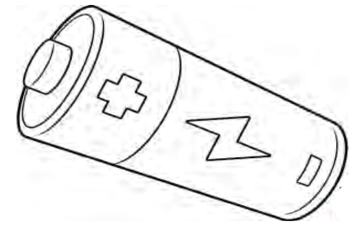
Features of the Siemens S700 vehicle include:

- Length of 90 feet and weight of 100,000 pounds
- Space for up to 211 passengers, with 62 seated and 149 standing
- A 70 percent low-floor with hydraulic level boarding
- Four sets of double doors
- Articulated with three sections

Revenue service is to begin sometime in the spring of 2026.

[Sources: Passenger Transport (APTA), July 1, 2025; Mass Transit Magazine, May 8, 2025]

Battery Bus News



Vancouver's TransLink to add over 100 Battery Buses and Test New 60 Foot Electric Trolley

TransLink has received $479 million in funding through the Government of Canada's Community Building Fund to purchase 102 battery buses as replacements for aging diesel buses, and to test a 60-foot electric trolleybus with In-Motion Charging capability.

TransLink says the investment will improve bus service for customers by supporting long-term service growth, expanding charging capabilities and diversifying the transit fleet. The funding will also cover the addition of 64 bus chargers and upgrades at the Port Coquitlam Transit Centre.

TransLink currently has 19 battery buses with 57 Nova LFSe+ battery buses on order. This purchase would bring the number of battery vehicles in its fleet from 19 to 178 by 2030.

TransLink notes it continues to build new infrastructure to support future fleet electrification, including adding new on-route charging stations. The 102 new BEBs will reduce TransLink's greenhouse gas emissions by 8,200 metric tons annually and more than 140,000 metric tons over their lifespan. On-route charging stations can top up buses in just five minutes, enabling all day service.

TransLink already operates the largest fleet of fully electric buses in Canada with its 262 vehicle electric trolleybus fleet. Testing of a 60-foot articulated trolleybus with In-Motion Charging will allow the agency to make further progress on the renewal of its electric trolley fleet, which is currently underway under a contract with Polish bus builder Solaris.

[Sources: TransLink News Release, June 27, 2025; Daily Hive, June 27, 2025]

Calgary Transit orders 120 Battery Buses from Nova Bus

Calgary Transit has awarded a contract to Canadian bus manufacturer Nova Bus to produce 120 LFSe+ battery-electric buses as part of an undertaking to decarbonize its operations by 2050. Production will begin in 2027.

Equipped with two charging options, Nova Bus notes LFSe+ buses can use overhead charging via a pantograph, as well as a plug-in system using sockets located on each side of the vehicle.

Funding for the buses is as follows: $100 million from the City, $123 million from the Canada Infrastructure Bank and $220 million from the Canada Zero Emission Transit Fund. Infrastructure and facility upgrades are also included in what is covered by the funding. The funding agreements were made in 2023 and originally were intended to fund 259 battery buses, but the cost of a bus has risen significantly since then. [Sources: Novabus, Aug. 12, 2025; Calgary Herald, Aug. 8, 2025]

Saskatoon Transit Looks at Two Options for Zero-Emission Fleet

Saskatoon Transit contracted the Canadian Urban Transit Research and Innovation Consortium (CUTRIC) through Canada's Zero Emission Transit Fund to create a comprehensive Zero Emissions Bus (ZEB) Implementation Plan. The analysis was confined to battery buses and hydrogen fuel cells.

Financial cost was shown to be a significant factor. The study found that the life cycle cost (15 years) of a fleet of 100% Fuel Cell Electric Buses would cost $1.1 billion using current prices plus another $18.2 million for facility retrofits. A fleet of 100% battery buses would have a total life cycle cost (15 years) of $479.2 million and require $47.7 million in facility costs and on-route charging infrastructure.

The study noted that both battery-electric and hydrogen-powered buses rely significantly on the power grid for charging or fuel production. Saskatchewan power plants use fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas to generate electricity, which emit greenhouse gases and counter some of the benefits of reduced tailpipe emissions from zero-emission buses.

Josipa Petrunic, President and CEO of CUTRIC, commented that electrification will become a more viable option for cities like Saskatoon as the provincial grid system decarbonizes in future years.

A transit fleet renewal strategy focussed on annual diesel bus purchases was presented to Saskatoon City Council's Standing Policy Committee on Transportation in June. [Source: City of Saskatoon, May 6, 2025]

CUTRIC releases sixth Zero-emission Bus Database

The Canadian Urban Transit Research and Innovation Consortium (CUTRIC) released a sixth edition of its Canadian Zero Emission Bus Database in July. The database features statistical information and highlights the challenges in moving toward zero-emission bus transit. It focuses on battery-electric, fuel cell and renewable-CNG buses.

There are 4,031 zero-emission buses recorded at some stage from pronouncement to in-service deployment across Canada. This number represents an overall decrease of 30% since the last report. This decrease is said to be due to market uncertainties, tariffs and inflation. However, the database does note a 42% increase in the deployment of battery-electric buses in Canada, with Quebec having the largest number of battery-electric vehicles in operation at 1,544 units. [Source: CUTRIC https://cutric-crituc.org/, accessed September 17, 2025; Mass Transit Magazine, August 29, 2025]

Toronto Transit Commission expands Battery Bus Fleet to 100+

The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) now has more than 100 battery buses in service across the city, and the agency also notes that all 340 electric buses under procurement are expected by the second quarter of 2026. The TTC aims to have a zero-emission bus fleet by 2040.

Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow congratulated the TTC on this milestone, saying, “Environmentally friendly public transit is a priority for the City of Toronto. I am pleased to see the TTC making progress on its goal of fleet electrification and achieving a cleaner, greener future for everyone.”

The TTC notes that in addition to the battery buses, hybrid vehicles currently make up approximately 30 percent of its bus fleet; they use approximately 25 percent less fuel than diesel buses and can run as zero-emission buses in green zones—locations where the diesel generator turns off completely—and thereby improve local air quality. The agency is also procuring five battery-powered para-transit buses which will arrive in 2026 and undergo a two-year pilot evaluation. [Source: TTC Media Release, June 25, 2025]

Chicago’s Pace Suburban Bus Service buys Battery-Electrics

In July, Chicago’s PACE board approved the purchase of 27 battery buses and adoption of several pilot routes at its July meeting.

The new vehicles will be 40-foot battery-electric buses from GILLIG. The board also approved continued work with the Chicago Transit Authority on a joint procurement of battery-electric buses for 2025 and 2026.

[Source: Busworld, July 18, 2025]

Washington’s Sound Transit Progresses with Stride Project

Sound Transit recently broke ground on a Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility (Bus OMF) that is destined to become the home of the Stride Bus Rapid Transit System. The new three-line BRT system will run battery-electric buses at 10 to 15 minute frequencies using high occupancy lanes to connect 11 cities located along Interstate 405 and SR 522 to each other and to light rail.

The Bus OMF, which is located north of the Canyon Park Park-and-Ride in Bothell, will include a new operations and maintenance building and parking structures for buses and support vehicles for both Stride and some ST Express bus services. It will also include the charging infrastructure necessary to support Stride’s double-decker and articulated battery-electric buses. [Source: Mass Transit Magazine, August 14, 2025]

San Mateo Transit builds Infrastructure for Battery Fleet Expansion

California’s San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) Board of Directors voted in August to approve a plan to build charging stations for its expanding fleet of battery-electric buses. The $36.3 million agreement includes the installation of high-capacity chargers, overhead pantograph dispensers and upgraded electrical and communications systems at Samtrans’ South Base Operations and Maintenance Facility in San Carlos, California. This first phase will power the 37 battery buses currently operating out of the South Base facility, while laying the groundwork to support up to 110 additional such vehicles in the future. [Source: Mass Transit, August 15, 2025; Metro Magazine, August 15, 2025]

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