



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OMNIBUS SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

**MAY/JUNE 2010**

**RUN 03-2010**

Welcome to another issue of The Green Pennant Special, the official publication of The Omnibus Society of America.

Through this publication we hope to keep our readers informed of events happening in the transit industry in Chicago and other cities in the United States.

Visit the Omnibus Society of America website at "[www.osabus.com](http://www.osabus.com)". At [osabus.com](http://osabus.com) we will be posting upcoming fan trips and meetings information, as well as membership information.

Please visit our site when you have a chance and give us your opinions and comments.

## • MAY/JUNE MEETINGS

The **May meeting** of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on May 7, 2010, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital, 2751 W. Winona Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

Our program for the evening will be a slide presentation by Wisconsinite Tom Poliak.

The June meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on June 4, 2010, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital. The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

The presentation will be "**Highway Coaches**" a slide presentation by Melvin Bernero.

## **PACE EXPRESS SERVICE A "HIT" WITH BASEBALL FANS**

April 1, 2010 9:30:00 AM  
Media Release Office: (847) 228-4295  
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Convenient service provided from suburban locations direct to Sox and Cubs home games

Don't commit an error this baseball season by attempting to deal with summer construction traffic and high parking costs when traveling to games- Pace's Express Service to Popular Destinations is the easy alternative.

With service to both home openers, all night, weekend and holiday games, as well as weekday daytime games June through August, the Wrigley Field Express and U.S. Cellular Field Express shuttle fans from convenient departure points with free parking at each directly to the main gates at the stadium. There is no service to weekday night games in April, May, September, or October. One

way fares are only \$4.00 per person, payable on the bus. Exact fare is required as drivers do not carry change.

Two routes comprise Pace's Wrigley Field Express, Route 282 from the Northwest Transportation Center in Schaumburg and Route 779 from Yorktown Center in Lombard. The U.S. Cellular Field Express is made up of three routes; Route 773 from Markham and Tinley Park, Route 774 from Oak Lawn and Palos Heights, and Route 775 from Bolingbrook and Burr Ridge. Specific information regarding these locations as well as departure times is available at [www.pacebus.com](http://www.pacebus.com) or by calling (847) 228-2416. Departure times vary based on game time and location, but generally depart between two and two and a half hours prior to the start of the game. All buses return approximately 30 minutes after the game ends.

"Our express service to baseball games is a great alternative to driving, especially in light of traffic congestion made worse by road construction, and no one likes to pay a lot for parking," said Pace Chairman of the Board Richard Kwasneski. "It's also a great opportunity for us to show people who aren't regular transit users how our service offers convenience and comfort while also saving them money."

Pace also operates seasonal express service to Toyota Park, Six Flags Great America, Soldier Field and most events at the Allstate Arena. More information on these routes is available at [www.pacebus.com](http://www.pacebus.com).

## **South Elgin hopes for transportation update**

April 7, 2010  
By JANELLE WALKER for Sun-Times Media

**SOUTH ELGIN** — The village board signed off this week on spending at least \$15,000 to study transit in the village.

The money represents South Elgin's share of the cost of a study by the Regional Transportation Authority to look at public transportation options in the village.

The RTA will pick up \$60,000 of the \$75,000 total cost, said Steve Super, South Elgin director of community development. Over the next year, the village, RTA and planning consultants Lane Vision will meet with residents, industrial and commercial business owners and management, and their employees, to review what public transportation options are needed or possible in the village.

Several public hearings will be needed, Super said, but have not yet been scheduled.



"It will involve us reaching out to our businesses to see what kind of services will be beneficial to them going forward," Super said. "We want to find out what the opportunities are and hope to find out what is the best path to provide possible services in the future."

Currently, there is just one Pace bus route that goes through South Elgin, Super said. That route starts at the Pace depot in downtown Elgin and ends at the Charlestowne Mall in St. Charles.

Village officials have heard, anecdotally, that there is a desire and a need in the village for additional transit options, Super said. "People say that it would be nice if we had a bus here, but buses are expensive to operate," he added.

In some cases, both Pace and the RTA have added specialized transit routes, Super said, which could be what is needed in South Elgin.

The study will include looking at transporting employees to the village's manufacturing facilities, as well as bringing shoppers to the Randall Road corridor, Super said. However, what the study could suggest at its end can't be determined yet, he added.

"People might use (public transportation) to get from home to work, whether it is in South Elgin or to the (Metra) train station or another bus, or to shopping areas and back ... and people who don't live in South Elgin to their jobs. We have a lot of small manufacturers and retailers that employ people who may possibly use transit," Super said.

## **Public Transportation in Serious Funding Crisis Due To Economic Recession**

Public transportation systems are facing unprecedented funding challenges due to widespread declining state and local revenues, and have been forced to take a number of critical actions including: raising fares, cutting service, and laying off employees, according to a new survey released today by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).

This report, *Impacts of the Recession on Public Transportation Agencies*, shows that since January 1, 2009, 84 percent of public transit systems have raised fares, cut service or are considering either of those actions. Fifty nine percent of public transit systems reported that they have already cut service or raised fares.

Service cuts that have been either implemented or will be considered for future action include: reductions in rush hour service (56%), reductions in off-peak service (62%), and reductions in geographic coverage (40%).

The severity of the funding situation is evident with seven out of ten public transit systems (69%) projecting budget shortfalls in their next fiscal year. According to the report, public transit systems have taken significant personnel actions to reduce spending. A total of 68 percent of public transportation systems have eliminated positions or are considering doing so in the future. Nearly half (47%) of public transit systems have laid off employees or are considering layoffs in the future.

In addition, more than half (54%) of public transportation systems responding have transferred funds from capital use to operations, thus aggravating efforts to keep systems in a state of good repair.

"Public transportation is experiencing a funding crisis and it is negatively impacting the millions of riders who depend on public transportation every day," said APTA President William Millar. "The results of this survey are grim as many public transportation systems are facing large budget shortfalls due to declining state and local revenues.

"As bad as things are today, more drastic service cuts, fare increases, layoffs, and deferred capital projects will occur if this problem is not addressed," said Millar.

"I call on Congress to provide federal funds for operating expenses during this economic recession," said Millar. "This funding crisis is not going away. Without help from the federal government, transit riders will be left behind at the curb or station."

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) supported and created more than 200,000 jobs, through both capital investment and up to 10 percent of funding for operating expenses. APTA's survey found that about one-third of public transit systems used some of their ARRA funds to pay operating costs. In December, the U.S. House of Representatives approved "The Jobs for Main Street Act," which provides an additional \$8.4 billion for public transportation, including funds for both capital and operating expenses.

"I urge the Senate to act now on its version of a new jobs bill, especially since no ARRA funding remains available for new grants," said Millar. "Absent a new jobs bill, further layoffs will occur as ARRA projects are completed."

Noting that nearly 60 percent of all the trips taken on public transportation are taken to commute to and from work, Millar said, "Now is not the time to cut service that helps people commute to work or enables the unemployed to look for work. Now is the time for federal, state and local governments to invest in public transportation to help support and create jobs, and maintain service to the public."

The report is based on a survey of 151 APTA transit system members representing more than 80 percent of



the nation's transit riders, and includes 19 of the top 25 agencies in terms of annual ridership.

## Regent Coach Line meets a growing region with a new MCI® J4500

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — April 8, 2010** — As San Antonio's tourism and convention business has expanded well beyond the Alamo and River Walk, Regent Coach Line Ltd. has expanded to meet an increasingly diverse community of businesses, educators and visitors.



To keep up with their passengers' need for comfort and safety, the 11-year-old charter operator chose a new MCI J4500, America's best-selling coach, as the latest addition to its 23-coach fleet.

"We felt it was time to do more business with MCI," explained Richard Dupree, vice president of operations, who already oversees three MCI coaches in Regent's fleet. "We had a pressing need for a 56-seat coach with a wheelchair lift, and MCI was able to make that happen for us quickly. It worked out great."

In addition to the Ricon chair lift, Regent's new J4500 features a Cummins ISM engine with an Allison B500 transmission, electronic stability control, wide-ride suspension with Koni FSD shocks and a reverse sensing system. "Everything about the coach works for our customers. MCI makes a nice product," said Dupree.

Dupree explained that the lion's share of Regent's charter business is corporate, but it does a significant amount of business for churches and schools including the University of Texas and Texas A&M University. San Antonio continues to gain more popularity as a tourism and living destination: In 2009, it was ranked on *Travel & Leisure* magazine's list of America's Favorite Cities, and the continuing U.S. Department of Defense base consolidation move continues to bring more military to the San Antonio area.

Dupree started the business in 1999 with two partners: The company's President is Russ Tottle and Chief Financial Officer is Glenn Robinson. In addition,

Dupree's son Geoff and daughter, Nicole Wilson, are also involved in managing and building the business.

Dupree began his career in the transportation business after leaving the Navy in 1969 with a company called Kerrville, now part of Coach USA. He rose through the ranks at Kerrville until he became vice president of operations. "All three of us (Dupree, Tuttle and Robinson) were all in the bus business for a long time, and we wanted to start something of our own. It's an interesting business, and you're always finding out something new."

In addition to its 23 full-size coaches, the company operates two, 29-passenger seat, mini-buses for local and regional use.

For more information, go to [www.regentcoachline.com](http://www.regentcoachline.com).

## Rolling with gas: CNG-powered MCI Commuter Coach goes on nationwide tour for U.S. Transit Agencies

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — April 5, 2010** — Despite a tough economy, U.S. transit agencies are planning now for a cleaner and energy-independent future.



To meet that need, Motor Coach Industries (MCI) has placed a compressed natural gas (CNG)-equipped Commuter Coach model on a tour to demonstrate the benefits of CNG to transit executives nationwide. MCI is borrowing the coach from longtime customer NJ TRANSIT to make the trip. The touring model comes complete with a new Cummins CNG-powered engine that will allow transit agencies all over the country a chance to see what the latest generation of CNG power can do.

"Our goal is to gauge market receptivity," said Michael Melaniphy, vice president of MCI's Public Sector. "Potentially, a CNG-powered MCI Commuter Coach model could be useful to agencies serving long-distance commuters in communities where CNG is required." Based on the industry all time best selling D-Series



model, the MCI Commuter Coach features many passenger-pleasing amenities and office-like digital options for a comfortable and productive ride.

"MCI and NJ Transit have had a good relationship since the CNG buses went into service in New Jersey in 1999, and we wanted to show other U.S. transit agencies how well a CNG-equipped Commuter Coach can serve their ridership," said Tom Wagner, director of business development for MCI's public sector division.

MCI is a leader in greener solutions for public transportation with both clean-diesel and hybrid electric clean-diesel engine technologies available in its Altoona-tested and Buy America-compliant Commuter Coach model line. Compressed Natural Gas is another fuel energy alternative MCI may offer customers in the future.

As America's largest statewide public transportation system, NJ TRANSIT has taken a leadership role in alternative fuel transportation. MCI delivered 77 CNG-equipped Commuter Coaches for NJ TRANSIT in 1999 and 2000 — today, those original coaches are still in operation with more than 500,000 miles on the odometer.

NJ TRANSIT bus maintenance officials say that the CNG-fueled coaches have turned into a smart investment in the system's future.

The particular Commuter Coach on the tour has a Cummins ISL G 8.3 -liter, 320hp engine specifically configured to operate on CNG that will be tested as a prototype for a potential future model equipped with a 2010 EPA standards compliant 8.9-liter engine. The tour began in Texas and has planned stops in Arizona, Southern California, Washington State and Idaho.

Transit agencies are invited to contact Tom.Wagner@mcicoach.com to schedule an appointment.

NJ TRANSIT is the nation's largest statewide public transportation system with more than 18,000 bus stops linking major points in New Jersey, New York and Philadelphia. Its website is [www.njtransit.com](http://www.njtransit.com)

## **MCI wins Greyhound Lines contract for 70 MCI® D4505 models**

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — March 31, 2010** — As part of Greyhound Lines' bid to modernize its fleet, it has awarded Motor Coach Industries (MCI) a contract for 70 luxuriously appointed MCI D4505 coaches. Delivery of the coaches will start in June 2010, and Greyhound has an option for 30 additional coaches.

"It's gratifying that Greyhound has once again turned to MCI for its equipment needs," said Tom Sorrells, president and CEO of MCI. "With the current state of the

economy and a growing movement toward more ecologically friendly travel, we're very pleased to be able to offer Greyhound the reliability, value and amenities so important in today's competitive marketplace. This order will also allow us to expand our production workforce by about 100 in our Winnipeg, Canada, and Pembina, North Dakota plants."



Greyhound's new D4505 coaches will be wired for Wi-Fi and equipped with passenger power outlets and three-point seatbelts. Additionally, each new coach will feature a wheelchair lift and plush leatherette passenger seating for 50, compared to the typical 55-seat configuration for the D4505 model. This move will give riders significantly more legroom. Greyhound has also opted for MCI's optional air-ride driver's seat, opened up the driver's area for additional comfort, and added additional security features including an aisle gate and driver's shield. The coaches are wired for up to six onboard surveillance cameras. The new MCI D4505s are also powered by clean- diesel engine technology, specifically the Detroit Diesel Series 60 engine paired with an Allison B500 transmission.

"Today's motor coach experience can make passengers more comfortable and productive," said Michael Melaniphy, vice president of MCI's Public Sector. "A typical motor coach replaces more than 50 cars on the road, and with the addition of high-tech interior features, we're changing a lot of commuting and travel habits."

A 2009 DePaul University study found that motor coach travel has grown much faster than other modes of public and commercial transportation due to coach companies making aggressive investments in passenger technology like WiFi access and power outlets throughout the coach that allow their customers to work and play online. "Greyhound is a legendary travel brand in the U.S. and Canada," said Sorrells. "As the leading builder of coaches, we look forward to expanding this important business relationship by offering the products and customer support services that allow for a safe, secure and all-around superb travel experience."



Last year, Greyhound entered into a new replacement parts contract with MCI Service Parts, and is currently developing contracts to acquire additional MCI coaches with Section 5311(f) federal funding offered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). MCI's relationship with Greyhound Lines spans six decades. Nearly 90 percent of the vehicles in Greyhound's fleet are MCI coaches.

"We are pleased to continue our long and well-established relationship with MCI," said Dave Leach, president and CEO of Greyhound. "During this partnership, MCI has delivered a reliable service to us ensuring our success as the largest provider of intercity bus transportation in North America. We are pleased to be able to work together to enhance our customers' travel experience."

#### About Greyhound

Greyhound is the largest North American provider of intercity bus transportation, serving more than 2,300 destinations across the continent. For information visit the Web site at [www.greyhound.com](http://www.greyhound.com). Follow Greyhound on Twitter for the latest news and travel deals, <http://twitter.com/GreyhoundBus>.

#### Flagship Trailways Continues its Olympian Efforts with a Brand-New MCI® D4505



**SCHAUMBURG, IL — March 17, 2010** — Flagship Trailways, a quarter-century old charter company in Rhode Island, has added a new MCI D4505 to its nearly 14-coach deluxe fleet. One of several key carriers in the Trailways system supporting the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Flagship's vehicles were a frequent sight throughout the games. Flagship President Tom McCaughey brought a fleet of coaches from the company's home base in Cranston, Rhode Island, to serve both the main Winter Games and the Vancouver Paralympic Games immediately afterward. "I still have a D4505 in Canada right now — it's a workhorse with a wheelchair lift, and the games are a 24/7 operation," noted McCaughey, who added that transportation providers were probably the only people celebrating the

lack of snow in Vancouver — it made for a considerably easier job. "We were ready for a horrible situation with tire chains and everything," said McCaughey. "We were lucky that the weather at least moved in our favor."

Flagship Trailways bought its latest D4505 coach for similar reasons — it's an easily maintained comfortable machine that can do yeoman work in a pinch, McCaughey explained. The newest model features electronic stability control, Amerex fire suppression and traction control as well as the SmartWave® tire-pressure monitoring system.

A believer in coach travel for its environmental benefits and the superior benefits it will provide commuters and travelers now and in the future, Flagship also placed the slogan from the national "Motorcoachified" campaign on his new coach. Established through the Motor Coach Council, the campaign is a grass roots effort to get the word out on all the benefits of travel by motor coach. Operators can have their coaches decaled (becoming rolling billboards) with a number of slogans promoting the benefits. For more information on that program, go to [www.motorcoachcouncil.org](http://www.motorcoachcouncil.org).

"With WiFi and electrical 110 volt outlets at every seat, riders now have a way to work and commute in ways they've never experienced before, and nobody competes with what coaches offer right now, not trains or planes," said McCaughey.

The McCaughey family bought Flagship Trailways from the DiCostanzo family in 2001 after the McCaughey family's longtime waste-hauling business was purchased by a major corporation. It turned out to be time for a change. "We liked being entrepreneurs, not part of a big corporation, and when I was younger, I always liked taking the bus," said McCaughey. "I had summer passes on Greyhound and Trailways when I was younger." When the McCaugheys sold their business in 1999, Tom McCaughey started working for the DiCostanzos and eventually negotiated to buy the company when casinos opening closer to the company's home base started to undercut the line's longtime Atlantic City business.

The deal was completed in July 2001 with bright prospects. Two months later, the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington "essentially put a stop on business," McCaughey explained. It would take months until the company could start building back a stable of customers led by a girls' boarding school that needed charter transportation. "I had nearly zero business when they called. They're always going to be one of my favorite customers," McCaughey says.

Since those tough days, the company has battled back by building a regional tour business cemented by runs to local casinos, ski areas, New York City and Boston Red Sox games. Its charter business serves private industry, schools and the military.



McCaughey notes that the success of his business also depended on aggressive efforts to become known inside the industry and attain key certifications such as its U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) safety designation, so far awarded to only a few hundred coach companies in the country, and to affiliate itself with the strength of the Trailways brand. Flagship Trailways is also a member of the American Bus Association, New England Bus Association, The United Motor Coach Association as well as the Rhode Island Trucking Association. "I believe in our industry, and these connections have helped build our company," said McCaughey

For more information on Flagship Trailways, go to [www.flagshiptrailways.com](http://www.flagshiptrailways.com).

## Francis Custom Tours brings passengers a new level of luxury with new MCI® E4500

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — March 17, 2010** — Francis Custom Tours of Arkadelphia, Arkansas, has built an international tourism business on the back of one hardworking coach — a 2006 MCI® J4500 Fast Track model. It will now double the size of its fleet — and the luxury it offers passengers — with its new 2010 MCI E4500.



According to company President Mary Francis, her firm deals mainly with retiree passengers and the 50-seat "E" coach will allow for two big necessities for that ridership — top-of-the-line comfort and extra room. "It's not uncommon for us to do 16-day trips and when you have passengers who have to deal with knee and back problems, a roomy coach is a great incentive for keeping those customers with you," said Francis. She points out that among the many amenities included with the E4500, she also took the extra step to include the optional seatbelts on their newest coach to round out the features provided to their passengers.

Among the other features on the new Francis Custom Tours E4500: Leather and upholstery Amaya seating, 110-volt power outlets, burlwood laminated parcel racks and entry-trim, flush lavatory, Blaupunkt 10.4" monitors,

a cordless microphone and a backup camera for the driver.

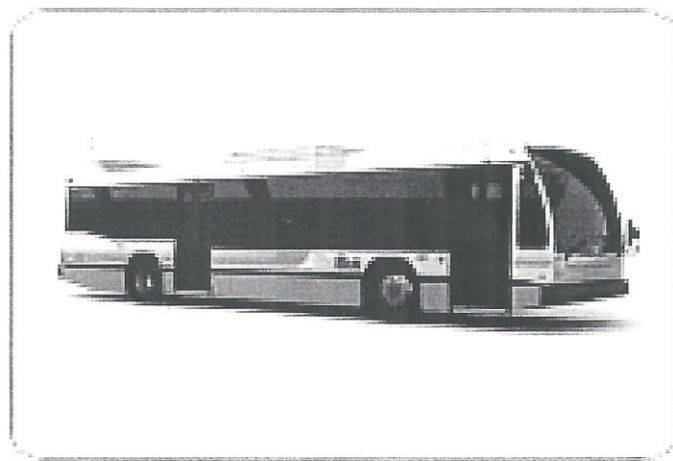
"We are planning to use this vehicle coast-to-coast," says Francis, whose daughter Susan Brackett also works in the company and plans to take Mary Francis's leadership role when she retires. Mary and her late husband Jerry Francis got into the travel business in 1987 with the purchase of Small World Travel and started offering short motorcoach tours in the early 1990s. In 1997, the family sold Small World, founded Francis Custom Tours, and eventually bought their first motor coach — an in-stock J4500 — in 2006.

"I love the motor coach business, and I go on most of the trips so we're right there to see that our customers are getting what they need," said Francis. "I enjoy interacting with people, and I always wanted to be part of a business that people would be enjoying."

For more information, contact Francis Custom Tours at [www.franciscustomtours.com](http://www.franciscustomtours.com).

## City of Honolulu partners with Nova Bus

The City of Honolulu has placed an order valued at \$10 million for 24 Nova LFS buses, with options on additional vehicles. The buses will be assembled in Nova Bus' upstate New York plant and delivered in late 2010.



The City of Honolulu and Oahu Transit Services are keenly customer-focused, and Nova Bus is proud to partner with them in enhancing their fleet, which provides over 72.5 million rides annually to the community of Honolulu.

Nova Bus President and CEO Mr. Gilles Dion welcomed the news, stating, "The Nova Bus team is thrilled to have the opportunity to collaborate with an innovative organization like the City of Honolulu. We realize the pivotal role public transit plays in their community, and we will work diligently to make this partnership a mutual success."



Since opening its facilities in Plattsburgh, NY, Nova Bus has been awarded contracts totaling over \$120 million from transit authorities such as MTA/New York City Transit and CT Transit. Nova Bus' presence in New York has led to the creation of more than 250 direct jobs and five times as many indirect jobs through productive relationships with over 150 suppliers.

"The city of Honolulu's decision to purchase buses from Nova is a huge win for the North Country," said U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer. "This contract will strengthen Nova's bottom line, provide job security to its workers and act as an economic shot in the arm for the region. Having Nova's buses on display in new markets will be great for its business and great for Upstate New York."

Congressman Bill Owens added: "This is great news for the city of Plattsburgh and the entire North Country. I would like to congratulate Nova Bus and the many members of our community for their efforts to bring jobs to the region. Many of us have worked for many years at job creation, which is my number one priority in Congress."

The Nova LFS is engineered around a unique stainless steel structure, which presents a distinct advantage in areas where corrosion is a significant concern, such as Honolulu. The bus is designed with riders in mind, with large, 360-degree windows for maximum natural light, and wide doors and aisles for easy access.

#### About Nova Bus

Nova Bus is a leading provider of sustainable transit solutions in North America, including hybrid buses, high-capacity vehicles and integrated intelligent transportation systems. The company relies on a team of more than 1,100 experts driven by the challenges of public transit with regard to mobility, safety, and productivity. Nova Bus is part of the Volvo Bus Corporation. For more information regarding Nova Bus products and services, please visit [www.novabus.com](http://www.novabus.com)

### **BC Transit and TransLink transportation provided by buses from Nova Bus**

**Saint-Eustache, Quebec, February 10, 2010** – BC Transit and TransLink recently took delivery of more than 300 new buses from Nova Bus, of which 141 are hybrid buses.

The two major British-Columbia transit authorities, TransLink and BC Transit, were assigned management of the important bus transportation during the 2010 Olympic Winter Games this February. The companies took the opportunity to expand and renew their city bus fleets. Combined, the companies ordered 311 Nova LFS city buses, and the new buses were delivered in 2009 and at the beginning of 2010. Of the total, TransLink has

taken delivery of 141 hybrid-drive Nova LFS HEV, with significantly lower fuel consumption and thus lower emissions of carbon and other pollutants.

Mr. Gilles Dion, Nova Bus President and CEO, states the importance of having a strong partnership with its clients. "Until the end of February, in addition to the usual service team, additional dedicated colleagues are on-site in our clients' strategic establishments to ensure maximum assistance during this time of high ridership."

TransLink's CEO, Ian Jarvis, says the new Nova buses represent a significant part of the increase in bus transit service in Metro Vancouver. "People all over our region are noticing the new Novas, particularly the distinctive design of our new fleet of hybrid buses. They'll play an important role in transporting the extra 250,000 transit passengers we expect to see per day on our system in February and March 2010, and they'll continue to serve our customers for many years to come."

"BC Transit's ability to provide enhanced service levels in February relies on the support from our partners," said Manuel Achadinha, President and CEO of BC Transit. "Nova Bus will help us move over two million customers in the Sea to Sky corridor."

#### About Nova Bus

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### **Coach America to add 11 new Van Hools**

ABC Companies recently worked with Dallas based Coach America to add 11 new Van Hools to their 1600 coach fleet. Currently operating 3100 total vehicles, Coach America is the nation's largest, and most diverse, operator of line, charter, sightseeing, contract and tour services. ABC is the exclusive distributor of Van Hool motorcoaches in the US and Canada.

The Anaheim, California division took delivery of 3 TD925 coaches. 8 Van Hool ADA equipped C2045E's have been added to Coach America's Woodland commuter fleet in Houston, Texas.

Mike Pierce, Coach America VP of Maintenance and Procurement, said "We like dealing with ABC... they do what they promise, and they do it on time. We treat our suppliers like partners, and we depend on them. ABC is a good company to work with."



ABC Regional Vice President Clint Guth indicated "ABC is proud to be one of the preferred suppliers for Coach America. They take the 'partnership' idea seriously, and the relationship fits the way ABC likes to serve our customers. Coach America's headquarters are located in Dallas and having personally grown up in the DFW Metroplex, this opportunity was especially fulfilling."

ABC Companies is a leading provider to the transportation industry with diverse product and service offerings that cover a full spectrum of operational needs including new and pre-owned full size highway coach equipment, mid-size shuttle transport vehicles, and advanced design heavy duty transit equipment.

With six strategic sales locations in the U.S. and Canada, five service locations and three fully-stocked parts warehouses nationwide, along with a major Canadian-based parts distribution hub, ABC supports customers with a comprehensive after sale service network for service and repairs, collision services, extensive OEM and quality aftermarket parts needs for transit, motorcoach and heavy-duty equipment. Additionally, private and municipal financing and leasing options are available through the company's financial services group – one of the largest financial service providers within the industry. For more information, contact ABC Companies at 1-800-222-2875 or visit the company web site at [www.abc-companies.com](http://www.abc-companies.com).

## Harlow's purchases the new 2010 T2145

"This is the first time Harlow's has purchased a new motorcoach and they really bought a beauty," said John McFarlane, VP/Sales Manager, ABC Companies, Canada. "The 2010 T2145 has the proven Cummins ISM engine/Allison Gen4 B500 drive train, but the rest of the coach is really unique. Harlow's opted for Van Hool's contoured parcel rack with 23" video monitors, REI's enhanced sound system, leather trimmed Amaya Gaudi passenger seats, Durabright aluminum wheels, WiFi, and 110 volt outlets. Their customers are going to fall in love with this coach."

Harlow Hageness started selling school buses in 1966 based in Rolette, ND. In 1978, in an effort to fill a regional need for chartered buses, he began running coaches out of Bismarck ND, and the operation has steadily grew into a 11 bus fleet operating charters to 48 U.S. States and all the Canadian Provinces. Harlow, with his son, General Manager Jason Hageness, continue to run the family owned business.

Neal Prichard, Coach Division Manager, pointed out that Harlow's Bus Sales and Service is a major school bus contractor and commercial and school bus

dealer, employing 450 people, selling and servicing buses in seven Western states.

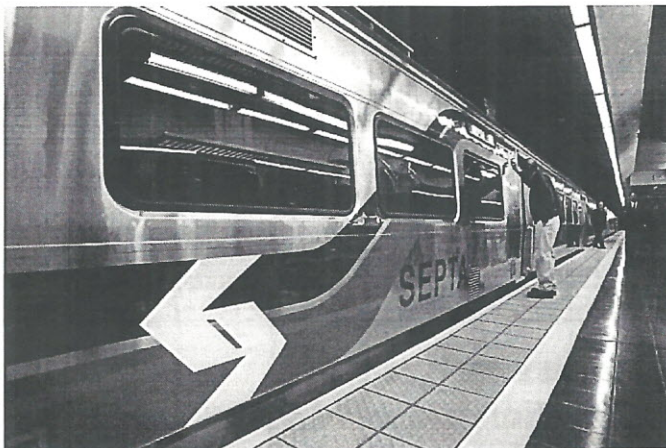
Prichard, an educator who worked 11 summers as a driver, joined the coach operation full time as Manager in 2003. "Every day when I come to work, the first thing I think of is safety. At Harlow's we're enormously proud of how much our customers trust us, and we work hard to keep it that way. We're DOD certified, and our employees take pride in providing our military the best possible transportation. We're in the process of joining Trailways, because we feel they share our philosophy of safety and reliability."

"Harlow's began as a service," Prichard pointed out, "and now we want to use what we've learned and take it up a notch. We think there is an untapped market in our area. There are a lot of folks who will really appreciate the luxury that this Van Hool affords, and we want to get them into travelling by coach. Our fleet has seven Van Hool's that we bought used from ABC so we know the product and support will serve us well."

## Septa Gives Public a Peek at Its Newest Regional Rail Cars

by KYW's John Ostapovich

SEPTA is showing off its next generation regional rail car, due in service later this year.



It's nearly the last gasp for previous generations of Silverliners, the self-powered vehicles that make up much of the fleet. SEPTA general manager Joe Casey (right):

"With this 120-car purchase, Septa will retire 73 Silverliner IIs and IIIs that are 43 and 47 years old, and will increase our fleet size by 47 cars."

The first of the new Silverliner Vs will go into service this fall, the rollout to be completed by the end of next year.

Two big changes for passengers will be more comfortable seating and doorways in the middle of the



car instead of on the ends -- a big help to passengers in wheelchairs.

Each car has video screens, for commercials, but can get service updates via loudspeaker straight from the Septa control center.

Two of the new cars will be on display Tuesday through Thursday, 11am to 6pm, on Suburban Station's track 0 (zero).

## **NJ Transit would cut planned fare hike to 10% on buses**

Posted on Tue, Apr. 13, 2010

By Edward Colimore  
Inquirer Staff Writer

NJ Transit bus riders could get a smaller-than-expected fare hike on May 1 under a proposal to be considered by the agency on Wednesday.

The plan would increase fares by 10 percent instead of the 25 percent proposed last month, officials said.

It also would restore \$4 million for bus service and would preserve some routes that were to be eliminated.

Train riders would receive no relief from the 25 percent fare hike proposed in March.

NJ Transit Executive Director James Weinstein is scheduled to present the revised plan to the agency's board of directors at the regularly scheduled board meeting Wednesday.

The change follows comments from thousands of customers at public hearings, in writing, and online, officials said.

"The modified proposal seeks to minimize the impact of fare changes and service reductions on the most vulnerable riders - low-income riders, students, seniors, and customers with disabilities," Weinstein said on Monday.

NJ Transit is the nation's largest statewide public transportation system, providing more than 895,000 weekday trips on 240 bus routes, three light rail lines, and 12 commuter rail lines.

The budget-cutting measures are intended to help address a \$300 million shortfall in NJ Transit's budget, officials said.

The response to the changes was mixed on Monday.

The reduced bus-fare increase "is a small step in the right direction," said Assemblyman John S. Wisniewski (D., Middlesex), the deputy speaker and transportation committee chairman. "But this remains a tax increase by another name for mass-transit riders."

"I remain unconvinced that Gov. Christie has done enough to cut costs and patronage before passing on this massive fare hike to working-class New Jerseyans," Wisniewski said.

Senate Majority Leader Barbara Buono (D., Middlesex) and East Brunswick Mayor David Stahl praised NJ Transit for its plan to preserve two bus routes that were to be eliminated.

The legislators said they had been inundated with correspondence from constituents alarmed that, of the three lines to be dropped in the entire state, all serve the East Brunswick area.

"Had all three of these bus routes been eliminated, the effects would have been disastrous, both for commuters and our roadways," Buono said.

The fare hikes and service cuts are part of an effort by Gov. Christie to close a \$2.2 billion gap in the state budget this fiscal year and as much as an \$11 billion deficit in the fiscal year that begins July 1.

Riders and transit advocates had blasted the changes, saying they would bring financial pain to those who can least afford it and that motorists had not been asked to pay higher tolls or fuel taxes.

"The proposed changes to the fare increases by NJ Transit are still outrageous," Jeff Tittel, director of the New Jersey Sierra Club, said on Monday.

Tittel suggested that more money should be raised through toll hikes and that the widening of highways should be delayed to cover transit costs.

"We need a long-term funding mechanism for transit in New Jersey," he said. "Otherwise these cuts to services and fare increases will keep happening, leading to the dismantling of one of the most successful transit programs in the U.S."

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## **Driverless trains in Subway plan**

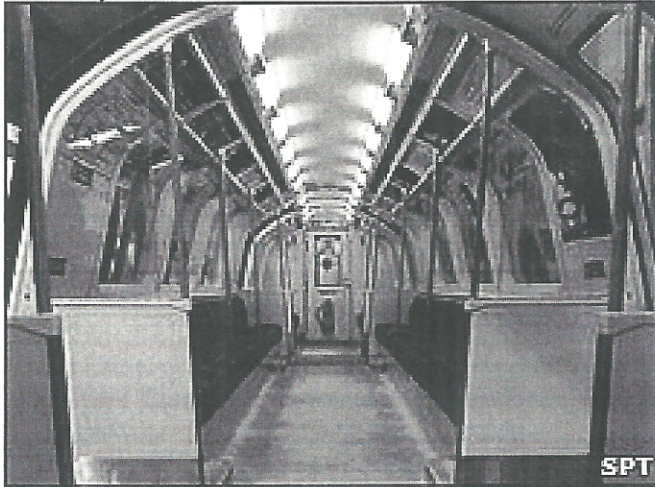
**BBC News 13 April 2010**

**A £400m revamp plan of Glasgow's Subway system could see staff numbers cut and the introduction of driverless trains and upgraded stations, it has emerged.**

The proposals are contained in a report which is due to be considered by Subway operator, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT), on Friday. If approved, SPT would ask the Scottish government for increased funding and also borrow against existing assets.



It believes the plans can deliver huge savings over the next 30 years.



SPT aims to borrow the majority of the cash needed for the overhaul

The report outlines options for a £290m overhaul of Glasgow's ageing Subway system with an additional £100m to cover operational costs over the next three decades.



Stations would be upgraded as part of the £390m revamp

The system, in its existing state, is believed to require about £220m on maintenance work over the same time period, with a further £320m in operational costs. SPT believes that a major revamp could cut running costs in the next 30 years to £100m.

Scotland's largest transport authority will be asked to back the improvement plans in principle, paving the way for far-reaching changes to infrastructure and staffing. Driverless trains could be introduced on new tracks running through refurbished stations.

These changes would require a 25% reduction in the system's 350-strong workforce.

The report states, however, that there would be no compulsory redundancies as most of the staffing cut could be achieved through retirements as the new system came online.

To pay for the overhaul, SPT proposes asking the Scottish government for an additional £5m a year for the first 10 years of the project

This would help meet interest payments the authority would incur in borrowing the majority of the cash against the value of existing assets.

Glasgow's Subway system was built in 1896. The last major revamp was in 1977.

## **U, Met Council angle for public's backing in Central Corridor feud**

**Money spent, cases made on eve of court-ordered talks on light-rail route**

By Dave Orrick

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Updated: 04/12/2010 05:36:47 PM CDT

Sky-is-falling sound bites, letters to the editor, heated correspondence destined to become public, tens of thousands in lobbying expenses, and, last week, threatened legislation.

These are among the weapons deployed by the University of Minnesota and the Metropolitan Council in their feud over how to build the Central Corridor light-rail line linking the Twin Cities through the U's campus.

Now, with court-ordered mediation sessions this week and a legislative hearing slated for Friday, the war of words and leverage between the institutions could either end or worsen. Or maybe just stay the same.

Regardless, at stake are millions of dollars — all taxpayer dollars — in what everyone involved says is the largest public works project in the history of the state.

Experts say both sides need to step up or risk hurting their reputations.

"I can see people in the general public throwing up their hands and saying, 'Why can't they resolve this?'" said Betsy Anderson, assistant professor of communications and journalism at Macalester College. Anderson has been following the back-and-forth of the proposed \$957-million light rail line at what she figures is "the average level" for most in the public. "I see the headlines and read some of the stories. Sometimes I'll hear an MPR report on it."

She said from that vantage, it's not easy to figure out what's really going on. "Is it really money that's behind all this? Is it research? Is it safety?"

What's really the problem, and what's really the solution?"

**ARGUMENTS MADE PUBLIC**



For more than a year, the two sides have been in negotiations over how to lay tracks and run trains without harming university research equipment. While the talks have all taken place behind closed doors, both sides have also made their arguments to other audiences.

Met Council Chairman Peter Bell, for example, has criticized the U in letters to University President Robert Bruininks. Those letters are public information, and the media has reported on them — and Bruininks has accused Bell of using them in the battle for the hearts and minds of state lawmakers and the public. Bell also has warned that university resistance threatens to scuttle the project, a warning that, at least so far, has not proven true.

The University has shot back with its own public relations blitz, including a video on its Web site, with Tim Mulcahey, vice president for research, warning of damage to science labs.

While Bell's staffers have argued their interpretations of federal regulations and construction timelines, the U has sought to discredit those statements, leaning on legal advice and lobbying skills from its own experts, including spending \$40,000 on the Washington, D.C. law firm and lobbying operation Patton Boggs LLP, according to the Center for Responsive Politics, a watchdog group that tracks lobbying expenses.

Bell, a former university regent himself, has criticized the U for spending on lobbying while cutting faculty pay. Meanwhile, university general counsel Mark Rotenberg has argued that the Met Council has spent more than the U on its own lobbying efforts.

Anderson noted that disagreements between the Met Council and the U surfaced several years ago when officials were deciding what route the rail line should take: tunnel versus street level, Washington Avenue versus other routes. In the end, everyone, including the U, agreed upon a Washington Avenue street-level route, although the U had reservations.

#### HEADED FOR MEDIATION

The current impasse, however, simmering for more than a year, is about how to protect sensitive university research equipment from vibrations and electromagnetic interference when the electric trains start rumbling along Washington Avenue in 2014.

Actually, it appears to be about less than that now. One of the key sticking points is what to do if trains cause more interference than predicted. And who pays — if anyone. And how much. And so on.

And that impasse has led to another problem: The university has refused to grant a temporary easement to allow construction on a series of side-street improvements.

Met Council officials say the delay has essentially cost taxpayers about \$1 million in a low-bid contract that will now go stale. In a sub-dispute, university officials say the Met Council is wrong about its own construction-scheduling needs.

In the last several weeks, this latest dispute shot rhetoric and tactics up another notch.

Bell, Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak, Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin and Ramsey County Commissioner Jim McDonough issued a series of verbal slams against university leaders, alleging "arrogance and pettiness" and accusing them of being "dead wrong."

University officials, as well as alumni leaders, fought back, penning letters to the editor accusing the Met Council of running a bullying public-relations campaign.

Then on Thursday, a pair of Democratic lawmakers played a card for the Met Council's side, introducing a bill that would allow the Met Council to use eminent domain to condemn university land it needs to build the line. One of the sponsors, state Rep. Alice Hausman of St. Paul, had tried to bring both sides together late last year in a series of public meetings. Her effort failed.

A hearing on the bill is scheduled for Friday morning. Until then, expect the rhetoric to be silent as the sides enter closed-door, court-ordered mediation as part of a lawsuit the U filed against the Met Council.

Retired U.S. Magistrate Judge Jonathan Lebedoff — a pick by the U and the Met Council to act as mediator — has instructed both sides to keep quiet, he said Friday. "We just want to get this done," he said.

Before his unofficial gag order, Kathleen O'Brien, vice president for university services, said she was optimistic mediation could settle things quickly.

Bell said he doubted that.

## Trolleybuses get the green light for the UK

By Andrew Bounds, North of England correspondent  
Published: March 22 2010 16:32 | Last updated: March 22 2010 16:32

Leeds won government support for its plan to reintroduce trolleybuses to the UK today, modelled on systems in Athens, Greece and Lyon, France.

The government agreed in principal to provide £235m of the £254m cost almost five years after it dismissed the Yorkshire city's tram scheme as too expensive.

Leeds' single-decker trolleybuses would run north and south for a total of 14km from the centre on existing roads powered by overhead electric cables. They are a cheaper alternative to trams, which have made a



comeback in many regional cities. The last British trolleybus ran in Bradford in 1972.

Sadiq Khan, transport minister, said today: "This is fantastic news for Leeds. An efficient and reliable transport system is critical to any local community. This is why we're investing significant amounts of money in infrastructure in towns and cities across the country.

"Today's announcement seeks to tackle congestion in the city at peak times, whilst presenting sustainable and practical alternatives to the car.

He also announced programme entry for a £15m scheme to help to improve access to Leeds City station, the busiest in the UK outside London, from the south. The growth of the city's new leisure and business district there has been hampered by the lack of a simple, step-free crossing over the River Aire, which the station straddles.

Rosie Winterton, minister for Yorkshire and The Humber, said: "Both these schemes – the trolley bus and the new station entrance – are a huge boost for the city's economy and will help to stimulate long-term sustainable growth and prosperity."

Mr. Khan also announced programme entry for a £25m scheme to enlarge York's park and ride system, which would increase capacity from 3,750 to 5,350 parking spaces.

He also said the government would set aside up to £331m for new roads to reduce congestion around the ports of Hull and Immingham and held out the prospect of tolls on the Humber Bridge being abolished.

Andrew Carter, joint leader of Leeds City Council, said they were the first schemes in three years in the whole of Yorkshire and the Humber to receive programme entry, and thereby pre-qualify for government funding.

The scheme must still pass further hurdles and funding is conditional on it being available when final approval is given. Transport spending in the Yorkshire and the Humber for 2007-08 was £234 per head, below the national average of £326.

Last week the government gave programme entry for a £127m extension to Birmingham's tram system. This month is also agreed to buy six new trams for Manchester and part-fund the construction of two new lines.

It also unveiled a £30bn high speed rail network to link London and Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield and Leeds.

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