



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OMNIBUS SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

## **MARCH-APRIL 2015**

**02-2015**

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.org](http://www.osabus.org)". At [osabus.org](http://osabus.org) 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.

### **• MAR/APR MEETINGS**

**The March meeting** of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on March 6, 2015, 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 showing of various DVD's on transportation subjects by Mel Bernero.

**The April meeting** of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on April 3, 2015, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital. The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

We currently have no program for this evening. If anyone wishes to present one, contact John LeBeau at the March meeting..

## **OSA Happenings**

**2015 dues** for membership in the Omnibus Society of America are now being accepted. Dues for the year are \$30.00 and can be paid in person at any OSA meeting or by sending a check or money order to our post office box.

Jack Doyle is in the process of arranging a 5 hour trip on Wednesday, June 24 using one of the MTM's old looks in Minneapolis/St. Paul.

Exact details are not available at this time but an informational flyer is to be made available for OSA distribution at a later date.

## **Mayor Emanuel Announces Next Steps to Transform Fisk Coal Plant Site into Community Asset**

4/18/2015

***NRG Energy, CTA to enter into a MOU to explore development of CTA facility and open space***

Mayor Rahm Emanuel joined Alderman Danny Solis and leaders of the Fisk and Crawford Reuse Task Force to announce today that the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) and NRG Energy have entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to explore potential redevelopment of the Fisk coal plant site into a CTA bus garage and maintenance facility. Significant sections of the Fisk site would also be set aside as open space and a park for use by the community, and the site will be better connected to the Chicago River.

"After working with community groups to shut down the last two coal plants in Chicago, we've made real progress in finding options to redevelop these sites in a way that creates both jobs and healthier neighborhoods," said Mayor Emanuel. "This MOU will continue our effort to redevelop these sites to provide opportunities for local residents to live, work and play in a healthy environment."

Working closely with the Mayor's office, NRG and the CTA will begin exploring technical details on the construction of a bus garage and maintenance facility on the site of the Fisk coal plant. The proposed facility would incorporate state-of-the-art clean energy systems and would employ more than 400 full-time employees.

Based on preliminary estimates, a bus facility at the Fisk site could save the CTA around \$2 million annually in fuel and operational costs by reducing the distance between the garage and the start of bus routes served by the garage.

"We are pleased to partner with Mayor Emanuel and NRG in exploring this development opportunity, which could ultimately improve the quality of service we deliver to customers while lowering costs for the agency," said CTA President Forrest Claypool.

In addition to the potential creation of a new CTA facility, significant sections of the Fisk site would be set aside as open space and developed into a park along the Chicago River.

"Building a state-of-the-art CTA facility that incorporates renewable energy and open space supports NRG's focus on a clean energy future," said NRG's East Region President Lee Davis. "We're very pleased to be working with these excellent partners—the CTA, Mayor Emanuel, Alderman Solis, PERRO, Pilsen Alliance, LVEJO, Delta Institute, and ComEd—to create a model for the nation on sustainable redevelopment of former coal plant sites."

"Removing these power plants was the first step in a process that is now moving forward," said Alderman Solis. "I am eager to bring this community to a place where our



residents can enjoy a higher quality of life and better-paying jobs."

Community groups have been leading the effort to not only close the coal plants, but through the Mayor's Fisk and Crawford Reuse Task Force, they have developed guiding principles for redevelopment of the two coal plant sites.

"Our community must be proud to be transforming a site of hazards and discord into one of unity and justice," said Nelson Soza, executive director of Pilsen Alliance. "A new huge task is commencing, and the community will be at the table from the start."

"After Fisk closed, PERRO organized to learn the Pilsen community's vision for the site of the coal plant that had plagued us for years," said Victoria Thurmond, spokesperson for the Pilsen Environmental Rights and Reform Organization. "Community priorities were clean, sustainable jobs, community green space, and access to the river. This announcement is an encouraging step in the Task Force dialogue, and PERRO will continue to work with Pilsen neighbors, NRG, CTA, and the Task Force to make sure development fits with the community's needs."

"For so long the Fisk plant was a source of environmental injustices in Pilsen. Through a strong community process, there is now a tremendous opportunity to transform the site and meet the needs for living wage jobs and access to open space in Pilsen," said Antonio Lopez, executive director of Little Village Environmental Justice Organization. "We also look forward to next steps on redevelopment of the Crawford plant that will transform the site into a productive community asset for Little Village."

As the facilitator of the Task Force, Delta Institute worked with Task Force members to solicit public input, facilitate stakeholder dialogue, and bring technical information to assist in finding solutions to revitalize this site and benefit community residents.

"Coal plant redevelopment is a difficult process that often takes decades to achieve," said Delta Institute CEO Jean Pogge. "Today's exciting announcement - just a couple years after plant closure - is a testament to the hard work and continued efforts of the Task Force, and it's great example of how important it is to bring all the key decision makers and stakeholders to the table, especially the communities that are most affected, economically and environmentally, by the coal plant closure and reuse plans."

## CTA Retires Historic 2400-Series Rail Cars

1/21/2015

***Agency holds "retirement ceremony" for indomitable, nearly 40-year-old rail cars, known for their original red-white-and-blue markings, as rail-fleet modernization continues***

In 1976, the United States celebrated the nation's bicentennial. "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" won multiple Academy Awards, including Best Picture. Jimmy Carter was elected President. Apple Computer Inc. was formed by Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak. Captain and Tennille's "Love Will Keep Us Together" won the Grammy for Record of the Year.



Steve Klabish photo

And, the Chicago Transit Authority introduced a new line of rail cars—the 2400-series. Unlike its predecessor, the 2200-series, the 2400-series exterior featured bold, red-white-and-blue graphics on both sides and the end of the cars, a nod to America's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday.

After nearly 40 years of service and millions of trips, the 2400-series rail cars will make their last in-service run today, as the CTA retires the fleet's remaining eight passenger cars.

The cars, produced between 1976-1978, are being replaced as the CTA continues to upgrade its rail fleet as part of an aggressive modernization and infrastructure plan by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and CTA President Forrest Claypool. The CTA continues to add its newest, state-of-the-art rail cars, the 5000-series, with more than 600 deployed to the Red, Purple, Yellow, Pink and Green Lines with a total of 714 of the new cars expected to be in place by the end of 2015.

To commemorate the 2400-series' nearly four decades of service, the CTA today will host ceremonial last rides on the Brown and Green/Red Lines on a train made up of 2400-series cars that have been restored to their original look inside and out.

Some fun facts about 2400-series rail cars:

- Built by Boeing-Vertol, the car's interior and exterior designs were developed by industrial design firm Sundberg-Ferar, who also worked on cars for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA, DC Metro), Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA). The CTA's 2400-series are the only heavy rail rapid transit cars Boeing ever manufactured.
- The interiors of the cars were a departure from previous series in several aspects and set the



standard by which 'L' cars interiors would be designed for the next few decades, featuring fiberglass seats with padded colored inserts, walnut grain-pattern wainscot panels with beige molded plastic upper walls, and chocolate colored rubber floors. The 2400-series cars are notable as featuring a return to wide sliding side doors instead of bi-fold blinker-type doors, which had been featured on all 'L' cars built in the preceding 30 years. These sliding doors allowed for freer passenger flow and were more suitable for access by persons with disabilities.

- The electrical equipment was updated and improved over that on the preceding 2200-series. A major change was the use of a motor-alternator to supply 230-volt 60-hertz alternating current (AC) power for all the auxiliary systems on the car, allowing less expensive components to be employed. These changes represented another step in the evolutionary path that eventually led to the modern 5000-series cars being delivered today, whose entire propulsion system is AC-powered.
- The 2400-series cars are one of the few car series to have operated on every line on the 'L' system. At various points in their service lives, they were assigned to the lines that make up seven of the eight 'L' services today. While never formally assigned to the Yellow Line, they operated there on rare occasions when substitute equipment was needed, since they were stabled in the same yard as the normal Yellow Line equipment.
- Two of the rail cars were given to the Illinois Railway Museum, where they are on display today.

Nearly 200 2400-series cars were retired. CTA retains two dozen of the cars that have been modified to serve as maintenance/work trains. Some of the 2400-series rail cars used in today's retirement ceremony will become part of CTA's historic rail car fleet, and will be used for special events and paid charters.

## Mayor Emanuel Announces Opening of New Cermak CTA Green Line Station

2/9/2015

### *Near South Side Station to Deliver Major Service Improvement for Motor Row and Nearby McCormick Place*

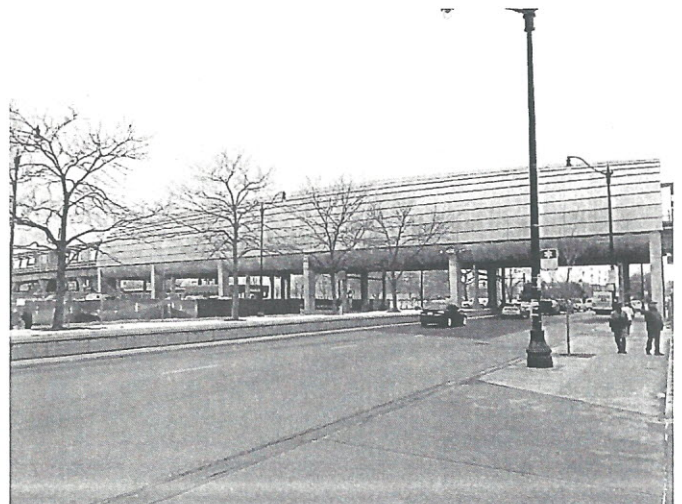
Mayor Rahm Emanuel today opened the newly constructed Cermak-McCormick Place Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Green Line station, which will serve the growing area near historic Motor Row area and provide a crucial additional transportation option for the Near South Side.

"Today we cut the ribbon on not just a new station for the Green Line but on a new economic future for the businesses and residents on the Near South Side," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "For Chicago to have a growing 21<sup>st</sup> century economy, we must have a 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure. So this new station is an essential investment in the continued growth of the Near South Side. It will encourage more investment and bring more jobs and more opportunities for people who live and work in this growing neighborhood."



CTA photograph

The new station, part of \$4 billion in transit investments announced by Mayor Emanuel since 2011, is located near the intersection of Cermak Road and State Street will provide much-needed access to rapid transit for Near South Side residents and businesses. It fills in a major gap in CTA service that has existed in the 2.5 mile stretch between Roosevelt and 35<sup>th</sup>/IIT stations since the previous Cermak station at that location was demolished in 1977.



CTA photograph

It will also provide convenient rail access to McCormick Place, which lies two blocks east. Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has worked extensively to help McCormick Place achieve its status as the premiere destination for conventions and meetings in the United States. Since enacting crucial work rules reforms, McCormick Place has been able to secure more than \$6



billion in new, recommitted, or extended shows. Through *Elevate Chicago*, McCormick Place and Navy Pier is undergoing \$1.1 billion in transformational development projects.



CTA photograph

"This station will benefit businesses and residents of this neighborhood, improving transportation and, as we have seen with other CTA new and rehabilitated stations, stimulating economic development in the neighborhood," said CTA President Forrest Claypool. "Through Mayor Emanuel's commitment to improving the transportation infrastructure in Chicago's neighborhoods we are continuing to increase affordable transportation options for people who live, work and visit this community."

The new station has three entrance points, including a main entrance on the north side of Cermak and additional entrances on the south side of Cermak and on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. Both the main entrance and the 23<sup>rd</sup> St. entrance include elevators from the street level to the platform for easy access for all passengers.

The station has a fully enclosed boarding platform to protect riders from the elements. The project also included new sidewalks, landscaping and street lights along 23<sup>rd</sup> St. and bike racks at each station house.

"This is another major investment in Chicago's transit system that demonstrates Mayor Emanuel's commitment to building a new Chicago," said Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld of the Chicago Department of Transportation, which managed the station's construction. "This modern, fully-accessible intermodal station will provide tremendous benefits to the near south side, serving rail and bus riders as well as pedestrians and bicyclists, linking all of them to the city's transportation network."

"This station is a great addition to the community and will serve the residents and tourists of this neighborhood well," said State Senator Mattie Hunter.

The project was financed through Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) funds.

## CH Bus delivers Temsa TS-45 to Texas

Posted on February 19, 2015

Killeen, Texas' Arrow Trailways added a new Temsa TS-45 motorcoach from CH Bus Sales.



The TS 45 is constructed from stainless steel for extra durability and strength. Equipped with the Cummins ISX engine and Allison B500 transmission, the coach provides raw power and optimum serviceability, according to the company. Top safety features come standard, such as an engine fire suppression system, lane departure warning system, tire pressure monitoring system, and laminated and tempered windows.

Arrow's TS 45 coach has seating for 56 passengers and includes quality features such as 110-volt plugs with USB ports, Alcoa Durabright wheels, REI monitors, and side and driver shades.

CH Bus Sales Inc. is the exclusive distributor of Temsa motorcoaches in the U.S. and Canada.

## CH Bus delivers full-, mid-size Temsas to Atlanta

Posted on February 6, 2015

Atlanta's Atlantic Limousine & Transportation took delivery of four Temsa TS 45 full-size and two TS 35 mid-size coaches from CH Bus Sales.





Atlantic's TS 35 mid-size coaches provide seating for 40 passengers and are equipped with leather seats, hardwood floor, a REI A/V system, flat screen TVs, Satellite TV, Wi-Fi, 110-volt/USB power outlets, and a restroom.

Meanwhile, the TS 45 full-size coaches are seated for 56 passengers and are equipped with some of the same favorite features, including Wi-Fi, 110-volt/USB power outlets, and Satellite TV.

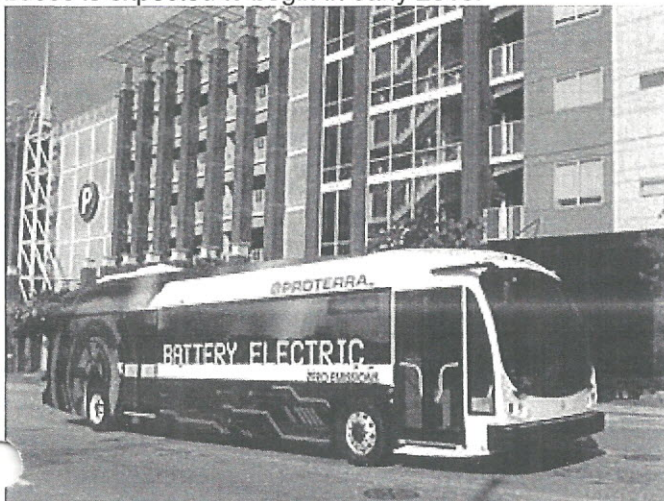
## Proterra grows market share with new FTA grant announcements

Posted on February 9, 2015

Six of the ten recent Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5312 grant winners will use their funds to purchase Proterra EV buses and charging stations, according to the company. This grant funding will result in the sale of 28 additional battery-electric buses and 7 fast-charge stations, bringing Proterra's total number of orders to 97 buses from 14 different transit agencies in North America.

Proterra welcomes three new customers receiving grants, including: Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), Dallas, which will receive 7 buses and 2 chargers; Duluth Transit Authority (DTA), Duluth, Minn., which will receive 6 buses and 1 charger; and Transit Authority of Lexington (LEXTRANS), Lexington, Ky., which will receive 5 buses and 1 charger.

Current Proterra customers receiving grants include: San Joaquin Regional Transit District (RTD), Stockton, Calif., which will receive 5 buses and 1 charger; Transit Authority of River City (TARC), Louisville, Ky., which will receive 5 buses and 1 charger; and Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA), Worcester, Mass., which will receive 1 charger. RTD, TARC and WRTA already have Proterra buses in daily revenue service and have chosen to expand the electrification of their fleets based on these buses' strong performance. Delivery of the new buses is expected to begin in early 2016.



"We are extremely pleased with the growing number of US cities that have selected Proterra as their partner in

eliminating fossil fuels from their transit operations. This announcement further strengthens Proterra's EV market leadership," said Proterra Vice President of Sales, Matt Horton. "We also applaud the strong leadership of the Federal Transit Administration in continuing to support American innovation."

Part of the FTA's Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users SAFETEA-LU program, 5312 grant funds are used to promote the development and demonstration of energy efficient buses used in public transportation.

To date, Proterra buses have logged more than 900,000 miles in revenue service in cities across the U.S. Proterra bus customers report excellent return on investment, significantly better performance than diesel buses and improved rider and community feedback. Existing Proterra customers include: San Joaquin Regional Transit District in Stockton, Calif.; Star Metro in Tallahassee, Fla.; Washoe Regional Transit District in Reno, Nev.; Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority in Nashville, Tenn.; the City of Seneca/ Clemson Area Transit in Seneca, S.C.; VIA Metropolitan Transit in San Antonio; Foothill Transit in Pomona, Calif.; King County Metro in Seattle; TARC in Louisville, Ky.; WRTA in Worcester, Mass.; and Transit Windsor in Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

## MDOT pays \$1.1M a year for rail cars it can't use

Detroit Free Press

OWOSSO – The State of Michigan is paying \$1.1 million a year to lease 23 passenger rail cars it can't use — and likely won't use for at least another two years — as the taxpayer tab for the troubled project approaches \$12 million and counting.



The 1950s and '60s-era double-decker cars are sitting in a rail yard in Owosso, where they are expected to remain for the indefinite future.

The Michigan Department of Transportation started leasing the cars in 2010 for two commuter rail passenger



services proposed between Detroit and Ann Arbor, and Howell and Ann Arbor.

But nearly five years later, none of the cars has logged a single commuter passenger mile. There still is no funding and no operator for either proposed commuter service, required environmental studies are not complete, and in the case of the Detroit-Ann Arbor service, even the tracks won't be ready for another two years.

So far, the state has paid the owner of the rail cars, Great Lakes Central Railroad, about \$7.6 million to overhaul the cars and another \$2.7 million in lease charges. But the per-car lease costs more than doubled in 2013 and 2014 as refurbishments were completed and the cars were certified as rail-worthy. Under the terms of the state's contract with the railroad, MDOT then had to start paying "in-service" rates that total about \$3,000 a day, even though the cars are just sitting in a railway maintenance yard in Shiawassee County about 30 miles northeast of Lansing.

MDOT has paid another \$1.1 million to its consultant on the rail car project, Pennsylvania-based Quandel.

The roughly \$11.4 million spent as of Dec. 31 was mostly paid from Michigan's \$300-million Comprehensive Transportation Fund, which is largely raised from fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees and is mainly used to pay for transit and rail.

Under state law, at least 10% of appropriations from the fund must be allocated for intercity passenger services, which includes rail projects. Michael Frezell, a spokesman for MDOT, said the project money came from that allocation and could not have been spent on roads, though it could have been spent on other eligible projects such as a bus service between two Michigan cities or another rail-related project.

The project costs continue to grow, but are still small change compared with the \$1.2 billion Gov. Rick Snyder wants to raise for additional road repairs through a May 5 ballot proposal that would raise the sales tax to 7%. Still, lawmakers expressed strong concerns about the expenditures after learning about them from the Free Press.

"They're betting on something that might not even come to fruition," said Rep. Marilyn Lane, D-Fraser, who is minority vice-chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

"I'm mad," Lane said. "If we have these dollars to peel off, we should be fixing the roads. For MDOT to jump so far out front on this is concerning."

Tim Hoeffner, director of MDOT's Office of Rail, conceded the project is "costing us more money than we wished it would."

"I'm not going to try and spin this," Hoeffner said. "Would we have liked to have gotten the service up and running sooner? Absolutely. Would we have liked to have timed

the lease and the overhaul of the equipment to better fit with the start of the services? Absolutely."

But Hoeffner said he doesn't think MDOT made a mistake. There's often a long lead time involved in securing equipment, so the department was right to tackle that issue before other needed items were in place, he said. He blamed a poor economy for the commuter rail services not getting up and running more quickly and said the project has been a boost to Michigan workers and businesses, with a large chunk of the renovation money spent in-state.

"Monday morning quarterbacking, hindsighting this, yes, we could have done a lot of things differently," Hoeffner said. "Based on the available information, and based on the estimated risks, we made sound decisions," and "time will tell ... whether or not we have failed miserably or been great visionaries."

Sen. Goeff Hansen, R-Hart, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, said he doesn't want to say much until he has more information on the contract. The deal was signed during the administration of former Gov. Jennifer Granholm, a Democrat, but amended four times during the administration of Snyder, a Republican — each time to increase the contract's maximum cost.

"Any lease that we're not using for something does concern me," Hansen said. "I need to find out at the end of the day, what are their plans, what is the time frame, when are the cars going to be used."

Under its deal with Great Lakes Central, MDOT could have leased and overhauled just 15 of the cars. Hoeffner agreed that in hindsight it would have made sense to go with a smaller number than 23, since he estimates only five cars, including a spare, would be allocated to a Howell-Ann Arbor commuter service — the one he said he feels has the best chance of going into operation first — and nine cars would be allocated to the Ann Arbor-Detroit service.

For now, MDOT has been putting the cars on display in places such as Ann Arbor and Dearborn to drum up interest in the commuter services. The state agency is also looking for temporary and short-term uses for some of the cars — which were part of Chicago's Metra fleet before their sale to Great Lakes Central — to help offset the hefty lease costs, Hoeffner said.

Possibilities include Amtrak using some of the cars on its Grand Rapids-Chicago service, Hoeffner said. That would require cars with handicapped-accessible restrooms. Initially, Hoeffner opted to refurbish the cars without restrooms but has since reconsidered. MDOT recently spent \$300,000 to equip two of the cars with handicap restrooms and may pay to put similar restrooms in other cars, he said.

In the meantime, Michigan Auditor General Doug Ringler has also been looking into the expenditures and a report to the Legislature is expected soon.



Carmine Palombo, deputy executive director of the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, has been working with local officials on developing the commuter rail services. He said there's enthusiasm for the projects all along the proposed lines, but the best bet for the Detroit-Ann Arbor service might be if the new Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan decides to include the proposed service in a four-county transit-related ballot proposal planned for November 2016.

Rail upgrades are under way for the next two construction seasons on the rail line the Ann Arbor to Detroit service would use, and both Hoeffner and Palombo said they don't want to start that service during construction work that could cause delays.

"The real key on both of these services is that without a commitment from the local communities to provide funding to help cover the operating deficits of the service, they're not going to get moving," Palombo said.

Michael Cicchella, a former supervisor of Northfield Township in Washtenaw County, said he worked hard on promoting the commuter service in 2007 and 2008 before stepping aside in frustration. He cited resistance in Livingston County government for the project not proceeding when he thought it should have.

It's too bad, Cicchella said, because commuter rail service between Howell and Ann Arbor could save lives by taking thousands of commuters a day off heavily congested U.S.-23.

Hoeffner said it can cost \$2 million to \$3 million per car to purchase new cars, and \$400,000 to \$500,000 per car to purchase new equipment. On that basis, the cost of the project — which now approaches \$500,000 per car when renovation costs are included — is not out of line, he said.

Still, "without having firm dates as to when these services are going to start and what all of that is, I believe that it is prudent to question what we've done," Hoeffner said.

## Paris orders more trains from Alstom-Bombardier consortium

Posted on February 12, 2015

Paris' STIF ordered 10 additional MI09 double-deck trains from the Alstom-Bombardier consortium, with the total amount of the contract approaching \$170 million.

The order relates to a purchase option on a contract awarded to the Alstom-Bombardier consortium in 2009. The new trains — set to be delivered during 2017 — will operate on the RER line A, which carries 1.2 million passengers per day, making it the busiest regional line in Europe.

The new order aims at strengthening the line's performance by increasing trains capacity and frequencies. It goes along operations that are related to a performance master plan being conducted on the line.

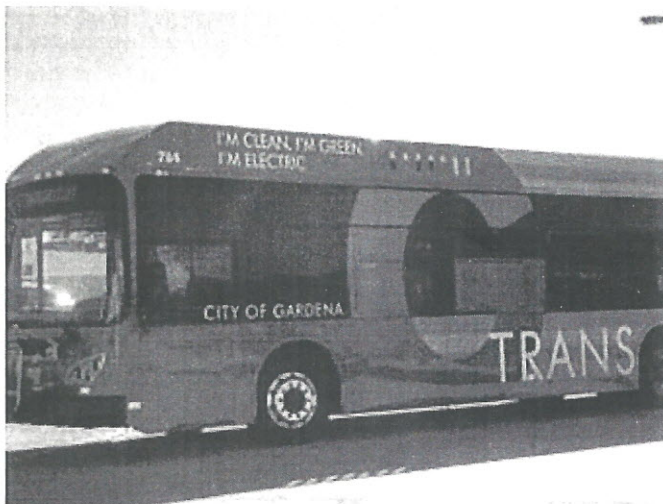


Each MI09 train can carry up to 1,725 people at a maximum speed of approximately 69 miles per hour. The trains are composed of five cars, each with three wide doors on each side to optimize passenger flow in stations. Its high-performance electric braking system reduces the train's energy consumption. A train-ground Wi-Fi link transmits operating parameters for the train, making it possible to anticipate maintenance operations and guarantee a reliable service.

## Calif. agency adds BYD bus, rebrands

Posted on February 5, 2015

Calif.'s Gardena Municipal Bus Lines debuted its first all-electric BYD Motors bus.



The operator, which recently unveiled the vehicle during a ceremony marking the bus line's 75th anniversary, also announced it is officially rebranding itself as GTrans. GTrans says the new name is easier to say, with "G" representing its home city of Gardena, as well as the bus line's commitment to green, environmentally friendly initiatives.

The operator has acquired two electric buses from BYD and plans to add more to its fleet in the future.



"Gardena's move to electric buses provides a ride that is quiet, with zero emissions, reduced hazardous waste, reduced dependence on petroleum and harnesses the sun to charge the buses without using electricity from the grid," said Macy Neshati, VP, sales, of BYD Coach and Bus.

## Iowa DOT study has officials eyeing intercity bus service, ridematching

By *B.A. Morelli, The Gazette*

LINN and JOHNSON COUNTIES — An express intercity bus service connecting Cedar Rapids, North Liberty, Coralville and Iowa City, and public ridematching software to better facilitate car and van pools are two preferred improvements identified in a preliminary draft of a yearlong study on commuting in Eastern Iowa.

The two-way intercity bus service would be geared to working commuters, offering power outlets and wireless Internet, said Brent Paulsen, technology and research manager for the Iowa Department of Transportation.

"It would have more amenities than typical bus service, such as Wi-Fi, so passengers can do some of their work on the ride," Paulsen said.

The Iowa DOT is working with HNTB, a Kansas City-based architectural and engineering firm, to finalize the Iowa Commuter Transportation Study and submit it to the Legislature by Dec. 15.

The study has focused on Johnson, Linn, Benton, Jones, Iowa, Cedar and Washington counties.

Paulsen said 7,000 people a day — about 14,000 trips — commute between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. With better transportation options, even more could access employment opportunities throughout the region, he said.

"There's definitely a need for express service between Iowa City and Cedar Rapids," he said.

Fifteen of the area's largest employers, who were consulted as part of the study, also said better transportation is needed to strengthen the workforce, he said.

The commuter study looked at a variety of options for public intercity bus service, such as rides every 15 minutes or one trip per peak time. More trips would require more buses and increase costs, while fewer trips would save money but limit participation, Paulsen said.

A model with rides every 30 minutes during peak hours — five buses and eight stops — would be most ideal based on cost estimates and rider demand, he said. This model is projected to draw 563 passengers a day with 5 to 9 a.m. and 2 to 6 p.m. service times.

Off-peak service could be eliminated as long as a "guaranteed ride home program" is in place, according to a presentation of the recommendations.

Paulsen said preliminary cost estimates for launching and operating the system need to be revised. The target

ticket price would be \$7 per round trip, according to the draft.

The proposed stops include the Cedar Rapids Ground Transportation Center, Kirkwood Community College (Cedar Rapids campus), park and ride near The Eastern Iowa Airport, park and ride serving North Liberty, the Coralville Intermodal Facility in the Iowa River Landing, University of Iowa near Carver-Hawkeye Arena, University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, and Iowa City Court Street Transportation Center.

The draft included other preferred improvements to accommodate people in more remote areas.

The DOT plans to launch public ridematching software for car and van pools that would allow users to connect directly with others to arrange ride-sharing.

The draft study also recommends a subscription bus service tailored to large employers. Paulsen said Whirlpool in Amana is a focal point for this option.

After the study is finalized, representatives from transit agencies in Eastern Iowa will form an implementation committee. The Eastern Iowa Council of Governments will be recommended to lead the group, Paulsen said.

## Broward County Transit prepares five MCI Commuter Coaches to put in service on Express Routes; will add nine more later this year

DES PLAINES, IL — February 10, 2015 — During a launch at Broward County Governmental Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Broward County Transit (BCT) introduced one of five new MCI Commuter Coaches that will serve its express routes to Miami-Dade County starting this spring. Another 9 MCI Commuter Coaches were ordered and are expected to go into service by this fall.



The new coaches feature comfortable high-back seats, LED reading lights, electrical outlets, Wi-Fi, pullout bike storage trays and wheelchair lifts. Designed for higher speeds, the Buy-America-compliant, Altoona-tested MCI Commuter Coach uses a high-floor design that raises passengers and the driver above traffic, along with a long-travel suspension for a smooth ride. It offers safety features including Electronic Stability Control, tire



pressure monitoring and fire suppression, plus a clean-diesel engine for near-zero emissions.

"We're honored that Broward County Transit has selected the MCI Commuter Coach," said Tom Wagner, MCI Vice President Public Sector sales. "MCI Commuter Coaches provide a higher level of passenger comfort, along with convenience, flexibility, and safety. One coach at seated capacity can replace 55 cars on the road, helping to fight congestion and promote conservation. Agencies like BCT are forward thinkers; we're pleased that MCI fits their vision."

MCI's Commuter Coach has earned its leadership position in express transit service by offering low ownership cost; a lower per-seat cost with 42% more seating capacity than a typical 40-foot transit bus; and an excellent MDBF rate, with the fewest failures per vehicle among all bus types.

#### **About BCT**

Broward County Transit (BCT) provides safe and economical bus transportation via fixed route, express, community bus and paratransit services to its customers. Serving nearly 40 million rides to customers annually, BCT operates 44 major routes within 410 square miles of Broward County, as well as carrying commuters to Miami and connecting with neighboring transit agencies. For more information about BCT visit [broward.org/BCT](http://broward.org/BCT).

### **San Francisco Municipal Transportation Awards New Flyer A Contract For Up To 424 Xcelsior® 60-Foot Heavy-Duty Transit Buses**

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada – January 8, 2015: (TSX: NFI) (TSX: NFI.DB.U) New Flyer Industries Inc. ("New Flyer" or the "Company"), the leading manufacturer of heavy-duty transit buses in the United States and Canada, announced today that San Francisco Municipal Railway ("MUNI"), overseen by San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority ("SFMTA"), awarded New Flyer a contract in December 2014 for up to 424 diesel-electric hybrid 60-foot heavy-duty Xcelsior® transit buses (648 equivalent units or "EUs").

The contract includes a firm order for 61 diesel-electric hybrid 60-foot Xcelsior buses (122 equivalent units or "EUs") and options for up to an additional 363 diesel-electric hybrid 40-foot and 60-foot Xcelsior buses (526 EU) that may be purchased over the 5-year contract.

Since 1988, New Flyer has delivered 302 heavy-duty transit buses to SFMTA in a variety of lengths, models and propulsion systems. This new award follows the MUNI award to New Flyer for 50 40-foot Xcelsior diesel-electric hybrid buses (as stated in New Flyer's November 13, 2013 press release) of which all buses have been delivered and are currently in service.

"Modernizing our transit fleet is at the core of Muni Forward," said SFMTA Director of Transportation Ed Reiskin.

"Replacing old vehicles with these state of the art buses will augment existing efforts like 'Red-Carpet Lanes' and transit signal priority. This purchase is an all-encompassing investment, by the SFMTA, that will help shorten trips while increasing service reliability."

"New Flyer appreciates the partnership developed with the SFMTA team over the last 25 years of repeat business, and we look forward to continuing to support their transit bus fleet development and replacement efforts with world-class environmentally friendly Xcelsior product line," said Paul Soubry, New Flyer's President and Chief Executive Officer.

### **Orange County Transportation Authority Awards New Flyer a Contract For 212 Xcelsior® Buses**

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada – January 9, 2015: (TSX: NFI) (TSX: NFI.DB.U) New Flyer Industries Inc. ("New Flyer" or the "Company"), the leading manufacturer of heavy-duty transit buses in the United States and Canada, announced today that Orange County Transportation Authority ("OCTA") awarded New Flyer a contract in December 2014, for up to 212 compressed natural gas (CNG) 40-foot heavy-duty Xcelsior® buses.

The contract is a firm order for 202 XN40 Xcelsior 40-foot buses and options for up to an additional 10 buses that may be executed over the three-year contract period.

OCTA's current active transit bus fleet consists of approximately 525 buses of which 521 have been built by New Flyer since 2006 and powered by natural gas.

This recent award of Xcelsior CNG buses will replace 192 liquefied natural gas-powered buses and 10 diesel buses that have reached the end of their useful life.

"New Flyer is the market leader in offering a wide variety of clean propulsion systems powering transit buses in the U.S. and Canada, of which nearly 5,000 CNG buses currently in service," said Paul Soubry, President and CEO of New Flyer. "We are committed to continue our support and the partnership with OCTA by providing a world class product and best value and support for the life of their New Flyer buses."

### **New York City Transit Awards New Flyer a Contract for 120 Xcelsior® Buses**

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada – January 21, 2015: (TSX: NFI) (TSX: NFI.DB.U) New Flyer Industries Inc. ("New Flyer" or the "Company"), the leading manufacturer of heavy-duty transit buses in the United States and Canada, announced today that New York City Transit Authority ("NYCT") awarded New Flyer a federally funded contract for 120 heavy-duty 40 and 60-foot Xcelsior® buses (195 equivalent units or "EUs"). This order was included in New Flyer's fourth quarter backlog



in the January 13, 2015 press release.

The contract is valued at \$80 million and includes a firm order for 45 XD40 (45 EUs) and 75 XD60 (150 EUs) Xcelsior clean diesel powered buses. This award follows on from the most recent award in January 2014 for 276 buses, which are currently in production.

NYCT and MTA Bus Company (together, "MTA") comprise the largest transit agency in North America with over 5,700 transit buses in their fleet and an annual ridership of nearly 2.7 billion. New Flyer began building buses for MTA more than two decades ago and to date have built nearly 1,500 buses, of which 977 are actively in service for MTA today.

"We are very proud to have been awarded yet another opportunity to build buses for the MTA," said Paul Soubry, New Flyer's President and Chief Executive Officer. "With more than 17% of their fleet now comprised of New Flyer, we look forward to building on our successful partnership. With the support of both NYCT and MTA Bus Company, New Flyer has enhanced our New York state supply base and increased our New York state content."

## **Hamilton Awards New Flyer a Contract For 18 60-Foot Xcelsior® Buses**

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada – February 3, 2015: (TSX: NFI) (TSX: NFI.DB.U) New Flyer Industries Inc. ("New Flyer" or the "Company"), the leading manufacturer of heavy-duty transit buses in the Canada and the United States, announced today that the City of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada awarded New Flyer a contract for 18 (36 equivalent units or "EUs") heavy-duty 60-foot Xcelsior® compressed natural gas ("CNG") buses.

For nearly two decades New Flyer has built transit buses for the City of Hamilton in a variety of models, bus lengths and propulsion systems ranging from diesel, diesel hybrid, and CNG. The City of Hamilton operates more than 250 New Flyer buses with this award marking the first time that New Flyer will build their best-in-class Xcelsior model for Hamilton.

"We greatly appreciate the confidence the City of Hamilton continues to have in New Flyer product and are excited to now deliver our Xcelsior model to them for the first time," said Paul Soubry, New Flyer's President and Chief Executive Officer.

## **Lane Transit Awards New Flyer a Contract For Up To Twenty 60-Foot Xcelsior® Buses**

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada – February 6, 2015: (TSX: NFI) (TSX: NFI.DB.U) New Flyer Industries Inc. ("New Flyer" or the "Company"), the leading manufacturer of heavy-duty transit buses in the United States and

Canada, announced today that Lane Transit, located in Eugene, Oregon awarded New Flyer a contract for up to 20 (40 equivalent units or "EUs") heavy-duty 60-foot Xcelsior® diesel electric hybrid buses.

The contract includes a firm order for seven (14 EUs) XDE60 buses and options for an additional 13 (26 EUs) buses over the next five years.

Over the last decade, New Flyer has built and delivered 29 60-foot diesel and diesel electric hybrid buses to Lane Transit. The last award was in 2014 with the delivery of three diesel electric hybrid Xcelsior buses.

"We are honored to continue to build our environmentally friendly diesel electric hybrid Xcelsior buses for Lane Transit," said Paul Soubry, New Flyer's President and Chief Executive Officer. "Lane Transit has proven to be a leader in providing green transportation to their annual ridership of over 11,000,000 customers."

## **BYD Unveils World's First Battery Electric Coach Bus**

01/28/2015

NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 27, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- BYD Motors Inc. has officially unveiled the world's first long range, 100% Battery Electric Over the Road Coach Bus. This first electric coach, named the BYD C9, is a two-axle, 40' coach with the seating capacity to carry 47 people at highway speed for over 190 miles. "The transportation industry is still just warming up to the idea of Battery Electric transit buses," said BYD Coach & Bus Vice President of Sales, Macy Neshati. "It was exciting to walk around last year's APTA Expo in Houston and see so many reputable names displaying an electrified transit bus. However, I don't think anybody thought they would see a viable electric coach solution for a few more years."



The BYD C9 is the first of three 100% Battery Electric coaches the company will launch globally this year. The other two, a 45' three-axle coach named the C10 and a 23' coach with executive and transport configurations named the C6 will be arriving by the end of 2015, and BYD sales managers at the 2015 UMA Expo were

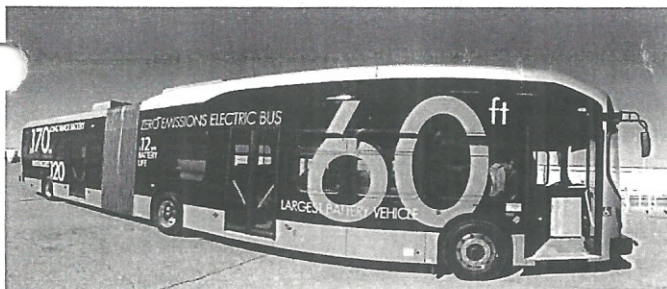


adamant about the fact they are taking orders for all three of the coaches starting now. "Last year, BYD pulled away from the competition in the transit space when they launched a 30' low floor bus and a 60' articulated bus in addition to their 40' bus making them the only electric bus builder with multiple offerings. This year the launch of three coach buses puts BYD on a level with no other bus or coach OEM. Not many people know this about BYD but we are a multibillion-dollar company employing nearly 190,000 people worldwide. There simply has never been a bus manufacturer in the United States with this sort of engineering or manufacturing power, that's why I tell every customer I meet with they should go BYD, it's the safe choice!" said Neshati.

## Come Ride The World's Largest Battery Electric Vehicle In Long Beach

11/26/2014

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 20, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- BYD Motors-- an American Manufacturer of battery-electric transit buses, will roll out one of its new extraordinary electric buses in Long Beach, California on December 3, 2014 for an exclusive tour with press and invited local guests.



The 60-foot articulated electric bus can carry 120 passengers and will be driven from BYD's factory in Lancaster, California where it was designed and built to Long Beach for a tour around town, and end with a reception showcasing BYD's ZERO-emissions, all-electric cars and buses. This all-electric bus can go over 170 miles on a single charge (complete in 2 to 3 hours over-night).

BYD is set to deliver the first five of LA METRO's twenty-five 40-foot, 100% Battery Electric transit buses in early January 2015. "METRO is proving that they are one of the nation's leaders in clean public transportation," stated BYD America Vice President Micheal Austin. In addition, BYD has also deployed 13 of their 40-foot electric buses for Stanford University's campus shuttle routes.

While each BYD electric bus eliminates the equivalent emissions of 33 gasoline cars every day -- equivalent to the carbon-dioxide absorbed by 2.77 trees each, Los Angeles METRO will immediately see yearly fuel & maintenance savings of \$35,000.00 per bus.

If you would like to be a part of BYD's tour of Long Beach, please RSVP to the address shown and feel free to call with questions. There will be full press availability during the tour with BYD Executives.

## CTA, Pace brace for Rauner's proposed \$130 million cuts

The CTA, Metra and Pace would lose almost \$130 million in state funding under the 2016 budget plan that Gov. Bruce Rauner presented Wednesday, potentially threatening transit services provided to disabled riders and opening the door to deep service cuts and fare increases for daily commuters on trains and buses, transit officials said.

The CTA alone would suffer a state cutback of more than \$105 million, according to a preliminary analysis by the transit agency. The proposed cuts, roughly 7 percent of the agency's operating budget, would risk reversing improvements the CTA has made in recent years, CTA spokesman Brian Steele said.

To put the cuts in perspective, the city of Chicago spent \$50 million to build the new Cermak-McCormick Place station that opened this month on the Green Line. And it cost the CTA about \$16 million on a crowding-reduction plan implemented in late 2012 that added service on 48 bus routes and six rail lines, while eliminating service on 12 bus routes.

In an apparent effort to downplay the impact, a fact sheet released by the governor's office said the proposed reduction equals 4.4 percent of the Regional Transportation Authority's \$2.9 billion operating budget for the Chicago-area mass transit system in 2015.

Meanwhile, the state will still provide \$131 million toward helping the RTA pay off debt on bonds that finance transit capital improvement projects, the fact sheet said.

And the Illinois Department of Transportation will receive an additional \$120 million for its road and state construction fund, raising the total spending to \$1.85 billion, officials said.

But the proposed hit on mass transit funding, although expected by some experts in the days leading up to Rauner's announcement, drew strong criticism because of its potential impact on delivering the 2 million transit rides taken each weekday in the Chicago region.

"We understand that the state has financial challenges across the board, but other states are leaving us in the dust. Cutting back on our transportation system is not a way to move forward," said Peter Skosey, executive vice president of the Metropolitan Planning Council, which this week launched a transportation investment campaign across the state called Accelerate Illinois.

State Rep. Elaine Nekritz, D-Northbrook, said she was "shocked and saddened" at how much the plan would affect services for the disabled, including paratransit.



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Rauner proposes eliminating an \$8.5 million annual appropriation for ADA paratransit for the disabled that comes out of the state's general revenue fund.

Paratransit service for the six-county area, including the city of Chicago, is overseen by Pace with a budget of \$172.2 million a year. Losing \$8.5 million would represent a nearly 5 percent budget cut.

"At this point, we can't rule out any budget solution relative to service levels, fares or our employees," Pace said in a statement. "With that said, we have to remain aware that this is the beginning of the state's budget process, and we'll be working with Governor Rauner's office and the General Assembly."

Metra officials also said they were still analyzing the governor's proposed cuts.

The transit system's operating budgets are based approximately 40 percent on fares, 40 percent on sales tax revenue and 20 percent on state funding.

The \$105 million cut facing the CTA could "impact our ability to provide essential public transit services," Steele said.

In addition, a Rauner proposal to eliminate the \$28 million that the CTA receives as a state reimbursement for providing free and reduced-fare rides to eligible senior citizens and riders with disabilities would place a further burden on a state-mandated program that is already underfunded, Steele said.

Although CTA officials said it was too early to talk specifically about service cuts or fare hikes, Steele said it is highly unlikely that the CTA would be able to absorb

such a funding loss through operational efficiencies and administrative belt-tightening.

The Rauner budget would reduce the state subsidy to Amtrak. State transportation officials had sought about \$46 million but would instead receive about \$26 million, according to the budget office.

The governor also plans to eliminate an annual state reimbursement to Amtrak that covers discounted tickets for state employees, including legislators who travel between Chicago and Springfield.

For business travel on weekdays between Chicago and Springfield, the state rate is \$21, instead of the normal one-way fare, which could run as high as \$54, depending on time of purchase, according to Amtrak.

The reimbursement totaled about \$500,000 last year, according to IDOT.

The proposed Illiana toll road and south suburban airport project near Peotone both remained on hold pending review, a budget official said.

Opponents of the Illiana delivered several boxes full of petitions to Rauner's Chicago office urging him to kill the \$1.3 billion project. The petitions were gathered by Will County residents and groups including the Sierra Club, Openlands, Environmental Law & Policy Center, Active Transportation Alliance and Illinois PIRG.

Critics say the Illiana, which would connect Interstate 55 near Wilmington and I-65 near Lowell, Ind., would destroy farmland and upset the rural lifestyle. Critics also contend the project is a boondoggle that could cost taxpayers up to \$1.1 billion.