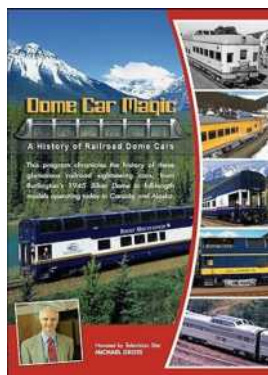


North Texas Chapter – National Railway Historical Society



April Chapter Meeting: Double Video Treat



Dome Car Magic



Luxury Rides The Rails

From Burlington's 1945 Silver Dome to present-day full-length domes operating in Canada and Alaska, this program chronicles the history of those glamorous sightseeing dome cars. Includes archival footage of the Empire Builder, Super Chief, California Zephyr and more.

This DVD traces the history of private rail car travel for more than a century. It spans the eras from Lincoln's private car to the latest, most modern cars that are plying the rails today. Private rail cars have always had a mystique about them. Who owned and rode these cars? When and who built them? Do they still operate them today? "Luxury Rides the Rails" answers all these questions through in-depth interviews, vintage film/video and photographs plus bonus footage of a few political campaign trains of recent times.

When: Tuesday, April 2nd @ 7:30 p.m.
(Meet "N" Greet at 7:00 p.m.)

Where: Cotton Belt Room of the Chill Bar & Grill at 814 S. Main St (NW corner of S. Main St. & Dallas Rd), Grapevine, TX.
Food will be available for purchase.



Link to Website:

<https://www.chillbardfw.com/>

Guests are always welcome!
See you there!

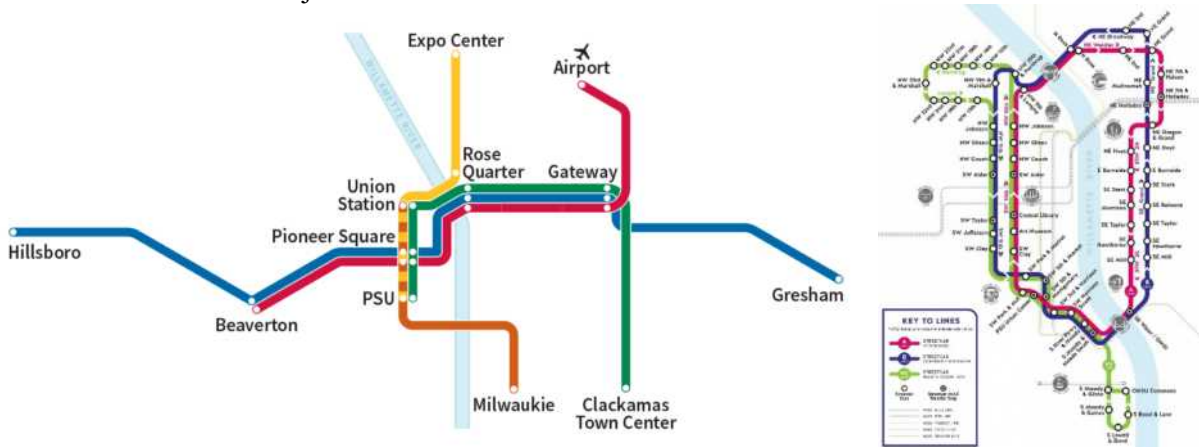
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Portland Rails (Part 2 of 4): Portland Light Rail/Streetcar Systems

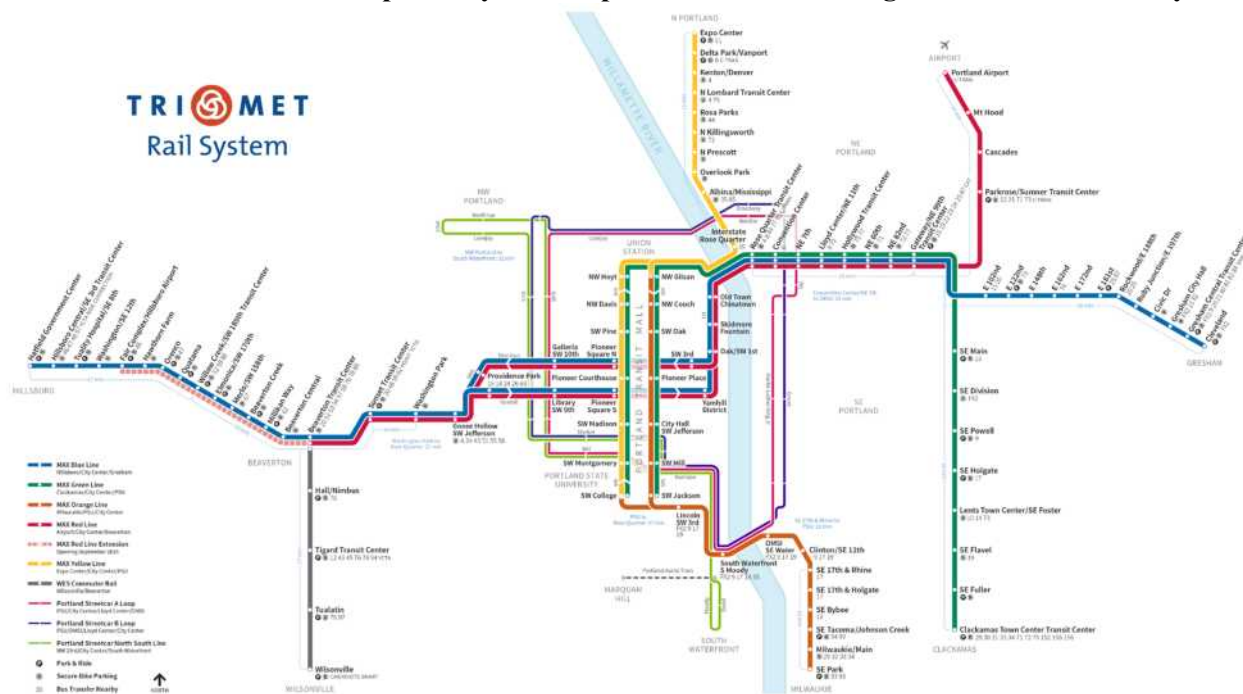
By Wayne Smith

Metropolitan Area Express (MAX) is the light rail system that serves Portland and surrounding communities. MAX also connects the Portland Airport to the rest of the city. It is owned and operated by TriMet (Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon). Schedules indicate that trains run seven days a week every 15 minutes, or less, depending on the time of day. MAX is one of three rail systems that serve the Portland area, the other two being the Portland Streetcar and WES Commuter Rail. Your editor was able to experience TriMet MAX and Portland Streetcars multiple times. MAX (5 lines) directly connects with the Portland Streetcars (3 lines) and WES Commuter Rail as well as with other transit services including Amtrak (Portland Union Station). According to literature, trains operate with two-car consists due to downtown Portland's short city blocks. One can take the red line from the airport and connect with almost all major attractions in Portland without the need of a car or taxi.



Above Left: TriMet MAX simplified system map.

Above Right: TriMet Streetcar system.



A complete TriMet System Map is shown above. Source: <https://trimet.org/max/#lines>



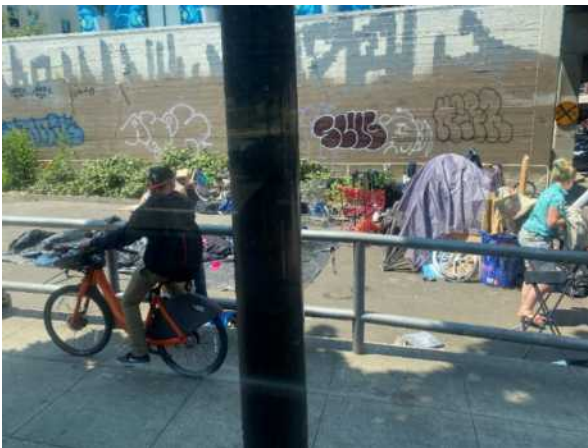
The TriMet MAX Red Line takes passengers from the Portland Airport to the Gateway Transit Center that can connect with two other MAX light rail lines, which then will connect with the entire system.



In front of the Oregon Convention Center, westbound and eastbound TriMet MAX light rail trains (pictured above) connect with north and south bound trains as well as Portland Street Cars.



Catching a Southbound Streetcar at the Oregon Convention Center (above) will take you to the Oregon Rail Heritage Center in just a few minutes. Unless, the Streetcar experiences a power failure and has to sit beside a homeless encampment (below left) for 20-30 minutes. Homelessness is out of control in Portland and homeless camps are found in all areas of town including downtown, business districts, residential areas and transit centers. But having a power failure also allows you to peer into the driver's cab (below right) without being impeded by the driver. The area was separated from passengers by a plexiglas panel.





The Oregon Rail Heritage Center (below) is accessible by the MAX Orange Line, Portland Streetcar Loop Service or TriMet bus routes. Directly across the street from the entrance of the Oregon Rail Heritage Center is the Mt. Hood Brewing Co., Tilikum Station (above). It is a bar and grill with some interesting features, including a Northern Pacific caboose. The Oregon Rail Heritage Center is home to the Southern Pacific 4449; Spokane, Portland & Seattle 700; and Oregon Railroad & Navigation Co. 197, all of which will be featured next month in *The North Texas Zephyr*. The photo below is a preview of May's newsletter.



A Visit to the Graham, TX Rock Island/Wichita Falls & Southern “Union Station”
By Wayne Smith



The Rock Island (CRI&G) depot still stands in Graham, TX. The Rock Island went through Bridgeport on its way south from Oklahoma to Fort Worth. An extension was later built from Bridgeport and reached Graham in 1903. The Rock Island shared the Union Depot with the Wichita Falls and Southern (1923). In 1955, the Rock Island acquired the lines of the Wichita Falls and Southern Railroad between Graham and South Hanlon. They abandoned this line in 1969 and the last freight train rolled out of Graham a few years later. The depot was used as a farm implement store for a while, then an antique store, and now is used as a faith-based youth activity center known as “The Rock.” The below shot was obtained by the author sticking his hands/phone through the iron fence. The name on the front of the depot, “Rock Island Southern”, is certainly misleading.





The other side of the depot has a heavy weight baggage car with “The Rock” emblem painted near both ends. The author could not find any history on the baggage car, which is clearly missing its trucks. There is a deck with a picnic table alongside the baggage car painted in an unusual shade of blue.





This sign (left), “The Rock - High School Youth Activity Center”, was laying on its side against the back fence. The facility is clearly for, “High School Students Only”.



The entire property is fenced off. The facility was closed during Covid and it was not known if it reopened. With the main sign removed and leaning against the back fence, it didn’t seem likely. However, the author checked and the facility has a current and active Facebook page and indicates the facility is open Friday and Saturday nights, 7:30 PM – 11:30 PM. One picture indicates that a ping-pong table is located in the baggage car. Another picture shows an air hockey table and a shuffleboard table toward the other end of the baggage car. “The Rock” appears to be a very popular hangout. The depot is also utilized for various Graham High School special events as well. Photos – 2024 WS

A Visit to Jacksboro - Part of the Rock Island Branch Line

(Discussed above) By Wayne Smith

After the Rock Island Railroad (CRI&G) built through Bridgeport, to avoid duplicating Fort Worth and Denver trackage into Fort Worth, Bridgeport was able to serve as a Rock Island branch point to the west where coal and other minerals were being mined, eventually becoming a major oil producing region. Rock Island built 28 miles west from Bridgeport to Jacksboro in 1898, continuing 27 miles farther west to Graham in 1903. The Rock Island had the first depot in Jacksboro and operated from 1898 until the 1970's. The Rock Island depot is currently found at Fort Richardson State Park, Historic Site & Lost Creek Reservoir State Trailway. The depot has not been restored. However, the last time your editor saw the depot, it had a new roof to protect it from further damage caused by the elements. A Rock Island trestle bridge can also be found at Fort Richardson. The bridge once spanned nearby Lost Creek. The Rock Island Railroad operated over the bridge during most of its service life. The bridge was moved about 500 yards in 1985 to the Fort Richardson State Historic Park.

There was a second depot built in Jacksboro when the Gulf, Texas and Western Railroad was brought to town. It was built in 1909 by the GT&W and restored in 2006. It now houses the Visitor Center and Chamber of Commerce. "It [Gulf, Texas and Western] connects at Weatherford with the Texas-Pacific and with the Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe. It connects at Jacksboro with the Rock Island System. It connects at Olney with the Wichita Falls & Southern, which is a subsidiary of the Missouri, Kansas & Texas, and it connects at Seymour with the Wichita Valley, which is a line belonging to the Burlington." (said Ben B. Cain in 1918)



The Gulf, Texas and Western Depot currently serves as the Jacksboro Visitor Center and Chamber of Commerce. Photo – 2020 WS



Left: Markers found on the GT&W depot (Jacksboro Visitor Center and Chamber of Commerce) in Jacksboro, TX. The plaque at the bottom of the picture indicates that the depot was built of stone from a nearby quarry. Photo – 2020 WS



Also found at the GT&W depot is this monument recognizing the Butterfield Stage Line that also ran through Jacksboro on its way to Fort Belknap, which was its main destination in the region. The historical monument was “Erected by the State of Texas in 1936”. Photo – 2020 WS

Photos of the NTC Meeting in March

Photos by Elden Baker



President Wayne Smith is seen conducting the March meeting of the North Texas Chapter of the NRHS.



Chapter Member James Dolande gave an extensive presentation on his recent trip to Wales and, to a lesser degree, the UK. At some point during his presentation, James puts on his early 1920's Railwayman's wool hat bought online prior to his trip. The badge on the hat was bought at the Ffestiniog Railway.



James' 009 kit models were purchased in Wales and the "Thomas" models are from Bandai in Japan.

Minutes of the Trips & Events Committee Meeting of the North Texas Chapter NRHS

The Trips and Events Committee meeting took place at the Chill Bar in Grapevine, TX on March 5, 2024. Eleven (11) attended.

Chairman Bill Long called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM. Discussion of possible trips and events were:

- CPKC 2816 in Shreveport, LA;
- 24 Hours at Saginaw;
- Big Sandy;
- Texas State Railroad;
- Austin Steam Train;
- McKinney Avenue Trolley;
- Old interurban lines;
- Depot tour.

Here are the group's decisions/recommendations:

1. That we go forward with the CPKC trip. It would require travel on your own by car. Perhaps those traveling could carpool. A trip on Amtrak to Longview or Marshall, and alternate transportation to Shreveport MIGHT be also feasible. Jerry Nunn will investigate the logistics of an Amtrak trip.
2. Since the Saginaw Chamber of Commerce disbanded, we have no building or facilities available. As a result, funding for 24 Hours @ Saginaw has become expensive, as we now have to rent tents and port-a-potties. Also, the CPKC event is the same weekend that we traditionally hold 24 Hours @ Saginaw, which is Memorial Day weekend. The committee recommended that we NOT schedule a 24 Hours @ Saginaw event this year.
3. Last year's Big Sandy event was a success. There was plenty of trains to photograph, the city officials welcomed us and we had an excellent building to conduct our programs. The committee recommends we have the Big Sandy event again this year. We wish to avoid times when the weather is likely to be too hot, and when it's possible to be too cool to spend much time outside. Our first choice is the second Friday and Saturday in September (the 13th and 14th). If that's not possible, we recommend the 1st weekend in October (the 4th and 5th).
4. An excursion at the Texas State Railroad would require automobile transport to get to the site. There are now air-conditioned cars available, a plus. However, most prefer a trip behind a steam locomotive, which will be unavailable this summer. The committee voted to table the recommendation for further discussion, after checking if a steam locomotive excursion might be available in November.
5. A trip on the McKinney Avenue Trolley was briefly discussed, but no decision was reached.
6. A tour of the abandoned interurban lines in the area (much like a previous tour we had) was also discussed. Again, no decision was reached.
7. A tour of depots in the area was also mentioned. Steve Goen would be an ideal tour guide. No decision was reached.

Another meeting in early May is planned.

The meeting adjourned about 7 PM.

Jerry Nunn, Secretary,
North Texas Chapter, NRHS

Minutes of the March 2024 Meeting of the North Texas Chapter of the NRHS

The March 2024 meeting of the North Texas Chapter of the NRHS was held on Tuesday, March 5 in the Cotton Belt Room of the Chill Bar and Grill in Grapevine, TX. There were 18 attendees.

President Wayne Smith called the meeting to order at 7:38 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Wayne Smith:

1. The Chapter's share of the proceeds from the Plano Train Show was \$1980.00.
2. This year marks the 175th anniversary of the Chicago Burlington and Quincy RR (CB&Q). (Editor's Note: See related BNSF article in this issue).
3. In addition, the Pioneer Zephyr is 90 years old this year and the California Zephyr is 75 years old this year.
4. Wayne displayed some photographs from the Chapter's Quanah Zephyr excursion, and reminded the audience of "The Attack of the Blue-Faced Monster", and that the BNSF police were there quicker than a security detail when someone jumps on the stage during a rock concert. (Secretary's Note: I actually saw that happen during a ZZ Top concert!).
5. Wayne will be at a conference in Lubbock next month when the Chapter meeting takes place. VP Jon Shea will conduct the meeting.

VP Jon Shea

1. Jon passed around a recent copy of a Galveston Historical Society magazine that featured photographs of Galveston's Pagoda Bath House with Katy RR signs on the sides of the building touting the "Katy Flyer: Comfort and Speed".
2. Jon has copies of the Katy Historical Society magazine for sale. ALL proceeds go to the Katy RR Historical Society.
3. Video providers for the next 3 meetings are: April, Sam Metzgar; May, Bob Kennedy; and June, Jon Shea.

VP Skip Waters

1. The Grapevine Train Show is the weekend of March 9. Skip and his trackless train will be there.
2. The 2024 NRHS National Convention will be in Harrisburg, PA August 26 – August 31. Details on hotel accommodations, agenda, and excursions are available on the National NRHS website.
3. A National Board Meeting is scheduled May 4 – May 6 in Cedar Rapids, IA. Tickets are \$300.00. Expect an email detailing the meeting.
4. There will also be a Fall Meeting in the Philadelphia, PA area. Dates TBD.
5. Skip will be retiring as a member of the National Board of Directors. If anyone is interested in serving, this is an opportunity to fill in behind Skip.

Treasurer Bob Kennedy

1. The membership renewal drive is over. The Chapter had over 90% renewals, and we have 36 members.
2. Many thanks to Dave Podrahsy, who filled all the Chapter's work obligations during the previous Plano Train Show. The membership will have to fill in for the Chapter's obligations during the next train show. This is a reminder that we will need volunteers to help out with ticket sales and door monitors, and help man the Chapter's information booth. Be sure to help out when the call for volunteers is issued.

PROGRAM

The evening's program was "The UK Trip", a photographic essay of James Dolande's recent trip to rail museums and tourist lines in the UK.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

1. April meeting – Tuesday, April 2 at the Chill Bar and Grill Cotton Belt Room. Program: Videos from Sam Metzgar, *Dome Car Magic* and *Luxury Rides the Rails*
2. May meeting – Tuesday, May 7 at the Chill Bar and Grill Cotton Belt Room. Program: Video from Bob Kennedy, *The Amtrak Chief*
3. Remainder of 2024 Meetings – Future meetings will be held in the Cotton Belt Room of the Chill Bar unless otherwise announced.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Jerry M. Nunn

Secretary, North Texas Chapter, NRHS

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Dallas Area Rapid Transit: **News Releases**

Mar 01, 2024 | General

Media Relations Contact: Jeamy Molina

Freight Rail Return Activates Dormant Crossings in Plano and Richardson

Beginning Monday, March 4 normal freight operations resume

A yellow railroad crossing advance warning sign with a black 'X' and two black circles with red centers.

RAIL ROAD ACTIVITY NOTIFICATION

Beginning March 3, 2024

A partir del 3 de marzo de 2024

For additional information: [DART.org/SilverLine](https://www.dart.org/SilverLine) | 817-989-9131



The continued progress of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Silver Line Regional Rail Project is bringing freight rail service back to the cities of Plano and Richardson beginning Sunday, March 3.

DART and CPKC, formerly Kansas City Southern Railroad, agreed to cease freight operations in July of 2022, allowing Archer Western Herzog (AWH), DART's design-build contractor, construction crews more room to work and advance major construction of the Silver Line project. The agreement gave DART the ability to move about the corridor with its construction plans, while rerouting CPKC freight traffic out of the area. Once the project advanced to the point where the reroute was no longer necessary, the agreement would allow CPKC to resume freight service.

For the commuters and residents in Plano and Richardson driving near the Silver Line corridor this means warning systems and crossing signals dormant for about 20 months will be active again.

"We are grateful to CPKC for working with us to make this section of the Silver Line corridor as safe as possible for our crews and commuters as we advanced the project," said Trey Walker, DART vice president of capital design and construction. "Now that we are continuing that progress, we want to continue to stress safety, ensure the public is aware of these changes, and adhere to the crossing signals and warning signs."

DART has been in communication with the cities and school districts in Plano and Richardson, as well as their eastern neighbors along the railroad tracks of Murphy and Wylie to ensure residents and commuters are aware of the return of freight rail service to the area. New signage, warning systems, and existing crossing signals were tested and operational before freight trains return to the tracks.

The return of CPKC freight operations will affect 12 at-grade crossings in Plano and two in Richardson on the Silver Line pathway. Testing of the systems and crossing signals will take place Sunday, March 3, from 9 am to 5 pm with flaggers at crossings as a safety precaution for vehicle traffic.

Normal freight operations will begin Monday, March 4, and run at night after 10 pm and include evening trips.

The DART Silver Line is a 26-mile commuter rail that traverses seven North Texas cities (Grapevine, Coppell, Dallas, Carrollton, Addison, Richardson, Plano) between DFW Airport and Shiloh Road in Plano. The regional rail alignment crosses three counties (Collin, Dallas, Tarrant) and will provide service to improve mobility and accessibility across the northern portion of the DART service area. DART Silver Line revenue service is scheduled to begin in late 2025 to early-2026.

To learn more about the Silver Line Regional Rail Project, please visit [DART.org/silverline](https://www.dart.org/silverline).

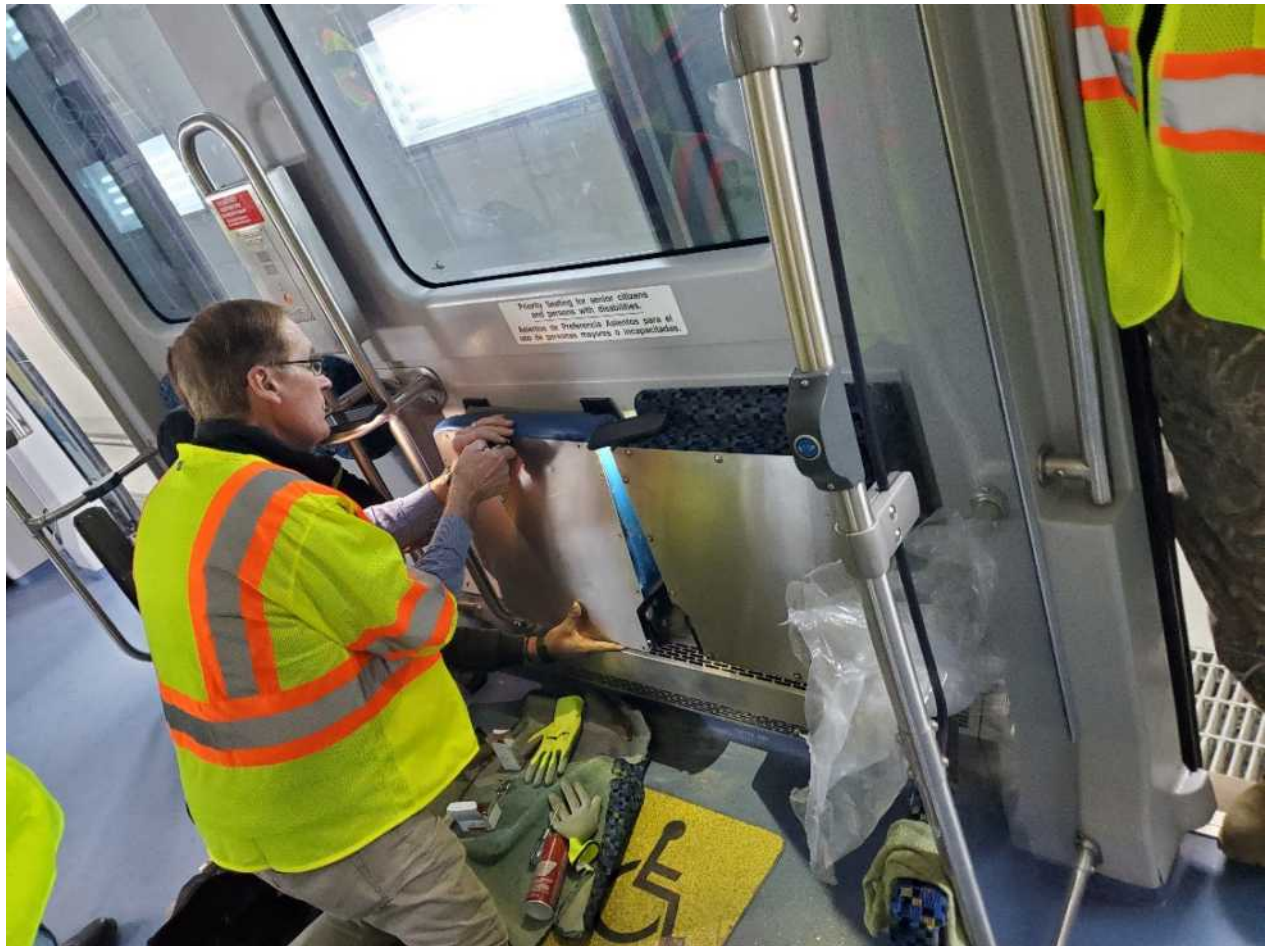
Jan 22, 2024 | General

Media Relations Contact: Gordon Shattles, DART

DART Pilots Upgraded Seating on Light Rail and Streetcar Vehicles

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) has launched the second phase of their vinyl seat retrofit program with the piloting of one light rail vehicle and one Dallas Streetcar vehicle that will go into regular service beginning Monday, January 22.

To provide a cleaner and more comfortable environment for customers, DART replaced almost 34,000 fabric seat cushions and backs on its bus fleet with vinyl-covered seats last year. Over 16,000 light rail vehicle seats in 163 vehicles will be replaced throughout the DART fleet starting in March of this year.



“We are very excited to begin the second phase of our vinyl seat replacement program for our light rail vehicles,” said Bernard Jackson, DART SR. EVP, and chief operations officer. “I know from speaking with many of our bus riders that they appreciate the new seating, and we look forward to providing additional upgrades in the future that focus on rider comfort.”

The new vinyl seats are part of the agency’s continued customer-focused commitment to riders to provide a safe and clean transit experience. This includes the DART Clean Team Initiative that utilizes on-board contract cleaning personnel to remove trash and debris aboard DART light rail vehicles as they operate throughout the DART network, supplementing the extensive cleaning protocols already in place.

Customers are invited to complete a survey, via QR code on each pilot vehicle, about the new vinyl seating and provide valuable feedback and comments, as well as future upgrades they would like to see.

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE IS SHARED AND ADAPTED FROM
FRIENDS OF BNSF INSIDE TRACK

JOIN FRIENDS OF BNSF HERE: [Friends of BNSF | In the Community](#)

LEGEND AND LEGACY: 175 YEARS OF BNSF AND COUNTING



It was 175 years ago today, February 12, 1849, that the Illinois General Assembly chartered the Aurora Branch Railroad, a six-mile-long track between Batavia, Illinois, and West Chicago. Chugging along with borrowed equipment and secondhand steel tracks, little did the branch line, nor the developing American economy, know this small railway would grow into one of the largest North American railroads.

Now serving 28 states in the western two-thirds of the U.S., three Canadian provinces and five key Mexican gateways with 32,500 route miles of track, we're proud of our humble beginning.

"Our legacy of growth and innovation was made possible by generations of resilient and dedicated railroaders from more than 400 predecessor rail lines, leading up to the people of BNSF who continue that tradition today," said BNSF President and CEO Katie Farmer.



Map of the BNSF network today

The Aurora Branch Line (1849)

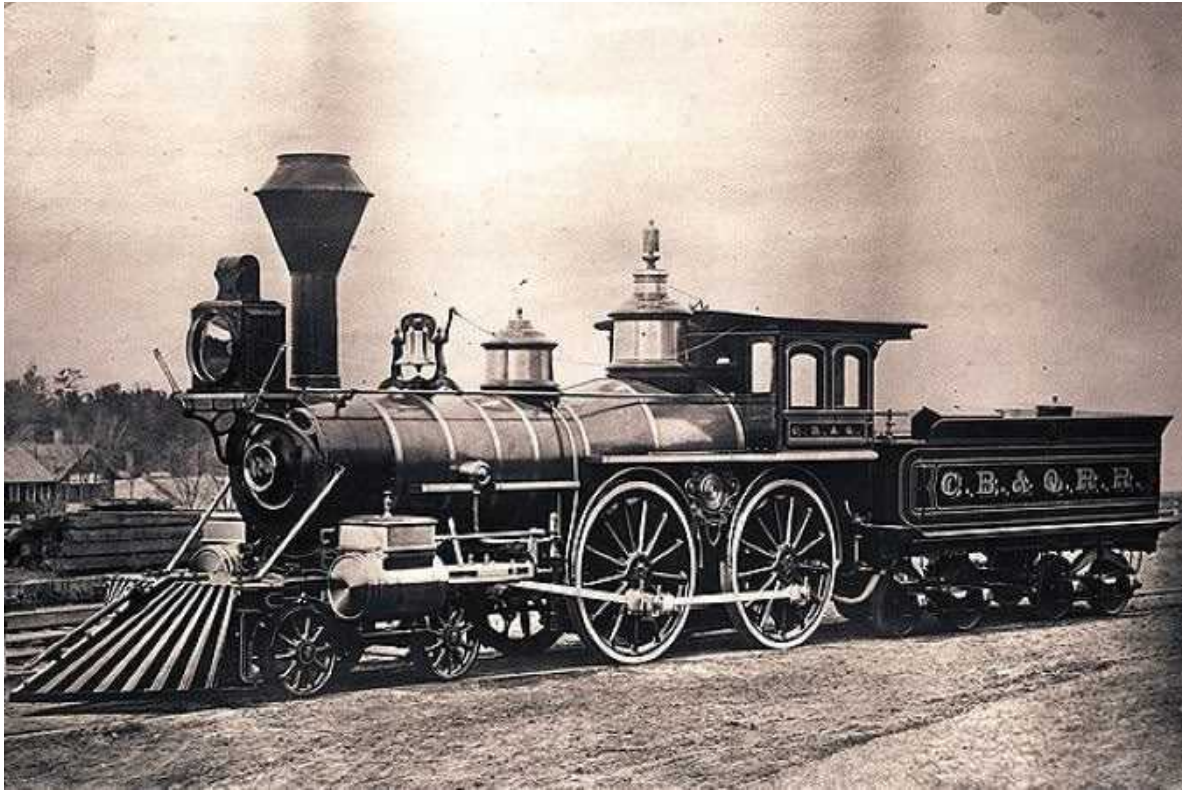
This little-railroad-that-could was founded in 1849, and though many doubted its success, the Aurora Branch soon became the second railroad to reach Chicago. By 1852, a group of investors purchased the small line and expanded its reach by 400 miles. The Aurora Branch name was changed to Chicago, Burlington & Quincy to better describe its trackage, which now reached these Midwestern towns.

The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (1849-1970)

Reigning over the Midwest for 106 years until the Burlington Northern merger, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (CB&Q or Burlington Route) progressed rapidly following the conclusion of the Civil War with an accumulation of 204 smaller railroads – tripling the Burlington Route's size.

Crossing the Mississippi and Missouri rivers quickly opened new routes to the West through Iowa and Nebraska. Summiting the Rocky Mountains, the Burlington Route created the first direct rail route from Denver to Chicago. But it didn't stop there.

Forging north, the railroad trekked along the Mississippi River to St. Paul, Minnesota. It didn't take long for the Burlington Route's growth to be noticed by James J. Hill, founder of the Great Northern Railway (GN). Hill's GN, in collaboration with the Northern Pacific Railroad (NP), purchased more than 97 percent of the Burlington Route's stock in 1908, paving the way for a long, fruitful relationship.

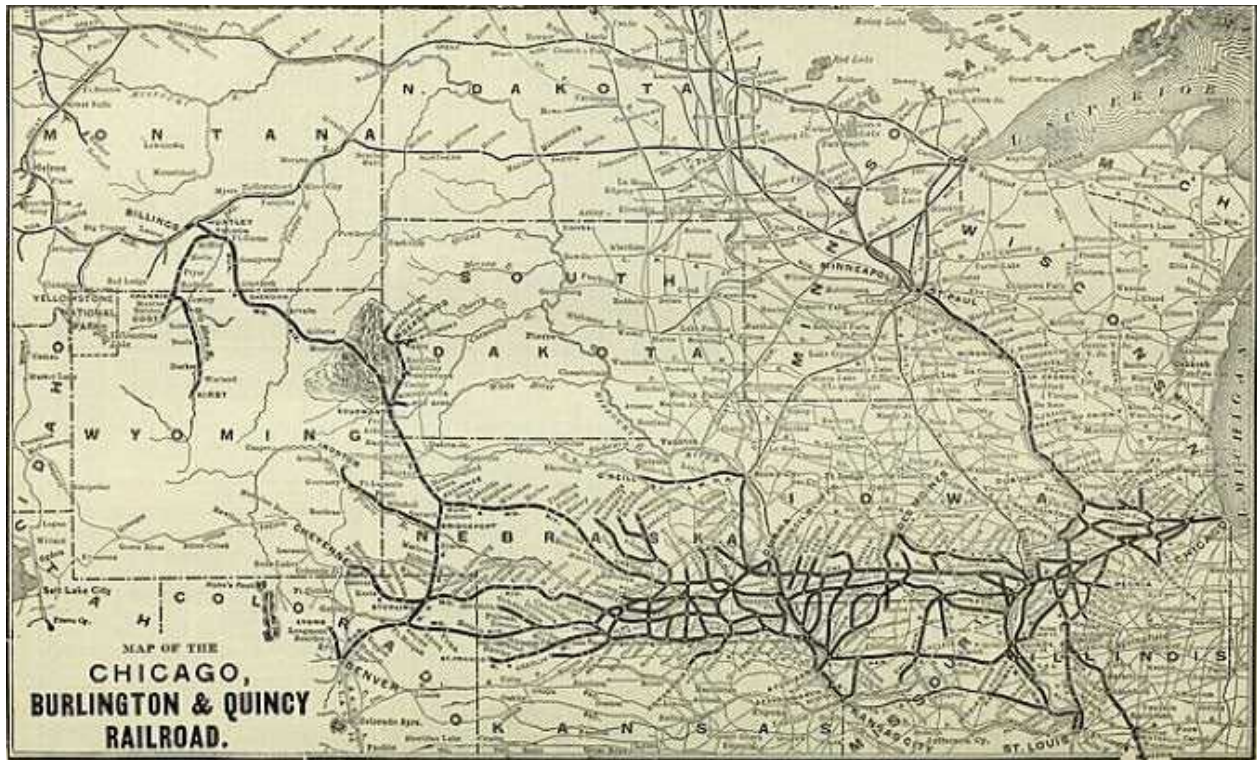


CB&Q locomotive circa 1850s. Photo credit: DeGolyer Library, Southern Methodist University



A CB&Q locomotive in 1967

Gaining a reputation for innovation and safety, the Burlington Route was one of the first to implement centralized traffic control by the end of the 1950s. The railroad also ventured into a successful era of passenger transportation with routes serving major cities.



Burlington Route map circa 1909.

The CB&Q, along with Hill's other investments, would eventually create the Burlington Northern Railway (BN) in 1970.

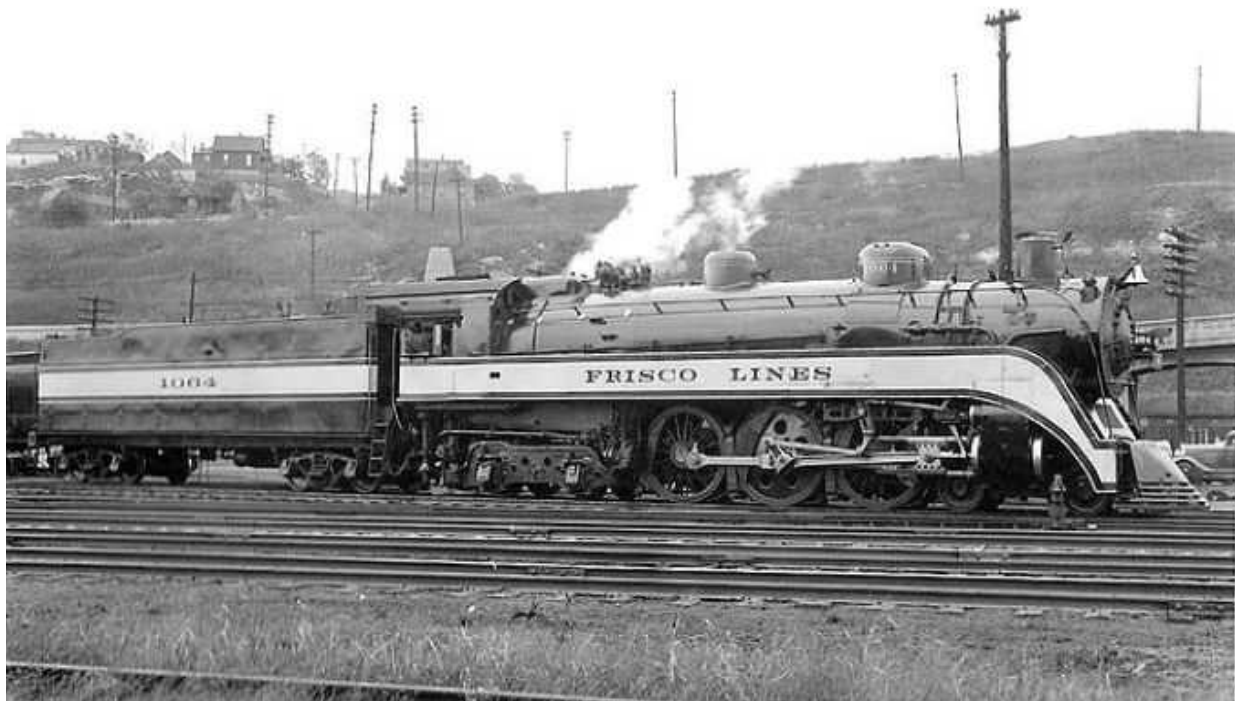
St. Louis-San Francisco Railway (1876-1980)

In 1876, the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway (SLSF or the Frisco) helped transform the American heartland. Getting its start from the former Atlantic and Pacific Railroad (A&P), the Frisco's tracks wove across Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas, leaving an indelible mark on the landscape and economy of the South-Central U.S.

Despite intending to become a transcontinental railroad, the Frisco would never reach its namesake. The growing Santa Fe acquired control of the line in 1879 using the Atlantic and Pacific franchise and most of its land grant to build its own line from New Mexico to California.

With Santa Fe controlling its western portion, the Frisco expanded in the growing heartland. By establishing long-term leases with localized railroads and gaining control of lines from Kansas City to Springfield, Missouri, and Memphis to Birmingham, Alabama, the Frisco made its niche.

The Frisco was deeply affected by the Great Depression and went bankrupt in 1933 but re-emerged during World War II. Burlington Northern acquired the Frisco in 1980.



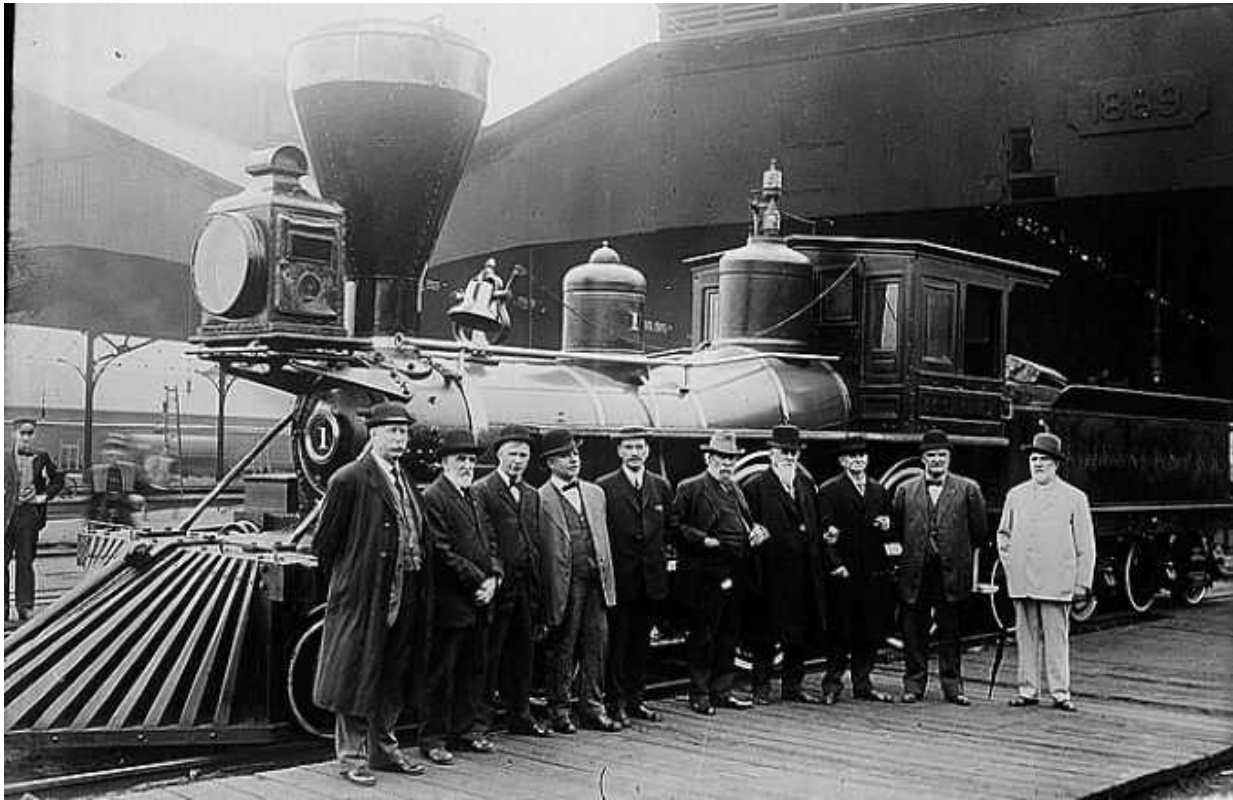
A Frisco steam locomotive in 1946



A Frisco train moving automotive freight in the 1960s

Great Northern Railway (1857-1970)

In the Gilded Age, skepticism loomed over the expansion of railroads, but in the face of doubt, visionaries emerged to reshape history. One was Hill, aptly named “The Empire Builder.”



James J. Hill (center) in front of restored St. Paul and Pacific locomotive, the William Crooks (1914)

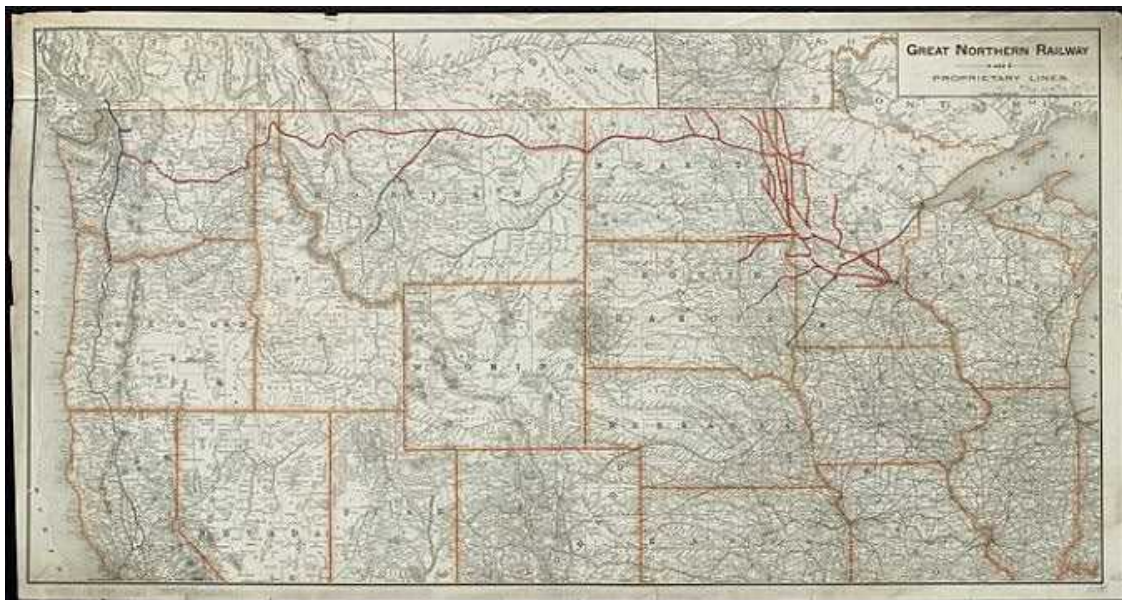
Hill purchased the bankrupt St. Paul and Pacific (SP&P) and Minneapolis and St. Cloud (M&StC) railroads; from these the GN emerged in 1890, stretching from St. Paul to the distant reaches of Seattle. Hill's expansion was strategic, incrementally building profitable lines without succumbing to overwhelming debt or relying on government land grant money.

Despite persistent skepticism, Hill transformed the GN into a force that shaped the West. Hill not only defied expectations but actively populated the developing region by selling homesteads to pioneers, facilitating their journey with specially furnished trains. Aggressive advertising in European newspapers and overseas agents fueled immigration, turning Hill's vision into a reality. The GN continued to expand across the Northwest by strategically bringing industries to its growing network in Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota and Montana.

Hill's success with the creation of GN inspired him to continue rail ventures. Going on to create the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railroad (SP&S) and become a shareholder of the CB&Q alongside Northern Pacific, Hill built a rail empire. Hill's legacy lived on as the railroads he owned and influenced merged with GN in 1970, giving life to Burlington Northern.



Nose of a diesel electric GN locomotive

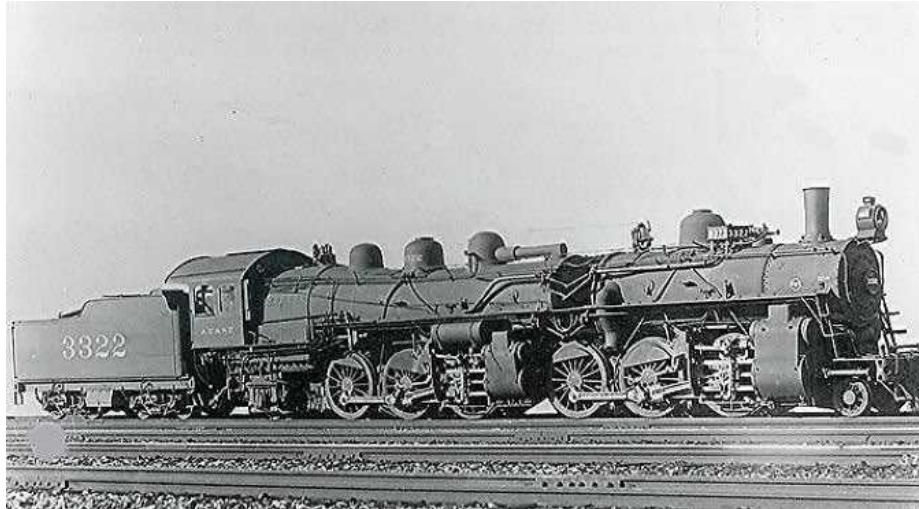


Great Northern map circa 1889

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway (1859-1995)

As GN expanded across the northern U.S., the Southwest was rapidly growing. Fueled by the rush for California gold and the cattle drives from Texas to Kansas City, entrepreneur Cyrus K. Holliday sought to follow the path of the Santa Fe Trail by rail. Holliday was also one of the founders of Topeka, Kansas.

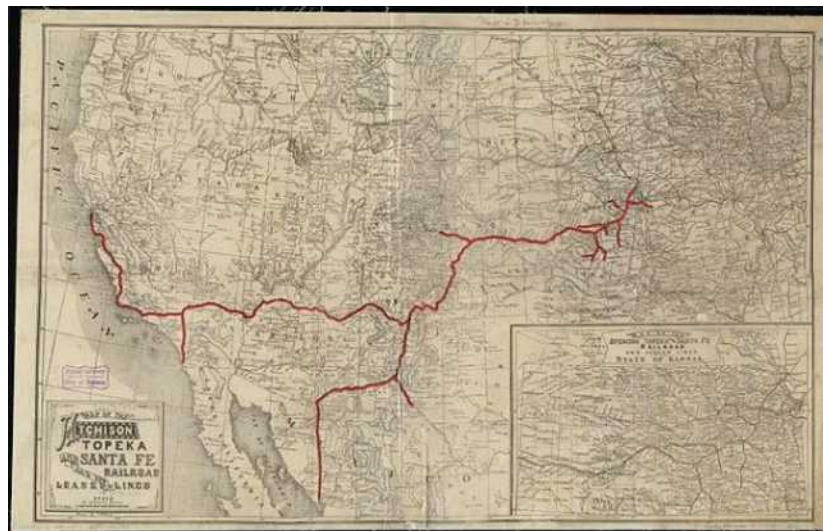
In 1859, the Atchison and Topeka Railroad Company was chartered, and by 1863, the railroad became the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway (ATSF) and adopted its iconic nickname, the Santa Fe. It grew to around 9,000 miles by the 1890s.



A Santa Fe jointed locomotive

After a reorganization in 1893, Santa Fe connected Chicago to the sun-kissed landscapes of California, creating a network of more than 11,000 miles by 1920. Despite its name, it never reached Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The Santa Fe painted its legacy across 12 states, its freight revenues stemming from a diverse array of intermodal traffic, agricultural products, chemicals, vehicles and industrial materials.



ATSF map circa 1888 including its connections



Santa Fe Locomotives boasting its signature Warbonnet paint scheme

Northern Pacific Railway (1864-1970)

NP got its start in 1864 following an act of Congress signed by President Abraham Lincoln to create another railroad in the north. Surveys and other detail provided decades earlier by famed explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark contributed to NP's ability to chart an efficient route through undeveloped terrain. NP would eventually reach from Lake Superior to Puget Sound.

As the wheels of progress turned, in 1872 NP built a route from Fargo to Bismarck, North Dakota. With bold strokes, it carved an isolated segment from Kalama, Washington, to Tacoma along the Columbia River.

In September 1883, NP's final spike was driven at Gold Creek, Montana, completing a second transcontinental route across the northern territories from the shores of Duluth, Minnesota, to Wallula Junction, Washington.

Soon NP set its sights on a direct line from Pasco, Washington, scaling the formidable Cascade Range to reach Tacoma. The race to Tacoma unfolded against the backdrop of a booming Puget Sound area. In 1887, the dream persisted as the Pasco-Tacoma line materialized, its inaugural journey navigating temporary switchbacks over Stampede Pass until the grand unveiling of the Stampede Tunnel in May 1888.

The NP operated until 1970 when it joined GN, the CB&Q and the SP&S in creation of the BN.



A NP locomotive approaching Carrington, North Dakota



A map of Northern Pacific Railway circa 1900

Fort Worth & Denver (1873-1970) and Colorado and Southern (1881-1970)

In the late 19th century, a line was needed between Texas and the Rocky Mountains. The histories of Colorado and Southern Railway (C&S) and the Fort Worth & Denver Railway (FW&D or the Denver Road) began with a shared vision.

John Evans, a doctor and prominent rail investor, sought to connect Colorado to the Gulf of Mexico. In 1881 he founded the Denver and New Orleans Railroad (D&NO), which would become the C&S. Meanwhile, the city of Fort Worth, Texas, envisioned a Gulf-to-Rockies route, leading to the creation of the FW&D in 1873, with construction under Gen. Grenville M. Dodge.



FW&D locomotive in Dallas in 1938. Photo credit: DeGolyer Library, Southern Methodist University

The D&NO negotiated with the FW&D, but challenges arose. Evans faced opposition from established railroads like the Rio Grande, Santa Fe and Union Pacific, and in 1885, Evans' venture was reorganized as the Denver, Texas and Gulf Railroad Company.

Negotiations between Evans and Dodge led to an 1887 agreement, closing the gap between Pueblo, Colorado, and Quanah, Texas. That same year, the Denver, Texas and Fort Worth Railroad was formed, connecting Pueblo to the Texas-New Mexico border. A year later, it linked with FW&D, realizing the Gulf-to-Rockies vision.

Incorporated in Colorado in 1898, the C&S comprised nearly 30 railroad companies, combined 1,085 miles of track and held a controlling stock interest in the FW&D. In 1908, both the C&S and the FW&D became a part of the CB&Q.



C&S rotary snowplow, Como, Colorado

Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway (1905-1970)

In the early 20th century, the Pacific Northwest rail map was divided by the Columbia River and two major competing rail lines: GN and NP. The Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway (SP&S) emerged in 1908 on the north bank of the river as a joint venture of both railroads.

With GN and NP tied together in the stocks of the Burlington Route, the collaborative development of the SP&S earned the nickname “The Northwest’s Own Railway.” The SP&S connected Portland, Oregon, to Spokane, Washington, and thrived as a West Coast freight route. Less motive power was needed to move heavy trains along the flood plains and the shores were natural settlements for the growing population.

Like its founders’ other rail networks, SP&S was part of the merger to create BN in 1970.



The SP&S Streamliner departs Portland for Spokane in 1970. Photo by Drew Jacksich

Burlington Northern (1970)

One of BNSF's two namesake predecessors, BN was the result of a long-awaited merger between four rail lines: GN, NP, SP&S and CB&Q.



Top officers of the new BN, left to right: William J. Quinn (CB&Q), Louis W. Menk (NP) and John M. Budd (GN)

As BN was signed into existence, the company prided itself on becoming America's first mega-railroad with more than 20,000 miles of track connecting Texas' Gulf Coast to the northern Midwest and to the Pacific Northwest's ports.

Agricultural products, including corn, wheat and soybeans were the biggest segment of BN's business. It was the country's biggest transporter of grain. Another major business for BN was coal originating from the Powder River region of Wyoming. It also shipped automobiles, chemicals and forest products, among other commodities.



A BN locomotive

BNSF Railway (1995)

In 1995, BN merged with the Santa Fe to create America's largest rail network and form the company we are today, BNSF Railway.

"Having started my career with the Burlington Northern, I had the opportunity to witness – and work through – one of the most influential railroad mergers," Farmer said. "Built on the values of the roads before us, BNSF is committed to adapting to the changing markets and innovating for the future. I believe our brightest days are still ahead of us."



A BNSF locomotive engineer at work

February 12 is an important date for BNSF for more than one reason. Coincidentally, that's also the date that conglomerate Berkshire Hathaway, Inc., led by investors Warren Buffett and Charlie Munger, completed its acquisition of BNSF in 2010. With the acquisition, BNSF joined a group of dozens of respected companies and started a new chapter in its long history.

After 175 years, BNSF is a crucial underpinning of the nation's supply chain and proudly continues to move the freight people need to live their lives. Thank you to the countless railroaders who, from the 19th Century to the 21st, have connected and continue to connect our nation's markets to the rest of the world. We look forward to the next 175!

SP&S photo published under [Creative Commons license](#).

Chapter Directory

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[The Zephyr Newsletter - North Texas Chapter, NRHS \(ntxnrhs.org\)](http://TheZephyrNewsletter-NorthTexasChapter,NRHS(ntxnrhs.org))

Zephyr Archives:

[Rail History Newsletters \(gogeocaching.com\)](http://RailHistoryNewsletters(gogeocaching.com))

North Texas Chapter History

Founded and chartered in 1996, the North Texas Chapter is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) educational organization incorporated under the laws of the state of Texas. Emphasis of the chapter is activity, history, and enjoyment of railroading past and present. Meetings are usually held 7:30-9:30 p.m., the first Tuesday of each month. Visitors and newcomers are welcome.

Chapter membership includes our monthly chapter newsletter, the North Texas Zephyr. Currently, chapter dues are \$16, plus \$2 per additional family member. Payment may be made by check or paid online. By check - Mail a check payable to "North Texas Chapter NRHS" for \$16 (individual) or \$18 (family) and mail it to North Texas Chapter NRHS, PO Box 600304, Dallas TX, 75360. If your check does not clearly indicate who the member is, please add a note with the member's name.

Online - Visit the chapter's on-line store at

<https://ntxnrhs.org/store>

to pay by credit card or PayPal. A small service charge (50 cents for individuals, 75 cents for families) is added to your dues payment to cover processing fees.

Learn about the National Railway Historical Society at

www.nrhs.com

Doodlebug News Briefs



MKT doodlebug M10

Tuesday, April 2nd Chapter Meeting @ 7:30 p.m. (Meet "N" Greet at 7:00 p.m.) – Program Presentation: Two Videos including *Dome Car Magic* and *Luxury Rides the Rails*, at the Chill Bar and Grill, Grapevine, TX.

Tuesday, May 7th Chapter Meeting @ 7:30 p.m. (Meet "N" Greet at 7:00 p.m.) – Program Presentation: Video, *The Amtrak Chief*, at the Chill Bar and Grill, Grapevine, TX.

Tuesday, June 4th Chapter Meeting @ 7:30 p.m. (Meet "N" Greet at 7:00 p.m.) – Program Presentation: Video, *Mojave Desert Rails*, at the Chill Bar and Grill, Grapevine.

Please Note – The Cotton Belt Room of the Chill Bar and Grill in Grapevine is the Chapter's new semi-permanent meeting location due to its central location, cost (free), private room and food service. The majority of the chapter meetings will be held here for the remainder of the year.

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Wayne Smith, North Texas News Editor.

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