

Columbus Electric Railway Chronology

1880-1900

- 1879 **The Columbus Consolidated Street Railroad Co. (CCSR)**. was incorporated. As the name implies it took over the many single-street horsecar lines.
- Fall 1888 The first electric car operated on Chittenden Avenue from High Street to the State Fair Grounds. The event was widely advertised for free rides. It was part of the Centennial Celebration and was the first, although temporary, electric operation in Columbus.
- 8/18/1889 The **Columbus Railway Company** was incorporated.
- Sept. 1890 Electric cars operated by the **Glenwood and Greenlawn Street Railway Company (G&GSR)** on West Broad Street from High Street to the Asylum.
- 1891 CCSR erected buildings and machinery for electric power used for driving the cars on the High Street line. It provided 20,000hp.
- 1891 The **Columbus & Westerville Railway Co.** was incorporated.
- 1891 **Worthington & Columbus Street Railway** incorporated
- 7/4/1891 Electric cars operated on Neil Avenue replacing horse cars.
- 7/15/1891 Electric cars operated on High St. from Tunnel to North Columbus
- 7/16/1891 Electric cars operated on High St. from Court House to the tunnel.
- 9/14/1891 The depot trestle was built to replace the tunnel. Construction was completed in 14 days (Sept. 1-14).
- 4/25/1892 The **Columbus Street Railway Company (CSR)** was incorporated and took over the Columbus Consolidated Street Railway Company.
- 1/25/1892 Track laid on Chestnut Street from High Street to Fourth Street and on Fourth Street north to Chittenden Avenue. This included the use of the Fourth Street bridge.
- Feb. 1892 Electric cars operated on Oak Street replacing the last horse cars.
- 3/14/1892 The allowable rate of speed on High Street, between Goodale and Mound streets was fixed at eight mph and on all other streets at not over fourteen mph, including stops.
- Oct. 1892 North trestle ramp razed in preparation for building the High Street Viaduct. High Street cars routed Chestnut Street, Fourth Street, and Chittenden Street while Viaduct and Union Station No. 3 were

constructed.

- 11/1/1892 Livingston Avenue construction complete – electric operation
- 11/1/1892 Fourth Street construction complete – electric operation
- 2/24/1893 The **Crosstown Street Railway Co.** was incorporated and purchased the Glenwood & Greenlawn Street Railway Co.
- 3/8/1893 **The Columbus Central Railway Co.** was incorporated and purchased the Columbus & Westerville Railway Co.
- 1895 East track along N. Fourth Street from Chittenden to Wyandotte built.
- 10/2/1899 The **Columbus Railway Co.** merged the Columbus Street Railway Co., the Crosstown Street Railway Co., and the Columbus Central Railway Co.

1901-1920

- 2/4/1901 Ordinance was passed by the city council renewing the franchise of The Columbus Railway Company for a term of 25 years permitting the inauguration of owl car service on High Street, West Broad Street, Main Street, and Long Street.
- 1901 The **Central Market Street Railway (CMSR)** was incorporated. It operated the local streetcars on the interurban tracks in Columbus.
- 1903 The **Columbus Railway & Light Company (CR&L)** incorporated. It leased the streetcar and electric businesses in Columbus.
- 1906 The CR&L took over the operation and maintenance of the Central Market Street Railway.
- 1909 The west track was built on the side of N. Fourth Street from Chittenden to Wyandotte.
- 1910 Streetcar strike from July 24 to October 19, 1910
- 1911 Track on Schiller (Whittier) Street extended east across Parsons Avenue to Lockbourne Road.
- 1913 The **Columbus Railway, Power & Light Company (CRP&L)** was incorporated. Power added the sale of steam for heating commercial buildings.
- 6/19/1913 Through service to Bexley inaugurated with every third car providing 18-minute service.
- 3/2/1914 Double-deck streetcar No. 1000 started operation on the High Street line.
- Before 1915 The CD&M Standard gauge Fairgrounds loop was abandoned.

- Sept. 1915 The track on Hosack Street was replaced by the track on Barthman Avenue due to the construction of the viaduct on Parsons Avenue over the T&OC RR. East (northbound) track on Parsons built from crossover near Innis Avenue to the end of the line at the T&OC RR.
- 1917 The use of open cars was discontinued per legislation enacted by the State of Ohio Legislature.
- 11/1/1917 Eleventh Avenue–Chittenden Line operated as an independent line with the connection of trackage on Eleventh Avenue to that on Chittenden and the new Fairgrounds loop.
- 6/27/1918 Two city ordinances changed the names of Bismark to Lansing, Germania to Stewart, Schiller to Whittier, and Schiller Park to Washington Park.
- 8/31/1918 The Company moved its offices from Broad and High to 104 N. Third Street.
- 11/13/1918 Camp Chase and East Mound lines consolidated.

1921-1930

- 12/12/1921 Parsons-Pennsylvania line transferred to West Broad Street car house from Milo car house.
- 1922 A new track was built on Indianola Avenue from Arcadia Avenue to the north side of Glen Echo Ravine for the CD&M's Worthington bypass.
- 2/13/1922 City car service extended to Webster Park Avenue on the N. High Street line.
- 2/26/1922 Car service from Long and Third Streets to Worthington was established with three zones. The fare was 6 cents cash or one ticket in each zone
- 6/19/1922 Marble Cliff cash transfer discontinued and regular fare accepted.
- 1923 Tracks on Oak Street were rebuilt as a double track from Grant to Kelton Avenues.
- 9/1/1923 Owl car service was established on Parsons Avenue.
- 10/21/1923 Taylor Avenue extension on the Mt. Vernon line completed. Every other car is operated over the extension.
- 1924 Laid new wide-gauge track on the West Mound Street bridge over the Scioto River and the Hocking Valley Railway.
- 1924 CRP&L was purchased by Cyrus Eaton's **Continental Gas & Electric**.
- 1924 The track on Spruce Street and Harrison Avenue was replaced by the track on Goodale Street.

- 1924 Driving Park loop at the end of Livingston Avenue abandoned along with the track on Kelton Avenue from Livingston Avenue to Main Street.
- 2/1/1924 The **Columbus, New Albany & Johnston Traction Co.** (CAN&JT) was taken over by the CRP&L. It became the Ralston Division with four zones.
- 1925 A short piece of track on Naughten Street, Neilston Street, and Mt. Vernon Avenue was abandoned.
- 1926 A new franchise was received from the City of Columbus.
- 1926 The track on Fulton Street was replaced by Livingston Avenue trackage.
- 7/14/1926 Cemetery cars cutover to new track from Glenwood to Central Avenues, and service discontinued from Central Avenue to Cemetery.
- Sept. 1926 Picway Power Plant began operation. (The standard gauge Central Market lines were supplied with power from the Scioto Valley Traction's Rees powerhouse 1904-1928)
- Early 1927 Standard gauge track on Indianola Avenue extended north from Glen Echo Ravine
- 5/23/1927 Car service on West Mound Street with a 15-minute base designated as the "West Mound-Leonard line"
- 6/15/1927 Shuttle car service on Indianola Avenue to Oakland Park Avenue
- 12/25/1927 Regular 20-minute service on Indianola Avenue. Extended North High Street cars to Oakland Park Avenue. Extended Summit Street line to Weisheimer Road and North High Street.
- 1/1/1928 Extended North High Owl car service to Oakland Park Avenue.
- 1/8/1928 Extended Camp Chase line to Hague Avenue and Broad Street.
- 5/27/1928 Extended Camp Chase line to Big Four Railroad on a 20-minute headway.
- 9/29/1928 Westerville freight car discontinued.
- 11/1/1928 Ralston car line discontinued. Mt. Vernon car line extended to East Columbus on 20-minute headway.
- 12/16/1928 Columbus–Worthington, Steelton–North High lines consolidated. This reduced the headway on Worthington from 45 minutes to 20 minutes.
- 1/16/1929 East Mound Streetcar service discontinued. Southern Ohio Public Service (Columbus Newark & Zanesville) abandoned.
- 12/1/1929 Westerville car service was discontinued from the CA&C RR to Westerville. Route: railroad west to Cleveland Avenue, to Eleventh Avenue, West to Fourth Street, south to Chestnut Street, west to High Street, north to Goodale Street, east to Fourth Street, and returning over

the same route.

The old service from Fourth Street and Livingston Avenue to Westerville took 55 minutes.

1931-1940

- 1930 The track on Main Street was rebuilt as a double track from Bulen Avenue to Parkview Avenue.
- 4/7/1930 Worthington line extended to North Street in Worthington.
- 8/22/1930 Fire at Milo car house destroys building and 25 cars.
- 9-7-1930 Track on Dawson and Clifton Avenues north of Broad Street abandoned.
- 10/1/30 Arlington and West Mound lines paired with 20-minute headway. Glenwood and Leonard lines paired with 10-minute headway.
- 10/13/1930 Arlington line extended to South Parkway and Coventry Road on new track, Work began 8/8/1930 from Fifth Avenue north.
- 12/1/1930 Shuttle car on Minerva Park line from Agler Road to Minerva Park entrance with hourly service.
- 12/14/1930 One-man operation on Minerva Park shuttle car.
- 10/13/1931 Minerva Park shuttle discontinued.
- 1932 CRP&L bought the **Southern Ohio Electric Company**.
- 7/25/1932 East Columbus line cut back to Nelson Road.
- 1/5/1933 One-man cars in full service on the High-Whittier line.
- 2/12/1933 Parsons-Pennsylvania line routed via High Street to State Street and Fourth Street.
- 12/3/1933 Trolley coach service started on Cleveland Avenue.
- 11/12/1934 Streetcar service on the Worthington line was abandoned and all regular cars on the Summit-Steelton line were routed directly north on Indianola Avenue to Oakland Park Avenue.
- Began N High Street track reconstruction to change standard gauge track from Oakland Park Avenue to Blenheim Road to broad gauge.
- 12/15/1934 Eleventh Avenue shuttle car line discontinued.
- 5/5/1935 Discontinued Camp Chase line and substituted trolley coaches. The Sullivant and Cleveland lines became a pair. Leonard cars looped downtown using Fourth, State, High, and Long Streets.
- 6/2/1935 Parsons-Pennsylvania line began using one-man cars from Kelton Avenue.

- 7/28/1935 West Broad–Mt. Vernon streetcar routed via Broad to High to Spring Streets in both directions.
- 9/1/1935 Oak-Long car line began using one-man cars.
- 11/24/1935 Offices moved to North High Street.
- 12/29/1935 West Mound Street and Leonard Avenue car service was abandoned. Arlington cars routed over Front, Main, High, and Goodale Streets.
- 3/22/1936 Arlington Line discontinued.
- 6/21/1936 New Transportation office at Cleveland and Reynolds Avenues.
- 10/4/1936 One-man operation on West Broad–Mt. Vernon line.
- 11/1/1936 All owl service provided with busses assigned on the Main–Long, S. High–Neil, Parsons, N. Fourth Street–Summit and also Livingston–Leonard lines (12/20/1935)
- 5/2/1937 One-man car operation on the Fourth Street–Livingston line.
- 5/14/1937 The **Columbus & Southern Ohio Electric Company** (C&SOE) was incorporated. It included the CRP&L Co.
- 11/1/1937 East terminal of the West Broad–Mt. Vernon line changed to Taylor and Mt. Vernon Avenue.
- Oct. 1938 A streetcar storage yard replaced the Olentangy Park Loop at the North High car house.
- 10/16/1938 Summit–N. Fourth Street lines were replaced with trolley coaches. Steelton line ended downtown at Gay and Third Streets. Livingston and Long car lines combined.
- 10/29/1938 Steelton line abandoned.
- 10/30/1938 Parsons line extended across the viaduct to Groveport Road.
- 11/13/1938 Oak Street line discontinued. Oak and Indianola trolley coach lines combined.
- 1/1/1938 The rerouting plan of the city council begins:
Main–Neil – North on Front from Main to Goodale. South on High from Goodale to Main.
West Broad–Mt. Vernon – North on Front from Broad to Spring. South on High from Spring to Broad.
Parsons–Pennsylvania – North on High from Livingston to Goodale. South on Front from Goodale to Mound, to High.
- 3/19/1939 Parsons–Pennsylvania – North on Fourth, State and High to Goodale. South on High from Goodale to Livingston.
- 2/17/1940 West Broad car house discontinued servicing streetcars. The West Broad–Mt. Vernon and Long-Livingston lines transferred to Kelton

Avenue.

- 4/14/1940 Car service on the West Broad–Mt. Vernon line was discontinued.
- 6/13/1940 Track on Drexel, Powell, and Dawson north of Main Street abandoned.

1941-1948

- June 1947 Tracks removed on West Mound Street.
- Early 1947 Railfans want a PCC car trial, but the request was denied.
- 8/3/1947 Car service on Pennsylvania discontinued.
- 8/17/1947 Car service on Long-Livingston discontinued
- 9/7/1947 Car service on North High–South High and High–Whittier lines discontinued.
- 8/21/1948 Car service on Parsons discontinued.
- 9/4/1948 Car service on Neil-Main discontinued.

The Last Streetcar Trip

Streetcars departed from both ends of the Neil–Main line at 12:20 am on September 5, 1948, for Kelton Avenue. The last car to arrive was car #704 from Neil Avenue. Retiring motorman Rollie Baker operated the car. A crowd of spectators had gathered at Kelton and Oak to view the auspicious event.

Data collected by BJ Kern with additions by Ed Miller and Alex Campbell
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Revised by Alex Campbell, February 2024