

Columbus Electric Railway Chronology

1880-1900

- 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.
- 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. It was soon taken over by the **Columbus Consolidated Street Railway Company** (CCSR).
- 1891 CCSR erected buildings and machinery for electric power used for driving the cars on High Street line. It provided 20,000hp.
- 1891 Columbus & Westerville company incorporated
- 1891 Worthington & Columbus Street Railway incorporated
- 1/14/1891 Electric cars operated on High Street replacing horse cars.
- 7/4/1891 Electric cars operated on Neil Avenue replacing horse cars.
- 1892 The Columbus Consolidated Street Railway Company was reorganized as the **Columbus Street Railway Company** (CSR).
- 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.
- 1893 The streetcar and electric light business brought together and named the **Columbus Railway & Light Company** (CR&L).
- 1895 East track along N. Fourth Street from Chittenden to Wyandotte built.

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 CR&L purchased the **Central Market Street Railway (CMSR)** including the Westerville and "PA" lines
- 1904 The company became the **Columbus Railway, Power & Light Company (CRP&L)**.
- 1909 West track 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.
- 6/19/1913 Through service to Bexley inaugurated with every third car providing 18-minute service.
- 3/2/1914 Double deck streetcar started operation on the High Street line.
- Before 1915 Standard gauge Fairgrounds loop abandoned.
- Sept. 1915 Track on Hosack Street replaced by track on Barthman due to construction of the viaduct on Parsons Avenue over the T&OC RR. East (northbound) track on Parsons built from crossover near Innis to end of line at the T&OC RR.
- 1917 Discontinued the use of open cars entirely during this year.
- 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 New track built on Indianola Avenue from Arcadia Avenue to the north side of Glen Echo Ravine for the Worthington bypass of the CD&M.
- 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 – 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 rebuilt as double track from Grant to Kelton Avenues.
- 9/1/1923 Owl car service 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 broad gauge track on West Mound Street bridge over the Scioto River and the Hocking Valley Railway.
- 1924 CRP&L purchased by Cyrus Eaton's **Continental Gas & Electric**.
- 1924 Track on Spruce Street and Harrison Avenue replaced by 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) taken over by the CRP&L. It became the Ralston Division with four zones.
- Sept. 1924 CG&E purchased by United Light & Power.
- 1925 Abandoned short piece of track on Naughten Street, Neilston Street and Mt. Vernon Avenue.
- 1926 New franchise received from the City of Columbus.
- 1926 Track on Fulton Street 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 power house 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 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 Street car service discontinued. Southern Ohio Public Service (CN&Z) abandoned.
- 12/1/1929 Westerville car service 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 Track on Main Street rebuilt as 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 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 Worthington line discontinued and all regular cars on the Summit-Steelton line routed directly north on Indianola Avenue to Oakland Park Avenue.
- Began 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 Car service discontinued to West Mound Street and on Leonard Avenue. 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 Named changed to the **Columbus & Southern Ohio Electric Company (C&SOE)**
- 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 replaced with trolley coaches. Steelton line ended downtown at Gay and Third Streets. Livingston and Long car lines combined.
- 10/29/1938 Steelton line discontinued.
- 10/30/1938 Parsons line extended across viaduct to Groveport Road.
- 11/13/1938 Oak Street line discontinued. Oak and Indianola trolley coach lines

combined.

- 1/1/1938 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 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. 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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