

**Appendix 13A - 4: Email Submissions**

**Subject: Train near my home**

**From: Deanne Adler <[REDACTED]>**

**To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Sun, 29 Nov 2020 12:31:40 -0500**

**Hello**

**I will certainly appreciate this train system as I work in Philly but have some concerns. Will our streets be protected from others parking near our homes . Will we have signage as of no parking or permits? I live on E. Sussex Ave. which is marked as one of the properties near the stop would you be able to confirm where the stop near Mantua Boulevard will be . I am also told there will be no parking lot? How will people be able to use the train if they are not local ?**

**I appreciate your time .**

**Regards**

**Deanne Adler**

**Sent from my iPhone**

**Subject: no train**

From: roedance | [REDACTED]

To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com

Fri, 04 Dec 2020 12:53:34 -0500

I am a sewell resident for 43 years no train is needed here. There is no reason for a train to stop here. We have a nice quiet community we don't need others here. No barricades on Cumberland which is a hazard

Trains coming every 15 minutes would not be good for traffic.

**NO TRAIN**

Roseann Amorates

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

**Subject: draft Eis formal comment**

**From: ancona46 <[REDACTED]>**

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 16:14:01 -0500**

**My name is Michael Ancona and I live in Mantua township right around the corner from the proposed train stop , myself and my neighbors all strongly oppose the GCL line as this will cause a decrease in our property values, quality of life, and offer direct travel for criminals into our peaceful community!**

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S20+ 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Glassborocamdenline  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 1:19:24 PM

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To whom it may concern,

As a resident of the neighborhood this line would be coming through I would like to express my dissatisfaction. Mantua Township Sewell is quiet, clean and safe, your plan would make it none of those. The sound from the trains would be unbearable, we have trains come through on occasion in the night and they always wake me up so I can only imagine the lack of sleep your line would force on me. Especially now that I have to sleep during the day as an overnight ER nurse at an emergency animal hospital. I live on a dead end in the woods, I value my privacy and peace. I'm also a severe migraine sufferer sensitive to low frequency noise pollution and the increase in low frequency noise from the train would have me in agony.

Your line would also decrease the value of my home. A home my dad built and I've been lovingly updating since his passing in his memory. I've worked hard to increase the value of my home as have my neighbors. We have a very beautiful well cared for neighborhood. An influx of strangers who don't care about our neighborhood would lead to littering in our streets and the possible vandalism of our homes we put so much love into.

Your plan also would have people who wanted to use our stop, parking on our streets to walk to the train. So now residents lose our ability to park in our own neighborhood.

We are a very quiet and tight-knit neighborhood. We all know each other and look out for each other. The idea of groups of people not from our community on our streets is concerning. I've lived in my home for 30 years and I've never once felt unsafe or concerned if I forgot to lock my door. Your plan would change that.

As a member of the community that will be affected I hope you will hear my voice and listen. I do not want this line. I do not want the noise from the trains every 7.5 minutes. I do not want strangers parking in our neighborhood. I do not want an influx of people from Camden or Glassboro in our neighborhood. And I do not want to feel unsafe in my neighborhood that I've never once worried about my safety in. Please stop this project.

Kelly Andrews

**Subject: Re: Public Comment for GCL**

From: "GCL Project Team" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

To: "Appleby-Wineberg Bryan Kent" <[REDACTED]>

Thu, 05 Nov 2020 18:19:27 -0500

Thank you for your formal comment on the Glassboro-Camden Line draft EIS. Your comments will be recorded and addressed in the final EIS after the comment period closes on Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 11:59 PM EST.

Sincerely,

The GCL Project Team

----- Original Message -----

**From:**

"Appleby Wineberg Bryan Kent" <[REDACTED]>

**To:**

"contactus@glassborocamdenline.com" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Cc:**

**Sent:**

Mon, 2 Nov 2020 18:39:22 +0000

**Subject:**

Public Comment for GCL

Hi,

We have been waiting 20 years for you guys to put this together and connect us with Philly. The is a GREAT move forward.

The only problem is that it won't be as fast or environmentally friendly as it was in the 1960s. This new line will be about 20 min slower AND won't be electrified. Those two things are a HUGE shame. Not exactly progress.

That said, get on with it and build this thing!!! It is WAY past time to vault into the 20<sup>th</sup> century (yup since we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century it is way past time) and it would be better with faster/electric trains, not slower/diesel trains.....but at least we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.....

This reminds me a bit of the PATCO high speed line conversion a few years ago, when they moved from needing quarters to purchase tickets to a credit card system.....it was SO hard for them to do....never mind every major train system on the planet had been using cards and credit card machines for nearly 20 years before PATCO made the switch. Just silly. Don't reinvent the wheel, take lessons from other places, do it better and faster, and move forward.

Anyway don't mind the rantings of this old man. We are so excited this is coming.....just hope it gets here before we retire and move (14 years from now).....we have seriously been waiting for this for 20 years.

Cheers,  
Bryan

**Bryan Appleby-Wineberg, DMA**

Professor of Trumpet/Head of Brass

Rowan University

Wilson 137

Office Phone [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Draft EIS Formal Comment  
**Date:** Thursday, November 19, 2020 12:55:02 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[GCL Draft EIS Testimony.pdf](#)

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November 19, 2020

Testimony Before the Glassboro – Camden Light Rail Draft EIS Public Hearing

Via Email: [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com),

Good Afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Study of the Glassboro – Camden Light Rail project.

My name is Marlene Asselta, President of the Southern New Jersey Development Council (SNJDC), a non-profit, 8-county economic development organization comprised of over 300 mid to large size businesses, founded in 1951 to represent the interests of both the public and private sectors.

The Southern New Jersey Development Council has been a tireless advocate for the expansion of passenger rail service throughout the southern counties of New Jersey and hereby strongly supports the Glassboro-Camden Line project.

The GCL provides an alternative to existing automobile dependency by restoring passenger rail service to communities historically served by commuter rail, and which are now serviced by limited transit options and personal automobiles.

The GCL's strategic location primarily within existing rail takes advantage of an underutilized transportation corridor, creating a faster east-west mobility option than auto or bus, while minimizing property acquisition. This has an immediate environmental impact through the alleviation of congestion on increasingly overburdened roadways in the region. As described, the reduction in traffic on roadways will have a direct and significant impact on the single greatest contributor of greenhouse gas emissions in New Jersey.

The increased mobility between established neighborhoods and job centers, particularly for transit



dependent populations, and regional access by providing connections to Philadelphia, Trenton and other areas via the PATCO Speedline, the NJ Transit River Line, and other NJ Transit Bus Routes will encourage economic development in established business centers along the corridor.

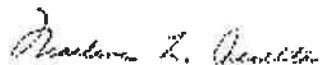
The construction, operation, and maintenance of the GCL system would provide jobs and economic stimulus to the region such as those seen in the areas surrounding the existing River Line as well as promote development consistent with Smart Growth programs and policies currently in place at the local, State, and regional levels to reduce sprawl by encouraging infill and transit-oriented development.

The proposed GCL will provide a convenient transportation link to facilitate collaboration and travel between the Rowan University/Rutgers campuses in Camden and Glassboro including the new Joint Health Sciences Center in Camden. This state-of-the-art facility includes labs and training spaces that houses Rowan University and Rutgers University-Camden, Camden County College, and the Cooper Medical School of Rowan University. The GCL will help propel the growth and expansion of the Eds and Meds corridor that has already proven to be a significant factor in the revitalization of Camden and the southern NJ region.

The draft EIS document factors for a worse-case scenario of environmental impact and assures minimalization during the process. The GCL project would require permits from various NJDEP agencies such as the Division of Land Resource Protection, NJDEP Division of Parks and Forestry, the Bureau of Water Allocation, the Bureau of Surface Water, and the Bureau of Nonpoint Pollution Control. As the review and approval process will require an accounting of any identifiable impact, we have the upmost confidence in the project's minimized environmental impact.

The SNJDC fully supports the Glassboro-Camden Line and will continue to work and advocate on its behalf to successful completion of extended rail service in southern New Jersey.

Thank you for your time.



**Marlene Z Asselta, President**  
**Southern New Jersey Development Council**

Turnersville, NJ 08012

[www.snjdc.org](http://www.snjdc.org)

 Please consider the environment before printing this email

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment****From: Paige Bathurst** [REDACTED]**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>****Thu, 17 Dec 2020 22:38:39 -0500**

In 2014, I sat in my 6th grade social studies teacher's classroom and for the first time I learned about the Glassboro Camden Line. Now I am a first year student at Rowan University and have become aware of the reborn idea of this transportation system. I'm sure you don't get many messages like this but I couldn't go any longer without writing to you about my immense support of this. As a Mantua Township resident for my entire 18 years of life, I have watched this town grow and evolve and to see community members say that this time, we shouldn't grow is so hard for me to understand.

I am quite honestly flabbergasted by the outpouring negativity against this system. I write to tell you that I refuse to believe any of their concerns are valid. One that I see very often is the idea that the crime and drug rates will go up profusely, especially drug use of minors. To begin, I believe we have a very good police department here in Mantua and throughout Gloucester County and do not believe we should be concerned about crimes. Also, as an 18 year old, one thing that has always horrified me is the drug and alcohol use by my peers. To see parents imply that their child will be tempted to use drugs because of the location that this line will connect to is just so wrong to me. Another point I continue to see brought up is that emergency vehicles would be stopped by traffic at these train stops. I don't believe this is a real issue and if it was, how does the rest of the country manage with rails like these?

My initial support of the GCL was honestly for personal reasons. As I mentioned previously, I have been aware of this idea for many years. I grew up dancing at a studio along the tracks in Wenonah. Sometimes I would daydream about what it would be like to take a 1 minute drive to the stop by my house and take a train ride to my dance class. Now similarly, I imagine how different my experience and so many others' experiences would be if they could simply hop on a train to head to their class in Glassboro on the Rowan University campus or to be able to easily come home on the weekends. On a similar idea, this line could give Gloucester County residents an easier pathway to commute to schools in Philadelphia such as Drexel University or University of Pennsylvania. Conversely, we could see an increase in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania suburb residents enrolling in our University. To continue, I also support this line because the Mantua Township I grew up in is not the Mantua Township I live in now. With stores like Target and Lowe's along with restaurants like Chick-fil-A, I believe this line could help our economy grow. With the initial and continued discovery of the fossil pit, Inversand as I like to call it, I believe Mantua is going to be put on the maps and this line will just help us.

To end, I urge you to go through with this project. I believe many are uneducated and don't know what the benefits of this could be. Thank you for your time and stay well.

Kind regards,  
Paige E. Bathurst

[REDACTED]  
Sewell, NJ 08080

**Subject: Opinion regarding proposed Camden Glassboro line****From: Denise Bauer** <[REDACTED]>**To: "contactus@glassborocamdenline.com"** <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

Wed, 18 Nov 2020 03:07:48 +0000

**To the team proposing this project/ project managers,**

Something similar to this was proposed over 20 years ago and we purposely waited to purchase our home as we did not want to be any where near this rail line. A similar project was done from Camden to Echelon and brought nothing but problems! To me, I believe my property value will drop, crime will greatly increase, my taxes will be even more outrageous, and frankly I don't see the need to spend the money for this project especially during a pandemic! Public transportation routes in Philadelphia are being cut due to lack of customers as people are NOT using public transportation during a pandemic. There already is sufficient public transportation and access to the train elsewhere in my opinion. I'm also wondering why this is even being considered as we are in an economically tough time for many? I just heard about this public hearing and cannot attend the virtual meeting. I also do not see the need for all these stops in Gloucester county, which is a more rural area. I think most of my neighbors would agree with my opinion if they even know this project is on the table again.

Thank you for your time,

Ms. Bauer

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

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**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment - Matylda M Biedron****From: Matylda Biedron <[REDACTED]>****To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com****Thu, 17 Dec 2020 23:52:37 -0500****Hello!**

I'm writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail project. On an unrelated note, thank you for the work you've done so far on the project, I am absolutely vehemently against it, however, I know a lot of time was put into this, and your time and efforts are appreciated.

First and foremost, as a proposed green alternative by community leaders, it's environmentally unconscionable to clear a wooded lot in the residential area of Woodbury Heights to create a Vehicle Maintenance Facility. The Vehicle Maintenance Facility will greatly impact Woodbury-Heights, Wenonah, and Oak Valley. Vacant industrial lots near the border of Camden or near the Walt Whitman Bridge should be utilized as these locations are not near residential areas. Clearing a wooded lot for a maintenance facility in a residential area is environmentally detrimental, as well as disruptive and invasive. The GCL is not a green option, it creates and increases fossil-fuel emissions and noise pollution.

I'm deeply troubled by the noise disruption that will be caused by the GCL, especially in Wenonah, NJ. Please see the infographic attached. The amount of research I've read on the detrimental and dangerous effects of noise pollution on the environment and on human health is very alarming and undeniable.

It's disheartening that the EIS study claimed, "that people tend to be more sensitive to sound during the typical sleeping hours. Many surveys have shown that L is well correlated with human annoyance, and therefore this descriptor is widely used to describe how humans perceive environmental noise."

It's very worrisome and alarming that the GCL EIS downplayed the effects of sound and noise pollution on human health. It's irresponsible, dangerous, and inexcusable. In 2011, the WHO published a report titled "Burden of Disease from Environmental Noise." In this study, the WHO officially stated,

**"One in three individuals is annoyed during the daytime and one in five has disturbed sleep at night because of traffic noise. Epidemiological evidence indicates that those chronically exposed to high levels of environmental noise have an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases such as myocardial infarction. Thus, noise pollution is considered not only an environmental nuisance but also a threat to public health."**

The GCL EIS is treating the proposed effects of sound and vibration as a nuisance, instead of treating it as a threat to public health and environmental health, as established by the WHO. According to Marion Burgess of the Acoustics and Vibration Unit of the University of NSW,

**"Interestingly, it may be the sounds we aren't even aware we're hearing that are affecting us the most, in particular, those we 'hear' when we're asleep. The human ear is extremely sensitive, and it never rests. So even when you sleep, your ears are working, picking up and transmitting sounds which are filtered and interpreted by different parts of the brain. It's a permanently open auditory channel. So although you may not be aware of it, background noises of traffic, aircraft, or music coming from a neighbour are still being processed, and your body is reacting to them in different ways."**

The GCL alarmingly stated, "project-generated noise in the "No Impact" range is not likely to be found annoying and is considered acceptable according to FTA criteria, thus no mitigation is required." If health experts are not reviewing the data and officially stating the noise is simply a nuisance as the EIS implies, the GCL EIS's claims of sound and vibration are irresponsible and insignificant as they are baseless from a health care perspective.

Researchers have concluded that noise impacts human health and is a threat to public health. "According to guidelines published by the W.H.O.'s European regional office last year, include tinnitus, sleep disturbance, ischemic heart disease, obesity, diabetes, adverse birth outcomes, and cognitive impairment in children. In Western Europe, the guidelines say, traffic noise results in an annual loss of "at least one million health years of life."

Europe is a champion of rail, however, researchers are now discovering the detrimental and lasting health and environmental effects rail has caused throughout Europe. Rather than repeating the mistakes made in Europe, we need to shelve and reexamine the GCL, especially in a post-COVID environment. Doing otherwise is irresponsible and detrimental to the environment and public health.

COVID-19 has had unforeseen impacts on employment. Many commuters nationwide have been able to work remotely from home, and "have gained, on average, a little more than 10% of their workweek back. Cutting out the commute also reduced gasoline consumption and CO2 emissions." Working remotely from home has also impacted the daily life of American workers.

*"The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a sudden, massive shift around the world to working from home. While there is great concern how this will affect inequality and how the economy will adjust, the shift has also saved billions of hours of commuting time in the US alone. Drawing on original surveys, this column estimates that the shift to working from home lowers commuting time among Americans by more than 60 million hours per workday. Americans devote about a third of the time savings to their primary jobs and about 60% to other work activities, including household chores and childcare. The allocation of time savings differs substantially by education group and between persons with and without children at home.*

According to the Wall Street Journal, "employees spent over 22 million extra hours on their primary job each workday." In an experiment conducted with 500 call-center employees, "the performance of those working from home increased 13%. Encouraged by the results, the travel agency offered the option to work from home to all its employees and saw performance increase more than 30%."

With these encouraging statistics, it's very likely that many office jobs will become permanently remote, which will have a massive impact on mass transit, especially rail. With employers saving money by no longer needing to rent office space, this may also give employers room to possibly increase salaries. Until we can fully grasp the economic impacts of COVID-19 on employment and development, we cannot continue with the GCL. From a drafted community letter, "People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete. "

Although bus transit has been able to recover to 70-80% pre-COVID ridership levels, the same cannot be said for rail. Rail in New Jersey has failed to rebound past 20%. Rail has required billions in bailouts nationwide, and it is still struggling.

Given that the GCL is heralded as being a benefit to the communities along the proposed route, downplaying the drastic effects of sound is inexcusable. Many studies have been released that living along a train route causes cardiovascular disease and also causes cognitive development issues in children. Given the declaration from the W.H.O., we need to conduct further studies to fully understand and grasp the detrimental effects of noise pollution, and the difficulty in reducing newly created noise pollution. We cannot champion 'growth' initiatives if they are actively harming local residents. This type of growth is not innovative, it's irresponsible, harmful, and dangerous. Treating it as anything else is

If Camden is already disproportionately affected by noise and air pollution, why are we causing further harm to the residents of Camden that have been disproportionately affected by noise pollution? This further compounds air and noise pollution in Camden, and it unnecessarily creates noise and air pollution in quiet suburban and rural residential areas.

If we are to truly impact our local communities with growth, we need to invest the \$2-3 billion proposed for this rail to cornfields, in local BID initiatives. Collingswood did not benefit from living along PATCO, it experienced recent growth because community representatives heavily invested in rebuilding the downtown area and attracting new businesses and restaurants. That is why

Collingswood is a desirable place to live. Before this downtown renovation, it was a community in need of help that had experienced issues with blight.

We cannot spend \$2-3 billion on a promise of economic growth, especially when COVID has rendered any past economic growth statistics obsolete. Promoting a rail line as a tool of economic growth through promising economic growth is simply one broken promise after another. The route along the River Line has been waiting over 15 years for promised economic growth.

Thank you for your time. I also fully agree with and support the message in this community letter:

"I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

One of the largest suggested benefits of the current GCL proposal is to reduce traffic congestion, however the current proposal does not provide any realistic mass transit alternative to current traffic routes. Heaviest traffic congestion is currently seen along highways 42, 295, and 76 (Walt Whitman bridge), however the current GCL proposal does not provide a realistic alternative for any of these routes; the current GCL proposal would provide a route into Camden, but destinations in Camden are not the cause of current traffic concerns. Highway 676, which is the route that would be served by the proposed GCL, is arguably the least congested of South Jersey's roadways. At a proposed cost of billions of taxpayer dollars, the proposed GCL provides too small a benefit to only a small number of people. The current GCL proposal also fails to account for the significant impact the new 295-42 Interchange Project will have on traffic patterns and congestion along those major roadways.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42, COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

The GCL, as proposed, will:

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.
- Cripple local streets near the GCL including reduction of lanes widths, relocation of roadways, and full closures of one-way streets affecting local circulation patterns.<sup>1</sup> These street circulation patterns would be most-heavily affected in towns like ours, with at-grade crossings.
- Disrupt communities with introduction of significant noise from the frequent passage of trains, in addition to disruption and traffic introduced into these communities with an influx of rail passengers driving to and from proposed

rail stations. Many communities along the proposed GCL are currently quiet communities with limited, local traffic.

- The potential health effects on local residents due to increased fossil fuel emissions and the permanent disruption of noise pollution resulting from the GCL needs to be studied. These health effects include anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation, asthma, and cardiovascular disease.
  - *“Noise exposure modifies the function of multiple organs and systems. Acute noise exposure, in both laboratory settings where traffic noise was simulated and in real-life environments, can cause increases in blood pressure, heart rate, and cardiac output, likely mediated by the release of stress hormones such as catecholamines (for review, see Babisch4,5). As shown by field studies, these acute effects occur not only at high sound levels in occupational settings but also at relatively low environmental noise levels when concentration, relaxation, or sleep is disturbed.”<sup>2</sup>*
  - *“Railway noise is related to disturbed sleep, which in turn increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, supported by indications of increased cardiovascular disease in persons living close to railways.”<sup>3</sup>*
- Cost the state \$2-3 Billion dollars. After reviewing costs of similar projects, the GCL seems to cost double the per mile figures to construct than other comparable projects. After reviewing projects such as the Riverline, with costs totalling in at \$1.1 billion and ridership down substantially from projection, it seems there is no benefit from a cost vs reward standpoint. The promise of economic growth from the River Line for the past 15 years has been just that, a promise unfulfilled.
 

Additionally, other rail lines have continuously relied upon continuous funding from taxpayer dollars to cover operating costs. Other similar rail projects have not been shown to be financially sustainable without bailouts, and the potential cost of this current GCL proposal for years following the initial construction costs has not been sufficiently outlined at this time.
- The current proposal also fails to meet the crucial efforts needed to reduce carbon emissions, as the suggested rail will be powered by diesel fuel, which will impact the air quality of South Jersey residents. Rather than eliminating emissions, this current proposal will add emissions and expand our carbon footprint.
- Include permanent and temporary environmental impacts, such as disturbance to soil and vegetation, resulting in the loss, alteration, or degradation of wildlife habitat and plant communities. This includes impacts to sensitive plant communities and habitat for federal and state-listed species.<sup>4</sup>No action plan has been announced to mitigate this impact to our natural resources.
- Have considerable impact at 34 areas of concern that are “Known or Potential Contaminated Sites Expected to be Impacted by the Proposed Alignment”.<sup>5</sup>No further information on the investigation has been presented in order to confirm contamination would not be encountered.
- Threaten the integrity of 11 historic districts and 6 historic properties; 5 properties are listed in the National Register and State Register and 12 properties have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register and State Register.<sup>6</sup> Historic resources are protected under Federal law through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Applicable State of New Jersey legislation governing the protection of historic resources includes Chapter 268 of the New Jersey State Register Law of 1970 and EO215.

**Other Issues forecasted with the GCL that need to be addressed are as follows:**

- COVID-19 has undeniably impacted our way of life- politically, economically, and socially. Given the mass impacts of COVID-19, priority should be given to studying the effects of the virus long term in order to determine if the need for the GCL still exists. There is currently no way to predict how many jobs will now be conducted remotely going forward, and how many jobs will no longer require the same daily commute now that many industries have adapted to conducting their business online with options for employees to work from home.
- Data in support of the need for the proposed GCL does not account for the potential impacts to be seen following completion of the construction project currently underway to improve traffic flow between highways 295, 42, and 76. We

should table this EIS phase of the GCL and re-evaluate mass transit needs in the region once current highway construction has been completed. Current traffic patterns and mass transit needs may change significantly following completion of the work that is now underway on 295.

- Property values of many homes in the communities that are in the direct path of this current GCL proposal may be negatively affected, which not only affects the economic well-being of our individual citizens, but also affects property tax assessments. A drop in property values may leave these communities with a loss in annual revenue when tax assessments fall sharply for properties along the proposed rail line. There is no adequate study to assess the potential impact to property values along the GCL as currently proposed.
- Our goal of strategically expanding mass transit sustainably and effectively includes exploring other less intrusive and less expensive proposals. For instance, the expansion and upgrade of our current bus routes with electric or hydrogen powered buses is a more cost effective option. Such projects have been successfully completed in California for an approximate \$200+ million budget, a stark contrast to the \$2-3 billion cost of the GCL.
- The GCL EIS is outdated as it proposes using unsustainable fossil fuels. Given the nationwide effort to curb carbon emissions and move away from fossil fuels, it's only a matter of time until the use of diesel/electric powered trains will be rendered obsolete and will require upgrading to fully electric or hydrogen fuel-cell powered trains to meet carbon emission goals. Currently we have the technology to move forward using electric powered buses for 1/10th of the cost of this proposed GCL project. The infrastructure already exists, examples being routes 55, 42 and I-76.

I urge you to reassess support of the GCL as proposed. It will have a severe impact on our natural resources, threaten historic sites, drain the economy, have long term cost implications and INCREASE traffic in our towns. Please do not let another doomed-from-the-start light rail line become another failure for South Jersey.<sup>7</sup> My neighbors and I are counting on you for your support in OPPOSITION to the GCL Light Rail Line and ask that you join us in helping the entities involved in this project complete these goals with much better planning than an outdated and extremely expensive plan.

1. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Traffic Analysis Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05\\_Traffic\\_Analysis\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.p df](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05_Traffic_Analysis_Technical_Report_web.p df)
2. Münzel, T., Gori, T., Babisch, W., & Basner, M. (2014). Cardiovascular effects of environmental noise exposure. *European heart journal*, 35(13), 829–836. <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurheartj/ehu030>
3. Croy I, Smith MG, Waye KPEffects of train noise and vibration on human heart rate during sleep: an experimental studyBMJ Open 2013;3:e002655. <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/3/5/e002655>
4. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Natural Resources Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/01\\_Natural\\_Resources\\_Technical\\_Report\\_w e b.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/01_Natural_Resources_Technical_Report_w e b.pdf)
5. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Hazardous Material Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/04\\_Hazardous\\_Materials\\_Technical\\_Report\\_w eb.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/04_Hazardous_Materials_Technical_Report_w eb.pdf)
6. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Cultural Resources Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/07\\_Cultural\\_Resources\\_Technical\\_Report\\_pa ges\\_1-100.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/07_Cultural_Resources_Technical_Report_pa ges_1-100.pdf)
7. Source: Gov. Chris Christie labels NJ Transit River Line 'a joke' due to its poor ridership - News - Burlington County Times - Westampton, NJ <https://www.burlingtoncountytimes.com/news/20171211/gov-chris-christie-labels-nj-transi t-riv er-line-a-joke-due-to-its-poor-ridership>“

**Thank you very much** for your time in reading my concerns. I truly appreciate all of the time that's being taken to read the concerns, thoughts, and opinions of all of the residents living along the proposed GCL route.

Sincerely,

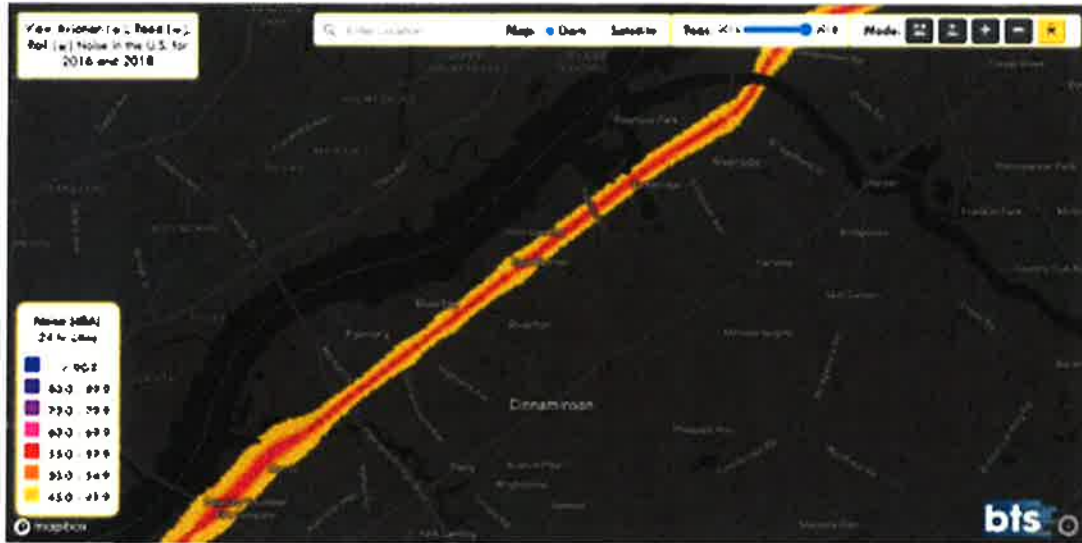


Matylda M. Biedron

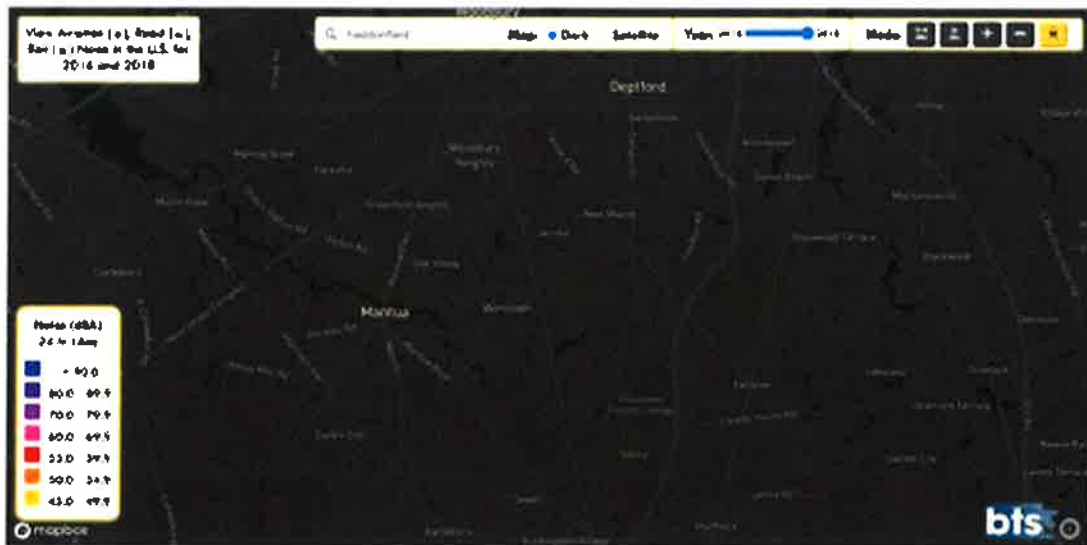
I included a PDF of my letter as well. Thank You.

## NOISE POLLUTION IMPACT OF LIGHT RAIL

### Current River Line Impact



### Current light rail noise impact along proposed GCL



### Projected light rail noise impact along proposed GCL consistent with River Line





MAP REFERENCE: <https://data.bts.gov/stories/x/National-Transportation-Noise-Map/#9-bbox>

Hello!

I'm writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail project. On an unrelated note, thank you for the work you've done so far on the project, I am absolutely vehemently against it, however, I know a lot of time was put into this, and your time and efforts are appreciated.

First and foremost, as a proposed green alternative by community leaders, it's environmentally unconscionable to clear a wooded lot in the residential area of Woodbury Heights to create a Vehicle Maintenance Facility. The Vehicle Maintenance Facility will greatly impact Woodbury-Heights, Wenonah, and Oak Valley. Vacant industrial lots near the border of Camden or near the Walt Whitman Bridge should be utilized as these locations are not near residential areas. Clearing a wooded lot for a maintenance facility in a residential area is environmentally detrimental, as well as disruptive and invasive. The GCL is not a green option, it creates and increases fossil-fuel emissions and noise pollution.

It's disheartening that the EIS study claimed, "that people tend to be more sensitive to sound during the typical sleeping hours. Many surveys have shown that L is well correlated with human annoyance, and therefore this descriptor is widely used to describe how humans perceive environmental noise."

It's very worrisome and alarming that the GCL EIS downplayed the effects of sound and noise pollution on human health. It's irresponsible, dangerous, and inexcusable. In 2011, the WHO published a report titled "Burden of Disease from Environmental Noise." In this study, the WHO officially stated,

**"One in three individuals is annoyed during the daytime and one in five has disturbed sleep at night because of traffic noise. Epidemiological evidence indicates that those chronically exposed to high levels of environmental noise have an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases such as myocardial infarction. Thus, noise pollution is considered not only an environmental nuisance but also a threat to public health."**

The GCL EIS is treating the proposed effects of sound and vibration as a nuisance, instead of treating it as a threat to public health and environmental health, as established by the WHO. According to Marion Burgess of the Acoustics and Vibration Unit of the University of NSW,

**"Interestingly, it may be the sounds we aren't even aware we're hearing that are affecting us the most, in particular, those we 'hear' when we're asleep. The human ear is extremely sensitive, and it never rests. So even when you sleep, your ears are working, picking up and transmitting sounds which are filtered and interpreted by different parts of the brain. It's a permanently open auditory channel. So although you may not be aware of it, background noises of traffic, aircraft, or music coming from a neighbour are still being processed, and your body is reacting to them in different ways."**

The GCL alarmingly stated, “project-generated noise in the “No Impact” range is not likely to be found annoying and is considered acceptable according to FTA criteria, thus no mitigation is required.” If health experts are not reviewing the data and officially stating the noise is simply a nuisance as the EIS implies, the GCL EIS’s claims of sound and vibration are irresponsible and insignificant as they are baseless from a health care perspective.

Researchers have concluded that noise impacts human health and is a threat to public health. “According to guidelines published by the W.H.O.’s European regional office last year, include tinnitus, sleep disturbance, ischemic heart disease, obesity, diabetes, adverse birth outcomes, and cognitive impairment in children. In Western Europe, the guidelines say, traffic noise results in an annual loss of “at least one million health years of life.”

Europe is a champion of rail, however, researchers are now discovering the detrimental and lasting health and environmental effects rail has caused throughout Europe. Rather than repeating the mistakes made in Europe, we need to shelve and reexamine the GCL, especially in a post-COVID environment. Doing otherwise is irresponsible and detrimental to the environment and public health.

COVID-19 has had unforeseen impacts on employment. Many commuters nationwide have been able to work remotely from home, and “have gained, on average, a little more than 10% of their workweek back. Cutting out the commute also reduced gasoline consumption and CO2 emissions.”<sup>1</sup> Working remotely from home has also impacted the daily life of American workers.

*“The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a sudden, massive shift around the world to working from home. While there is great concern how this will affect inequality and how the economy will adjust, the shift has also saved billions of hours of commuting time in the US alone. Drawing on original surveys, this column estimates that the shift to working from home lowers commuting time among Americans by more than 60 million hours per workday. Americans devote about a third of the time savings to their primary jobs and about 60% to other work activities, including household chores and childcare. The allocation of time savings differs substantially by education group and between persons with and without children at home.”<sup>2</sup>*

According to the Wall Street Journal, “employees spent over 22 million extra hours on their primary job each workday.”<sup>3</sup> In an experiment conducted with 500 call-center employees, “the performance of those working from home increased 13%. Encouraged by the results, the travel agency offered the option to work from home to all its employees and saw performance increase more than 30%.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.marketplace.org/2020/09/02/saving-time-money-not-commuting-traffic-fuel-telecommuting-co2-emissions/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://voxeu.org/article/how-americans-use-time-saved-working-home>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/with-no-commute-americans-simply-worked-more-during-coronavirus-11604050200>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/with-no-commute-americans-simply-worked-more-during-coronavirus-11604050200>

With these encouraging statistics, it's very likely that many office jobs will become permanently remote, which will have a massive impact on mass transit, especially rail. With employers saving money by no longer needing to rent office space, this may also give employers room to possibly increase salaries. Until we can fully grasp the economic impacts of COVID-19 on employment and development, we cannot continue with the GCL. From a drafted community letter, "People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete. "

Although bus transit has been able to recover to 70-80% pre-COVID ridership levels, the same cannot be said for rail. Rail in New Jersey has failed to rebound past 20%.<sup>5</sup> Rail has required billions in bailouts nationwide, and it is still struggling.

Given that the GCL is heralded as being a benefit to the communities along the proposed route, downplaying the drastic effects of sound is inexcusable. Many studies have been released that living along a train route causes cardiovascular disease and also causes cognitive development issues in children. Given the declaration from the W.H.O., we need to conduct further studies to fully understand and grasp the detrimental effects of noise pollution, and the difficulty in reducing newly created noise pollution. We cannot champion 'growth' initiatives if they are actively harming local residents. This type of growth is not innovative, it's irresponsible, harmful, and dangerous. Treating it as anything else is

If Camden is already disproportionately affected by noise and air pollution, why are we causing further harm to the residents of Camden that have been disproportionately affected by noise pollution? This further compounds air and noise pollution in Camden, and it unnecessarily creates noise and air pollution in quiet suburban and rural residential areas.

If we are to truly impact our local communities with growth, we need to invest the \$2-3 billion proposed for this rail to cornfields, in local BID initiatives. Collingswood did not benefit from living along PATCO, it experienced recent growth because community representatives heavily invested in rebuilding the downtown area and attracting new businesses and restaurants. That is why Collingswood is a desirable place to live. Before this downtown renovation, it was a community in need of help that had experienced issues with blight.

We cannot spend \$2-3 billion on a promise of economic growth, especially when COVID has rendered any past economic growth statistics obsolete. Promoting a rail line as a tool of economic growth through promising economic growth is simply one broken promise after another. The route along the River Line has been waiting over 15 years for promised economic growth.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.masstransitmag.com/print/content/21154654>

Thank you for your time. I also fully agree with and support the message in this community letter:

"I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

One of the largest suggested benefits of the current GCL proposal is to reduce traffic congestion, however the current proposal does not provide any realistic mass transit alternative to current traffic routes. Heaviest traffic congestion is currently seen along highways 42, 295, and 76 (Walt Whitman bridge), however the current GCL proposal does not provide a realistic alternative for any of these routes; the current GCL proposal would provide a route into Camden, but destinations in Camden are not the cause of current traffic concerns. Highway 676, which is the route that would be served by the proposed GCL, is arguably the least congested of South Jersey's roadways. At a proposed cost of billions of taxpayer dollars, the proposed GCL provides too small a benefit to only a small number of people. The current GCL proposal also fails to account for the significant impact the new 295-42 Interchange Project will have on traffic patterns and congestion along those major roadways.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42, COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

The GCL, as proposed, will:

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.
- Cripple local streets near the GCL including reduction of lanes widths, relocation of roadways, and full closures of one-way streets affecting local circulation patterns.<sup>1</sup> These street circulation patterns would be most-heavily affected in towns like ours, with at-grade crossings.
- Disrupt communities with introduction of significant noise from the frequent passage of trains, in addition to disruption and traffic introduced into these communities with an influx of rail passengers driving to and from proposed rail stations. Many communities along the proposed GCL are currently quiet communities with limited, local traffic.
- The potential health effects on local residents due to increased fossil fuel emissions and the permanent disruption of noise pollution resulting from the GCL needs to be studied. These health effects include anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation, asthma, and cardiovascular disease.
  - *"Noise exposure modifies the function of multiple organs and systems. Acute noise exposure, in both laboratory settings where traffic noise was simulated and in real-life environments, can cause increases in blood pressure, heart rate, and cardiac output, likely mediated by the release of stress hormones such as catecholamines (for review, see Babisch4,5). As shown by field studies, these acute effects occur not only at high sound levels in occupational settings but also at relatively low environmental noise levels when concentration, relaxation, or sleep is disturbed."*<sup>2</sup>
  - *"Railway noise is related to disturbed sleep, which in turn increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, supported by indications of increased cardiovascular disease in persons living close to railways."*<sup>3</sup>
- Cost the state \$2-3 Billion dollars. After reviewing costs of similar projects, the GCL seems to cost double the per mile figures to construct than other comparable projects. After reviewing projects such as the Riverline, with costs totalling in at \$1.1 billion and ridership down substantially from projection, it seems there is no benefit from a cost vs reward standpoint. The promise of economic growth from the River Line for the past 15 years has been just that, a promise unfulfilled.

Additionally, other rail lines have continuously relied upon continuous funding from taxpayer dollars to cover operating costs. Other similar rail projects have not been shown to be financially sustainable without bailouts, and the potential cost of this current GCL proposal

for years following the initial construction costs has not been sufficiently outlined at this time.

- The current proposal also fails to meet the crucial efforts needed to reduce carbon emissions, as the suggested rail will be powered by diesel fuel, which will impact the air quality of South Jersey residents. Rather than eliminating emissions, this current proposal will add emissions and expand our carbon footprint.
- Include permanent and temporary environmental impacts, such as disturbance to soil and vegetation, resulting in the loss, alteration, or degradation of wildlife habitat and plant communities. This includes impacts to sensitive plant communities and habitat for federal and state-listed species.<sup>4</sup>No action plan has been announced to mitigate this impact to our natural resources.
- Have considerable impact at 34 areas of concern that are “Known or Potential Contaminated Sites Expected to be Impacted by the Proposed Alignment”.<sup>5</sup>No further information on the investigation has been presented in order to confirm contamination would not be encountered.
- Threaten the integrity of 11 historic districts and 6 historic properties; 5 properties are listed in the National Register and State Register and 12 properties have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register and State Register.<sup>6</sup>Historic resources are protected under Federal law through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Applicable State of New Jersey legislation governing the protection of historic resources includes Chapter 268 of the New Jersey State Register Law of 1970 and EO215.

**Other Issues forecasted with the GCL that need to be addressed are as follows:**

- COVID-19 has undeniably impacted our way of life- politically, economically, and socially. Given the mass impacts of COVID-19, priority should be given to studying the effects of the virus long term in order to determine if the need for the GCL still exists. There is currently no way to predict how many jobs will now be conducted remotely going forward, and how many jobs will no longer require the same daily commute now that many industries have adapted to conducting their business online with options for employees to work from home.
- Data in support of the need for the proposed GCL does not account for the potential impacts to be seen following completion of the construction project currently underway to improve traffic flow between highways 295, 42, and 76. We should table this EIS phase of the GCL and re-evaluate mass transit needs in the region once current highway construction has been completed. Current traffic patterns and mass transit needs may change significantly following completion of the work that is now underway on 295.
- Property values of many homes in the communities that are in the direct path of this current GCL



proposal may be negatively affected, which not only affects the economic well-being of our individual citizens, but also affects property tax assessments. A drop in property values may leave these communities with a loss in annual revenue when tax assessments fall sharply for properties along the proposed rail line. There is no adequate study to assess the potential impact to property values along the GCL as currently proposed.

- Our goal of strategically expanding mass transit sustainably and effectively includes exploring other less intrusive and less expensive proposals. For instance, the expansion and upgrade of our current bus routes with electric or hydrogen powered buses is a more cost effective option. Such projects have been successfully completed in California for an approximate \$200+ million budget, a stark contrast to the \$2-3 billion cost of the GCL.
- The GCL EIS is outdated as it proposes using unsustainable fossil fuels. Given the nationwide effort to curb carbon emissions and move away from fossil fuels, it's only a matter of time until the use of diesel/electric powered trains will be rendered obsolete and will require upgrading to fully electric or hydrogen fuel-cell powered trains to meet carbon emission goals. Currently we have the technology to move forward using electric powered buses for 1/10th of the cost of this proposed GCL project. The infrastructure already exists, examples being routes 55, 42 and I-76.

I urge you to reassess support of the GCL as proposed. It will have a severe impact on our natural resources , threaten historic sites, drain the economy , have long term cost implications and INCREASE traffic in our towns. Please do not let another doomed-from-the-start light rail line become another failure for South Jersey.<sup>7</sup>My neighbors and I are counting on you for your support in OPPOSITION to the GCL Light Rail Line and ask that you join us in helping the entities involved in this project complete these goals with much better planning than an outdated and extremely expensive plan.

1. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Traffic Analysis Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05\\_Traffic\\_Analysis\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05_Traffic_Analysis_Technical_Report_web.pdf)
2. Münzel, T., Gori, T., Babisch, W., & Basner, M. (2014). Cardiovascular effects of environmental noise exposure. *European heart journal*, 35(13), 829–836. <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurheartj/ehu030>
3. Croy I, Smith MG, Wayne KPEffects of train noise and vibration on human heart rate during sleep: an experimental studyBMJ Open 2013;3:e002655. <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/3/5/e002655>
4. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Natural Resources Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/01\\_Natural\\_Resources\\_Technical\\_Report\\_we](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/01_Natural_Resources_Technical_Report_we)

b.pdf

5. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Hazardous Material Technical Report. November 2020. Access:  
[http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/04\\_Hazardous\\_Materials\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/04_Hazardous_Materials_Technical_Report_web.pdf)
6. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Cultural Resources Technical Report. November 2020. Access:  
[http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/07\\_Cultural\\_Resources\\_Technical\\_Report\\_pages\\_1-100.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/07_Cultural_Resources_Technical_Report_pages_1-100.pdf)
7. Source: Gov. Chris Christie labels NJ Transit River Line 'a joke' due to its poor ridership - News - Burlington County Times - Westampton, NJ  
<https://www.burlingtoncountytimes.com/news/20171211/gov-chris-christie-labels-nj-transit-river-line-a-joke-due-to-its-poor-ridership>

**Thank you very much** for your time in reading my concerns. I truly appreciate all of the time that's being taken to read the concerns, thoughts, and opinions of all of the residents living along the proposed GCL route.

Sincerely,

Matylda M. Biedron

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Regarding the glassboro/Camden lightrail project  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 11:27:24 AM

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My name is Elizabeth Bohn. My family and I live on East Cumberland ave in Sewell. I have great concerns regarding the approval of the glassboro/Camden lightrail project that is in plans for our community. I grew up in riverside NJ and was a young girl when the Riverline to Camden was put in place. Our once quiet and peaceful community quickly spiraled downhill as a result of the direct line into Camden. Drugs became widespread in our little community and riverside still has yet to recover for the epidemic that claimed the lives of many of my childhood friends.

My family and I just moved to Sewell a year ago and the major attraction for us was the quiet and peaceful atmosphere that this town provides. The addition of this makes me scared for my children and community. My worst fear is Sewell suffering the same fate that riverside did. Please reconsider the addition of the glassboro/Camden riverline. It could drastically change our community for years to come.

Please feel free to reach me at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Thank you for your time regarding this important matter and listening to the voice of your community.

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** GCL Draft EIS - Formal Comment Submission  
**Date:** Thursday, December 3, 2020 11:21:30 AM

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I am writing to voice concerns about the proposed Glassboro/Camden rail. I am a Sewell resident who lives a block away from the tracks. My two biggest concerns are safety and traffic. My husband has lived in this house all his life....62 years. We have been married for 40 years. Our neighborhood has gone through many changes but has been able to stay a quiet, safe community. We have many children of various ages who ride bikes, skateboard and walk along the tracks. Having trains running every 15 minutes seems to me like a recipe for tragedy. I am also concerned about traffic as I am hearing of the potential that Cumberland Ave. would be closed to traffic at the railroad. Cumberland is the only through street in our neighborhood. We have seen firsthand what happens to our streets when traffic is rerouted for any reason. Fairview and Atlantic cannot handle the flow and when you add a train crossing on Center street it will be a nightmare.

We have seen proposals for light rail through our neighborhood before and thankfully have been able to shoot it down. This is a lousy idea and a liability to our community.

Patricia and Robert Bonin  
[REDACTED]  
Sewell, NJ

Sent from my iPhone

**Subject: "Draft EIS Formal Comment"**

**From: Ron Brittin** <[REDACTED]>

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 23:35:33 -0500**

For decades planners and politicians with no real life connections to this area have been pushing this project. It has been rejected by residents every time it has been proposed. It is clearly not the locally preferred alternative, hence, it's never been approved for funding by the Federal government. If fixed rail mass transit is really needed in South Jersey, it needs to be built to serve the most densely populated communities. ie Washington Township. The GCL is will be an under utilized tax burden.

Ron Brittin

[REDACTED]

Deptford, NJ 08096

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment****From: ELLEN BROOKS** [REDACTED]**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>****Thu, 17 Dec 2020 08:49:12 -0500 (EST)****Good Morning,**

**The Glassboro-Camden Line should not proceed. The benefits of this train will not outweigh the cons.**

**The line will be under utilized and will cost so much more than it will bring in, while the communities in which the train will run will have to deal with:**

- **properties being taken from them via eminent domain**
- **commuter parking issues on their streets**
- **loud train horns constantly sounding**
- **pedestrian and bike traffic safety issues**
- **traffic congestion at crossings**
- **increased police costs**
- **decreased parking availability for local businesses**

**and many other issues this train will bring with it. We can't afford to spend so much money - especially now while trying to recover from this pandemic - on something that will harm so many and benefit so few.**

**Please do not allow this project to come to fruition.**

**Thank you,  
Ellen Brooks**

**Subject: Objections to the GCL , Mantua Resident****From: Ryan Campbell** <[REDACTED]>**To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com****Tue, 1 Dec 2020 12:43:31 -0500****Hello All ,**

**My name is Ryan Campbell , current address is [REDACTED] Mantua . I have come across drips of information around the GCL . I want to go on record and voice my objections to the proposal .**

**1.) From my neighborhood stance the proposal states, we will have a station with no parking . My question is how do you think that is going to work? Mantua has a walk ability of next to zero . Where are the people coming from that will use the train ? Will they use the streets to park ? If the streets are used to park are we getting new streets ?**

**2.) What are the plans to minimize news ?**

**3.) As a Full time Realtor , I consider the value will be affected . For towns like Gloucester city time sure it will help , but towns like mantua and wenonah have a major negative impact!**

**4.) safety issues with being in a Neighborhood**

**Thank You,****Ryan Campbell****Realtor Associate/Team Leader****Keller Williams****Bunis-Campbell Group**  
[REDACTED]

**Subject: OBJECTIONS TO GCL****From:** Ryan Campbell [REDACTED]**To:** publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com, INFO@donaldnorcross.com

Thu, 17 Dec 2020 13:00:09 -0500

December 17, 2020

To all that may be concerned,

**RE: The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Light Rail Project**

Dear (your Assembly Member/Senator/Governor) (their Last name):

My name is (your first and last name) and I am a resident in your (your district/county/state).

I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

One of the largest suggested benefits of the current GCL proposal is to reduce traffic congestion, however the current proposal does not provide any realistic mass transit alternative to current traffic routes. Heaviest traffic congestion is currently seen along highways 42, 295, and 76 (Walt Whitman bridge), however the current GCL proposal does not provide a realistic alternative for any of these routes; the current GCL proposal would provide a route into Camden, but destinations in Camden are not the cause of current traffic concerns. Highway 676, which is the route that would be served by the proposed GCL, is arguably the least congested of South Jersey's roadways. At a proposed cost of billions of taxpayer dollars, the proposed GCL provides too small a benefit to only a small number of people. The current GCL proposal also fails to account for the significant impact the new 295-42 Interchange Project will have on traffic patterns and congestion along those major roadways.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42, COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in bailouts. Locally, NJ rail



ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

The GCL, as proposed, will:

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.
- Cripple local streets near the GCL including reduction of lanes widths, relocation of roadways, and full closures of one-way streets affecting local circulation patterns.<sup>1</sup> These street circulation patterns would be most-heavily affected in towns like ours, with at-grade crossings.
- Disrupt communities with introduction of significant noise from the frequent passage of trains, in addition to disruption and traffic introduced into these communities with an influx of rail passengers driving to and from proposed rail stations. Many communities along the proposed GCL are currently quiet communities with limited, local traffic.
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Additionally, other rail lines have continuously relied upon continuous funding from taxpayer dollars to cover operating costs. Other similar rail projects have not been shown to be financially sustainable without bailouts, and the potential cost of this current GCL proposal for years following the initial construction costs has not been sufficiently outlined at this time.
- The current proposal also fails to meet the crucial efforts needed to reduce carbon emissions, as the suggested rail will be powered by diesel fuel, which will impact the air quality of South Jersey residents. Rather than eliminating emissions, this current proposal will add emissions and expand our carbon footprint.

- Include permanent and temporary environmental impacts, such as disturbance to soil and vegetation, resulting in the loss, alteration, or degradation of wildlife habitat and plant communities. This includes impacts to sensitive plant communities and habitat for federal and state-listed species.<sup>4</sup>No action plan has been announced to mitigate this impact to our natural resources.
- Have considerable impact at 34 areas of concern that are “Known or Potential Contaminated Sites Expected to be Impacted by the Proposed Alignment”.<sup>5</sup>No further information on the investigation has been presented in order to confirm contamination would not be encountered.
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- COVID-19 has undeniably impacted our way of life- politically, economically, and socially. Given the mass impacts of COVID-19, priority should be given to studying the effects of the virus long term in order to determine if the need for the GCL still exists. There is currently no way to predict how many jobs will now be conducted remotely going forward, and how many jobs will no longer require the same daily commute now that many industries have adapted to conducting their business online with options for employees to work from home.
- Data in support of the need for the proposed GCL does not account for the potential impacts to be seen following completion of the construction project currently underway to improve traffic flow between highways 295, 42, and 76. We should table this EIS phase of the GCL and re-evaluate mass transit needs in the region once current highway construction has been completed. Current traffic patterns and mass transit needs may change significantly following completion of the work that is now underway on 295.
- Property values of many homes in the communities that are in the direct path of this current GCL proposal may be negatively affected, which not only affects the economic well-being of our individual citizens, but also affects property tax assessments. A drop in property values may leave these communities with a loss in annual revenue when tax assessments fall sharply for properties along the proposed rail line. There is no adequate study to assess the potential impact to property values along the GCL as currently proposed.
- Our goal of strategically expanding mass transit sustainably and effectively includes exploring other less intrusive and less expensive proposals. For instance, the expansion and upgrade of our current bus routes with electric or hydrogen powered buses is a more cost effective option. Such projects have been successfully completed in California for an approximate \$200+ million budget, a stark contrast to the \$2-3 billion cost of the GCL.
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I urge you to reassess support of the GCL as proposed. It will have a severe impact on our natural resources , threaten historic sites, drain the economy , have long term cost implications and INCREASE traffic in our towns. Please do not let another doomed-from-the-start light rail line become another failure for South Jersey.<sup>7</sup>My neighbors and I are counting on you for your support in OPPOSITION to the GCL Light Rail Line and ask that you join us in helping the entities involved in this project complete these goals with much better planning than an outdated and extremely expensive plan.

Sincerely,

Ryan Campbell

[REDACTED]  
Sewell, NJ,08080

References:

1. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Traffic Analysis Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05\\_Traffic\\_Analysis\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05_Traffic_Analysis_Technical_Report_web.pdf)
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**Subject: No**

**From: Megan Cargill <[REDACTED]>**

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Tue, 15 Dec 2020 20:11:59 -0500**

**This would be horrible for our community. Lost homes, disruption, added crime. You would not be connecting schools rather you would be connecting criminals. We do not need this! I could go on but I'm sure it would go through one ear and out the other. Politics at its best.**

**Sent from my iPhone**

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment**

**From: Leslie Carlin <[REDACTED]>**

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 12:10:30 -0500**

**Please see attachments for Draft EIS Format Comment of Opposition for the GCL. We do not support this line!**

--

**Sincerely,**

**Leslie Carlin & Matthew Carlin**

**[REDACTED]**

December 17, 2020

The Honorable Nilsa Cruz-Perez  
231-L Market Street  
Camden, NJ 08102

**RE: The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Light Rail Project**

Dear Senator Cruz-Perez

My name is Leslie Carlin and I am a resident in your 5<sup>th</sup> District in Wenonah, New Jersey.

I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

One of the largest suggested benefits of the current GCL proposal is to reduce traffic congestion, however the current proposal does not provide any realistic mass transit alternative to current traffic routes. Heaviest traffic congestion is currently seen along highways 42, 295, and 76 (Walt Whitman bridge), however the current GCL proposal does not provide a realistic alternative for any of these routes; the current GCL proposal would provide a route into Camden, but destinations in Camden are not the cause of current traffic concerns. Highway 676, which is the route that would be served by the proposed GCL, is arguably the least congested of South Jersey's roadways. At a proposed cost of billions of taxpayer dollars, the proposed GCL provides too small a benefit to only a small number of people. The current GCL proposal also fails to account for the significant impact the new 295-42 Interchange Project will have on traffic patterns and congestion along those major roadways.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42, COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in

bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

The GCL, as proposed, will:

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.
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Sincerely,

Leslie A Carlin



Wenonah, NJ 08090

References:

1. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Traffic Analysis Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05 Traffic Analysis Technical Report web.p df](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05_Traffic_Analysis_Technical_Report_web.pdf)
2. Münzel, T., Gori, T., Babisch, W., & Basner, M. (2014). Cardiovascular effects of environmental noise exposure. *European heart journal*, 35(13), 829–836. <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurheartj/ehu030>
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**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment**

**From: Leslie Carlin** <[REDACTED]>

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 13:53:31 -0500**

**Attached is the formal opposition comment for the GCL for:**

**Matthew Carlin**

**[REDACTED]  
Wenonah, NJ 08096**

December 17, 2020

The Honorable Nilsa Cruz-Perez  
231-L Market Street  
Camden, NJ 08102

**RE: The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Light Rail Project**

Dear Senator Cruz-Perez

My name is Matthew Carlin and I am a resident in your 5<sup>th</sup> District in Wenonah, New Jersey.

I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

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Sincerely,

Matthew J Carlin



Wenonah, NJ 08090

References:

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**Subject: New rail line questions**

**From: "Carr, Ed (Contractor)" <[REDACTED]>**

**To: "contactus@glassborocamdenline.com" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>**

**Tue, 24 Nov 2020 19:02:29 +0000**

Hello,

I own property that butts to the existing rail now in Mantua township and want to know the impact of the new rail (s) on my property.

My property is [REDACTED] in Sewell/Mantua township and if I read the plans correctly a station will be added at Tyler's mill and the existing rail.

Please give me what info you can

Ed Carr

Cell # [REDACTED]

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**Subject: Yes yes yes for the Glassboro-Camden line**

**From: Chris Christensen** [REDACTED]

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Wed, 16 Dec 2020 17:34:49 -0500**

What a fantastic idea for public transportation in an area that has so few ways to get around other than highway driving. And a smart use of the former rail bed.

As a soon-to-be resident of Pitman, I am delighted to see that the Glassboro-Camden line is in the works. I support this project fully, and can't wait to use it! I know that it will be a great benefit to the community, and can only add to the prestige of Rowan University, making it both convenient and economical for students and staff. Please make it happen.

Chris Christensen

[REDACTED] (as of Dec. 20, 2020)

Pitman, NJ 08071

**Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Formal Comments (GCL Project)****From: Chris Connelly** [REDACTED]**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>****Mon, 14 Dec 2020 21:33:40 +0000 (UTC)****Attention: Ms. Victoria Malaszecki, Public Involvement Liaison**

I am opposed to the GCL project for many reasons. I have been a resident of Sewell/Mantua Township for many years and have been able to enjoy the peaceful/tranquil neighborhood without the blare of horns or rumble of trains which you propose I now will have to endure.

The small towns/municipalities between Glassboro and Camden are comprised mainly of residential homes, however you propose to allow trains to barrel their way through our sleepy little towns from 5 AM until at least midnight, every 7 1/2 minutes, dividing some neighborhoods in half. I would compare this proposal to putting a major highway (such as Interstate 295) directly through our communities. (Ever tried to cross 295 during working hours?) Of course this will impact the safety of our neighbors, both young and old who, on average, will need to cross these tracks several times a day. Each and every time being fearful of an oncoming train, not to mention school buses crossing, children bike riding, neighbors jogging or walking their dogs and so on. No more nice quiet town for us!

Your project mentions the benefits for Rowan and Rutgers-Camden colleges (coincidentally the train anchor towns of Glassboro and Camden). How it can be argued that we need this train project for college students as a number one focal point is ridiculous. The simpler and more cost effective idea would be to use busses as transport for the college students, which is what has been done for years for K-12 students. Further, your project mentions the benefits seniors would enjoy from healthcare facilities in Camden or Glassboro that they would be able to reach by train. Unless the train is directly outside a senior's home (so they can hop on) and their destination arrival at a healthcare facility is directly outside of their train stop (so they can hop off), I know of few seniors who would care to "hoof it" several blocks to either hop on or hop off. This not even taking into consideration senior's with disabilities or other health issues.

Now lets talk about noise. Mantua Twp. has a noise ordinance (as do other GCL communities). This ordinance states in part: "No person shall make, continue or cause to be made or continued any loud, unnecessary or unusual noise or any noise which does or is likely to annoy, disturb, injure or endanger the comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of others, within the limits of the Township." It appears to me that a blasting horn/whistle and the rumble of the train every 7 1/2 minutes would qualify as a violation of that ordinance. We can't forget about diesel pollution either. A quick Google search yielded me this finding: "**Diesel** fuel (refined from crude oil) produces many harmful emissions when it is burned, and **diesel**-fueled vehicles are major sources of harmful **pollutants**, such as ground-level ozone and particulate matter." Need I say more.

Let's talk money. For example, the Camden to Trenton rail line has cost NJ tax payers huge amounts of money and runs at a loss and yet you use it as an example to go forward with the GCL? The State of NJ is deeply in debt and yet someone is still pushing for this unwanted and impractical train project to continue. To put it frankly, the State of NJ is broke and the citizens are tired of being nicked and dined to death for someone's pet project. The cost to our community, now and in the future, will be detrimental to us all. This train idea has been bantered about since at least 2003 (probably earlier) and is now outdated and antiquated. Perhaps the people in charge should look into the Rte. 55 alternative (an oldie but a goodie) or a bus project for the few who need to get themselves from Point A (Glassboro) to Point B (Camden). I will continue to drive my car the 9 miles in either direction of Points A&B..

From: Chris (Christine) Connelly, [REDACTED] Sewell, NJ 08080, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject: Draft EIS formal comment**

**From: dan\_karen1** <[REDACTED]>

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 18:26:41 -0500**

I wanted to take this opportunity to register my objection to the proposed Glassboro - Camden rail line.

It's very hard to understand what demand there could be for this line, however what seems to be inarguable is the detrimental effect this will have in the communities it would run through. There is absolutely no doubt that in particular the picturesque peaceful Borough of Wenonah would suffer irreparable damage to the quality of life of it's residents.

There is no perceivable benefit and the deterioration in property values that will come from the destruction of the most appealing qualities of the area just cannot be justified.

Best regards  
Dan Cooper

Wenonah

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S8, an AT&T 5G Evolution capable smartphone

**Subject: Glassboro - Camden Line****From: Julie Cureton** [REDACTED]**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com****Wed, 11 Nov 2020 09:58:24 -0500**

Has it been addressed that Sony Music no longer exists? Has the possibility of using the shuttered Sony facility as a station and utilizing the existing space and parking there instead of along Tyler Mill Road?

**2.2.2 Major Activity Centers in the Study Area** In addition to the more locally-oriented uses in each corridor, major activity centers exist, with a high concentration of a specific use with influence throughout the region. These nodes with high levels of employment, commercial, or recreational opportunities are listed in Table 2-4. Of the activity centers, the Camden Waterfront, L-3 Communications, Cooper University Hospital, Camden County College, Rutgers University-Camden, and Echelon Mall are served by rapid transit (either by PATCO or by the NJ TRANSIT River LINE running from Camden to Trenton). Major employment centers that currently have no public transportation access include the Delaware Valley Floral Group and **Sony Music**.

**Sony Music Located in Pitman off Woodbury - Glassboro Road, is a leading manufacturer of audio, video, communications, and information technology products for the consumer and professional markets. Employes 550 persons. No public transit access**

**Subject: Support for the project**

**From: SHARON E Damon** <[REDACTED]>

**To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 10 Dec 2020 09:50:09 -0500**

I am just writing to say that my family is extremely excited about this project! My parents were able to take the ferry from West Deptford to the Navy yard, and the job opportunities changed their lives and built our community. I see the same opportunity for my children. Also, southern NJ has been far too reliant on automotive travel and my children are deeply concerned about global warming. They see access to public transportation as a necessity for their future.

Thank for all of your efforts to make this project a reality,  
Sharon Damon  
West Deptford, NJ

**Subject: Against the GCL**

**From: Daniel** [REDACTED]

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Tue, 15 Dec 2020 20:09:01 -0500**

I want to express my total opposition to the gcl. I grew up in Sewell along the railline and my family lives he now. I vote and I'm active in the community. The GCL is just a way to line the pockets of connected people that own land along the rail line. The people that live here don't want it and our elected officials need to act.

Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy S10+.



# Subject: Glassboro-Camden Rail Line Concerns

From: James DeMasi <[REDACTED]>

To: [contactus@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:contactus@glassborocamdenline.com),  
[jlegge@mantuatownship.com](mailto:jlegge@mantuatownship.com)

Sun, 29 Nov 2020 19:37:22 -0500

As a resident of Mantua who lives on Mantua Blvd and Sewell Ave, I'm very concerned about this proposed rail line. I live a couple hundred feet away from the current railroad track. A train passes through daily on that track between 8PM and 1AM. This one train is enough to annoy residents. It blares its horn and shakes the ground every time it passes. I understand that the light rail is a smaller passenger train and not a cargo train, but what it lacks in size it clearly makes up for in frequency. You're proposing that this train will run during the day every 7 - 15 minutes. For what benefit? Who will be using it?

The train connects Inspira and Cooper hospitals, but who is going to take a train to the hospital? Obviously, it would only be visitors who live near the tracks. Anyone who would drive to the railway would be more likely to just drive to the hospital, and no one in need of medical care will be taking it nor should they.

Will it be people who work in Philadelphia? Maybe if they work in Center City since that's where the Speedline goes. Otherwise, any work commute to the city would require either 3 train rides or 2 train rides and a bus ride. No one who cares about being on time will go through that. They will drive instead.

Will it be people visiting Philadelphia? Only the ones who are comfortable waiting around in Camden for the Speedline to arrive. Your website says this rail is to expand transportation options to older people. Do older people feel safe enough to wait around at a Camden train stop? Highly doubtful.

Let's talk about money. There's only one audience that is likely to use this and is most likely the reason for its proposal: Rowan students. Since the schools and hospitals are the main appeal of this line, how is it possible that it will get enough passengers to run so frequently? I'm afraid it won't, in which case it is a waste of taxpayer money.

Whose taxes are going to be raised? Mine? Not after my home value drops. Do you really think my home value will do anything else but drop living next to a very busy train corridor? Many people are hesitant about living near train tracks even with one train passing by everyday. Who would want to live here with a train passing every 7 to 15 minutes?

Lower tax revenue means less money for the schools. Of course, you can always raise tax rates to make up the difference. Meanwhile, you'll turn Mantua into Woodbury, where taxes are so high that no one wants to live there anymore. All of this for what? Just to fund a rail line that will see very little use and has very little purpose except to appease the power's that be at Rowan University. It might make a nice feather in one's cap to point and say look at what I accomplished, but any politician who takes their duty to their citizens seriously should vote no.

Sincerely,

James DeMasi, CFA

**Subject: GCL concerns****From: Marlo DiDonna** <[REDACTED]>**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com"** <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 00:42:02 +0000 (UTC)**

Hello,

As a resident of Wenonah since 1998 and also an employee of Cooper Hospital since 1996, it worries me that a train will be running through these small, very walkable communities in Gloucester County. I frequently observe the Light Rail in Camden on my commute to Cooper Hospital. Even in Camden's major commercial and business district, the noise and street congestion caused by a passing Light Rail is alarming. So much so, that when the Light Rail passes the hospital's main entrance, a police officer is often stationed in the street as a safety measure to provide traffic assistance. Imagining a train running through one of these smaller Gloucester county communities that mostly are "walking school districts" is very concerning to me. Speaking of Wenonah (my town), we are a 1-square mile walking community with a vast network of hiking trails and wooded conservation land. To me, a train running through it multiple times a day would seriously deter from the natural appeal of our community, while also putting our children in danger as we are a "walking" school district.

Please consider these issues along with the general issues of traffic congestion, lack of safe parking, and small community noise disturbance that this project will cause. I strongly oppose the GCL as it has been presented thus far.

Thankyou for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Marlo DiDonna

**Subject: Brooklawn Line**

**From: Denise Dobbins** [REDACTED]

**To: publicinvolvement@glassboroçamdenline.com**

**Mon, 7 Dec 2020 14:54:46 -0500**

Dear Sir or Madam,

I don't appreciate this rail line being pushed through before people are totally aware of the ramifications. We have heard rumors of such things since I was a child in Brooklawn 50 years ago. Now it seems to be actually coming to pass.

We are angry that a train with decibels just a tad under what's legal would be passing within less than a block from our home and the local grammar school. We are angry at the extra traffic it will bring in our area, including Gloucester City and Sewell, etc. We are struggling enough financially and don't need our home devalued nor taxes going up due to low ridership. This train takes forever to get you where you're going and it will not be a popular form of travel because no one has that kind of time.

We are against this and would like to go on record as such.

Denise and Ray Dobbins

[REDACTED] Brooklawn, NJ 08030

Subject: Gil train

From: Paul Duffy <[REDACTED]>

To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com

Sat, 5 Dec 2020 17:09:17 -0500

I am strongly opposed to this complete waste of money. This is an extremely outdated plan that no one is going use. This thing is slow and there are quite a few better options that aren't going through the middle of neighborhoods

Sent from my iPhone

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment**

**From: Jennifer Duffy** <[REDACTED]>

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Mon, 7 Dec 2020 21:51:28 -0500**

**I oppose this outdated proposal for the Glassboro-Camden line. There are more efficient, reliable, secure, and enviromentally friendly alternatives.**

**Thank You,  
Paul Duffy**

[REDACTED]

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment - William Earley****From: William Earley** <[REDACTED]>**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com"** <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>**Fri, 18 Dec 2020 04:57:30 +0000 (UTC)**

To whom it may concern,

Mass transit options are undeniably important, especially in a state as densely populated as New Jersey. I do believe that both rail and bus routes are key to alleviating traffic congestion, provide vital connections for communities, and play a very important role in reducing emissions and our consumption of fossil fuels. Every mass transit proposal has pros and cons, and certainly a chief hurdle in expanding transit options and infrastructure is the enormous cost to build and maintain, but the benefits of a good mass transit plan that is developed to serve the needs of our communities and improve the lives of our citizens should ultimately outweigh the financial burden to the State and taxpayer. The goal of any civic project should always be to benefit our citizens and communities.

Unfortunately, the current GCL proposal, as outlined in the November 2020 EIS, does NOT provide sufficient benefits to outweigh the significant detrimental effects it will have on impacted communities and does NOT provide sufficient benefits to justify the staggering cost of this proposed project.

The following are serious concerns that are NOT sufficiently addressed in the current GCL proposal:

As currently proposed, the GCL will greatly disrupt communities along the proposed rail line by introducing a considerable amount of noise pollution into residential areas and community parks. As cited in the EIS, the currently proposed route for the GCL passes in close proximity to many residential properties. Per the EIS, 815 residential homes will experience moderate to severe noise and vibration impacts. The current study, however, greatly understates and misrepresents the severity of impact to these homes and communities. For one, the EIS discusses the level of added noise by citing decibel levels (dBA), however even if the measured decibel level itself appears to be at an "acceptable" level, the EIS does not speak to nor account for duration/frequency of the noise pollution. As an example, there is a considerable difference between a noise occurring once every 8 hours vs. a noise recurring every 15 minutes. Even noise of a "minimal" decibel level, if recurring frequently (ie, every 10-15 minutes) has a far greater impact than a sound of higher decibel level that only occurs at long, infrequent intervals.

Thus, it is very misleading that the current EIS indicates that the impact of sound and vibration will be minimal, as this study examines only the level of sound in isolation and does not consider the effects of this sound when repeated at frequent intervals. As proposed, the GCL is expected to have trains pass every 7-8 minutes during peak times. Even if decibel levels are low, this becomes almost a constant noise affecting these communities and homes.

Not only does this noise pollution significantly impact a great number of individual residences, it poses a significant threat to the larger communities as a whole, as the noise and vibration will impact a number of public spaces and parks. It is specified in the EIS that there are a number of schools, civic buildings, and public parks directly alongside of the proposed rail route; the repeated noise and vibration of frequent passenger trains will significantly affect these public places. Frequent noise impacting adjacent schools can be incredibly disruptive to learning, affecting children's concentration and ability to focus. The use of public parks and civic spaces will be affected; what are now quiet places of respite and relaxation for citizens, and places for friends to gather, will lose that function. Places that are now used to host outdoor events, events which draw people into these communities, generate revenue for these towns, and strengthen the bonds of these communities, will no longer be suitable for the same uses with frequently passing trains.

And in addition to the impact to these communities, the EIS does not examine the impact of noise and vibration on wildlife along this proposed GCL route. As cited in the EIS, the proposed GCL would travel through conservation land in Wenonah, NJ. The frequent passage of trains through conservation land will especially impact those areas, diminishing the vital purpose of those preserved ecosystems. These conservation areas also have active trail systems which are regularly used by citizens, which are important for recreation, education, community enrichment, and an important factor in home values. While the EIS cites that views of the project area from trails and parkland are "limited," this does not consider the noise and vibration affecting these trails and parkland. Not being able to see the passing trains from a conservation trail is meaningless if the trains are clearly heard.

The noise and vibration impacts assessed in the EIS do not sufficiently assess the impact of train horns sounding at every street crossing. As noted in the EIS, the proposed GCL trains would use horns to alert of an approaching train at each street crossing (as required by the FRA). Yet in many instances, the EIS cites a single sensor used to measure decibel levels in an area, and that sensor is far away from many additional street crossings. Due to the fact that this proposed GCL line would travel through the very center of many residential neighborhoods, there are many street crossings surrounded by residential homes and parks, which would be greatly impacted by the recurring sound of a train horn. This is not addressed in the EIS. There is not sufficient examination of the impact of a horn sounding at multiple street crossings within the same community; for example if the train crosses two or three intersections within a

short span, citizens in that area will hear the horn signaling multiple times, which adds a significant level of additional noise pollution beyond the decibel level of the passing train itself.

In many instances, the EIS for the current proposal cites that a "minimal" impact is expected because the proposed GCL uses an existing rail corridor. While it is true that the proposed GCL would use an existing, currently active rail corridor, this supposition that adding the proposed GCL along this same route would be minimally invasive is NOT valid and greatly misrepresents the potential impacts. The existing Conrail line currently only sees very limited and sporadic rail traffic. For example, many days currently a Conrail freight train travels through these affected communities 2-3 times a day. The proposed GCL would introduce trains running along this corridor multiple times an hour. Additionally, the proposed GCL would add side-by-side tracks, greatly expanding the size of the track intrusion through communities. These impacts are not sufficiently discussed in the current EIS.

As currently proposed, the GCL will greatly disrupt communities along the proposed rail line by interrupting local traffic with continuous street closures with each passing train. The EIS cites that "given the use of existing rail corridor, overall negative impacts to automobile travel patterns and accessibility are not anticipated within these neighborhoods[1]," however this does not account for the increased number of trains per hour per day that would be running along this rail line. At peak times, GCL trains would be crossing neighborhood streets at 7-8 minute intervals which could greatly impact traffic patterns, especially during these peak "rush-hour" times.

The EIS does not sufficiently evaluate the impact the proposed GCL would have on communities that would potentially experience an increase in traffic from persons driving to and from the proposed rail stations. Many of the proposed GCL stations are in currently quiet residential locations. These currently residential streets would have an influx of cars for passengers driving to the train station. Not only does this potentially increase traffic congestion within small towns, this adds noise pollution and air pollution in close proximity to homes, schools, and parks by attracting commuters to these otherwise residential areas.

Ridership demand cannot be accurately known at this time for two reasons: 1) transit demand may change significantly with the completion of the current 295/76/42 interchange, and 2) future changes in commuting patterns as a result of COVID-19 (many former commuters may now work from home in the future)

These are all significant flaws in the current GCL proposal that must be considered. These concerns, among others, come as no surprise; a major issue with the currently proposed GCL as a whole is that trains would be running frequently through small residential communities.

The potential impact of this GCL proposal is understated throughout the EIS, even beginning in the initial summary description on page 1. The project description indicates how the proposed GCL "would restore passenger rail service in a corridor that historically provided adjacent and surrounding communities with passenger rail service," and while this is true, it misrepresents the scope of the current proposal. While the currently proposed GCL route would follow the same rail corridor where passenger trains once ran over 50 years ago, what this does not reflect is that those passenger trains in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century did NOT run along this rail corridor multiple times per hour from 5:00 AM to 12:00 AM. There is a significant difference in impact to residential communities between trains that pass every 15 minutes vs. trains that pass only a few times per day. The discussion also does not address changes that these communities have seen in the decades that have passed since this rail corridor was last used for passenger service, nor does it reflect the changes and improvements that have been made to other infrastructure, as this current GCL proposal ignores the other mass transit alternatives that are now available. For example, when the existing rail corridor (now Conrail) was built, New Jersey did not have the network of roads and highways it has now, and certainly did not have the availability of electric busses or other energy efficient modes of transportation. Seeking to "restore" service to a rail line that was needed a century ago may not make sense anymore.

This is a fundamental problem with the current GCL proposal- between all of the impacts cited in the EIS, and then additional, significant impacts that are not addressed in the EIS, between these serious concerns and the negative impacts to these South Jersey communities and residents, coupled with the staggering multi-billion-dollar cost projected for the GCL, the proposal doesn't make sense. There would need to be a very great, clear need for a mass transit project of this scale to justify these costs, and there simply is not such a great need. This isn't to say that a rail service wouldn't benefit many residents, and some businesses- it surely would. But a project of this scale, to provide rail service with trains running multiple times per hour with construction costs of several billion dollars needs to be of great benefit to a large population, without greater, or more cost effective, alternatives.

The current GCL proposal assumes a need to satisfy travel demand between Glassboro and Camden, but how has this need been quantitatively determined? Examining existing traffic patterns is a fairly sound measure of determining need for mass transit options. Based on the busiest roadways and busiest transit corridors, it becomes clear which destinations need mass transit options to accommodate the traveling population. As a prime example, transit options are clearly needed to reduce traffic along 42, 76, and 295. However the current GCL proposal does not seem to connect, or aim to alleviate, any areas of current high-traffic congestion. Of all the major highways in this region, 676 is most often the least congested, and this is the route that the GCL provides an alternative for. The GCL proposal seems to highlight literally only a handful of businesses in Camden, hospital systems, and Rutgers and Rowan Universities as chief examples of the need for the GCL. As admittedly helpful as the GCL would be to university students, funding the travel convenience of these small groups is NOT the responsibility of the general taxpayer. Providing a route for commuters is important, however the current GCL proposal does not provide an ideal option here. There is a greater

need for transit from South Jersey into Philadelphia, but the GCL would terminate in Camden, and require transfer to another line. As is, the current GCL proposal would easily double the commute time of South Jersey residents if they were to use this means to travel into Philadelphia as opposed to driving. The issue of the proposed route is made worse by the fact that, because it runs through residential areas and runs at grade, the GCL is limited in speed. If the GCL were constructed elsewhere, for example as an alternative proposal had previously suggested constructing a rail line along highway 55 to 676, a high speed line could be implemented, like the existing PATCO line, which would far better serve commuters with fast service.

Additionally, the scope of this proposed rail project draws comparisons to PATCO, the River Line, and other rail options in Northern New Jersey, however the population densities do not compare. Gloucester County has significantly less population than northern counterparts, and so one must question how ridership for the GCL could possibly hope to pay for, or sustain, the cost of this project. By comparison, the River Line, which serves a much larger population, continues to sustain significant financial losses that require subsidies from the State and taxpayer.

So for the proposed multi-billion-dollar cost to construct a low-speed GCL through residential areas seems destined to fail. A high-speed commuter rail along 55 would make much more sense, though is certainly costly. But for an equivalent option, efficient bus lines could very easily be implemented at a fraction of the cost, using our existing infrastructure. Woodbury-Glassboro road runs in a nearly perfectly direct, parallel route to the proposed GCL, and would be easily serviced by buses. This would additionally better connect residents to businesses in the area, as most businesses are along roadways, not in the residential areas where the rail is proposed to run. As a Gloucester County resident, I must strongly oppose the current GCL proposal and urge our great State of NJ to seek more reasonable and effective mass transit options.

Sincerely,  
William Earley

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[1] November 2020 GCL EIS, 3.4.4 "Neighborhood Character"



Mass transit options are undeniably important, especially in a state as densely populated as New Jersey. I do believe that both rail and bus routes are key to alleviating traffic congestion, provide vital connections for communities, and play a very important role in reducing emissions and our consumption of fossil fuels. Every mass transit proposal has pros and cons, and certainly a chief hurdle in expanding transit options and infrastructure is the enormous cost to build and maintain, but the benefits of a good mass transit plan that is developed to serve the needs of our communities and improve the lives of our citizens should ultimately outweigh the financial burden to the State and taxpayer. The goal of any civic project should always be to benefit our citizens and communities.

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The following are serious concerns that are NOT sufficiently addressed in the current GCL proposal:

- As currently proposed, the GCL will greatly disrupt communities along the proposed rail line by introducing a considerable amount of noise pollution into residential areas and community parks. As cited in the EIS, the currently proposed route for the GCL passes in close proximity to many residential properties. Per the EIS, 815 residential homes will experience moderate to severe noise and vibration impacts. The current study, however, greatly understates and misrepresents the severity of impact to these homes and communities. For one, the EIS discusses the level of added noise by citing decibel levels (dBA), however even if the measured decibel level itself appears to be at an “acceptable” level, the EIS does not speak to nor account for duration/frequency of the noise pollution. As an example, there is a considerable difference between a noise occurring once every 8 hours vs. a noise recurring every 15 minutes. Even noise of a “minimal” decibel level, if recurring frequently (ie, every 10-15 minutes) has a far greater impact than a sound of higher decibel level that only occurs at long, infrequent intervals. Thus, it is very misleading that the current EIS indicates that the impact of sound and vibration will be minimal, as this study examines only the level of sound in isolation and does not consider the effects of this sound when repeated at frequent intervals. As proposed, the GCL is expected to have trains pass every 7-8 minutes during peak times. Even if decibel levels are low, this becomes almost a constant noise affecting these communities and homes. Not only does this noise pollution significantly impact a great number of individual residences, it poses a significant threat to the larger communities as a whole, as the noise and vibration will impact a number of public spaces and parks. It is specified in the EIS that there are a number of schools, civic buildings, and public parks directly alongside of the proposed rail route; the repeated noise and vibration of frequent passenger trains will significantly affect these public places. Frequent noise impacting adjacent schools can be incredibly disruptive to learning, affecting children’s concentration and ability to focus. The use of public parks and civic spaces will be affected; what are now quite places of respite and relaxation for citizens, and places for friends to gather, will lose that function. Places that are now used to host outdoor events, events which draw people into these communities, generate revenue for these towns, and

strengthen the bonds of these communities, will no longer be suitable for the same uses with frequently passing trains.

And in addition to the impact to these communities, the EIS does not examine the impact of noise and vibration on wildlife along this proposed GCL route. As cited in the EIS, the proposed GCL would travel through conservation land in Wenonah, NJ. The frequent passage of trains through conservation land will especially impact those areas, diminishing the vital purpose of those preserved ecosystems. These conservations areas also have active trail systems which are regularly used by citizens, which are important for recreation, education, community enrichment, and an important factor in home values. While the EIS cites that views of the project area from trails and parkland are "limited," this does not consider the noise and vibration affecting these trails and parkland. Not being able to see the passing trains from a conservation trail is meaningless if the trains are clearly heard.

- The noise and vibration impacts assessed in the EIS do not sufficiently assess the impact of train horns sounding at every street crossing. As noted in the EIS, the proposed GCL trains would use horns to alert of an approaching train at each street crossing (as required by the FRA). Yet in many instances, the EIS cites a single sensor used to measure decibel levels in an area, and that sensor is far away from many additional street crossings. Due to the fact that this proposed GCL line would travel through the very center of many residential neighborhoods, there are many street crossings surrounded by residential homes and parks, which would be greatly impacted by the recurring sound of a train horn. This is not addressed in the EIS. There is not sufficient examination of the impact of a horn sounding at multiple street crossings within the same community; for example if the train crosses two or three intersections within a short span, citizens in that area will hear the horn signaling multiple times, which adds a significant level of additional noise pollution beyond the decibel level of the passing train itself.
- In many instances, the EIS for the current proposal cites that a "minimal" impact is expected because the proposed GCL uses an existing rail corridor. While it is true that the proposed GCL would use an existing, currently active rail corridor, this supposition that adding the proposed GCL along this same route would be minimally invasive is NOT valid and greatly misrepresents the potential impacts. The existing Conrail line currently only sees very limited and sporadic rail traffic. For example, many days currently a Conrail freight train travels through these affected communities 2-3 times a day. The proposed GCL would introduce trains running along this corridor multiple times an hour. Additionally, the proposed GCL would add side-by-side tracks, greatly expanding the size of the track intrusion through communities. These impacts are not sufficiently discussed in the current EIS.
- As currently proposed, the GCL will greatly disrupt communities along the proposed rail line by interrupting local traffic with continuous street closures with each passing train. The EIS cites that "given the use of existing rail corridor, overall negative impacts to automobile travel patterns and accessibility are not anticipated within these neighborhoods<sup>1</sup>," however this does not account for the increased number of trains per hour per day that would be running along this rail line. At peak times, GCL trains would be crossing neighborhood streets at 7-8 minute intervals which could greatly impact traffic patterns, especially during these peak "rush-hour" times.

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<sup>1</sup> November 2020 GCL EIS, 3.4.4 "Neighborhood Character"

- The EIS does not sufficiently evaluate the impact the proposed GCL would have on communities that would potentially experience an increase in traffic from persons driving to and from the proposed rail stations. Many of the proposed GCL stations are in currently quiet residential locations. These currently residential streets would have an influx of cars for passengers driving to the train station. Not only does this potentially increase traffic congestion within small towns, this adds noise pollution and air pollution in close proximity to homes, schools, and parks by attracting commuters to these otherwise residential areas.
- Ridership demand cannot be accurately known at this time for two reasons: 1) transit demand may change significantly with the completion of the current 295/76/42 interchange, and 2) future changes in commuting patterns as a result of COVID-19 (many former commuters may now work from home in the future)

These are all significant flaws in the current GCL proposal that must be considered. These concerns, among others, come as no surprise; a major issue with the currently proposed GCL as a whole is that trains would be running frequently through small residential communities.

The potential impact of this GCL proposal is understated throughout the EIS, even beginning in the initial summary description on page 1. The project description indicates how the proposed GCL "would restore passenger rail service in a corridor that historically provided adjacent and surrounding communities with passenger rail service," and while this is true, it misrepresents the scope of the current proposal. While the currently proposed GCL route would follow the same rail corridor where passenger trains once ran over 50 years ago, what this does not reflect is that those passenger trains in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century did NOT run along this rail corridor multiple times per hour from 5:00 AM to 12:00 AM. There is a significant difference in impact to residential communities between trains that pass every 15 minutes vs. trains that pass only a few times per day. The discussion also does not address changes that these communities have seen in the decades that have passed since this rail corridor was last used for passenger service, nor does it reflect the changes and improvements that have been made to other infrastructure, as this current GCL proposal ignores the other mass transit alternatives that are now available. For example, when the existing rail corridor (now Conrail) was built, New Jersey did not have the network of roads and highways it has now, and certainly did not have the availability of electric busses or other energy efficient modes of transportation. Seeking to "restore" service to a rail line that was needed a century ago may not make sense anymore.

This is a fundamental problem with the current GCL proposal- between all of the impacts cited in the EIS, and then additional, significant impacts that are not addressed in the EIS, between these serious concerns and the negative impacts to these South Jersey communities and residents, coupled with the staggering multi-billion-dollar cost projected for the GCL, the proposal doesn't make sense. There would need to be a very great, clear need for a mass transit project of this scale to justify these costs, and there simply is not such a great need. This isn't to say that a rail service wouldn't benefit many residents, and some businesses- it surely would. But a project of this scale, to provide rail service with trains running multiple times per hour with construction costs of several billion dollars needs to be of great benefit to a large population, without greater, or more cost effective, alternatives.

The current GCL proposal assumes a need to satisfy travel demand between Glassboro and Camden, but how has this need been quantitatively determined? Examining existing traffic patterns is a fairly sound measure of determining need for mass transit options. Based on the busiest roadways and busiest transit corridors, it becomes clear which destinations need mass transit options to accommodate the traveling population. As a prime example, transit options are clearly needed to reduce traffic along 42, 76, and 295. However the current GCL proposal does not seem to connect, or aim to alleviate, any areas of current high-traffic congestion. Of all the major highways in this region, 676 is most often the least congested, and this is the route that the GCL provides an alternative for. The GCL proposal seems to highlight literally only a handful of businesses in Camden, hospital systems, and Rutgers and Rowan Universities as chief examples of the need for the GCL. As admittedly helpful as the GCL would be to university students, funding the travel convenience of these small groups is NOT the responsibility of the general taxpayer. Providing a route for commuters is important, however the current GCL proposal does not provide an ideal option here. There is a greater need for transit from South Jersey into Philadelphia, but the GCL would terminate in Camden, and require transfer to another line. As is, the current GCL proposal would easily double the commute time of South Jersey residents if they were to use this means to travel into Philadelphia as opposed to driving. The issue of the proposed route is made worse by the fact that, because it runs through residential areas and runs at grade, the GCL is limited in speed. If the GCL were constructed elsewhere, for example as an alternative proposal had previously suggested constructing a rail line along highway 55 to 676, a high speed line could be implemented, like the existing PATCO line, which would far better serve commuters with fast service.

Additionally, the scope of this proposed rail project draws comparisons to PATCO, the River Line, and other rail options in Northern New Jersey, however the population densities do not compare. Gloucester County has significantly less population than northern counterparts, and so one must question how ridership for the GCL could possibly hope to pay for, or sustain, the cost of this project. By comparison, the River Line, which serves a much larger population, continues to sustain significant financial losses that require subsidies from the State and taxpayer.

So for the proposed multi-billion-dollar cost to construct a low-speed GCL through residential areas seems destined to fail. A high-speed commuter rail along 55 would make much more sense, though is certainly costly. But for an equivalent option, efficient bus lines could very easily be implemented at a fraction of the cost, using our existing infrastructure. Woodbury-Glassboro road runs in a nearly perfectly direct, parallel route to the proposed GCL, and would be easily serviced by buses. This would additionally better connect residents to businesses in the area, as most businesses are along roadways, not in the residential areas where the rail is proposed to run. As a Gloucester County resident, I must strongly oppose the current GCL proposal and urge our great State of NJ to seek more reasonable and effective mass transit options.

Subject: GCL

From: nanette emerle <[REDACTED]>

To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com

Thu, 17 Dec 2020 17:54:56 -0500

Hello my name is Nanette Emerle. I am a Glassboro resident. I am opposed to the Glassboro Camden line, it is a total waste of money that could be put to much better use. It will bring more crime to our area, create more traffic jams, it will be very disruptive for the residents and the children in schools. I remember the passenger train in the 1960s, it was not profitable and created traffic jams way back then. This will be a huge problem in an already congested area. I've personally do not know one person that would have any use for this train. Our roads are a disgrace, why don't you spend the money to fix them? **NOBODY WANTS TO GO TO CAMDEN** unless it's to buy drugs.

Sent from my iPhone

**Subject: Glassboro-Camden Line**

**From: Timothy Feeney** <[REDACTED]>

**To: "contactus@glassborocamdenline.com"** <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 22:28:31 +0000**

Hello, my name is Tim Feeney. I have worked in Camden for many years and I was delighted to hear about this wonderful project.

Camden is rising, and I think this will really help revitalize the city as well as benefit the whole area and all the towns between. The lack of efficient public transportation around here is smothering great economic potential.

Thank you,

Timothy Feeney

**Subject: Opposition To Rail Line**

**From: William Ferrelli** <[REDACTED]>

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 13:46:53 -0500**

Please see the attached thank you

**Linda Ferrelli**

December 17, 2020

The Honorable Stephen Sweeney  
935 Kings Highway, Suite 400  
West Deptford, NJ 08086

**RE: The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Light Rail Project**

Dear Senator Sweeney,

My name is Linda Ferrelli and I am a resident in your 3<sup>rd</sup> District in Glassboro, New Jersey.

I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

One of the largest suggested benefits of the current GCL proposal is to reduce traffic congestion, however the current proposal does not provide any realistic mass transit alternative to current traffic routes. Heaviest traffic congestion is currently seen along highways 42, 295, and 76 (Walt Whitman bridge), however the current GCL proposal does not provide a realistic alternative for any of these routes; the current GCL proposal would provide a route into Camden, but destinations in Camden are not the cause of current traffic concerns. Highway 676, which is the route that would be served by the proposed GCL, is arguably the least congested of South Jersey's roadways. At a proposed cost of billions of taxpayer dollars, the proposed GCL provides too small a benefit to only a small number of people. The current GCL proposal also fails to account for the significant impact the new 295-42 Interchange Project will have on traffic patterns and congestion along those major roadways.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42, COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in



bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

The GCL, as proposed, will:

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.
- Cripple local streets near the GCL including reduction of lanes widths, relocation of roadways, and full closures of one-way streets affecting local circulation patterns. These street circulation patterns would be most-heavily affected in towns like ours, with at-grade crossings.
- Disrupt communities with introduction of significant noise from the frequent passage of trains, in addition to disruption and traffic introduced into these communities with an influx of rail passengers driving to and from proposed rail stations. Many communities along the proposed GCL are currently quiet communities with limited, local traffic.
- The potential health effects on local residents due to increased fossil fuel emissions and the permanent disruption of noise pollution resulting from the GCL needs to be studied. These health effects include anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation, asthma, and cardiovascular disease.
  - *"Noise exposure modifies the function of multiple organs and systems. Acute noise exposure, in both laboratory settings where traffic noise was simulated and in real-life environments, can cause increases in blood pressure, heart rate, and cardiac output, likely mediated by the release of stress hormones such as catecholamines (for review, see Babisch4,5). As shown by field studies, these acute effects occur not only at high sound levels in occupational settings but also at relatively low environmental noise levels when concentration, relaxation, or sleep is disturbed."*
  - *"Railway noise is related to disturbed sleep, which in turn increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, supported by indications of increased cardiovascular disease in persons living close to railways."*
- Cost the state \$2-3 Billion dollars. After reviewing costs of similar projects, the GCL seems to cost double the per mile figures to construct than other comparable projects. After reviewing projects such as the Riverline, with costs totalling in at \$1.1 billion and ridership down substantially from projection, it seems there is no benefit from a cost vs reward standpoint. The promise of economic growth from the River Line for the past 15 years has been just that, a promise unfulfilled.

Additionally, other rail lines have continuously relied upon continuous funding from taxpayer dollars to cover operating costs. Other similar rail projects have not been shown to be financially sustainable without bailouts, and the potential cost of this current GCL proposal for years following the initial construction costs has not been sufficiently outlined at this time.

- The current proposal also fails to meet the crucial efforts needed to reduce carbon emissions, as the suggested rail will be powered by diesel fuel, which will impact the air quality of South Jersey residents. Rather than eliminating emissions, this current proposal will add emissions and expand our carbon footprint.
- Include permanent and temporary environmental impacts, such as disturbance to soil and vegetation, resulting in the loss, alteration, or degradation of wildlife habitat and plant communities. This includes impacts to sensitive plant communities and habitat for federal and state-listed species. No action plan has been announced to mitigate this impact to our natural resources.
- Have considerable impact at 34 areas of concern that are "Known or Potential Contaminated Sites Expected to be Impacted by the Proposed Alignment". No further information on the investigation has been presented in order to confirm contamination would not be encountered.
- Threaten the integrity of 11 historic districts and 6 historic properties; 5 properties are listed in the National Register and State Register and 12 properties have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register and State Register. Historic resources are protected under Federal law through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Applicable State of New Jersey legislation governing the protection of historic resources includes Chapter 268 of the New Jersey State Register Law of 1970 and EO215.

**Other Issues forecasted with the GCL that need to be addressed are as follows:**

- COVID-19 has undeniably impacted our way of life- politically, economically, and socially. Given the mass impacts of COVID-19, priority should be given to studying the effects of the virus long term in order to determine if the need for the GCL still exists. There is currently no way to predict how many jobs will now be conducted remotely going forward, and how many jobs will no longer require the same daily commute now that many industries have adapted to conducting their business online with options for employees to work from home.
- Data in support of the need for the proposed GCL does not account for the potential impacts to be seen following completion of the construction project currently underway to improve traffic flow between highways 295, 42, and 76. We should table this EIS phase of the GCL and re-evaluate mass transit needs in the region once current highway construction has been completed. Current traffic patterns and mass transit needs may change significantly following completion of the work that is now underway on 295.
- Property values of many homes in the communities that are in the direct path of this current GCL proposal may be negatively affected, which not only affects the economic well-being of our individual citizens, but also affects property tax assessments. A drop in property values may leave these communities with a loss in annual revenue when tax assessments fall sharply for properties along the proposed rail line. There is no adequate study to assess the potential impact to property values along the GCL as currently proposed.

- Our goal of strategically expanding mass transit sustainably and effectively includes exploring other less intrusive and less expensive proposals. For instance, the expansion and upgrade of our current bus routes with electric or hydrogen powered buses is a more cost effective option. Such projects have been successfully completed in California for an approximate \$200+ million budget, a stark contrast to the \$2-3 billion cost of the GCL.
- The GCL EIS is outdated as it proposes using unsustainable fossil fuels. Given the nationwide effort to curb carbon emissions and move away from fossil fuels, it's only a matter of time until the use of diesel/electric powered trains will be rendered obsolete and will require upgrading to fully electric or hydrogen fuel-cell powered trains to meet carbon emission goals. Currently we have the technology to move forward using electric powered buses for 1/10th of the cost of this proposed GCL project. The infrastructure already exists, examples being routes 55, 42 and I-76.

I urge you to reassess support of the GCL as proposed. It will have a severe impact on our natural resources , threaten historic sites, drain the economy , have long term cost implications and INCREASE traffic in our towns. Please do not let another doomed-from-the-start light rail line become another failure for South Jersey. My neighbors and I are counting on you for your support in OPPOSITION to the GCL Light Rail Line and ask that you join us in helping the entities involved in this project complete these goals with much better planning than an outdated and extremely expensive plan.

Sincerely,

Linda Ferrelli

  
Glassboro, NJ 08028

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**Subject: Opposition to Rail Line**

**From: William Ferrelli <[REDACTED]>**

**To: [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 13:27:59 -0500**

December 17, 2020

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935 Kings Highway, Suite 400  
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Sincerely,

Linda Ferrelli

  
Glassboro, NJ 08028

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**Subject:** Re: Glassboro-Camden Line

**From:** "GCL Project Team" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

**To:** "Catherine Fichera" <[REDACTED]>

Thu, 05 Nov 2020 18:17:02 -0500

Thank you for your formal comment on the Glassboro-Camden Line draft EIS. Your comments will be recorded and addressed in the final EIS after the comment period closes on Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 11:59 PM EST.

Sincerely,

The GCL Project Team

----- Original Message -----

**From:**

"Catherine Fichera" <[REDACTED]>

**To:**

<contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Cc:**

"Fichera Lewis" <[REDACTED]>, <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:**

Tue, 3 Nov 2020 10:35:57 -0500

**Subject:**

Glassboro-Camden Line

Good Morning,

I was just informed, by a neighbor, that you are in the planning stages of this rail line, once again...

My husband and I, Lewis C. Fichera, Esq., were active members of CFAR, an organization that fought hard to preserve the peace, safety and tranquility of the neighborhoods along the rail line. We are putting in a call to our mayor ASAP regarding their involvement and our concern regarding the safety and NOISE issues this will create.

Any information you can give us now, regarding those issues, would be greatly appreciated. I have signed up for your email list and look forward to hearing more information about this project.

I fail to see how the fairness of community involvement can be achieved during the Covid pandemic when many who will be affected by this will be unable to appear in person or may not have access to zoom. How many people can you possibly expect will be able to participate in any discussion regarding this with Zoom? One of many issues that needs to be addressed.

Catherine Fichera  
Mantua Twp.

Sent from my iPhone

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment****From: Rick Figueroa <[REDACTED]>****To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com****Tue, 15 Dec 2020 21:16:36 -0500**

To whom it may concern, I am writing this letter in protest and opposition of the GCL line. I am a 17 year resident of the Cinderella development in the Sewell section of Mantua Township. The freight line is approximately 500 ft'. east of our residence and it usually runs about twice a day. Once in the early morning hours and once at about 8:30 pm. We purchased this home knowing that the tracks were active and in service. The train horn is blown about two blocks ahead of the intersection and sometimes it catches us off guard and frightens us some.

There has been talks about the Glassboro-Camden line as I 'm sure you guys are aware of. Mainly, the route that the train will be taking. Like all of our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for the expansion of transit options within our area, however, I feel that, as proposed, the GCL line will be a detriment to our township. After scanning through the proposal online, it appears that the rail line will be placed through communities, homes, backyards, easements, etc. I've even read that eminent domain will be used on some of the homes and properties that stand in the way.

I am not against mass transit and improvements to keep up with the high demands, but sometimes I can't help to wonder if anyone making the decisions ever think about the communities and the impact that it will have as a whole. At a fundamental level, the current GCL line proposal is a project with serious flaws. First, it's going cost approximately \$3 billions to build? That's a ridiculous and enormous price tag for a train that's going to run from Glassboro to Camden 7 days a week from 6am to midnight at a cost of \$ 2.50 roundtrip. Second, I do not believe the rail line will meet the needs of our residents and business owners. I understand that the line is mainly to move students and/or riders to and from Rutgers-Camden and Rowan University, however, I just don't see where the need for it, especially with the impact of the Corona virus pandemic that we are currently under. Who knows what type of unforeseen impact that'll have in our communities. Third, this will cause traffic congestion instead reduction. Where will the riders park their vehicles?

In closing, at a proposed cost of billions of dollars, the GCL rail line provides ridership to only a small number of riders. I strongly suggest an alternative route be chosen as this small, quaint community does not want the air pollution as well as the noise and increased traffic and crime coming into this town. Thank you in advance for accepting this letter.

**Subject: No to GCL**

**From: Dana Foley <[REDACTED]>**

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 21:23:15 -0500**

**As a resident of pitman, right off the tracks, I as a taxpayer, am against this 100%.  
NO TO GCL!!!**

**Sent from my iPhone**

**Subject: Comment.**

**From: Michael Follo** <[REDACTED]>

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 19 Nov 2020 18:18:25 -0500**

**I have two suggestion for the glassborocamdenline:**

**1)My first suggestion is have NJ Transit run the service but through route with the existing River Line to provide a one direct service between Trenton & Glassboro, in addition, reroute the line to serve the Camden Waterfront, this would give riders between Camden to Glassboro a one direct ride along the River Line without transferring in Camden & could give riders a direct transfer at Trenton to NJ Transit Northeast Corridor, Amtrak to points north & SEPTA Trenton Line.**

**2)My second suggestion is have PATCO run the service as a DMU but instead of terminating on the outside of the Camden station, have the service terminate underground with the existing PATCO Hi Speed Line in Camden & built two new platforms, this would give Camden riders a cross the platform transfer from the PATCO DMU with the PATCO High Speed Line in Camden for service to Philadelphia & cross the platform transfer with the PATCO Hi Speed Line to the PATCO DMU at Camden to Glassboro but built a underground loop after the Camden station so the PATCO DMU can reverse direction.**

**Michael**

**From:** [Nick G](#)  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Vote  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 9:56:24 PM

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How about a vote be sent out or held for residents to vote on it? I've lived in my home since 2014 and I only knew the project was floating around because I worked for Conrail. We don't need this. This isn't the city. This will be popular for a few months then dwindle down to nothing. The demographic who will use this the most is the college kids who want to go get drugs from Camden or go drinking in the city. Citizens in these towns should be able to vote before this waste of money project goes any further.

Sent from my iPhone

**Subject: Rail line problems**

**From: Jeff Geortler** [REDACTED]

**To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Sat, 28 Nov 2020 14:59:11 -0500**

This project is not needed in Gloucester county , it will bring nothing but crime and traffic problems that the towns cannot not handle. Was there any consideration of the intersection of center st and the railroad tracks in the Sewell section of Mantua at the start and end of the school days when busses and parents are going to the school and that is the main way to here there? That is only one of the traffic problems I foresee in one single town.

I also see crime rates going up around the stations such as burglaries where the train gives criminals a quick and easy way in and out of the town.



**From:** [Patricia Gianotti](mailto:Patricia.Gianotti)  
**To:** [contactus@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:contactus@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Glassboro Camden line  
**Date:** Friday, December 4, 2020 11:37:11 AM

---

I can see no real benefit for this line running through our small towns. The safety of our children will be in jeopardy, the cost is not affective, the crime rate will rise and the people don't want it! You can run a line along RT 55 if it's needed. We want our towns safe and quiet and don't want to pay for a train that will obviously lose money!

**Subject: input**

**From: ELAINE GOODMAN** [REDACTED]

**To: "contactus@glassborocamdenline.com" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>**

**Sun, 29 Nov 2020 20:28:06 -0500 (EST)**

**I have lived in Wenonah for 51 years and support the creation of the Glassboro Camden line.  
Elaine Sooy Goodman**

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment**

**From: Dorothy Grayson** <[REDACTED]>

**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com"** <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Fri, 18 Dec 2020 04:54:24 +0000**

While I have no problem with connecting Glassboro to Camden, I believe the Rte 55 option is best. There's no need to disturb the lives of small towns' citizens with noise, traffic, pollution and, most important, danger to our children. We all take pride in our homes and in our town. This train line would be disastrous. I believe rte 55 was built to accommodate a train and the train line would be easy to extend further south if needed. Please keep this out of our towns.

**Subject: Formal comment**

From: "Guilfoy, Michael P" <[REDACTED]>

To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

Thu, 17 Dec 2020 00:53:36 +0000

Ms. Malaszecki,

The concern I have with the project as proposed is the placement of the station in Wenonah. The site selected would be in the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> block of North East Ave. adjacent to the original station now the Wenonah community center. There are some issues with this location listed below:

1. Wenonah elementary is a walking school and North East Ave. is major access point for the school. The increased traffic would bring an added safety concern for the children.
2. The station would eliminate one of only two public non-street parking areas in the town center. This lot is used extensively by the community center in the old station.
3. The station at this site would have a direct effect on at least 10 residences with increased traffic and parking even if it is a walk-up station. An alternative location such as on South East Ave behind the Town Hall would not directly affect any residences.

I have been a resident of Wenonah for over 35 years and live on North East Ave. The GCL project would have a direct and major effect on my neighbors and myself but I still see the merits of the line. The proposed location of the station , if built, should be reconsidered.

Sincerely,

Michael Guilfoy

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<https://www.chemours.com/en/email-disclaimer>

# Subject: inputs on Glassboro-Camden line

From: <ashishgupta@somespace.com>

To: <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

Wed, 18 Nov 2020 20:57:24 -0500

Hello ,

I was recently browsing nj.com and came across a small letter in your opinion section called "Cancel rail plan, since Camden, Glassboro are ghost towns | Letters". I came to know about your site and read about the entire project.

In my opinion, investment by the state in a Glassboro-Camden Rail Line is not for an unproven need as mentioned in some opinions. It is rather a case of unaddressed need for transportation in these communities. Glassboro has been in the past, and still is, a thriving community. Camden is not an abandoned town. It has five hundred thousand people living there. A rail line connecting these two towns and the communities in the path, will only help the people of these communities to access work in the bigger city at an affordable cost. It will help the elderly to independently travel for medical & recreational purposes. It will help students and adult learners, access world class education at Rowan University. This will also help business setup shops and revitalize small town, commerce, art and culture. In my opinion, there can be no better service we can provide to our citizens than the service and privilege to travel freely to their destination of choice for the activity they want to engage in. That is literally the meaning of freedom, which we, as a democracy cherish so much. Yes, I hear the opinion that we are in a pandemic, but that is not going to last forever, life will not stop, cures will be found, and we will survive and prosper. Yes, I hear this will cost millions of dollars, but for the greater good. Yes there are inefficiencies in how public & state organizations work, but we cannot stop making progress, we need to operate and develop with the constraints we have and in time, improve on those inefficiencies. Let me put it this way, If we can build a highway to go to Atlantic city casinos, we can surely fund a rail line to a University for our future generation to get affordable education which secures their future and helps our state & country grow.

I have written this same email and send it to the editor on nj.com. I want you all, involved with this project to know that, I support this project and wish you the best of luck.

Regards

Ashish Gupta

Marlton, NJ 08053

856-264-0329

**Subject: For the rail line**

**From: Marie Hageman** <[REDACTED]>

**To: "contactus@glassborocamdenline.com"** <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

Sat, 12 Dec 2020 22:31:47 +0000 (UTC)

Thank you for reviving this beneficial project.

I have been a resident of the Glassboro area for over 30 years and would like to express my support of the proposed Light Rail Project.

I plan to frequently use this great addition to the community, when it becomes a reality.

I know the greatest benefits from light rail are reducing traffic congestion, as well as pollution, while decreasing the large volume of automobile traffic currently causing these plagues.

This will lead to greater safety for area kids and pedestrians and less noise, as well, resulting in a more pleasant community for all.

Since, I believe, this will utilize existing rail lines, only minimal environmental costs can be expected, which will be mitigated by the tremendous benefits of reduced air and noise pollution.

I'm told there are NIMBY's against it. (Actually, they are worse than NIMBY's. They are Nest Parasites, like cuckoos and Brown-headed Cow Birds, who invade other's nests.) These folks moved adjacent to a property then try to prevent the owner from using their own property for its clearly intended purpose. Just shameful. They do not represent the views of the community,

I urge all concerned to make this happen as quickly as possible. I am eager to begin making use of it.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Marie Hageman

**Subject:** RE: questions and concerns

**From:** "GCL Project Team" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

**To:** "BARBARA HALPERN" <[REDACTED]>

Thu, 05 Nov 2020 18:18:46 -0500

Thank you for your formal comment on the Glassboro-Camden Line draft EIS. Your comments will be recorded and addressed in the final EIS after the comment period closes on Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 11:59 PM EST.

Sincerely,

The GCL Project Team

----- Original Message -----

**From:**

"BARBARA HALPERN" <[REDACTED]>

**To:**

"contactus@glassborocamdenline.com" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Cc:**

**Sent:**

Tue, 3 Nov 2020 09:04:36 -0500 (EST)

**Subject:**

RE: questions and concerns

Hello,

My name is Barbara Halpern and I am the chairperson of the Franklin Township Environmental Commission. With New Jersey having significant air quality issues why is this project not using electrified rails? It does not make sense to spend this much money, disturb habitats and residents including the acquisition of property from owners to construct a rail system that will do little or nothing to improve the air quality.

I will only support this project if you change it to electric trains. I grew up on Long Island where the trains are electric and were installed approx. 50 years ago. How can we still be proposing fossil fuel driven trains a half century later. Even if the project is more expensive to go with electric trains the real cost of creating a project that uses fossil fuel is greater to the health of New Jersey residents and the planet. Removal of forested areas that would mitigate air pollution to create a project that emits air pollution makes the situation worse not better. Love the idea of public transportation by train but not the project as you are proposing. Please change this project to electric trains even if upfront costs are greater.

Thank you for your time,

Barbara Halpern

Chairperson

Subject: Re: Public Hearings for the Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Draft EIS

From: BARBARA HALPERN <[REDACTED]>

To: "Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Project" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Thu, 12 Nov 2020 16:25:02 -0500 (EST)

I had sent a comment regarding the need to make the trains electric and wanted to add to that comment.

Electric trains will require less infrastructure to maintain them. No oil changes, no fuel deliveries, no storage tanks where potential environmental impacts from spills and leaks are inevitable. Less cost in the long run to maintain electric trains. Like electric cars they need less labor for upkeep and have a much smaller footprint and zero air emissions. The cost of **electric** locomotive engines is about 20 percent **less than diesel** locomotive engines on the global market, and **maintenance** costs are 25-35 percent **less than** for **diesel** engines. As I mentioned in my comment previously for more than 50 years electric trains have been used for commuters on Long Island. In order to stop climate change and our air quality issues we must make all new public transportation electric. This project uses public funds and must be built to protect public health and the environment.

Thank you for your time,  
Barbara Halpern  
Franklin Township  
EC Chair

On 11/12/2020 1:50 PM Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Project <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com> wrote:



# PUBLIC HEARINGS

## Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Project

The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Project Team will hold two Public Hearings on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A 45-day public comment period on the Draft EIS started on November 2, 2020 and ends on December 17, 2020. All comments must be received by no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern



Time, Thursday, December 17, 2020.

As part of the EIS public participation process, the Project Team will hold two (2) virtual public hearings via Zoom, where interested members of the public can provide and listen to oral comments concerning the Proposed Action and information contained in the Draft EIS. The public hearings will occur on:

- **Tuesday, November 17, 2020 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**
- **Thursday, November 19, 2020 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

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## HOW YOU CAN ACCESS THE DRAFT EIS INFORMATION

A section of the project website has been dedicated to inform the public about the Draft EIS. Content includes:

- Draft EIS Overview
- Draft EIS Document
- Public Hearings Schedule & Registration
- How to Comment on the Draft EIS

To get started, please click the 'Draft EIS Overview' button:

**DRAFT EIS OVERVIEW**

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## HOW YOU CAN ATTEND THE PUBLIC HEARINGS

Due to the ongoing public health emergency associated with COVID-19 and to protect the health and safety of the community, all hearings will be hosted virtually on the Zoom online meeting platform. Below are the dates and times of the scheduled events, which anyone can register to attend.

**Tuesday, November 17, 2020**

**6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

**Thursday, November 19, 2020**

**3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

**Registration is required.** To register, click the 'Registration' button below to

visit the project website's Registration page for full details:

**REGISTRATION**

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### **What is a Public Hearing?**

Public hearings are official proceedings held to provide the public with an opportunity to submit oral comments about the Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Project and the EIS. Comments submitted during the hearings will become part of the project record, which the Project Team will review and address during the Final EIS phase. It should be noted that the hearing panel will not be responding to questions asked during an oral comment.

During the virtual public hearings, a brief summary of the project and public comment process will be provided, followed by oral comments for the project record. Comments will be accepted from registered participants via the Zoom virtual meeting platform as time permits. However, the public may also submit formal comments to the Project Team through the project website, email, U.S. mail, and the project information hotline, as outlined on the project website's [How to Comment](#) page.

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**The Draft EIS Public Comment Period Ends  
11:59 p.m., Eastern Time, on December 17, 2020**

**[www.GlassboroCamdenLine.com](http://www.GlassboroCamdenLine.com)**

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You are receiving this email because you expressed interest about the Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Project.

**Our mailing address is:**  
Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Project  
2 Riverside Drive  
Camden, NJ 08101

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**Subject: Not a good plan**

From: "Alan S. Hamilton" <[REDACTED]>

To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com

Thu, 17 Dec 2020 20:57:35 -0500

I was an opponent of this years ago when it was first proposed. The best solution is to build a line down the divider of Route 55. Route 55 was initially constructed with its wide median area precisely for the purpose of eventually having a commuter rail line built there. The ONLY reason the alternative plan is now being proposed is because it would be cheaper to build. People looking to save on construction costs are conveniently ignoring the fact that this alternative plan, in addition to being environmentally detrimental and esthetically unappealing, would not be as advantageous in the long run in providing the service it is intended to fulfill. This plan has been defeated once and deserves to be defeated again. Light rail connecting commuter parks for cars, electric vehicles, and bicycles connected to local bike trails is absolutely the best plan for long term development of the area.

 **Alan Hamilton** and 32 others

2 Comments 1 Share

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 Comment

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Sent from my iPad

**Subject: Proposed Glassboro Camden Line Complaints****From:** Lyle Hamilton <[REDACTED]>**To:** publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 21:13:00 -0500**

To whom it may concern:

I believe that this project has been a bad idea for at least 20 years, and that is not designed to meet the needs of the residents of the communities it will affect. It would be a colossal waste of funding and present real, tangible problems for thousands of taxpayers who live along these tracks. First of all the ridership does not exist. Ridership has been underwhelming with the riverline, and the population numbers and demographics show that the demand is even lower in our area. Not to mention this is low speed, diesel powered, with no direct service to Philadelphia. This is a bad idea, for multiple reasons. Please look into spending some real money and using the Route 55 median as it was intended, for high-speed rail with a direct connection to Philadelphia that won't cause massive disruptions to numerous communities.

Thank you

Lyle Hamilton

I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners that have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL as obsolete.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

One of the largest suggested benefits of the current GCL proposal is to reduce traffic congestion, however the current proposal does not provide any realistic mass transit alternative to current traffic routes. Heaviest traffic congestion is currently seen along highways 42, 295, and 76 (Walt Whitman bridge), however the current GCL proposal does not provide a realistic alternative for any of these routes; the current GCL proposal would provide a route into Camden, but destinations in Camden are not the cause of current traffic concerns. Highway 676, which is the route that would be served by the proposed GCL, is arguably the least congested of South Jersey's roadways. At a proposed cost of billions of taxpayer dollars, the proposed GCL provides too small a benefit to only a small number of people. The current GCL proposal also fails to account for the significant impact the new 295-42 Interchange Project will have on traffic patterns and congestion along those major roadways.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42, COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

The GCL, as proposed, will:

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.
- Cripple local streets near the GCL including reduction of lanes widths, relocation of roadways, and full closures of one-way streets affecting local circulation patterns.<sup>4</sup> These street circulation patterns would be most heavily affected in towns like ours, with at-grade crossings.
- Disrupt communities with introduction of significant noise from the frequent passage of trains, in addition to disruption and traffic introduced into these communities with an influx of rail passengers driving to and from proposed rail stations. Many communities along the proposed GCL are currently quiet communities with limited, local traffic.
- The potential health effects on local residents due to increased fossil fuel emissions and the permanent disruption of noise pollution resulting from the GCL needs to be studied. These health effects include anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation, asthma, and cardiovascular disease.
  - “Noise exposure modifies the function of multiple organs and systems. Acute noise exposure, in both laboratory settings where traffic noise was simulated and in real-life environments, can cause increases in blood pressure, heart rate, and cardiac output, likely mediated by the release of stress hormones such as catecholamines (for review, see Babisch<sup>4,5</sup>). As shown by field studies, these acute effects occur not only at high sound levels in occupational settings but also at relatively low environmental noise levels when concentration, relaxation, or sleep is disturbed.”<sup>6</sup>
  - ““Railway noise is related to disturbed sleep, which in turn increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, supported by indications of increased cardiovascular disease in persons living close to railways.”<sup>7</sup>
- Cost the state \$2-3 Billion dollars. After reviewing costs of similar projects, the GCL seems to cost double the per mile figures to construct than other comparable projects. After reviewing projects such as the Riverline, with costs totalling in at \$1.1 billion and ridership down substantially from projection, it seems there is no benefit from a cost vs reward standpoint. The promise of economic growth from the River Line for the past 15 years has been just that, a promise unfulfilled. Additionally, other rail lines have continuously relied upon continuous funding from taxpayer dollars to cover operating costs. Other similar rail projects have not been shown to be financially sustainable without bailouts, and the potential cost of this current GCL proposal for years following the initial construction costs has not been sufficiently outlined at this time.
- The current proposal also fails to meet the crucial efforts needed to reduce carbon emissions, as the suggested rail will be powered by diesel fuel, which will impact the air quality of South Jersey residents. Rather than eliminating emissions, this current proposal will add emissions and expand our carbon footprint.

- Include permanent and temporary environmental impacts, such as disturbance to soil and vegetation, resulting in the loss, alteration, or degradation of wildlife habitat and plant communities. This includes impacts to sensitive plant communities and habitat for federal and state-listed species.<sup>1</sup>No action plan has been announced to mitigate this impact to our natural resources.
  - Have considerable impact at 34 areas of concern that are “Known or Potential Contaminated Sites Expected to be Impacted by the Proposed Alignment”.<sup>2</sup>No further information on the investigation has been presented in order to confirm contamination would not be encountered.
- Threaten the integrity of 11 historic districts and 6 historic properties; 5 properties are listed in the National Register and State Register and 12 properties have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register and State Register.<sup>3</sup>Historic resources are protected under Federal law through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Applicable State of New Jersey legislation governing the protection of historic resources includes Chapter 268 of the New Jersey State Register Law of 1970 and EO215.

Other Issues forecasted with the GCL that need to be addressed are as follows:

- COVID-19 has undeniably impacted our way of life- politically, economically, and socially. Given the mass impacts of COVID-19, priority should be given to studying the effects of the virus long term in order to determine if the need for the GCL still exists. There is currently no way to predict how many jobs will now be conducted remotely going forward, and how many jobs will no longer require the same daily commute now that many industries have adapted to conducting their business online with options for employees to work from home.
- Data in support of the need for the proposed GCL does not account for the potential impacts to be seen following completion of the construction project currently underway to improve traffic flow between highways 295, 42, and 76. We should table this EIS phase of the GCL and re-evaluate mass transit needs in the region once current highway construction has been completed. Current traffic patterns and mass transit needs may change significantly following completion of the work that is now underway on 295.
- Property values of many homes in the communities that are in the direct path of this current GCL proposal may be negatively affected, which not only affects the economic well-being of our individual citizens, but also affects property tax assessments. A drop in property values may leave these communities with a loss in annual revenue when tax assessments fall sharply for properties along the proposed rail line. There is no adequate study to assess the potential impact to property values along the GCL as currently proposed.
- Our goal of strategically expanding mass transit sustainably and effectively includes exploring other less intrusive and less expensive proposals. For instance, the expansion and upgrade of our current bus routes with electric or hydrogen powered buses is a more cost effective option. Such projects have been successfully completed in California for an approximate \$200+ million budget, a stark contrast to the \$2-3 billion cost of the GCL.
  - The GCL EIS is outdated as it proposes using unsustainable fossil fuels. Given the nationwide effort to curb carbon emissions and move away from fossil fuels, it's only a matter of time until the use of diesel/electric powered trains will be rendered obsolete and will require upgrading to fully electric or hydrogen fuel-cell powered trains to meet carbon emission goals. Currently we have the technology to move forward using electric powered buses for 1/10th of the cost of this proposed GCL project. The infrastructure already exists, examples being routes 55, 42 and I-76.

I urge you to reassess support of the GCL as proposed. It will have a severe impact on our natural resources , threaten historic sites, drain the economy , have long term cost implications and INCREASE traffic in our towns. Please do not let another doomed-from-the-start light rail line become another failure for South Jersey.<sup>5</sup>My neighbors and I are counting on you for your support in OPPOSITION to the GCL Light Rail Line and ask that you join us in helping the entities involved in this project complete these goals with much better planning than an outdated and extremely expensive plan.

Sincerely,

(YOUR NAME)

(Your Street address

City, State

Zip code)

References:

1. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Natural Resources Technical Report. November 2020. Access:  
[http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/01\\_Natural\\_Resources\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/01_Natural_Resources_Technical_Report_web.pdf)
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7. Croy I, Smith MG, Wayne KE Effects of train noise and vibration on human heart rate during sleep: an experimental study BMJ Open 2013;3:e002655. <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/3/5/e002655>



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** rail line Glassboro / Camden  
**Date:** Sunday, November 15, 2020 6:14:15 PM

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This line is running right through the black community. (Academy St.)

Foundation of Homes disrupted, Strangers in back yard which no one would want.  
Nightly noise and excessive light.

If this commuter Train must come to pass in our backyard, I would like to see  
guaranteed job opportunities for people of color.

Thank You  
Rev. Charles Harvey Jr.

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment - Consolidated Rail Corporation**

**From:** "Hill, Ryan M." <[REDACTED]>

**To:** "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

Thu, 17 Dec 2020 13:51:27 +0000

To Whom It May Concern:

Please see the attached letter containing Consolidated Rail Corporation's (Conrail) comments to the Glassboro Camden Line Draft EIS.

Thank you.

Ryan M. Hill, PE | Chief Engineer – Design & Construction | Consolidated Rail Corporation

[REDACTED] Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054 | [REDACTED]



December 17, 2020

Ms. Victoria Malaszecki, Public Involvement Liaison  
P.O. Box 536  
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062

RE: Glassboro to Camden Line Environmental Impact Statement Formal Comment –  
Consolidated Rail Corporation

Dear Ms. Malaszecki:

Consolidated Rail Corporation (“Conrail”) submits the following comments on the Environmental Impact Statement released November 2, 2020 by Delaware River Port Authority (“DRPA”), Port Authority Transit Corporation (“PATCO”), and New Jersey Transit Corporation (“NJ Transit”) for the proposed construction of new passenger light rail service between the City of Camden in Camden County and the Borough of Glassboro in Gloucester County (the “GCL” or “Proposed Project”). Conrail is a Class III switching freight railroad, indirectly and jointly owned by CSX Corporation (“CSX”) and Norfolk Southern Corporation (“NS”).

The proposed GCL would require the use of Conrail property and right-of-way for a significant portion of its alignment. This existing freight corridor is at the heart of Conrail’s operation in South Jersey and an important link in the industrial supply chain of the region. The proposed construction, occupation and operation of the GCL will have an impact on existing freight rail transportation as well as curtail the future growth potential of freight rail customers located along Conrail’s right-of-way. Conrail’s foremost concern is the preservation its existing freight transportation franchise. Accordingly, Conrail believes the following guiding principles are critical in the advancement of any iteration of the Proposed Project:

- Any proposed implementation of the Proposed Project must have the ability to preserve current freight service levels and access to freight rail customers throughout the entire existing Conrail right-of-way.
- Any proposed alignment must provide sufficient capacity that does not preclude future expansion of freight service on the current Conrail right-of way.
- The Proposed Project should provide opportunities for synergies in rail infrastructure investments that would benefit both passenger and freight rail service.

In addition, Conrail respectfully provides some detailed comments to the GCL EIS as set forth below. Please note that these specific comments are not designed to address every single issue Conrail may have with the proposed alignment but instead are intended to highlight some high level issues the Proposed Project would have on Conrail's right-of-way and its existing freight franchise and its future growth potential.

1. In previous meetings with the GCL team, Conrail indicated several projects that are critical to Conrail for the preservation of its operation:
  - a. Woodbury to Thorofare Siding
  - b. New Wye Track at Eagle Point
  - c. Pavonia Yard Through-Track Capacity Improvement
  - d. 23' vertical clearance under Hunter Street Overhead Bridge
  - e. Extension of Conrail's existing siding 2.25 miles south to Woodbury heights, with the incorporation of a interlocked middle crossover

While the Hunter Street Bridge and extension of the siding into Woodbury Heights, albeit not 2.25 miles, was included, the other improvements were not included as a part of the report. Conrail's approval and the use of its property is contingent upon these projects being completed prior to the construction of the GCL. The completion of these projects will mitigate the negative impact to Conrail's critical operations.

2. Throughout the report, the use of the existing Conrail rail corridor between Camden and Glassboro is referenced frequently. Conrail has not been a party to any discussions regarding the intent to secure Conrail property for the project and Conrail has no written agreement with the GCL to allow the project within its ROW.
3. Throughout the design and construction of the project there will be a significant amount of effort required from Conrail's engineering, legal, transportation, real estate and environmental departments to ensure the proposed GCL is not adversely impacting our operation, the information is accurate, and Conrail is compensated for the loss of its operating property, increased maintenance expenses, environmental risk is properly handled, and the proper agreements are negotiated. All of Conrail's effort shall be at the expense of the GCL project.
4. Four quadrant gates are proposed at all grade crossings. Quiet zones are not being considered as a part of the project. Coordination with FRA is required to ensure the proper vetting of at-grade crossings is completed.
5. The report identifies several impacts of construction, but the substantial impact to Conrail's operation is not identified or considered in any capacity. Conrail will have to supply significant resources to the GCL project, and operational disruptions to Conrail and its customers would be required to complete certain aspects of the project. The existence of the GCL will have an adverse impact to industrial growth along Conrail's existing rail corridor. The development of a light rail line on Conrail's right-of-way severely limits the potential for industrial development and will lead to the loss of current established

businesses. Conrail has witnessed this previously with the development of the NJT River Line Light Rail and the proposed GCL is located along the backbone of Conrail's industrial supply chain in Southern New Jersey.

6. There is no direct representation of the real estate impact to Conrail in the report within the EIS. Conrail will require a detailed list of the properties required for the proposed GCL, because a significant portion of the GCL alignment is proposed on Conrail property. It is currently impossible for Conrail to predict the impact these real estate requirements may have on its operations without more information. If real estate is ultimately required, Conrail will seek appropriate value for any conveyance or encumbrance up its privately-owned property.
7. The report indicates areas where only a 17-foot track center spacing is established between Conrail tracks and those of the GCL. In those areas, the report indicates fencing will be installed to separate the two operations. Conrail has previously indicated to the GCL team that 25-foot track center spacing is required to avoid Conrail and FRA enforced adjacent track protection rules becoming a part of the routine maintenance for each operation. This distance is accordance with Conrail's engineering standards. If 25-foot track centers are not obtainable, more research is needed to establish the best practice of safely separated the operations and allowing for the safe performance of maintenance.
8. Temporary construction easements will be needed on areas of Conrail's property where GCL's contractor requires access, laydown or other use.
9. The EIS proposes a Conrail operating window south of Woodbury between 9:00 pm and 5:00 am. Service windows have a severe negative impact on freight. The lack of service flexibility, especially when limiting access during standard business operating hours, will force Conrail's customers to consider other methods of transportation. The reduced service window will also restrict the possibility of industrial growth in the area, which is a detriment to not only Conrail, but the economic sustainability of the Southern New Jersey community as a whole.
10. GCL vehicles are proposed as light DMU's, similar to the existing NJT River Line. More research will be required to evaluate the possibility of heavy rail equipment being utilized along the GCL. Light DMU's will restrict Conrail's operational flexibility on a shared ROW.
11. The report states specific corridor ownership by various entities. Conrail's Real Estate department will need to verify these claims. Research will also need to be conducted regarding rail usage rights for the corridor. There are areas where Conrail may not own, but has the exclusive usage rights. The usage of these areas will by both Conrail and the proposed GCL will need to be discussed and agreed upon prior to the GCL being put into service. Agreements shall be established that indicate the GCL will be responsible for the cost burden of potential rail freight customers locating on or across the GCL.
12. The report references existing railroad bridges that will need to modified as a part of the project. Conrail will need to further evaluate the condition of existing structures impacted to the project, and what will be required should maintenance or replacement be needed in the future. Conrail may require its existing bridges impacted by the proposed GCL be

replaced at the time of the GCL construction to mitigate any future impacts on Conrail's operations once the GCL is placed into service

13. All proposed structures, retaining walls, bridges, ditches, etc. will need to meet Conrail requirements for clearance from Conrail's tracks, both horizontally and vertically.
14. All utilities affected by the GCL project on Conrail's ROW shall be modified or relocated in accordance with Conrail specifications. All plans for these changes must be reviewed and approved by Conrail's engineering department to verify adherence to Conrail's requirements.
15. The report incorrectly identifies fouling as 4 feet from the nearest rail. GCL employees and contractors are fouling when within 15 feet of the centerline of track.

Conrail supports the efforts of the GCL to explore the possibility of bringing a light rail line to Southern New Jersey. We believe it is important, however, to recognize that freight rail is as critical for economic development as passenger service. Conrail appreciates the opportunity to provide comments, and looks forward to its involvement as a stakeholder in the overall plan for the Glassboro Camden Light Rail.

Sincerely,



Eric B. Levin  
Vice President Engineering & Mechanical Policy



**Subject: Support for the proposed Glassboro to Camden Line**

**From: "Hostetter, Elisabeth" <[REDACTED]>**

**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>**

**Thu, 12 Nov 2020 20:04:09 +0000**

I write in full support of the proposed Glassboro to Camden light rail line. As a professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance and as a resident of Sewell near the Glassboro/Pitman intersection, I am delighted about the prospect of this easy and affordable public transportation option that I and my students would be able to use on a daily basis.

**Elisabeth Hostetter, Ph.d**

[REDACTED]

**Sewell, NJ 08080**

Subject: Re: Train

From: Jody Ilisco <[REDACTED]>

To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

Tue, 8 Dec 2020 11:29:34 -0500

On Tue, Dec 8, 2020 at 11:25 AM Jody Ilisco <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Subject: Train

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

To Ms Victoria Malaszecki

Public Realties Liaison

PO BOX 536

Mullica Hill, NJ 08062

From Jody and Anthony Ilisco

[REDACTED] Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097

[Woodbury Heights, NJ](#)

### Environmental Impact Statement

I am writing concerning the negative environmental impact to the Borough of Woodbury Heights from the GCL.

Woodbury Heights is divided in half by the train tracks. So to add a speed line train every 30 minutes would stop emergency vehicles such as police, fire and ambulance from quick access to residents. Also our school has walkers to three schools in our community. We have a crossing guard at Elm and West Jersey Ave that would now have to safely cross children over railroad tracks.



The new Master Plan includes a housing project and train station and now train yard to be added to our small 1.5 square mile community. These changes would drastically impact our small community in a negative manner. The need for more police services and resources would negatively impact the taxpayers, who already have one of the highest tax rates in Gloucester County.

The Borough Hall and public grade school is located directly beside the railroad tracks. The train traffic would cause a major distraction to both students, teachers and Borough workers and meetings. Houses on both sides already rock and roll when the train goes by. My china cabinet in my home clangs as the train goes by every day and night. Every half hour train traffic would prove to be a disruption to the school, borough hall and homes on both sides of the tracks.

A train station would add more traffic to the already busy Glassboro Road and Elm Ave. The traffic would have to go through the residential area to reach the county roads. Many roads have underground streams in the area and already experience flooding. More development of the wetland areas could increase the problems.

The Train Station would be within blocks of the Drug Free Zone of the grade school. Concerns

of persons coming and going in that area would call for more police presence at a greater cost to the small community. And once again a greater tax burden to taxpayers.

I hope these concerns are added to your environmental impact statement.

Sincerely,  
Tony & Jody Ilisco

**Subject: Pitman NJ**

From: matthew ac <[REDACTED]>

To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com

Thu, 17 Dec 2020 16:36:53 -0500

Hello. Kamal Johnson here. Would like to send a comment about the train proposal to come through pitman, for passengers. Our town has all older homes including my home over 100 yrs old. We have a freight train that comes a few times a day. It shakes the houses. I can only imagine if a passenger train comes through it will be worse. We asking that the passenger train not come through pitman. Thank you. Kamal Johnson

Sent from my iPhone

**Subject: Glassboro Camden line****From: el kerr** **To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com****Thu, 17 Dec 2020 19:22:48 -0500**

I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

One of the largest suggested benefits of the current GCL proposal is to reduce traffic congestion, however the current proposal does not provide any realistic mass transit alternative to current traffic routes. Heaviest traffic congestion is currently seen along highways 42, 295, and 76 (Walt Whitman bridge), however the current GCL proposal does not provide a realistic alternative for any of these routes; the current GCL proposal would provide a route into Camden, but destinations in Camden are not the cause of current traffic concerns. Highway 676, which is the route that would be served by the proposed GCL, is arguably the least congested of South Jersey's roadways. At a proposed cost of billions of taxpayer dollars, the proposed GCL provides too small a benefit to only a small number of people. The current GCL proposal also fails to account for the significant impact the new 295-42 Interchange Project will have on traffic patterns and congestion along those major roadways.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42, COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

**The GCL, as proposed, will:**

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.
- Cripple local streets near the GCL including reduction of lanes widths, relocation of roadways, and full closures of one-way streets affecting local circulation patterns.<sup>1</sup> These street circulation patterns would be most-heavily affected in towns like ours, with at-grade crossings.
- Disrupt communities with introduction of significant noise from the frequent passage of trains, in addition to disruption and traffic introduced into these communities with an influx of rail passengers driving to and from

proposed rail stations. Many communities along the proposed GCL are currently quiet communities with limited, local traffic.

- The potential health effects on local residents due to increased fossil fuel emissions and the permanent disruption of noise pollution resulting from the GCL needs to be studied. These health effects include anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation, asthma, and cardiovascular disease.

airways.”<sup>3</sup>

- Cost the state \$2-3 Billion dollars. After reviewing costs of similar projects, the GCL seems to cost double the per mile figures to construct than other comparable projects. After reviewing projects such as the Riverline, with costs totalling in at \$1.1 billion and ridership down substantially from projection, it seems there is no benefit from a cost vs reward standpoint. The promise of economic growth from the River Line for the past 15 years has been just that, a promise unfulfilled.

Additionally, other rail lines have continuously relied upon continuous funding from taxpayer dollars to cover operating costs. Other similar rail projects have not been shown to be financially sustainable without bailouts, and the potential cost of this current GCL proposal for years following the initial construction costs has not been sufficiently outlined at this time.

- The current proposal also fails to meet the crucial efforts needed to reduce carbon emissions, as the suggested rail will be powered by diesel fuel, which will impact the air quality of South Jersey residents. Rather than eliminating emissions, this current proposal will add emissions and expand our carbon footprint.
- Include permanent and temporary environmental impacts, such as disturbance to soil and vegetation, resulting in the loss, alteration, or degradation of wildlife habitat and plant communities. This includes impacts to sensitive plant communities and habitat for federal and state-listed species.<sup>4</sup> No action plan has been announced to mitigate this impact to our natural resources.
- Have considerable impact at 34 areas of concern that are “Known or Potential Contaminated Sites Expected to be Impacted by the Proposed Alignment”.<sup>5</sup> No further information on the investigation has been presented in order to confirm contamination would not be encountered.
- Threaten the integrity of 11 historic districts and 6 historic properties; 5 properties are listed in the National Register and State Register and 12 properties have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register and State Register.<sup>6</sup> Historic resources are protected under Federal law through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Applicable State of New Jersey legislation governing the protection of historic resources includes Chapter 268 of the New Jersey State Register Law of 1970 and EO215.

Eleanor Kerr

Glassboro Nj

08028

Sent from my iPhone

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment**

**From:** [REDACTED]

**To:** publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com

Thu, 17 Dec 2020 21:04:41 -0500

December 17, 2020

**RE: The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Light Rail Project**

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Richard Kinmonth and I live in Wenonah, NJ.

I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our borough seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete.

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The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

The GCL, as proposed, will:

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.

- Cripple local streets near the GCL including reduction of lanes widths, relocation of roadways, and full closures of one-way streets affecting local circulation patterns.<sup>1</sup> These street circulation patterns would be most-heavily affected in towns like ours, with at-grade crossings.
- Disrupt communities with introduction of significant noise from the frequent passage of trains, in addition to disruption and traffic introduced into these communities with an influx of rail passengers driving to and from proposed rail stations. Many communities along the proposed GCL are currently quiet communities with limited, local traffic.
- The potential health effects on local residents due to increased fossil fuel emissions and the permanent disruption of noise pollution resulting from the GCL needs to be studied. These health effects include anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation, asthma, and cardiovascular disease.
  - *“Noise exposure modifies the function of multiple organs and systems. Acute noise exposure, in both laboratory settings where traffic noise was simulated and in real-life environments, can cause increases in blood pressure, heart rate, and cardiac output, likely mediated by the release of stress hormones such as catecholamines (for review, see Babisch<sup>4,5</sup>). As shown by field studies, these acute effects occur not only at high sound levels in occupational settings but also at relatively low environmental noise levels when concentration, relaxation, or sleep is disturbed.”<sup>2</sup>*
  - *““Railway noise is related to disturbed sleep, which in turn increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, supported by indications of increased cardiovascular disease in persons living close to railways.”<sup>3</sup>*
- Cost the state \$2-3 Billion dollars. After reviewing costs of similar projects, the GCL seems to cost double the per mile figures to construct than other comparable projects. After reviewing projects such as the Riverline, with costs totalling in at \$1.1 billion and ridership down substantially from projection, it seems there is no benefit from a cost vs reward standpoint. The promise of economic growth from the River Line for the past 15 years has been just that, a promise unfulfilled.
 

Additionally, other rail lines have continuously relied upon continuous funding from taxpayer dollars to cover operating costs. Other similar rail projects have not been shown to be financially sustainable without bailouts, and the potential cost of this current GCL proposal for years following the initial construction costs has not been sufficiently outlined at this time.
- The current proposal also fails to meet the crucial efforts needed to reduce carbon emissions, as the suggested rail will be powered by diesel fuel, which will impact the air quality of South Jersey residents. Rather than eliminating emissions, this current proposal will add emissions and expand our carbon footprint.
- Include permanent and temporary environmental impacts, such as disturbance to soil and vegetation, resulting in the loss, alteration, or degradation of wildlife habitat and plant communities. This includes impacts to sensitive plant communities and habitat for federal and state-listed species.<sup>4</sup> No action plan has been announced to mitigate this impact to our natural resources.
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**Other Issues forecasted with the GCL that need to be addressed are as follows:**

- COVID-19 has undeniably impacted our way of life- politically, economically, and socially. Given the mass impacts of COVID-19, priority should be given to studying the effects of the virus long term in order to determine if the need for the GCL still exists. There is currently no way to predict how many jobs will now be conducted remotely going forward, and how many jobs will no longer require the same daily commute now that many industries have adapted to conducting their business online with options for employees to work from home.
- Data in support of the need for the proposed GCL does not account for the potential impacts to be seen following completion of the construction project currently underway to improve traffic flow between highways 295, 42, and 76. We should table this EIS phase of the GCL and re-evaluate mass transit needs in the region once current highway construction has been completed. Current traffic patterns and mass transit needs may change significantly following completion of the work that is now underway on 295.
- Property values of many homes in the communities that are in the direct path of this current GCL proposal may be negatively affected, which not only affects the economic well-being of our individual citizens, but also affects property tax assessments. A drop in property values may leave these communities with a loss in annual revenue when tax assessments fall sharply for properties along the proposed rail line. There is no adequate study to assess the potential impact to property values along the GCL as currently proposed.
- Our goal of strategically expanding mass transit sustainably and effectively includes exploring other less intrusive and less expensive proposals. For instance, the expansion and upgrade of our current bus routes with electric or hydrogen powered buses is a more cost effective option. Such projects have been successfully completed in California for an approximate \$200+ million budget, a stark contrast to the \$2-3 billion cost of the GCL.
- The GCL EIS is outdated as it proposes using unsustainable fossil fuels. Given the nationwide effort to curb carbon emissions and move away from fossil fuels, it's only a matter of time until the use of diesel/electric powered trains will be rendered obsolete and will require upgrading to fully electric or hydrogen fuel-cell powered trains to meet carbon emission goals. Currently we have the technology to move forward using electric powered buses for 1/10th of the cost of this proposed GCL project. The infrastructure already exists, examples being routes 55, 42 and I-76.

I urge you to reassess support of the GCL as proposed. It will have a severe impact on our natural resources , threaten historic sites, drain the economy , have long term cost implications and INCREASE traffic in our towns.

Please do not let another doomed-from-the-start light rail line become another failure for South Jersey.<sup>7</sup> My neighbors and I are counting on you for your support in OPPOSITION to the GCL Light Rail Line and ask that you join us in helping the entities involved in this project complete these goals with much better planning than an outdated and extremely expensive plan.

Sincerely,

Richard Kinmonth

Wenonah, NJ 08090

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Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/01\\_Natural\\_Resources\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/01_Natural_Resources_Technical_Report_web.pdf)
5. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Hazardous Material Technical Report. November 2020.  
Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/04\\_Hazardous\\_Materials\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/04_Hazardous_Materials_Technical_Report_web.pdf)
6. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Cultural Resources Technical Report. November 2020.  
Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/07\\_Cultural\\_Resources\\_Technical\\_Report\\_pages\\_1-100.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/07_Cultural_Resources_Technical_Report_pages_1-100.pdf)
7. Source: Gov. Chris Christie labels NJ Transit River Line 'a joke' due to its poor ridership - News - Burlington County Times - Westampton, NJ  
<https://www.burlingtoncountytimes.com/news/20171211/gov-chris-christie-labels-nj-transit-river-line-a-joke-due-to-its-poor-ridership>



**Subject: Gloucester County Rail Line****From: Kurt Kohler** <[REDACTED]>**To: "contactus@glassborocamdenline.com"** <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

Mon, 16 Nov 2020 14:58:29 -0500

**To whom it may concern:**

This is still a terrible plan, to spend billions of dollars running a train through some of the smallest towns in Gloucester County. It will solve nothing traffic wise and I predict will have a lower ridership than the RiverLine which loses millions of dollars a year. People will not get off 55 to get on this train! If there is to be another South Jersey railway it should service areas where the population is high; i.e Washington Twp., Gloucester Twp. , Winslow Twp each of which have more population than all of the towns in this plan combined. In our town of Wenonah a fence will have to be erected basically halving our town and in my opinion ruining it's quaint feel.

Please don't do this and saddle our children with this useless folly and ultimately add to our States debt which I believe will be approaching \$100B between the under funded State/Teachers pensions and the many many previous terrible financial gambles.

Kurt Kohler  
Wenonah, NJ

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

**Subject: Questions**

From: [REDACTED]

To: "contactus@glassborocamdenline.com" &lt;contactus@glassborocamdenline.com&gt;

Sun, 8 Nov 2020 22:19:30 -0500 (EST)

Hi Team,

I live in Wenonah and would like to know if you have engineered drawings for the RR tracks. I am interested mainly in the area of S. West and Willow.

1. Will the current tracks be removed? If so, how many tracks will replace the current one?
2. If 2 sets of tracks heading N where will they or (1 track) be added to the left or to the right of current tracks?
3. Will the current landscape change in this area? If so how?
4. Will any land be taken from residents in this area?
5. Will any land be taken that is on the sides of the tracks right now and will it continue to the streets on both sides?
6. If land is taken and landscape is changed what will replace it?
7. If a train passes every 7-1/2 minutes will Willow crossing be closed off?
8. I know this is a light rail, how will this effect the stability of properties in the area? As to the current train, which only passes once a day sometimes twice I have to straighten pictures in my home from the vibration.
9. I realize in some areas home values increase sometimes by 20%. I also realize that living across the street from a train will decrease the value of homes.
10. What is the compensation plan for residents whose properties will be decreased?
11. Would future plans for this line be to design it like the Camden County Patco Speedline ?
12. With studies for this line why was Route 55 not feasible?

Looking forward to your reply and thanking you in advance for information.

Regards,

Bonnie Lahey

[REDACTED]  
Wenonah, NJ 08090

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment****From: Bonnie Lahey** [REDACTED]**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com****Cc:** [REDACTED]

Thu, 17 Dec 2020 17:39:40 -0500

Noise and Vibration – Twenty-seven representative measurement sites were identified within the GCL corridor and were chosen as receptors for the noise impact assessment. Seventeen of these 27 sites are in communities where there would be a likelihood of increased noise exposure from daily project-related service operations, which could be related to their proximity to the proposed track and at-grade crossings.

**Question-**What is the plan to mitigate this?

Neighborhood Character – Given that the proposed GCL would run within an existing rail corridor, the proposed project would not physically divide neighborhoods, reduce access to, or disrupt the cohesion of existing communities. The proposed alignment would also not be likely to alter neighborhood boundaries or the setting in which these neighborhoods exist, and access to neighborhoods would not be severed. **However, noise and vibration impacts would occur in some areas.**

**Question-**What would be the impact of noise and vibration at 150 feet?

Aesthetic Features – The project sponsor prior to construction of the proposed GCL will work with municipalities to make sure that the removal of mature trees in the vicinity of Wenonah Station and Pitman Station would be mitigated through careful landscaping of station sites. Further, as part of design and engineering efforts, the project sponsor prior to construction of the proposed GCL will work with municipalities to make sure that appropriate mitigation measures are employed to minimize adverse impacts to aesthetic features in the vicinity of the Woodbury Heights VMF. While views of this site would be partially obscured by existing trees and fencing, further mitigation and design measures would be coordinated with the Borough of Woodbury Heights so that visual impacts at this location can be mitigated to the extent practicable.

**Question-**What exact landscaping will be done on streets along the tracks. I live on S West Ave in Wenonah and the landscaping is mature along the tracks, what is the replacement plan? ie Mature trees densely placed. Please define “extent practicable” from the Aesthetic Features.

**Question-** How will reimbursements be made to homeowners due to proximity of their home to the tracks and the decrease in value due location?

The following table shows estimated travel times between select locations.

**Question-**How was the stop and Walter Rand and transfer to PATCO calculated? Was it calculated? Is 5 minutes realistic when trains are packed by the time they get to that Walter Rand station and realistically riders will be waiting for PATCO trains with room?

From	To Woodbury	To Camden	To Philadelphia and transfer to PATCO
Glassboro	17 - 22 min	26 - 44 min	43 - 55 min
Mantua	7 - 12 min	25 - 30 min	35 - 45 min
Woodbury	-	17 - 22 min	28 - 36 min

**Question**-Is this train is sponsored by the DRPA why can't they pick up the cost for quiet zones in all town?

#### STATEMENTS

New Jersey has a budget deficit. The cost of this project will be *over* 2 billion.

It will cost taxpayers in excess of \$2 billion to build and cost taxpayers \$21 million annually to subsidize. this based on ongoing taxpayer burden for the River line which also uses the similar diesel vehicles with grade crossings, but with quiet zones because the tracks are not used by freight trains. Why pay this if it does not relieve gridlock on the major highways and does not go into Center City without connecting at the Walter Rand Station with trains already at full capacity during peak hours? It will increase travel time to Philadelphia due to the speed and stops.

The municipalities will have to pay \$300,000 per crossing in order to install the four-quadrant gates and constant warning time devices required by the Federal Railway Administration in order to have the so-called "quiet zones." Otherwise, there will be three sets of 100 decibel diesel horn blasts every *7-1/2 minutes* at each crossing which is seriously detrimental health wise, medically speaking, for example in the Wenonah Elementary school and the Woodbury Heights Elementary school, not to mention anyone living near the crossings. The municipalities cannot afford the \$300,000 investment for each crossing and the EIS report said that not a single municipality has applied for quiet zones.

The original plans should have been implemented which had foreseen railbeds for high-speed electric trains one easements along and Rt 55-42-76. It would have been easy to prepare for these rail beds during times when these highways were repeatedly widened, like in many other parts of this country and elsewhere. Why this was not done has never been explained. This would also provide more ridership.

It will use slow-moving (30 mph) polluting diesel vehicles (not high speed like Patco, not electric like Patco).

During peak hours, the four-quadrant gates will come down every 7-1/2 minutes across every busy at-grade crossing in Glassboro, Pitman, Sewell, Wenonah, Woodbury Heights, Woodbury and Westville with cars polluting the air while standing there every 7-1/2 minutes at peak times. Please go and count the number of grade crossings and go to those crossings and see how busy those roads are during the peak hours. There is no other place in this country in which busy crossings have to be closed every 7-1/2 minutes during peak hours.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42,

**COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.**

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

Thank you,

Mike Lahey

null

**Subject: GCL Rail Line**

**From:** kristel lauk <[REDACTED]>

**To:** contactus@glassborocamdenline.com

Sat, 12 Dec 2020 07:54:39 -0500

Hello,

I am against this rail line because our house is close to the train tracks and this would directly affect us and the neighbors. Our quality of life will be directly affected by it.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kristel Lauk  
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

**Subject:** Re: Sewell train station

**From:** Susanne Lawton <[REDACTED]>

**To:** GCL Project Team <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

Thu, 5 Nov 2020 23:25:32 +0000 (UTC)

Thanks very much.

On Thursday, November 5, 2020, 06:15:54 PM EST, GCL Project Team <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com> wrote:

Thank you for your formal comment on the Glassboro-Camden Line draft EIS. Your comments will be recorded and addressed in the final EIS after the comment period closes on Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 11:59 PM EST.

Sincerely,

The GCL Project Team

----- Original Message -----

**From:**

"Susanne Lawton" <[REDACTED]>

**To:**

"contactus@glassborocamdenline.com" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Cc:**

**Sent:**

Wed, 4 Nov 2020 20:45:52 +0000 (UTC)

**Subject:**

Sewell train station

Hello:

I moved to my current home at [REDACTED] about 2 years ago. I moved here from West Virginia when I retired, to be close to my family who all live in this area. This is where I plan to live out the rest of my life. I choose this neighborhood as it has small, single floor homes that will be manageable for me, and most of the time, it's nice and quiet and most of the people take care of their homes. My neighbors are wonderful and I want to keep this neighborhood as nice as it is now. My house is about 4 houses west of the current railroad tracks that go through Sewell along Atlantic Ave.. There is an old railroad station building on the site along Center Street that has the potential to be a beautiful building. I would like to see this building restored and put back into use. The sketch of the proposed train stops, using steel columns and all metal, except for the wind blocks and roof sheathing, is cold and not at all attractive. Please consider making this stop something that will be talked about as a beautiful historic reconstruction, not just a "train stop". By the way, is this building a historic structure? If so, that is even more reason to consider rebuilding in the manner of its original structure.

The project description states this will be a "walk up" station. Does this mean no one will drive to this station and park? If so, I envision people ignoring this "rule", and instead, driving and parking in our neighborhood to take the train. There may be room for one row of parking on the property already owned by the Railroad, (Conrail I think) even though there will be a second

track installed. It appears the new track will be on the East side of the current one, therefore a parking area could be constructed on the West side. Homeowners on the West side of Atlantic Avenue already use that area to park their overflow parking.

The current train, I believe it is a freight train, that goes through this section of Sewell (Mantua Twp.), runs through only 2 xs per day and very slowly. I would like to know how many times trains would be going through the town after the project is completed and how fast they will travel when they do.

Please add me to the update e-mails.

Sincerely, Susanne Lawton



**Subject: comment on Glassboro Camden Line****From: Susanne Lawton** <[REDACTED]>**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com"** <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>, "contactus@glassborocamdenline.com" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

Tue, 15 Dec 2020 13:26:36 +0000 (UTC)

[REDACTED]  
Sewell, NJ 08080  
[REDACTED]

December 14, 2020

To Public Outreach Coordinator:

I am sure you are aware of the Glassboro-Camden Light Rail project now under review, for the third or fourth time. On December 17, 2020, the public comment period expires, and it will be up to the powers in government to decide if this project moves forward. Construction is proposed to start in 2022 and be completed by 2025.

I am against this project for many reasons, but mainly for the fiscal disaster the existing rail lines have been for New Jersey residents as we subsidize them to keep them in existence. There is not an established a funding mechanism in place for rail systems, which forces the Government to repeatedly raid the capital budget to finance operations. A 2018 audit of this system called NJ Transit's current stream "inadequate, uncertain, and unsustainable." The proposed Glassboro Camden Light Rail project will likely be the same financial debacle further harming the families in New Jersey. We can not afford this project. Please be brave enough to discourage this project for the residents of New Jersey.

The Glassboro Camden Light Rail project is projected to be a \$1.6 Billion project. We all know that these high dollar projects often run over budget and this proposed project will likely end up costing closer to \$2 Billion. Right now, Rowen University, in Glassboro, is having classes virtually as are many of the schools across the USA. People are getting used to learning and working from home, and when COVID-19 has passed, many of these people will continue to learn and work from home. It is unlikely that there will be any need for this train system in the future. If there is a need to move people between Glassboro and Camden, a small fleet of electric buses could handle the job at a much lower cost, faster, and with much less pollution then the diesel trains proposed. A fleet of busses could easily be started with just a few busses, and could expand if necessary, at a very reasonable cost. This would not be so easy with the trains as much of the cost is building and maintaining the rail system. Busses also would not be so damaging to our residential neighborhoods which are planned to host this new train system.

We live in South Jersey for the "lack" of big city services such as trains. They are not wanted here, especially every 15 minutes from 5:00 am to midnight as planned!

Please consider a change to this project to a much less expensive and scalable project, such as electric busses, for the reasons I have mentioned and the many more which you have probably heard from other people.

Sincerely,  
Susanne Lawton

**Subject: Comment on Project****From: Scott Layou** <[REDACTED]>**To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com****Thu, 17 Dec 2020 09:13:56 -0500**

I would like to express my desire to not see the project as proposed go forward. I think the amount of trains that will be running through these small towns, and more specifically through Mantua will have an adverse affect on the safety of our community. I feel that the vehicle rail crossings will cause extended delays in emergency vehicles being able to traverse to other parts of the town. I would expect there to be lines of cars waiting to cross at all times of the day. The current freight train that uses this rail twice a day travels through at off peak hours and sometimes causes evening traffic backups. These are infrequent and very tolerable. I would hope that the committee in charge of this evaluates all impacts and proposes some other solution to the potential congestion this will cause in these communities. I don't feel the addition of this rail line at this location would have a tremendous affect on the traffic congestion on route 55, 45 and I-295.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Scott Layou  
Concerned Citizen

**Subject:** Light rail line.

**From:** Oneda Lee <[REDACTED]>

**To:** [contactus@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:contactus@glassborocamdenline.com)

**Tue, 10 Nov 2020 14:46:33 -0500**

This is excellent news! It would be so beneficial to so many people. The possibilities of employment in areas that a person might not otherwise be able to get to is great. This is a good thing.

**Subject: GCL**

**From: Amy Lipsett** <[REDACTED]>

**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com"** <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 10:34:09 -0500**

**Hello,**

**My name is Amy Lipsett. My family and I have lived in Glassboro for 19 years. I am emailing to voice our opposition of the GCL. The data that supports this rail line is old. The GCL is a waste of taxpayer money.**

**Thank you,  
Amy Lipsett**

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [contactus@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:contactus@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** HARD NO FOR THE TRAIN  
**Date:** Thursday, December 3, 2020 10:28:53 AM

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WE DO NOT WANT THIS LINE THROUGH OUR TOWN!!! WE DO NOT SUPPORT THIS NIGHTMARE!! GET A CAR AND DRIVE LIKE THE REST OF US!! TAKE A BUS- DO NOT DISRUPT TOWNS AND HOMES OF PEOPLE WHO PURCHASED KNOWING THE TRAIN RUNS THROUGH MINIMALLY! ARE YOU GOING TO PURCHASE ALL THE HOMES AND LOST REVENUE DUE TO THE FACT THAT NO ONE WANTS THAT RUNNING PAST THEIR KIDS OR PETS. FORGET THE NOISE OR THE FACT THAT THERE IS NO LIGHTS OR RAILING WHEN THE TRAIN COMES THROUGH. OH AND LET'S NOT FORGET THE POLLUTION!!!!!! GET A CAR, RIDE A BUS!!! OR HERE'S A THOUGHT FIX THE ROADS WE PAY FOR!! NOT A STUPID UNNECESSARY MONEY HOLE OF A TRAIN!!! KEEP THE DRUGS AND CRAP OUT OF OUR NEIGHBORHOODS!! WOULD YOU WANT TO LIVE WITH A TRAIN 50 FT FROM YOUR DOOR EVERY 15 MINUTES?!!!!!!!!!! HARD NO!!!!

ASHLEY MACHULSKY  
OF MANTUA TOWNSHIP CINDERELLA VILLAGE- NOT CAMDEN

**Subject: Draft eis formal comment**

**From: Frankie Mayer** <[REDACTED]>

**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com"** <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Tue, 8 Dec 2020 03:02:51 +0000 (UTC)**

Hello my name is frank I live in scwell. I wanted to message u to let u know I am completely against the new train line that will be installed in my quiet town. I will be notifying my neighbors and placing signs to fight against this project along with man other residents in my location. This project will do more harm then good we already have problems getting across the tracks now and u want to get ride of the Cumberland crossing wish would only allow 1 exit for me and of my neighbors this is unacceptable. Not to mention the noise these trains will coming threw every 7 min is crazy to imagine with noise and children playing in that area constantly. There has to be another location that would better fit this project like along route 55. Please consider cancelling or changing the location of this project because it will do more bad then good and won't make as much money as it will cost in the long run. Thank you

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

**Subject: Stop**

**From: "Patrick McClain SR." <[REDACTED]>**

**To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Sun, 13 Dec 2020 13:22:44 -0500**

**Why add so much debt to a state that already is deep in debt?**

**There are so many people out of work and struggling during these tough times, we don't need to raise taxes, tolls and gas on top of it.**

**This new line will disrupt so many more people than it will benefit. Let's start taking care of others rather than the politicians themselves.**

**You are forcing people to leave New Jersey instead of enticing them to stay!**

**Patrick J. McClain Sr.  
McClain Brothers Roofing  
Cell # [REDACTED]**

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [contactus@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:contactus@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Sewell and Mantua Stations  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 1, 2020 9:22:11 PM

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Hello

Just a concerned citizen. Wondering exactly where the Mantua Boulevard, Sewell, and Mantua Pitman station will be located. How big are those stations going to be and will you be using eminent domain to acquire property in this area?

Thank you

Steve Meagher

Sent from my iPhone



**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment**

**From: Kristin Meil** <[REDACTED]>

**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com"** <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 19:30:14 +0000**

December 17, 2020

The Honorable Nilsa Cruz-Perez  
231-L Market Street  
Camden, NJ 08102

**RE: The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Light Rail Project**

Dear Senator Cruz-Perez,

My name is (Your Name Here) and I am a resident in your 5<sup>th</sup> District in Wenonah, New Jersey.

I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

One of the largest suggested benefits of the current GCL proposal is to reduce traffic congestion, however the current proposal does not provide any realistic mass transit alternative to current traffic routes. Heaviest traffic congestion is currently seen along highways 42, 295, and 76 (Walt Whitman bridge), however the current GCL proposal does not provide a realistic alternative for any of these routes; the current GCL proposal would provide a route into Camden, but destinations in Camden are not the cause of current traffic concerns. Highway 676, which is the route that would be served by the proposed GCL, is arguably the least congested of South Jersey's roadways. At a proposed cost of billions of taxpayer dollars, the proposed GCL provides too small a benefit to only a small number of people. The current GCL proposal also fails to account for the significant impact the new 295-42 Interchange Project will have on traffic patterns and congestion along those major roadways.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42, COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in

bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

The GCL, as proposed, will:

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.
- Cripple local streets near the GCL including reduction of lanes widths, relocation of roadways, and full closures of one-way streets affecting local circulation patterns. These street circulation patterns would be most-heavily affected in towns like ours, with at-grade crossings.
- Disrupt communities with introduction of significant noise from the frequent passage of trains, in addition to disruption and traffic introduced into these communities with an influx of rail passengers driving to and from proposed rail stations. Many communities along the proposed GCL are currently quiet communities with limited, local traffic.
- The potential health effects on local residents due to increased fossil fuel emissions and the permanent disruption of noise pollution resulting from the GCL needs to be studied. These health effects include anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation, asthma, and cardiovascular disease.
  - *"Noise exposure modifies the function of multiple organs and systems. Acute noise exposure, in both laboratory settings where traffic noise was simulated and in real-life environments, can cause increases in blood pressure, heart rate, and cardiac output, likely mediated by the release of stress hormones such as catecholamines (for review, see Babisch4,5). As shown by field studies, these acute effects occur not only at high sound levels in occupational settings but also at relatively low environmental noise levels when concentration, relaxation, or sleep is disturbed."*
  - *"Railway noise is related to disturbed sleep, which in turn increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, supported by indications of increased cardiovascular disease in persons living close to railways."*
- Cost the state \$2-3 Billion dollars. After reviewing costs of similar projects, the GCL seems to cost double the per mile figures to construct than other comparable projects. After reviewing projects such as the Riverline, with costs totaling in at \$1.1 billion and ridership down substantially from projection, it seems there is no benefit from a cost vs reward standpoint. The promise of economic growth from the River Line for the past 15 years has been just that, a promise unfulfilled.

Additionally, other rail lines have continuously relied upon continuous funding from taxpayer dollars to cover operating costs. Other similar rail projects have not been shown to be financially sustainable without bailouts, and the potential cost of this current GCL proposal for years following the initial construction costs has not been sufficiently outlined at this time.

- The current proposal also fails to meet the crucial efforts needed to reduce carbon emissions, as the suggested rail will be powered by diesel fuel, which will impact the air quality of South Jersey residents. Rather than eliminating emissions, this current proposal will add emissions and expand our carbon footprint.
- Include permanent and temporary environmental impacts, such as disturbance to soil and vegetation, resulting in the loss, alteration, or degradation of wildlife habitat and plant communities. This includes impacts to sensitive plant communities and habitat for federal and state-listed species. No action plan has been announced to mitigate this impact to our natural resources.
- Have considerable impact at 34 areas of concern that are “Known or Potential Contaminated Sites Expected to be Impacted by the Proposed Alignment”. No further information on the investigation has been presented in order to confirm contamination would not be encountered.
- Threaten the integrity of 11 historic districts and 6 historic properties; 5 properties are listed in the National Register and State Register and 12 properties have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register and State Register. Historic resources are protected under Federal law through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Applicable State of New Jersey legislation governing the protection of historic resources includes Chapter 268 of the New Jersey State Register Law of 1970 and EO215.

**Other issues forecasted with the GCL that need to be addressed are as follows:**

- COVID-19 has undeniably impacted our way of life- politically, economically, and socially. Given the mass impacts of COVID-19, priority should be given to studying the effects of the virus long term in order to determine if the need for the GCL still exists. There is currently no way to predict how many jobs will now be conducted remotely going forward, and how many jobs will no longer require the same daily commute now that many industries have adapted to conducting their business online with options for employees to work from home.
- Data in support of the need for the proposed GCL does not account for the potential impacts to be seen following completion of the construction project currently underway to improve traffic flow between highways 295, 42, and 76. We should table this EIS phase of the GCL and re-evaluate mass transit needs in the region once current highway construction has been completed. Current traffic patterns and mass transit needs may change significantly following completion of the work that is now underway on 295.
- Property values of many homes in the communities that are in the direct path of this current GCL proposal may be negatively affected, which not only affects the economic well-being of our individual citizens, but also affects property tax assessments. A drop in property values may leave these communities with a loss in annual revenue when tax assessments fall sharply for properties along the proposed rail line. There is no adequate study to assess the potential impact to property values along the GCL as currently proposed.

- Our goal of strategically expanding mass transit sustainably and effectively includes exploring other less intrusive and less expensive proposals. For instance, the expansion and upgrade of our current bus routes with electric or hydrogen powered buses is a more cost effective option. Such projects have been successfully completed in California for an approximate \$200+ million budget, a stark contrast to the \$2-3 billion cost of the GCL.
- The GCL EIS is outdated as it proposes using unsustainable fossil fuels. Given the nationwide effort to curb carbon emissions and move away from fossil fuels, it's only a matter of time until the use of diesel/electric powered trains will be rendered obsolete and will require upgrading to fully electric or hydrogen fuel-cell powered trains to meet carbon emission goals. Currently we have the technology to move forward using electric powered buses for 1/10th of the cost of this proposed GCL project. The infrastructure already exists, examples being routes 55, 42 and I-76.

I urge you to reassess support of the GCL as proposed. It will have a severe impact on our natural resources , threaten historic sites, drain the economy , have long term cost implications and INCREASE traffic in our towns. Please do not let another doomed-from-the-start light rail line become another failure for South Jersey. My neighbors and I are counting on you for your support in OPPOSITION to the GCL Light Rail Line and ask that you join us in helping the entities involved in this project complete these goals with much better planning than an outdated and extremely expensive plan.

Sincerely,

(Your name here)

(Your street address here)

Wenonah, NJ 08090

#### References:

1. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Traffic Analysis Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05\\_Traffic\\_Analysis\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05_Traffic_Analysis_Technical_Report_web.pdf)
2. Münzel, T., Gori, T., Babisch, W., & Basner, M. (2014). Cardiovascular effects of environmental noise exposure. *European heart journal*, 35(13), 829–836. <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurheartj/ehu030>
3. Croy I, Smith MG, Wayne KPEffects of train noise and vibration on human heart rate during sleep: an experimental studyBMJ Open 2013;3:e002655. <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/3/5/e002655>
4. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Natural Resources Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/01\\_Natural\\_Resources\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/01_Natural_Resources_Technical_Report_web.pdf)
5. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Hazardous Material Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/04\\_Hazardous\\_Materials\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/04_Hazardous_Materials_Technical_Report_web.pdf)

6. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Cultural Resources Technical Report. November 2020. Access:  
[http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/07 Cultural Resources Technical Report pages 1-100.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/07_Cultural_Resources_Technical_Report_pages_1-100.pdf)

7. Source: Gov. Chris Christie labels NJ Transit River Line 'a joke' due to its poor ridership -  
News - Burlington County Times - Westampton, NJ  
<https://www.burlingtoncountytimes.com/news/20171211/gov-chris-christie-labels-nj-transit-river-line-a-joke-due-to-its-poor-ridership>

**Subject: Re: Environmental Impact Public Mtg****From:** "GCL Project Team" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>**To:** "Stuart Merrian" <[REDACTED]>

Mon, 09 Nov 2020 15:42:31 -0500

Dear Mr. Merrian,

Thank you for reaching out to the GCL Project Team about your interest in the Glassboro-Camden Line project. The public hearings taking place on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 between 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm EST and Thursday, November 19, 2020 between 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm EST are different from the project meeting you reference in your comment. The public hearings, recently advertised, are official proceedings being held to provide the public with an opportunity to submit oral comments about the Glassboro-Camden Line Project and the Environmental Impact Statement findings. Comments submitted during the hearings will become part of the project record, which the project team will review and address during the Final EIS phase. Meetings held prior provided the public with general information about the project and gain feedback on the proposed GCL alignment and elements.

If you have not already done so please register for the public hearing meetings on the project website at <http://glassborocamdenline.com>. You can also sign up to leave an oral comment during the meeting. There are only 50 spots available for speaking during the 2-hour hearing, so we encourage you to sign up as early as possible to guarantee a speaking spot.

If you are unable to attend the public hearings and wish to provide a formal comment, comments can also be sent by email to [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com), provided verbally by calling the project information line at (855) 343-0130, or submitted through a comment submission form on the project website at <http://www.glassborocamdenline.com>.

Written comments on the Draft EIS may also be submitted via U.S. Mail to:

Ms. Victoria Malaszecki, Public Involvement Liaison  
P.O. Box 536, Mullica Hill, NJ 08062

Again, thank you for your continued interest in the GCL project.

Sincerely,  
The GCL Project Team

----- Original Message -----

**From:**

"Stuart Merrian" &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

**To:**

"contactus@glassborocamdenline.com" &lt;contactus@glassborocamdenline.com&gt;

**Cc:****Sent:**

Mon, 2 Nov 2020 18:43:20 +0000 (UTC)

**Subject:**  
Environmental Impact Public Mtg

Dear Sirs/Madams:

I see there is a public meeting scheduled for the populous to give their input on the environmental impact of the proposed GCL. Wasn't one of these held about 6 years ago? I could have sworn I attended one at a local school where they had poster boards put up of aerial views of the proposed stations and a map of the proposed route. If they already presented the expected environmental impact to the community why do they have to do this again? It seems like such a waste of money and time.

Stuart Merrian



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com); [jlegge@mantuatownship.com](mailto:jlegge@mantuatownship.com)  
**Subject:** Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 7:43:20 PM

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EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the Envision network. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom it May Concern,

We live on [REDACTED] Sewell NJ 08080. We were originally told this project was dead. I do not see any advantage to Mantua Twp residents in regards to this project. Further more my property, 2 houses from the tracks, will suffer from noise pollution, air pollution, and will decrease property value. We bought this house 15 years ago and we asked about the train situation. If we were told at that time that this was a possibility we would not have bought the property. It has been used infrequently since this time. We have to areas where the train is required to blow whistle, which when it happens is definitely an issue. To have this happening every 15 Minutes would be intolerable. This project would also increase traffic issues on Center Street as well. Stopping traffic every 15 minutes for a crossing. There has been a drastic increase in traffic in this area over the years. I understand there is no parking for some of the stops as well, this will just further burden resident along this route. I question how many public commuters will benefit from Sewell, Mantua Twp, Wenonah, Woodbury Heights and Pitman. These towns primarily do not use public transportation now. There was also a proposal to run it down Route 55, this would be a much better alternative that doesn't effect property owners along the present railway.

Sincerely,  
Joseph Midgett & Family

Sent from my iPad

**Subject: DRAFT EIS FORMAL COMMENT****From:** Courtney Milward <[REDACTED]>**To:** "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

Fri, 18 Dec 2020 00:35:45 +0000

December 17, 2020

**RE: The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Light Rail Project**

To whom this may concern,

My name is Courtney Milward and I am a resident in Pitman NJ

I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

One of the largest suggested benefits of the current GCL proposal is to reduce traffic congestion, however the current proposal does not provide any realistic mass transit alternative to current traffic routes. Heaviest traffic congestion is currently seen along highways 42, 295, and 76 (Walt Whitman bridge), however the current GCL proposal does not provide a realistic alternative for any of these routes; the current GCL proposal would provide a route into Camden, but destinations in Camden are not the cause of current traffic concerns. Highway 676, which is the route that would be served by the proposed GCL, is arguably the least congested of South Jersey's roadways. At a proposed cost of billions of taxpayer dollars, the proposed GCL provides too small a benefit to only a small number of people. The current GCL proposal also fails to account for the significant impact the new 295-42 Interchange Project will have on traffic patterns and congestion along those major roadways.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42, COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

**The GCL, as proposed, will:**

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.

- Cripple local streets near the GCL including reduction of lanes widths, relocation of roadways, and full closures of one-way streets affecting local circulation patterns.<sup>1</sup> These street circulation patterns would be most-heavily affected in towns like ours, with at-grade crossings.
- Disrupt communities with introduction of significant noise from the frequent passage of trains, in addition to disruption and traffic introduced into these communities with an influx of rail passengers driving to and from proposed rail stations. Many communities along the proposed GCL are currently quiet communities with limited, local traffic.
- The potential health effects on local residents due to increased fossil fuel emissions and the permanent disruption of noise pollution resulting from the GCL needs to be studied. These health effects include anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation, asthma, and cardiovascular disease.

○ *"Noise exposure modifies the function of multiple organs and systems. Acute noise exposure, in both laboratory settings where traffic noise was simulated and in*

*real-life environments, can cause increases in blood pressure, heart rate, and cardiac output, likely mediated by the release of stress hormones such as catecholamines (for review, see Babisch<sup>4,5</sup>). As shown by field studies, these acute effects occur not only at high sound levels in occupational settings but also at relatively low environmental noise levels when concentration, relaxation, or sleep is disturbed."*<sup>2</sup>

- *"Railway noise is related to disturbed sleep, which in turn increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, supported by indications of increased cardiovascular disease in persons living close to railways."*<sup>3</sup>
- Cost the state \$2-3 Billion dollars. After reviewing costs of similar projects, the GCL seems to cost double the per mile figures to construct than other comparable projects. After reviewing projects such as the Riverline, with costs totalling in at \$1.1 billion and ridership down substantially from projection, it seems there is no benefit from a cost vs reward standpoint. The promise of economic growth from the River Line for the past 15 years has been just that, a promise unfulfilled.

Additionally, other rail lines have continuously relied upon continuous funding from taxpayer dollars to cover operating costs. Other similar rail projects have not been shown to be financially sustainable without bailouts, and the potential cost of this current GCL proposal for years following the initial construction costs has not been sufficiently outlined at this time.

- The current proposal also fails to meet the crucial efforts needed to reduce carbon emissions, as the suggested rail will be powered by diesel fuel, which will impact the air quality of South Jersey residents. Rather than eliminating emissions, this current proposal will add emissions and expand our carbon footprint.
- Include permanent and temporary environmental impacts, such as disturbance to soil and vegetation, resulting in the loss, alteration, or degradation of wildlife habitat and plant communities. This includes impacts to sensitive plant communities and habitat for federal and state-listed species.<sup>4</sup> No action plan has been announced to mitigate this impact to our natural resources.
- Have considerable impact at 34 areas of concern that are "Known or Potential Contaminated Sites Expected to be Impacted by the Proposed Alignment".<sup>5</sup> No further information on the investigation has been presented in order to confirm contamination would not be encountered.
- Threaten the integrity of 11 historic districts and 6 historic properties; 5 properties are listed in the National Register and State Register and 12 properties have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register and State Register.<sup>6</sup> Historic resources are protected under Federal law through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Applicable State of New Jersey legislation governing the protection of historic resources includes Chapter 268 of the New Jersey State Register Law of 1970 and EO215.

**Other Issues forecasted with the GCL that need to be addressed are as follows:**

- COVID-19 has undeniably impacted our way of life- politically, economically, and socially. Given the mass impacts of COVID-19, priority should be given to studying the effects of the virus long term in order to determine if the need for the GCL still exists. There is currently no way to predict how many jobs will now be conducted remotely going forward, and how many jobs will no longer require the same daily commute now that many industries have adapted to conducting their business online with options for employees to work from home.

- Data in support of the need for the proposed GCL does not account for the potential impacts to be seen following completion of the construction project currently underway to improve traffic flow between highways 295, 42, and 76. We should table this EIS phase of the GCL and re-evaluate mass transit needs in the region once current highway construction has been completed. Current traffic patterns and mass transit needs may change significantly following completion of the work that is now underway on 295.
- Property values of many homes in the communities that are in the direct path of this current GCL proposal may be negatively affected, which not only affects the economic well-being of our individual citizens, but also affects property tax assessments. A drop in property values may leave these communities with a loss in annual revenue when tax assessments fall sharply for properties along the proposed rail line. There is no adequate study to assess the potential impact to property values along the GCL as currently proposed.
- Our goal of strategically expanding mass transit sustainably and effectively includes exploring other less intrusive and less expensive proposals. For instance, the expansion and upgrade of our current bus routes with electric or hydrogen powered buses is a more cost effective option. Such projects have been successfully completed in California for an approximate \$200+ million budget, a stark contrast to the \$2-3 billion cost of the GCL.
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I urge you to reassess support of the GCL as proposed. It will have a severe impact on our natural resources, threaten historic sites, drain the economy, have long term cost implications and INCREASE traffic in our towns. Please do not let another doomed-from-the-start light rail line become another failure for South Jersey. My neighbors and I are counting on you for your support in OPPOSITION to the GCL Light Rail Line and ask that you join us in helping the entities involved in this project complete these goals with much better planning than an outdated and extremely expensive plan.

Sincerely,

Courtney Milward

P:itman NJ 08071

#### References:

1. Glassboro-Camden Line EIS. Traffic Analysis Technical Report. November 2020. Access: [http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05\\_Traffic\\_Analysis\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://glassborocamdenline.com/images/uploads/05_Traffic_Analysis_Technical_Report_web.pdf)
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7. Source: Gov. Chris Christie labels NJ Transit River Line 'a joke' due to its poor ridership - News - Burlington County Times - Westampton, NJ

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Thanks!

Courtney Milward

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED DURING THE HOLIDAY FROM 12/25/2020 THRU 1/1/2021. WAREHOUSES WILL BE STAFFED TO ACCEPT DELIVERIES ONLY WE WILL RE-OPEN MONDAY 1/4/2021\*\*\***

- [GCL LINE.docx](#) Microsoft Word document - 26 KB

December 17, 2020

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Sincerely,

Courtney Millward



P:itman NJ 08071

References:

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2. Münzel, T., Gori, T., Babisch, W., & Basner, M. (2014). Cardiovascular effects of environmental noise exposure. *European heart journal*, 35(13), 829–836. <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurheartj/ehu030>
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7. Source: Gov. Chris Christie labels NJ Transit River Line 'a joke' due to its poor ridership - News - Burlington County Times - Westampton, NJ [https://www.burlingtoncountytimes.com/news/20171211/gov-chris-christie-labels-nj-transit-riv er-line-a-joke-due-to-its-poor-ridership](https://www.burlingtoncountytimes.com/news/20171211/gov-chris-christie-labels-nj-transit-river-line-a-joke-due-to-its-poor-ridership)

**Subject: GCL overview for Tri-County Sustainability****From: Sean Mohen** [REDACTED]**To: "contactus@glassborocamdenline.com" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>****Mon, 2 Nov 2020 23:52:49 +0000****Hello.**

As part of the Gloucester-Camden Line project's outreach program, I'd like to request Mike and/or Kiran speak at one of our upcoming Tri-County Sustainability (TCS) general meetings.

As background, we're the sustainability hub for the 101 towns across Burlington, Camden and Gloucester counties. It would be helpful if our constituents could have a better understanding of GCL in order to better communicate the project's merits to their respective municipal governments and residents.

Our next general meeting is Monday, 30-November-2020 @ 7PM.

Let me know. Thanks in advance.

**Sean Mohen**  
Executive Director  
Tri-County Sustainability  
Burlington | Camden | Gloucester  
[REDACTED] Oaklyn, NJ 08107  
<http://www.tcsahub.org/>

**From:** [Tom Mor](#)  
**To:** [contactus@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:contactus@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Proposed light rail line  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 1:30:59 PM

---

I live 4 houses from where this rail line is supposed to go. I have kids, grandkids sleeping babies. I do not need to hear train horns blowing and waking the children all day. Not to mention the older kids who walk the dogs with me by the tracks. They do not need to be exposed to these noises and seeing the graffiti on the trains that come out of the Camden area. I do not want to expose my children to that. I am demanding this "light rail line" be stopped.

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

---

Subject: RR

From: JOHN MORENCY <[REDACTED]>

To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

Wed, 16 Dec 2020 14:38:08 -0500 (EST)

As a lifelong Gloucester county resident I have seen many changes, some good and others not. As a 30 year resident of Wenonah the decision on how this rail line will be constructed has me concerned. I've seen the results of the two rail services that serve this region and have come to the conclusion that the Patco type line is a much better choice. The River Line has much lower ridership (as predicted), Electric vs. Diesel, and most important, raised and lowed rail beds with over and underpasses that create a much *safer and cleaner* environment. If the goal is to create a system that will increase ridership and reduce cars on our roads we all know train service would be best served using the RT.55 medium, which was built for that reason. Unfortunately we all know the political machine in power are steadfast with this proposed plan using the existing tracks. So I would hope you would at least consider making some changes in the Boro of Wenonah to keep our children and residents safe! Lower the railbed through the town (like was done in Haddonfield), create road overpasses at Maple St, Mantua Ave, and possibly Willow or Cedar. Additionally add man made and landscaped sound barriers along the rails in town. These changes would certainly enhance the current proposal, with safety being the top priority. So lets do this right the first time around, lower rail bed through town!

John Morency Jr.

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment**

**From: Shawn Neal** <[REDACTED]>

**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com"** <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Fri, 11 Dec 2020 21:18:32 +0000**

Hello,

I wanted to state my support for this project. I lived in Philadelphia for a period of time and now am I Gloucester County resident.

South Jersey is severely lacking in terms of public transit and this would greatly improve that.

Please let me know if there is anything else I can do in order to support this project.

Regards,

Shawn Neal

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Draft EIS Formal Comment  
**Date:** Thursday, November 12, 2020 2:31:58 PM

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Hi,

I'm writing in regards to the Glassboro Camden line.

Can you please connect the GCL further into Center City, up to 30th street station?

There are many residents In Woolwich Township and Greenwich Township that would take the GCL into Center City Philadelphia and/or University City Philadelphia.

Can you please extend the GCL to Woolwich Township?

Thanks!  
-Kim

**From:** [judyoffner](mailto:judyoffner)  
**To:** [contactus@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:contactus@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** opinion  
**Date:** Thursday, December 3, 2020 9:23:51 PM

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I agree with all of your premises as to why this is needed and I believe ...an electric... train system should be set up in this project

I am not clear how many trains will be going back and forth..will there be train traffic every 15 minutes in all of these towns..it seems excessive. Also, will there be rail road crossing bars that come down to keep cars from trying to beat the trains? Flashing lights every 15 minutes won't be adequate and we have about 4 streets in town that would need railroad crossing bars to stop cars.

Also how much will each ticket cost?

And has there been a survey of actual citizens to show who would use the train? Not just projections based on population numbers..

For seniors and others to go to Philly..they would have to change at Camden which may be a disagreeable prospect.especially at time of day or day of week.

I think south Jersey desperately needs commuter trains all the way to Vineland and Bridgeton. Please continue with the plans.

Positive PR from citizens is needed..not just negative reactionary stuff. Put this on Philly news..very few people watch NJTV news around here.

Sent from Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Dear Committee,  
**Date:** Thursday, December 3, 2020 6:45:19 PM

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Please be aware, I am against the Glassboro-Camden Light Rail Line. I'm a retired Rn, senior citizen & a veteran who has lived on Fairview Drive in Sewell for almost 40 years. I'm very concerned that a train repeatedly coming through will compromise the safety of our community, especially for our children, create a negative impact on the environment, increase traffic into the area & at the crossings, noise & litter pollution.

Has anyone surveyed the need for this rail, who & how many will be using it? Where will people park, what will be the impact to people & homes on Atlantic Ave, on Fairview Drive? Who & what is being considered the priority? As public servants, are you truly serving us or a supposed economic development? Please table this proposal & listen to your constituents-we don't want a light rail running through our town.

Thank you for your kind consideration,

Anna O'Neill

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Sent from Windows Mail



**Subject: Glassboro-Camden Line**

**From: "Timothy O'Neill Sr." <[REDACTED]>**

**To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Wed, 9 Dec 2020 21:04:40 -0500**

**To all concerned,**

**My wife and I are adamantly opposed to this Glassboro-Camden Line passing through our quiet little town. There are several reasons for our opposition including but not limited to the following;**

- 1. The frequency of the trains passing through on a daily basis**
- 2. The added air and ground pollution of the trains and it's riders to our lovely semi-bucolic town**
- 3. The added sound pollution and traffic stoppages at several locations throughout town**
- 4. The added traffic and parking issues in our proposed "no park train stop" in Mantua. With such a proposition as yours, the residents of Mantua Township stand to suffer increased car and foot traffic through their respective neighborhoods by non-residents and the spectre of increased taxes.**
- 5. My wife and I moved here two years ago to get away from such air, noise and traffic pollution. We love our new home and feel that if this proposition were to move forward, we will be forced to move elsewhere!**

**Thank you.**

**Tim O'Neill, Sr.**

**[REDACTED]**  
**Mantua, NJ 08080**  
**[REDACTED]**  
**[REDACTED]**

**Subject: GCL - Glassboro - Camden Train Line - DRAFT EIS Formal Comment**

**From: CAROL OSSMAN <[REDACTED]>**

**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 12:03:46 -0500 (EST)**

**Good Morning -**

**This e-mail is in reference to the current plan for the GCL Train line. The current plan is based on an outdated - 11 yr. plan - and doesn't make economic sense nor will it help traffic in the most congested areas: Rt 42 - 295 and 55.**

**This line will divide towns / communities as the train will literally run down the center of many towns causing traffic delays and safety concerns - i.e. emergency response - walking school districts.**

**Since the GCL won't provide direct access to Philadelphia - I don't see ridership in this area as being widely received.**

**One of the alternatives was running the train down the center of Rt 55; I would expect this would pull more ridership and allow for future expansion - perhaps to the Jersey shore; Note: Rt 55 was designed with a future train in mind.**

**Respectfully request that this current plan be put on hold and reevaluated.**

**Carol Ossman  
Resident - West Deptford Twp. - NJ.**

**From:** [Dawn Parks](#)  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Glassboro-Camden line  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 2, 2020 8:35:33 PM

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Nobody wants this train , it will not help anyone !!! Pollution, noise, traffic!! Who wants this !!! NOONE.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [contactus@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:contactus@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** GCL  
**Date:** Thursday, December 3, 2020 7:30:44 PM

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Hello, I would like to express my concerns on the GCL. I don't believe that this line is even necessary. I can't remember anyone (in the 20 years that I've lived in Sewell) thinking or saying "What this neighborhood needs is a Speed line running through it!" The previous sentence sounds ridiculous, because it is.

Who thought that having a speed line from Glassboro to Camden has any sufficient value? The thought that people would line up at Sewell train station to travel to Glassboro or Camden is a reach at best. Are you planning on sealing off Cumberland Ave? Or are we going to have 2 railroad crossings within 1/8 of a mile of each other? If you are going to seal off East Cumberland from West Cumberland, do the residents know of this proposal?

I also think of the crime potential. My son attends Rowan University, and quite often we are alerted to a robbery or an assault on campus. That's the Glassboro end. Camden has it's own history of high crime. So riders can stop off at our little town and commit crime and jump back on the train and be long gone. Well doesn't that sound like something this town needs?

Speed line in Sewell! It's just ridiculous....

Sent from my iPhone

Subject: GLASSBORO-CAMDEN LINE

From: Mike Pontz <[REDACTED]>

To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

Fri, 18 Dec 2020 03:24:53 +0000 (UTC)

The concept of considering the Glassboro-Camden line is bad for several reasons, but foremost is the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the commuting practices of anyone that might have used this system. The entire business world has dramatically changed since Covid-19. People that needed a lite rail system to travel into the city are now working from home.

The outcome of this pandemic is going to result in a fundamental shift in WHERE businesses do business. If a company no longer needs X amount of rental space, and their employees are more productive using a 'work at home' model, there will be an incredible amount of empty real estate in Philadelphia. This is already a fact. The occupancy rate in Philadelphia is down dramatically. There are several REIT's that are under incredible financial hardship.

With this sole piece of the NEW reality, there is absolutely no reason to spend tax payers dollars on an investment in infrastructure that is arguably not needed. Just look at the capacity of Amtrak, PATCO and the NJ transit systems to see the drop in usage. As this entire project is being pursued by the DRPA, the ridership information is READILY available.

The fact of the matter is that it will be years before the full effects of the pandemic are known. Investing tax payers dollars into a system that is marginal is short-sighted and simply a waste. There is no funding available for this project and the data that this project is based on is more than 10 years old.

The Delaware River Port Authority had restarted this 20 year old project for nothing more than greed. In today's era of available information, it is easy to determine who really is to benefit from this project. The citizen's of Southern New Jersey will know who betrayed them if this "Restart" continues.

Find this as my disapproval of the Glassboro-Camden Line.

Mike Pontz

████████████████████  
“In wine there is wisdom, in beer there is Freedom, in water there is bacteria.” – **Benjamin Franklin**



**g** Benjamin Franklin  
Author of *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, *The Way to Wealth*, and *Poor Richard's Almanack*

**Subject: GCL CONSTRUCTION AND IMPACTS**

From: Erik <[REDACTED]>

To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com

Tue, 17 Nov 2020 19:23:25 -0500

Hello,

My name is Erik Reebenaker and I want to voice my opposition to this project. I love on [REDACTED] in Sewell. The current train runs approximately x2 per day, slowly and with a fairly minimal impact. This proposed project will significantly impact my neighborhood and me personally because of the fact that the trains will run every 15 minutes and will also be at least partly diesel. This will decrease my property value potentially significantly because of the frequent noise and vibration. I am very much against this project and want to know what is the likely hood that this will move forward? Is there funding to complete this project? What will be done to compensate my self or other home owners that do not wish to live next to such a noisy and disruptive environment?

I have seen on line that construction could start as soon as 2022, and could be completed by 2025. What are the variables to the start date? Who gives final approval on whether this project moves forward or not?

Thank you for your anticipated responses,

Erik Reebenaker  
An extremely concerned resident of Sewell/Mantua

Subject: Re: ?

From: Robert Rhodes <[REDACTED]>

To: GCL Project Team <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

Tue, 10 Nov 2020 07:50:01 -0500 (EST)

Thank you for your response.

I went to section 1.51 and didn't see any cost figures.

The total I saw on pages 250-253 is 1.4 Billion which is considerably less then the last estimate of 2.3 Billion. Is that because the Conrail figure is missing?

Carol Rhodes

On 11/09/2020 3:37 PM GCL Project Team <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com> wrote:

Dear Ms. Rhodes,

Thank you for reaching out to the GCL Project Team about your interest in the Glassboro-Camden Line project. The project cost are included in the draft EIS that is out for public review. The project cost can be found on pages 250-253, specifically in Tables 3.4-2 "Capital Expenditures – Proposed Light Rail Transit Alternative", 3.4-3 "Regional Economic Impacts of Construction", 3.4-4 "Regional Economic Impacts of Annual O&M Costs – the GCL (2018\$)".

The draft EIS hardcopies for the GCL project was distributed to municipalities and libraries (including county libraries) throughout the study area. Each location was provided with two hardcopies of the report. They have been distributed to the following locations throughout the corridor:

#### LIBRARIES

Glassboro Library  
2 Center Street  
Glassboro, NJ 08028  
(856) 881-0001

Gloucester City Library  
50 N Railroad Avenue  
Gloucester City, NJ 08030  
(856) 456-4181

Riletta L. Cream Ferry Avenue Branch  
852 Ferry Avenue  
Camden, NJ 08104  
(856) 342-9789

Nilsa I. Cruz-Perez Downtown Branch  
301 N 5th Street  
Camden, NJ 08102  
(856) 225-6807



McCowan Memorial Library  
15 Pitman Avenue  
Pitman, NJ 08071  
(856) 589-1656

Wenonah Free Public Library  
101 E Mantua Avenue  
Wenonah, NJ 08090  
(856) 468-6323

West Deptford Library  
420 Crown Point Road  
Thorofare, NJ 08086  
(856) 845-5593

Woodbury Library  
33 Delaware Street, #5998  
Woodbury, NJ 08096  
(856) 845-2611

#### MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

City of Camden  
520 Market Street  
Camden, NJ 08101  
(856) 757-7200

Gloucester City  
512 Monmouth Street  
Gloucester City, NJ 08030  
(856) 456-0205

Brooklawn  
301 Christiana Street  
Brooklawn, NJ 08030  
(856) 456-0750

Westville  
165 Broadway  
Westville, NJ 08093  
(856) 456-0030

West Deptford  
400 Crown Point Road  
West Deptford, NJ 08086  
(856) 845-4004

Woodbury Heights  
500 Elm Avenue  
Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097  
(856) 848-2832

Mantua

401 Main Street  
Mantua Township, NJ 08051  
(856) 468-1500

Pitman  
110 South Broadway  
Pitman, NJ 08071  
(856) 589-3528

Glassboro  
1 South Main Street  
Glassboro, NJ 08028  
(856) 881-8140

Wenonah  
1 S. West Avenue  
Wenonah, NJ 08090  
(856) 468-6713 EXT. 102

Deptford Township  
1011 Cooper Street  
Deptford, NJ 08096  
(856) 845-5300

Camden County  
1301 Park Blvd.  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002  
(856) 858-5211

Gloucester County  
2 South Broad Street  
Woodbury, NJ 08096  
(856) 384-6930

In addition to these physical locations the GCL draft EIS can be downloaded in its entirety on the project website [www.glassborocamdenline.com](http://www.glassborocamdenline.com) under the Public Involvement tab.

Again, thank you for your continued interest in the GCL project.

Sincerely,  
The GCL Project Team

----- Original Message -----

**From:**

"Robert Rhodes" <[REDACTED]>

**To:**

"contactus@glassborocamdenline.com" <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Cc:**

**Sent:**

Tue, 3 Nov 2020 11:24:51 -0500 (EST)

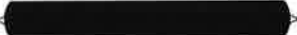
**Subject:**

?

I will be registering to speak at the online public meeting but have a question I would like answered. In reviewing the information I received, I didn't see the current project cost of the GCL. Did I somehow miss that or was that left out of the partial draft notice? I would like that information.

You have paper copies of the full draft notice available at a very limited number of locations, I would like the full report accessible at the main county library location in Mullica Hill.

Carol Rhodes  


**Subject: Draft EIS formal comment****From: carol rhodes** **To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com****Thu, 10 Dec 2020 07:08:39 -0500**

The November release date of the Glassboro-Camden line EIS study (10 years in the making) appears to have been politically motivated, to shield incumbent Democratic officials at both the municipal and county level from having to state their position on a controversial project that many view as having a detrimental effect on our towns.

.Where is the groundswell of demand for a diesel train running from Glassboro-Camden? The study was based on a false premise that the 18 mile route through our towns was the preferred route. The Route 55 corridor was designed with the light rail line in mind, because that's where the traffic was prior to Covid.

The Glassboro-Camden light rail diesel line is facing mounting opposition in some of the towns along the route. Newer residents had never heard of the GCL and older residents thought it was a dead issue. The Mantua township mayor at a public meeting stated the train will not be allowed to stop in our town. Reportedly, other towns on the proposed route are taking the same "No stops" stand.

800,000 people live in Gloucester and Camden County. Yet the study team offered the public less than 12 public scoping meetings.

During a national pandemic, the GCL study team further sought to deny Gloucester and Camden residents sufficient avenues to educate themselves on the EIS draft debut by limiting the public's participation to 2 zoom meetings consisting of 2 hours each with 3 minutes allowed for public comments though written comments will be accepted but only if received by December 17th. Why subject residents to an arbitrary deadline for a project of this magnitude? The limited timeline marginalizes residents who are facing Covid 19 concerns, unemployment, reduced income, food insecurity issues, school and daycare closures and the holidays.

The Covid pandemic has rendered the just released EIS irrelevant as no accurate algorithm exists that can predict ridership figures post Covid.. Destinations along the route have permanently closed or have a severely reduced presence. Both the jail and baseball field in Camden are gone. Camden County College and Rutgers and Rowan's locations have gone predominantly virtual with no estimation if or when the schools will return to their pre Covid capacity.

Businesses that relocated to Camden with the promise of lucrative tax credits are under investigation for the questionable documentation they provided to receive those credits. How long will they stay in Camden if the tax credits are revoked? Inspira Hospital has relocated to Mullica Hill with only a minimal presence in Woodbury. The jail in Woodbury also closed. Many employers in NJ and Phila are offering their employees work at home options which greatly reduces the need for travel.

The GCL's precedent was the Camden-Trenton light rail line which came in 3x over budget with only 1/3 of the estimated ridership. A financial path destined to be followed by the GCL as the EIS team chose to ignore many factors that are relevant to cost estimates and ridership figures in an effort to present study results that would please the public officials who paid for the study. The per ticket subsidy information is very significant to taxpayers and should have been addressed.

A recent poll conducted by the Garden State Initiative, an independent research and educational organization dedicated to promoting new investment, innovation and economic growth in NJ shows 40% of respondents said they plan to leave the state in the near future citing property taxes and the high cost of living.

The non-partisan Tax Foundation rated NJ as having the worst business climate in the US for the 7th consecutive year. One third of NJ's small businesses have already closed. Predictions are for more restaurants to close with winter weather approaching.

The EIS failed to address the devastating impact Covid 19 has had on our communities. Fewer residents and fewer businesses are factors that should have been considered in a study that took a decade to complete. Just having the DRPA and NJ Transit be the proposed project partners on the GCL project should be enough to stop the train in its tracks.

The DRPA was the subject of a federal investigation for its mishandling of 1/2 billion dollars in economic funding. 2 inspector generals were appointed to oversee the DRPA board but quit when the commissioners refused to co-operate. More recently, the DRPA's system for awarding multi-million dollar contracts was found to be illegal and irrational by both a federal judge and the 3rd circuit court of appeals. The DRPA commissioners all claimed attorney client privilege with no consequences.

NJ Transit is rated the worst transportation agency in the country, for many reasons, a truth acknowledged by NJ's Governor. NJ Transit paid 15 million dollars to a bus company that didn't run bus routes. Their safety record is abysmal. Expanding their operational responsibilities would only lead to more deaths.

Should NJ taxpayers be asked to put billions of dollars of our tax money in the hands of unscrupulous, incompetent officials? I say no and I'm asking the Fed Dept of Transportation to decline any GCL funding requests for the above stated reasons.

Gov. Murphy has an environmental initiative to replace NJ's entire fleet of diesel trucks with electric vehicles to help meet emissions standards. Building a diesel train that will run every 15 minutes during rush hour in close proximity to residential neighborhoods shouldn't be considered a transportation option.

Gloucester/Camden County residents deserve an updated EIS that encourages community participation and strives to disseminate information that will allow all parties involved to reach informed decisions on transportation projects that will affect our communities and our environment. The current EIS failed to meet those objectives.

Carol Rhodes  
Barnsboro NJ

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Sewell, Nj 08080  
[REDACTED]

**Subject: GCL**

**From: Michael Riggs** <[REDACTED]>

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Wed, 9 Dec 2020 20:03:39 -0500**

Personally, I am opposed to a light rail line going in between Glassboro and Camden City. Like the River Line, I believe that this is not a necessary improvement, and will raise crime rates locally. I think there are must better options, ie direct bussing, than a light rail train through our quiet communities. I know many other residents in the area feel the same way as I do.

**Mike Riggs**  
**Mantua (Sewell) Resident**  
**Sent from my iPhone**

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment**

From: William and Dawn Ritzler <[REDACTED]>

To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

Wed, 18 Nov 2020 12:06:06 -0500 (EST)

William A. Ritzler

[REDACTED]  
Pitman, NJ 08071

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Before I begin the main part of my testimony, I would like to underscore two points:

- A passenger rail system is needed in the Camden-Woodbury-Glassboro corridor, and
- The existing Conrail right-of-way is the best alignment for such a system.

**1.3.1. Alternatives Considered**

*The 2009 DRPA/PATCO Alternatives Analysis process was fundamentally flawed. The Alternatives Analysis did not evaluate the concept of PATCO Light Rail, an extension of the existing PATCO system using Light Rail technology standards.*

*Also formerly known as "Modified PATCO" in previous studies, PATCO trains between Philadelphia and Glassboro (via the Conrail right-of-way) would:*

- operate at grade (when south of the City of Camden), and
- switch between third rail and overhead catenary power supply.

*While uncommon, this technology does exist; Lines A and B of the Rotterdam Metro in The Netherlands operate in this environment every day. Closer to Philadelphia, this technology was a leading option for an extension of the MBTA heavy rail Blue Line to the City of Lynn, northeast of Boston, Massachusetts.*

*Passenger rail advocates repeatedly asked DRPA to include the PATCO Light Rail alternative in the Alternatives Analysis. The requests was ignored.*

*The initial matrix of alternatives included for evaluation appears to have been selected at the behest of the contemporaneous DRPA leadership team, who, in my opinion, sought to eliminate further DRPA involvement based on insular concerns regarding the size of PATCO subsidy payments and the desire to refrain from making PATCO operations more complex.*

*Concurrent with the DRPA perspective in 2009, NJ Transit had not (and still hasn't) implemented a light rail transit project without utilizing a public-private partnership (P3) design, build, operate and maintain (DBOM) scheme. P3 rail system implementations, when managed properly, substantially reduce the impact on NJ Transit by making project delivery and subsequent rail system operations less of a burden to administer through the disposal of day-to-day responsibility to the P3 entity. However, P3 implementation presupposes a new rail system that will not be integrated with a non-P3 legacy passenger rail operation due to a variety of institutional issues.*

*The bias exhibited by former DRPA leadership, in combination with the parochial NJ Transit approach to rail transit system implementation, represents the fundamental flaw leading to the selection of diesel light rail technology. For these reasons, the 2009 Alternatives Analysis and this DEIS should be discarded and redone.*

#### **1.4.4.1. Bridges, Culverts, and Elevated Viaducts**

*Cooper Viaduct 3 appears to be the wrong street name. The correct location should be Pine Street, not Vine Street. This type of mistake indicates carelessness during the study preparation process.*

*The new viaduct construction north of Kaighn (NOTE: No "s" in the name) Avenue represents a needless duplication of passenger rail infrastructure required only due to the selection of diesel light rail technology. This duplicative infrastructure is a significant cost factor that will also create unnecessary disruption for the surrounding neighborhood. Reallocation of the viaduct component costs toward GCL electrification and a PATCO interlocking in the vicinity of CP Mill represents better value by facilitating interstate through service on PATCO.*

#### **1.4.4.5. Vehicle Maintenance Facilities and Other Infrastructure**

*The selection of the Anderson Window manufacturing facility in Woodbury Heights as a vehicle maintenance facility is a poor choice. Formerly known by the acronym MAMCO (Mid-Atlantic Millwork Company), this site should instead be used as a park and ride station for passengers approaching the system via Woodbury-Glassboro Road. Per the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) Burlington-Gloucester Corridor Assessment / Definition of Alignments, Technologies and Preliminary Alternatives, Technical Report Task 4, the selection of PATCO Light Rail would make this facility unnecessary as vehicle maintenance would occur at the existing PATCO shop facility in Lindenwold, eliminating another redundant project component.*

#### **1.6.1. Vehicles**

*As stated above, the selection of Diesel Light Rail Technology is fundamentally flawed. PATCO Light Rail would allow for interstate through service between New Jersey and Philadelphia, which would result in greater patronage by providing a service that more people would find attractive. The PATCO Light Rail vehicle fleet would also enhance system efficiency by being compatible with existing PATCO vehicles. As there is no guarantee that SNJ Rail Group (the operator of the River Line) would be selected as the Glassboro-Camden Line operating entity, there is the possibility of three unnecessarily duplicative organizations and vehicle standards.*

#### **1.6.2. Service Plan**

*A previous justification to eliminate the possibility of PATCO Light Rail in the Glassboro-Camden Line corridor is based on the premise that the required frequency of service would be unsustainable on a second PATCO branch given the capacity limitations of the PATCO trunk west of the Conrail CP Mill. The introduction of four trains per hour in the peak can be easily accommodated by the PATCO trunk as verified per previous capacity testing performed in the early 1990's and documented in the DVRPC Burlington-Gloucester Corridor Assessment / Definition of Alignments, Technologies and Preliminary Alternatives, Technical Report Task 4. Therefore, system trunk capacity is not a roadblock for PATCO Light Rail through service between New Jersey and Philadelphia.*

*Another previous justification used to exclude PATCO Light Rail from further consideration in the Glassboro-Camden Line corridor is founded in regulatory concerns. PATCO is classified as an interurban railway and is therefore exempt from Federal Railroad Administration regulatory*



oversight. PATCO has been reluctant to consider any service expansion that would potentially alter the status of the organization. The proposed Glassboro-Camden Line service pattern includes the temporal and off-peak spatial separation between transit and Conrail operations that would be necessary to avoid FRA oversight of PATCO operations. As a result, FRA regulatory concerns do not represent a roadblock for PATCO Light Rail in the Glassboro-Camden Line corridor.

### 1.6.3. Ridership Demand Forecast

The projected passenger boardings approach or exceed the numbers identified in the 1992 Burlington-Gloucester Corridor Assessment and 1996 Burlington-Gloucester Major Investment Study. Through service between New Jersey and Philadelphia would significantly increase the number of passengers using the system. The scale of this project requires a best cost approach (greatest number of passengers per capital dollar) to advance the use of funding resources most effectively for the public good.

### 3.3.4 Traffic – (Grade Crossings)

Grade crossings at Cooper Street in Woodbury and at Mullica Hill Road (U.S Hwy 322) in Glassboro represent significant impediments to motor vehicle traffic and safety issues due to traffic volume. Impact remediation at these two locations deserves additional design study with the aim of implementing grade separation.

Lambs Road should also be considered for possible grade separation due to the existing vertical profile of the grade crossing and significant traffic volumes at peak travel times.

#### 3.3.4.4. Transit

The impact of Glassboro-Camden Line passengers transferring to/from PATCO for continued interstate travel will require one of two undesirable solutions:

- Increasing Lindenwold branch PATCO train lengths to carry extra passengers that will increase costs and reduce operating efficiency due to underutilization east of Walter Rand Transportation Center, or
- Operating shorter trains as Ferry Avenue locals with a resulting impact on crew assignments and degradation of operating efficiency.

Through service between New Jersey and Philadelphia would eliminate the need for unused passenger capacity on the Lindenwold PATCO branch. Option #2 is particularly unsatisfactory; it would make far more sense for trains to operate directly to & from Glassboro versus the forced transfers required by the kludge approach of Ferry Avenue locals.

### 3.4.9.2. Proposed Stations

**Colonial Manor – no Station.** A moderately sized Park & Ride station should be located on the site currently occupied by Cornell & Company at 1173 Broadway in Deptford Township.

**Red Bank Avenue – this station should include a facility to support intermodal transfers between GCL service and NJ Transit bus routes 401, 402, 408, 410, 412, 455 and 463.**

**Woodbury Heights Station – wrong location.** There is no compelling reason to locate the Woodbury Heights station at Elm Avenue. A modest amount of residential density exists nearby, limited potential parking exists and there is no defined Central Business District in the town. A Park & Ride station should be placed at the site of the Anderson Window manufacturing facility for passengers approaching the system from Woodbury-Glassboro Road. The Woodbury Heights

*Vehicle Maintenance Facility proposed for the Anderson Window manufacturing site should be relocated or eliminated.*

**Mantua Boulevard** – *station unnecessary. This station serves little purpose because the road access is not consistent with the direction of travel for the majority of passengers using the system and is not located adjacent to a significant residential cluster. The existing light industrial businesses in proximity to the proposed station site due not represent the critical mass necessary to justify station construction.*

**Mantua – Pitman** –*the station site should be located closer to State Hwy 55 w/dedicated ramps*

**Glassboro** – *wrong location. The main justification for the proposed station site is proximity to the Glassboro Central Business District. The proposed station site is still located a significant distance from the Glassboro CBD – now even more so with the migration of business activity to Rowan Boulevard. The location is beyond the Conrail Millville Secondary, which creates a problematic operating scenario if service is extended south in the future or a potential roadblock to a future southern extension.*

### **3.4.10.3. Microscale CO Analysis**

**Gloucester City Surface 70 GCL** – *suggest acquisition and relocation of Public Storage facility north of Market Street*

**Red Bank Avenue Surface 500 Shared** – *The proposed Woodbury Center parking garage should be located here*

**Woodbury Garage 1,200** – *this garage should be deleted and relocated to Red Bank Avenue*

**Shared Woodbury Heights Surface 50 GCL** – *wrong location, should be a park & ride lot at the Anderson Window manufacturing site.*

**Mantua Boulevard Surface** – *unnecessary location*

**Glassboro Garage 1,000 Shared** – *all existing parking facilities are located at some distance from the proposed station location. Space constraints limit the possibility of new parking space construction.*

### **4.3.3.1. Local Station Area Roadway Proposed Mitigation Measures**

#### **Walter Rand Transportation Center**

*PATCO Light Rail would utilize the existing PATCO trunk and remove the need for (and cost of) mitigation strategies along MLK Boulevard by eliminating in-street operation.*

#### **Glassboro**

*Absent a significant change in land use, the potential for new development is limited.*

### **4.3.3.3. Impacts to Transit Services and Mitigation**

*As previously stated, operating PATCO Light Rail interstate through service would offset many of the significant negative impacts associated with providing required PATCO passenger capacity increases.*

#### **6.4. 13 NEW STATIONS ALTERNATIVE**

*The Borough of Wenonah should not be offered the singular ability to “opt out” of the project. This will only stimulate the demands of anti-passenger rail NIMBY activists in other municipalities.*

#### **6.5. PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED ALTERNATIVES**

*As stated previously, the Alternatives Analysis did not include the PATCO Light Rail alternative which previous studies had identified as the option deemed to be most cost effective and to attract the greatest number of passengers.*

#### **Appendix 5A – DVRPC and STOPS Model Information**

##### ***Rowan University Ridership***

*Given the Rowan-related passenger projections, the infrastructure plan for initial service will require significant upgrades that would cost less in the immediate future than they will based on a twenty-year horizon. If the infrastructure required for expanded service levels can not be built at the outset, crucial elements should be designed and built with future service levels in mind to reduce expense and disruption.*

**From:** [William and Dawn Ritzler](#)  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Draft EIS Formal Comment  
**Date:** Friday, November 20, 2020 2:27:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [COMMENTARY Proposed light-rail line is inferior option.pdf](#)

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Please see the attached file for comments regarding PATCO Light Rail. I am requesting that this Courier Post article be entered into the project record.  
William A Ritzler

# Courier Post

**OPINION | Opinion** *This piece expresses the views of its author(s), separate from those of this publication.*

## COMMENTARY: Proposed light-rail line is inferior option

**J. WILLIAM VIGRASS**

Published 12:17 a.m. ET Apr. 25, 2015 | Updated 12:17 a.m. ET Apr. 25, 2015

The proposed Glassboro-Camden diesel light-rail line would have ranked third among the technology alternatives reviewed in the Burlington-Gloucester Corridor Assessment study of the 1990s. Let us compare the diesel light-rail transit (or DLRT), NJ Transit's "locally preferred alternative," to a previously studied alternative, namely modified PATCO at ground level that would provide a through one-seat ride from Glassboro to the station at 15th-16th and Locust streets in Philadelphia.

1. Travel time would be slower, taking 39 minutes from Glassboro to Camden, plus a five-minute transfer, plus a 10-minute PATCO ride, for a total of 54 minutes. Modified PATCO was calculated in the 1990s to require 39 minutes from Glassboro to 15th-16th. DLRT trains accelerate slower than Modified PATCO trains.
2. The Camden transfer would be an inconvenience to every passenger and an impediment for anyone with a disability.
3. Passengers waiting for a DLRT train would be exposed to the weather in typical NJ Transit shelters, whereas Modified PATCO stations would be enclosed with full heating, ventilation and air conditioning.
4. DLRT would emit diesel fumes, especially when accelerating.
5. DLRT has been forecast to attract about 18,000 rides per average weekday, whereas Modified PATCO had been forecast in previous studies to attract about 24,000.

Benefits such as had been observed in the original Lindenwold Corridor of increased property values may be estimated to be proportional with DLRT having about 75 percent or less of the benefits of a Modified PATCO rail line.

By every measure, the proposed DLRT line is inferior to previously studied Modified PATCO.

Speed sells. This was the thinking behind the creation of the PATCO Hi-Speed Line, which has proven to be correct.

A Modified PATCO line would cost more to build than a diesel light-rail line. Lowest first cost appears to be the primary criterion in NJ Transit's choice.

The Delaware River Port Authority/PATCO board has voted to not contribute funds for construction or operation of the proposed diesel light-rail line. Why was a superior performing alternative not selected for this study? NJ Transit assumed control of studies around the end of the 1990s. NJ Transit management chose light rail as it could be bid as a "Design Build Operate Maintain" contract like the River LINE. This was a business decision that made sense for NJ Transit.

The acceptance of the River LINE as a ground-level operation appears to have allayed fears of most local residents.

A political decision is needed. Should DRPA's board do what the original compact between Pennsylvania and New Jersey intended? Will political leaders in South Jersey and Philadelphia support such an endeavor? Will the business community demand that a PATCO-quality service be created in the Gloucester Corridor?

Will the body politic chose to support a mediocre or a superior transit line to connect Glassboro with Camden and Philadelphia? The decision will be theirs.

J. William Vigrass retired from PATCO as assistant general manager in 1988. He lives in Cherry Hill.

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment**

**From: Katelyn** <[REDACTED]>

**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com"** <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 18:38:04 +0000 (UTC)**

**This is a letter to oppose GCL.**

**Katelyn Robinson**

**[REDACTED]**  
**Monroeville, NJ 08343**

December 17, 2020

The Honorable Stephen Sweeny

199 East Broadway

1st Floor

Suite G

Salem, NJ 08079

**RE: The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Light Rail Project**

Dear Stephen Sweeney:

My name is Katelyn Robinson and I am a resident in your (your District 3/Salem/NJ).

I am writing to you in strong opposition of the proposed GCL Light Rail Project. Like our neighboring towns, our community understands the need for strategic expansion of transit options within our area; however, we feel that, as proposed, the GCL Light Rail will be a detriment to our township.

People in our township seek to understand why our legislators would support this current outdated proposal based on 11 year old data. The dated information does not reflect current local growth initiatives, nor does it consider or quantify the quality of life impact to the many new homeowners who have purchased their homes within the last 11 years. Also, the abrupt and unforeseen impact of COVID-19 has also rendered the data and information collected for the GCL obsolete.

At a fundamental level, the current GCL proposal is a project with serious flaws, and there is not nearly enough credible evidence that the projected benefits of this proposal would justify the enormous cost, nor justify the potentially devastating impacts to our communities. The current GCL proposal cites a need for providing enhanced mass transit options for South Jersey residents, which is an agreeable need, however, the current GCL proposal at a very basic level simply does not appear to meet the needs of residents or business owners in the region.

One of the largest suggested benefits of the current GCL proposal is to reduce traffic congestion, however the current proposal does not provide any realistic mass transit alternative to current traffic routes. Heaviest traffic congestion is currently seen along highways 42, 295, and 76 (Walt Whitman bridge), however the current GCL proposal does not provide a realistic alternative for any of these routes; the current GCL proposal would provide a route into Camden, but destinations in Camden are not the cause of current traffic concerns. Highway 676, which is the route that would be served by the proposed GCL, is arguably the least congested of South Jersey's roadways. At a proposed cost of billions of taxpayer dollars, the proposed GCL provides too small a benefit to only a small number of people. The current GCL proposal also fails to account for the significant impact the new 295-42 Interchange Project will have on traffic patterns and congestion along those major roadways.

Although the GCL proposal suggests it will reduce traffic congestion along routes 55 and 42,



COVID-19 has abruptly impacted employment, proving many office jobs may be done remotely. This drastic shift needs to be addressed and studied as drastic shifts in employment may continue to drastically impact mass transit.

The current GCL proposal fails to account for the unforeseen devastating effects mass transit, specifically rail, has suffered as a result of COVID-19. Nationwide, mass transit has required billions in bailouts. Locally, NJ rail ridership still hasn't recovered, as it currently stands, rail ridership is still down by 80%. This is a stark contrast to the recovery of bus ridership, which is currently down between 20-30%.

The GCL, as proposed, will:

- Create significant delays in EMS responses. The train will stop traffic (including EMS) every 7.5 minutes during peak hours. Every minute is crucial in an emergency. If EMS responders are forced to wait for a train to pass as frequently as projected in the GCL EIS, the resulting loss of life and damages resulting from slower response times will have devastating effects on those in dire need of help.
- Cripple local streets near the GCL including reduction of lanes widths, relocation of roadways, and full closures of one-way streets affecting local circulation patterns. These street circulation patterns would be most-heavily affected in towns like ours, with at-grade crossings.
- Disrupt communities with introduction of significant noise from the frequent passage of trains, in addition to disruption and traffic introduced into these communities with an influx of rail passengers driving to and from proposed rail stations. Many communities along the proposed GCL are currently quiet communities with limited, local traffic.
- The potential health effects on local residents due to increased fossil fuel emissions and the permanent disruption of noise pollution resulting from the GCL needs to be studied. These health effects include anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation, asthma, and cardiovascular disease.
  - *“Noise exposure modifies the function of multiple organs and systems. Acute noise exposure, in both laboratory settings where traffic noise was simulated and in real-life environments, can cause increases in blood pressure, heart rate, and cardiac output, likely mediated by the release of stress hormones such as catecholamines (for review, see Babisch4,5). As shown by field studies, these acute effects occur not only at high sound levels in occupational settings but also at relatively low environmental noise levels when concentration, relaxation, or sleep is disturbed.”*<sup>2</sup>
  - *“Railway noise is related to disturbed sleep, which in turn increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, supported by indications of increased cardiovascular disease in persons living close to railways.”*<sup>3</sup>
- Cost the state \$2-3 Billion dollars. After reviewing costs of similar projects, the GCL seems to cost double the per mile figures to construct than other comparable projects. After reviewing projects such as the Riverline, with costs totalling in at \$1.1 billion and ridership down substantially from projection, it seems there is no benefit from a cost vs reward standpoint. The promise of economic growth from the River Line for the past 15 years has been just that, a promise unfulfilled.

Additionally, other rail lines have continuously relied upon continuous funding from taxpayer dollars to cover operating costs. Other similar rail projects have not been shown to be financially sustainable without bailouts, and the potential cost of this current GCL proposal for years following the initial construction costs has not been sufficiently outlined at this time.

- The current proposal also fails to meet the crucial efforts needed to reduce carbon emissions, as the suggested rail will be powered by diesel fuel, which will impact the air quality of South Jersey residents. Rather than eliminating emissions, this current proposal will add emissions and expand our carbon footprint.
- Include permanent and temporary environmental impacts, such as disturbance to soil and vegetation, resulting in the loss, alteration, or degradation of wildlife habitat and plant communities. This includes impacts to sensitive plant communities and habitat for federal and state-listed species. No action plan has been announced to mitigate this impact to our natural resources.
- Have considerable impact at 34 areas of concern that are “Known or Potential Contaminated Sites Expected to be Impacted by the Proposed Alignment”. No further information on the investigation has been presented in order to confirm contamination would not be encountered.
- Threaten the integrity of 11 historic districts and 6 historic properties; 5 properties are listed in the National Register and State Register and 12 properties have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register and State Register. Historic resources are protected under Federal law through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Applicable State of New Jersey legislation governing the protection of historic resources includes Chapter 268 of the New Jersey State Register Law of 1970 and EO215.

**Other Issues forecasted with the GCL that need to be addressed are as follows:**

- COVID-19 has undeniably impacted our way of life- politically, economically, and socially. Given the mass impacts of COVID-19, priority should be given to studying the effects of the virus long term in order to determine if the need for the GCL still exists. There is currently no way to predict how many jobs will now be conducted remotely going forward, and how many jobs will no longer require the same daily commute now that many industries have adapted to conducting their business online with options for employees to work from home.
- Data in support of the need for the proposed GCL does not account for the potential impacts to be seen following completion of the construction project currently underway to improve traffic flow between highways 295, 42, and 76. We should table this EIS phase of the GCL and re-evaluate mass transit needs in the region once current highway construction has been completed. Current traffic patterns and mass transit needs may change significantly following completion of the work that is now underway on 295.
- Property values of many homes in the communities that are in the direct path of this current GCL proposal may be negatively affected, which not only affects the economic well-being of our individual citizens, but also affects property tax assessments. A drop in property values may leave these

communities with a loss in annual revenue when tax assessments fall sharply for properties along the proposed rail line. There is no adequate study to assess the potential impact to property values along the GCL as currently proposed.

- Our goal of strategically expanding mass transit sustainably and effectively includes exploring other less intrusive and less expensive proposals. For instance, the expansion and upgrade of our current bus routes with electric or hydrogen powered buses is a more cost effective option. Such projects have been successfully completed in California for an approximate \$200+ million budget, a stark contrast to the \$2-3 billion cost of the GCL.
- The GCL EIS is outdated as it proposes using unsustainable fossil fuels. Given the nationwide effort to curb carbon emissions and move away from fossil fuels, it's only a matter of time until the use of diesel/electric powered trains will be rendered obsolete and will require upgrading to fully electric or hydrogen fuel-cell powered trains to meet carbon emission goals. Currently we have the technology to move forward using electric powered buses for 1/10th of the cost of this proposed GCL project. The infrastructure already exists, examples being routes 55, 42 and I-76.

I urge you to reassess support of the GCL as proposed. It will have a severe impact on our natural resources, threaten historic sites, drain the economy, have long term cost implications and INCREASE traffic in our towns. Please do not let another doomed-from-the-start light rail line become another failure for South Jersey. My neighbors and I are counting on you for your support in OPPOSITION to the GCL Light Rail Line and ask that you join us in helping the entities involved in this project complete these goals with much better planning than an outdated and extremely expensive plan.

Sincerely,

Katelyn Robinson

Monroeville, NJ 08343

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<https://www.burlingtoncountytimes.com/news/20171211/gov-chris-christie-labels-nj-transit-river-line-a-joke-due-to-its-poor-ridership>

Subject:

From: William Rohm <[REDACTED]>

To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>

Sat, 28 Nov 2020 19:07:17 +0000

I believe this rail project to be unnecessary and a burden to the residents of which it will affect. A vote would be a much better way to go about all this as some residents are probably not even aware this is be proposed. I dont believe most residents will even use this train. A vote would ensure everyone knows of the proposal, gets a real say in what happens in their backyard, and will tell the planners whether this thing will even break even with its use. I dont see anyone wanting this go through our towns, if anything the median on 55 is the place for it, as thats what it was designed for. There is no place for this coming through these towns and turning it into Camden County. Gloucester County residents live here for the quiet, not for some empty passenger train coming through all the time. It needs to be voted on. The incompetent people trying to get this going also need to inform all residents of what they are trying to do here. I stumbled across this information, I should have had something mailed to me. It seems its trying to be pushed under the radar. Resident have a right to be heard and a fair chance to have all the information presented to them. You people have to inform everyone this is happening.

Sent from Samsung Galaxy smartphone.  
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Draft EIS Formal Comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 1, 2020 8:20:44 PM

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

My wife, Linda, and I have lived at [REDACTED] in Sewell, New Jersey for almost 50 years. Our house is on the corner of East Atlantic Avenue and East Sussex Avenue. The west side of our house is approximately 50 yards from the present freight tracks and about 300 yards in both directions from street/rail crossings. As freight trains pass our house, usually twice a day, the whistle is blowing and items on their shelves start vibrating. Talking on the phone or across the room, listening to music or to the television becomes almost impossible. Over the years, we have learned to put up with these infrequent but annoying distractions to normal living.

Bringing a train past our house every 7.5 minutes or even every 15 minutes would destroy the peace and tranquility which brought us to Sewell so many years ago. Being senior citizens, the thoughts of more traffic on our streets, parking issues near the station, untold effects of increasing air pollution - especially on the elderly and those who are ill or have allergies, greater amounts of noise around the clock, increased danger for our children, grandchildren, and pets - no fencing along the tracks, and decreasing property values are very discouraging and frightening,,, All brought about by this misguided project.

My wife and I know of no one living near us or in the town who will benefit from the development of this rail line. In talking with our neighbors, we could not find anyone who was even supportive of its construction. Why sacrifice the "small town atmosphere" of all these communities when an alternative along Route 55 is available? Is the voice of the majority again to be ignored for the sake of the few who will profit from this? I for one am always in favor of those things which will benefit the greater good, but on this one, my wife and I would cast our vote as a NO for the completion of this project. And please do not accept any mail-in-ballots!! Seriously, let us all hope this decision has not already been made before our voices are heard.

Sincerely,  
Craig & Linda Rudisill

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

**Subject: EIS video**

**From: Everet Rummel** <[REDACTED]>

**To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Wed, 9 Dec 2020 09:41:50 -0500**

**Can you post video of the EIS public hearings online?**  
**[http://glassborocamdenline.com/post/draft\\_eis\\_public\\_hearings](http://glassborocamdenline.com/post/draft_eis_public_hearings)**

**Best,**

**Everet**

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [contactus@glassborocamdenline.com](mailto:contactus@glassborocamdenline.com)  
**Subject:** Train  
**Date:** Thursday, December 3, 2020 5:58:45 PM

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Why during this stressful time would this idea of a train even be considered! The money could be better spent helping the families of our towns that are not meeting monthly expenditures.

If the planning of this rail line is being sought because people have so many other really important things on their mind (like keeping food on the table) and won't pay attention to what is being done to our towns, then shame on you. This is not the time for this venture. Our roads and streets need to be taken care of before we even think about a train. Where are parking lots and stops going to be? Are you going to buy our houses to make parking lots? Go down the center of Route 55, as was intended.

I ask you to please rethink this. After all, who and for what reason would you need to go from Glassboro to Camden. Certainly not shopping or for work. If there is a really good reason for this project that will bring nothing but chaos to towns I for one would like to know.

Donna M Rutherford

[REDACTED]

Sewell N.J.



**Subject: Glassboro Camden line**

**From: Michael Salvatore** <[REDACTED]>

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Fri, 4 Dec 2020 11:56:06 -0500**

**I would not like a train driving right by my house I am 50 yards from the tracks I think it would bring property values down and create nothing but problems in our neighborhood been here 40 years If I wanted to go to Camden I would drive there I vote no for this line I repeat again I vote no**

**Michael Salvatore**

**Subject: GCL**

**From: Carl Schwab** <[REDACTED]>

**To: "contactus@glassborocamdenline.com"** <contactus@glassborocamdenline.com>

**Wed, 16 Dec 2020 16:53:15 -0500**

**Are you crazy? This stupid idea has been shot down at least 4 times. There is NO money available. Lying & trying to sneak things thru won't work any better this time than last time. If you want a construction project, you can build a building & then tear it down & rebuild it, etc. You will waste less money this way than on this rail line.**

**Carl Schwab**

**Sent from Mail for Windows 10**

Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment

From: "Bruce Schwartz" <[REDACTED]>  
 To: <publicinvolvement@glasborocamdenline.com>  
 Thu, 17 Dec 2020 22:40:57 -0500  
 Dear Ms. Malaszek,

Attached please find my formal comments on the Draft EIS for the proposed Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL), along with some supporting materials. I hope these prove useful to the Project Team's review.

Following my name & address information, I have copied the text of my comments. I am doing this because sometimes attachments fail to transmit successfully via email. If that occurs with respect to any of the attached materials, please contact me and I will re-send them. Thank you.

Regards,

Bruce Schwartz

[REDACTED]  
 Cherry Hill, NJ 08002  
 [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED] (mobile)\*

*\* I would appreciate your deleting my phone numbers from any copies published to the general public. Thank you.*

BRUCE SCHWARTZ

[REDACTED]  
 Cherry Hill, NJ 08002  
 [REDACTED]

December 17, 2020

Via email

Ms. Victoria Malaszecki, Public Involvement Liaison  
 Mullica Hill, NJ 08062

Re: **Comments on the Draft EIS for proposed Gloucester-Camden Light Rail Line (GCL)**

These comments address the following points:

- **AIR POLLUTION/CARBON FOOTPRINT** – Recent advances in battery-electric rail technology should make it possible to operate the GCL with zero-emission rolling stock. This would eliminate local air pollution impacts along the right-of-way. And to the extent the system utilizes electricity sourced from renewables (wind, solar) or nuclear, the line could be carbon-neutral with respect to operations.
- **INTEROPERABILITY WITH PATCO/DIRECT TRAVEL INTO PHILADELPHIA** – the same battery-electric technology should make it possible to run the line with rolling stock that can operate on the existing PATCO line. This opens the possibility of switching GCL trains onto the PATCO line in Camden, allowing direct travel between Glassboro and downtown Philadelphia. (Even if this option is not chosen at inception, project plans should be adjusted so as to preserve it for the future.)
- **NOISE FROM HORNS and TRAIN "BELLS"** – to minimize noise impacts on residents living near the tracks, the Project Team should consider methods for running the trains as quietly as possible. Routine sounding of horns and generated "bell" sounds at station stops are two features of the RiverLine that were cited as objectionable at the public hearings held November 17 and 19. Project planners should be tasked to investigate whether modern sensor technology and artificial intelligence can be incorporated into the GCL so as to detect possible intruders in the path of trains. This would allow limiting horn sounding to only when necessary to warn people in danger. Routine "bell" sounds at station stops alert inattentive passengers that a train is arriving – but if train operators have "eyes" on the platform, and connection to a PA system, they can (e.g.) wake sleeping passengers. That would eliminate the need for routine noise-making.
- **GLASSBORO TERMINUS** – as presently proposed, the Rowan University stop would be at the far western end of the campus. The final Glassboro terminus would be several hundred feet south of the farthest southeast point on the campus (and would require disruption of a residential neighborhood). This limits utility of the GCL line for convenient travel to Rowan University. But one advantage of light rail is that it can run on streets in built-up areas. Consideration should be given to changing the alignment in Glassboro so that the line will better service the Rowan Campus. (One possibility is to bring the line up Whitney Avenue and loop around the modern "Downtown" centered on the University Bookstore.)

The extension of rail service to Gloucester County should be welcomed as a net positive for the region. I have not studied the cost-benefit analyses I presume have been done by the GCL sponsors. But, in general, mass transit is known to draw travelers (in particular, commuters) away from automobiles, so the GCL should help reduce traffic congestion on RTs 55 and 42 (and to a lesser extent I-76 and 676, and the DRPA bridges that carry them). Mass transit is more energy efficient than car travel per passenger-mile, and therefore the GCL should have a net impact of reducing air pollution and carbon emissions in the region. Finally, establishment of a transit corridor tends to channel residential and commercial development toward areas convenient to stations – mitigating suburban sprawl and the loss of farmland.

Extension of high-speed rail service feeding into the existing PATCO line has been a dream for half a century. From the standpoint of a rail passenger, I would certainly like to see a high-speed line to Glassboro. But according to the draft EIS, the benefits can't justify the expense of building a grade-separated high-speed line. Light rail cannot offer the same speeds, and therefore won't attract as many riders, but it appears to be "good enough" for now. It is fortunate that the proposed corridor has remained a rail line over the last half-century. By staking out the corridor as a transit line, the land can be preserved for high-speed rail should development warrant building it in the future.

Several commenters during the public hearings expressed concern that their houses near proposed GCL stations will lose market value as a result of anticipated local air pollution, noise, and congestion due to station traffic and backups at grade crossings. These concerns should be addressed in the final EIS. But, in general, it is known that property values near transit nodes tend to *increase* over time as these properties are attractive to buyers who want to use transit. As far as I know properties in Collingswood, Westmont and Haddonfield on the original PATCO line have not lost value over the past 50 years – quite the opposite.

I do not know whether the same can be said of the RiverLine, the transit line that most closely resembles the proposed GCL. It would be useful for the Project Team to include in its response to the public comments any analyses that have been done of property values along the RiverLine.

That said, the final plan for the GCL should try to mitigate *local* negative impacts; in particular, air pollution and noise. Fortunately, it appears that recent technological advances make this possible.

### **AIR POLLUTION/CARBON FOOTPRINT and BATTERY-ELECTRIC TECHNOLOGY**

As currently proposed, the GCL will utilize diesel-electric vehicles. Even with pollution controls and mufflers, diesel engines are dirtier and noisier than electric motors. Of special concern are emissions of very small particulates, known to be especially dangerous to persons with lung disease or susceptibility to cancer.

Fortunately, it appears there is a technological fix for these shortcomings: battery-electric light rail vehicles (LRVs). As a citizen commenter – a volunteer – I have not had the time or resources to make an in-depth study. But even a cursory search of the Internet discloses that battery-electric light rail systems (called “trams” abroad) are now operating in several European cities, as well as Japan and China, and more are being planned. Battery-electric locomotives are being introduced for freight trains. (These developments should not be surprising in an age when electric cars have become competitive with gas- and diesel-powered vehicles.)

Battery-electric LRVs are being offered by a number of prominent rail-car manufacturers, among them Bombardier, Alstom, Vivarail, Siemens, Stadler and Kawasaki. There is even a US-based manufacturer of battery-electric streetcars: Brookville Equipment Corporation in Pennsylvania.

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#### **ABOUT THE COMMENTER**

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<https://theconversation.com/why-trackless-trams-are-ready-to-replace-light-rail-103690>

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<https://www.focustransport.org/2019/12/battery-powered-trams-start-service-in.html>

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<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2352152X16301839>

<https://www.leeds-live.co.uk/news/leeds-news/leeds-city-centre-transport-tram-17656201>

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**BRUCE SCHWARTZ**

**Cherry Hill, NJ 08002**

December 17, 2020

Via email

Ms. Victoria Malaszecki, Public Involvement Liaison  
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062

Re: **Comments on the Draft EIS for proposed Gloucester-Camden Light Rail Line (GCL)**

These comments address the following points:

- **AIR POLLUTION/CARBON FOOTPRINT** – Recent advances in battery-electric rail technology should make it possible to operate the GCL with zero-emission rolling stock. This would eliminate local air pollution impacts along the right-of-way. And to the extent the system utilizes electricity sourced from renewables (wind, solar) or nuclear, the line could be carbon-neutral with respect to operations.
- **INTEROPERABILITY WITH PATCO/DIRECT TRAVEL INTO PHILADELPHIA** – the same battery-electric technology should make it possible to run the line with rolling stock that can operate on the existing PATCO line. This opens the possibility of switching GCL trains onto the PATCO line in Camden, allowing direct travel between Glassboro and downtown Philadelphia. (Even if this option is not chosen at inception, project plans should be adjusted so as to preserve it for the future.)
- **NOISE FROM HORNS and TRAIN “BELLS”** – to minimize noise impacts on residents living near the tracks, the Project Team should consider methods for running the trains as quietly as possible. Routine sounding of horns and generated “bell” sounds at station stops are two features of the RiverLine that were cited as objectionable at the public hearings held November 17 and 19. Project planners should be tasked to investigate whether modern sensor technology and artificial intelligence can be incorporated into the GCL so as to detect possible intruders in the path of trains. This would allow limiting horn sounding to only when necessary to warn people in danger. Routine “bell” sounds at station stops alert inattentive passengers that a train is arriving – but if train operators have “eyes” on the platform, and connection to a PA system, they can (e.g.) wake sleeping passengers. That would eliminate the need for routine noise-making.
- **GLASSBORO TERMINUS** – as presently proposed, the Rowan University stop would be at the far western end of the campus. The final Glassboro terminus would be several hundred feet south of the farthest southeast point on the campus (and would require disruption of a residential neighborhood). This limits utility of the GCL line for convenient travel to Rowan University. But one advantage of light rail is that it can run on streets in built-up areas. Consideration should be given to changing the alignment in Glassboro so that the line will better service the Rowan Campus. (One possibility is to bring the line up Whitney Avenue and loop around the modern “Downtown” centered on the University Bookstore.)

The extension of rail service to Gloucester County should be welcomed as a net positive for the region. I have not studied the cost-benefit analyses I presume have been done by the GCL sponsors. But, in general, mass transit is known to draw travelers (in particular, commuters) away from automobiles, so the GCL should help reduce traffic congestion on RTs 55 and 42 (and to a lesser extent I-76 and 676, and the DRPA bridges that carry them). Mass transit is more energy efficient than car travel per passenger-mile, and therefore the GCL should have a net impact of reducing air pollution and carbon emissions in the region. Finally, establishment of a transit corridor tends to channel residential and commercial development toward areas convenient to stations – mitigating suburban sprawl and the loss of farmland.

Extension of high-speed rail service feeding into the existing PATCO line has been a dream for half a century. From the standpoint of a rail passenger, I would certainly like to see a high-speed line to Glassboro. But according to the draft EIS, the benefits can't justify the expense of building a grade-separated high-speed line. Light rail cannot offer the same speeds, and therefore won't attract as many riders, but it appears to be "good enough" for now. It is fortunate that the proposed corridor has remained a rail line over the last half-century. By staking out the corridor as a transit line, the land can be preserved for high-speed rail should development warrant building it in the future.

Several commenters during the public hearings expressed concern that their houses near proposed GCL stations will lose market value as a result of anticipated local air pollution, noise, and congestion due to station traffic and backups at grade crossings. These concerns should be addressed in the final EIS. But, in general, it is known that property values near transit nodes tend to *increase* over time as these properties are attractive to buyers who want to use transit. As far as I know properties in Collingswood, Westmont and Haddonfield on the original PATCO line have not lost value over the past 50 years – quite the opposite.

I do not know whether the same can be said of the RiverLine, the transit line that most closely resembles the proposed GCL. It would be useful for the Project Team to include in its response to the public comments any analyses that have been done of property values along the RiverLine.

That said, the final plan for the GCL should try to mitigate *local* negative impacts; in particular, air pollution and noise. Fortunately, it appears that recent technological advances make this possible.

### **AIR POLLUTION/CARBON FOOTPRINT and BATTERY-ELECTRIC TECHNOLOGY**

As currently proposed, the GCL will utilize diesel-electric vehicles. Even with pollution controls and mufflers, diesel engines are dirtier and noisier than electric motors. Of special concern are emissions of very small particulates, known to be especially dangerous to persons with lung disease or susceptibility to cancer.

Fortunately, it appears there is a technological fix for these shortcomings: battery-electric light rail vehicles (LRVs). As a citizen commenter – a volunteer – I have not had the time or resources to make an in-depth study. But even a cursory search of the Internet discloses that battery-electric light rail systems (called "trams" abroad) are now operating in several European cities, as well as Japan and China, and more are being planned. Battery-electric locomotives are being introduced for freight trains. (These developments should not be surprising in an age when electric cars have become competitive with gas- and diesel-powered vehicles.)

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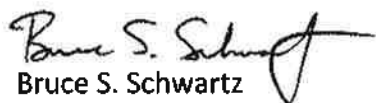
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# Battery electric multiple unit

A **battery electric multiple unit** (**BEMU**), **battery electric railcar** or **accumulator railcar** is an electrically driven multiple unit or railcar whose energy is derived from rechargeable batteries driving the traction motors.

Prime advantages of these vehicles is that they do not use fossil fuels such as coal or diesel fuel, emit no exhaust gases and do not require the railway to have expensive infrastructure like electric ground rails or overhead catenary. On the down side is the weight of the batteries, which raises the vehicle weight, and their range before recharging of between 300 and 600 kilometres (186 and 373 mi). Currently, battery electric units have a higher purchase price and running cost than petrol or diesel railcars. One or more charging stations are required along the routes they operate, unless operation is on a mixture of electrified and unelectrified track, with the batteries being charged from the electrified track.

Battery technology has greatly improved over the past 20 years broadening the scope of use of battery trains, moving away from limited niche applications. Vivarail in the United Kingdom claim their trains have a range of 100 miles on only battery power, with a 10 minute charging time.<sup>[1]</sup> These sorts of ranges and battery recharging times greatly widens the scope of use of battery or battery-electric trains. Despite higher purchase, on certain railway lines battery trains are economically viable as the very high cost and maintenance of full line electrification is eliminated. Previously, incorporating lightly used unelectrified lines into an electrified network meant extending expensive electrical infrastructure, making many extensions unviable. Modern battery-electric trains have the ability to operate on both types of track. A number of metro networks around the world have extended electrified metro lines using battery-electric technology, with a number of networks considering the option.

From March 2014 passenger battery trains have been in operation in Japan on a number of lines. Austria has overhead wire/battery trains which became operational in 2019.<sup>[2]</sup> Britain successfully trialled fare paying passenger hybrid overhead wire/lithium battery trains in January and February 2015.<sup>[3]</sup>



The Japanese lead the world in battery trains with at least 23 battery electric multiple units in regular operation, replacing diesel multiple units (DMU) on non-electrified routes or non-electrified sections of route.

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## History



Railcar no. 517 008 of the German national railway, DB

Experiments with accumulator railcars, as they were originally called, were conducted from around 1890 in Belgium, France, Germany and Italy. Full implementation of battery trains were undertaken with various degrees of success. In the U.S., railcars of the *Edison-Beach* type, with nickel-iron batteries were used from 1911. In New Zealand, a battery-electric Edison railcar with a range of 160 km operated from 1926 to 1934 on the 34 km long Little



British Rail BEMU, operationally fare paying from 1955 to 1966, now acting as a shunting train.

River Branch line. The Drumm nickel-zinc battery was used on four 2-car sets between 1932 and 1946 on the Harcourt Street Line in Ireland. British Railways used lead-acid batteries in a British Rail BEMU from 1958 to 1966 on the 38 mile long Aberdeen to Ballater line in Scotland. The BEMU was a success however was decommissioned as the line was closed. A BEMU has been restored operating as a shunting train until proper battery charging facilities are built.<sup>[4]</sup> In Germany between 1955 and 1995 Deutsche Bahn railways successfully operated 232 DB Class ETA 150 railcars utilising lead-acid batteries.

## Supercapacitors

A number of tramway manufacturers are offering battery tramcars that combine the traction battery with a supercapacitor that will be charged at each stop. The main motivation for the usage of battery-powered tramways is to avoid overhead wires across a city. Using boost charging at each stop allows to lower the size of the required traction battery. This technology is hoped to be transferred to full trains.

The CAF Urbos 3 tramways was ordered for the Seville MetroCentro with the *Acumulador de Carga Rápida* system which uses short overhead wires at each stop for charging. The Seville trams have been operating since Easter 2011.<sup>[5]</sup>



Supercapacitor trams on the Haizhu Tram in Guangzhou.

Siemens three car trams are to be used for Education City in Doha, the capital of Qatar.<sup>[6][7]</sup> The network opened in 2010.<sup>[8]</sup> No overhead wires were installed, as the 10 Avenio trams will be powered by the Siemens Sitras HES

system (Hybrid Energy Storage), a combination of a supercapacitor and a traction battery that are charged at each stop through an overhead conductor rail.<sup>[7][9][10]</sup>

A Combino tramway using four car tramsets equipped with the Sitras HES system has been in regular service from Almada to Seixal, Portugal, since November 2008. It is capable of running up to distances of 2,500 metres without overhead wires.<sup>[11][12]</sup>

A number of catenary-free tramways have opened in China that recharge at tram stops and terminals. The 20.3km Huai'an tram line in China, opened in February 2016. The line is entirely catenary-free utilising battery-powered trams supplied by CRRC Zhuzhou which recharge at tram stops.<sup>[13]</sup>

## By country

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### Australia

The Byron Bay Train service in Byron Bay, New South Wales operates a heritage 600 class railcar. The railcar was formerly diesel powered which was operational from 1949 to 1994. The railcar had the diesel equipment stripped out with electric traction motors fitted, being converted to solar power using a battery set to store solar generated energy from the cars' roof panels. The solar train came into operational use on a formerly disused section of line through Byron Bay in 2017. It is believed to be the world's first solar-powered train.<sup>[14][15]</sup>



The solar-powered Byron Bay Train in Byron Bay, Australia

### Austria

The Austrian Federal Railways has purchased 189 Siemens Desiro ML trains from 2013 to 2020. One of these trains was converted to a battery electric multiple unit and branded as *cityjet eco*. The battery-electric version of the Siemens train is equipped to operate with batteries and overhead wires, with a battery only range of 80km reaching a maximum speed of 100 km/hr in battery mode. The trains are to be tested on regional and suburban rail lines on electrified and unelectrified track. The test services began in September 2019 on the Kamp Valley line between Horn and St. Pölten.<sup>[2][16]</sup>



Siemens Desiro battery train being trialled in Austria

### Denmark

From the end of 2020, Stadler FLIRT Akku battery trains will be trialled on two lines, the 25 km Helsingør to Hillerød line in North Zealand, and the 18 km Lemvig line in northern West Jutland.<sup>[17]</sup> If successful it is viewed the trains will be fully operational replacing the existing diesel trains in 2025.



Stadler FLIRT Akku battery train, to be trialled in Denmark

## Germany

In 1887 the first German accumulator railcars were placed in service by the Royal Bavarian State Railways. Their development continued with the pre-Second World War classes ETA 177 to 180, the post-war DB Class ETA 176 (later 517) and finally ended with DB Class ETA 150 (later 515). The latter were used until 1995 having been since modernised into the *Nokia ETA*, painted light grey and green and deployed onto the so-called *Nokia Railway* (timetable number RB 46), nowadays the *Glückauf-Bahn* from Gelsenkirchen via *Wanne-Eickel* to Bochum.

In July 2019, Schleswig-Holstein rail authority NAH.SH awarded Stadler a €600m order for 55 battery-powered Flirt Akku multiple unit trains along with maintenance for 30 years. The trains, which offer 150km of battery range, will start entering service in 2022 and replace DMUs on non-electrified routes.<sup>[18]</sup>

The five routes of: Offenburg to Freudenstadt/Hornberg, Offenburg to Bad Griesbach, Offenburg to Achern, Achern to Ottenhöfen and Biberach (Baden) to Oberharmersbach-Riersbach will operate from 2013 on electrified and unelectrified track, the 120 seat Siemens Mireo Plus B battery-powered/overhead power line trains. On only battery operation the trains have a range of 80 kilometers.<sup>[19]</sup>



Operating in Germany, Siemens Mireo Plus B battery-overhead wire trains, with a range of 80 km on battery only operation.

## Georgia

The New Athos Cave Railway in Abkhazia in the country of Georgia has three narrow-gauge battery electric multiple units built by the Railroad Machinery Plants of Riga in Latvia. Two Ep «Tourist» trains were built in 1975 and later modernized in 2005 and 2009, and the new Ep-563 train was built in 2014.<sup>[20]</sup> Since 2014 this it been the only train in use. The first Ep train is based at Anakopea station for doubling the Ep 563 train in case of malfunction. Another Ep train is based at the depot.<sup>[20]</sup> Each train consists of 6 cars, including 1 control car with motors and power equipment and 5 trailer cars for passengers.<sup>[21]</sup> Both models can run either on a third rail with 300 V DC or batteries with 240V DC being used for short unelectrified sections at switches without a third rail, and also at passenger stations where the third rail has no voltage for safety reasons.<sup>[22]</sup>



Ep-563 train at Anakopea station, New Athos Cave Railway in Georgia

## Hungary

Fifty battery-electric trains will be gradually delivered from 2023 to 2029 for use on Hungary's railways. The trains will have a range of 80-120 km with a speed of 100 km/H. Line 29 will take the first batch of trains then

further trains operational on the reconstructed Budapest-Lajosmizsei line. The new battery-electric trains will also be operational on the lines: Győr to Szombathely, Miskolc to Ózd, Esztergom to Komárom, Győr to Keszthely to Kaposvár to Pécs and Szolnok to Hatvan to Somoskőújfalu.

The battery-electric trains will be capable of operation on both electrified overhead wire 25kV 50Hz lines, and non-electrified lines using the battery power.<sup>[23]</sup>

## Ireland

Between 1932 and 1949, two battery electric trains ran successfully between Dublin and Bray. Two additional trains were built and placed into service in 1939, also running until 1949. The train's batteries were charged at each terminus via an overhead pickup. The train could reach 60 mph/105km/h, though service speeds were typically limited to 40 mph/66 km/h.<sup>[24]</sup>

In 2019, Iarnród Éireann announced they would purchase 250 new carriages, with an option of up to 600, over a 10-year period, for use on the DART network. The order will consist of both electric multiple units and battery electric multiple units.<sup>[25][26][27][28]</sup>

## Japan

### N700S bullet train

The N700s train had battery backup introduced in June 2020. The batteries power the train at reduced speed to the nearest station when power outages occur. The train will operate on the Tokaido Shinkansen line between Tokyo and Shin-Osaka.<sup>[29]</sup>



N700 bullet train with battery backup.

### NE Train Smart Denchi-kun

In Japan, JR East tested a "NE Train Smart Denchi-kun" battery electric railcar from 2009. This vehicle is capable of operating under 1,500 V DC overhead wires or on battery power alone for a distance of up to 50 km away from an overhead power supply.<sup>[30]</sup> The batteries are charged via the pantograph either when running under an overhead electric supply or at a specially built recharging facility.<sup>[30][31]</sup>

### EV-E301 series

From March 2014, a two-car battery electric multiple unit, the EV-E301 series with 1,500 V DC overhead wire and battery power capability, entered revenue-earning service on the 20 km (12 mi) long non-electrified Karasuyama Line.<sup>[32]</sup>

Since March 4, 2017, battery electric trains have completely replaced diesel multiple units on this route. There are four two-car sets in operation, each set equipped with a 190 kWh lithium-ion battery.<sup>[33]</sup>



EV-E301 charging from the overhead conductor bar

The trains recharge their batteries at Karasuyama Station (the end of the line) via their pantographs, using a rigid conductor bar placed where the overhead wires would be, connected to the local electric grid. At the other end, at Hōshakuji, the Karasuyama Line meets the electrified Tohoku Main Line. The trains then continue over the electrified Tohoku Main Line to Utsunomiya, where passengers can change to Shinkansen high-speed trains.



## BEC819 series

From April 2016, JR Kyushu started trial operation of a two-car BEC819 series BEMU train, nicknamed "DENCHA", on part of the Chikuhō Main Line, with revenue-earning service scheduled from October of the same year, and six more trains planned to be introduced on the line in spring 2017.<sup>[34]</sup> It can also be powered via overhead AC power line. The BEC819 series battery-electric trains became operational on the through services on the Fukuhoku Yutaka Line in October 2016, which is electrified at 20 kV 60 Hz AC and the non-electrified Chikuhō Main Line, known as the "Wakamatsu Line", between Orio and Wakamatsu.<sup>[35]</sup>

The battery capacity is 360 kWh.

In 2019, a total of 11 new BEC819 trainsets were introduced on the Kashii Line, replacing all diesel multiple units previously operated on that line.<sup>[36][37][38]</sup> This brought the total number of BEC819 trainsets in revenue service to 18.

## EV-E801 series

A new EV-E801 series two-car BEMU train was introduced on the 26.6 km (16.5 mi) long non-electrified Oga Line in Akita Prefecture in March 2017. It shares some characteristics with the BEC819 trains: it uses a 360 kWh battery and is recharged from a 20 kV 50 Hz AC overhead supply instead of a 1,500 V DC overhead supply used by the earlier EV-E301 trains.<sup>[39]</sup>



BEC819 at Kashii Station



EV-E801 at Oiwake Station, Akita

## United Kingdom

Historically, a number of battery electric trains have been used on British railways. The British Rail BEMU was taken out of service because the line from Aberdeen to Ballater in Scotland was closed in 1966. The trains have been renovated being ready for reuse on the Royal Deeside Railway.<sup>[40]</sup> The British Rail Class 419, motor luggage van, was operational from 1959 to 2004, which could run on either on batteries or a third rail, being used for short unelectrified section on quaysides.

The United Kingdom has almost two-thirds, 58%, of the 20,000 mile rail network on non-electrified track, which consumes 469 million litres of diesel each year. Mark Carne of Network Rail, who are responsible for the tracks of the British rail network, in March 2017 stated: "The idea that you need to electrify an entire route is no longer necessarily the case. I think that where we have got hybrid trains, that opens up quite a lot of interesting opportunities for partial electrification." Carne also stated: "technology was advancing at such a pace that better reliability could be achieved without the construction of unsightly overhead cables." He added that developments in batteries are such that it might soon be cost-effective to swap diesel engines for battery or hybrid devices, therefore saving the vast cost of installing power lines above every section of track.<sup>[41]</sup>



Test Electrostar Train converted to run on batteries and overhead wires

Company's such as UK based Hitachi, Vivarail and Bombardier have committed to or are producing battery-electric trains. These trains will be either new units or conversion of existing units, to fulfil the aims of Network Rail's introduction of battery powered trains.<sup>[42][43]</sup>

In 2015 a single Class 379 Electrostar, after electric lithium batteries were installed, began passenger operations on the Mayflower Line in Essex. The train can travel up to 60 miles (97 km) on energy stored in the batteries also recharging the batteries via the overhead-wires when on electrified sections of the line, at stations and via brake regeneration. The trial lasted one month from January to February.<sup>[44]</sup> Network Rail refer to this prototype model and its possible future descendants as *Independently Powered Electric Multiple Units* (IPEMU).<sup>[45]</sup>

A month after the trial in March 2015, the introduction of battery-powered trains was proposed by Network Rail for consideration for the fifteen station 27 miles long diesel operated Wrexham, North Wales to Bidston, Birkenhead, Borderlands Line.<sup>[46]</sup><sup>[1]</sup> (<http://www.borderlandsline.com/wp-content/uploads/borderlandsline-route.pdf>) The aim is to merge the line into the electric 3rd rail Merseyrail Wirral Line extending into the underground section of Liverpool's city centre, making Wrexham one of the branch terminals of the line. The line is diesel train operated unable to progress into the electric 3rd rail underground Birkenhead and Liverpool Merseyrail tunnels & stations. If battery trains are introduced that run into the tunnels, the Borderlands line will be incorporated into the Wirral Line becoming an urban metro line between Liverpool and Wrexham.

The diesel operated trains on the slow Borderlands line terminate at Bidston railway station in Birkenhead, with passengers having to change trains onto the Merseyrail electric network to proceed into Liverpool's centre. Network Rail proposed using dual battery powered/3rd rail pickup rolling stock without full electrification of the line, providing a cheaper method of incorporating the line in the Wirral Line. The trains will only terminate at Wrexham, while at the Liverpool end of the line trains will proceed around the loop of the electrified Liverpool city centre underground tunnels with thirteen station stops. As the train proceeds on the looped electrified line from Bidston and back, the train's batteries are charged.

### **Class 777**

On page 37 of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Long Term Rail Strategy document of October 2017, it states that in 2020 a trial of new class 777 Merseyrail electric 3rd rail/battery trains will be undertaken in view to incorporate two stretches of unelectrified track onto the Merseyrail network. The sections are on the Wirral Line from Ellesmere Port to Helsby interchange station and the Northern Line from Ormskirk to Preston interchange station.<sup>[47]</sup>



Class 777, Stadler, to conduct battery-electric trials in Liverpool.

### **Class 230**

Vivarail have produced the Class 230 train which is converted from redundant London Underground D-Stock trains. The second demonstrator unit, the two-car 230002, has been fitted for battery power in contrast to the diesel-electric power of the earlier 230001 demonstrator unit. Vivarail have developed a fast charger giving a 100 mile range with a 10 minutes recharging time.<sup>[48]</sup> Power is provided by two lithium-ion batteries per car giving four per train, providing 106kWh, with an expected life of seven years for the batteries.<sup>[49]</sup>



Vivarail battery electric train

In 2017, Vivarail battery trains were being considered for use on the Valley Lines network in South Wales. The trains would be battery powered, capable of being recharged via 25 kV OHLE.<sup>[50]</sup>

### **United States**

The Edison-Beach battery railcar was developed by Thomas Edison and Ralph H. Beach. The latter headed the *Railway Storage Battery Car Company* and the *Electric Car & Locomotive Corp.*<sup>[51]</sup> Car No. 105 of the Alaska Railroad was an Edison-Beach car,<sup>[52]</sup> and examples operated on the Central Vermont Railway running between Millers Falls, Northfield and West Townshend.<sup>[53]</sup> A notable feature of the Edison-Beach cars was the Beach drive system. Each wheel was mounted on ball bearings on a dead axle and was driven by an individual traction motor through gearing.<sup>[54][55]</sup>

## See also

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- [Electric multiple unit](#)
- [Diesel multiple unit](#)
- [Battery locomotive](#)
- [Electric vehicle battery](#)
- [Flywheel energy storage](#)

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**PARSONS**

# OCS-free Light Rail Vehicle Technology

*Jeffrey Pringle*





## Light Rail Vehicle – LRV

Historically the application of the LRV to meet various operating environments was been achieved through a set of design criteria during initial planning such as;

- Vehicle Configuration - 70% or 100% low floor
- Capacity- Total # passenger seats and standees
- Length – 20m to 32 m (65.6 to 104.9 ft)
- Width - 2.4 m or 2.65m (7.8 to 8.7 ft)
- Speed – 26 to 66 mph most common
- Minimum turning radius- 18m to 25m (59 to 82 ft)

Today the ability to provide an OCS-free LRV has resulted with **another new design choice** to be considered.



# OCS – free Design Criteria Available

- 1. On-Board Storage Systems**
  - Battery
  - Capacitors
    - Combination**Create Energy**
  - Flywheel
  - Generator
    - Diesel
    - Fuel cell
- 2. Embedded Third Rail**
  - Electronic
  - Mechanical
  - Inductive

# **Overhead Contact System**

## **OCS – (IEEE definition)**

**That part of the traction power system comprising the overhead conductors (or single contact wire), aerial feeders, OCS supports, foundations, balanceweights and other equipment and assemblies, that delivers electrical power to non-self powered electric vehicles.**



Bilbao, Spain LRV



## OCS versus OCS-free

With modern LRVs, the power distribution system provides Direct Current (DC) to the vehicle's power conversion equipment which, in turn, supplies Variable Voltage Variable Frequency (VVVF) power to the traction motors.

LRVs use Alternating Current (AC) as the power source, the AC power feeds a transformer and a DC link converts the AC power to DC power before being supplied to the traction inverter.

The major difference with OCS-free LRVs is in the equipment supplying energy to the on-board power conversion equipment.



**CAF LRV Operating OCS-Free in Seville**

# OCS-Charged Systems

## CAF ACR System

Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles, SA (CAF) has developed a rapid-charge, on-board energy storage system using supercapacitors, called ACR (Rapid Charge Accumulator). CAF's ACR *Freedrive* system, which utilizes supercapacitors and batteries, allows the vehicles to operate OCS free for about 1.4 km. The supercapacitors are charged by the OCS at stations in 20 seconds.



**FreeDrive Unit. Courtesy of CAF**

## LRVs with on-board energy storage

- LRVs that create electrical energy

By using an onboard diesel-generator set or a fuel cell.



**•EVE Hydrogen Fuel Cell Powered Vehicle. Courtesy Railway Gazette International**

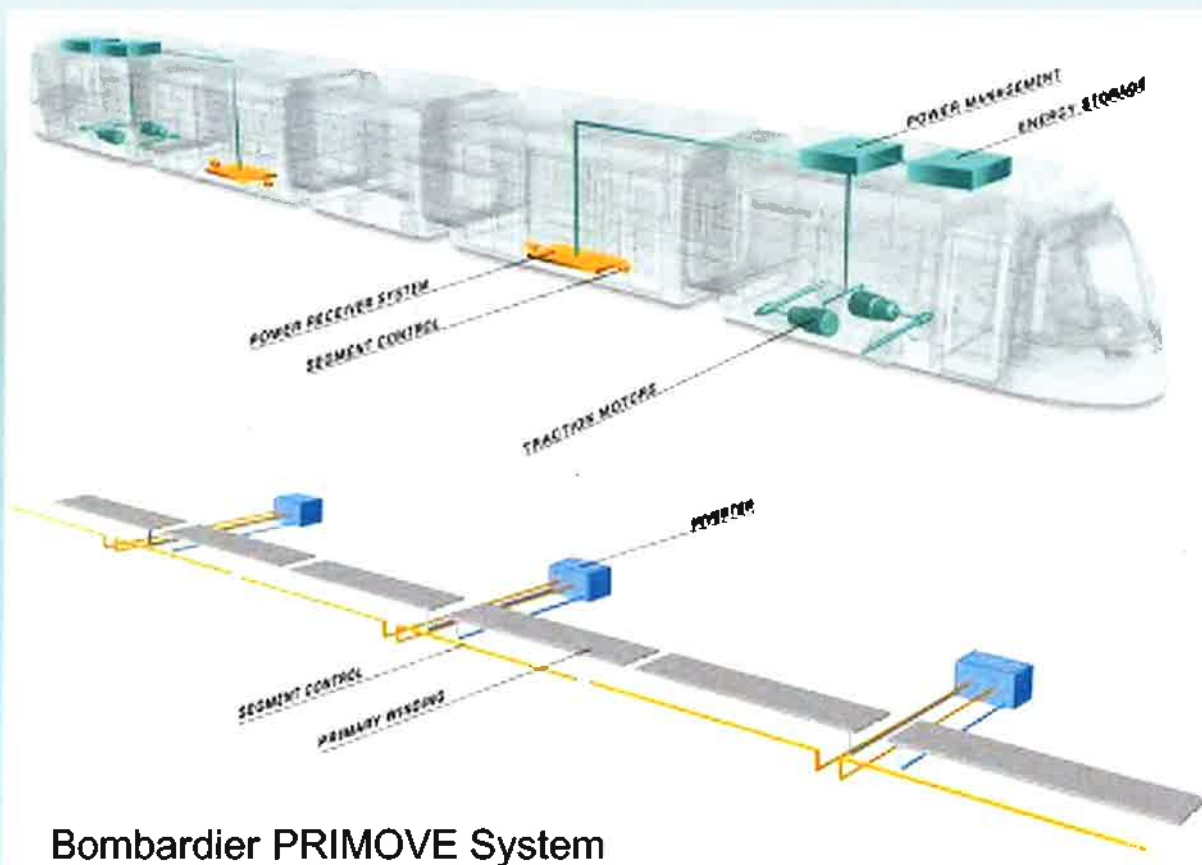


**Citadis diesel hybrid tram-trains**



# LRVs with on-board energy storage

- LRVs that draw electrical energy inductively from a power source embedded in the ground.

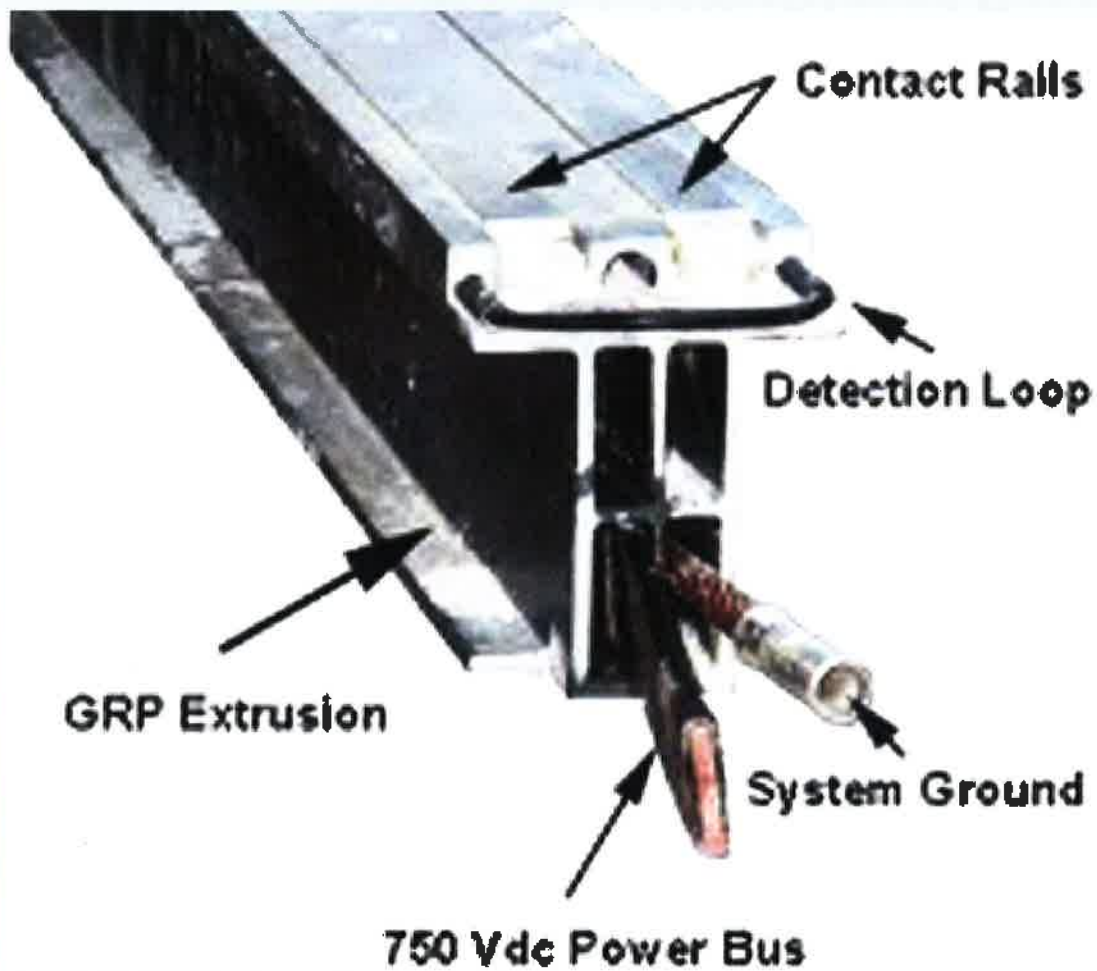


## OCS –free technologies 2 major categories

### 2. LRVs that draw electrical energy continually from a third rail embedded in the ground.

- Electronically-Activated Third Rail - The Alstom APS (alimentation par le soleil – ground level power supply) system consists of short segments of conductor rail separated by insulated segments that are installed between the running rails along the length of the track.
- Mechanically-Activated Third Rail - The Ansaldo TramWave system consists of short segments of conductor rail installed between the running rails along the length of the track, each segment being individually connected to the electrical power supply.

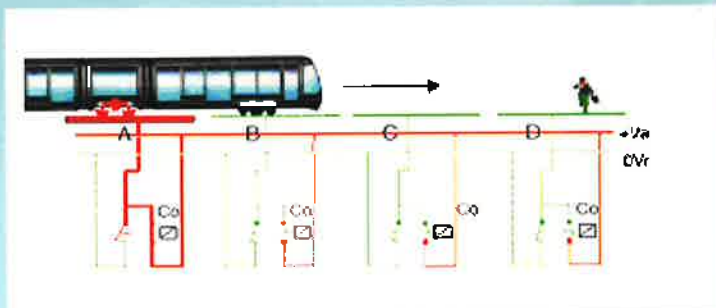
## Embedded Third rail



# EMBEDDED THIRD RAIL

## Electronically-Activated Third Rail -

Currently solely represented by Alstom's APS system, and by the Alstom Citadis LRVs. The third rail system consists of short segments of conductor rail separated by insulated segments installed between the running rails. Each conductor rail is surrounded by a loop embedded in the track bed, and the loop receives a coded signal from the vehicle for power to be fed to the conductor rail from a "power box" embedded under the track. The conductor rail is only ever live when it is covered by the vehicle.



**Live Third Rail Only Under the Vehicle.**  
Courtesy of Alstom



**Alstom Citadis Tram in Bordeaux.**  
Photograph Courtesy of Peter Gugerell

# EMBEDDED THIRD RAIL

## Mechanically-Activated Third Rail -

*The Ansaldo TramWave system functions similarly to the Alstom APS system, but operates on a mechanical rather than an electronic sectioning system. Powerful electro magnets on the vehicle lift a flexible conductor strip into contact with the lower surface of a live buss.*



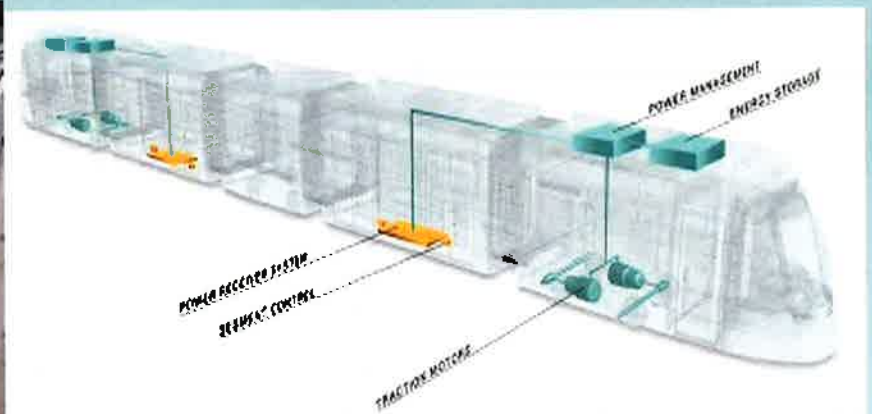
**Ansaldo TramWave Third Rail Installation.  
Courtesy of Ansaldo STS**



**Ansaldo TramWave Current Collector Shoe.  
Courtesy of Ansaldo STS**

# Inductively-Activated Third Rail

*PRIMOVE is a contactless energy transfer technology developed by Bombardier. In 2010, Bombardier installed a demonstration PRIMOVE system for LRVs on an 800 m section of Line 3 to the Augsburg trade fair center.*



**Bombardier Primove System. Courtesy of Bombardier**

# Flywheel Energy Storage Systems

Since 2005, Alstom has been testing a Citadis LRV in Rotterdam with a CCM (Centre for Concepts in Mechatronics) flywheel system. Using the flywheel alone, the vehicle is capable of traveling for 2 km at speeds up to 50 km/h.



CCM Flywheel Package. Courtesy of CCM

CCM flywheel technology is currently being used in the development of a hybrid traction system as part of the ULEV-TAP 2 (Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Transport Advanced Propulsion) project sponsored by the European Commission. The system will be installed on a Siemens Avanto tram-train. The flywheel is designed to provide an output of 300 kW.

# **LRV with on board energy storage**

## **OCS-Charged Systems -**

LRVs draw electrical energy from an OCS at specific locations, such as when stopped at stations, to recharge the on-board energy storage system used to propel the vehicle. OCS-free LRVs frequently also incorporate energy storage equipment to receive and convert braking energy to be, in turn, used to propel the vehicle, thus saving energy.



## OCS – alternative

- LRVs that draw electrical energy from an OCS at specific locations, such as when stopped at stations, to recharge the on-board energy storage system



**Short Rigid OCS at Station Stops. Courtesy of CAF**

# Battery Storage Systems

**Alstom-** In Nice, France, the Alstom Citadis trams utilize battery power alone to cross the 500 m distance across the city's historical Place Masséna and Place Garibaldi squares. The roof-mounted SAFT Ni-MH batteries allow the trams to run for 1 km at 30 km/h.



**Alstom Citadis Tram Crossing Place Masséna in Nice**

# Battery Storage Systems

## Brookville Equipment Corporation

In February 2013, the Brookville Equipment Corporation of Brookville, Pennsylvania was awarded a \$9.4m contract to supply two 70% low floor LRVs to DART for its downtown Union Station to Oak Cliff extension project. Brookville's Liberty Modern LRVs will utilize a battery energy storage system to power the cars OCS free over a 1.6 km section of track. The vehicles will have a maximum speed of 70 km/h.



# Battery Storage Systems

**Kawasaki** - In 2007, Kawasaki introduced its prototype three-section low floor *SWIMO X LRV*. The vehicle has a length of 15 m with a passenger boarding height of 330 mm. On battery power alone, the vehicle is capable of traveling over a distance of 10 km at a top speed of 40 km/h on a single five-minute charge.



**Kawasaki SWIMO. Courtesy of Kawasaki**  
In 2009, the next generation of *SWIMO* was announced.

# Battery Storage Systems

**Kinki Sharyo** - In the United States, Kinki Sharyo has introduced its *ameriTRAM 100% low floor demonstrator LRV*. Powered by its proprietary eBrid electro-hybrid Li-ion batteries, the vehicle can operate using the OCS or OCS free. The eBrid system charges the batteries and powers the auxiliary equipment when running on the OCS and also allows braking energy to be stored in the batteries. When running OCS free, eBrid uses battery power to propel the vehicle and to power the auxiliary equipment.



**Kinki Sharyo ameriTRAM. Courtesy of Kinki Sharyo**

*ameriTRAM is able to operate for 8 km on battery power alone and reported as fully compliant with ADA, Buy America, NFPA 130, and ASME RT-1.*

# Battery Storage Systems

## Stadler

In 2011, a Munich Tramway S-class Stadler Variotram set a record for a battery powered tram by running 16 km on its battery, without the use of the OCS. The Li-ion battery weighed 380 kg. The test was carried out on one of four such vehicles ordered by Munich, and a further 10 vehicles have been ordered.



# Diesel-Generator Systems

**Alstom** -Kassel, in Germany, is using 10 Alstom Regio Citadis diesel hybrid tram-trains. The vehicles have an acceleration of  $1.1\text{ m/s}^2$  and a top speed of  $100\text{ km/h}$ .



However, it is to be seen whether or not this technology will increase in popularity, because the industry appears to be moving away from fossil fuel solutions.

# Fuel Cells

In 2011, Spanish meter-gauge operator FEVE unveiled a prototype tram powered by two 12 kW hydrogen fuel cells that can carry up to 30 passengers at speeds up to 20 km/h. Constructed by Fenit Rail using a 14.3 m 1970s Series 3400 FEVE car. The fuel cells are supplied with hydrogen from a rack of 12 canisters. Energy produced during regenerative braking is stored in three supercapacitors or Li-ion batteries rated at 95 kW. The power conversion equipment was designed by CIDAUT.



**FEVE Hydrogen Fuel Cell Powered Vehicle. Courtesy Railway Gazette International**



## **PROS AND CONS OF THIRD RAIL AND ONBOARD ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS**

- Based on an analysis of recent contract prices, it has been estimated that the onboard APS equipment can be expected to add between 8 to 15 % of the average selling price of LRVs over the past few years.
- Undoubtedly, the electrical power distribution system equipment on an OCS-free vehicle is more costly than that on a conventional LRV. Although little cost information is available, for the operators, any increased price of the vehicle must be balanced against the expected reduction in energy costs and any difference in maintenance and overhaul costs.

## **PRICE AND BUY AMERICA IMPACT**

Today it is not at all apparent that any vehicle supplier or System supplier would invest in the manufacture of traction batteries in the USA. This, of course, only tends to make it more difficult for foreign suppliers to meet Buy America requirements.

If the cost of the offshore electrical equipment cost increases the vehicle selling price by about 10%, foreign suppliers required to meet Buy America requirements must become more inventive to increase vehicle domestic content.

Interestingly though some vehicle manufacturers are committing to supply LRVs to US transit agencies that will meet Buy America requirements.

# RELIABILITY

## On-Board Vehicle -

On-board battery - Have the potential to be very reliable but lack to be service proven.

Supercapacitor technology, or a combination of supercapacitors and batteries, is now a fairly mature technology and it appears to have excellent reliability.

Flywheel energy storage technology is not yet sufficiently developed for LRV use, and its reliability in this environment is unknown.

Fuel cell technology is not in a sufficiently advance stage of development, and its reliability in a rail system environment is unknown.

Combustion energy technology is well proven and reliable.

# RELIABILITY

## Wayside Systems –

Third rail systems now appear to be a reliable technology, although it should be carefully assessed against the specific operating environment.

Induction power transfer system is also not service proven, and its reliability is unknown, although it has the potential to be very reliable.

## MOVING FORWARD

Today there exists a considerable amount of technical information pertaining to OCS-free Systems for Transit Agencies to make the basic decisions such as the;

***Type of System*** - Onboard energy storage vs. Wayside (Third rail / embedded induction power transfer ) based.

***Onboard energy storage*** – Battery, Capacitors, Flywheel, Generator, Diesel, Fuel cell

***Third rail / embedded*** – *Electronic, mechanical activated or Inductive*

## **MOVING FORWARD**

High expectations and benefits using OCS  
–free technology are apparent....

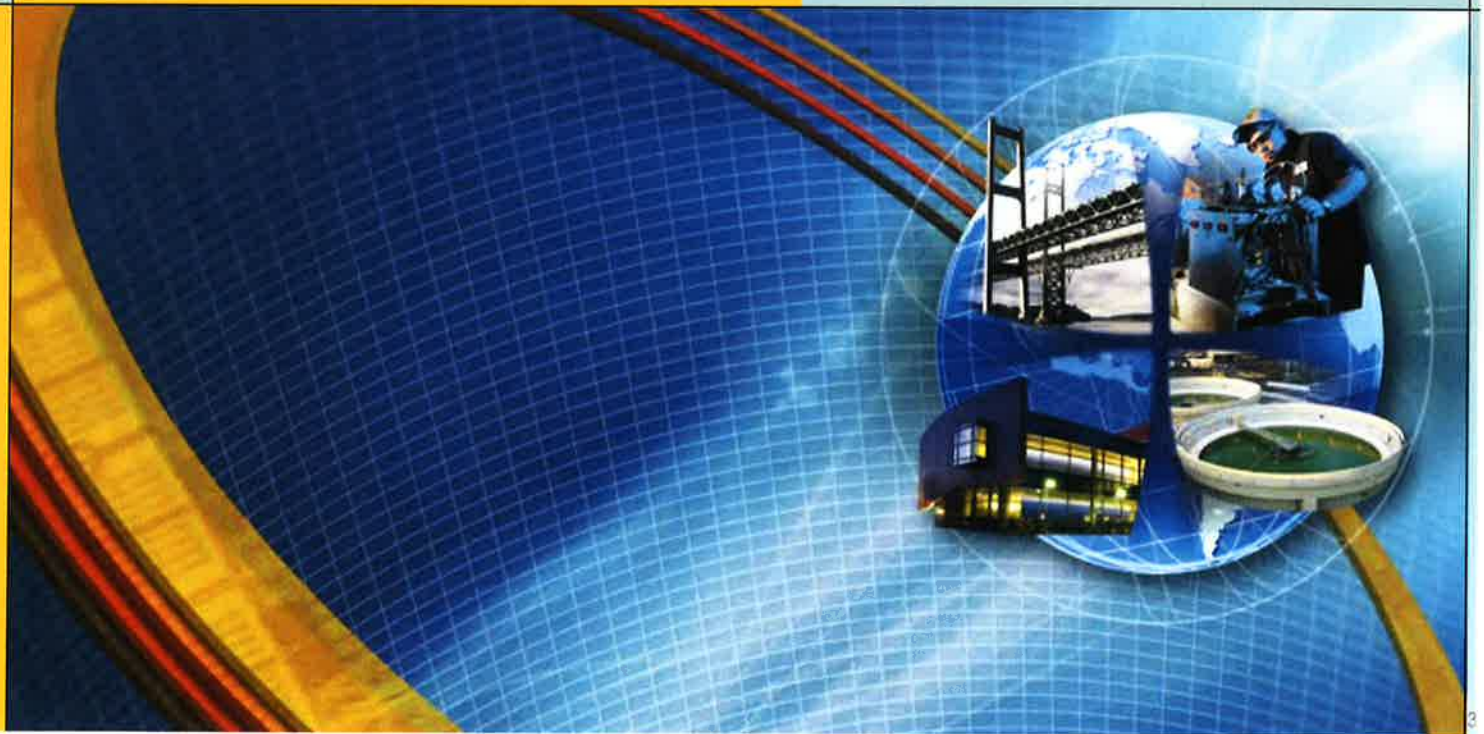
Decisions will need to be made with little;

- Historical reliability and maintenance data
- Total life costs or conflicting costing data differentials
- Fast moving technology improvement / gains in distance, speed, costs.

Transit Agencies must be prudent to carefully analysis their unique operations and rolling stock needs prior to committing to new technology.

**PARSONS**

Thank You !



# Reference slides only



## **CURRENT PROPULSION TECHNOLOGY AND CONSTRAINTS**

The vehicle propulsion system, that is the equipment downstream of the DC link, should be little different, if at all, to existing propulsion equipment. This is the reason that Siemens claims its Sitras equipment can easily be incorporated into older vehicles, including those of other manufacturers. Accordingly, whichever OCS-free technology is chosen, this should not affect the cost of the propulsion system.

- OCS-free technology directly affects the vehicle's electrical power distribution system up to the DC link, however.

# Flywheel Energy Storage Systems

Alstom and Williams Hybrid Power have joined forces to apply the Williams technology on Citadis LRVs, which will include testing the Williams combined magnetically loaded composite (MLC) flywheel, which is expected to provide fuel savings of about 15%.



**Williams Hybrid Power Flywheel. Courtesy of Williams**

Flywheel technology is far from mature, but it would appear to be a viable energy storage option in the not-too-distant future.

# OCS-Charged Systems

## Supercapacitor Energy Storage

### Alstom

In July 2009, under the STEEM (Système de Tramway à Efficacité Energétique Maximisée) research and development project, Alstom and Paris transportation agency RATP carried out a trial of a supercapacitor-based on-board energy storage system on a low floor Citadis tram. The supercapacitors stored regenerated braking energy, but could also be recharged from the OCS in about 20 seconds during station stops. The system allows OCS free operation for about 400 m at 30 km/h. Energy savings on the order of 30% are estimated.

## Diesel-Generator Systems

**Vossloh-** In 2012, Vossloh won an order to supply eight electro-diesel tram-trains for the network under development around Chemnitz, Germany. The tram-trains will operate from the existing network's 600 Vdc and 750 Vdc OCS, switching to diesel mode along regional lines. The vehicles have a top speed of 100 km/h.

# Battery Storage Systems

## **Bombardier/CSR Nanjing Puzhen Rolling Stock Company**

In April 2013, it was announced that Nanjing Puzhen Rolling Stock Company is to supply 15 OCS-free LRVs to Nanjing, the vehicles being designed and built under a technology licensing agreement with Bombardier.

The 100% low-floor vehicles will be based on Bombardier's Flexity 2 platform and will be 32 m long and 2.650 m wide. Each vehicle will be equipped with two *Primove Li-ion batteries*, which will be recharged using the OCS at station stops and the terminal.

# OCS-Charged Systems

## Siemens Sitras MES and HES Systems

The Siemens Sitras MES (mobile energy storage) system utilizes supercapacitors to enable braking energy to be captured, and later released to propel the vehicle. The Sitras HES (hybrid energy storage) system combines the supercapacitors with a SAFT Ni-MH traction battery to store both braking energy and power drawn from the OCS to enable OCS-free operation



**Siemens Sitras Energy Storage Unit and Traction Battery**  
Courtesy of Siemens

# OCS-Charged Systems

## Bombardier MITRAC

Bombardier's *MITRAC* energy saving system utilizes supercapacitors to enable braking energy to be captured, and later released to propel the vehicle. This allows energy savings, but also allows OCS-free operation.



### Courtesy of Bombardier

Between 2003 and 2007, a Bombardier GTN6 LRV operated by Mannheim MVV was equipped with a *MITRAC* energy saving unit and ran in normal revenue service. The *MITRAC* unit weighed 477 kg and had an output of 300 kW, and the trial demonstrated energy savings of up to 30%.

# OCS-Charged Systems

## Siemens Sitras MES and HES Systems

The Siemens Sitras MES (mobile energy storage) system utilizes supercapacitors to enable braking energy to be captured, and later released to propel the vehicle. The Sitras HES (hybrid energy storage) system combines the supercapacitors with a SAFT Ni-MH traction battery to store both braking energy and power drawn from the OCS to enable OCS-free operation

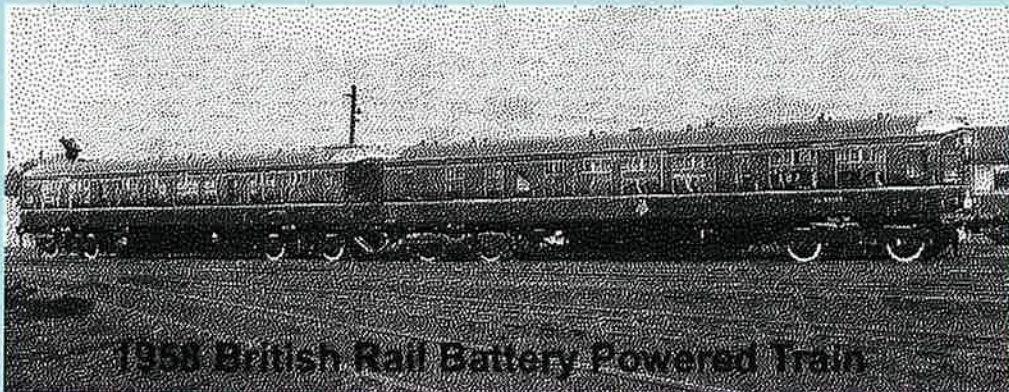


**Siemens Sitras Energy Storage Unit and Traction Battery  
Courtesy of Siemens**



# Battery Storage Systems

The use of batteries to propel rail vehicles is not new. As far back as 1958, British Rail operated a two-car train using lead acid batteries mounted on the underframes.



The trains ran successfully in revenue service for about four years, and completed over 100 miles per day at an average speed of 40 mph. The batteries were charged overnight, but received top up charges during operation.

# Types of Rolling Stock

The European approach for passenger vehicles EN 12663 divides all vehicles into five structural design categories. These five categories are listed below, with an indication of the types of vehicle generally associated with each:

- Category P-I      Coaches and locomotives;
- Category P-II     Fixed units;
- Category P-III    Underground rapid transit vehicles;
- Category P-IV    Light duty metro and heavy duty trams
- Category P-V      Tramway vehicles.



# Very Light Rail (VLR) as a means of delivering low-cost railways

**Dr Nick Mallinson**

Programme Manager, WMG Centre High  
Value Manufacturing Catapult

*LCV2018 Event Sponsor:*



**newmotion**  
charge street  
A member of the Shell Group



## **Very Light Rail (VLR) as a means of delivering low-cost railways**

*Dr Nick Mallinson, Programme Manager*

## Low Emissions Transport R&D at WMG



## Traditional Rail & Trams

- Typically heavy (vehicles and infrastructure)
  - Expensive
  - Highly regulated and standards driven
  - Slow to innovate
  - Efficient mass transit solution
  - Rapid on purpose-built alignments
- 
- In 2014, RSSB asked WMG to be 'disruptive innovators' in rail, maximising technology transfer from the automotive sector
  - DfT asked WMG to focus initially on making branch line services more affordable and sustainable

## Very Light Rail

- A potential enabler of lower-cost connectivity of urban, suburban and rural areas, including replacement of traditional tram solutions, the revitalisation of unprofitable branch lines and reopening of previously closed 'Beeching' lines
- A possible element in 'last mile' public transport journeys



## What is VLR?

- Very light weight vehicles (less than 1 tonne per linear metre) which can operate on less substantial track and infrastructure (lower costs of construction, operation and maintenance)
- Transfer of technology from the automotive sector (proven solutions, high quality, low cost, reduced risk)
- Self-propelled to eliminate expensive overhead electrification
- Vehicles designed for low cost manufacture allowing lower prices and bigger fleets
- Light weight slab track enabling fast installation and reduced maintenance costs
- Digital control to eliminate track side signals; autonomy to eliminate the cost of drivers

*BUT....VLR vehicles do not have 'mainline crashworthiness'*

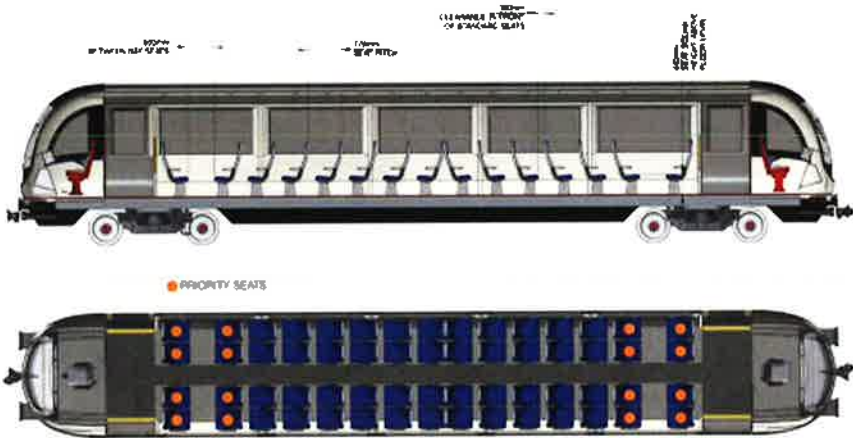


## Revolution VLR Project

- Consortium awarded £1.1m by RSSB from the Radical Train Competition in 2014 to create a very light-weight railcar with novel hybrid-drive self-propelled bogies
- Phase 1 completed in September 2016 - detailed vehicle concept design and propulsion solution submitted to RSSB
- Phase 2 commenced January 2018, with £2.75m funding from DfT/RSSB. The £5.5m project will deliver a fully functional vehicle demonstrator by April 2020
- Eversholt Rail has made a significant investment in Phase 2 and is working to identify the first routes for operation



# Modular Vehicle Architecture



**PASSENGER CAPACITY:**  
 SEATED - 60 (INCLUDING 16 TSI PRM "PRIORITY" SEATS)  
 STANDING - 40 (NORMAL OPERATION (1.4 PEOPLE/m<sup>2</sup>))  
 STANDING - 70 CRUSH (LOADING (1.4 PEOPLE/m<sup>2</sup>))

**REVOLUTION VLR**

18 tonnes tare (50% less than traditional DMU vehicle)

100kph+ top speed

High efficiency Cummins diesel-electric hybrid drives, using 2.8l engine, with Euro 6 exhaust after-treatment, mounted in a power-cassette under the vehicle body

Electric regenerative braking to zero mph; all electric operation in stations; electric launch from stations



# Initial Routes and Future Mainline Operation

## Segregated Routes

- RSSB has identified more than 30 routes in the UK where VLR technology could be used to transform uneconomic rural lines or enable lines closed in the Beeching era to be reopened and operated at much reduced cost.
- Train operating companies such as Northern, Arriva and Abellio have identified additional mothballed alignments that they would like to see re-opened.
- Rolling stock company, Eversholt Rail, intends to be the first mover in the introduction of VLR

## Mainline Operation

- For more widespread applications, a collaborative forum is to be set up with representatives from ORR, RSSB, Network Rail, ROSCOs and TOCs to work towards appropriate safety standards and operating protocols.



# Coventry Very Light Rail Project

## Coventry is growing rapidly

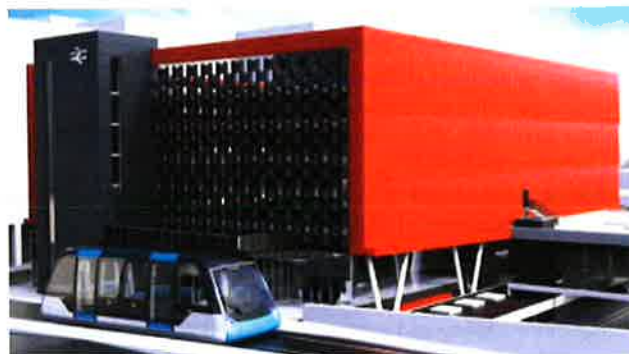
- as are many medium sized cities in the UK

## Significant road congestion and emissions

- urgent need for an improved public transport system which encourages modal shift from cars

## Affordable long-term public transport solution required

- trams are too expensive but rail based solutions offer permanence not provided by buses



## The Quest for Low Cost Urban Rail

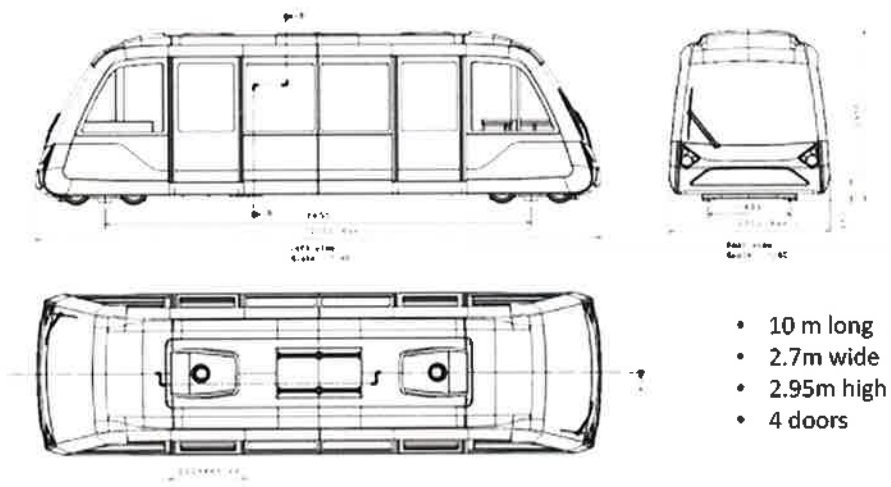
In 2017, Coventry City Council commissioned WMG to carry out 2 feasibility studies:

- A study focussed on low cost 'tram' vehicles
- A study focussed on low-cost utility-friendly track solutions

In early 2018 Coventry City Council awarded an £8.0m contract to WMG to oversee the development of a battery powered vehicle (to be 'autonomous ready') and associated track solution which will be delivered by mid 2020.



# Coventry VLR Shuttle Dimensions



- 10 m long
- 2.7m wide
- 2.95m high
- 4 doors



## Coventry VLR Research & Development

The aim is to achieve a **total** whole-system target cost of around **£7m per kilometre**

Note traditional tram solutions typically cost between £35m to £60m per kilometre

The R&D programme is split into four work streams:

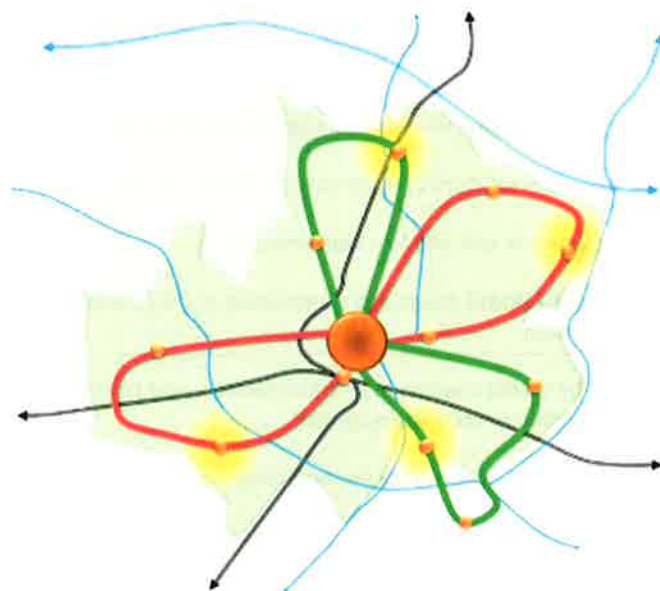
- **Vehicle – (led by WMG)** design and construction of a lightweight vehicle prototype, including a battery propulsion system
- **Track – (led by WMG)** creation of an innovative low-cost track form which can be installed into roads with minimal disruption to utilities' equipment
- **Route Selection – (Coventry City Council)** route development, business case and Transport & Works Act Order
- **Operations – (Transport for West Midlands):** system operation (control, security, ticketing), passenger information and communications



## Route Aspirations

A clover leaf network covering high density housing and commercial areas of the city

Future shuttle line from city centre to HS2 station at Birmingham Airport





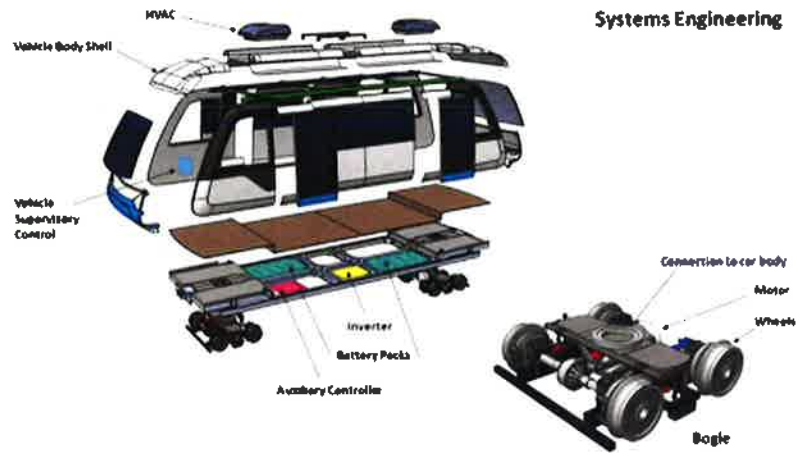
## Vehicle Workstream

### Main features:

- Bi-directional car
- Low floor, 2 bogies
- 15m radius cornering capability
- 6.8 tonnes tare
- Capacity 50+ (18 seats plus standees)
- Composite construction
- Battery powered (no overhead catenary)
- Charging of batteries via contacts on vehicle roof – electric bus chargers to be used
- Control system to SIL 3
- Autonomous ready
- Cooling via 2 x 6kW roof mounted units; heating from scavenged heat from vehicle systems



# Vehicle Components



Systems Engineering

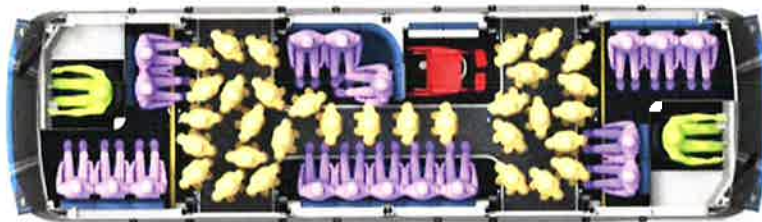
## Vehicle Interior – Standard Mode



# Passenger Capacity

With Wheelchair in use

Seats - 18  
Standing Capacity @4pax/m<sup>2</sup> (Shown below) - 32      Total Capacity = 50  
Standing Capacity @8pax/m<sup>2</sup> (Crush Loading) - 64      Total Capacity = 82



- Seating Passengers
- Standing Passengers
- Driver
- Wheelchair

## Track Solution Technical Challenges

The construction cost of new tram routes is dominated by the relocation costs of utilities – therefore ways to minimise the need for utility diversions offer opportunities for savings – ideally the track should be:

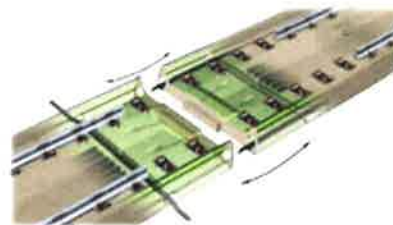
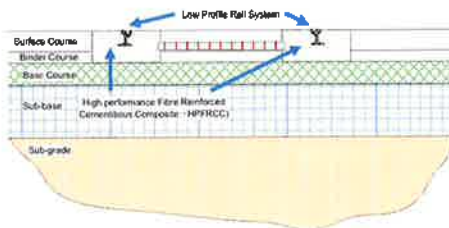
- Manufactured off-site, low cost, readily transportable
- Thin, durable, but able to support HGV loads
- Minimal disruption when laying
- Short timescales
- Few utilities diversions
- Minimal excavation
- Fast removal and reinstatement when access required by utilities
- Low noise and vibration emissions
- Safe for pedestrians and cyclists



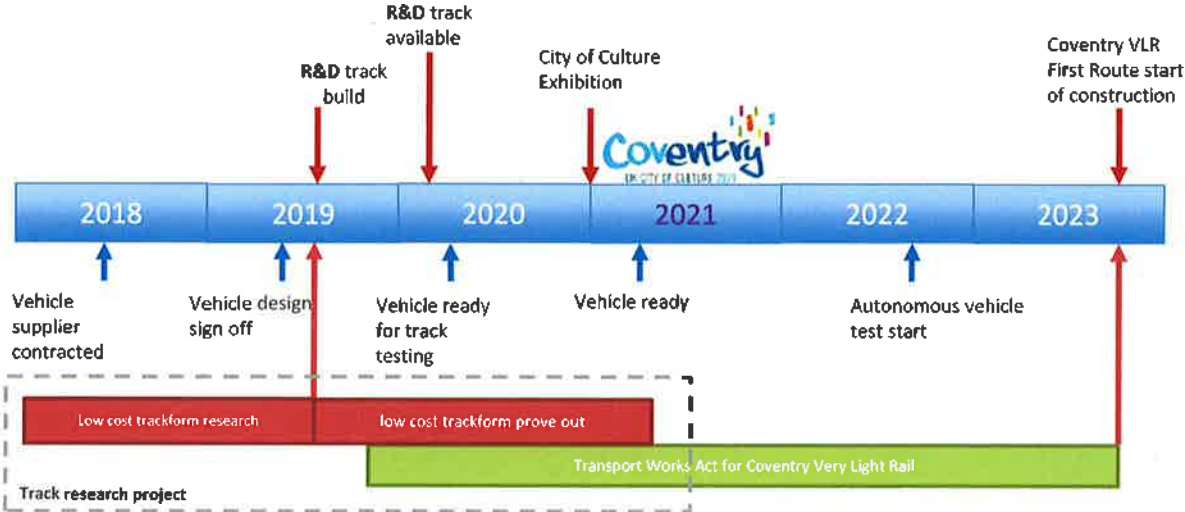
# Track Work Stream

## Requirements of novel track form:

- no thicker than tarmac layer on surface of the road
- subsoil loads no greater than with existing road traffic
- modular construction with off-site manufacture
- Rapid easy removal and reinstatement
- Acceptance from utilities that relocation is not generally required
- 6m to 8m long sections manufactured off-site



# Coventry VLR high level plan



## **'Hub-to-Home': the Next Revolution**

Our vision is that VLR trains and shuttles will be part of solutions to carry travellers the last few miles of a journey to their homes or work

These journeys might begin or be completed by autonomous road "pods", providing travellers with frictionless public transport from door-to-door

The proposed VLR National Innovation Centre in Dudley will focus on this



# The Very Light Rail National Innovation Centre



Situated at Castle Hill, Dudley, on the site of the former Dudley Station alongside the mothballed South Staffordshire railway line



2.2km twin test tracks



1. Lightweight structures
2. Propulsion and energy storage
3. Dynamics
4. Civils & infrastructure



## Questions?

Contact: Nick Mallinson



Tel: 

# Brookville Liberty Modern Streetcar

The **Brookville Liberty Modern Streetcar** (also known as the **Brookville Liberty** or simply the **Liberty**) is a streetcar built by Brookville Equipment Corporation since 2012.<sup>[1]</sup> It is manufactured at Brookville's plant in Pennsylvania.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Contents

### Design

### Orders and deliveries

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## Design

The Brookville Liberty Modern Streetcar is equipped with 750 V onboard battery packs made up of rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, referred to as an onboard energy storage system (OESS), that enable it to operate off-wire.<sup>[1][6]</sup> It is the first streetcar built in the United States capable of operating off-wire.<sup>[4]</sup> Brookville president Marion Van Fosson referred to it as "the Prius of the modern streetcar market" due to its hybrid design that allows it to run on either battery power or via pantograph and catenary wires.<sup>[6]</sup>

The streetcar is a 70% low-floor design that measures 66.5 feet (20.27 m) in length and can seat 32 passengers; it is also capable of accommodating between 125 and 150 people while fully loaded.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup> Empty, each car weighs 79,000 pounds (35,800 kg).<sup>[2]</sup> The streetcar rides on Brookville's Soft-Ride trucks on standard-gauge track, and can reach a top speed of 35 to 44 miles per hour (56 to 71 km/h).<sup>[1][5]</sup> The streetcar's loading gauge varies between 96 inches (2,438 mm), in Dallas, and 104 inches (2,642 mm), in Detroit and Milwaukee.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup>

## Orders and deliveries

### Brookville Liberty Modern Streetcar



A Brookville Liberty Modern Streetcar on the DART Dallas Streetcar line

<b>Manufacturer</b>	<u>Brookville Equipment Corporation</u>
<b>Built at</b>	<u>Brookville, Pennsylvania</u>
<b>Constructed</b>	2012–present
<b>Entered service</b>	2015–present
<b>Number under construction</b>	8
<b>Number built</b>	22
<b>Number in service</b>	22
<b>Capacity</b>	32 passengers (seated), 125 to 150 (total)
<b>Operator(s)</b>	U.S. streetcar operators (see table)
<b>Specifications</b>	
<b>Car length</b>	66.5 feet (20.27 m)
<b>Floor height</b>	13.75 inches (34.93 cm) (low-floor section)
<b>Doors</b>	2 per side
<b>Maximum speed</b>	35 to 44 mph (56 to 71 km/h)
<b>Traction motors</b>	4

In February 2013, Brookville signed a \$9.4 million contract with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) in Dallas for two Liberty Modern Streetcars to operate its Dallas Streetcar service between Union Station and Oak Cliff, making it the "first-ever American designed and manufactured off-wire capable streetcar to be delivered to a U.S. public transit agency".<sup>[7]</sup> DART took delivery of its first Brookville streetcar in March 2015.<sup>[4][5][8]</sup>

In June 2015, Brookville signed a contract with M-1 RAIL (later renamed the QLine) in Detroit to sell six Liberty Modern Streetcars for \$32 million, its second order for the streetcars.<sup>[1]</sup> On the Detroit line, the streetcars operate off-wire 60% of the time.<sup>[1][9]</sup> The first two cars were scheduled for a late 2016 delivery in anticipation of the line's opening in spring 2017, and were followed by four more deliveries by spring 2017.<sup>[9]</sup>

In November 2015, Milwaukee signed a four-car, \$18.6-million contract with Brookville for its Lakefront Line, the third order for the streetcars.<sup>[2][3]</sup> Milwaukee's cars feature bicycle racks as well as a climate-control system "adapted to meet the needs of Milwaukee's climate".<sup>[3]</sup> Delivery of the streetcars is expected to begin in mid- to late 2017, with all four cars being delivered by early 2018.<sup>[3]</sup>

In March 2016, Oklahoma City reached a final agreement with Brookville to purchase five streetcars, with an option for a sixth, at a cost of \$24.9 million for its Oklahoma City Streetcar.<sup>[10]</sup>

In 2017, Brookville was awarded a \$33 million contract to deliver six Liberty Streetcars for use on the forthcoming Tempe Streetcar<sup>[11]</sup> and a \$26.5 million contract from Sound Transit for five streetcars to be operated on the Tacoma Link line.<sup>[12]</sup> In 2018, Brookville secured the sale of two Liberty Modern Streetcars to Portland Streetcar.<sup>[13]</sup>

<b>Power output</b>	99 kW per motor
<b>Acceleration</b>	3 feet per second (0.91 m/s)
<b>Deceleration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular: 3 feet per second (0.91 m/s)</li> <li>Emergency: 5 feet per second (1.5 m/s)</li> </ul>
<b>Electric system(s)</b>	750 V DC catenary and a 750 V onboard energy storage system (OESS) consisting of lithium-ion batteries in battery packs
<b>Current collection method</b>	Pantograph
<b>Track gauge</b>	4 ft 8½ in (1,435 mm) standard gauge
<b>Notes</b>	
[1][2][3][4][5][6]	



A Brookville Liberty car for the Oklahoma City Streetcar system

City/Region	System	No. in service	Year ordered	Year operating
Dallas	Dallas Streetcar	4	2013	2015
Detroit	QLine	6	2015	2017
Milwaukee	The Hop	5	2015	2018
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma City Streetcar	7	2016	2018
Portland, Oregon	Portland Streetcar	3 (on order)	2018	2020 (planned)
Tacoma	Line T	5 (on order)	2017	
Tempe	Tempe Streetcar	6 (on order)	2017	2020 (planned)

## Accolades

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In October 2015, the Liberty Modern Streetcar won the Technical Innovation of the Year award at the Light Rail Transit Association's Global Light Rail Awards in London.<sup>[14][15][16]</sup>

## See also

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- [Streetcars in North America](#)

## References

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7. "Brookville Awarded Contract to Manufacture First American Designed and Produced Off-Wire Capable Modern Streetcars for City of Dallas" (<http://www.dart.org/news/news.asp?ID=1055>). Dallas Area Rapid Transit. March 11, 2013. Retrieved May 18, 2017.
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9. Roberts, Adrienne (September 15, 2015). "M-1 Rail's Streetcars to be Powered with 'Off-Wire' Technology" (<http://www.dbusiness.com/daily-news/Annual-2015/M-1-Rails-Streetcars-to-be-Powered-with-Off-Wire-Technology/>). *DBusiness*. Retrieved May 18, 2017.
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11. "Brookville Contracted to Design, Build Six Off-Wire Capable Liberty Streetcar Vehicles for Valley Metro" ([http://www.masstransitmag.com/press\\_release/12345296/brookville-contracted-to-design-build-six-off-wire-capable-liberty-streetcar-vehicles-for-valley-metros-tempe-streetcar-project](http://www.masstransitmag.com/press_release/12345296/brookville-contracted-to-design-build-six-off-wire-capable-liberty-streetcar-vehicles-for-valley-metros-tempe-streetcar-project)). *Mass Transit*. June 19, 2017. Retrieved July 12, 2017.
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## External links

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- [Official website \(http://www.brookvillecorp.com/streetcar-modern.asp\)](http://www.brookvillecorp.com/streetcar-modern.asp)
- 

Retrieved from "[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Brookville\\_Liberty\\_Modern\\_Streetcar&oldid=992739978](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Brookville_Liberty_Modern_Streetcar&oldid=992739978)"

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12/17/2020

**Subject:**

**From:** [REDACTED]

**To:** contactus@glassborocamdenline.com

Sat, 05 Dec 2020 16:48:58 -0500

**To Whomever,**

**Please forget this train project.**

**It is not necessary. Our tax burden is already oppressive.**

**E Shaughnessy**

**Mullica Hill**

Subject: Fwd: The proposed light rail train

From: Arlene <[REDACTED]>

To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com

Mon, 7 Dec 2020 19:13:44 -0500

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Shute, Arlene" <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** December 7, 2020 at 5:27:49 PM EST  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Fwd: The proposed light rail train

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Shute, Arlene <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Mon, Dec 7, 2020 at 5:16 PM  
**Subject:** The proposed light rail train  
**To:** <[pscirroto@mantuatownship.com](mailto:pscirroto@mantuatownship.com)>

Dear Mayor Peter Sciroto,

Thank you for all you do for our township to make it a better place in which to live.

I am certain you are well aware that community members are organizing in large numbers to prevent the light rail train from ever becoming a reality in our town. As a community by the tracks, we will never stand for this worthless project! I have been made aware of communities along the projected line doing the same to protest this outrageous idea!! The train would further divide our town and create a hazard like none other!

It is hard to imagine why a two billion dollar project would be considered during a pandemic when the full extent of the cost of its financial impact has yet to be realized! Residents up and down the corridor have lost jobs, are in danger of losing their homes and are looking for their next meal! It appears to many concerned that the planners may have viewed the pandemic as an opportunity to sneak past the train's approval without the residents' knowledge; they see them as being preoccupied with Covid-19. We do not have the financial resources to fix our state's many bridges, roads and dams that are in desperate need of repairs, yet the state sees fit to add a rail line which will be as unprofitable and under used as the Camden Trenton line! Employees working remotely during the pandemic will continue to do so long after it ends and there will be less need for travel to places of employment. There is currently a bus service that operates between Camden and Glassboro and is not a financial burden to taxpayers!

There seems to be little concern for the environment and the health and welfare of the community members of Mantua Township and the surrounding communities! A diesel electric train would surely produce pollution affecting both human life and wildlife. Are we not living in



an era where electric cars are the wave of the future as seen by the numerous ads promoting them? Noise pollution is a real concern and blowing a horn three times at every stop and crossing would definitely create a health issue and annoyance!

A major concern for safety exists every time a train passes through and the gates are closed backing up traffic! Our students in both our elementary and high school districts are mostly bussed which will create a serious safety issue for all involved! Sadly, it will not be safe to cross the tracks to visit neighbors or for children to play with friends on the other side of the tracks! Our quiet, safe community will be a thing of the past! Already, neighbors have contacted realtors to place their homes on the market! These are upstanding, contributing, tax paying community members and not the folks we wish to flee our township!

An unprofitable ,slow moving train is not something our town needs! It will only serve to benefit some of the politicians outside our community and destroy the town as we know it! Please do everything in your power to make this worthless proposal a thing of the past and never to be visited again! Let us not be like the communities in Burlington County who despise what the train has done to their towns and immediately prevent the train from destroying our community !

Thank you!

Arlene Shute

[REDACTED]

Sewell,NJ

[REDACTED]

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment****From: Mike Siciliano** **To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com****Tue, 8 Dec 2020 03:16:47 +0000 (UTC)**

To whom it may concern,

I live within 100 yards of the proposed light rail train track. I have 2 you kids, 6 and 11. I oppose this project on many many levels.

First, traffic. Both on the rails and in the neighborhood. The rail traffic poses a significant safety hazard to the neighborhood as kids cross the tracks many times a day to get to friends houses! The way the track run divide our neighborhood in to virtually 4 section, making track crossings a daily part of life for the neighborhood kids. With a train running 4 times every hour, I fear children will quickly become victims.

Let's talk costs. How much is the final subsidy per rider that the tax payer will carry? Does the River Line turn a profit? What about AC rail passenger line, does that turn a profit? PATCO, how many quarters a year does that run in the green? The only saving grace for patco, is that it is directly linked to Philadelphia's rail system. The GCL, won't have that link putting it in the same tier passenger rail as river line and AC rail. Why burden the already exhausted and financial strapped tax payer with another bill?

Why now, why diesel trains? As Governor Murphy pushes environmental responsibility and encourages green and renewable energy, the powers to be are recommending a new diesel rain system? What would that do to the air in our communities? The train is surrounded heavily by residential neighborhoods. As a resident of a local neighborhood, I'm not looking forward to the fresh diesel aroma every 15 minutes when I'm mowing my lawn or playing catch with my kids.

I can go on and on about why this train proposition makes absolutely zero sense. This is irresponsible leadership delegating power to make dreams of their own come true. With the "new normal" becoming permanent, companies and corporations are realizing they can fatten their bottom line by keeping employees remote. As a full time employee of a Philadelphia based company, i see first hand how vacant the city is. There's no longer mass congestion on the area highways nor is there nearly the amount of foot traffic in the city as there once was. It truly is time to put this idea to rest, for good. Take the money and help the tax payers out. Use the funding to expand bus routes and equipment that is in dire need of upgrade or repair. Don't take this opportunity to deepen the debt of the people. Think about it. Nothing good comes to mind.

Thanks,

Mike Siciliano

Sent from Me

Subject: GCL

From: Laura Snow <[REDACTED]>

To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com

Fri, 4 Dec 2020 23:39:27 -0500

Hello, my name is Laura Snow. I live on East Atlantic Ave in Sewell, NJ. I am extremely concerned for my children's and neighborhoods safety with a train going by all day. This train is not going through empty areas but going through school communities with playgrounds, schools, open grass areas for kids to play. Also, I will be paying the bill with tax increases? This project is not the slightest bit profitable and will need to take tax payers hard earned money to just stay afloat. Where is the communities vote in all this? This effects our lives the most and we have zero input? Who will be paying for damage that will occur overtime to my foundation with all the vibrations from trains? How about the air quality? Environmental impacts in local ecosystems? Our property values? Who will want to live in these communities now with hearing a train horn blow all day? People will move out and you won't get your tax money then. So many failed rail projects in other places I don't see how a train to basically nowhere will be a improvement to these communities it will pull apart. Such a waste of resources. We need the numbers and proof this will not destroy our lovely towns, you owe this respect to these communities.

Laura Snow

Sent from my iPhone

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment****From: Matthew Speak** [REDACTED]**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com****Thu, 17 Dec 2020 18:05:21 -0500**

Hello,

My name is Matthew Speak and I am a resident of Pitman, NJ and I am writing to express my concerns regarding the Glassboro-Camden Line. My house is located on East Ave, in very close proximity to the railroad crossing on the corner of Laurel Ave and Broadway.

The freight train that moves past my house once a day is tolerable being that it's only once per day. However, with the GCL moving through town every 15 minutes going both ways, even a moderate level of noise will be extremely annoying to deal with.

My biggest concerns have to do with noise, congestion, and property value. They are as follows:

1. The noise from the actual train transporting through town.
2. The noise from the train's wheels screeching against the tracks as the train nears the station.
3. The noise from the train's horn.
4. The annoyance of the train shaking the ground. My house currently shakes when the usual train goes by.
5. The noise from the railroad crossing bells ringing every 15 minutes.
6. The potential drop in property value for a house that sits right next to a railroad crossing.
7. The congestion that will arise from traffic being stopped every 15 minutes on the busiest road in town.
8. The congestion that will arise from the train being backed up.
9. The influx of impatient drivers rushing to catch the train.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns.

Matthew Speak

**Subject: Don't do it!!!**

**From: Stacy scher** <[REDACTED]>

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 08:41:06 -0500**

Please cancel plans to move ahead with this railway plan. It is going to wreak our small communities not to mention endanger our kids who walk to school. The towns this train will go through already pay huge property taxes. Wenonah a beautiful quiet town has 3 crossings. My son crosses Woodbury Heights to get to Gateway. These are idealic small town American towns that will be ruined by the noise, pollution and traffic. This train is unnecessary. I used a bus when needed to get to and from Rutgers Camden to Woodbury to work and Wenonah to live as a college student when needed. Now there is Uber and Lyft. Please don't ruin our towns for a train that will run a 20 minute car ride from beginning to end. Thank you, Stacy Scher

Sent from my iPhone

**Subject: RE: Glassboro-Camden Line Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

**From: Jeff Storms** <[REDACTED]>

**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Thu, 17 Dec 2020 21:37:21 -0500**

**Ms. Victoria Malaszecki, Public Involvement Liaison.**

**Attached is the Westville Environmental Commission's response to the EIS.**

**Jeff Storms, Commissioner.**

December 16, 2020

Ms. Victoria Malaszecki, Public Involvement Liaison  
PO Box 536  
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062

RE: Glassboro-Camden Line Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

#### FLOODING AND PARKING

I spoke at the last Public Hearing at Rowan University and invited you to Westville but warned if it's raining "bring a boat" which drew laughter from those familiar with the area. You see, the station site is a Tidal Flood Plain. I personally spoke to panel members, identifying problem areas on the plans. Well, you took my invitation to heart, but your experts dispute the problem.

Now you want to compound the problem by bulldozing properties and paving an area for 330 cars. The site currently contains a pond and wetland soil that absorbs some floodwaters. Originally, the area was a series of lakes connected by a stream that emptied into the Delaware River – hence the bowl shape. Twentieth century engineers decided it was safe to cover streams and lakes creating roads. Well they were wrong – it wasn't safe.

On a warm, sunny day – depending on Moon size and tide height – water will seep, ooze or pour from 6 storm water inlets on Broadway near Willow because the flood gates on Route 130 don't close correctly and probably never will. Even the DOT Engineers tasked with rebuilding the Route 130 Bridge admit they can't stop the flooding. Surrounded by water on three sides (Delaware River, Lake Martha and Big Timber Creek), the flooding situation in Westville will only worsen as oceans and rivers continue to rise..

The last extreme flood made the National News with helicopters hovering while EMS, Fire and Public Works employees rescued people from homes. Extensive property damage, cars floating, even the Bank flooded. There were no human casualties but the residents of a small chicken coop at New Street and Broadway drowned. The date was June 19, 2019. It was considered a thirty year event.

I remember the last extreme flood in the mid 1990's – even Route 42 was flooded. I tried repeatedly to reach my office in Marlton only to be turned back at each point. Even returning home was difficult as my previous routes were barricaded. "You can't there from here" should be our town's motto. Of course with flooding or accidents come the onslaughts of traffic from Delsea Drive, Route 45 and Route 130 bringing the area to a standstill. No where do you address the problem of cars using Pine St. crossing then traveling two short one lane roads (Station Rd. and Woodbine Ave.) to reach the parking lot on Broadway; or Delsea traffic rushing down Duncan

Ave. by Parkview School to catch a train. This is a walking area for school children who should have the right of way - but will they?

Among your "acquisitions" is Kelsch Associates (368 Broadway) a Social Services Agency under DHS contract to provide housing, education and training for Developmentally Disabled Adults. While 10 employee may work full time at that location, up to 50 staff may visit the office for supplies, work schedules, time sheets, pay checks and client stipends. The residential setting is soothing for clients who occasionally visit. The Parking lot is filled with back up vehicles for client transport. There is no other site in Westville that meets their specific needs.

I also fail to understand the necessity of acquiring the driveway beside Kelsch (400 Broadway) but not the apartment units. It fails the basic need to move trashcans from rear to street or provide emergency access for Fire and EMS vehicles.

If you still intend to build this parking lot, then it is mandatory that permeable paving material be used to mitigate flooding. If you do not, then the degree of flooding and property damage will rise exponentially.

It's odd that Westville is one of the smallest towns in Gloucester County but we have the second highest acquisition rate (22%). Why?  
[Attachment 12: Table 1 Pg. 9, Table 2 Pg. 10]

Why do we have the largest surface parking lot? [EIS Pg. 16, 1.4.3.4]

Why must our taxpayers foot the bill for policing your parking lot?

Why does Wenonah have the option to decline a station?

BIG TIMBER CREEK TO WESTVILLE STATION - Attachment 7, Phase 1A, 5.4, Pg. 43

Where is the Temporary Parking referenced in the above Archaeological section Westville Station? ... bus/auto drop-off area and temporary parking spaces to the west of the rail line ... this is the logical solution - utilizing Conrail frontage to absorb traffic from Routes 295/130/45.

Park Ave. would feed traffic to/from the lot with a pedestrian only crossing to the station. A small parking lot on the east side would capture traffic from Delsea Drive. This option protects residents and infrastructure from potential harm.

In the same section the report notes ... southeast corner of Big Timber Creek is covered with fill and occupied by a salvage/storage yard and diner. Sorry, this is Westville's Public Works Yard and not subject to resizing, reduction or confiscation to accommodate the new GCL Rail Bridge. Google Earth failed you.



## AIR QUALITY

Your Air Quality statistics from 2013-2014 are useless and irrelevant. Historic global wildfires in Europe, Russia, Australia, United States and Canada darkened the sky, impaired air quality and altered the status quo. When in our wildest dreams did we imagine the Australian Navy rescuing people from beaches or Koalas on the verge of extinction. Smoke and particulates from fires in Canada and the west coast fell in our area.

The roll backs of the EPA Clean Air and Water Acts since 2016 put the final nail in the coffin. Even the lowly shower head was axed for better hair. Your latest Ozone statistics are from 2016; but in the past three years multiple Ozone Alerts have been issued. All air quality emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and Ozone must be redone quickly to reflect current conditions. Also the impact of idling vehicles (330) on residential health must be included.

## NOISE

Noise will always be a problem. My home in Newbold - the original site of J. M. White's Wind Mill Farm circa 1690 (thank you for the historical info).is roughly two blocks from the rail tracks. The train whistle and gate crossing signals are audible and I can discern wheel rotation as the whistle fades. We have a Noise Ordinance with nighttime restrictions. Residents would protest any night time construction activity.

## VIBRATION

Vibration could be a severe problem in an older community that was settled before the Revolution of 1776. A resident who first lived on Broadway at New Street says her home shook when trains went by, My home like many others has a fieldstone foundation . Will it survive your construction and daily use?

## PARK LAND, GREEN ACRES AND FARM PRESERVATION

While not affecting Westville, I personally object to taking natural places and farms for commercial use no matter what the reason. Green Acres and Farm Preservation are state programs to encourage stewardship of natural resources. Are we to be known as the Rail State instead of the Garden State? You can't eat steel!

The primary purpose of the GCL line is to move students between Rowan and Rutgers. Will it help commuters? That depends on their destination, time required and cost. Many have safety reservations about connections at the Rand Center. Unfortunately, Camden still has an image issue.

It is difficult to determine the veracity of this EIS when the data vacillates from page to page or section to section. Multiple reports by different people at different times were used but not proofed for accuracy or continuity. The EIS still has problems that must be addressed and I believe Westville is being use d as a dumping ground for parking because we are low income and won't complain. Well, I am complaining

I was raised in Philadelphia and my parents moved here in 1967. An Environmental Commissioner since 1987, I strive to improve the environmental health and safety of my community. Reliable transportation that spans flooding and traffic congestion is needed but it must benefit everyone.

These comments are my own opinions as the Commission has no formal position.

Joyce A. Lovell, Chairperson  
Westville Environmental Commission  
[REDACTED]  
Westville, NJ 08093-1028

[REDACTED]

**Subject: Public Opinion for the proposed train route****From: Jonathan Streater** [REDACTED]**To: publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com****Thu, 17 Dec 2020 09:58:39 -0500****Good morning,**

I would like to voice my opinion against the proposed train route that travels through Pitman and other small towns on the existing Conrail train tracks. I believe this would be a major disruption to our quality of life and downtown business district. A train ever 8 minutes would change our towns dynamics and be a threat to children walking to school and overall public safety. Pitman is a school walking district. I believe the alternative route that travels along route 55 is a better option. Gloucester County still will receive the perks of having a passenger train but it will not negatively impact the small towns. I hope the governing body takes these opinions into consideration. I also believe that if this is put on a ballot it would be rejected. The majority of residents do not know about this project.

**Thank you,****Jon Streater****[REDACTED]**  
**Pitman, NJ 08071**

**Subject: Draft EIS Formal Comment****From: Jeff Taylor** [REDACTED]**To: "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>****Thu, 17 Dec 2020 20:50:25 -0500 (EST)**

Below are my comments for the Draft EIS of the Glassboro Camden Light Rail line. Thank you for this public comment period. Jeff Taylor

Train crossing stoppages will be longer than what are being suggested. Within the documents, tables show crossings would remain in level of Service A. Being familiar with the light rail line in Trenton, traffic stoppages at crossings, especially at Cass Street, are sometimes quite long as the train station is too close to the crossing. Thus, the gates remain down during the entire time the train is at the station. That rail line runs 4 trains per hour. This rail line is proposing 8 trains per hour in each direction, or up to 16 stoppages per hour at each crossing in the proposed corridor. And in some cases, these stoppages may be extended-length stoppages if the trains are deemed close enough together in opposing directions, or close enough to the stations, in which case the gates will remain down for possibly several minutes. Depending on lead time for the crossings to close and the time needed to unload and load the trains at the stations, rough estimates are that traffic could be stopped up to 2 minutes per train, which would be up to 4 minutes at a time for closely spaced trains, or 32 minutes out of every hour.

Stated within the documents, it is noted that VMT will be reduced by approximately 2% during peak period travel. The proposed stations are throughout a fair portion of Gloucester County, where people would be commuting on various roadways. The overall difference on any one roadway is so minute and fractional to any volume data that it would be inconsequential to any travel time savings in the area.

However, that all said, I do believe there are some portions of the light rail line worth pursuing. The rail line can make use of the parking garage at the former Underwood Memorial Hospital in Woodbury, which is currently operating mainly as an Emergency Room. While I don't know any details about potential or future long-term uses of this site, a future path of the light rail line could involve the distance between Camden and Woodbury, curving around the existing CVS at Red Bank Ave & Route 45, and ending next to the existing parking garage for the former hospital. This location will still have the potential to draw riders from many of the same areas as the currently proposed path of the line, but will route traffic down State Route 45 to this train stop. By utilizing this parking garage as the end of the line for a light rail train, it could encourage growth in the city, both by passing traffic and foot traffic, which would be within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of all of downtown Woodbury, and be an asset to any future development of the hospital site.

Also, the report reflects heavily on at-grade train crossings. However, I didn't see anything mentioned in reference to the sub-standard grade-separated crossing over US 130 at the Brooklawn Circles. The clearance under this overpass is signed at 13' 0". Additionally, and more significantly, the roadways under this overpass are subjected to frequent flooding, which is a problem NJDOT had attempted to tackle without much success due to limitations in the area, especially the train crossing. Any rail project should include a provision to raise the grade-separated crossing to a sufficient height to both raise US 130 above flooding levels, and to provide modern-standard clearances underneath the crossing.

**Subject: Bad idea!**

**From: Lyndsay DeMaio** <[REDACTED]>

**To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Sat, 28 Nov 2020 21:06:48 -0500**

This rail line would be a terrible idea! It would lower the value of our homes and wouldn't be safe for our children with many people coming and going in our small quiet neighborhood. Please don't ruin our neighborhood. Please take your business elsewhere. Plus with COVID many people are out of work and the ones that do work don't want to be surrounded by germs on an in closed train. The city is 15 min drive. No need for a train.

Thank You!

Lyndsay Taylor  
[REDACTED]

**Subject: GCL Rail comment****From:** brian toal [REDACTED]**To:** "publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com" <publicinvolvement@glassborocamdenline.com>**Fri, 18 Dec 2020 03:50:31 +0000 (UTC)**

I grew up in Woodbury Heights and moved to Mantua Twp (Sewell) over 30 years ago. I am only a few houses away from the railroad tracks so I am accustomed to the occasional rail traffic. I have thought long and hard about the proposed rail line (GCL) and must voice my opposition to this proposal.

I served as a police officer in our area for over 30 years and I feel that I have a very good feel for the pulse of our community and what may help or hurt our residents. The GCL will undoubtedly attract an unsavory element to our quiet communities. I have witnessed first hand how criminals and undesirable people utilize public transportation to effect quiet communities like we have along this proposed rail path.

Prior to COVID, my wife was working in the city and commuting daily. Since Covid lockdowns she has been working from home, like millions of other Americans. We have changed the way we work and travel. The need to commute has been greatly diminished. I don't have the hard numbers but it is easy to see how traffic across the bridges has changed over the past year. There is simply no need for a public rail service to commute to work. I think we are all aware of how covid will forever change the way we work and travel.

The world is changing rapidly and public rail travel seems to be a step in reverse. We had rail travel along these lines back when they were first opened. They were discontinued for good reason. The area changed, people changed the way they travel and the rail lines were not cost effective. I now wonder why we are even considering a very expensive project like this. This project will only continue to be a burden for the taxpayers.

The idea that my property value will increase due to its proximity to the GCL is absurd. With a train crossing only a block away from my home, I can't imagine living here. I can't imagine how much of an interruption this will be for our residents and vehicle traffic in the area. With a freight train coming through only a few times a day, we experience some traffic issues. With a train stopping, regularly, near these crossings is going to create quite a problem.

Having served as a first responder and volunteer firefighter, I am sure this rail service will cause problems for our first responders. This train will slow our response times and create a host of new problems. Our first responders need to train for the "what if's". This will mean a lot of new and very expensive rescue equipment and thousands of training hours for our first responders. This training and need for equipment is not a one time purchase. These things require regular maintenance, upgrading and constant training. This financial burden will of course have to be paid for by our residents.

During my time as a police officer I spent quite a lot of time dealing with emergency management training, budgeting, site surveys, as well as responding to real life catastrophes. Pedestrian rail travel is a huge emergency management issue. Beyond the obvious accident concerns, rail travel is a very attractive target for terrorists. We don't want or need to introduce this new, very complex and very real problem to our community. The addition of this rail service will certainly require more services, equipment and first responder personnel to address this burden.

This money could be used for so many other improvements to our infrastructure. Our roadways and bridges could really use some work. Why on earth would we spend millions of dollars on a system that makes no economic sense? This rail service is certainly not a money making venture.

With the massive cost of this project and the negative impact it will have on the wonderful communities it will disrupt, we can't sit by and allow this project to move forward. I hope that our local leaders can come to the realization that this project decreases safety in our communities and increases the financial burden to our taxpayers.

Thank you for taking the time to hear me out on this issue.

**Brian Toal**[REDACTED]  
Sewell, NJ 08080

**Subject: Thank you!**

**From: nadiazhiltsova <[REDACTED]>**

**To: contactus@glassborocamdenline.com**

**Mon, 09 Nov 2020 07:36:28 -0500**

**We can't wait until this line is up and running!!!**

**Rail is the way of the future and would ease our commute to the city, reduce carbon footprint and bring job growth along the line.**

**Just wanted to say thanks!**

**Is there a projected completion eta?**

**Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy S8+.**