

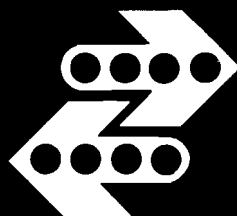
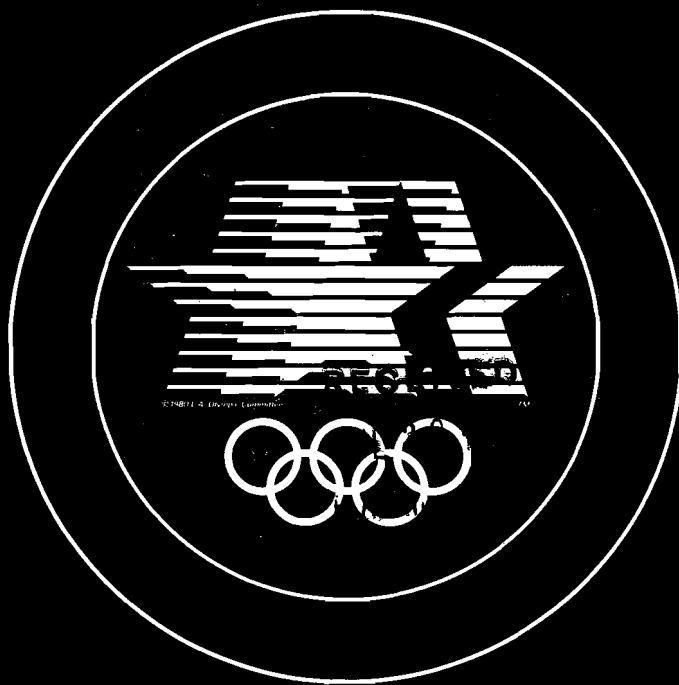
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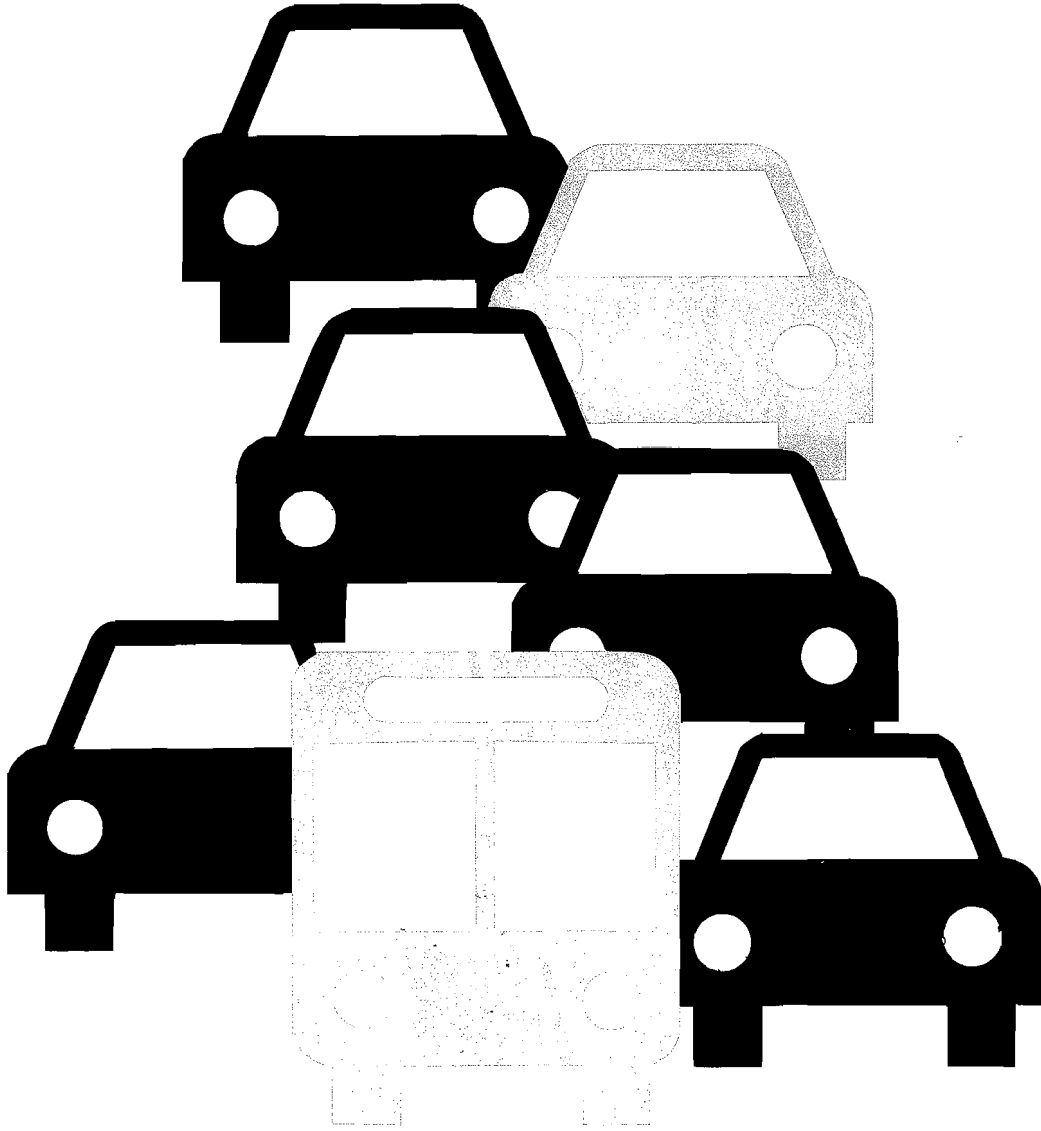
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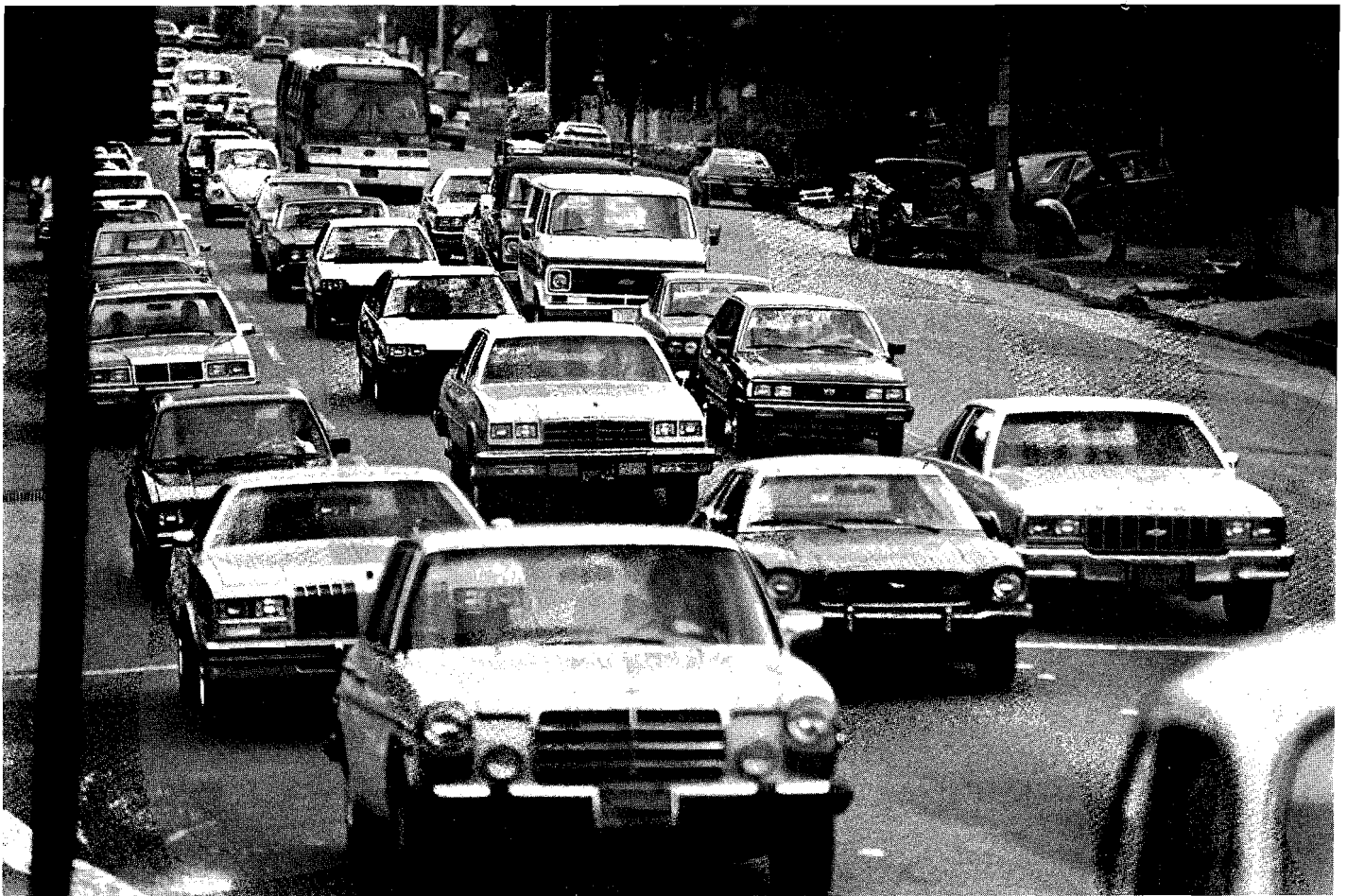
olympics

Los Angeles' SCRFD is busy taking steps to head off a massive citywide gridlock of traffic that some predict when an estimated 7 million visitors arrive later this month for the 1984 Summer Olympics





LA Trying to Head Off Olympic-Size Traffic Jam



The SCRTD is putting a special 550-bus Olympic fleet into service during this summer's Games to help handle the millions of visitors to LA and to keep the region's regular heavy traffic flowing

Los Angeles was a different city the first time it hosted the summer Olympic Games. That was in 1932. Like the rest of the United States, it was struggling through the Great Depression.

The city was like an overgrown small town. Its population was climbing toward the 1.5 million mark, but with a mixture of people from everywhere it was a growing cosmopolitan center and it had big aspirations. Talking motion pictures were only a few years old then but Hollywood, its most famous suburb, had already become a universal byword.

The region's first freeway had not yet been built and commuters relied instead on an expanding network of palm tree-lined

“An estimated 7 million spectators are expected to attend the Games which have been called the biggest entertainment spectacle ever staged in Southern California and perhaps anywhere.”

streets, avenues and boulevards. They also had one of the nation's most efficient transit systems—a combined network of streetcars and interurban trains, plus a growing fleet of buses and trackless trolleys, that made it a breeze to get almost anywhere in the sprawling city.

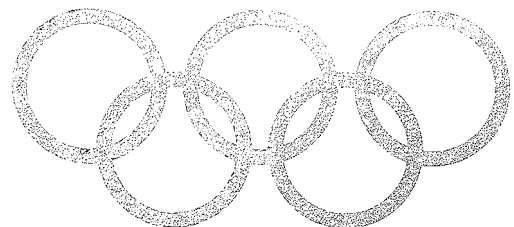
Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, built nearly 10 years earlier a few miles south of downtown, had been enlarged to hold 105,000 spectators for the 1932 10th Olympiad. It was the site

for the Games' opening and closing ceremonies and the high visibility track and field events.

Later this month the Coliseum will again become the focal point of an Olympics competition. For 16 days, starting July 28 and continuing through Aug. 12, the 23rd Olympiad will unfold at the Coliseum and at 23 other venue sites spread out across four counties. An estimated 7 million spectators are expected to attend the Games which have been called the biggest entertainment spectacle ever staged in Southern California and perhaps anywhere.

While it was easy to get to the Coliseum and the other Olympic sites in 1932, time and more than a doubling of Los Angeles' population have changed the city into a crowded metropolis where traveling, even under normal conditions, is often a challenge.

But superimposing a prolonged event with the scope of this summer's Olympics over a city already notorious for its jammed



freeways has nightmarish implications. Since planning for the 1984 Games began five years ago, transportation—both for Olympic spectators and the region's daily commuters—has emerged as one of the Games' monumental problems.

Yet, it is also a problem transportation planners believe they can handle—given a little luck, as many have pointed out—even though the Games are being staged for the first time since 1960 in a city lacking a rail rapid transit system capable of carrying thousands of passengers.

Long ago the tracks for the Los Angeles region's expansive streetcar and commuter train systems were torn up. The trackless trolleys have disappeared, too, and the burden for getting most Olympic spectators and participants through traffic to the venue sites will fall on publicly operated bus systems and private bus carriers.

Most of that burden is being shouldered by the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD). Already operating the nation's largest all-bus system, the district is ready to put a special 550-bus Olympic fleet into service during the Games to carry four out of every 10 spectators to the Coliseum area, the University of California at Los Angeles, the Rose Bowl, Dodger Stadium and other major venue sites in the Los Angeles metropolitan area.

The SCRTD says the special Olympic operation, which will run independently from its regular daily commuter service, is comparable to starting up the fourth largest transit system in California for the 16-day period.

Other statistics give a graphic picture of the logistics involved in transporting the Games' millions of spectators and participants while keeping the Los Angeles region's regular heavy traffic flowing.

For example, the first of nearly 750,000 estimated out-of-town visitors have already started arriving for the Games and the



LA Mayor Thomas Bradley, left, and SCRTD Board President Mike Lewis hold SCRTD 1984 Olympic Commemorative token sets that will raise revenue to help pay for the extra bus service

Olympic Arts Festival, which started June 1 and will continue through the Games.

During the 16 days of ceremonies and competition, the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, the private group in charge of the Games, estimated at least 400,000 ticket holders will be traveling to and between the venue sites each day.

Another 12,000 persons—the athletes, their coaches and staffs—will be at Olympic Villages at the University of Southern California (USC) adjacent to the Coliseum and at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) 10 miles/16.1 km west of downtown Los Angeles. Another group of athletes will be at a smaller Village on the University of California at Santa Barbara

staffs, field personnel, visiting VIPs, representatives of companies sponsoring the Games, suppliers and countless others. For example, a brigade of truck drivers has been on the freeways for weeks hauling such items as 47 miles/75.8 km of fencing, 4,000 mattresses and 34,000 office chairs for use at the Olympic Villages and the competition and training sites.

Based on information transportation planners began assembling many months ago, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the agency responsible for the Los Angeles region's more than 600 miles/967.7 km of freeways, estimates that Olympic-related traffic building up this month will peak at about a 10% higher figure than normal during the 16-day competition period.

To plan for this increased traffic—and also to put the plans into effect—an Olympic Transportation Advisory Committee was set up with the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee and all major transportation-related agencies represented. Virtually all the more than 80 cities in Los Angeles County and many in

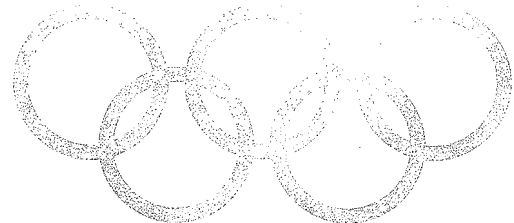
“It is known as a gridlock. Traffic comes to a halt. Engines overheat and so do tempers. No one can move.”

campus 90 miles/146 km northwest of downtown.

The Olympic athletes, including many who have already arrived for the Games, will be traveling to 20 different training centers in addition to the competition sites.

Many members of another corps—an estimated 8,000 media representatives from around the world who will report the competitions and related events—also are on hand.

Besides these groups, there are the Olympic officials, their



neighboring Orange and Ventura counties also have been involved because of the widespread locations of the Olympic venues.

Aside from those in the central Los Angeles area, the sites are spread over a 130-mile/209.7 km region, ranging from Lake Casitas in Ventura County, where the canoeing and rowing events will be held, to Coto de Caza in a rural section of Orange County, site of the modern pentathlon.

Although the canoeing and rowing events, for example, will be among the more lightly attended competitions, traffic nevertheless will be a problem. Lake Casitas, a reservoir, is in a rural area and seating is available for only 10,000 spectators. There is also limited parking and spectators are being advised to share rides or take buses. To avoid congestion, checkpoints will be set up as early as 4 a.m. on days the events are held to keep out everyone except ticket holders, the area's residents and authorized vehicles.

However, it will be a different story in central Los Angeles, especially around the Coliseum-USC area and UCLA in Westwood.

Two different events—gymnastics and tennis—will be held at UCLA, which contributes to what already is one of the Los Angeles region's most traffic-congested communities. Over the years Westwood has gained notoriety for having the busiest intersection in Los Angeles—the point where Wilshire and Sepulveda boulevards bisect on the edge of the campus.

An estimated 20,000 spectators will be attending the daily Olympic events at UCLA and nearly half are expected to go by bus because of congestion, limited campus parking and no street parking. Even so, the Caltrans and other transportation planning agencies expect their biggest problems at the Coliseum-USC venue and Olympic Village sites.

More than 120,000 people will be attending the Olympic



A special Olympic bus waits outside LA's Memorial Coliseum, the site of the 1932 10th Olympiad, as well as the focal point of the 1984 Olympic competitions that also will take place at 23 other sites

opening and closing ceremonies and other events, including track and field, boxing at the Sports Arena next to the Coliseum and swimming and diving at the new Olympic pool on the university campus.

Exposition Park, in which the Coliseum and Sports Arena are located, normally has 16,000 parking spaces, but buses and special vehicles will be using them. For that reason 65% of the Olympic spectators bound for the Coliseum area are expected to go by bus.

Part of Caltrans' Traffic Management Plan, which has been worked out with Los Angeles city transportation officials, calls for freeway ramp closures at key points on the nearby Harbor

changed back to their normal traffic patterns after the Games.

Transportation planners view these conversions, as well as the freeway ramp and street closures and other traffic measures being taken in the downtown-Coliseum corridor, as a way to avoid what they fear most: a traffic stalemate.

Such a possibility has been discussed, almost in hushed tones, and then dismissed. It is known as a gridlock. Traffic comes to a halt. Engines overheat and so do tempers. No one can move.

The likeliest day for this to occur, although no one believes the worst will happen, is Aug. 3, the Games' seventh day. It has often been called Black Friday and the Games will be in full swing with the first track and field events scheduled at the Coliseum.

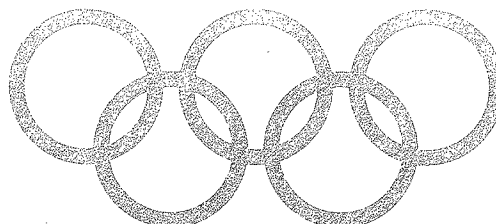
Swimming and boxing competition will be underway at USC and the Sports Arena. There will be baseball at Dodger Stadium a few miles up the Harbor and Pasadena freeways and athletes

(Continued on page 50)

“All that's needed is a positive spirit of cooperation . . . to keep the freeways and streets moving. . . .”

and Santa Monica freeways (the Santa Monica Freeway is the Los Angeles region's busiest, carrying nearly 250,000 cars a day) and shutting down major streets adjacent to the Coliseum and the USC campus for the Games' duration.

Two months ago the city also converted two main downtown streets—Figueroa and Flower—to one-way thoroughfares so commuters could become accustomed to the new routing. Both, like the Harbor Freeway, skirt Exposition Park and will be



olympics

(Continued from page 11)

will be competing in 14 other events at sites ranging from the Rose Bowl to UCLA.

As many as 405,000 spectators could be attending Olympic events in the Los Angeles area alone on Aug. 3 and many others probably will be lined along the shore to watch yachting at Long Beach.

Caltrans concedes that "major incidents," such as overturned trucks or spilled loads, could occur on the freeways, crippling freeway and surface street traffic for long periods. However, its studies show this encouraging sign:

"When the Coliseum is in operation on a workday, commuters will find that congestion patterns will be similar to current rush hour conditions (although) congestion will occur sooner and last longer.

"When the Coliseum is not involved . . . the freeways will not be as congested but traffic will be heavy for longer periods than usual. On weekends traffic will flow smoothly, with a few exceptions . . ."

"The Games are giving the Los Angeles business community a chance to look at what traffic may be like 15 or 20 years from now."

Caltrans, along with other agencies concerned about the Olympics' transportation problems, expects to have a computerized, up-to-the-minute view of freeway traffic conditions.

In the early 1970s, the state agency began monitoring a 42-mile/67.7-km freeway loop in the central Los Angeles area with electronic sensors embedded in the freeway lanes. Since then it has added television cameras to this surveillance system and extended the monitoring devices to other freeways.

Now the agency has the capability, through an expanded wall-sized electrified map in its downtown headquarters, to spot freeway problems and respond promptly with the help of California Highway Patrol helicopters, ground units, tow trucks and other service vehicles.

During the Games, this downtown Control Center—beefed up with transportation experts from the region's major traffic agencies—will serve as the heart and eyes of the Olympics' Traffic Management Plan.

"All that's needed is a positive spirit of cooperation . . . to keep the freeways and streets moving . . ." Caltrans says.

SCRTD is putting the finishing touches on its own Command Center a few blocks down the street from Caltrans' headquarters. From there, the SCRTD, using information from Caltrans and its own field personnel, expects to monitor its own special Olympic bus fleet, maneuvering the 550 vehicles along 24 shuttle, express and park-and-ride routes. Their primary destinations will be the Coliseum and other heavy attendance venue sites, especially where parking is limited.

For example, the district is setting up three terminals—two downtown and another in the Crenshaw Shopping Center in southwest Los Angeles—to provide shuttle bus service to the Coliseum and other venues in Exposition Park.

During the Olympics' 16-day period, the district's special fleet is expected to carry 3.5 million passengers, ranging from 84,000 on opening day to 326,000—the peak single day load—on Aug. 3, Black Friday.

Fares for Olympic patrons will be at a premium. The district is heavily subsidized but none of that money will be used to offset the Olympic bus fleet's \$13.6 million budget. Instead, riders will pay from \$2 for one-way shuttle service to \$6 for one-way express rides longer than 20 miles/32.3 km.

The SCRTD estimates that these fares will cover all but \$1.7 million of the special service's costs and that difference will be made up through the sale of special Olympic commemorative tokens.

Climaxing 18 months of planning, SCRTD General Manager John Dyer noted in a report to the district's board of directors the uncertainty the agency faces in deploying its special Olympic buses and regular 2,500-bus fleet during the 16-day competition period.

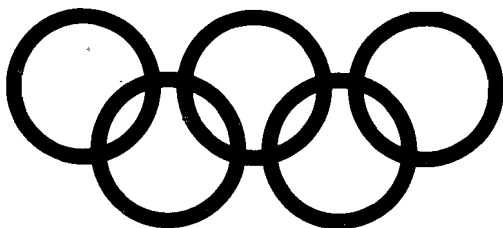
The Games, he said, should generate additional tourist travel to many Los Angeles area attractions, throwing a greater strain on the regular fleet, which now carries more than 1.5 million riders a day.

At the same time, he said, the Games could have a dampening effect on normal tourism due to "well-publicized speculation regarding problems with housing, transportation and other factors." Even so, he said, the SCRTD has to be prepared for a jump in patronage on its regular routes and will reserve a pool of extra buses, including some it has purchased from other cities, to handle the possible increase in patronage.

Commuter Computer, which operates the nation's largest ridesharing program with more than 350,000 participants, has been concerned about Los Angeles area employees getting to and from work as they tangle with increased Olympics-related traffic. In the months leading up to the Games, it has been producing a regular Olympic Countdown newsletter and offering employers Olympic Commuter Information Packages to help them set up ridesharing programs during the Olympic Games' "emergency."

"The Games are giving the Los Angeles business community a chance to look at what traffic may be like 15 or 20 years from now," says Tad Widby, Commuter Computer's president. Other agencies, notably the Southern California Association of Governments, the region's long-range planning agency, will be keeping a close watch on the Games' impact on traffic, business and Southern California's lifestyles.

SCAG views the 16-day period as an urban transportation workshop and believes it will provide a real test of how well a large city can plan for a sudden increase in traffic and adjust to almost certain congestion and transportation problems. □





1910 — General Electric-powered “Big 900s” begin serving the consolidated Cleveland system

The era of the “Big 900s” began in 1910 when the Cleveland Railway Company, a consolidation of various systems, purchased its first cars. Built by the Kuhlman Company, each of these cars was powered by four GE 40-hp traction motors.

The “Big 900s” really were large for their time — 52 feet long, weighing more than 24 tons, and seating 56 passengers in innovative forward-facing cross seats.

For a brief period of time, they operated on the busy Euclid line. However, later the cars were almost exclusively identified with Harvard-Denison, Cleveland’s only through east-west belt line.

Over the years, General Electric has continued its association with the progressive Cleveland transit system. For example, in 1968, GE-powered Airporter cars began operating from Windmere to the Union Terminal and



Today, GE-powered cars provide fast, reliable service on Cleveland’s successful downtown-to-airport run.

thence to the airport. This original complement of 20 Pullman-built cars was followed by 10 more units in 1970.

The highly-successful downtown-to-airport run will soon receive an additional 60 new stainless steel cars. Built by the Tokyo Car Company and designed to accommodate 80 passengers each, these 70-foot cars also utilize General Electric motors and controls.

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