



# Newsletter

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## South Main – Many Moving Parts

South Main always seems to be in transition and there are a number of projects presently underway which will influence the areas future.

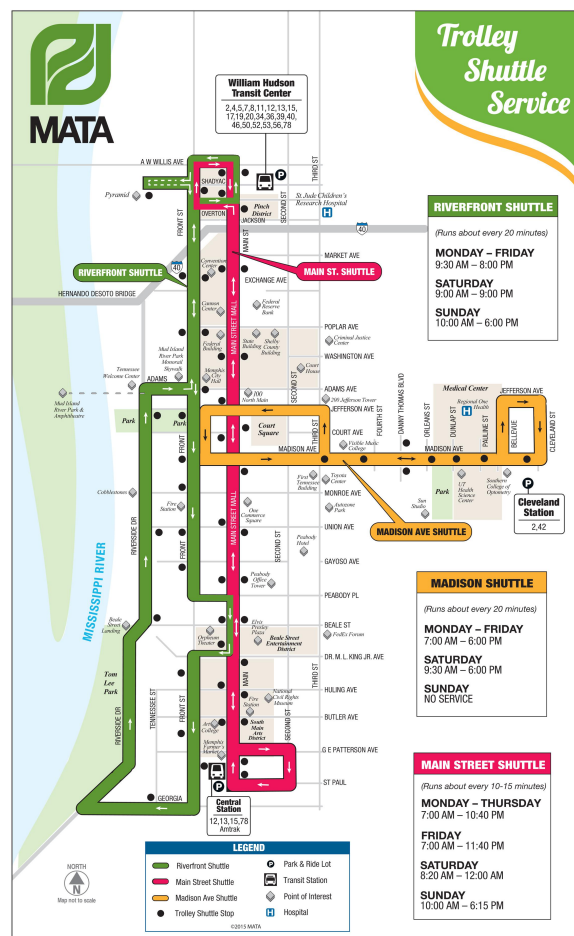
## The Trolleys



*One of the new Trolley Buses*

One of the most immediate situations affecting South Main is the suspension of the trolleys. MATA has purchased seven trolley buses to put in service on the Main Street route. In addition it has inaugurated a Riverfront shuttle service as a substitute for the Riverfront Trolley.

The current plan is to concentrate on five of the trolleys which are deemed to be in the best condition. After they have been restored and re-certified, they will be put



*Map of Substituted Trolley Service. Red: Main Street Trolley Bus. Green: Riverfront Shuttle Bus*

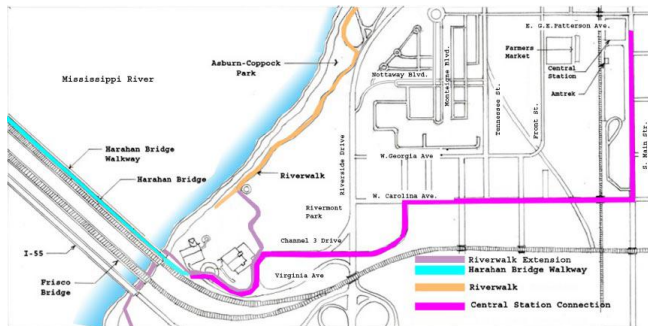
in service on the Main Street Route, hopefully later this fall. The remainder of the fleet will undergo the same process and be put in service on the Riverfront and Madison Street lines.

The trolley not only connects South Main with the rest of downtown Memphis, it ties together all the attractions in the area. Newly opened Bass Pro at the Pyramid, Mud Island, Beale Street Landing, The National Civil Rights Museum, FedEx Forum and Beale Street are on or within walking distance of the trolley. The trolley is a viable people mover and full service needs to be restored as quickly as possible.



# Harahan Bridge Project

Out of the spotlight, the [“Main Street to Main Street Multi-modal Connector Project”](#) as it's officially known is well underway. Projected to open the Summer of 2016, the project will connect downtown Memphis with downtown West Memphis, Arkansas. The crown jewel of this project will be the Harahan Bridge pedestrian walkway across the Mississippi River.



*Route of the Main Street to Main Street Connector*



*Job Site at east end of the Harahan Bridge*



*New Sidewalk along Channel 3 Drive leading to the bridge*



*New pedestrian bridge across Riverside Drive is in place*

## Central Station

The conversion of Central Station from apartment building to a hotel complex while possibly not on the near horizon, is definitely on the horizon. Representatives of the new group can regularly be seen on the property. Apartments are still being leased, but with a clause allowing the landlord cancel the lease with ninety days notice.



*The parking lot west of the station is to be re-configured to accommodate 200 cars. The Farmers' Market which now uses the lot on weekends will be relocated to a larger area adjacent to Front Street and the pavilions torn down.*

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, MATA, owner of Central Station, requested a \$200,000 grant from the Center City Development Corporation to be used to reconfigure the parking area west of the station to accommodate 200 cars and to construct a concourse from Main Street to opposite side



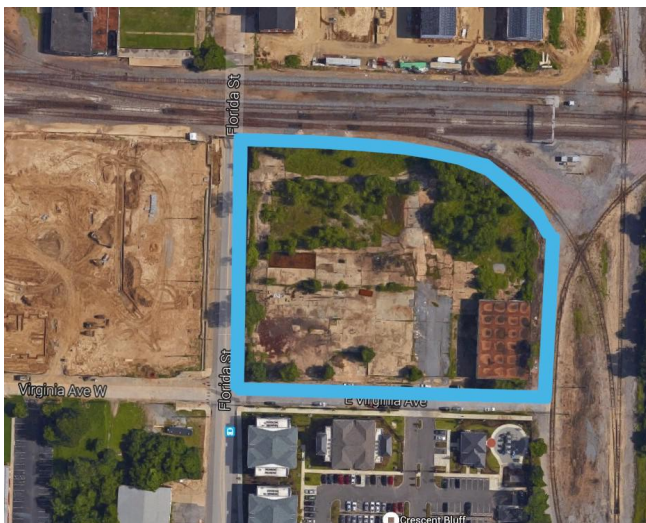
of the station to create access to the relocated Farmer's Market, the proposed movie theater and the reconfigured parking lot.



*A concourse to connect Main Street with the other side of the station is planned. A cut through this retaining wall (about where the red symbol is painted) is being considered. The museum is at the right in the picture.*

Central Station has been the anchor for South Main Street for over one hundred years and will remain so for many years to come once this latest renovation is complete.

## Railfan Park



*This property may one day become a Railfan Park*

A parcel of land less than 200 yards off the Main Street to Main Street Corridor, just west of the CN and south of Broad-

way has been designated as a "Super Fund" sight by the EPA and unsuitable for development. Once occupied by Jehl Cooperage Company, the site was used by Jehl to clean used barrels previously containing hazardous chemicals. As a Super Fund site, the EPA will clean up the site, removing the contaminated soil and make the site suitable for use as a park. With tracks of the UP, BNSF, CSXT and CN adjoining the property, the perfect use of the property would be a railfan park. Although this has been discussed by the parties involved, including the museum, at this time it is only an idea or a concept to be explored. If it ever comes to pass, it would be a valuable addition to the South Main area.



*A view of Broadway at CN Junction. This is adjacent to the proposed Railfan Park.*

## Grenada Railway

On July 29, 2015, railroad entrepreneur Ed Ellis' Iowa Pacific Holdings began operation of the Grenada Railway which runs between Southhaven and Canton, Mississippi. The road had previously been operated by V&S Railways. V&S, a subsidiary of A&K Railway Materials is notorious for downgrading service, driving off business, petitioning the Surface Transportation Board to abandon the line and then taking up and selling the rail. Indeed, the 81 miles between Grenada and Canton has been out of service since 2011. V&S



*Equipment assembled at Grenada for the "Polar Express" painted in Illinois Central colors.*

*Terry Redeker Photo*

petitioned to abandon the line but protests along the line caused V&S to withdraw their petition. The line was then bought by the North Mississippi Regional Railroad Authority who then leased the line to Iowa Pacific Holdings.

Big changes are already occurring on the Grenada Railway. Upgrades are underway on the Canton line to return the line to service. Perhaps the biggest news after the takeover was the announcement of the **"Polar Express"** to be run over the Thanksgiving/Christmas holidays. The equipment for this holiday excursion train has already been assembled at Grenada and all first class accommodations sold out immediately.

**UPDATE: Due to demand Grenada Railway announced that additional equipment is to be added to the **"Polar Express"****  
Click [HERE](#) for more information.

In 2013 Iowa Pacific Holdings owned 162 passenger cars. Almost all of their properties have a passenger component. There has been speculation that the Grenada

Railway may want to run occasional excursion or dinner trains to or from Memphis. It is entirely possible that this could happen.

Imagine all of the above becoming reality. Trolleys running from beyond the Pyramid to Central Station. A refurbished Central Station complex featuring a boutique hotel and multi screen movie theater, home to the Farmers' Market and the Memphis Railroad & Trolley Museum. The Main Street to Main Street trail passing in front of the hotel's main entrance, leading to a walkway on the Harahan Bridge over the Mississippi River with a railfan park along the way. Occasional excursion trains over the Grenada Railway. Such a mixture of attractions could bring thousands if not millions of tourists to downtown Memphis.

For additional information on the Grenada Railway visit our blog at :

<http://memphismuseum.blogspot.com/2015/09/homewoodill.html>