



## MAX: Portland's favorite train

*The U.S. city of Portland is redesigning its urban landscape by replacing wide expressways with pedestrian zones and small businesses – just like in Europe. The MAX light rail system is what makes this vision possible.*



*Public transportation is revitalizing the inner city: Pioneer Place in downtown Portland contains nearly a hundred stores and restaurants.*

In America, they say, it takes a car to make you feel like a complete person. And its true that most major cities are designed around the automobile, not people. In the 1960s, suburban America began to fill up with residential, office and shopping complexes, accompanied by enormous parking lots, turning many downtown areas into a wasteland.

But a city on the West Coast of the United States is showing that it doesn't have to be this way. Home to 500,000 people, Portland ranks among the top ten most livable cities in the U.S. And for good reason: it all has to with "new urbanism", an urban development movement aimed at revitalizing abandoned inner cities by bringing sidewalk cafes and business back to the urban landscape.

This new trend would be impossible without a smoothly running public transport system. Which is why, since the 1980s, Portland has again been filled with busses, street cars and the Metropolitan Area Express light rail trains, or MAX for short.

The MAX light rail system was developed especially for Portland and can be used for both local and regional public transport.



*Siemens developed this type of light rail system especially for Portland.*



*In the old days, you had to lug baby carriages and wheel chairs up steep stairs. But retractable ramps make the new light rail trains easy to board.*

The trains are more massive than a conventional street car, yet provide better maneuverability than a commuter train, and reach top speeds of 55 mph (just under 90 kilometers per hour). The comfortable low-platform trains are very popular among the passengers.

In the early 1980's, Portland had only 26 trains, which were boarded by climbing steep stairs. In 1995, the city added the first 46 Siemens trains, and the old cars will soon disappear altogether. Wheelchairs, baby carriages and heavy luggage have no trouble getting on board the new SD 660 vehicles, a convenience that neither local commuters nor the tourists and business travelers to this vibrant city along the Columbia River are willing to give up.

All four doors on both sides of each car have additional ramps that passengers can extend at the press of a button. In addition to 72 seats, each vehicle can accommodate four wheelchairs or baby carriages.

In addition to the loudspeaker announcements, the names of stops appear on easy-to-read LED displays, a convenience that not only the hearing impaired can appreciate. A special floor covering in the center of the aisles helps the visually impaired find their way around. In addition, the emergency switches in the trains are labeled in Braille.

Portland is a good example of how convenient and environmentally sound mobility really pays off, as demonstrated by the outstanding usage rates and steady rise in passenger figures reported by Tri-Met (Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation Authority), which operates the system. Some MAX lines transport an average of 25,000 passengers per day, with more people climbing on board all the time. A good reason to expand the light rail network.

The Interstate MAX Yellow Line, which runs to the exhibition and convention center in the northern part of the city, began construction in November 2000 and will be completed in September 2004. The U.S. market leader Siemens Transportation Systems will supply 27 additional low-platform trains for this line. Along with the 52 existing rail vehicles, they meet the strict standards of today's modern public transport systems.

Portland's convenient MAX light rail system makes it easy to leave your car at home – and still feel like a complete person.



*The next stop is announced not only over the loudspeaker, but also on LED displays.*

## Portland's light rail project

**Customer:**

Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon (Tri-Met), Portland, OR, USA.

**Built between:**

1995 and 2005.

**Scope of delivery:**

A total of 89 vehicles.

**Already in use:**

52 vehicles.

**Type of vehicle:**

SD 660 low-platform light rail cars.

**Length:**

27.2 meters.

**Width:**

2.65 meters.

**Floor height:**

355 mm.

**Operation:**

Bidirectional.

**Further information:**

Siemens Transportation Systems

[http://www.siemens.com/index.jsp?sdc\\_p=t4csu18o20000pnfl0m&sdc\\_sid=4773317474&](http://www.siemens.com/index.jsp?sdc_p=t4csu18o20000pnfl0m&sdc_sid=4773317474&)

Siemens Transportation Systems USA

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