

# CRT #4420



Type: Rapid Transit Car

Built: 1924

Modernized in 1952

Seats: 52

Length – 48' 6"

Width – 8' 11"

Height – 13' 3"

Weight – 76,800 lbs.



The Chicago "L" (short for "elevated") rapid transit system has been extremely influential in the shaping and expansion of the Chicago area. Tracks were first laid down in late 1892 by the Chicago and South Side Elevated Railroad. In following years, the line was electrified and competing companies opened up across the city, interchanging passengers on a downtown elevated loop of track they all had rights to use. Wooden interurban and rapid transit cars would circle the loop before heading back on their own trackage. Today, the loop still exists, carrying thousands of passengers every day around the downtown, which is even known as "the loop."

In the early 1920s, Samuel Insull, an electric utilities entrepreneur of the time, officially consolidated the four different "L" companies into one, forming his privately-owned Chicago Rapid Transit Company (CRT). Needing to improve service and operate faster trains, Insull ordered over 400 all-steel "L" cars, numbered 4001-4455.

The 4000s served the CRT (which became the government-operated Chicago Transit Authority in 1947) well, operating across the various elevated lines for almost 50 years in passenger service. During World War II, the first subway through the central city was completed. The 4000s, being the only steel rapid transit cars operating on the "L" at



Roger Puta photos

the time, were assigned to all runs through the two subway lines. Being equipped with trolley poles, the cars were also often used on outlying "L" lines and were even leased to connecting electric interurban rail lines. In the 1950s, more modern steel cars were bought, and air conditioning would first arrive on cars ordered in 1964. The wooden cars were all retired, and the 4000s were quickly becoming outdated with the swift advances in technology.

In 1973, the last of the 4000s were retired from passenger service, with a few staying in maintenance service for a few years afterwards. Car #4420 was officially removed from the CTA fleet in 1975, soon after becoming part of the Wisconsin Trolley Museum collection.

In 1985, the museum became part of the East Troy Railroad Museum and restored Car 4420 to its as-delivered condition. Today, the car regularly operates with two other restored 4000s on the last interurban trackage in the state of Wisconsin: the six miles between East Troy and Mukwonago.

