



Photo: GFF Architecture

## **Namesake Tower to Include MATA Car Barn, Office**

Photo: GFF

How is this for name recognition: Trammell Crow's new 20-story apartment tower will be called the M-Line Tower. It will have 262 residential units and 13,000 square feet of ground-floor retail.

The tower will stand at McKinney Avenue and Bowen Street – the former site of Café Express, which will get bigger, fancier digs on the ground floor when the project is completed.

And so will MATA: Trammell Crow has generously provided – free, for at least 20 years – a new 60-foot streetcar bay capable of housing one large, or two small, cars. Additionally, the developer is donating 670 square feet of office space to MATA. The new spaces will augment MATA's existing trolley barn; M-Line Tower is directly across the street from it.

On top of all this, Trammell Crow donated \$100,000 to the agency for the refurbishment or purchase of streetcars.

## Welcome Three New Hall of Famers



Photo: Anita Simmons

MATA's Hall of Fame honors those who have made long-lasting contributions to the agency, and on March 31, MATA inducted three new members.

**Lynne Fleming** is the first employee ever to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. Hailing from Chicago, Fleming is a Vietnam vet who served as a train operator on his hometown's famed El line. He was a MATA dispatcher for 15 years and was in fact one of the agency's first. He retired in 2015, but still volunteers for the agency periodically.

Another first: **Dr. Erwin Thal** has been inducted posthumously. Thal was a longtime volunteer who died last year but his presence is still felt at MATA. A native Ohioan, Thal had a distinguished medical career that included heading up the Emergency Room at Parkland Hospital. From 2012 through 2015, he pulled a four-hour shift as a volunteer motorman every Sunday, usually taking his grandson along. Alex Duran, Thal's grandson, is grown now and a full-time motorman on the M-Line. He accepted the honor on his grandfather's behalf at the ceremony.

**Dr. John Hunt** was a close friend of Thal's, and he too is a newly minted Hall of Famer. Over the course of a 40-year career, Hunt was co-director of the Burn Center at UT Southwestern Medical School. Along with his friend Thal, he began volunteering as a motorman every Sunday in 2012. He still puts in four hours each week.

Congratulations to the most recent crop of "All-Timers"!





## Ridership Spikes to All-Time High

M-Line ridership for 2015 not only hit an all-time high – it did so by a long shot. The M-Line provided 635,000 passenger trips last year, which is a 26 percent increase over 2014. And ridership is continuing its upward tick, increasing this year over 2015 by 20 percent so far.

The increase is attributable to the opening of the new loop through the Arts District. Thanks to this new loop, the trolley now stops directly at Klyde Warren for the first time.

Impressively, even while carrying more passengers, MATA has lowered its accident rate. Part of the reason is an incentive plan the agency implemented for operators. Additionally, since the loop opened, the streetcars no longer operate in two directions on St. Paul Street.

## Everything Old Is New Again



Photo: James Nelms

The newest face in MATA's fleet will be right at home on the M-Line. That's because Car 612 spent its original service life in Dallas, and it will hit the streets early next year.

Car 612 plied the trolley lines of Dallas from 1945 until streetcar service ended in 1956. It got a second life in Boston, Mass., from 1959 until at least the 1970s – as part of a fleet of cars the transit agency there dubbed the Texas Rangers. MATA purchased the car several years ago, and it was stored by the Illinois Railway Museum in Chicago. It's a double-ended PCC-style car, which rail enthusiasts will recognize as a rarity. MATA is currently completely refurbishing it for service – look for it on the M-Line sometime early next spring.

It's a third career and a homecoming all at once for Car 612.