

Highway in the Sky: Walt Disney World Resort Monorail Fact Sheet

History: The forerunner of the modern monorail system was tested in Germany in the 1950s where it caught the attention of Walt Disney, then in the midst of planning Disneyland in California. In 1959, when the Disneyland monorail system premiered at the theme park, it became the first new-style monorail to operate daily in the United States. Today, the Mark VI Monorail Trains at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida incorporate nearly 40 years of research and development in monorail technology. The system, in operation since 1971, was expanded in 1982 with a four-mile extension to Epcot and updated in the early 90s with new trains to complete the 11-train fleet.

Specifications: Each of the twelve, six-car trains is 203 feet long and has 124 rubber tires powered by 600-Volt DC propulsion systems, including eight DC motors rated 113 HP each. Train bodies are made of a high-strength composite honeycomb material that allows high strength at a low weight.

Design: Features includes improved air conditioning, door systems and safety features, a re-designed interior, additional standing room for peak travel periods, improved sliding-door systems, on-board monitoring and improved communications and control.

Technology: Trains travel on a 26-inch-wide concrete beam supported by tapered concrete columns approximately 110 feet apart. The beams and columns are constructed in sets of six and post-tensioned together to form a single 600-foot structure. As trains move along the beamway, they pick up electrical power from a metallic buss bar.

Capacity: Nearly 4,000 guests per direction, per hour. On a typical day, more than 50,000 guests utilize monorail transportation.

Highway in the Sky: Walt Disney World Resort has a 14.7-mile system of elevated beamway that services seven stations throughout two theme parks and several hotels.