



A Memo from the SEPTA Youth Advisory Council

December 8, 2025

YAC Statement on Silverliner VI Procurement

The SEPTA YAC is pleased to see SEPTA taking swift action to procure new Silverliner VI MU railcars to replace the aging and outdated Silverliner VI's. With the IV's now over fifty years old, plagued with mechanical failures and an FRA mandated inspection, new equipment is desperately needed to ensure future regional rail reliability.

The inclusion of new technologies into the cars, such as the potential for onboard wifi, dynamic electronic route maps, and real time passenger counts will all be welcome improvements. In addition, luggage racks on select "Airport" married pairs and additional bike racks will improve capacity and have a positive impact on rider experience, particularly for travelers and cyclists who rely on regional rail for multimodal connections.

The YAC strongly recommends that SEPTA include personal latest-generation USB ports at every seat or seating cluster on the new Silverliner VI fleet. As riders increasingly rely on mobile devices for trip planning, ticketing, and communication, access to onboard charging has become an essential amenity rather than a luxury. Personal USB outlets are a standard modern amenity on any new commuter rolling stock, with Metra, NJT, LIRR, and CTDOT's upcoming procurements all including either USB or 120V outlets at every seat. The ability to charge on-the-go makes regional rail more attractive and competitive for riders.

Finally, we are concerned with the custom nature of the specifications SEPTA is asking for. The last two custom regional rail cars SEPTA procured came with enormous headaches for both riders and the agency. The Silverliner V fleet came years late, overweight, and plagued with quality control issues. The entire fleet had to be pulled in 2016 due to fatigue issues in the trucks, and they were forced to cancel their CRRC bi-level fleet altogether. How will the agency guarantee the Silverliner VI's see a smooth rollout and not shortchange passengers the same way their previous procurements have?

SEPTA should make clear the steps it plans to take to ensure these railcars do not face the same pitfalls as previous ones. The YAC encourages SEPTA to consider an off-the-shelf railcar from a proven manufacturer. Doing so would result in a faster and cheaper design-build process and enhanced reliability upon delivery for both the agency and riders.