



# THE *TRANSIT* ADVOCATE

Newsletter of Southern California Transit Advocates  
July/ Special 2015 Volume 23, Number 5 Issue 265



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## Seeing Red?

"Is the Harbor Red Car gone?" a friend asked earlier this year, "It's not on MTA's System map." Just another new map error, I thought... until I was handed the April 2-15 issue of Random Lengths newspaper; indeed, the Port of LA (+ who else?) quietly laid a trap to kill the Waterfront Red Cars (& more) after San Pedro's September Lobster Fest ends; "Vehicular interference" is cited (wait a minute- *autos* cause that; buses & trains reduce it!) RL's OpEd made good points, local opposition is promised... but depending who's in on this conspiracy, it could be a battle already lost. Former Port Commission's Geraldine Knatz once said "a real transit agency" was needed to take over the Red Car... Nonsense! -the Port makes money & is required to invest a percentage of its profits in portside communities to offset its impacts -Providing visitor circulation at the Port is what the Port's Red Car does, making the Port its ideal transit funding source... -While MTA does not; and (given its divided interests, & need to consume money), MTA is not! But though it's the "operator of last resort", MTA may now be the only entity that can save the Red Car + running rights + right of way + right now. This issue will take a look.



## Will the Red Cars end...again? x John Ulloth

Is this the 2nd end of the Red Cars; being lost again to make way for cars, buses, & developers in Los Angeles? Or can an ad-hoc grassroots affiliation of Port area residents, Council District 15 Neighborhood Council (NC) resolutions, petition-signers, their toddler-colorists, & a local member of Congress convince the Port Of Los Angeles' (POLA) Board... or LA Mayor Garcetti... or LA Councilmember Buscaino to stop it, and intervene to save San Pedro's "Waterfront Red Cars" before they -& Lobster Fest- are to end September 27th?

**Even if you didn't care about transit, this is a skyline story of our times: what is the right role of government, & what is the duty of its elected leaders today: To serve the expanding power of business, vs. to serve the people who rely on the permanence of public benefits granted to them? Who decides? It hardly seems a stretch to compare the *zeitgeist* of this to Wall Street vs. Main Street... to The 1%-ers vs. The 99%-ers... and to what the current top 2 front-runners, Donald Trump vs. Bernie Sanders bring to the 2016 contest for President of the United States.**

Rolling over its historic right-of-way, adding authentic atmosphere to POLA's "Historic Waterfront" District, the 3 Red Car fleet is both rolling museum & time machine that's recreating a mile & a half of the Pacific Electric Railway (PERy) experience of a century ago... 1.1 million rides since July 19, 2003. If you haven't been on board, think of being in a long, glassy red Victorian house with curved porches at each end, staffed by 2 uniformed crewmembers to keep you safely rocking over jointed rail (clickety-clack), passing portside landscape at 10-20 miles an hour. Inside, it's a forest of wood, air is drawn through the side windows, up & out the open colored glass clerestory windows in the roof above... thick leather straps swing for standees... got Bells? Check! ...and Whistles? Check! Occasionally during layovers, small children are allowed up front to pull the whistle's chord, frequently scaring themselves.

The cars themselves are miraculous: Originally built in 1908, #1058 was rebuilt from a wreck-damaged

700-series Pacific Electric car by shipyard owner Richard Fellows; wanting a larger "Ten-series" car (and here's where owning your own shipyard comes in handy), he added 10 feet, rebuilt the ends, & gave it the next "Ten-series" car number following PERy's original sequence. Since the PERy rail system was lost, Fellows added an engine, fuel tank, & rigged it up like a truck for rubber-tired road operation for parades, movies, etc. Before the present Waterfront Red Car operation began, POLA negotiated with Fellows' widow to buy #1058, removing the engine, etc. -essentially reversing the roadway conversion- to return it to rails. Cars #500 & #501 are tribute cars, not only to their long-gone originals built in 1902 (for the Los Angeles Pacific, a PERy competitor before the Great Merger of 1911)... but with the approach of Labor Day, also a tribute to Port talent & ingenuity (find matching "then & now" photos in the band of period advertising inside, above the seats): Their carbodies built from scratch for the 2003 startup in Wilmington by the Port itself, who stepped in after the winning subcontractor failed, re-creating them from century-old blueprints. Much clever work was done, especially by the Port's Carpentry shop, to clad an internal tube-steel framework (not found on the original) with wood to match the original's appearance. Plus 13 coats of high tech finish. More-practical modern running gear was located... like electrical equipment from NYC subway cars, a new speed controller from a modern mining locomotive manufacturer whose design dates back to the 1920's, etc. According to retired project manager Bob Henry, parts were located for building at least 2 more cars for the Line expansions promised since opening day... Since the R&D's done, the Port could be building these- or other kinds of tribute cars- for export to cities or museums that want streetcars back, including low floor streetcars for downtown San Pedro, or downtown LA's stalled Broadway streetcar... or light-rail car height & width for inter-lining with the Port's existing Red Car (trading the electrical trolley pole for a pantograph to interline with MTA's light rail trains).

Track, maintained by the ports' railroad Pacific Harbor Lines for a freight customer (who left recently) required relatively little investment. There's more track around to branch out, needing not too much more initially



## Will the Red Cars burn...again? (cont'd.)

than electrification... 2 "drawbridges" on each Red Car station platform were installed to be raised to allow main line railcars (10' wide) to pass during hours when the narrower Red Car isn't running... with a time buffer, a.k.a. "Temporal Separation" between kinds of operations, satisfying the California Public Utilities Commission operating & safety requirement... (requirement that also applies to San Diego County MTS' Blue Line, shared with main line freight operators to San Ysidro, & MTS' diesel light rail Sprinter sharing freight tracks to Escondido...)

But Red Car's arrangements are now targeted for elimination by POLA's plans to give land to a developer (who?) to build a previously-unnecessary "Downtown Plaza": to twist & break a Ports O' Call intersection (Harbor x Sampson Way) taking the tracks between 6th & 8th Street where Harbor now is, and from 8th to 13th Street for an associated 4-block-long multi-level parking garage, located in such a way as to obliterate the last of the railyard & take its right-of-way which once dominated the area: A century ago this spot was no pleasure pier, but a hardworking dock, the east side of the Channel had a row of seafood canneries... what's now the Maritime Museum was the head-frame & offices of the Terminal Island car ferry, preceding bridges to it.

So who ordered this train robbery? While backroom deals are not new to any big city, nobody is "owning it", so rumors fill the gaps... Though POLA's Board are actually the ones approving their Engineering department's dastardly deed: (stealing the right-of-way for the "Downtown Plaza" plan, plus zeroing-out next year's Red Car's Operating budget, canceling its post-Sept. 27 insurance, refusing operator Herzog's reasonable offer to run power around the project to keep a (shortened) Red Car line running for now...) was this the Port Board's idea? Really?

☛...Did L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti do it? He literally has the power to save the line with 1 phone call; the Port & Airport are largely creatures of the Mayor's office (so did he, or did he not, tell these City Departments "If it doesn't make money, get rid of it!")(It's believed his firing of Geraldine Knatz from the Port was political payback for her support of rival

Wendy Gruel). Garcetti staffer "Manny" listened quietly, & will get back to us (we've been advised not to hold our breaths)... Motive? Garcetti's been hitting up the Port to build up his contingency & reserve funds (the former is more than adequately flush to maintain the city's AA Bond rating; any more of the latter is just slush-funding)... But there's another thing: Housing; lots of it; the Mayor is "behind" on his big plans to drop 100,000 new units around L.A.; Do we need that? Of course not; this is not for the people, won't bring congestion relief; it's for a wider tax base! Are all 5,000 units going to be dropped on the Port, milking POLA of both real estate & cash to do it in a vacuum left by Community Redevelopment Agencies? Is a trifling public asset like Red Cars or Ports O' Call businesses all that stand in his way?

☛...Is it LA Councilmember Joe Buscaino? (if it isn't, why has he done nothing to stop it)? He also has the power to save the Red Car Line by bringing just 1 vote before City Council that's virtually guaranteed to pass, due to "Legislative Courtesy" (which is neither)! What's that? Legislative Courtesy is an ancient, good-ole-boy, reciprocal back-scratching custom to automatically vote on local matters which-ever way the local Councilmember wants it... whether or not local constituents want it, or it's consistent policy, or it's even good for the City). His staffers didn't answer the question, but defended the Port's maps for destruction of the existing Red Car line & existing cars in *considerable detail*. However, the Councilmember of CD15's particular duty is to protect the people's interests over POLA's impacts/ side-effects of profit-making activities... like piling up sulfur, refineries' tank farms, & containers 5-high on the docks... With Buscaino's background (so well-regarded in his former job as LAPD Lead Officer, not 1 person could be found critical of his time doing that), he should know when a community's protection is needed! Buscaino, like all Councilmembers, is supposed to work with his community & Neighborhood Councils, but complaints about him in his present role are numerous. Lately, some wonder, is he ignoring them to work for/ on something else? Since he's the Mayor's buddy, is the Red Car an obstacle to... a wall of high-end residential waterfront towers- (all 5,000 at once?)- to benefit a developer? Even though the better place for such



## Will the Red Cars drown...again? (cont'd.)

density or high-rises would be out of the tsunami/ tidelands/ Coastal zone, stepped up on the bluff, in town where infrastructure is... Or better, moved along the bluff & turned south to overlook the small craft harbor/ Yacht Club? Did he & the Port fail to recognize the big problems that come with big waterside luxetower districts? Like Marina del Rey's snarled traffic, higher vacancy rates, & who can afford to live there? ♦...Or is it "loose canons" in Port departments, still furious about the U.S.S. Iowa battleship landing at POLA, who oppose building any significant Maritime History Center (as envisioned most eloquently by the S.S. Lane Victory's Executive Director Greg Williams) ...who begrudge even keeping water in fountains, or anything else benefitting the community on the Main Channel's west side... glad to take their frustrations out on Red Cars? (...Port building rents were reduced to gut the Red Cars' budget!) Why weren't the public, Neighborhood Councils, or Chambers of Commerce ever asked if they'd support mystery development that would cost them the Red Car? Why was no alternate road + parking garage alternative offered incorporating Red Car stations? or moved against up the bluffs to match their height, extending the blufftop's parkland?

Who needs a "Downtown Plaza" on the waterfront anyway? The developer does! But it could wipe out San Pedro's actual downtown offering plenty of clean, historic retail vacancies (including Art Deco) just steps away, with a promenade route of span-lighting brightening the way up into 6th & 7th Streets' Arts District after dark... "First Thursdays" is each month's gallery crawl/ brewpub/ food truck nightlife highlight; live music outside is 3rd Thursdays, & theaters are live. For some time, downtown leaders have called for adding residential redevelopment to make San Pedro more mixed-use & all the way live. What about existing Ports O' Call's dockview restaurants (whose wait lines for a table sometimes go out to the parking lot!) & other businesses & the buildings themselves at Ports O' Call? Would they be replaced in-kind to provide the public the use of the Historic Waterfront the public shows it favors? Or be bulldozed to be converted to something else entirely? For other people entirely? Other kinds of people? You can read the answer in the papered-over windows of entire

groups of buildings at the south end, without POLA signs even pretending to try to keep them leased... just like you'd see before a massive demolition, zoning-type-conversion, or gentrification. When they're done, you won't recognize it... and they won't recognize you!

In April, San Pedro NW Neighborhood Councilmember Robert J. Bryant, who's also one of (all) Red Car employees who'd be laid off September 27, launched a plebiscite (citizen's petition) to let POLA, Mayor, & City Council know the public expects them to "...find a way to save our Red Cars." He found 5 of the Port's Council District Neighborhood Councils, + the 3 area Chambers of Commerce in agreement with keeping the existing Red Car running. The port communities' bimonthly Random Lengths, with a distinctly liberal lean commensurate with the Port's historic Labor past, ran an article highlighting the Red Cars' "iconic" status & impending demise... as did The Daily Breeze, with follow-up articles. For its on-line content, KCET interviewed Bryant from a curious angle: "why would you take this on?" The petition circulated at events like Fullerton Railroad Days & train shows, spread to museums, & hobby shops. A volunteer launched a FaceBook page/ Calendar, joined by a Save The Red Car! petition at Change.org; placards were placed in supporting businesses... but signature-gatherers still meet many having no idea the Red Car could be gone forever... & others who don't even know it exists.

At the working-people-unfriendly hour of 8:30a.m. Monday, August 6, 11 people rose to argue against the Red Car's termination at Public Comment at POLA's Board bimonthly meeting, most notably, Congressmember Janice Hahn, in-person.... flashback to the Red Cars' inauguration in 2003 when she had been a featured speaker, Hahn recounted her father (County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn) took her & brother James to ride one of the last runs of the Pacific Electric, saying (words to the effect)- "I want you kids to see this perfectly good transportation system we're throwing away".... At the end of her 3 minutes before POLA, Hahn tossed out "if it takes an Act of Congress..." Bryant presented his volume of 2,700 Petition signatures collected to date, with on-line comments printed out separately. All this testimony provoked 2











## *Will the Red Cars roll...again? (cont'd.)*

Boardmembers to respond- (union-backed) David Arian, defensively: that he'd joined the Board to ensure high-paying (\$100,000) jobs at the Port... Anthony Pirozzi Jr., saw Red Car opportunity in POLA's plan... They were interrupted by the Port's lawyer, pointing out this was not an appropriate forum for Board responses (there isn't one, either!) followed up by Board Chair Vilma Martinez, saying the latter's remarks were his personal opinions. The Board proceeded down the agenda to a PowerPoint of the new "Downtown Plaza" -or rather everything *except* the Plaza (shown as bare land!)- all the infrastructure upheavals necessary to frame the project- the removal of roadway between 6th & 8th Streets, reconnecting Ports O'Call access from 7th diagonally to Samson Way... and voting to spend \$2.3Million for design services all around... this included a land reservation for a non-historic Red Car (a modern low-floor trolley with retro-looking ends), maybe 4 or maybe 10 years in the future (until then, rubber-tired "trolley" (sic) service would be substituted), out of the way of a multistory "POC parking expansion" garage from 8th to 13th Street to take over existing track & rail yard... Harbor Chief of Design Dina Aryan-Zahlan says placement of the new Red Car track is flexible- it could be on the side of the new Sampson road alignment or moved to a median. It is not planned to hug the Ports O' Call buildings where the rubber-tired gas burning "trolleys" (sic) now go (benefitting visitors the most). POLA's own planning/ Construction schedule showed the earliest a developer could put a shovel in the ground would be in 2017- Why so long after the Cars would be gone?- is this Bait-& Switch, or Bait-& Kill? "The Port giveth & the Port taketh away," answered one long-term San Pedran who signed the petition, predicting the sticker-shock of starting a new double-track low-floor rail system from scratch years from now will provide the Port "a convenient excuse from ever putting Red Cars of any kind back." The same morning as the POLA meeting, a Save the Red Car shirt became available at the Badfish Clothing Co. hipster hangout on 6th Street.

Red Car savers wonder why the developer shouldn't be legally compelled (& might even want) to incorporate an existing tourist-attracting Red Car line

with operating-rights in place, built with \$10Million of public money (now worth ~\$60Million)- something developers usually favor! Didn't Ric Caruso build an electric tram on his own dime, to run between stores & parking garages at The Grove shopping center? Didn't Glendale's Americana mall add a short rail loop too? (though neither has history, nor sought links to public transit)... Shouldn't San Pedro's Red Car have reached Wilmington by now? Where a Red Car museum & permanent shops were proposed for a vacant rail-served Bekins warehouse (C Street x Fries Avenue), 1 of 6 destinations proposed in the jointly-sponsored POLA - Wilson & Co. Architects & Engineers Waterfront Red Car Line Feasibility Report of 2009. It's a 3-phase system also including: Red Car yards at 12th Street, San Pedro's neatly-manicured North Gaffey Street (where suburbs & big-box shopping face a steamy hillside with Tosco/ Phillips 66 refinery complex & community garden), a 7-block downtown loop (too small to be of any use), City Dock #1 (where the harbor's Pilot Service is) a giant historic warehouse with freight docks PERy once served... where Red Cars could live, though the building still needs toxics abatement), Outer Harbor (south end of Miner Street where the S.S. Lane Victory ship is exiled, a turnaround loop & median already landscaped to suit Red Cars), & Cabrillo Beach/ Marina/ Aquarium. If built out, a 9.6-mile system & 17 Red Cars would deliver visitors to far-flung Historic Waterfront attractions without needing to drive & re-park several times per visit... And why drive to San Pedro at all? The peril the Red faces would be out of the question if any extensions were built beyond its 1.5 mile "starter kit", (especially ones long enough to move workers daily, Random Lengths Editor James Preston Allen said.) Those suggested in the past included an extension to MTA's Green Line via North Gaffey, or via BNSF Harbor Sub on the east (Eubank) side of Wilmington's Banning Park/ House Museum. To go to (or replace) MTA's Silver Line Busway in the 110 freeway to downtown L.A., or east to Queen Mary/ Long Beach Transit Mall (re-spanning approaches to Vincent Thomas bridge, & Long Beach counterpart the Gerald Desmond bridge, for rail/ bike/ trail,) once their highway bridge replacements are complete.



## Will the Red Cars run... again? (cont'd.)

Even Electric Railway Historical Association (ERHA) Chair Alan Fishell, who since a teenager protested the loss of L.A.'s last electric trains, doubts the last 2 scenarios, "You need to show ridership of ~20,000 (boardings) before They (L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority) will consider light rail..." Guesstimating San Pedro's population at 35,000 & MTA's Silver Line freeway ridership at 2 or 3,000 he summarizes: "Unlikely." But MTA library put August's weekday ridership at 14,117; a *Port-funded* Red Car Line wouldn't need such high ridership figures to be viable. Would this be fair & proper use of Port Funds? Is ripping out the community's Historic Waterfront & Red Car for a developer/ housing fair? or proper?

The Silver Line, which runs from downtown L.A. south down the middle of the I-110 Freeway, has shot itself in the foot from Day-1: it's Extra-fare (even MetroRail doesn't do that!)... Terminates at the Harbor Gateway Transit Center (population 0)... Falls well short of San Pedro... But now, at San Pedro Central's NC, transit advocate J.K. Drummond announces MTA will finally vote on getting Silver Line buses directly into San Pedro December 2015. He works the NC over for a detailed position to tell MTA to bring the Silver Line through town as far south as 22nd Street. But MTA likes long buses, which don't turn around easily on San Pedro's narrow, steep streets. NC Planning Committee Chair Sue Castillo strains to pin down his desired wording. Drummond likes detail & choices, but James Allen (who is also San Pedro Central's NC Chair) does not, & the gavel comes down to move the Agenda; Castillo is whipsawed. The next day at a MTA 450 stop (a connecting bus to the Silver Line) within a stone's throw of the Red Car's Swinford Station, 2 bike riders (at separate times) greeted the Silver Line extension news with "Really!?" (intonation suggesting equal parts gratitude & disbelief.)

Flyers contrasting 2009's POLA Red Car Extensions map with 2015's POLA Development (for adults), and a 2nd coloring sheet to involve kids (is that child labor?) were released at a noon August 15th Red Car Day Demonstration of public support for keeping the Red Car. Though the event promo was toned down (a 40-days-in-advance requirement for an official

Event Permit couldn't have been granted in time, & wouldn't have been granted by the Port anyway for a protest against its own policies!), & undercut by triple-digit temperatures, of the 2000 invited, and the 200 who pledged on-line to be there, only a fraction actually did. Mercifully in a way, as zero Press showed up too... but word was spreading; an officer from a rail museum in Portola, Freely Press, and the Red Car's retired Project Manager Bob Henry, came down from northern California to ride. Mr. Henry blamed the Red Car's ridership decline on 2008's Recession drying up the cruise ship business; beside Friday-Sunday, Red Cars used to run on days cruise ships were in port; one of the Red Cars' main purposes was to shuttle passengers (+ families seeing them off) between the ships & Ports O' Call. Now, that's almost never- maybe 1 or 2 per month to Hawaii. Disney Cruises pulled the plug (you can't run a cruise ship that may have a crew of 800, half full!), & the Port of Long Beach (POLB) poaching Carnival Cruise Lines (>90% of LA area cruise business) to their docks didn't help, but Port Public Relations made it worse by withdrawing even its half-hearted promotions supporting the Red Car- ending outside advertising, even on-board flyers years ago. Schools used to visit for field trips in droves don't come in numbers as they did. Without explanation, ride counts are cancelled some popular days (like Father's Day, when patronage surged to "standing loads"). \$1 Red Car admission went free (matching the rubber-tired "trolley" (sic) service driving up into San Pedro), but Conductors stopped issuing & punching color souvenir Day Passes with the map on the back... like ending a product's Tech Support...

The Red Cars' crewmembers, who'd been neutral-to-friendly early in the campaign, grew increasingly depressed (especially by the end of August after their bosses thanked them for their work, but declared it was "over"); crew said they would prefer petitioners circulate off the train. All of them love this job. There were no accidents. Graffiti artists & gangs respected the Red Cars: tag-free for 12+ years! Save The Red Car Petition signers topped 5,000 some-time early Labor Day weekend; "How many do you need?" - a frequent question with no clear answer.



## *Will the Red Cars rot...instead? (cont'd.)*

What would happen next? Irony; after the right-of-way is stolen, POLA has no exit strategy for the cars except for the definite decision not to run the Red Cars anywhere. Disliking the historic cars' high-platform floors, the Port lately decided not to let them go to a museum that would keep them running (such as Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris, where the largest collection of original PERy cars live). Yet Rail service provider Herzog has been told to prepare the Red Cars for long-term storage in the "temporary" tent where they've lived for 12 years; this will take a couple months. A feeling of déjà-vu & dread reigns among railfans who remember much of the derelict or now-immobile railroad equipment at Griffith Park's Travel Town was originally donated to the children of Los Angeles in good-to-excellent running condition (entire steam locomotives, etc.) Here's a Red Car example: in late July, the Port posted a schedule at Red Car stations to start running #1058 again; but its 1st-day-back operation was judged sub-par, & its future runs cancelled; Bryant believes primarily due to lack of use. The Port never allowed Red Car charters & isn't going to start now; apparently deterring any rail group from doing an off-day photo session/ shop tour (which Port Public Relations' Augie Bezmalinovich was willing to host).

Once trains stop & running rights are surrendered to the CPUC; new terms & conditions would be incredibly harder to meet. Once track & overhead wire would be scraped off the development area, anything else (like electric substation equipment, signals, RR crossing equipment...) would become "stranded assets" & likely scrapped quickly (as they seldom improve with dis-use). Abandonment filings with the Federal Railroad Administration would break up the line legally. Reversing all these losses could easily soar to 8- or 9-figures; a chance encounter with a Port Commissioner in the street after an event revealed he was unaware. Then all of this would sit derelict for 18 months- the earliest any developer's construction could start. The rail line would be gone 60-90 days before the public could see the first presentation of any developer's preliminary plans... The Red Car's workers have had to make other plans for employment- most troubling, losing the Mechanic & 12 years of specific experience.

The Red Car approaches Swinford station after dark... when the first run of the Friday/ Saturday/ Sunday Red Cars arrived at noon, the station area was nearly empty, but now the weather's cooled down enough to bring people out. Some are locals, but many came from outside the area, a few from a distant city (naming somewhere 40-50 miles inland) , and yes, came to ride the Red Car & cool off. It's picture-postcard perfect, & many are taking selfies: Blue lights connect-the-dots of the jade-colored Vincent Thomas Bridge & cables above, skyline shadows of candy-cane striped Star Wars-inspiring mega-cranes across the Main Channel on Terminal Island are outlined by Port lights & haze beyond. After making the safety stop, the Red Car pulls into the station, airbrakes set with a blast. Outside the car, its red sides appear nearly matte-black in the dark, a gleaming golden wood interior framing windows of families of passengers rising to get off; the Conductor pulls the walkover seats behind them, repeating until the last run south leaves ~8:40p.m. Below the station platform, loose crowds sitting on marble blocks beneath tall palms & butterfly-winged streetlights share plates generously piled with funnel cakes, fried bananas, or ice cream, provided by the brightly-lit weekend popup kitchen of Superchurros California. A couple eyes the Save The Red Car Petition on top of the ice cream freezer next to the cashier; should they sign it? ...Superchurros' mother & daughter business believe-in petitions (& sponsor this one) because they collected 3,000 signatures to save & expand their own operation. And self-interest: many of their customers park elsewhere & arrive by Red Car! ...50-100 laughing, soaked, early grade school children pull back from the bottom-lit dancing Fanfare Fountain as the music show starts- spraying, waving, & popping 2-storey jets with air-charges to Classical, Rock & Roll, show tunes, opera, Latino favorites, or Disney themes- ("When You Wish Upon A Star" a bittersweet relic of the Disney cruise ship terminal that almost-was)... the spray clears the air, drifting down for most of a minute after the show ends. If this Red Car & its line are not saved, these kids could be in high school before they ride (a different) Red Car nearby... If, as happened before, it takes ~40 years between the last (original) PERy car on this line for



## Will the Red Cars...(be continued?)

another to come along; these kids will be sending their own kids to college, or looking forward to retirement by then... Perhaps they'll return to find a Blade Runner scene of derelict high-rises, containers piled 5-high over the glass-strewn ruins of the dry fountains, with armed security guards demanding I.D.... But just maybe, some will remember this night of their youth in 2015, & want it put back... maybe one will be a Port Commissioner... maybe others will roll up their sleeves & together, find a way to bring back our Red Cars.

\* \* \*

Post Script: As Chair of the Construction Committee, MTA Director Don Knabe (whose Supervisor's district includes POLA), prepared a motion to recognize Red Cars' plight & direct MTA's CEO to prepare a summary report, due in 60 days, to study connecting transit, saving a shorter part of the line without stopping Port construction, identifying future funding resources, etc.

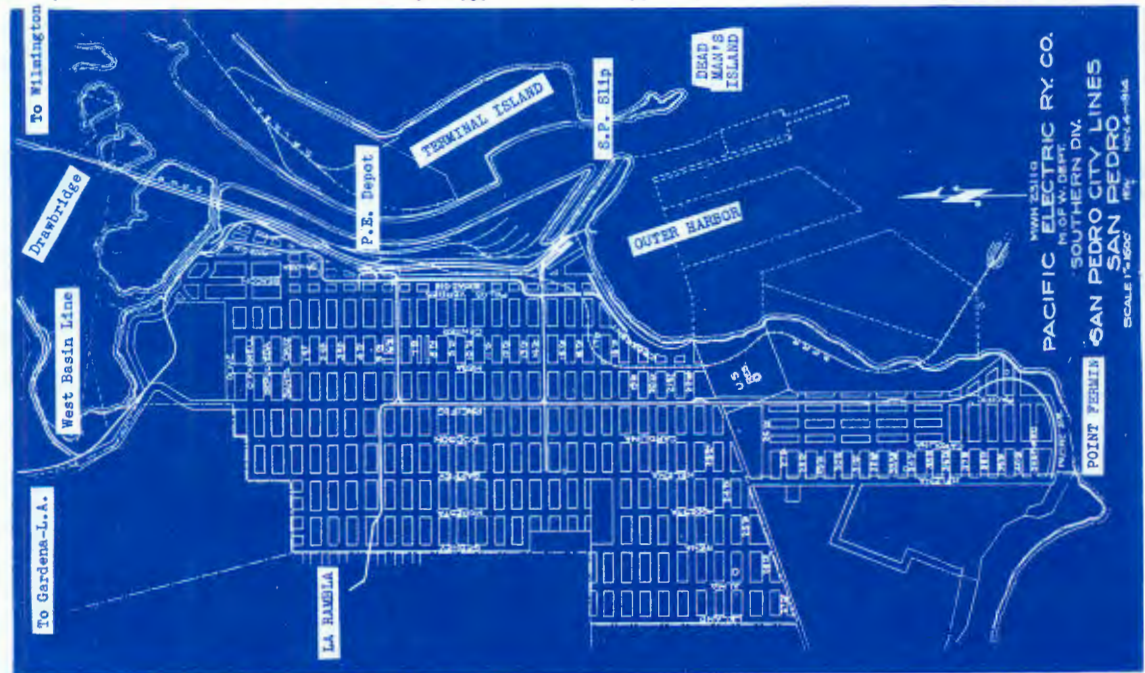
The motion passed that committee unanimously, & unanimously by the full Board 1 week later, when Bryant presented petition signatures topping 6,000... Now it's Thursday September 24th, just 3 days before the Port's abandonment... is it too little, too late? Word on board the Red Cars was there would be a reprieve- Red Cars would run 30 days while this gets worked out! Yet Monday the 28th, 1 day after Lobster Fest, the Port Board, meeting to consider the matter for hours, concluded without a result to run or save the Red Cars. Laid off, the on-board staff is dispersing, though the Red Car's Mechanic will be hired away by MTA; crucial in case MTA really intends to "pull the (Roger) Rabbit out of the hat." Or maybe salvage his knowledge & experience for the Broadway Streetcar?

...& now Ports O' Call business owners acknowledge Port representatives have notified them that they- & the buildings they occupy- will "be gone by 2018"....

## Historic Map of the Month Pacific Electric Ry. San Pedro City Lines (1914)

L.A. & S.L. = Los Angeles & Salt Lake (affiliate of Union Pacific RR)  
P.E. = Pacific Electric Railway (note La Rambla & Pt. Fermin Locals)  
S.P.R.R. = Southern Pacific (note breakwater starts nr. north arrow)

Source: Lines of the Pacific Electric Southern & Western Districts: Interurban Special 60, Seabree & Walker (1975), p. 204. Marked up (typewritten labels) prob. post-1914 carried over from earlier edition.





## LAT Ed. Advises New LACMTA CEO

A May Los Angeles Times (LAT) editorial advised Los Angeles County MTA's new CEO Phil Washington, "... who comes with rave reviews after leading Denver Regional Transportation District"... to: 1) Ride the buses! 75% of transit boardings, 2) Think like a rider\*\*\*, 3) Get the Financial house in order; the Operating deficit could trigger huge cuts, 4) Stay focused on projects that deliver greatest benefit; the CEO will play a crucial role picking which projects go into Measure "R2" 's Transportation Tax, & 5) Balance regional & individual public demands (Outstanding advice above, especially from LA Times, but good luck with the last part- a balancing-act involving juggling both *elected's* & the public's oversized egos! \*\*\* (I think item # 2) means things like: add more cops, take away (troublesome) TAP, add *low-tech* pole & system maps, shade & shelter most bus stops with solar panels, returning "free" electricity to recharge riders' *electronica*- just like airports, & for the same reason! -Ed.) = (The Transit Advocate's Ed.)

## THE **TRANSIT** ADVOCATE

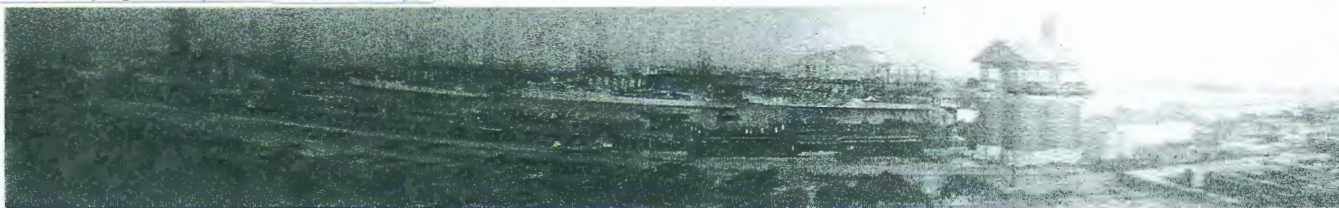
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## Building Los Angeles

Thursday, May 1, 2014 <http://buildinglosangeles.blogspot.com/2014/05/>

LA City Councilmembers Want Blue Line Extension to San Pedro

Despite being home to the United States' busiest container port, the waterfront community of San Pedro has long been isolated from Los Angeles County's Metro Rail network. Two members of the LA City Council are trying to change that. Yesterday, Councilmembers Tom LaBonge (4th District) and Jose Buscaino (19th District) introduced a motion which requests that Metro report on the feasibility of a new light rail line connecting the Wilmington/San Pedro area to the Blue Line. The line has existed for well over two decades, appearing in several past Harbor Area transportation plans. Notably, the light rail line was included in the Harbor Area Transportation Plan (HATP) proposal for Measure R2. In MetrolA's tentative plan, the line would connect the Harbor Area to the Blue Line and Chatsworth Lines, running south towards Wilmington.



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