

# **New Mass Transit Plans: Los Angeles 1951- Present**

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# Transit's Family Tree

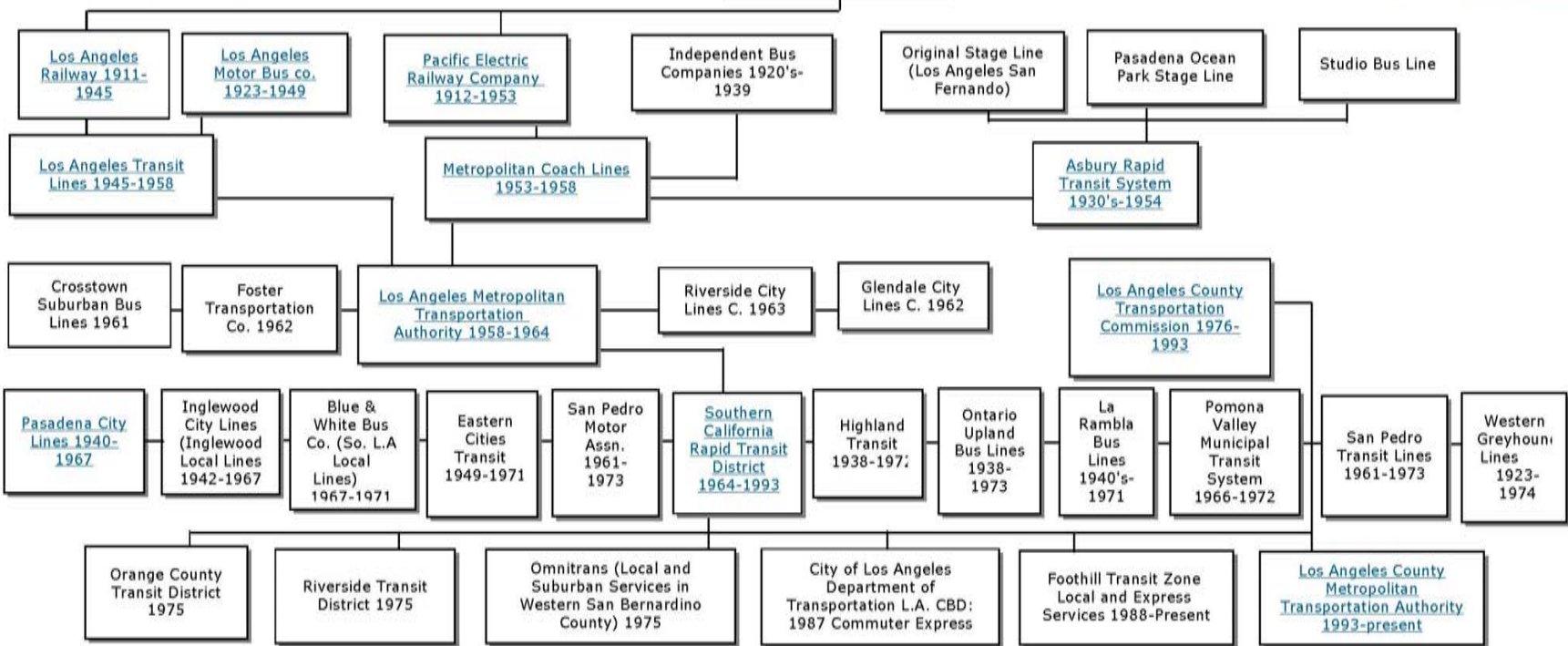


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**The Great Merger 1911**



\*When printing please make sure to set print properties to Landscape and use paper type 8.50 x14.00 in. for best results.

# Pacific Electric (1911-1953)



- Made concept of suburbia possible. Interurban “hybrid” transit system.
- Connected the suburbs and the city center, served Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside and Orange Counties, also ran some connecting buses and buses on Wilshire.
- Peak number of rail lines in 1925, peak ridership in 1923, and again during WWII due to rationing.
- The clean-air “Metrolink” commuter rail of its day, only much more extensive with 1,100 track miles, up to 2,700 trains a day, and multiple hubs.

# Los Angeles Railway (1911-1945)



- The urban rapid transit system of its day. Operated in the center of city streets, connecting points north, south, east and west in metropolitan Los Angeles with downtown, Pacific Electric and other transit service providers.
- Peak number of lines around 1925, peak ridership during WWII, 742 streetcars and about 650 track miles, also operated motorbuses and electric trolley buses.
- Known as the “Yellow Cars”. Grandfather of today’s urban bus system. Largely forgotten and frequently confused with Pacific Electric.

# Why did rail service go away?

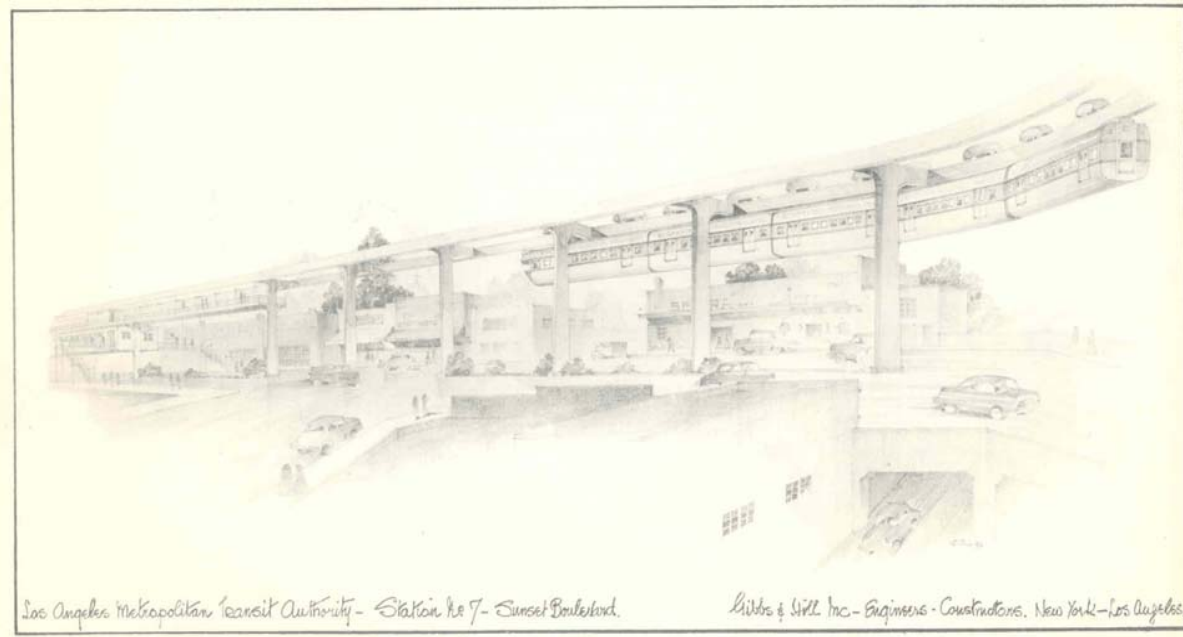
- Same basic business issues both pre and post WWII - huge capital costs to replace aging power substations, catenary wire and rail cars, buses become the economical alternative, rail-to-bus conversions begin in 1925.
- Public Utilities Commission held back fare increases – 5 cents from 1877 to 1927, 7 cents from 1928 to 1945, 10 cents from 1946 to 1951, 15 cents from 1952 to 1956.
- No public subsidies for capital or operating costs available from local, state or federal governments.
- Cultural changes - automobile reliability improves, status symbol marketing, and women & minorities enter the industrial workforce.
- Modal improvements - brand new un-crowded highways and freeways.
- Transit service operators believed that the freeway system would accommodate and speed transit buses as a high speed backbone, thereby increasing their attractiveness to passengers.
- GM perfects and markets the 45 seat transit bus; air conditioning and air suspension become options.
- Diesel is not yet considered to be a component of a new phenomenon called “smog”.



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# Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority

(1951-1964)



Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority - Station No 7 - Sunset Boulevard.

Libbe & Hill Inc. - Engineers - Constructors. New York - Los Angeles.

- Formed by the State in 1951 to study a monorail line from Long Beach to Panorama City within a one mile boundary of the L.A. River.
- Seven Member governing board appointed by the Governor.
- Released its first report in 1954.
- Powers expanded in 1954 to propose a new mass transit system for the region.
- Powers expanded again in 1957 allowing MTA to become a transit operator.
- Purchased Metropolitan Coach Lines (formerly Pacific Electric) and Los Angeles Transit Lines (formerly Los Angeles Railway), effective March 3, 1958.



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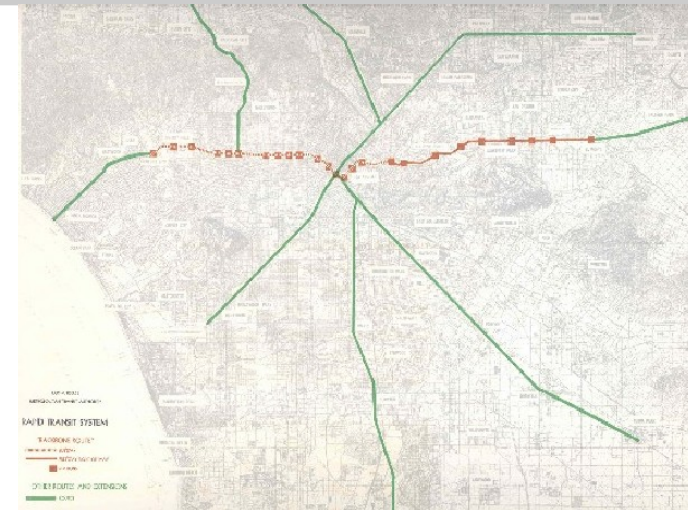
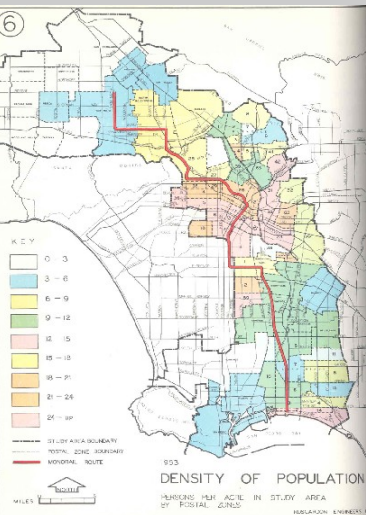
# Rail lines still operating in 1958:

- From Pacific Electric (1911-1953) via Metropolitan Coach Lines (1953-1958):
  - Long Beach, San Pedro, Bellflower, Watts Local, and Catalina Terminal.
  - Last “Red Car” runs to Long Beach in 1961.
- From Los Angeles Railway (1911-1945) via Los Angeles Transit Lines (1945-1958):
  - West Jefferson Blvd & Huntington Park (J), West Pico & East 1<sup>st</sup> St. (P), Whittier Blvd. & West 3<sup>rd</sup> St. (R), San Pedro St. & Western Ave. (S), Vernon & Vermont Ave (V).
  - Last “Yellow Car” runs in 1963.



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# Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority (1951-1964)



- The initial 1954 study of one monorail line, 45 miles/\$165 million, grows in 1960 to a 75 mile/\$529 million monorail plan with elevated rail along Wilshire.
- Expanded monorail plans meets strong opposition from Valley Boulevard, Wilshire Corridor and Beverly Hills.
- MTA's plan is scaled down to a "Backbone Route" with subway under Wilshire Boulevard and at-grade rail to El Monte.
- Alweg and Goodell Monorail Co.'s release their own monorail plans and offer to build systems for "free" in exchange for next 40 years of MTA's farebox revenue.
- MTA notifies private companies that any plan that does not include subway along the Wilshire route is unacceptable. MTA fails in its PR efforts with general public.



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# Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority

(1951-1964)



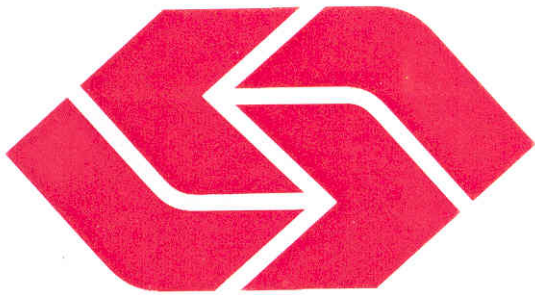
- Politicians vociferously battle over if and how transit would be subsidized and what the very definition of subsidy really is. Public becomes thoroughly confused.
- The MTA, without the ability to tax, issue bonds, or take property via eminent domain, without the existence of any Federal or State capital assistance programs, and still subject to taxation itself, holds two subway groundbreaking ceremonies: in downtown with Gov. Edmund G. Brown on 1/12/62, and in Beverly Hills with Mayor Jack Freeman, on 1/23/62.
- State Sen. Rees (D-Beverly Hills) re-writes MTA legislation to give the transit agency the powers it was missing, re-launching it as the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) in September 1964.



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# Southern California Rapid Transit District

(1964-1993)



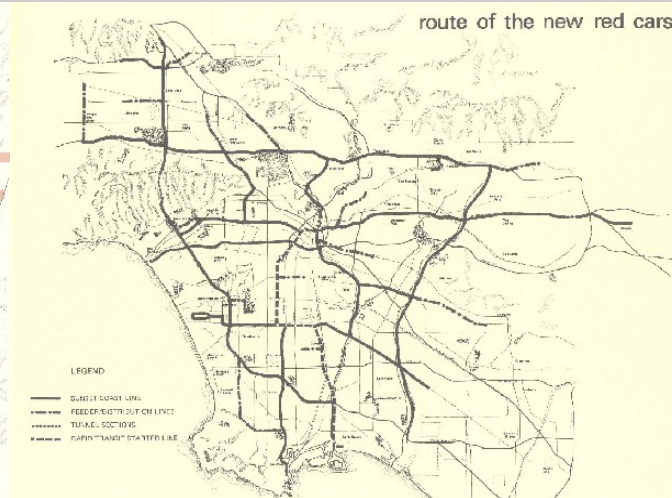
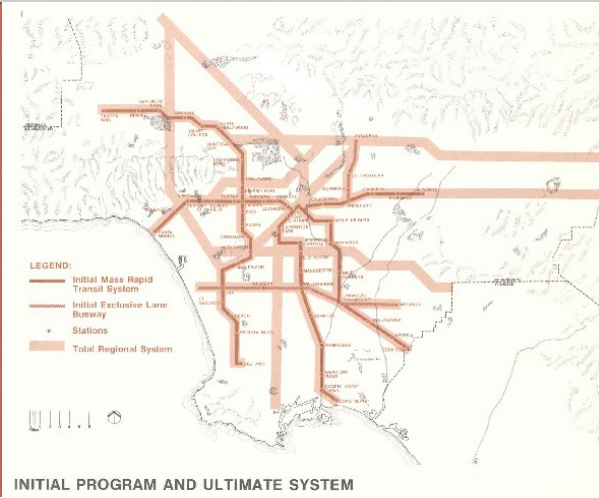
**RTD**



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- New agency has an eleven member board appointed by local elected officials, the powers of eminent domain, taxation through local referendum, bond issuance, and creation of Benefit Assessment Districts.
- It is enthusiastically welcomed in an event at the Ambassador Hotel with 400 civic leaders.
- Takes its legislative charge to create a new mass transit system for Los Angeles seriously and goes to work marketing public transportation as a needed and necessary community asset.
- Federal government forms the Urban Mass Transit Administration in 1964 (now called the Federal Transportation Administration).
- Operates transit service in L.A., Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.
- Takes over 11 other failing or failed transit companies, standardizing routes and fares.

# Southern California Rapid Transit District (1964-1993)



- 1968 Plan -
- Initial 62 mile system that could expand to 300 miles, projected cost of \$2.5 billion, 8.5 year construction period.
  - Voters rejected by a slim margin.

- 1974 Plan -
- Initial 116 mile system that could eventually expand to a 250 miles, projected cost of \$6.6 billion, 12 year construction period.
  - Also rejected by voters.

- 1976 “Baxter Ward” Plan -
- 281 mile system, 230 miles of elevated heavy rail and 51 miles of light rail, projected cost of \$7.5 billion.
  - Rejected by voters by widest margin.

# Southern California Rapid Transit District

(1964-1993)

- Agency is successful in getting federal grants to build the El Monte busway, part of the “backbone route” originally proposed by LAMTA, continues to be one of the most successful busway/HOV facilities in the nation.
- 1973 - Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino form their own public transit agencies
- 1974 – Proposition 5 passes, dedicates portion of state highway funds to public transportation, marks the first time in L.A.’s history a majority of voters signal support for public transportation.
- 1975 – A Rapid Transit Advisory Committee formed to identify a starter line for rail rapid transit.
- 1976 – State legislature forms the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) along with transportation commissions for Ventura, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.
- 1978 - California Transportation Commission is formed to replace California Highway Commission, State Transportation Board, Aeronautics Board and California Toll Bridge Authority.
- 1979 – Draft Environment Impact Report/Alternatives Analysis is released for a rail starter line that would eventually become the Metro Red Line subway.



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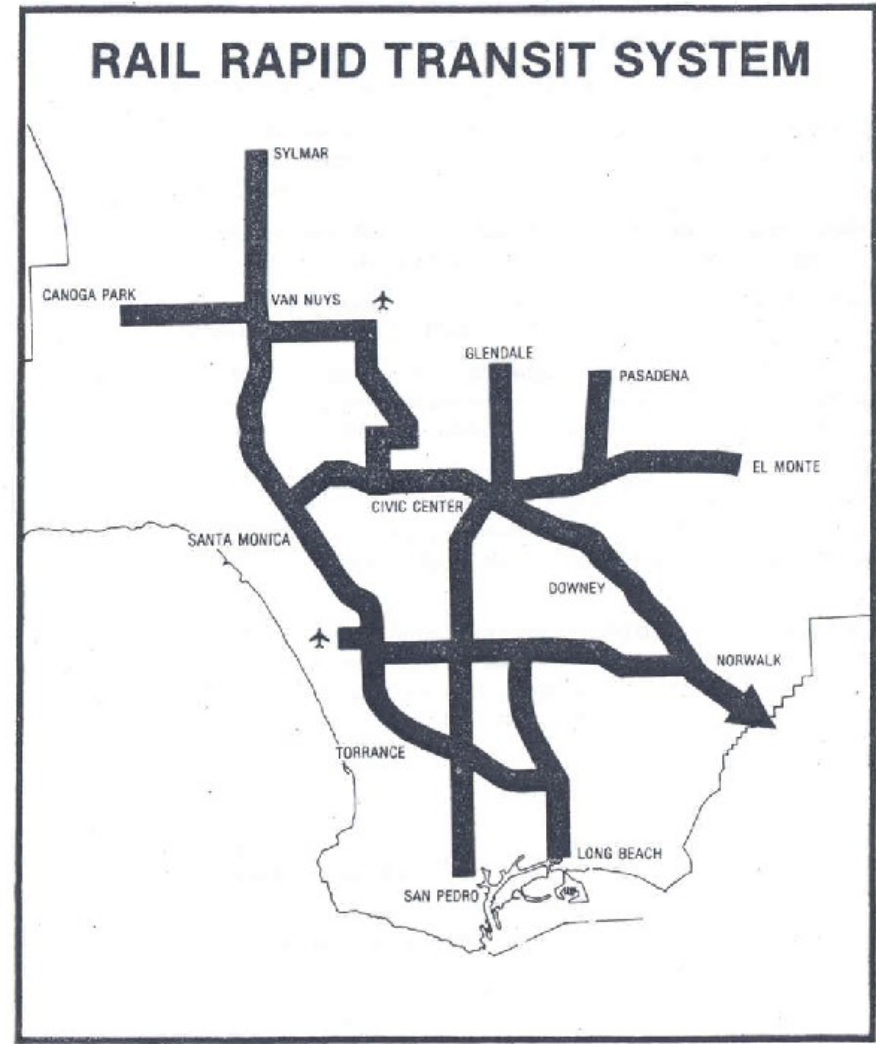
# Southern California Rapid Transit District (1964-1993)



# Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (1977-1993)



- State creates the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) in 1976 to coordinate between municipal transit operators and SCRTD, plan countywide transportation improvements and ensure efficient use of local, state and federal transportation funding.
- In 1980, a majority of Los Angeles County voters approve Proposition A, a half cent sales tax for transportation improvements, 35% of revenue is dedicated for rail construction.



Map from 1980 Proposition A voter information materials

# Two Agencies (1977-1993)

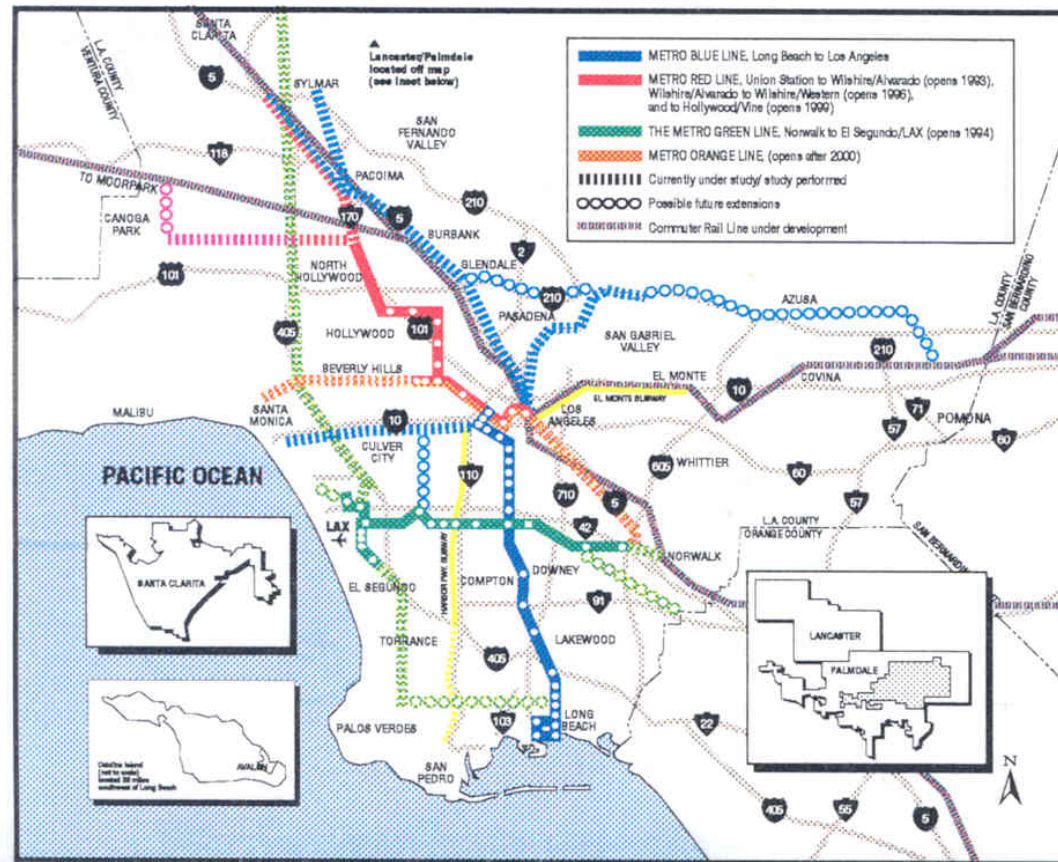
- 1983 – Rail planning is going on at both agencies: SCRTD is planning the Metro Rail starter line, a heavy rail subway, and LACTC is planning a countywide light rail system and prioritizing corridors – Los Angeles/Long Beach emerges as the highest priority – it is the same corridor that was Pacific Electric’s second interurban line and its most successful, opening in 1902.
- 1985 - methane gas explosion at Fairfax and Third prompts a change in federal law tied to SCRTD’s full funding grant agreement for its subway project. A methane gas risk zone is identified along the Wilshire corridor in the Miracle Mile area and the future route is changed to head north to Hollywood and the San Fernando Valley on Vermont instead of Fairfax.
- SCRTD re-considers its rail rapid transit planning and decides on a five station “starter line” subway in downtown Los Angeles that could expand to Hollywood and over the Cahuenga Pass to the San Fernando Valley. Using mostly Federal and state funding, construction begins in 1986.
- LACTC begins construction the Los Angeles/Long Beach and Norwalk/El Segundo light rail projects, and begins planning a commuter rail system.



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# Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (1977-1993)

- A second half-cent sales tax for transportation, Proposition C, was approved by a majority of Los Angeles County voters in 1990, along with propositions 108, 111 and 116.
- The Transportation Commission begins negotiations with Southern Pacific, the parent company of the former Pacific Electric system, to acquire 400 miles of right-of-way in Southern California. The parties eventually agree on a purchase price of \$980 million in 1992. The commuter rail system known as Metrolink is born and spun off as an independent five county joint powers authority.



1992 Long Range Plan for rail rapid transit, LACTC.



# Merging Transit with Transportation

- 1988, the two agencies agree on an eight-point plan that includes consolidating all rail construction under a single third entity, naming the lines the Metro Red Line, Metro Blue Line and Metro Green Line, and open discussion of an eventual merger.
- 1992, the Governor signs AB152(Katz) that creates the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, also known as MTA or Metro, effective February 1, 1993. It becomes a planning, funding, construction, and operating multi-modal “super agency” for Los Angeles County.



# Metro's Transit System

Metro BRT



Metro Local



Metro Express



Metro Rapid



Metro Light Rail



Metro Heavy Rail



# Current System

## Urban Fixed Guideway:

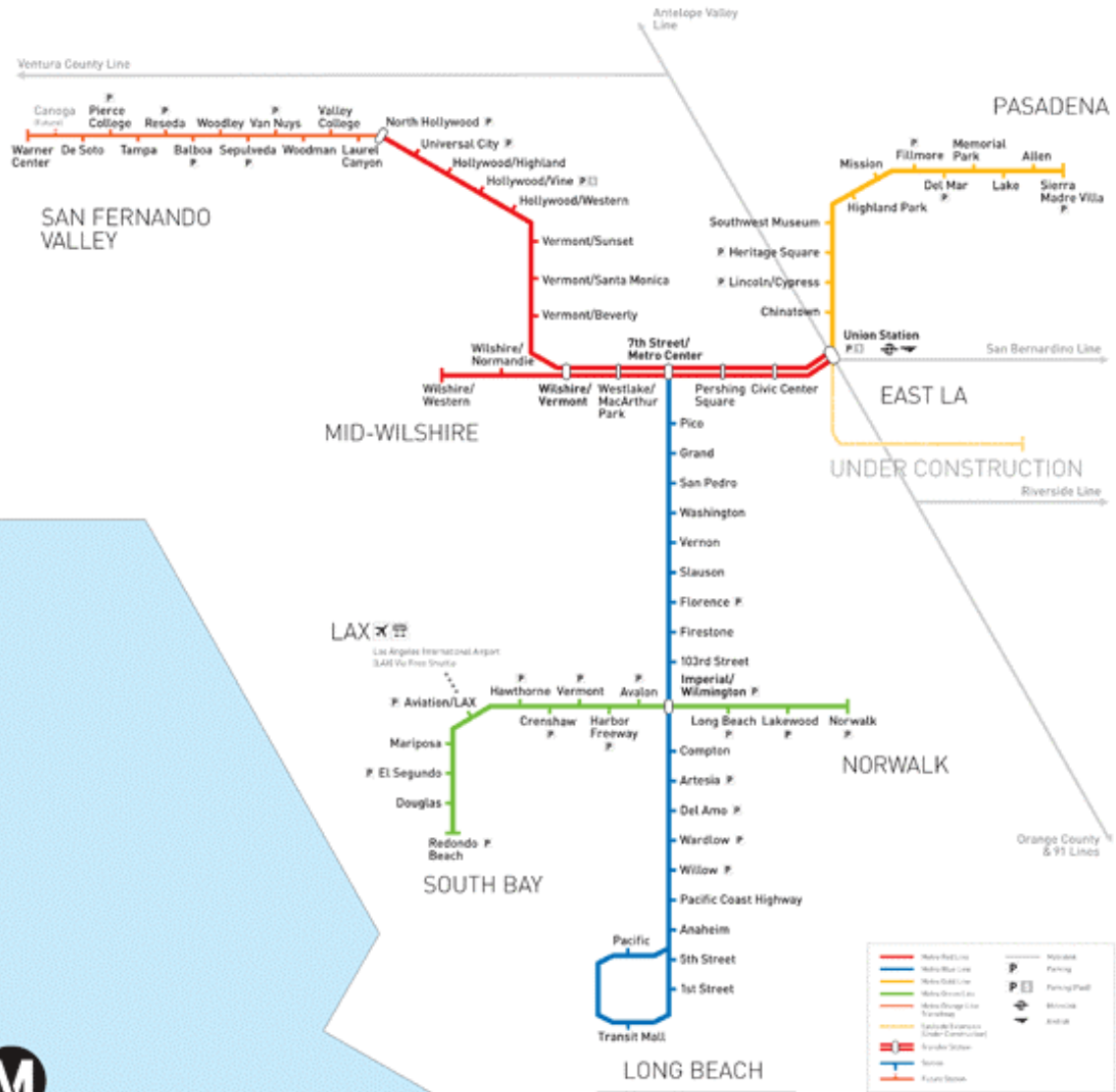
78 stations  
261 vehicles  
73.1 service miles

## Commuter Rail:

78 stations  
145 vehicles  
453 miles

## Metro Bus:

18,500 stops  
2,253 vehicles  
1,433 miles

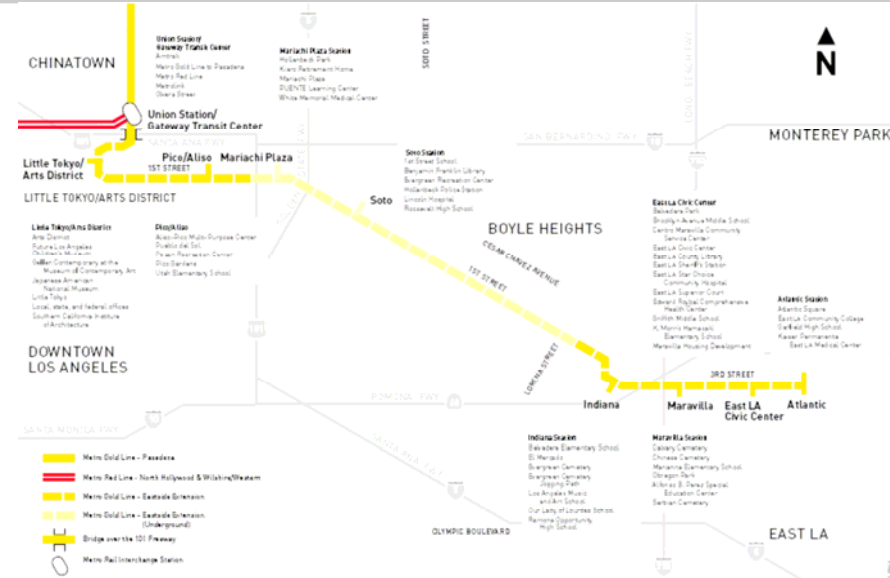


# Light Rail Under Construction

Next to open:

## Gold Line Light Rail Eastside Extension

- Opens late 2008
- 8 stations
- 6 miles
- Connects with Union Station hub



## Exposition Light Rail to Culver City

- Opens 2010
- 10 stations
- 8.5 miles
- Connects with 7th/Metro hub



# Future Fixed Guideway Proposals

In no particular order:

- **Gold Line** Foothill Extension, from Pasadena to Montclair
- **Purple Line** Wilshire Subway Extension, from Western to Fairfax, Westwood, or Santa Monica
- **Exposition** Extension from Culver City to Santa Monica
- **Green Line** Extension north to LAX, Westchester, and/or South to South Bay Galleria
- **Orange Line** Extension North along Canoga and/or Van Nuys
- Other projects as identified through Metro's Long Range Plan, currently in process and modeling various options.

# Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library

<http://www.metro.net/library>

- Originally the library of the Los Angeles Railway (1895-1945), first opened in July 1937 with assistance of the Huntington Library.
- Library began computer cataloging into OCLC's World Catalog using Library of Congress Subject Headings and honoring interlibrary loan requests from outside institutions in 1976.
- Renamed the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library by the LACMTA Board of Directors in 2001 to honor the distinguished career of its longest serving librarian.
- Transportation research library for employees, consultants, students, academics, other government agencies and the general public.
- Partner of the National Transportation Library.
- Partner of the National Academy of Sciences Transportation Research Board.
- Largest transit operator-owned library, fourth largest transportation library collection after U.C. Berkeley, Northwestern University and the U.S. DOT's Volpe Center.
- Archive of Greater L.A. transit history from 1873 to the present.
- Participant in Getty/USC's L.A. as Subject collection of less visible cultural archives.



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# End



Photo by Fred Camino