

Los Angeles Union Depot Project

*Reprinted from "Electric Traction"
for June, 1919*

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Proposed Changes In Los Angeles and Pasadena Will Provide Union Station and Eliminate Grade Crossings. Estimated Cost of the Two Projects About \$3,500,000

The Southern Pacific Railroad Company, the Southern Pacific Company, and the Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad Company, under date of July 8, 1917, entered into an agreement to centralize their passenger business at Central Avenue and Fifth Street, Los Angeles for the mutual benefits that each company would derive therefrom, and for the better and more expeditious and safer handling of the trains of the companies to and from the practical business center of the City of Los Angeles. The plan has been under consideration for many years. Early in 1913 the City, realizing that better facilities should be provided in the City of Los Angeles for the handling of the travel passing through to the Panama Pacific International Exposition to be held in San Francisco in 1915, petitioned the Southern Pacific Company for a more adequate depot. The matter was referred to the State Railroad Commission, and after many hearings, decision was reached on November 25, 1913, authorizing the construction of the present Southern Pacific station at an expense in excess of \$700,000, the only condition being that in the construction of this depot a plan would have to be made so that it would adapt itself for the future elimination of grade crossings to and from the station. The building was erected with this idea in view and is part of the general plan. This building was completed, and handled the crowds to the Fair, and Los Angeles was complimented by all travellers upon the commodious and splendid facilities that were provided.

Following the Fair, certain real estate interests in Los Angeles revived the matter of having this splendid \$700,000 structure dismantled and a union station be placed in another part of the city. The City Council of Los Angeles provided a fund of \$20,000 and petitioned the State Railroad Commission to evolve a comprehensive plan. This has not been done up to the present time, but certain temporary facilities have been suggested during the period of federal control of the steam line railroads.

In the plan evolved by Mr. H. B. Titcomb, early in

1908, when he was in charge of the southern district of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, provision was made for bringing the three steam railroads into one terminal and eliminating grade crossings in the districts of heavy traffic traversed by the Pacific Electric Railway and the steam roads. Especial attention was given to the Pacific Electric because of its tremendous load of passengers handled daily from the suburban points. Some idea of the volume of this traffic may be gained when it is stated that the total passengers handled on all the lines of the Pacific Electric averages 90,000,000 a year. The result is a comprehensive plan whereby no train leaving the Pacific Electric depot at Sixth and Main streets would cross a single street at grade, a freight or passenger track or any industry freight spur, until it had reached South Pasadena, a distance of over eight miles. The same applies to the Pacific Electric lines running to southern and eastern suburban cities. The plan as approved by the two steam lines named, and agreed to by the Pacific Electric Railway Company, would therefore give the much-sought-for relief to the grade crossing situation in the City of Los Angeles and would provide a quicker service on the Pacific Electric between Los Angeles and southern and northern division points. Interference with the operation of cars would be reduced to a minimum by the separation of the grades.

The proposed plan provides a new double truck connection from the north end of the city along the east bank of the Los Angeles river to a connection of the Santa Fe Railroad and the Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad tracks where the Santa Fe enters the city at the Los Angeles river. Continuing south on the east bank of the river, the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific, as well as the Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad trains, would operate south along the east bank of the river to a point between Sixth and Seventh streets. Similarly from the south the Southern Pacific passenger trains would branch off at the foot of Washington street and Alameda street, turn easterly, cross the Los Angeles river to the Salt Lake tracks, where the com-

bined traffic of the Salt Lake, Southern Pacific and Santa Fe would continue northerly along the east bank of the river to the point above mentioned between Sixth and Seventh streets.

At this latter point between Sixth and Seventh streets these railroads, both from the north and south, would have reached an elevation by easy incline, so that by swinging west across the Los Angeles river on bridges to be constructed, this combined traffic would pass over, by an elevated structure, the Santa Fe yards, Santa Fe avenue, Mateo street, Mill street and over Alameda and Sixth streets, dropping into the present yards on the Arcade depot site.

The Pacific Electric elevated structure, as it now exists east of the Pacific Electric building, would be carried east over San Pedro street, over Central avenue, completely over the steam lines at Sixth and Alameda streets, thence continuing easterly alongside of the steam elevated structure as above described across the Los Angeles river and would include a double track between the steam lines and the banks of the river northerly, going under the Fourth and First street viaducts, and thence by elevated structure south over the steam lines at Aliso street and the east bank of the river, over Aliso street near Mission Road, thence dropping down under the concrete arch where it now exists at Brooklyn avenue. The accompanying map shows the proposed lines and the various points mentioned.

By this plan the complete accomplishment of the elimination of grade crossings is made possible. The only suggestion that has come from the Southern Pacific and Salt Lake Railroad as to expense was that the city would join in a proper and equitable division of the viaduct construction that may hereafter be called for at the points above mentioned. Any other plan which has been suggested contemplates that these viaducts must be built sooner or later.

In working out the plan the city's needs, present and future, as well as those of the railroads, have been given full consideration. The following points have been considered. (1) The future unionizing of passenger stations. (2) The public convenience during temporary unification and federal control. (3) The public safety. (4) The effect upon the business of the city in general, and particularly those having investment and business enterprises in the vicinity of the present location as compared with the losses that they would sustain in any upheaval or moving. (5) The additional money to be expended by local or interurban passenger systems. (6) The effect, financial and otherwise, that unification would have on the various corporate properties, both steam and electric.

The plan also contemplates pairing off the freight and passenger traffic of the Southern Pacific and Salt Lake Railroad trains. Westbound traffic of both roads would arrive in the city over the Southern Pacific route via Alhambra avenue and Alameda street and trains east bound for both roads would go over the Salt Lake Railroad as far as Colton, thence east on their own

tracks. The coach yards of the combined roads could be placed on the east bank of the Los Angeles river, probably between First and Fourth streets. The combined passenger engines of the three steam roads could be placed in roundhouses on the east bank of the river, probably between Fourth and Seventh streets. Ultimately, entrance to the Arcade station would be by a four-track steam passenger service, which would take care of more than twice the business that is handled by the combined three roads at the present time.

The handling of the freight situation in the City of Los Angeles will be greatly improved, and ultimately the Santa Fe yards near the foot of Third Street and the river will be utilized for freight terminal or industrial purposes.

Estimated Cost of the Work

The work would cost the steam railroads approximately \$2,000,000 and the Pacific Electric Railway \$1,400,000, exclusive of the cost of the viaducts. The viaducts, according to the plan, could be built one at a time and the cost would be divided by agreement between street car lines, interurban lines, steam railroads, city and county.

Advantages to be Gained

The chief advantages to be gained have been summarized briefly as follows: All grade crossings eliminated. Danger of collisions or other accidents reduced to a minimum, with consequent saving of lives and money. Greater economy of operation, better service and a considerable gain in speed. The running time to Pasadena would be reduced, for instance, not less than eight and probably ten minutes. The interurban lines will not cross a single steam line at grade. Travel will be made more attractive and more people will travel.

The elimination of grade crossings with faster, safer and better service is the feature of the plan that Mr. Titcomb and other engineers regard as the most important and most valuable. Improving the Pasadena service so that the time would be substantially reduced and the cars running two-thirds of the way to Pasadena without a single important crossing at grade is typical of the big advantages to be gained in interurban travel between Los Angeles and neighboring communities.

Plan Utilizes Present Station

The Southern Pacific passenger station will take care of many times the passenger traffic of the roads coming into Los Angeles. Furthermore, whenever conditions warrant, greater baggage room space, waiting rooms, express rooms, etc., could be added. The tracks together with the umbrella sheds could be elevated leaving the entire area of 1800 ft. long and 400 ft. wide to be developed.

The proposed plan makes it entirely practicable for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad to join with the Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad and Southern Pacific Railroad on the east bank of the Los Angeles river and bring their trains into the present Southern Pacific passenger station.

The Pasadena Project as Suggested by the Friends of Municipal Ownership

A rapid transit railway project has also been proposed for the City of Pasadena, near Los Angeles. This consists of a municipal railroad system calling for the most modern rapid transit equipment available. The present plans call for the location of the Pasadena terminal at Broadway and Colorado streets and the Los Angeles terminal at First and Broadway, where the Tallyho stages are now located. The engineering plans propose a system composed of a combination of tunnels, open subways and closed subways.

Development of the Scheme

The proposed municipal railway may be said to be the outcome of a scheme devised over twenty years ago by Horace M. Dobbins, who has been connected with the large public service corporations in Southern California cities for the past twenty years.

In 1897 when the bicycle was being used extensively, Mr. Dobbins bought a narrow strip of land along the Arroyo Seco Canyon near Los Angeles and the California Cycleway Company was incorporated. It was proposed to use this strip as a bicycle path and a road for other horseless carriages and the project was approved by the state legislature. Additions to the right-of-way were gradually made until the tract consisted of 31 acres with an average width of 30 ft. and a length of about 5 miles. Some ten years after the original idea was conceived it

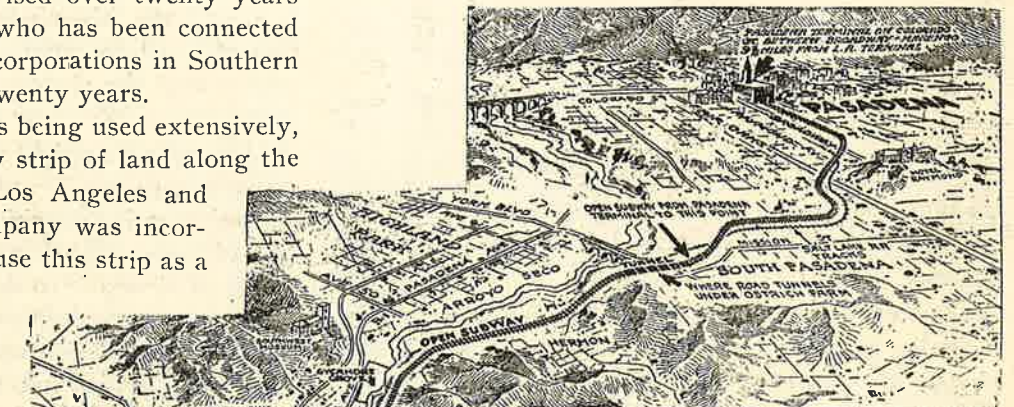
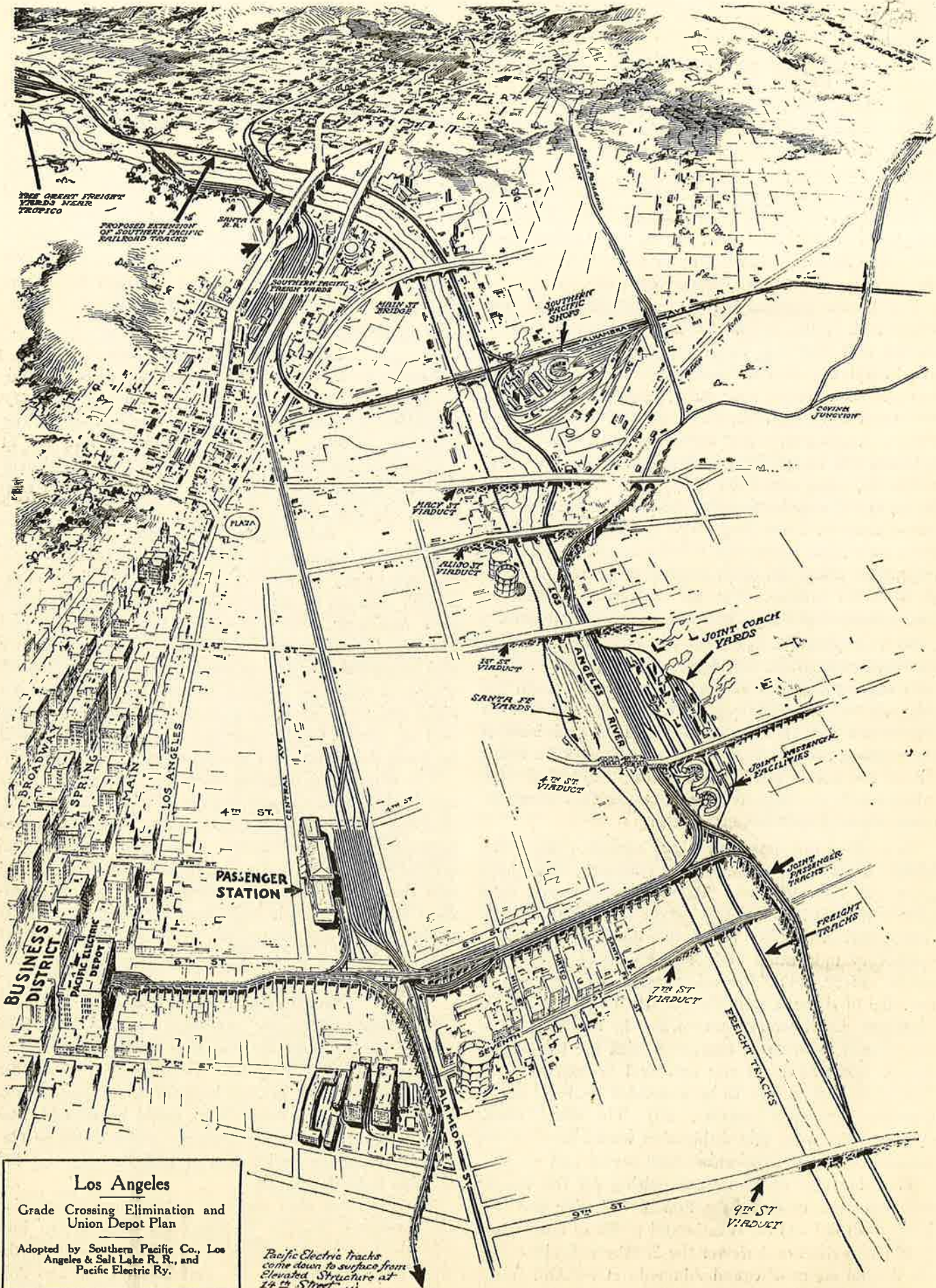
At this time, Mr. Dobbins offered the city of Pasadena an option on the holdings for \$156,425.

Tunnel Construction

The plans call for about 6000 feet of tunnel on the line, the longest of which would be under Elysian Park, as shown in the accompanying diagram.

Hydro Electric Power to be Used

One of the interesting and important features of the projected railway is that it would be operated with power generated by the Owens-river aqueduct. Pasadena recently signed a fifteen-year contract with the city of Los Angeles for the purchase of Los Angeles municipal electric energy at .65 of a cent per kilowatt. It is plain that this contract would enable the city of

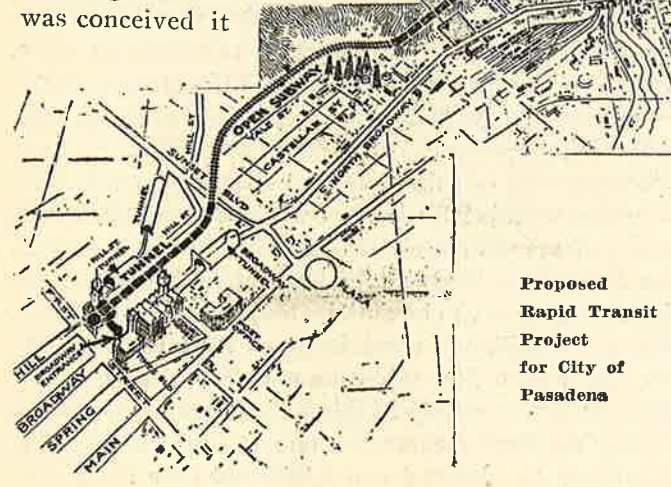


Pasadena to operate an electric railway cheaper than any other traction company in the country.

Estimated Cost

The cost of the entire scheme has been estimated as follows:

Los Angeles Terminal	\$ 45,500
Pasadena Terminal	115,476
Engineering and superintendence.....	50,000
Grading	148,843
Ballast	46,200
Ties	55,104
Rails, fastenings and joints.....	141,948
Special work, frogs and switches.....	14,000
Paving	17,866
Track laying and surfacing.....	21,000
Roadway tools	7,000
Tunnels	568,186
Bridges, trestles and culverts.....	384,440
Crossings, fencing and cattle guards.....	69,580
Interlocking and signal appliances.....	18,200
Telegraph and telephone lines.....	3,500
Transmission system	130,760
Power plant buildings.....	16,800
Shops and car houses.....	21,000
Stations, waiting-rooms and miscellaneous..	28,000
Power plant equipment.....	55,650
Rolling stock equipment.....	182,000
General expense	121,241
Right of way	514,813
Total	\$2,777,107



was proposed to convert the scheme into a direct rapid transit line between Pasadena and Los Angeles and the California Cycleway Company consequently transferred its holdings to a company known as the Pasadena Rapid Transit Company. It was the purpose of this corporation to finance an electric line running over the right-of-way described. War conditions in 1914 stopped development on the proposed line and it was not until 1917 that any action was again taken.

The matter of voting bonds to the amount of \$3,000,000 to carry out the project in line with the above estimate and prospectus was defeated at a recent election held in the City of Pasadena. Disinterested engineers showed conclusively that the project could not be constructed for less than \$8,000,000. A reconnaissance of the route showed that there would be practically 11,000 feet of tunnels, and it was shown definitely that a double track masonry or concrete lined tunnel could not be constructed for less than \$240.00 a foot. It was shown that the right-of-way could not be purchased for less than \$2,500,000 as against their estimate of \$500,000. These facts were taken into consideration by the voters, and the project was voted down.

In discussing the Pasadena project, H. B. Titcomb, vice-president of the Pacific Electric Railway says:

"The greater proportion of the thinking people realize that the Pacific Electric interurban system is honestly and efficiently managed and operated. They realize that it is the greatest single industry that the four southern counties of California have. They realize that it should not be financially wrecked. They realize that the costs per unit of service are cheaper than any municipally operated road. They realize that the catch phrase 'use cheap aqueduct power' at \$.0065 is misleading and erroneous. They realize that the power rate paid by the Pacific Electric to the power company is very little higher than this rate. The difference would practically be nil.

"The thinking people realize that the commutation fare as given to the City of Pasadena is low for the service performed. A commutation rate of 60 rides good for 40 days is given for \$6.00, which entitles a passenger to ride from any part of the City of Pasadena on the city street roads to the heart of Los Angeles, a maximum distance of fourteen and one-half miles. The greater part of the people are beginning to realize that if the municipality takes over the earnings from these corporations that the State would lose the 5¼ per cent of all the gross taken in by the corporations, as of course municipal lines do not pay such taxes. They realize that the subsidy that they are giving the jitney buses which are competing with the Pacific Electric Railway Company is unjust and unfair, and ultimately will wreck the electric transportation systems of the United States unless a fair and equitable basis is established so as to equalize the subsidies that are now given from the public purse. It can easily be shown that in Southern California the ordinary interurban jitney bus takes in about \$10,000 gross per annum. Even the municipal bus running to the golf links in the City of Los Angeles is taking in upwards of \$25.00 per day, or nearly \$10,000 gross per annum. Such an interurban jitney bus pays approximately \$150.00 per annum to do this \$10,000 gross business, and is provided with a complete right-of-way paved, and bridges, and no expense for the maintenance of

this road are attached to the jitney bus. As against this, the public demand that the electric corporation pay 5¼ per cent on its \$10,000 gross; it costs the company 9½ per cent for maintenance that must be provided. They must pay the interest on the amounts invested in the private rights-of-way, tracks, culverts, bridges, paving, signals, and other things to be put on an equality with the jitney bus, which amounts to approximately 15 per cent of the gross. In other words, the public are taxing their electric railroads \$3,000, while they are subsidizing the jitney bus by the difference of this amount and \$150.00.

"The people are beginning to realize that Southern California cannot live without this electric transportation, and the fair-minded and the people who know that after all the public must ultimately pay the bill, realize that the electric railroads must be fairly protected.

"As to the municipal project in Pasadena. The real estate enthusiasts in and around Los Angeles are endeavoring to have a civic center provided in the north end of town. The congestion now leading to this throat of streets is so marked at the present time that the private automobiles now make great detours to avoid the congestion and the delays necessary. The distance from Colorado and Fair Oaks avenue to Sixth and Main streets via the Pacific Electric is 11.1 miles, via San Pedro street. The distance via the municipal line from Colorado and Fair Oaks avenue to First and Hill streets is 9.2 miles, and about .8 of a mile further to the location of the Pacific Electric in the center of the business district, so that the municipal line is in reality approximately one mile less in distance than the Pacific Electric. The present running time of the Pacific Electric Railway is 38 minutes to Sixth and Main streets, and 32 minutes to First and Main streets, which would compare with the delivery point contemplated by the municipal line.

"Proponents of this municipal enterprise claim that they can run this 9.2 miles (of which 2.5 miles are over curves of approximately six degrees, with a rise from Los Angeles to Pasadena of 500 feet, and gradients as high as 5 per cent to be anticipated) within 12 minutes, with a possibility of three stops en route; it is therefore easily seen that this cannot be made in less than about 23, and probably 25 minutes, as against the service that the Pacific Electric interests have been willing to provide by elevated and additional four track systems delivering the people from the center of Pasadena to the center of Los Angeles in about 28 minutes with no expense to the municipality.

"The unbiased people, and those who give time and thought to the subject, appreciate that betterment of the Pasadena situation can be brought about by cooperation with the Pacific Electric interests, and that the statements made by those who have financial interests or political interests are biased, and do not represent the best thought of the community."

ZONE PLAN PROPOSED FOR LOS ANGELES

The Pacific Electric Railway Company operates an interurban system in southern California, connecting Los Angeles with practically all communities within a radius of 75 miles. It also operates local street car service within a number of incorporated cities, such as Long Beach, Pasadena, Pomona, Riverside, Redlands, San Bernardino, Santa Monica, Venice, etc., and a portion of the local street car service within the city of Los Angeles. However, local street car service within Los Angeles is also performed by the Los Angeles Railway Corporation, that corporation performing the principal part of such service.

In September, 1918, an increase and adjustment was granted by the Railroad Commission of the State of California in interurban fares of the Pacific Electric Railway Company, but that portion of the application for increase in local fares within Los Angeles and other cities was dismissed on account of the fact that no application had been made at that time by the Los Angeles Railway Corporation to change its local fares within Los Angeles. Subsequently the Los Angeles Railway Corporation has requested the Railroad Commission to make an investigation of its financial affairs and provide whatever relief they may find necessary in the premises, without, however, applying for any specific increase in their fares.

Some time ago, also, the Pacific Electric Railway Company filed another application with the Railroad Commission to increase its local fares within the City of Los Angeles and other cities in lieu of that portion of its previous application which had been dismissed. In the recent application the commission was requested to permit the establishment of a zone plan in the city of Los Angeles as follows:

An open five-cent fare within the downtown business district, extending approximately one and one-half miles from the central portion of such district. Beyond this point and within the present five-cent zone to establish an open eight-cent fare and also a 20-ride commutation ticket for \$1.00, or at the rate of five cents per ride; this ticket to be sold by conductors and to be limited to ten days from date of sale, to be good for only two rides on any one day during such period. Ticket will also be transferable. A special form of ticket has been prepared, and patent on the same has been applied for, which will require only one punch by conductor when issuing.

In the proposed five-cent zone, transfers will be issued to and from points on other lines within such zone; in the proposed eight-cent zone, transfers will be issued over the entire zone the same as is now done on five-cent fare. It is not proposed to make any charge for transfers.

Discussing the plan, O. A. Smith, general passenger agent, says: "In arriving at our zone plan we figure that by establishing an open five-cent fare in the business district we will not lose the short haul travel, it being my opinion that it is principally on account of the loss of the short haul riders that the six and seven cent fares have not proven satisfactory generally, where such fares have been established. In proposing the commutation tickets mentioned, it will afford the daily rider transportation without an increase in fare, but will require him to use the line daily to secure full benefit of the ticket. This ticket will also put the street car service on somewhat the same basis as other public utilities; namely, light, gas, water, telephone, etc., where a minimum charge per month is paid regardless of whether or not facilities are used; in other words, we perform a ready-to-serve service in the same manner as do the other utilities. We find that in the aggregate a large number of our patrons frequently are brought into the city by their friends in automobiles, depriving us of revenue which we should receive.

"By limiting this open five-cent zone to the business district of the city and by establishing an open eight-cent fare with a five-cents per ride commutation ticket over the remainder of the present five-cent zone we get away from complaints which are always prevailing that a zone system will tend to congest the city towards the center and disturb realty values in the outlying districts.

"Preliminary hearing of our application was held on April 29, before the Railroad Commission, which hearing, it is expected, will be continued within a short time.

"In the cities outside of Los Angeles, which range in population from 2,000 to 60,000, we do not propose a zone system as in Los Angeles, but do propose establishing an open seven-cent fare with the same five-cents-per-ride commutation ticket as suggested for Los Angeles."