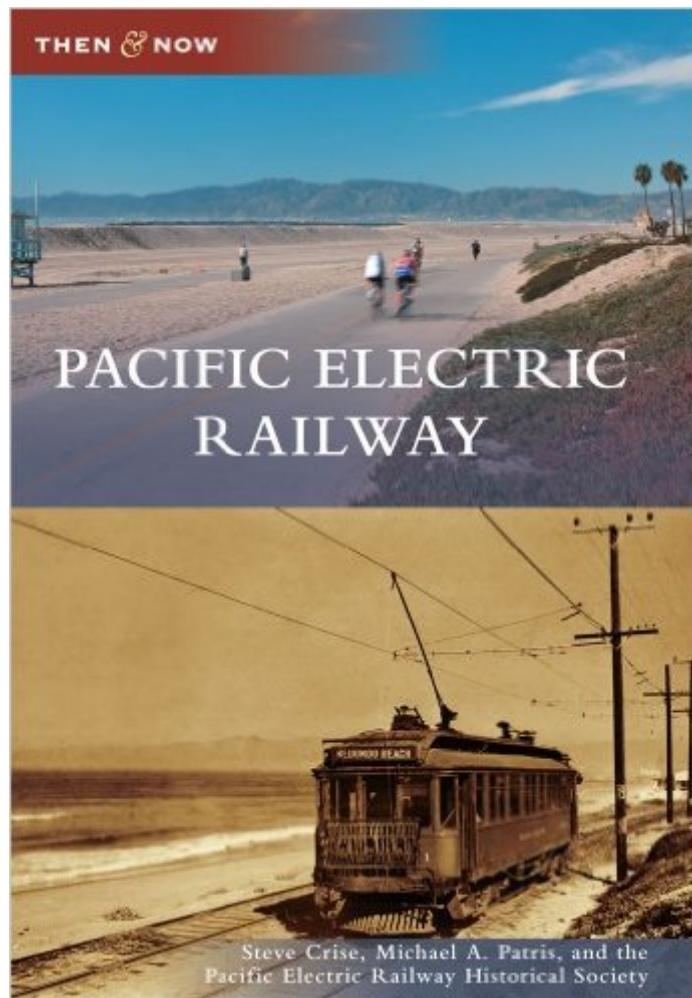


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# Pacific Electric Railway (Then And Now)



## Synopsis

The Pacific Electric Railway originally provided reliable transportation across more than 1,000 miles of track. Postwar society's affair with the automobile led to the loss of an infrastructure that could have formed the basis for an enviable modern light-rail system, one that current society would be happy to utilize.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Pacific Electric Railway, by Steve Crise, Michael A. Parris, and the Pacific Electric Railway Historical Society, is worth a look by anyone looking for a "then and now" portrait of one of America's signature streetcar and interurban empire. Few railroads have had the impact that the Pacific Electric Railway had on Los Angeles, CA, during the Twentieth Century. It tied together downtown Los Angeles, its growing neighborhoods, and its developing suburbs during the city's exploding growth in the pre-automotive era. And, as the Pacific Electric Railway declined, the result was increasingly congested freeways and gridlocked downtown streets. As shown in The Pacific Electric Railway, the line was a study in contrasts; its physical plant ranged from a high-density, 4-track right of way to single-track branches serving farming communities. It was also one of the few interurban railroads to develop an extensive business hauling freight and express--often agricultural products from the outer reaches of its branches. The Pacific Electric Railway's "Then & Now" format is ideally suited for studying the development of the railroad and the cities it tied together. Nothing displays the pace of urban change like pairs of photographs of line side settings, taken decades

apart. Often, the negative effects of urban congestion, caused, in part, by the growing popularity of the automobile, resulted in grid lock that is only now being addressed--by the area's new subway and light rail system that frequently duplicates the Pacific Electric's original routes.

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