

Decision No. 28911

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of
PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY COMPANY, a
corporation, for authority to abandon
service and remove its line between
Venice and Playa Del Rey.

Application No. 20396

ORIGINAL

Frank Karr and C. W. Cornell, for Applicant.

J. O. Marsh and James Gunn, for Board of
Public Utilities and Transportation of
the City of Los Angeles, Interested Party.

W. H. Silance, for Board of Education, City
of Los Angeles, Protestant.

A. L. Owen, for Motor Coach Company,
Interested Party.

Harold E. Hedger, for Los Angeles County Flood
Control District, Interested Party.

BY THE COMMISSION.

OPINION

Pacific Electric Railway Company, on February 25, 1936,
applied for authority to abandon service and remove its rail line
between Venice and Playa Del Rey in the City of Los Angeles,
State of California.

A public hearing on this matter was conducted before
Examiner McCaffrey on June 4, 1936, at which time it was sub-
mitted and is now ready for decision.

The total length of the line which it is proposed to abandon
is 2.444 miles. Of this mileage, 1.503 miles are double-tracked in
private right of way, .808 mile is double-tracked in paved street,
and .133 mile is single-tracked in paved street. The portion of
the line in private right of way consists of light rail, badly in

need of repair, while that in the paved area is grooved girder rail construction and in excellent condition.

The record shows that consideration was given to the abandonment of this line three years ago, because it was realized that rehabilitation would be necessary if the line were to be continued in operation. The necessary application to the Commission was prepared at that time, and the proposal was only abandoned after a series of conferences between the interested parties, which resulted in an agreement to keep the line in operation with limited schedules, principally to provide transportation for school children.

During the year 1935, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District advised the applicant that the present outlet of the storm drain at Ballona Creek was to be changed. This change, if the line is to be continued in operation, will necessitate the construction of a bridge which, if built for exclusive rail use, would cost approximately \$79,000. If a combination bridge, to be used jointly for rail and highway traffic, were constructed, placing rail facilities on such a bridge would add \$40,000 to the cost of a bridge for highway use only. In addition to this, it is estimated that it would be necessary to spend \$43,000 to rehabilitate that portion of the line on private right of way.

Exhibit "A," attached to the application, shows that for the year 1935, there was a net loss of \$2,405. Exhibit "B," attached to the application, is a traffic check taken during the week of January 26-February 1, 1936, showing the maximum number of passengers handled on the line in any one day to be 220 and the passenger revenue to be \$8.90. The fare between any two points on the entire line is 5 cents. Approximately half of the passengers handled are school children who, of course, are carried at half the adult fare. The

testimony shows that during the past ten years the line has been consistently operated at a loss.

The Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles entered a protest against the abandonment of the line as sought herein, basing such protest on the fact that should the abandonment be permitted, it would be necessary for the Board of Education to provide transportation for approximately fifty students to and from the Venice High School. This, according to their estimate, would entail an expenditure of approximately \$2,000 per year.

The Los Angeles County Flood Control District, through its assistant chief engineer, stated that it was necessary to straighten the alignment of the flood control channel, thus necessitating the construction of the new bridge above referred to over said channel. It was his further statement that personal observation showed that the travel on the rail line was very small, and strongly urged the granting of the application for complete abandonment.

A communication from the Board of Public Utilities and Transportation of the City of Los Angeles, dated April 22, 1936, has attached thereto a report of its engineering department dated March 16, 1936, in which they state that the abandonment is justified. The report contains the further statement that an effort will be made to secure accommodation by some other carrier for those few patrons who now use the line, and also to have the Board of Education supply a bus to transport pupils to the schools.

From the facts presented above, it would seem that this line could never be expected to earn even out-of-pocket expenses and certainly would not justify the expenditure of some \$83,000 which is the minimum estimate of the amount necessary to construct a new bridge and rehabilitate the portion of the line on private right of way.

After carefully considering the record in this proceeding, it is concluded that the application to abandon this rail line is reasonable and should be granted. The following order will so provide.

O R D E R

A public hearing having been held on the above entitled application, the matter having been duly submitted and the Commission being fully advised,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Pacific Electric Railway Company be, and it is, hereby authorized to discontinue operation of its line between Venice and Playa Del Rey in the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California, more particularly described as follows:

From connection with Venice Short Line at North Venice Boulevard (formerly Center Street) to 35th Avenue double track in paved street; thence from 35th Avenue to a point south of 56th Avenue double track on private right of way 30 feet and 40 feet in width; thence from point south of 56th Avenue to Esplanade, double track in paved street; thence from Esplanade to connection with Del Rey Line double track on private right of way. Also from Esplanade and Trolleyway to a connection with Del Rey Line at Culver Boulevard single track in paved street,

and to remove the tracks and facilities along this line, with the provision that that portion of the track in paved street may remain in place until such time as the street is repaved or the City may require the tracks to be removed, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Applicant shall give the public not less than ten (10) days' advance notice of the abandonment of this operation, by posting notices in all cars operating on this line and at all stations affected.

- (2) Applicant shall, within thirty (30) days thereafter, notify this Commission, in writing, of its compliance with the conditions of this order.
- (3) The authorization herein granted shall lapse and become void if not exercised within one year from the date hereof, unless further time is granted by subsequent order.

For all other purposes, the effective date of this order shall be twenty (20) days from the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 22nd day of June, 1936.

M. Blain
Leon A. Whalley
M. A. Green
Walter J. ...
Frank R. ...
Commissioners