



The Southern Pacific built its 21-mile Burbank Branch in 1893 to serve residents and orchards in the San Fernando Valley, with plans for the line to serve as the main route through the San Fernando Valley for the SP's then-incomplete Coast Line. However, in 1904, due to the sharp curves of the Burbank Branch, the SP built a straight track that connected both ends of the Burbank Branch. Thus, the SP Coast Line (1904) became the mainline and the Burbank Branch served as an alternate connection between Chatsworth, where the west end of the Burbank Branch joined the SP Coast Line (1904), and Burbank, where the east end of the Burbank Branch joined the SP (1876) original mainline into Southern California. In 1911, the Pacific Electric Red Car line commenced operation of trolleys on the Burbank Branch, which outcompeted the SP passenger service using gas-electric passenger cars, and by 1920 the SP discontinued passenger service. The Pacific Electric Red Cars continued to carry passengers until 1952. With freight service along the line diminishing, the line was severed as a through-route then end came in 1991 when the entire route was purchased by Los Angeles' Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA). The MTA rebuilt the western part of the route for express bus service and the eastern part for a multi-use trail. The west end of the line in Chatsworth is completely obliterated, but the Burbank wye for the original connection of the Burbank Branch to the SP (1876) mainline still exists along with 2,000 feet of track.

Westward view of the SP Burbank Branch (1893) at the preserved North Hollywood Station, originally called "Lankershim Station." The railroad ran through the gravel area to the right (north) of the building. The SP built the wooden depot in 1896. The state historic landmark, which had fallen into ruin, was restored by MTA. West of the station, the SP Burbank Branch (1893) right-of-way is the MTA express bus service route all the way to Chatsworth and the right-of-way east of the station is a rail-to-trail all the way to Burbank.





Northeastward view of the other side of the station, which is now a restaurant.

