

8-1 PURPOSE AND NEED

8-1.1 NEED FOR TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

8-1.1.1 Description of the Study Corridor

8-1.1.1.1 Physical Features and Activities

The San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor is located in the central part of Los Angeles County, generally 20 miles northwest of the Los Angeles Central Business District (CBD). **Figure 8-1-1** (San Fernando Valley Regional Context) shows the corridor in the regional context. As shown on **Figure 8-1-2** (Location of Study Corridor), the corridor begins on the east at the current Metro Red Line Segment 3 terminal station in North Hollywood and continues west through the Valley communities of Van Nuys, Reseda, Canoga Park, and Woodland Hills, terminating at Warner Center. The corridor is approximately 14 miles long and connects major activity areas through the San Fernando Valley, including Warner Center, the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area, the Van Nuys Government Center, Pierce College, Valley College, and North Hollywood. This corridor designation, adopted by the MTA Board in October 1994, was subsequently reviewed and approved by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Major Investment Studies Peer Review Group in June 1995.

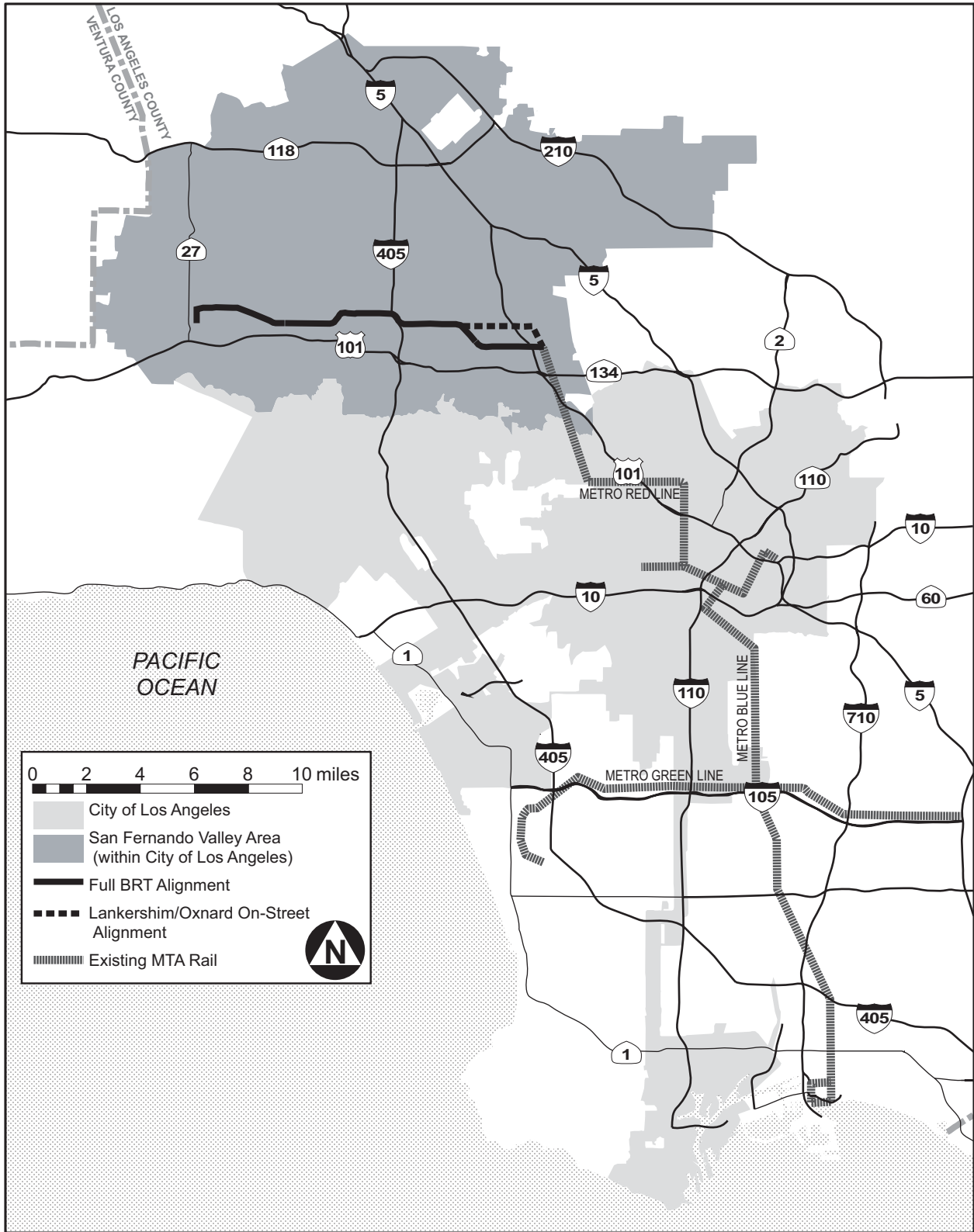
8-1.1.1.2 Growth and Development Trends

The study area for this discussion of growth and development includes the area within ½ mile of the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor (see **Figure 8-1-3** (Changing Demographics in the San Fernando Valley and Los Angeles County)), thus focusing on the areas that would be most immediately affected by the proposed project. Data from larger areas, including the City of Los Angeles and the entire San Fernando Valley, are also included for comparison purposes.

Los Angeles County is the most populous county in California. The County is estimated to currently have about 9.8 million residents, and is anticipated to have approximately 12.3 million residents in 2020—representing 27 percent growth over 20 years. This means the Los Angeles County population would account for approximately 60 percent of the entire southern California region’s population.

The City of Los Angeles is the second most populous city in the United States, and the most populous in the state of California. Los Angeles was home to approximately 3.49 million people in 1990, today is home to approximately 3.85 million people, and is predicted to grow to 4.89 million people by the year 2020. This represents 27 percent growth over the next 20 years.

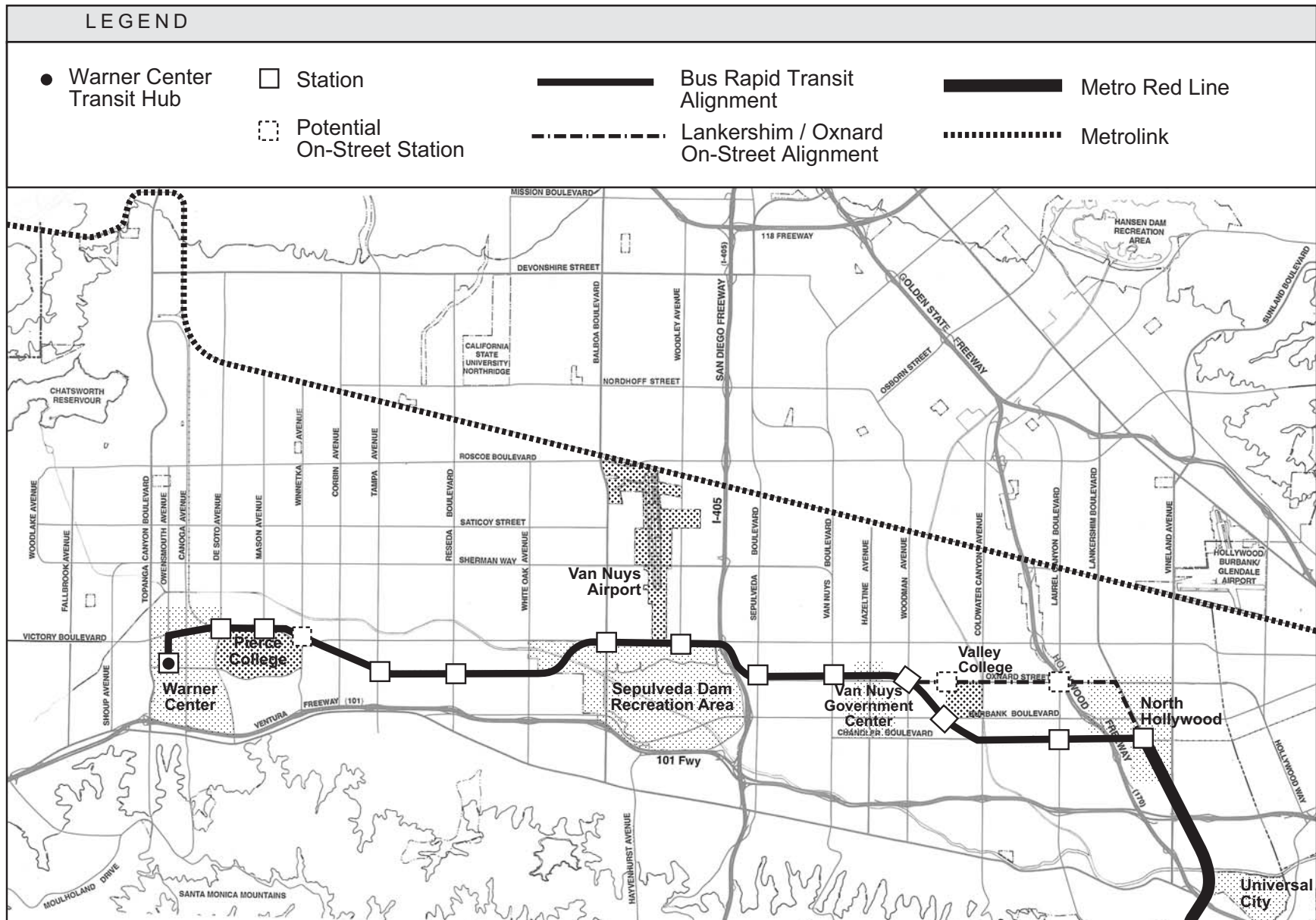
The San Fernando Valley began as a suburb of Los Angeles. This large, former agricultural area of over 260 square miles was affordable for workers commuting to downtown Los Angeles



Source: Gruen Associates, 2000; ESRI, 1999; MTA 2001

Figure 8-1-1: San Fernando Valley Regional Context





Source: Gruen Associates, 2000.

Note: Two alternatives are under consideration for the Pierce College station.

Figure 8-1-2: Location of Study Corridor

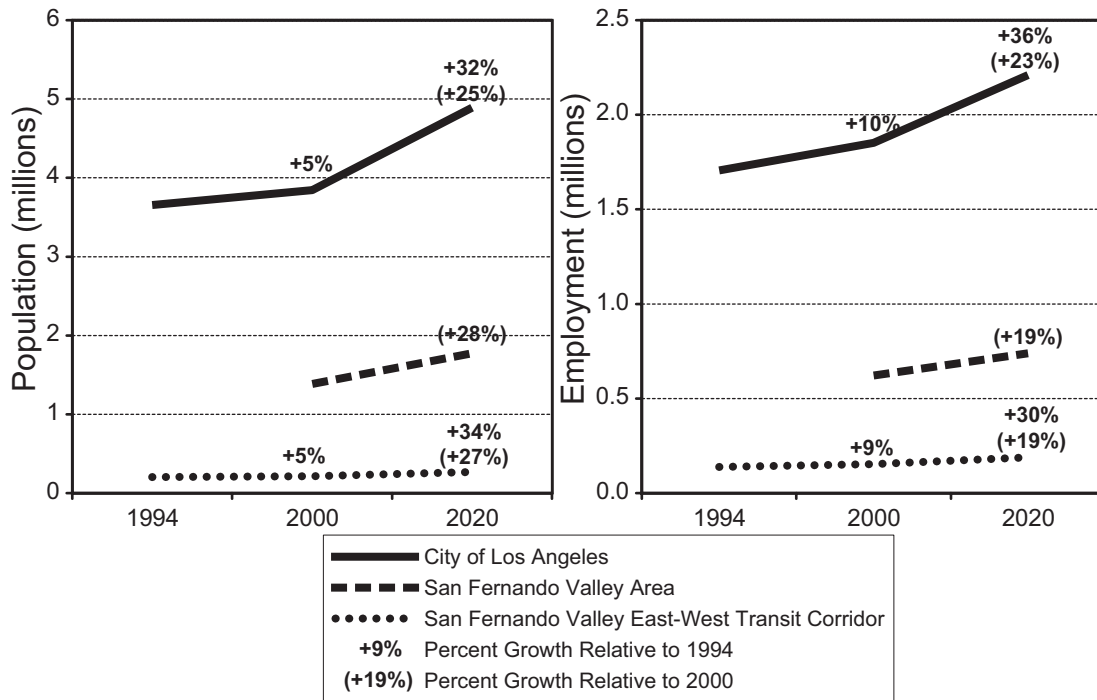
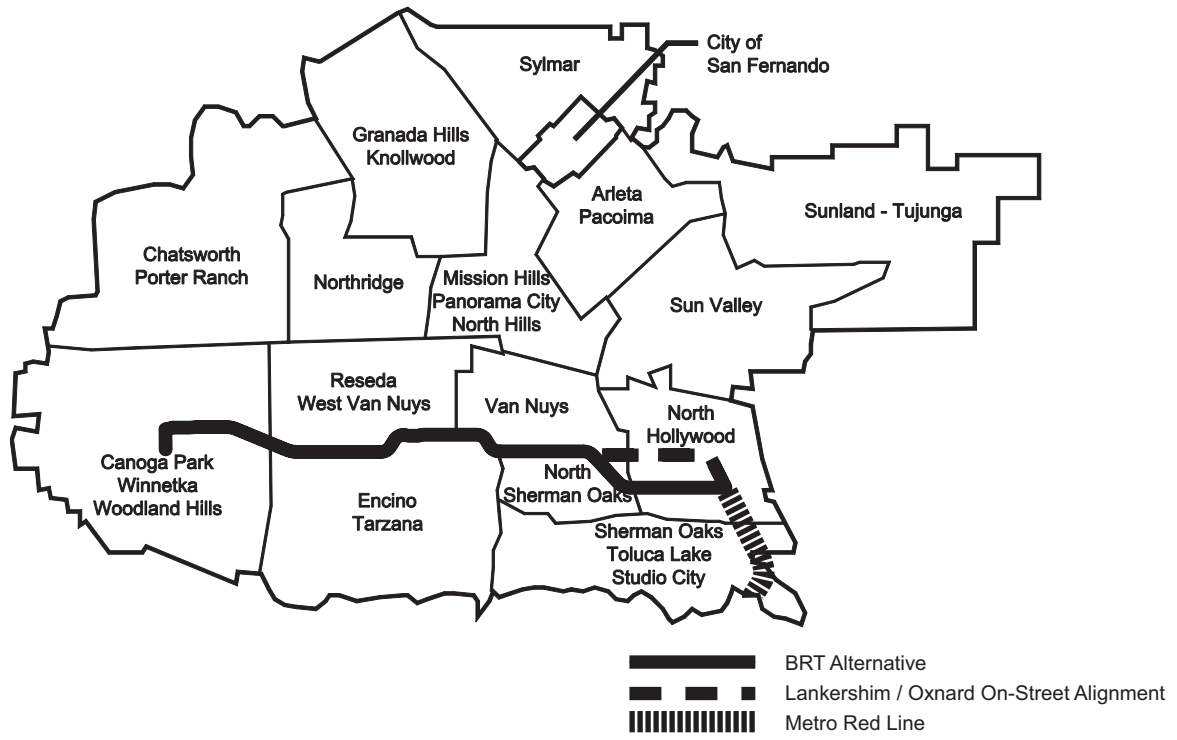


Figure 8-1-3: Changing Demographics in the San Fernando Valley and Los Angeles County

Source: Gruen Associates, 2000; Myra L. Frank & Associates, Inc., 2000.



and to elsewhere in the County and soon became a major bedroom community with workers commuting to jobs outside the Valley. In the 1980s, major employment centers located in the Valley. However, many residents continued to commute to jobs outside or across the Valley while residents from other areas of the County commuted to jobs in the Valley, resulting in a pattern of cross-town commuting.

As shown in **Table 8-1-1** (Population and Employment: 26-Year Change from 1994 to 2020), in 1994 the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor study area (the area within ½ mile of the Corridor) was estimated to have a population in 1994 of approximately 204,000 residents, is currently estimated to have approximately 214,000 residents, and is anticipated to have over 268,000 residents by 2020. This represents a growth rate of over 32 percent between 1994 and 2020. By the year 2020, over 5 percent of the City of Los Angeles and 15 percent of San Fernando Valley residents will live within ½ mile of the San Fernando East-West Transportation Corridor.

Table 8-1-1: Population and Employment: 26-Year Change from 1994 to 2020				
Area	1994	2000	2020	Percent Growth 1994-2020
Population				
San Fernando Valley	N/A	1,384,354	1,773,136	N/A
San Fernando Valley East-West Transportation Corridor	204,089	214,003	268,345	32%
City of Los Angeles	3,656,700	3,845,300	4,890,900	34%
Employment				
San Fernando Valley	N/A	612,107	738,871	N/A
San Fernando Valley East-West Transportation Corridor	138,940	153,242	188,713	32%
City of Los Angeles	1,705,100	1,851,600	2,209,300	30%
Notes:				
The San Fernando Valley East-West Transportation Corridor study area is comprised of the area within ½ mile of the Corridor.				
The San Fernando Valley encompasses 14 City of Los Angeles community planning areas, the City of San Fernando, and Universal City, an unincorporated area of Los Angeles.				

Sources: Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), 2000; 2020 Growth Forecasts for the 1998 Regional Transportation Plan, SCAG, April 1998.

Employment in the areas immediately adjacent to the East-West Transportation Corridor is also expected to grow at rapid pace (see **Table 8-1-1**). In 1994, there were approximately 139,000 jobs in the study area; by 2020, there will be close to 189,000 jobs. This is an increase in employment of over 32 percent, narrowly outpacing the City of Los Angeles at 30 percent.

The San Fernando Valley as a whole has also experienced substantial change in its racial and ethnic makeup, in recent years seeing its minority population increase substantially. In 1980, only 26 percent of the Valley's population was of minority racial or ethnic heritage. In 1990, that number had risen to 44 percent, and by 2002, it is expected to have reached 60 percent. These demographic changes reflect not only the growing minority population in the Los Angeles area as a whole, but also the increasing incorporation of the San Fernando Valley into the urban body of the City of Los Angeles.

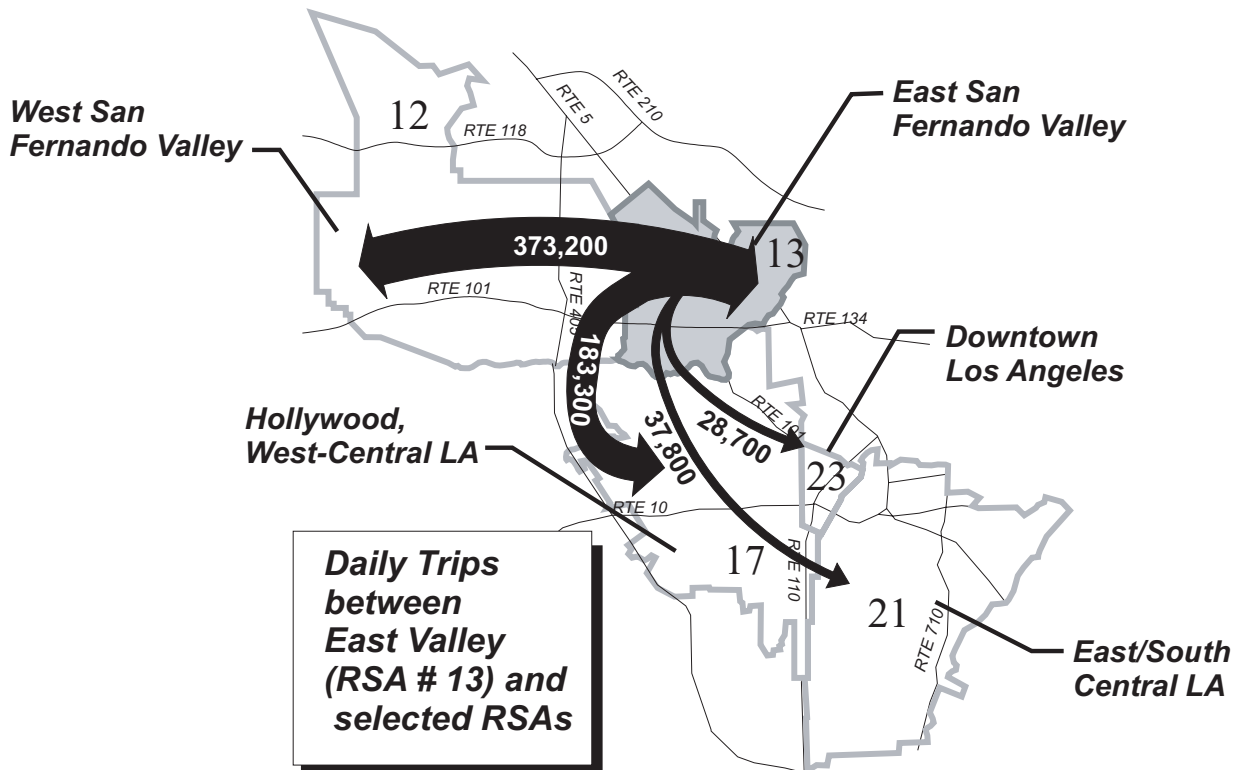
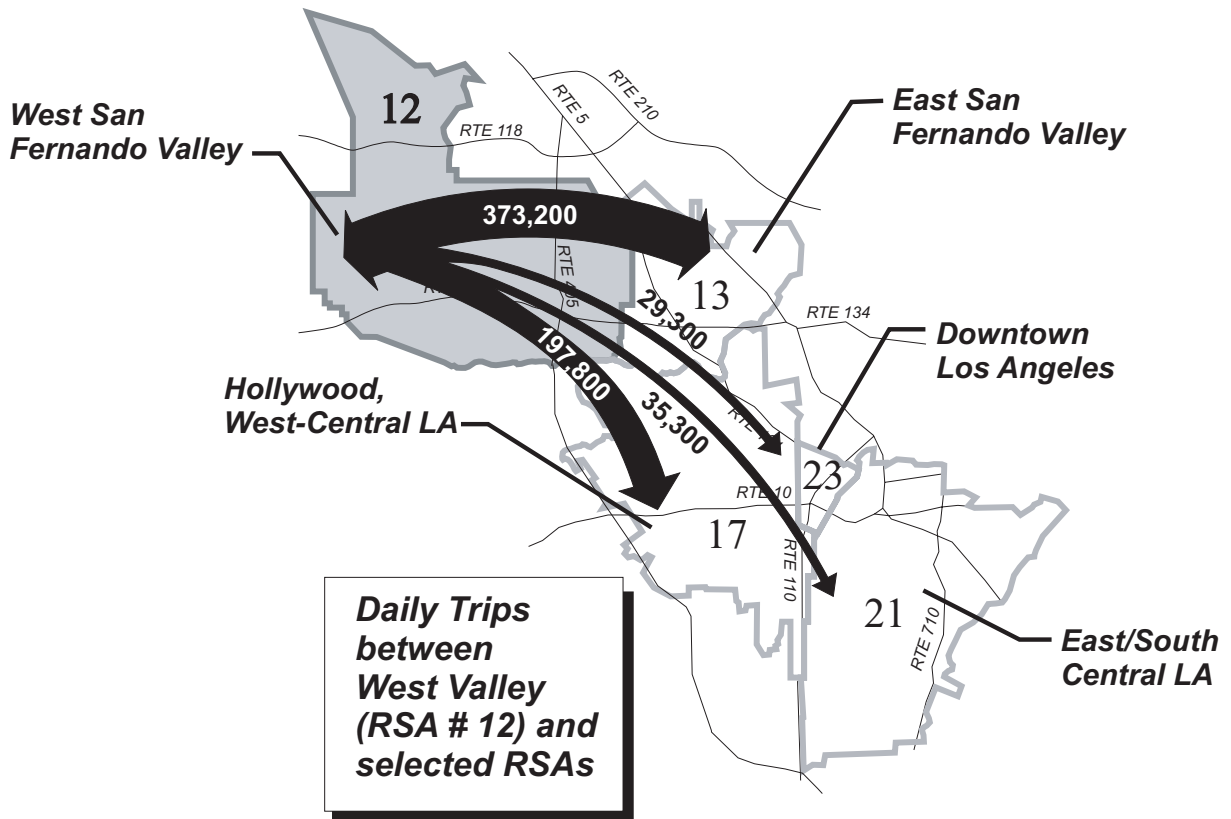
In summary, the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor, as well as the San Fernando Valley as a whole, has been steadily growing for the past several years, and is expected to continue growing at an even more rapid pace well into the future. It will experience an increase in population, especially minority population, and will play host to a large economy and an increasing number of jobs.

8-1.1.1.3 Travel Patterns and Potential Corridor Service Areas

Regional travel projections for Los Angeles County and the study corridor are generated by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) travel simulation model, using socioeconomic data developed by SCAG (*Year 2020 Population, Housing, and Employment Projections*, SCAG). This travel forecast model was used for both the projections presented in this document and the adopted MTA Long Range Plan (*A Plan for Los Angeles County Transportation in the 21st Century*, 1995).

The modeling area, which encompasses the five-county urbanized southern California region, is divided into planning areas called Regional Statistical Areas (RSAs) and contains the project area represented by RSA 12 (West Valley) and RSA 13 (East Valley) (see **Figure 8-1-4** (Existing Daily Travel Patterns To and From the San Fernando Valley)). Also shown on this figure are RSAs 17, 21, and 23, subareas in Los Angeles County that would be potential service areas for an east-west Valley transit facility. The Valley can be directly connected to these RSAs through the connection of the East-West Transit Corridor with the Red Line at North Hollywood. Travel statistics indicate that currently 62 percent of all Valley residents in RSAs 12 and 13 work outside of the Valley and 29 percent of these commute to jobs located within RSAs 17 (Hollywood, Mid-Wilshire, Beverly Hills), 21 (Downey, Southeast Los Angeles), and 23 (Downtown Los Angeles). Total daily two-way person trips between RSAs 12 and 13 and between RSAs 12 and 13 and each of the three external RSAs are shown on **Figure 8-1-4**.

As seen on **Figure 8-1-4**, in 1998 there were a total of 373,200 internal valley trips between the East Valley and West Valley RSAs, which could potentially be served by an east-west corridor. **Table 8-1-2** (Current Valley Related Daily Trip End Distribution) presents the total daily trips (all trip types and work trips) to and from RSAs 12 and 13, and shows that a large portion of these trips are to and from RSAs 17, 21, and 23, the potential direct service areas for the transit corridor. Overall, nearly seven percent of all trips and nearly 18 percent of work trips to and from the Valley RSAs originate from or are destined to these three RSAs. RSA 17 has the heaviest trip interchange with the Valley; five percent of all Valley trips and 12 percent of all



Note: 12,13,17,21,23, are Regional Statistical Areas (RSAs)

Source: LACMTA Travel Demand Model, 1998.

Figure 8-1-4: Existing Daily Travel Patterns To and From the San Fernando Valley



work trips originate in or are destined for RSA 17. This indicates that approximately 7 percent of all trips originating or terminating in points outside the Valley occur along the corridor defined by the existing Red Line and the proposed East-West Transit Corridor.

Table 8-1-2: Current Valley Related Daily Trip End Distribution

RSA	Area	All Trip Types		Work Trips	
		To/From RSAs 17, 21, and 23	To/From All Other RSAs	To/From RSAs 17, 21, and 23	To/From All Other RSAs
13	East Valley	249,800	2,063,000	113,500	404,600
12	West Valley	262,400	5,015,900	176,400	948,000
TOTAL		512,200	7,078,900	289,900	1,352,600

Source: 1998 MTA Travel Model.

8-1.1.2 Existing Transportation Facilities and Services in the Corridor Freeway System

The San Fernando Valley area is served by five major freeways (see **Figure 8-1-1**), some of which serve as major intra-state travel routes and are among the busiest in the nation. Three freeways, I-405 (San Diego Freeway), US 101/SR 134 (Ventura Freeway), and I-5 (Golden State Freeway), connect the Valley directly with the Los Angeles Basin through the Santa Monica Mountains. The Ventura Freeway and SR-118 (Ronald Reagan Freeway) facilitate east-west travel between Los Angeles County and Ventura County and connect the San Fernando Valley with points east through the San Gabriel Valley via I-210 (Foothill Freeway).

The Ventura Freeway, the primary freeway paralleling the East-West Transit Corridor, is generally a ten-lane freeway. The freeway is congested in both directions for much of the day and is one of the most congested freeways in southern California. The peak-hour congestion patterns persist for three to four hours in each of the peak periods on a daily basis. In addition, the freeway also experiences congestion patterns during the off-peak periods. The freeway corridor serves a large number of activity centers and provides connections to Hollywood and downtown Los Angeles. The Ventura Freeway is used by local traffic as well as long-distance commuters. **Table 8-1-3** (Traffic Volumes on Valley Freeways) summarizes the range of daily and peak-hour traffic volumes and number of lanes on the Valley's major freeways.

8-1.1.2.1 Arterial Highways

The entire corridor study area is located within the jurisdiction of the City of Los Angeles. The arterial and local street system conforms predominantly to an east-west/north-south grid system. **Table 8-1-4** (Characteristics of Major East-West Valley Arterials) summarizes the key east-west arterials within the study area, their functional classifications, and range of typical daily traffic volumes.

Table 8-1-3: Traffic Volumes on Valley Freeways

Freeway	Alignment	Number of Lanes (General Purpose + HOV)	Average Daily Traffic (Number of Vehicles)	Location of Lowest Volume	Location of Highest Volume
Golden State (I-5)	Northwest-southeast	8	155,000-266,000	Sun Valley, Lankershim Blvd. interchange	Panorama City, Osborne St. interchange
San Diego (I-405)	North-south	8 + 2	118,000-269,000	Los Angeles, San Fernando Mission Blvd. interchange	Los Angeles, Jct. US 101 (Ventura Fwy.)
Hollywood (SR-170)	North-south	8 + 2	103,000-174,000	Sun Valley, Jct. I-5 (Golden State Fwy.)	North Hollywood, Magnolia Blvd. interchange
Ventura (US-101)	East-west	10	196,000-322,000	Woodland Hills, Ventura Blvd. interchange	Sherman Oaks, Jct. I-405 (San Diego Fwy.)
Ronald Reagan (SR 118)	East-west	8 + 2	100,000-200,000	Chatsworth, Topanga Canyon Blvd. interchange	Los Angeles, Hayvenhurst Ave. interchange

Source: 1997 Traffic Volumes on the California State Highway System, Caltrans, 1997.

Table 8-1-4: Characteristics of Major East-West Valley Arterials

Arterial	Classification	Average Daily Traffic	Location of Lowest Volume	Location of Highest Volume
Saticoy Street	Secondary Highway or Arterial	12,000-28,000	West of Laurel Canyon Boulevard	East of Reseda Boulevard
Sherman Way	Major	44,000-70,000	East of Canoga Avenue	East of Firmament Avenue
Vanowen Street	Secondary	24,000-33,000	West of Laurel Canyon Boulevard	East of Reseda Boulevard
Victory Boulevard	Major	32,000-40,000	East of Topanga Canyon Boulevard	West of Laurel Canyon Boulevard
Oxnard Street	Secondary	14,000-28,000	At Lindley Avenue	West of Laurel Canyon Boulevard
Chandler Boulevard	Secondary	9,000-15,000	At Ethel Avenue	At Whitsett Avenue
Burbank Boulevard	Major	7,000-55,000	East of Shoup Avenue	At Sepulveda Boulevard
Ventura Boulevard	Major	33,000-46,000	East of Topanga Canyon Boulevard	At Woodley Avenue

Source: City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation, Electronic Traffic Count Database (1994–1996), except Chandler Boulevard, from Meyer, Mohaddes Associates, Inc. Traffic Counts (2000).

Only two major arterials, Sherman Way and Victory Boulevard, and one secondary arterial, Vanowen Street, are continuous throughout the entire length of the study corridor. Other east-west arterials are mostly continuous in the East Valley (east of the I-405) but become



discontinuous in the West Valley. This is due to a number of natural and/or constructed barriers, including I-405, Van Nuys Airport, the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area, and the Ventura Freeway. These obstructions, together with traffic from the freeway system, force east-west travel onto a limited number of congested arterials in the area.

8-1.1.2.2 Existing Levels of Service

During the a.m. and p.m. peak hours, many of the freeways and arterials in the Valley are operating at or near capacity in the peak direction of travel. Most of the freeways are experiencing average operating speeds of under 30 miles per hour in the peak direction of travel (toward the Los Angeles CBD in the AM peak; away from the Los Angeles CBD in the PM peak).

8-1.1.2.3 Public Transportation

The San Fernando Valley has an existing transit network that covers a large geographical area. Public transportation in the Valley is provided in three forms:

- Traditional transit service (fixed-route bus service with scheduled stops)
- Non-traditional transit service (special shuttle systems and demand-responsive services)
- Rail service (commuter and intercity rail)

Currently there are four major transit operators providing fixed-route bus service in the San Fernando Valley. These are:

- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)
- City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT Commuter Express/DASH)
- Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA)
- Santa Clarita Transit

The MTA currently operates 32 fixed bus routes that serve the San Fernando Valley. Eight are local lines that extend to downtown Los Angeles, 15 are local east-west MTA routes in the Valley, and nine are local north-south routes. There are four all day express routes and five peak period express routes.

In the east-west direction, the heaviest bus ridership occurs along Vanowen Street, Victory Boulevard, and Ventura Boulevard. North-south, the heaviest ridership occurs along the southern segment of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Van Nuys Boulevard. Bus ridership along each of these arterials totals more than 10,000 passengers each day. The east-west corridor has a daily bus ridership in the range of 40,000 to 50,000 passengers.

LADOT operates a total of nine bus lines in the Valley: one all-day express route, eight peak-period express lines, and four local DASH routes.



The AVTA operates one peak-period express line, Route 787 from the Antelope Valley to the San Fernando Valley. Santa Clarita Transit operates buses between Santa Clarita Valley, Chatsworth, Canoga Park, Sherman Oaks, and Van Nuys.

Non-traditional transit service options in the San Fernando Valley are a mixture of Metrolink rail station shuttles and dial-a-ride services. There are two circulator Metrolink shuttles operated by the Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport and the Burbank Media District Transportation Management Organization (TMO), as well as a Downtown Area Shuttle operated by Burbank. The Smart Shuttle program, a cooperative effort between LADOT & MTA provides dial-a-ride services in the West San Fernando Valley communities of Chatsworth, Northridge, West Hills, Reseda, Woodland Hills, and Encino/Tarzana and in the Northeast San Fernando Valley communities of Sun Valley, Arleta, Pacoima, Panorama City, San Fernando, and Van Nuys. The City of Los Angeles 12th Council District Transportation Management Association (TMA) operates a free taxi service within a 5-mile radius of the Chatsworth Metrolink station.

Existing commuter rail service is provided by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) Metrolink and intercity rail service is provided by Amtrak. Amtrak operates 14 trains per day between San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Seattle. Two Metrolink lines serve the Valley. The Ventura County Line has 18 trips while the Santa Clarita Line has 19 trips.

8-1.1.3 Transportation Planning Responsibilities

8-1.1.3.1 Agencies and Organizations

There are four key agencies involved with transportation planning and implementation in the project area. Each agency is in charge of a particular aspect of the transportation system with regard to the planning, development, and maintenance of the system. The agencies are the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), SCAG, MTA, and City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation.

Caltrans is in charge of construction, funding, maintenance, and planning for all state highway projects in California.

SCAG, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, prepares regional policies and handles regional issues that cross-city and county boundaries that relate to transportation, air quality, housing, growth, hazardous wastes, and water quality. SCAG prepares the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which has a 20-year planning horizon, every 2 years and the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP), which lists a 7-year program of projects, every year.

The MTA, as the principal regional public transportation agency in Los Angeles County, administers transportation services and has primary responsibility for the planning, funding, construction, and operation of ground transportation in Los Angeles County, including: (1) bus and rail transit services, (2) urban rail construction, (3) highway, arterial street, traffic flow



management funding, and capital improvement, (4) transit centers and park-and-ride facilities development, and (5) alternative types of transportation.

The City of Los Angeles designs, develops, and maintains the transportation system in the city. In addition, the city is also in charge of developing its land use and transportation plans.

8-1.1.3.2 Goals and Objectives

The proposed goals and objectives for the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor (see **Table 8-1-5** (Goals and Objectives of the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor)) have been developed from the transportation and land use goals and objectives of the participating government agencies and are consistent with the other transit improvements being planned for Los Angeles County.

a. Planned Transportation Improvements

The MTA Long Range Plan sets forth major policy directions for Los Angeles County. It includes a list of transportation improvements for which there has been a funding commitment. The list of planned transportation improvements was compiled from the MTA Long Range Plan (April 2001) and consists of projects that are to be in place by 2020. The new MTA Long-Range Plan was adopted.

b. Major Transit Projects Under Development

Several major transit projects in addition to the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor are currently under development in Los Angeles County:

- **Metro Rapid Bus Demonstration Program** – Two Rapid Bus lines are currently operating on-street with transit priority along Wilshire/Whittier and Ventura Boulevards. The MTA is evaluating the performance of these two Metro Rapid Bus routes, and may expand the program to other major bus routes.
- **Pasadena Gold Line** – The Los Angeles to Pasadena Metro Blue Line Construction Authority is currently constructing Phase I of the Pasadena Blue Line light rail, from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles to Pasadena. Phase I is scheduled to be in service by July 2003. Phase II of the project, which would extend from Pasadena east to the Los Angeles County line, is currently in the initial phases of study.
- **Eastside Transit Corridor** – The MTA has released to the public a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (DSEIS/DSEIR) to evaluate a light rail alternative extending from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles to Atlantic Boulevard in East Los Angeles.



Table 8-1-5: Goals and Objectives of the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor

Goal	Objective
1. Improve east-west mobility in the San Fernando Valley.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect important activity centers, including government, educational, medical, cultural, commercial, and business. • Provide an alternative to the congested Ventura Freeway (US 101/SR 134). • Relieve congestion through the Cahuenga and Sepulveda passes by providing Valley stations that are connected to the Metro Red Line North Hollywood Segment. • Minimize total travel times. • Provide enhanced bi-directional transit service. • Provide opportunities to intercept traffic passing through the valley.
2. Support land use and development goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high-capacity transit linkages between centers (North Hollywood, Van Nuys, Warner Center). • Achieve General Plan Framework Plan goals for increased transit mode split and concentration of growth in targeted growth areas. • Provide Warner Center Specific Plan transit access enhancements. • Provide joint development opportunities. • Provide accessibility to governmental facilities in the Van Nuys Government Center.
3. Maximize community input, i.e., define the project in a manner that is responsive to community and policy makers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate the citizen and policy maker input from previous studies in the San Fernando Valley. • Provide opportunities for community input to the MIS/EIS/EIR process. • Seek ways to incorporate community views into planning.
4. Provide a transportation project that is compatible with and enhances the physical environment where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify cost-effective alternatives that minimize adverse effects on the environment. • Avoid impacts on parklands. • Minimize noise impacts. • Minimize impacts on cultural resources. • Minimize air pollution.
5. Provide a transportation project that minimizes impacts on the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize business and residential dislocations, community disruption, and property damage. • Avoid creating physical barriers, destroying neighborhood cohesiveness, or in other ways lessening the quality of the human environment. • Minimize traffic and parking impacts. • Minimize impacts during construction.
6. Provide a transportation project that is cost-effective and within the ability of MTA to fund, including capital and operating costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify cost-saving measures to reduce project costs. • Maximize the benefits associated with use of right-of-way already purchased by the MTA. • Ensure fiscal consistency with the MTA Long Range Plan.

Source: *San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor Major Investment Study*, February 2000.



- **Mid-City/Westside Transit Corridor** – The MTA is currently developing a DSEIS/DSEIR for two corridors extending west from downtown Los Angeles, one along Wilshire Boulevard and one along the Exposition former rail right-of-way. The document evaluates Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along Wilshire Boulevard and both BRT and light rail along the Exposition right-of-way.

8-1.1.4 Transportation Problems in the Corridor

As shown in **Table 8-1-6** (Existing and Projected Travel in the San Fernando Valley), growth projections indicate that increases of 16 percent in total daily vehicle trips are expected to be generated in the Valley between 1998 and 2020. Vehicle miles of travel (VMT) are projected to increase by 37 percent between 1998 and 2020. Vehicle hours of travel will increase by 109 percent. It is projected that by 2020 average speeds on all roadways will decline by 34 percent from 32.4 mph to 21.4 mph.

Table 8-1-6: Existing and Projected Travel in the San Fernando Valley			
RSAs 12 and 13	1998	2020	% Change
Total Trips	7,591,000	8,801,000	16%
Work Trips	1,643,000	1,916,000	14%
Vehicle Miles of Travel (a.m. peak hour)	4,857,000	6,664,000	37%
Vehicle Hours of Travel (a.m. peak hour)	149,000	312,000	109%
Average Speeds (mph) (a.m. peak hour)	32.4	21.4	(- 34%)
Average Auto Occupancy	1.52	1.58	4%
Transit Mode Split	3.8%	5.2%	35%

Source: MTA Travel Model for Years 1998 and 2020.

Despite recent widening, US 101 is currently operating at capacity in both directions during peak hours. This freeway is projected to be one of southern California's most congested facilities in the future, operating at 50 to 60 percent over capacity by the year 2020, suggesting the need for up to eight new lanes in each direction.

By the year 2020, the east-west arterials are projected to be the most congested in the Valley. The most severely congested arterial segments would include Victory Boulevard, Vanowen Street, and Sherman Way, from west of Balboa Boulevard to east of Van Nuys Boulevard. Other arterial segments for which severe congestion is projected include Ventura Boulevard through Tarzana and Encino and Roscoe Boulevard near I-405.

The MTA Long Range Plan does not propose high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on US 101 in the next 20 years due to limitations of available room for widening and expense; making this freeway one of the few in the county that will not have an HOV facility.¹ This increase in

^{1/} Therefore, with the projected increased levels of congestion on this freeway without HOV lanes, commuter express buses on this corridor will not have any travel time advantage over automobiles.

congestion, however, would enhance the potential for increased ridership on the transit corridor that parallels this freeway. To the extent that HOV lanes will be implemented in the Valley, they will be oriented more toward north-south trips (e.g., SR 14/ I-5/SR 170 to SR 134 connection and SR 118 to I-405 connection) than east-west trips within the Valley.

In an effort to quantify existing and projected deficiencies, four screenlines were developed to analyze the traffic demand in the corridor study area. A screenline is an imaginary line drawn across streets and freeways that is used to record traffic volumes at the points where the screenline intersects the facility. Volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratios are used to compare the demand for travel across the screenline against a theoretical capacity of all of the facilities in the corridor. Based on the V/C ratio, the general performance of the corridor can be assessed. Ideally, the V/C ratio should be at or below 1.0, where the demand is equal to or less than the capacity of the corridor. Volume-to-capacity ratios above 1.0 indicate congested conditions and delays. As the V/C ratio increases beyond 1.0, congestion becomes more severe and delays become increasingly more burdensome. Results of the demand/capacity comparison across the screenlines for 1998 and 2020 are shown in **Table 8-1-7** (AM Peak-Hour Demand vs. Capacity, 1998 and 2020), and graphically with bar charts on **Figure 8-1-5** (Comparison of Traffic Demand and Capacity, 1998 and 2020).

Table 8-1-7: AM Peak-Hour Demand vs. Capacity, 1998 and 2020			
Screenline	Volume/Capacity Ratios^{1,2}		
	1998	2020	Traffic (Travel Demand) Increase
A (Reseda Blvd.)	1.27	1.30	27%
B (Sepulveda Blvd.)	1.00	1.26	26%
C (Coldwater Canyon Avenue)	0.89	1.20	34%
D2 (Santa Monica Mountains)	1.14	1.46	36%

Notes:
¹Ratios greater than 1.00 indicate a capacity deficiency; e.g., 1.04 = a capacity deficiency of 4 percent.
²Capacity includes future HOV lanes on I-5 in 2015.

Source: 1995 Caltrans and City of Los Angeles DOT traffic volume data; 2015 MTA Travel Model.

8-1.2 PLANNING CONTEXT/PROJECT HISTORY

Transportation planning in the Southern California region is the responsibility of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), which is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the six-county region that includes Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial counties. Under federal law, SCAG must prepare a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and update that plan periodically. The RTP must

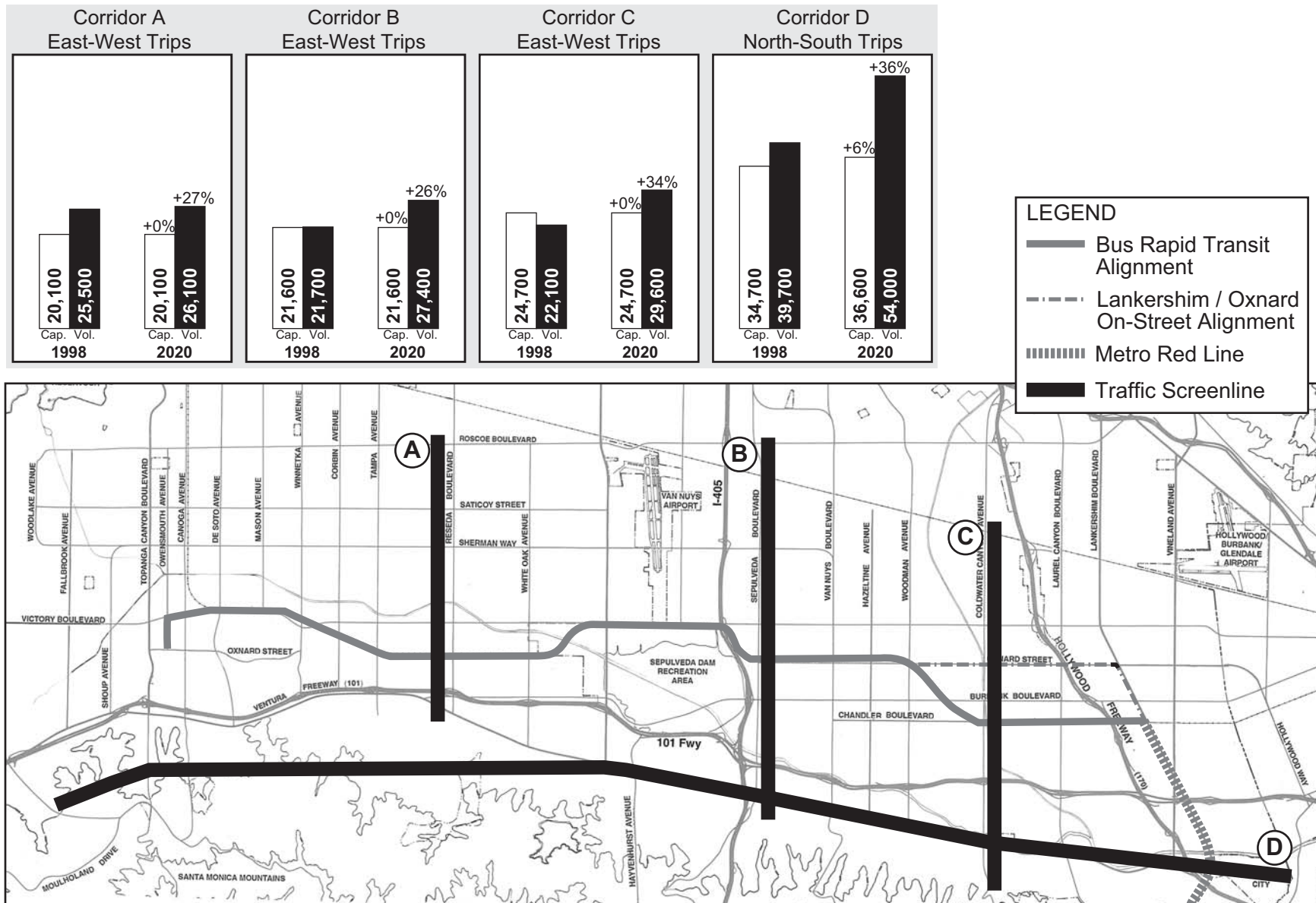


Figure 8-1-5: Comparison of Traffic Demand and Capacity, 1998 and 2020

demonstrate how the region will meet certain federal mandates, particularly air quality requirements, and must be approved by federal agencies in order to continue to receive federal transportation funds.

The MTA, as the state-designated planning and programming agency for Los Angeles County, submits recommended projects and programs to SCAG for inclusion in the RTP. The MTA identifies transportation needs and challenges that the county will face over a 25-year planning horizon through the development of its Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Once adopted by the MTA Board and included by SCAG in the RTP, the LRTP becomes the blueprint for implementing future transportation improvements in Los Angeles County. The Locally Preferred Alternative (Full BRT Alternative) was included in the adopted 2001 SCAG RTP.

Individual transportation projects identified for implementation by MTA and the other SCAG counties are incorporated into the regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP), which is also administered by SCAG. The MTA submits projects under its jurisdiction for listing in the RTIP. The RTIP has a 6-year near-term implementation horizon and is aimed at identifying projects approaching the construction phase of development. Projects listed in the RTIP, which must also be referenced in the RTP, are then eligible for state and federal funding.

Rail transit planning for the San Fernando Valley began in earnest in 1980, when Los Angeles County voters approved a one-half cent sales tax increase dedicated to funding a regional rail system. Among the alignments studied over the next several years were Sherman Way, Victory Boulevard, Ventura Boulevard, the Los Angeles River, the Southern Pacific (SP) Coast Mainline, the SP Burbank Branch, and the Ventura Freeway. Technologies under consideration ranged from at-grade and aerial light rail to deep-bore heavy rail (subway). Route refinement and environmental assessment activities continued until 1990, when the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC, now MTA) certified the San Fernando East-West Rail Transit Project Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and adopted a predominantly deep-bore subway alternative following the SP Burbank Branch right-of-way (SP ROW, now MTA ROW) from North Hollywood to the Warner Center area, a distance of roughly 14 miles (9 miles subway and 5 miles aerial). In 1992, a Supplemental EIR was completed, documenting the costs, expected ridership, and environmental impacts of the previously adopted SP Burbank Branch subway and a newly considered Ventura Freeway median aerial alignment. Pre-preliminary engineering studies for both of these alternatives were undertaken and after reviewing revised cost estimates, the Board of Directors of the MTA endorsed the SP Burbank Branch East-West Corridor in October 1994.

In 1996, a Major Investment Study (MIS) was initiated that was intended to proceed through the preparation of an environmental document and subsequent implementation of a project in the San Fernando Valley. An *MIS Alternatives Screening Report*, which outlined the alternatives to be carried forward into the environmental process, was presented to the MTA Board on May 22, 1996.

A draft Major Investment Study/Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (MIS/DEIS/SEIR) was prepared and review of that document was



initiated with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The process was halted during a review of overall planning activities of the MTA, and the project was suspended.

In 1997 and 1998, MTA undertook several planning efforts related to the regional bus system, and this activity led to the publication of several planning documents, including the May 1998 *Restructuring Plan*, the August 1998 *RTP Transit Restructuring for Use in the MTA Re-evaluation Study*, the November 1998 *Regional Transit Alternatives Analysis*, and the 1999 *Los Angeles Metro Rapid Bus Demonstration Program Implementation Plan*.

In June 1999, the MTA initiated a Major Investment Study (MIS) for the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor. This MIS relied heavily on work previously done and considered a range of alternatives including rapid transit, heavy and light rail, dual-mode rail, and diesel multiple unit technology. A range of profiles was also considered. A more detailed description of the MIS can be found in Chapter 2 of this document.

On February 18, 2000, the *San Fernando Valley East/West Transit Corridor Major Investment Study* was published and presented to the Board. On February 24, 2000, the MTA Board approved the MIS document and directed staff to proceed with work on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (Draft EIS/EIR) for the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project in the San Fernando Valley, as recommended in the MIS document. The MTA Board action of July 26, 2001, identified a Locally Preferred Alternative. The Board recommended moving forward with Preliminary Engineering on the Full BRT Alternative, but with added requirements that MTA staff: (1) “continue to study the Oxnard/Lankershim alternative during the PE and Final EIS/EIR phase as a possible operating alternative on Saturdays and Sundays should the Board choose not to operate the BRT on Chandler Boulevard on Saturdays and Sundays” and (2) “continue to work with adjacent communities during the PE and Final EIS/EIR phase to refine project design features where appropriate to address concerns.”

