

MTA San Fernando Valley North-South Bus Transit Corridor Study Released for Review

- **Board to Consider Adoption of Study at May 22 Meeting**

An MTA study whose recommendations will have a significant impact on dealing with traffic congestion in the San Fernando Valley will be available for public review and comment beginning Thursday, May 8.

The San Fernando Valley North-South Transit Corridor Study has been undertaken to assess the need for improvements in north-south transit service in the Valley and to evaluate a wide range of alternatives. In December 2002, following a series of community meetings and analysis, an MTA project team narrowed the list of alternatives for a north-south high capacity bus transit corridor from 13 to five.

Approximately 6,500 copies of the study's executive summary will be mailed to stakeholders, businesses and property owners in the San Fernando Valley.

The complete study will be supplied to community groups and will also be available for review at all public libraries in the San Fernando Valley and on MTA's web site at www.mta.net. Requests for copies can be made by calling the project hotline at (818) 701-2855 or by e-mail at martinr@mta.net.

The study will be forwarded to the MTA Planning & Programming Committee on May 15 and then to the MTA Board on May 22 for its approval and consideration of a phased implementation of the project.

High capacity bus service can range from Metro Rapid bus service, which provides greater capacity through headway-based scheduling and transit signal priority, to an enhanced Metro Rapid bus operation which could include one or more of the following upgrades: bus-only lanes or sections of lanes, intersection improvements, pedestrian improvements, landscaping, park-and-ride facilities, and upgraded station stops.

The five north-south corridors under consideration include (in alphabetical order): the rail right-of-way adjacent to Canoga Avenue, Lankershim Boulevard/San Fernando Road, Reseda Boulevard, Sepulveda Boulevard, and Van Nuys Boulevard (which would build upon the Van Nuys Metro Rapid bus line due to begin service in June 2003).

"People who live and work in the San Fernando Valley will benefit greatly from the addition of north-south high-capacity bus service to existing and future east-west Metro Rapid service crossing the Valley floor," said Jim de la Loza, MTA executive officer for countywide planning. "This integrated system will improve significantly their ability to get around this very congested part of L.A. County."

The study area generally extends from Ventura Boulevard on the south to the City of San Fernando and Sylmar community on the north, and from Glenoaks Boulevard/Vineland Avenue on the east to Topanga Canyon Boulevard on the west.

The area currently is served by the Metro Bus system, several municipal bus operations, the Metro Red Line subway and Metro Rapid bus service on Ventura Boulevard that

operates between the Metro Red Line Universal City Station and Warner Center in Woodland Hills.

The Metrolink commuter rail system operates two lines in the San Fernando Valley, one of which is shared with Amtrak service. In addition, the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapidway, scheduled to begin service in 2005, will provide east-west service between the Metro Red Line North Hollywood Station and Warner Center.

The study seeks ways to enhance north-south bus service in the area to better connect with all of these existing transit services, thereby improving mobility for residents and people who work in the Valley and significantly reducing air emissions. In addition to public input, study factors included employment density, population density, areas of high transit usage, land use condition and population under 15 and over 64.

Beyond planned Metro Rapid bus service on Van Nuys Boulevard, the addition of north-south high capacity bus service will greatly enhance the connectivity of large sections of the Valley to the regional transportation system. Travel times of all of the alternatives under consideration would benefit from a signal priority system currently in use on the four Metro Rapid bus lines.

The study has followed the procedures for a Regionally Significant Transportation Investment Study (RSTIS) so that recommended improvements may be eligible for potential federal funds as well as state and local funds. Assuming a phased implementation of the project, approximately \$20 million in anticipated MTA revenues will be available through FY 09.

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[\[Return to Home\]](#)