Comment Letter 20

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November 22, 2004

COMMENTS ON DRAFT REVISED FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT, SAN FERNANDO VALLEY EAST-WEST TRANSIT CORRIDOR

Dear Mr. Martin:

On behalf of Citizens Organized for Smart Transit (COST), I submit comments on the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) Draft Revised Final Environmental Impact Report (DRFEIR) for the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor, October 2004[1]. Where the plural pronoun, "we," appears, and elsewhere, I am commenting as the authorized representative of COST, although other COST supporters will also be commenting separately.

On page I-3 of the DRFEIR, it states, "Once the public comment period has expired, MTA will evaluate and respond to the significant environmental issues raised in comments. The comments and responses will be incorporated in the Revised FEIR. Once completed, the Revised FEIR will be presented to the MTA Board for consideration of certification and approval of the project." Be advised that we intend to closely review and, as may be necessary and appropriate, comment on the response document described above. Because of the very short period of time contemplated between the end of the comment period and the anticipated MTA Board action[2],

20-1

[1] In this letter and Attachments, "DRFEIR" will refer to the October 2004 document and "FEIR" will refer to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor that the MTA Board of Directors adopted in February 2002.

[2] MTA's press release of October 22, 2004, "Revised Environmental Report for Metro Orange Line Corridor Released, Study Examines Rapid Bus Alternative," states, "Comments on the draft Revised FEIR may be submitted, in writing, on or before November 22, 2004 ..." and "Upon completion, the Revised FEIR will be presented to the Metro Board December 13, 2004 for consideration of certification and approval of a San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor project."

Discounting the final day for submission of comments, November 22, and the day of the MTA Board meeting, December 13, this is a period of 20 days. After consideration that these 20 days includes Saturdays, Sundays, and the Thanksgiving Holiday, it is obvious that the completion and availability of this document several days prior to the meeting scheduled for Monday, December 13 – to allow the members of the MTA Board and the public to review it in detail – is not likely.

Response to Comment Letter 20

Comment 20-1

Per the commenter's request, as a courtesy, MTA intends to notify of the commenter of the availability of final Revised FEIR.

we believe that the members of the public, as well as the MTA Board Members, will have very little time to review the final document prior to the date scheduled for MTA action. I ask that I be *immediately* notified of the date, time, and place of availability of this "final" RFEIR as soon as these can be reasonably anticipated and that such notification be done by e-mail and telephone to the contact points in the letterhead above. Be also advised that I will be in contact with your (Mr. Martin's) office on a regular basis to make inquiries regarding the anticipated availability. I will be asking for printed copies of the document, as well as web-based availability[3].

20-1

While my experience and qualifications in the public transit industry and with MTA and its predecessor organizations are, undoubtedly, very well-known to MTA management from approximately 25 years of direct contact, I enclose my resume to establish, on the record, my professional qualifications in the transportation industry as an expert and expert witness (Exhibit I).

20-2

As you are well aware, the preparation and circulation of the DRFEIR was required because the MTA failed in its responsibility to properly complete the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements in the FEIR. COST successfully challenged that FEIR and, through the implementation of the Decision of the Court of Appeal of the State of California, Second Appellate Division, Division Seven, July 19, 2004, Case No. B164434 (DRFEIR, Chapter 8, Technical Appendix 8-A), MTA was required to, "…on any further proceedings on the EIR, to address the alternative of multiple Rapid Bus routes[4]."

20-3

The MTA-preferred Alternative, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on the portion of the former "Burbank Branch" railroad line between North Hollywood and Warner Center, has, since the adoption of the original FEIR, been named by the MTA Board as the "Orange Line." Although that term is not utilized anywhere in the FEIR, it will be utilized in this comment letter to refer to the BRT Alternative approved by the MTA Board of Directors in its actions of February 2002, for the sake of convenience and simplicity.

20-4

In the comments following, I submit an abundance of direct evidence to demonstrate that MTA has failed to properly fulfill its responsibility to address the alternative of multiple Rapid Bus routes in this DREIR. While the shortcomings of this document are many, by far the most important is that MTA, rather than making a reasonable effort to construct the optimal

20-5

[3] While I certainly encourage MTA to continue with its practice of making CEQA, NEPA, and other important documents available through its web site, there are significant disadvantages to this as the primary form of delivery. In the case of the DRFEIR, for example, none of the six appendices were available through this source, one section (8-5.14 Cultural Resources) was not originally available, and two pages of another section were missing. It took me several hours to download and print this material, even with a high-speed internet connection and the availability of both the required color and large-document (11" x 17") printers. Much of the material in the DRFEIR, particularly the figures and tables, are difficult to review solely on commuter screens.

[4] Disposition, page 32.

Comment 20-2
It is acknowledged that your resume has been included for the record.

Comment 20-3
MTA acknowledges that the Revised FEIR was prepared to address the alternative of multiple Rapid Bus Routes pursuant to the Court of Appeal's decision. The commenter's statements about the materials available on MTA's website are noted for the record.

Comment 20-4
The comment is acknowledged for the record.

Comment 20-5
The commenter suggests that MTA did not properly address the alternative of multiple Rapid Bus routes. See Response to Comment No. 4-2 for MTA's reasoning for selecting the three RB Alternatives to analyze in the Revised FEIR. The Revised FEIR thoroughly addressed the alternative of multiple Rapid Bus routes by analyzing three variations of the alternative. The Revised EIR contains full analysis of each of the three RB Alternatives and compares them to the Project. Thus, the Revised FEIR properly addressed the alternative of multiple Rapid Bus routes as required by the Court of Appeal.

transportation option built upon multiple Rapid Bus routes and other low-cost transit improvements, or even a good transportation option or options built upon multiple Rapid Bus routes and other easily implemented related improvements, has instead constructed three very poor multiple Rapid Bus line alternatives and then performed improper comparisons of the Rapid Bus and the Orange Line Alternative. This passive-aggressive approach to meeting the requirements of CEQA, as detailed in this specific case by Second Appellate in its decision, fails the tests of reasonableness and propriety, as well as being a gross failure of MTA's responsibilities to the transit riders, taxpayers, residents, and other users of the Los Angeles County urban transportation system.

20-5

While this "make the Orange Line look good by making Rapid Bus look bad" action of MTA was certainly not unexpected by COST, it is, never-the-less, very disappointing. Anticipating that MTA would construct sub-optimal Rapid Bus alternatives, we made every possible effort to meet with and work with MTA on this matter, beginning the very week when the Second Appellate decision was issued. These contacts included personal contacts between me and Roger Snoble, MTA's Chief Executive Office, and with James de la Loza, MTA Chief Planning Officer, County Wide Planning & Development and e-mails, faxes, hand-delivered letters, and a presentation to the MTA Board in which I urged cooperation in this matter. In my letter of July 23, 2004, hand-delivered to Mr. Snoble's office (Exhibit II) and receipted, I, as the authorized representative of COST, urged that COST and MTA meet early and continually through the development of what became the DRFEIR. The very first technical item on my list of activities was, "The methodology for identification, analysis, rating, ranking, and selection of the routes for the 'multiple Rapid Bus routes' alternative mandated by the Court."

20-6

Despite my also sending this same document by facsimile and e-mail, and despite multiple phone messages left for Mr. Snoble, and despite "cc'ing" the MTA Chair, MTA Chief Counsel, and MTA Special Counsel for the CEQA litigation, and despite urging response in the fastest possible way by telephone or e-mail, MTA did not respond until a letter of Mr. Snoble dated July 29 (Exhibit III) – but not mailed and facsimiled by MTA until August 2, the following week, and those sent to my Oakland residence, where I did not receive them until I returned home late on Friday, August 6. Despite all of my attempts to convey that time was of essence, MTA evidently was not of the same opinion and did not avail itself of any of the telephone or e-mail contact points that would have provided a faster means of communication. Further, Mr. Snoble's letter simply ignored all the suggestions in my letter, refused to even identify the person responsible for preparing the DRFEIR, and essentially indicated that while MTA would receive any comments in writing, it would not engage in any interactive activity akin to "scoping" under CEQA.

20-7

Despite this response, I made a second attempt to gain input to the DRFEIR process. In my letter to Mr. Snoble of September 16, 2004 and the attached technical appendix of over three dozen

20-8

Comment 20-6

The commenter suggests that the three RB Alternatives are sub-optimal. MTA believes that the RB Alternatives provide a good and reasonable representation of what the alternative of multiple Rapid Bus routes can accomplish in the Valley. For a more detailed discussion on MTA's reasoning for choosing the RB Alternatives, see Response to Comment No. 4-2. The Court of Appeal's decision required that the alternative of multiple Rapid Bus routes be addressed on any further proceedings on the FEIR. Thus, MTA found three reasonable variations to cover a spectrum of multiple Rapid Bus routes. However, the commenter's call for MTA to generate the optimal mix of Rapid Bus routes is not supported by any facts that this is feasible for MTA to do. There is no modeling system available to generate the optimum assemblage of bus routes to serve the most riders. There currently is no transit model in existence that can determine optimum transit routes. Instead, MTA's model and other agency transit demand models calculate the performance of transit routes that are manually coded into the models. Even at this level of analysis, the task is substantial. MTA's model utilizes hundreds of thousands of input data and evaluates that data with hundreds of thousands of calculations using nine dimensions of socioeconomic data, three dimensions of census data, six factors that influence a person's decision to take transit, and the characteristics of the street network and transit. A detailed discussion on the intricacies and breadth of the modeling effort is contained in the "Service and Travel Forecasting Methodology Report," prepared by Parson Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas in August 2002. Moreover, the possible permutations of multiple Rapid Bus routes are in the thousands, if not the hundreds of thousands. Conducting modeling on hundreds of

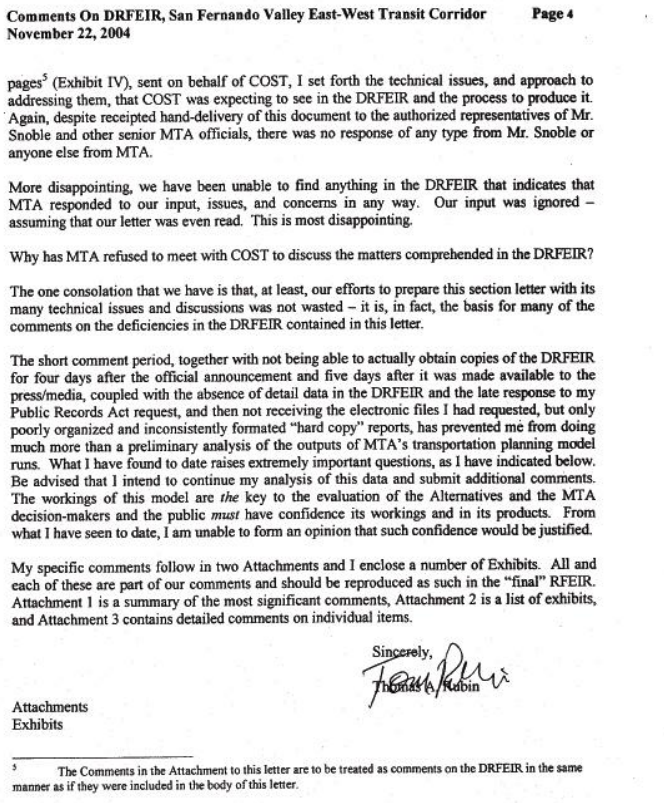
permutations of multiple Rapid Bus routes, let alone thousands, would also be extremely time consuming and would likely take years to perform. Each model run takes at least one week to conduct a complete model run.

Comment 20-7

For a discussion on consultation with the public, see Response to Comment No. 14-10. The commenter characterizes Mr. Snoble's letter to Mr. Rubin dated July 29, 2004 as a statement that MTA "would not engage in any interactive activity akin to 'scoping' under CEQA." However, Mr. Snoble's letter does not make this statement. Rather, Mr. Snoble informed Mr. Rubin that MTA would consider Mr. Rubin's suggestions while preparing the Revised FEIR.

Comment 20-8

MTA considered Mr. Rubin's letter dated September 16, 2004 in preparing the Revised FEIR.



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pages[5] (Exhibit IV), sent on behalf of COST, I set forth the technical issues, and approach to addressing them, that COST was expecting to see in the DRFEIR and the process to produce it. Again, despite receipted hand-delivery of this document to the authorized representatives of Mr. Snoble and other senior MTA officials, there was no response of any type from Mr. Snoble or anyone else from MTA. 20-8

More disappointing, we have been unable to find anything in the DRFEIR that indicates that MTA responded to our input, issues, and concerns in any way. Our input was ignored – assuming that our letter was even read. This is most disappointing. 20-9

Why has MTA refused to meet with COST to discuss the matters comprehended in the DRFEIR? 20-10

The one consolation that we have is that, at least, our efforts to prepare this section letter with its many technical issues and discussions was not wasted – it is, in fact, the basis for many of the comments on the deficiencies in the DRFEIR contained in this letter. 20-11

The short comment period, together with not being able to actually obtain copies of the DRFEIR for four days after the official announcement and five days after it was made available to the press/media, coupled with the absence of detail data in the DRFEIR and the late response to my Public Records Act request, and then not receiving the electronic files I had requested, but only poorly organized and inconsistently formated "hard copy" reports, has prevented me from doing much more than a preliminary analysis of the outputs of MTA's transportation planning model runs. What I have found to date raises extremely important questions, as I have indicated below. Be advised that I intend to continue my analysis of this data and submit additional comments. The workings of this model are *the* key to the evaluation of the Alternatives and the MTA decision-makers and the public *must* have confidence its workings and in its products. From what I have seen to date, I am unable to form an opinion that such confidence would be justified. 20-12

My specific comments follow in two Attachments and I enclose a number of Exhibits. All and each of these are part of our comments and should be reproduced as such in the "final" RFEIR. Attachment 1 is a summary of the most significant comments, Attachment 2 is a list of exhibits, and Attachment 3 contains detailed comments on individual items. 20-13

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Rubin

Attachments
Exhibits

[5] The Comments in the Attachment to this letter are to be treated as comments on the DRFEIR in the same manner as if they were included in the body of this letter.

Comment 20-9

MTA evaluated Mr. Rubin's letter dated September 16, 2004 and determined that it did not raise any significant environmental issue that MTA was not already considering in the Revised FEIR. In addition, see Response 31-6.

Comment 20-10

For a discussion on consultation with the public, see Response to Comment No. 14-10. In addition, Mr. Rubin acknowledges that neither he nor any member of COST is a transit planning expert. Accordingly, meeting with Mr. Rubin would not have provided the MTA with any expert assistance in developing the specific details of the RB Alternatives. Moreover, Mr. Rubin was proposing a process of evaluation by repetitive iterations of numerous variations of multiple route Rapid Bus alternatives that would likely take years to process, but offered no reasonable assurance that the process would merit the effort.

Comment 20-11

MTA concurs with the commenter that his efforts have not been wasted. MTA considered his suggestions in preparing the draft Revised FEIR and herein addresses the significant environmental issues he raises in his comments. In addition, to the extent possible and without waiver of MTA's right to assert that it is not required to address comments concerning issues outside the Revised FEIR, MTA responds to Mr. Rubin's comments herein.

Comment 20-12

See Response to Comment No. 14-2 for a discussion on why the comment period for the Revised FEIR was

proper and on MTA's compliance with Mr. Rubin's Public Record Act request.

Comment 20-13

MTA intends to attach Mr. Rubin's entire letter, together with its voluminous attachments and exhibits, in the final Revised FEIR at Mr. Rubin's request.

ATTACHMENT 1
SUMMARY OF MOST SIGNIFICANT COMMENTS

The numbers in parenthesis for each comment summary below refers to the paragraph number or numbers in Attachment 2, Detailed Comments.

A. There was absolutely no public outreach or public participation of any type in the preparation of the DRFEIR (25.-28., 30., 187.-.191, 220.-222.)
B. The attempts by COST to participate in the preparation of the DRFEIR were rebuffed and ignored (Cover Letter, pp. 3-4, 205.)
C. The DRFEIR was prepared over an exceeding short time period – indeed, if the December 13 Board Action date holds, MTA will beat its own projection of completion date, presented to the California Supreme Court, by more than half – which appears to have contributed to numerous errors, omissions, and inconsistencies (48.C., footnote 11, and all the below)
D. The Rapid Bus Alternatives are very poor. The choice of Rapid Lines in each Alternative is flawed and the individual Rapid Line routes are suboptimal and unimaginative. Even after MTA's own transportation model runs (sometimes referred by MTA as its "transportation demand model") clearly showed superior results on the limited options that were modeled, MTA did not make adjustments that would have substantially improved Rapid Bus Alternative performance. (6.-24.,29., 161.-174., 172.-192., 428-430.)
E. MTA claims that the selection of the Rapid Bus lines in the Rapid Bus Alternatives was dictated by the Second Appellate Order that directed it to consider Rapid Bus. However, no such requirement exists in the Order. Of the three Rapid Bus Alternatives in the DRFEIR, two were taken from single sentences in one e-mail and one written comment, where it was very clear from the context that the commenters were presenting concepts and a list of candidate lines for detailed consideration for inclusion, not final networks to be modeled. The other Alternative was from a concept map produced by COST – which communicated a detailed methodology for selection of Rapid Bus routes into Alternatives and communications between COST and MTA to facilitate this, which MTA ignored. (30., 176.-207.)
F. MTA made several changes to the Rapid Bus lines in the COST map, which discredits its own contention that the Rapid Bus Alternatives to be studied in this CEQA process were dictated by the Second Appellate Order. (185.-186.)
G. MTA significantly overstated a key performance indicator, the Warner Center to North Hollywood end-to-end run time, for the Victory Rapid Bus line by forcing it to utilize a far longer, slower route for no transportation purpose and by assuming a speed limit for Victory lower than the actual posted speed limit, which lowered its performance relative to the Orange Line Alternative. (31.-58., 91.-96., 120.-134.)

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Comment 20-14
See Response to Comment No. 14-10 for a discussion on "public outreach" (i.e., consultation with the public).

Comment 20-15
This comment duplicates Comment Nos. 20-7 through 20-10. See the responses to these comments.

Comment 20-16
The commenter's general statement is noted for the record. As to the review period, please refer to comment responses 14-1 and 14-2.

Comment 20-17
See Responses 4-2 and 20-6 for a discussion on MTA's reasoning for choosing the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-18
See Responses 4-2 and 14-14 for a discussion on MTA's reasoning for choosing the RB Alternatives. See Response to Comment No. 14-10 for a discussion on consultation with the public.

Comment 20-19
The commenter suggests that MTA made changes to the Rapid Bus route network proposed by COST that is purported contrary to MTA's contention that such alternatives were dictated by the Court of Appeal. The Revised FEIR stated that the Court of Appeal mentioned two comment letters and COST's suggested network. (Revised FEIR, page RS-1.) MTA looked at those suggestions and determined that would be a reasonable mix of multiple Rapid Bus routes to study. MTA does not contend that the Court of Appeal dictated that MTA must evaluate only the suggested

variations of the alternative of multiple Rapid Bus routes. See Response to Comment No. 4-2 for a more detailed discussion on MTA's reasoning for choosing the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-20

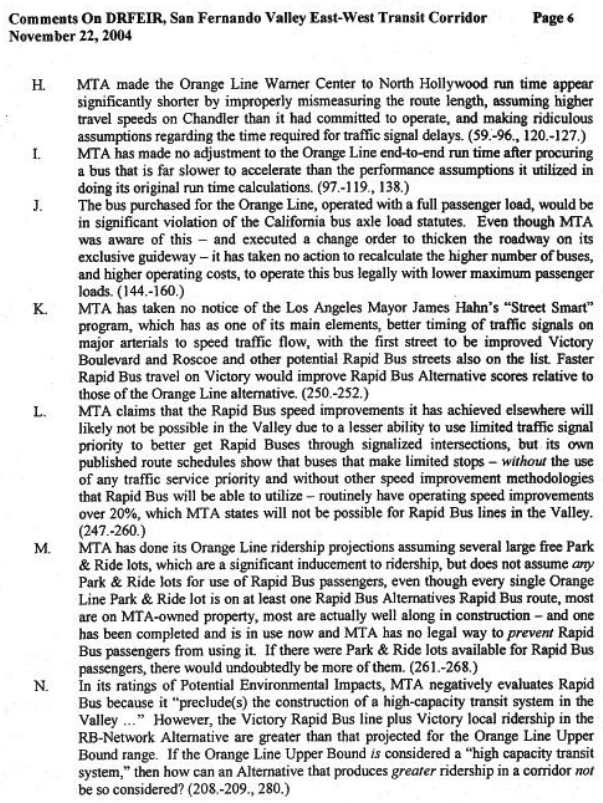
The rapid bus end-to-end run times used in the transportation demand model do not integrate any specific loop routings at either end of the rapid bus routes. Run times for rapid bus routes are automatically determined through the transportation demand model as a function of highway speeds in the forecast year. (Highway speeds in the forecast year are typically slower than existing highway speeds.)

Bus speeds (and therefore resulting travel times) are automatically calculated using a percentage of the modeled highway speed, depending on category:

	Urban Roadway	Suburban Roadway
Local Bus	65%	76%
Rapid Bus	78%	91%

These percentages account for the stop patterns that are typical for the bus service type.

Also see Response 20-34.



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H. MTA made the Orange Line Warner Center to North Hollywood run time appear significantly shorter by improperly mismeasuring the route length, assuming higher travel speeds on Chandler than it had committed to operate, and making ridiculous assumptions regarding the time required for traffic signal delays. (59.-96., 120.-127.)

I. MTA has made no adjustment to the Orange Line end-to-end run time after procuring a bus that is far slower to accelerate than the performance assumptions it utilized in doing its original run time calculations. (97.-119., 138.)

J. The bus purchased for the Orange Line, operated with a full passenger load, would be in significant violation of the California bus axle load statutes. Even though MTA was aware of this – and executed a change order to thicken the roadway on its exclusive guideway – it has taken no action to recalculate the higher number of buses, and higher operating costs, to operate this bus legally with lower maximum passenger loads. (144.-160.)

K. MTA has taken no notice of the Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn's "Street Smart" program, which has as one of its main elements, better timing of traffic signals on major arterials to speed traffic flow, with the first street to be improved Victory Boulevard and Roscoe and other potential Rapid Bus streets also on the list. Faster Rapid Bus travel on Victory would improve Rapid Bus Alternative scores relative to those of the Orange Line alternative. (250.-252.)

L. MTA claims that the Rapid Bus speed improvements it has achieved elsewhere will likely not be possible in the Valley due to a lesser ability to use limited traffic signal priority to better get Rapid Buses through signalized intersections, but its own published route schedules show that buses that make limited stops – *without* the use of any traffic service priority and without other speed improvement methodologies that Rapid Bus will be able to utilize – routinely have operating speed improvements over 20%, which MTA states will not be possible for Rapid Bus lines in the Valley. (247.-260.)

M. MTA has done its Orange Line ridership projections assuming several large free Park & Ride lots, which are a significant inducement to ridership, but does not assume *any* Park & Ride lots for use of Rapid Bus passengers, even though every single Orange Line Park & Ride lot is on at least one Rapid Bus Alternatives Rapid Bus route, most are on MTA-owned property, most are actually well along in construction – and one has been completed and is in use now and MTA has no legal way to *prevent* Rapid Bus passengers from using it. If there were Park & Ride lots available for Rapid Bus passengers, there would undoubtedly be more of them. (261.-268.)

N. In its ratings of Potential Environmental Impacts, MTA negatively evaluates Rapid Bus because it "preclude(s) the construction of a high-capacity transit system in the Valley ..." However, the Victory Rapid Bus line plus Victory local ridership in the RB-Network Alternative are greater than that projected for the Orange Line Upper Bound range. If the Orange Line Upper Bound *is* considered a "high capacity transit system," then how can an Alternative that produces *greater* ridership in a corridor *not* be so considered? (208.-209., 280.)

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Comment 20-21

The original 28.8 minute run time calculation from Warner Center to North Hollywood was based on measuring distances from engineering drawings and assumed an extensive system of signal priority including full preemption at street crossing between stations. Discussions with LADOT led to the addition of an "upper-bound" travel time estimate of 40 minutes. See Response 20-75.

Comment 20-22

The acceleration rates used in the run time model, which generated the original calculation of 28.8 minutes are not significantly different from those cited for the recently-ordered Metro Liners. Using a sample 2,700-foot section between Tampa Avenue and Wilbur Avenue (per comments 20-83 through 20-85), the run time model estimates 55.6 seconds, as compared to the 55.9 seconds as calculated by Mr. Rubin in comment 20-85.

Before MTA accepts the articulated bus, the bus OEM is required to certify that the bus it built meets the vehicle performance specified in the contract. Hence MTA made no adjustment to the Orange Line end-to-end run time.

Comment 20-23

See Response 20-22. MTA's specification requires the bus OEM to provide vehicles that conform to federal, state, and local codes and regulations. Before MTA's acceptance, the bus OEM must certify that the vehicles it built comply with federal, state, local codes and regulations.

Comment 20-24

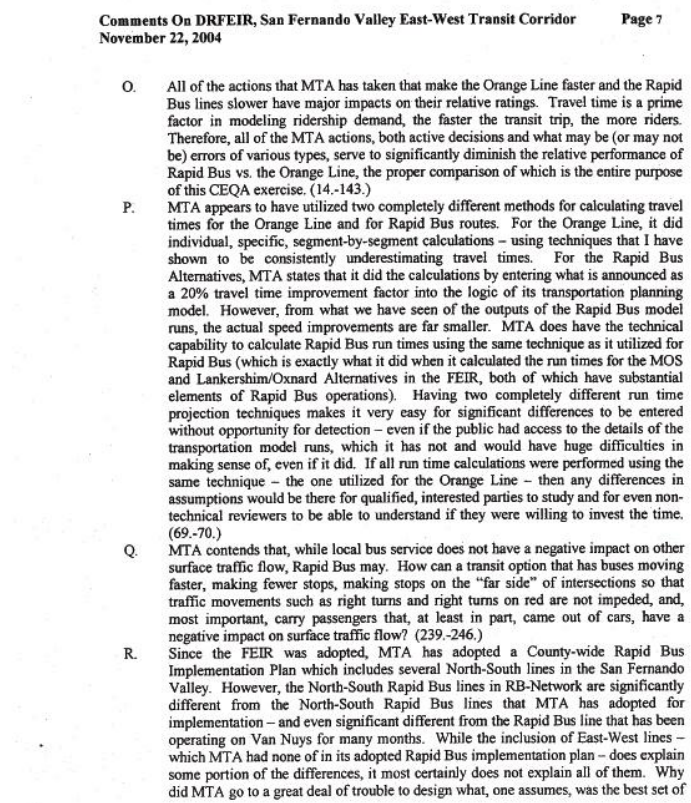
The specific details of Mayor Hahn's "Street Smart" program have not yet been developed or announced to the public, so it would be difficult to reflect the effects of this program in the MTA travel demand-forecasting model. It appears that the Mayor's plan will provide progressive signal timing along certain major arterials, such as Victory Boulevard, which may be counter productive to the real-time transit signal priority system installed as part of the Rapid Bus program and may make it even more difficult to provide transit priority in both the east-west and north-south directions of a grid street system, like the San Fernando Valley. The analysis of the Rapid Bus Alternatives in the Revised FEIR was conducted based on assumptions consistent with those used for the Project in 2000-2002, at which time the "Street Smart" program had not yet been conceived. Additionally, in order to make the appropriate comparisons between the RB Alternatives and the Project, the environmental setting and policies in place at the time the Project was analyzed were used to evaluate the RB Alternatives. Thus, it is inappropriate to consider the "Street Smart" program in the Revised FEIR.

Comment 20-25

Other east-west Valley streets might not experience quite the same travel time savings as Ventura Boulevard because Ventura Boulevard is the heaviest east-west street and the signal timing on Ventura is set to favor east-west traffic. There is simply not as much green time available along the other east-west corridors because the signal timing favors north-south traffic north of Ventura.

Comment 20-26
The concept of implementing rapid bus is that it can be done at minimal cost. Therefore, no park-and-rides were assumed in the rapid bus alternatives.

Comment 20-27
Please refer to response to comment 20-136.



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O. All of the actions that MTA has taken that make the Orange Line faster and the Rapid Bus lines slower have major impacts on their relative ratings. Travel time is a prime factor in modeling ridership demand, the faster the transit trip, the more riders. Therefore, all of the MTA actions, both active decisions and what may be (or may not be) errors of various types, serve to significantly diminish the relative performance of Rapid Bus vs. the Orange Line, the proper comparison of which is the entire purpose of this CEQA exercise. (14.-143.)

P. MTA appears to have utilized two completely different methods for calculating travel times for the Orange Line and for Rapid Bus routes. For the Orange Line, it did individual, specific, segment-by-segment calculations – using techniques that I have shown to be consistently underestimating travel times. For the Rapid Bus Alternatives, MTA states that it did the calculations by entering what is announced as a 20% travel time improvement factor into the logic of its transportation planning model. However, from what we have seen of the outputs of the Rapid Bus model runs, the actual speed improvements are far smaller. MTA does have the technical capability to calculate Rapid Bus run times using the same technique as it utilized for Rapid Bus (which is exactly what it did when it calculated the run times for the MOS and Lankershim/Oxnard Alternatives in the FEIR, both of which have substantial elements of Rapid Bus operations). Having two completely different run time projection techniques makes it very easy for significant differences to be entered without opportunity for detection – even if the public had access to the details of the transportation model runs, which it has not and would have huge difficulties in making sense of, even if it did. If all run time calculations were performed using the same technique – the one utilized for the Orange Line – then any differences in assumptions would be there for qualified, interested parties to study and for even non-technical reviewers to be able to understand if they were willing to invest the time. (69.-70.)

Q. MTA contends that, while local bus service does not have a negative impact on other surface traffic flow, Rapid Bus may. How can a transit option that has buses moving faster, making fewer stops, making stops on the "far side" of intersections so that traffic movements such as right turns and right turns on red are not impeded, and, most important, carry passengers that, at least in part, came out of cars, have a negative impact on surface traffic flow? (239.-246.)

R. Since the FEIR was adopted, MTA has adopted a County-wide Rapid Bus Implementation Plan which includes several North-South lines in the San Fernando Valley. However, the North-South Rapid Bus lines in RB-Network are significantly different from the North-South Rapid Bus lines that MTA has adopted for implementation – and even significant different from the Rapid Bus line that has been operating on Van Nuys for many months. While the inclusion of East-West lines – which MTA had none of in its adopted Rapid Bus implementation plan – does explain some portion of the differences, it most certainly does not explain all of them. Why did MTA go to a great deal of trouble to design what, one assumes, was the best set of

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Comment 20-28

Travel time calculations for the busway portion of the Orange Line is calculated differently than for rapid bus alternatives because of the different street environment in which they operate. The rapid bus routes operate in the street environment with no separation from vehicular traffic. Therefore, it is appropriate to use highway speeds, factored to account for making passenger stops.

The method of using highway speeds (by facility types and area types) and a set of locally calibrated adjustment factors is the standard and only acceptable procedure by FTA to derive the bus speed when buses operate in mixed-traffic environment. In fact, FTA developed the INET computer program to facilitate the implementation of such a critical modeling task. Comparing the base-year scheduled bus run time with the modeled run time has validated the set of locally calibrated adjustment factors.

For an operating environment with an exclusive lane, it is appropriate to use a run time model, which is able to account for specialized conditions such as transit priority and reduced number of crossings. The run time model used for the original BRT run time estimate is based on distances between stations, maximum speeds (considering curves and operating environment), dwell time at stops, and defined intersection delay based on priority/pre-emption assumptions.

LADOT revised this original estimate based on their own method, which the MTA used to provide the upper bound estimate for their analysis.

A particular route's travel time is not the prime factor in modeling ridership. Numerous other factors affect ridership and are utilized by MTA's model. Moreover, travel time on an alternative is less important than the total origin-to-destination travel time for riders, which the MTA model accounts for. For a discussion on how the MTA's model accounts for a rider's origin-to-destination travel time, see the report entitled, "Service and Travel for Casting Methodology Report", prepared by Parson Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas in August 2000. A copy of this report is available for review in the MTA library.

Comment 20-29

Modeling of the performance of transit is extremely complex and intricate. Please see Response 20-28.

Comment 20-30

The MTA does not contend that Rapid Buses would typically have a negative impact on other surface traffic flow. The only times that this could potentially occur would be if the addition of Rapid Buses to a particular street increased the total volume of traffic to above the capacity of the street. This typically does not occur however, because many Rapid Bus routes have balanced the bus volumes on the individual streets; adding Rapid Buses and reducing Limited or Local service. If such balancing of bus volumes did not occur and a roadway was carrying volumes at or near its capacity, the addition of Rapid Buses could cause some degradation of the overall traffic flow.

Comment 20-31

The RB- Network was generally studied as presented by COST. Staff evaluated the COST alternative as presented with the understanding it was a good faith

effort to address transportation needs in the Valley as perceived by COST. Since the COST alternative was presented to the Board in July 2001 and carried forward in litigation by COST (where it had the benefit of legal counsel and consultation with this commenter) staff concluded that the Metro effort to analyze alternatives should include the COST network. Some minor modifications were made to adjust the routes to conform to the plan's study area and to enhance comparability with other alternatives

The study team had a number of other goals in preparing the document, including: to re-create the decision point when the Board initially considered the project (with the addition of new RB alternatives); to utilize as much as possible the previous data and documentation prepared for the project to allow an "apples-to-apples" comparison of alternatives; to save time so that the Board and the public could reconsider this issue as soon as possible; to limit the expenditure of additional public dollars in evaluating the new alternatives by utilizing the previously prepared information; and, to keep the analysis consistent with the earlier effort so as not to skew the analysis with later plans and policies adopted by the Metro Board based on the previous approval of the SFV BRT.

Staff did not redo the previous modeling work for the No Build, TSM, and BRT alternatives for the reasons expressed above. Had we done so, each of these alternatives and the new RB alternatives would have benefited from the additional north/south RB service later studied by Metro in the SFV N/S study for future adoption. The RB-Network is the only alternative studied that was enhanced by both the TSM network and additional RB north/south service.

Valley North-South Rapid Bus lines it could and then assume a very different set of such lines in the RB-Network Alternative? Also, since MTA has already adopted a plan for significant North-South Rapid Bus lines, why is the cost of these lines included in the RB-Network Alternative? (The proper way of handling this would have been to include the MTA's adopted North-South Rapid Bus lines, with some routing and cost modifications that may be appropriate to optimize the transportation networks for the various Rapid Bus Alternatives, in *all*, or almost all [probably not the No Build, perhaps not the TSM] of the Alternatives.) (192.)

S. MTA has projected major traffic congestion worsening by 2020, which it claims would increase Orange Line ridership because more people will use it as traffic conditions worsen, but MTA has ignored a recent population projection by the State Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit which now projects only growth to a level that would produce only 44% of the population MTA utilized for its projections. Given that network throughput tends to decreases at a constantly higher rate as network capacity is approached and exceeded, this 56% reduction in population growth is likely to have a significant higher positive impact on traffic congestion changes. (230.-235., 237.-238., 269.-271., 284.)

T. MTA's ridership demand model is stated to assume a 20% Rapid Bus speed increase over local bus service on the same route, but the actual speed calculations done from data from the model runs for the RB-3 Rapid Bus Alternative showed speed increases of only 8%, 5%, and 1% on Victory, Vanowen, and Sherman Way, respectively. This raises a number of questions regarding MTA transportation planning model and modeling process. Interestingly, in MTA's Public Records Act Request production letter, it justified the high cost it charged me for these reports by stating that, "This data is not information that is provided in a report of any kind on any scheduled basis, therefore, special programming was required to generate the data." (428.)

U. The model runs for all three Rapid Bus Alternatives included a new limited stop bus line on Victory – in addition to the new Rapid Bus line on Victory – that had substantial added vehicles, revenue vehicle hours, and revenue vehicle miles – but no ridership at all, absolutely zero boardings and passenger miles. This may have improperly failed to count thousands of boardings away from all three Rapid Bus Alternatives, thereby significant negatively impacting their performance. Also, starting a new – and totally unannounced in the DRFEIR – limited line undoubted took riders away from both the Victory Rapid Bus lines in the RB-3, RB-5, and RB-network, as well as the pre-existing Victory local, making the Rapid Bus performance look lower that it should. (428.)

V. MTA has taken no notice what-so-ever of the extreme safety problems on the only Bus Rapid Transit line in the U.S. comparable to the proposed Orange Line, the Miami-Dade Transit South Miami Busway. Like the Orange Line, this Busway, which opened in 1997, was constructed on an unused former rail line, operates at grade through signalized intersections, and was designed for buses to go through intersections without stopping at 35 mph. However, due to the extremely high

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For a discussion on consideration of subsequently planned north-south Rapid Bus routes, see Response 20-113.

Comment 20-32

The MTA model utilizes socioeconomic forecasts prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the six-county region. The growth forecasts adopted by the SCAG Regional Council are the only official forecasts for the region that are recognized by the Federal Transit Authority for use in environmental documents on transit facilities. The use of the SCAG growth forecasts by the MTA is consistent with all of the other County Transportation Commissions, Councils of Governments, Counties and Cities in southern California.

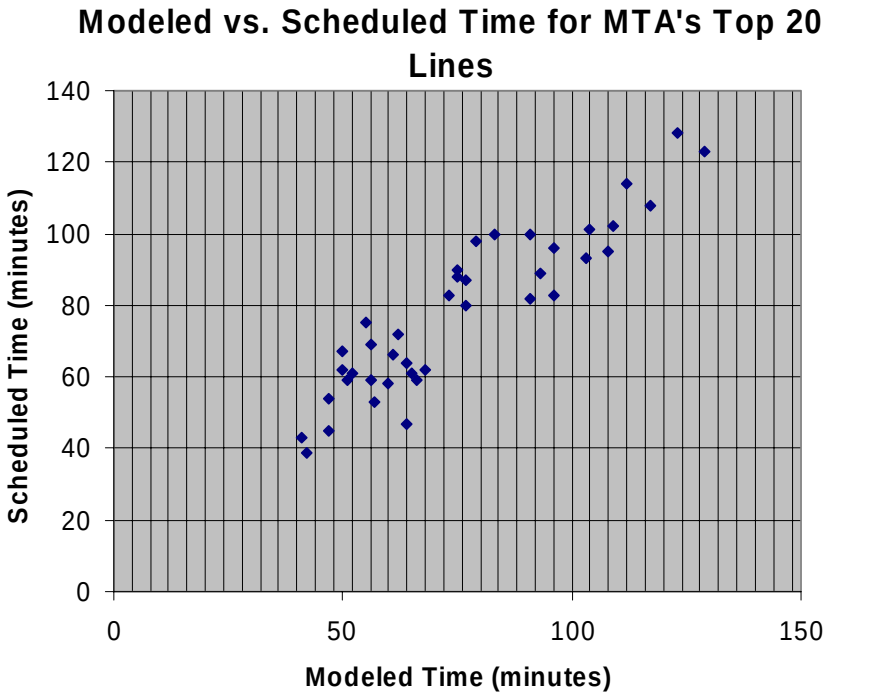
Comment 20-33

It is unclear from this comment how the quoted speed improvement percentages were calculated. However, looking at the more detailed related comments (20-234 – 20-239), it appears that the speed values calculated by the commenter were determined by dividing VMT by VHT. As recognized by the commenter in comment 20-236, "vehicle miles traveled divided by vehicle hours traveled, which is a close, but not precisely correct, measure of vehicle operating speed," so this method of calculating the speed of the Rapid Buses versus local buses is not precise. It is also an apples to oranges comparison, since for the Vanowen corridor, the local service travels all the way to Burbank, whereas the Rapid Bus goes to the North Hollywood Metro Red Line Station. A 20 percent speed increase assumption in the RB Alternatives does not translate to a forecast 20 percent overall speed increase. Many

factors in the MTA Model's effect the overall speed of a Rapid Bus Alternative. Moreover, the MTA Model was found to adequately forecast bus route run times in the AM period, midday period. MTA's model tested twenty bus lines: 2, 4, 14, 16, 18, 22, 26/51, 28, 30, 33, 40, 45, 60, 66, 204, 207, 210, 251, 420 and 561:

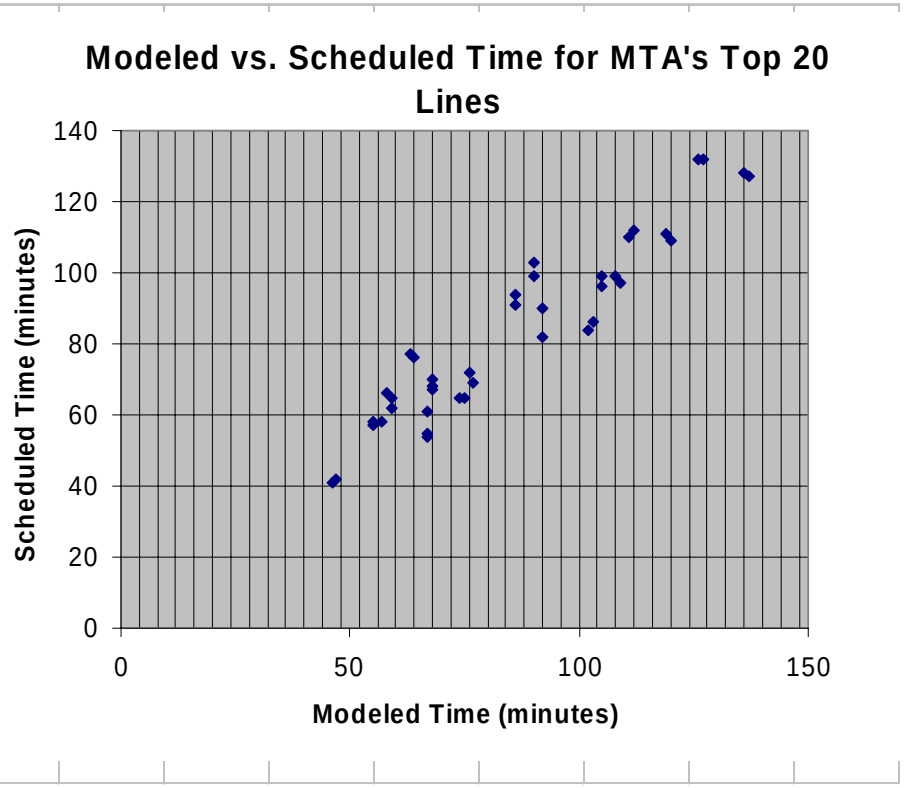
AM Bus Run Time Validation

	EB/SB		WB/NB	
MTA Line	Model	Actual	Model	Actual
Line 204	50	62	50	67
Line 22	93	89	96	96
Line 28	41	43	42	39
Line 207	51	59	52	61
Line 4	108	95	109	102
Line 30	65	61	61	66
Line 60	104	101	91	100
Line 40	79	98	75	90
Line 18	64	64	56	59
Line 66	64	47	57	53
Line 16	47	45	47	54
Line 26/51	77	87	77	80
Line 45	56	69	60	58
Line 33	96	83	91	82
Line 14	68	62	66	59
Line 420	83	100	103	93
Line 2	117	108	123	128
Line 210	73	83	75	88
Line 251	62	72	55	75
Line 561	129	123	112	114



PM Bus Run Time Model Validation

	EB/SB		WB/NB	
MTA Line	Model	Actual	Model	Actual
Line 204	58	66	57	58
Line 22	109	97	108	99
Line 28	47	42	46	41
Line 207	59	65	59	62
Line 4	120	109	119	111
Line 30	77	69	76	72
Line 60	112	112	111	110
Line 40	90	99	90	103
Line 18	68	68	67	61
Line 66	67	55	67	54
Line 16	55	57	55	58
Line 26/51	92	90	92	82
Line 45	68	70	68	67
Line 33	103	86	102	84
Line 14	75	65	74	65
Line 420	105	96	105	99
Line 2	137	127	136	128
Line 210	86	91	86	94
Line 251	63	77	64	76
Line 561	126	132	127	132



number of bus-vs.-car/train/pedestrian collisions, injuries, and fatalities, the advance loop system used to trigger the green lights for the Busway buses were turned off in 1999 and all Busway buses come to a complete stop at each intersection, even when they have the "green" signal. Even after implementing most of the Safety Consultant's recommendations designed to allow Busway buses to go through intersections without stopping – at 15 mph – the traffic signal limited priority system has not been turned back on and there is no schedule to do so. Two extensions of the Busway, designed and constructed to meet all of the Safety Consultant's recommendations, which will probably open to revenue service within weeks, will require all Busway buses to stop at each intersection. The Houston light rail line, which shares many of the design features of the Orange Line, has recently, on 7.5 miles of track, broken the old U.S. National "record" for the most light rail collisions in a year (with over a month left to go before it completes it first year) formerly held by the San Francisco Municipal Railroad MUNI METRO light rail system, which has 73 miles of track. Recent safety improvements have brought the collision rate down, but the most important safety improvement is a fifteen-second "all-directions" red light phase before a trail can enter intersections – which would appear to have a significant negative impact on traffic flow if it were to be applied along the Orange Line corridor. (134.-297.)

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Comment 20-34

The new limited stop bus line on Victory was actually a part of the original TSM definition included in the February 2002 FEIR. Unfortunately, this route was inadvertently omitted in the FEIR's Table 2-3 summarizing TSM bus service improvements. The limited stop bus line was however included in modeling of the RB Alternatives.

The limited stop bus line on Victory was not removed for the rapid bus alternatives in order to stay true to the intent of ensuring that rapid bus was added on top of (without replacing) TSM improvements. In actual practice, the MTA would evaluate the relative ridership and service levels of local, limited and rapid bus routes operating on a single corridor and would calibrate service levels accordingly.

Comment 20-35

The design of the Orange Line has incorporated additional safety features not present in the Miami system. Please refer to response to comment C9-66 in the Final EIR and Response to Comment No. 13-2 herein. The comparison of the Orange Line to light rail lines in Houston and San Francisco is not an appropriate comparison given the different acceleration and deceleration patterns of trains versus buses and the fact that several of the MUNI METRO light rail transit lines run in mixed flow with automobile traffic, not in dedicated lanes. Ms. Isabel Padron, the Project Manager, for the Miami-Dade busway confirmed that signal priority will be activated in mid 2005. She also noted that none of the Safety Consultant's recommendations have been implemented on busway, but the recommendations were going to be installed on the busway in mid 2005. (Telephone conference on

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ATTACHMENT 2
LIST OF EXHIBITS

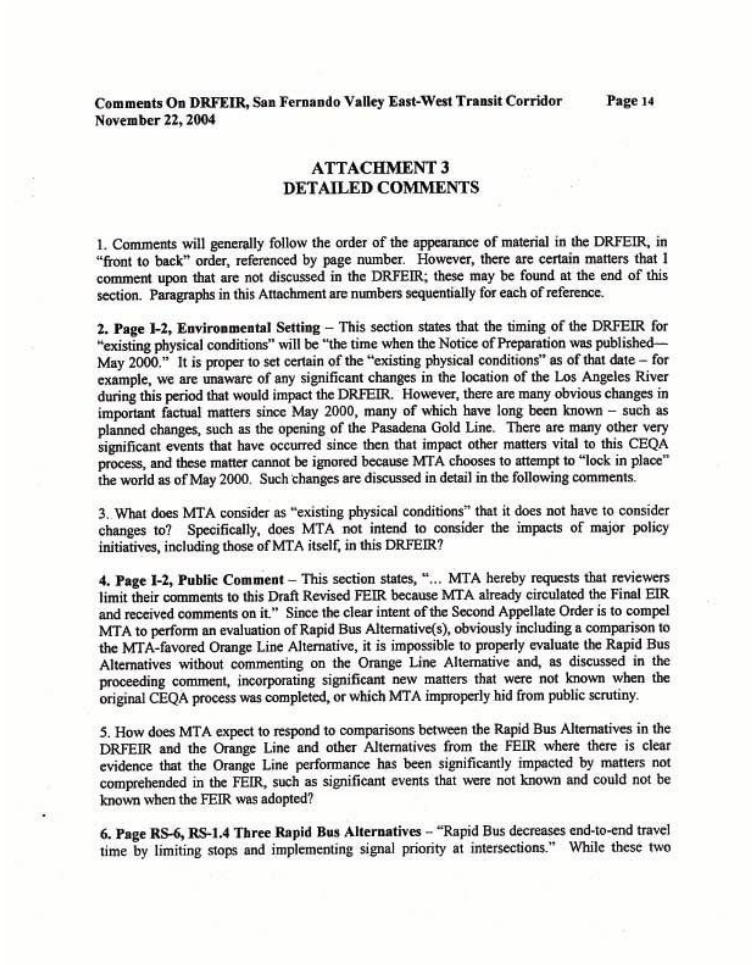
Exhibit	Title
I	Thomas A. Rubin (TAR) Resume
II	TAR Letter to MTA CEO Roger Snoble suggesting cooperation between COST and MTA in the preparation in new CEQA process, 7/23/04
III	Roger Snoble Letter to TAR, 7/29/04, responding to TAR letter of 7/23/04
IV	TAR Letter to Roger Snoble with detailed technical issues and suggested processes for new CEQA process, 9/16/04
V	Warner Center Orange Line and Rapid Bus Route Alignments
	Orange Line Alignment from FEIR (February 2002)
	Rapid Bus Alignment in DRFEIR Superimposed on Orange Line Alignment
	Superior Rapid Bus Alignment Superimposed on Orange Line Alignment
VI	MTA Press Releases
	May 14, 2001 – MTA Releases Draft Environmental Report on Proposed San Fernando Valley East-West Busway
	July 26, 2001 – MTA Board Approves Busway for San Fernando Valley East-West Corridor
	January 24, 2002 – High Capacity 'CompoBUS' MTA's Next Stop on High Tech Road
	February 12, 2002 – MTA Issues Final Environmental Report on San Fernando Valley East-West Busway
	February 28, 2002 – MTA Certifies Final Environmental Report on San Fernando Valley East-West Busway; Final Design to Get Underway
	July 18, 2002 – MTA Buying High Capacity Buses, Pursuing Other Options to Further Reduce Bus Overcrowding
	January 17, 2003 – *MTA Busway Coming to the Valley* – MTA Kicks off Metro Rapid Transitway Project in San Fernando Valley
	January 23, 2003 – MTA Board Approves Purchase of 70 Additional High-capacity 45- Foot High-tech Buses
	February 26, 2003 – Bus of the Future is Latest Addition to MTA Bus Fleet
	February 27, 2003 – MTA Board of Directors Approves Purchase of 200 High-capacity Articulated Compressed Natural Gas Buses
	April 3, 2003 – MTA Moves Forward with the Purchase of 200 High-capacity Buses and a Major Design/Build Contract for the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway

December 2, 2004.) Moreover, the Court of Appeal rejected claims by COST that the Project would create a significant safety impact. Accordingly, the Orange Line's intersections do not cause a significant safety risk.

Exhibit	Title
VI	MTA Press Releases (concluded)
	July 22, 2004 – Metro Board Approves Purchase of 75 New Buses
	August 6, 2004 – Metro Rolls out First high Capacity State-of-the-Art 45-Foot Bus
	August 26, 2004 – Metro CEO Orders Work to Resume on Metro Orange Line
	October 15, 2004 – Metro Raises Technology Bar with Super-Sized *Metro Liner*; Bus Prototype Unveiled Today in North Hollywood
	October 22, 2004 – Revised Environmental Report for Metro Orange Line Corridor Released; Study Examines Rapid Bus Alternative
VII	FEIR, Run Time Estimates for Bus Rapid Transit Alternatives
	Figure A-1: Run Time Estimate for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – 28.8 Minute, Lower Bound
	Figure A-2: Run Time Estimate for Bus Rapid Transit Minimum Operating Segment
	Figure A-3: 36-Minute Run Time Estimate of the BRT Alternative
	Figure A-4: 40-Minute Run Time Estimate, the Upper Bound (UB) of the BRT Alternative (Base on 36-Minute Run Time Estimate, Figure A-3)
VIII	Run Time Calculations for *Metro Liner* Bus To Be Utilized on Orange Line
	Corteen Avenue to Laurel Canyon Blvd
	Tampa Avenue to Wilbur Avenue
	White Oak to Balboa
IX	Time/Speed/Distance Schedule for *Metro Liner* Bus
X	American Public Transportation Association Standard Bus Procurement Guidelines – Low Floor CNG (excerpt)
XI	MTA Board Actions and Related Reports (dates are those of the report itself, which is usually the date of the Board Committee meeting prior to the full Board meeting; the number in parenthesis is the "Agenda" number for the Board meeting)
	February 21, 2002 (31) – Approve Implementation of the Metro Rapid Expansion Program
	September 18, 2002 (10) – Approve Implementation of the Metro Rapid Five-Year Implementation Plan

Exhibit	Title
XI	MTA Board Actions and Related Reports (concluded)
	February 20, 2003 (27) – Award Contract for Vehicles (200 Low Floor CNG Articulated Buses)
	May 20, 2004 (2) – Authorize Expenditures in the FY05 Budget for Bus Service Expansion to Support Consent Decree Compliance
	July 15, 2004 (27) – Increase the Life of Project Budget for the (Orange Line) busway from $8,100,000 to $10,637,860
	July 15, 2004 (28) – Execute Contract Modifications in the Amount of $1,030,239 for Community Landscape Enhancements
	July 15, 2004 (29) – Issue Change Orders in an Amount Not-To- Exceed $2,000,000 For Design and Construction to Upgrade the Busway Pavement Structural Section
	October 21, 2004 (Item 20) – Execute Recovery Plan for Orange Line Recovery Plan
XII	MTA Metro Rapid Plans and Map (from MTA web site)
	Update
	Overview
	Metro Rapid Services Effective June 2004
	Metro Rapid Phased Implementation
XIII	Citizens Organized for Smart Transportation – *San Fernando Valley Public Transportation Analysis – East/West Burbank-Chandler Busway*
XIV	COST "White Papers" on San Fernando Valley Transit Improvements
XV	Administrative Record Excerpts from *COST v MTA*
XVI	MTA, Long Range Transportation Plan for Los Angeles County – Executive Summary, April 26, 2001 (excerpts)
XVII	Route Operating Statistics by Alternative from MTA Transportation Model
	MTA Cover Letter to Public Records Act Request Production
	No Build Alternative
	Transportation Systems Management Alternative
	Orange Line (Full Bus Rapid Transit)
	Minimum Operating Segment BRT
	RB-3
	RB-5
	RB-Network

Exhibit	Title
XVIII	Thomas A. Rubin Public Records Act Requests for DRFEIR Materials
XIX	State of California – Department of Finance – Demographic Research Unit – "New State Projections Show 20 Million More Californian by 2020; Hispanics to be State's Majority Ethnic Group by 2040," May 19, 2004
XX	MTA – Pre- and Post-Rapid Bus Conversion – Number of Vehicles Assigned, AM Peak Period
XXI	MTA, *Final Report – Los Angeles Metro Rapid Demonstration Project*, July 2001
XXII	City of Los Angeles "Street Smart" Program
XXIII	MTA, Selected Limited Stop Bus Route Schedules
XXIV	MTA, Metro Orange Line August 2004 Monthly Project Status Report, September 23, 2004
XXV	Comparison of Capital and Operating and Maintenance Costs of Alternatives
XXVI	*Miami Herald* Articles re South Miami Busway
XXVII	DMJM-Harris and R. Aleman & Associates, Inc., *South Miami-Dade Busway Safety Study* for Metro-Dade Transit, August 13, 2001
XXVIII	Wham-Bam-Ram Tram Ram Counter
XXIX	Lucas Wall, "Rail ridership figures called 'impressive,'" *Houston Chronicle*, April 6, 2004
XXX	Marginal Hourly Cost of Bus Service
XXXI	MTA, Mid-City/Westside Transit Corridor Study Draft EIS/EIR, April 6, 2001 (Excerpts)



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ATTACHMENT 3
DETAILED COMMENTS

1. Comments will generally follow the order of the appearance of material in the DRFEIR, in "front to back" order, referenced by page number. However, there are certain matters that I comment upon that are not discussed in the DRFEIR; these may be found at the end of this section. Paragraphs in this Attachment are numbers sequentially for each of reference.

2. Page I-2, Environmental Setting – This section states that the timing of the DRFEIR for "existing physical conditions" will be "the time when the Notice of Preparation was published—May 2000." It is proper to set certain of the "existing physical conditions" as of that date – for example, we are unaware of any significant changes in the location of the Los Angeles River during this period that would impact the DRFEIR. However, there are many obvious changes in important factual matters since May 2000, many of which have long been known – such as planned changes, such as the opening of the Pasadena Gold Line. There are many other very significant events that have occurred since then that impact other matters vital to this CEQA process, and these matter cannot be ignored because MTA chooses to attempt to "lock in place" the world as of May 2000. Such changes are discussed in detail in the following comments.

3. What does MTA consider as "existing physical conditions" that it does not have to consider changes to? Specifically, does MTA not intend to consider the impacts of major policy initiatives, including those of MTA itself, in this DRFEIR?

4. Page I-2, Public Comment – This section states, "... MTA hereby requests that reviewers limit their comments to this Draft Revised FEIR because MTA already circulated the Final EIR and received comments on it." Since the clear intent of the Second Appellate Order is to compel MTA to perform an evaluation of Rapid Bus Alternative(s), obviously including a comparison to the MTA-favored Orange Line Alternative, it is impossible to properly evaluate the Rapid Bus Alternatives without commenting on the Orange Line Alternative and, as discussed in the proceeding comment, incorporating significant new matters that were not known when the original CEQA process was completed, or which MTA improperly hid from public scrutiny.

5. How does MTA expect to respond to comparisons between the Rapid Bus Alternatives in the DRFEIR and the Orange Line and other Alternatives from the FEIR where there is clear evidence that the Orange Line performance has been significantly impacted by matters not comprehended in the FEIR, such as significant events that were not known and could not be known when the FEIR was adopted?

6. Page RS-6, RS-1.4 Three Rapid Bus Alternatives – "Rapid Bus decreases end-to-end travel time by limiting stops and implementing signal priority at intersections." While these two

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Comment 20-36

See Response to Comment Nos. 14-12 and 14-13 for a discussion on MTA's reasoning on determining the environmental setting.

Comment 20-37

See Response to Comment Nos. 14-12 and 14-13 for a discussion on MTA's reasoning on determining the environmental setting. Further, MTA prepared a Revised FEIR, which only revises portions of the FEIR to consider the additional RB Alternatives. The Court of Appeal found that the FEIR was otherwise adequate. (Revised FEIR, p. I-1.) Moreover, the Court of Appeal only required MTA to consider the alternative of multiple Rapid Bus routes as an alternative. To do this, the RB Alternatives had to be compared to the already completed analysis on the Project. Moreover, changing the environmental setting to the year 2004 would require MTA to essentially throw out the FEIR and start from scratch, which was not required by the Court of Appeal.

Comment 20-38

See Response 4-13 and 20-37 for a discussion on MTA's reasoning for limiting comments to the environmental issues raised in the Revised FEIR.

Comment 20-39

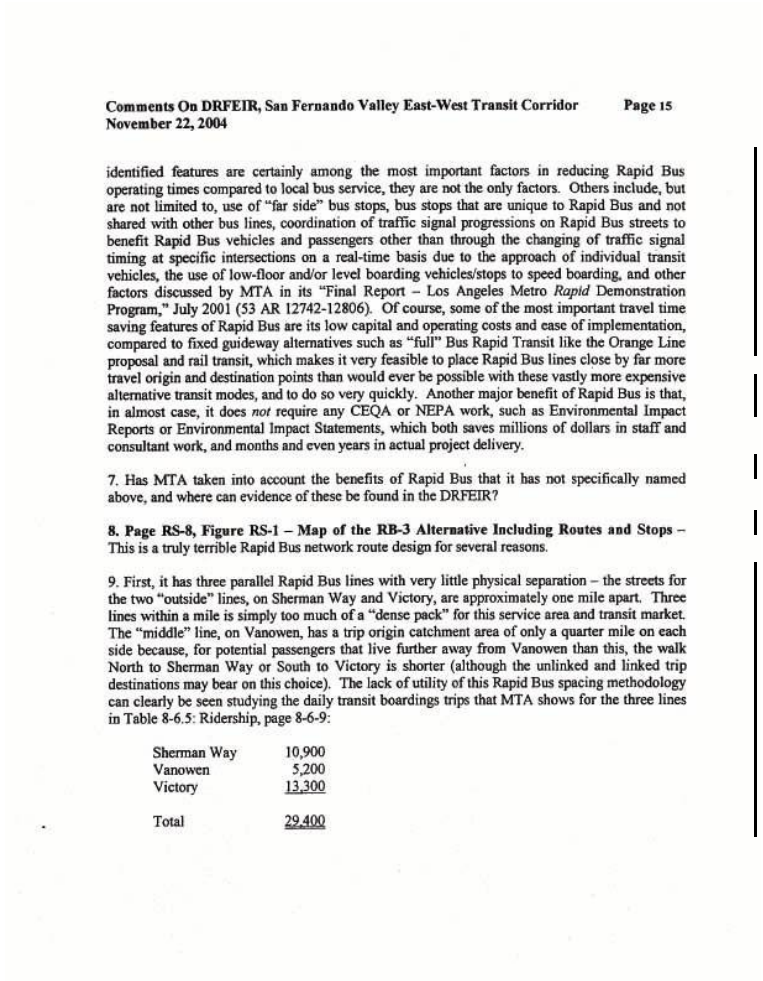
The Court of Appeal required that MTA consider multiple Rapid Bus routes as an alternative to the Project. Otherwise, the Court of Appeal did not find anything wrong with the FEIR's analysis of the Orange Line. Moreover, the State Clearing House had no objection to MTA limiting comments to the Revised FEIR. Accordingly, MTA was not required to reanalyze the Orange Line or consider any further comments upon it. In addition, the comment does not specify any specific events that were not known such that they can be specifically responded to in this response.

The commenter asserts the MTA hid matters from public scrutiny in the Final EIR. However, the Court of Appeal rejected COST's repeated assertions that MTA improperly hid information from public scrutiny.

Comment 20-40

In terms of analysis, the benefits described for Rapid Bus generally translate to improved travel times. The MTA's assumption of a 20% improvement in travel time is based on travel time improvements that occurred with the introduction of rapid bus on Ventura Boulevard, which provides a reasonable indicator of expected travel time improvement. It is unclear which purported "Significant Events that were not known and could not be known when the FEIR was adopted" that the commenter claims to exist. MTA cannot further respond with further detail to this comment.

The Revised Final EIR in Chapter 8-6 provides the performance measures for the Project so that a reviewer could make comments on the Project's performance in relation to the RB Alternatives.



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identified features are certainly among the most important factors in reducing Rapid Bus operating times compared to local bus service, they are not the only factors. Others include, but are not limited to, use of "far side" bus stops, bus stops that are unique to Rapid Bus and not shared with other bus lines, coordination of traffic signal progressions on Rapid Bus streets to benefit Rapid Bus vehicles and passengers other than through the changing of traffic signal timing at specific intersections on a real-time basis due to the approach of individual transit vehicles, the use of low-floor and/or level boarding vehicles/stops to speed boarding, and other factors discussed by MTA in its "Final Report – Los Angeles Metro *Rapid* Demonstration Program," July 2001 (53 AR 12742-12806). Of course, some of the most important travel time saving features of Rapid Bus are its low capital and operating costs and ease of implementation, compared to fixed guideway alternatives such as "full" Bus Rapid Transit like the Orange Line proposal and rail transit, which makes it very feasible to place Rapid Bus lines close by far more travel origin and destination points than would ever be possible with these vastly more expensive alternative transit modes, and to do so very quickly. Another major benefit of Rapid Bus is that, in almost case, it does *not* require any CEQA or NEPA work, such as Environmental Impact Reports or Environmental Impact Statements, which both saves millions of dollars in staff and consultant work, and months and even years in actual project delivery.

7. Has MTA taken into account the benefits of Rapid Bus that it has not specifically named above, and where can evidence of these be found in the DRFEIR?

8. Page RS-8, Figure RS-1 – Map of the RB-3 Alternative Including Routes and Stops – This is a truly terrible Rapid Bus network route design for several reasons.

9. First, it has three parallel Rapid Bus lines with very little physical separation – the streets for the two "outside" lines, on Sherman Way and Victory, are approximately one mile apart. Three lines within a mile is simply too much of a "dense pack" for this service area and transit market. The "middle" line, on Vanowen, has a trip origin catchment area of only a quarter mile on each side because, for potential passengers that live further away from Vanowen than this, the walk North to Sherman Way or South to Victory is shorter (although the unlinked and linked trip destinations may bear on this choice). The lack of utility of this Rapid Bus spacing methodology can clearly be seen studying the daily transit boardings trips that MTA shows for the three lines in Table 8-6.5: Ridership, page 8-6-9:

Sherman Way	10,900
Vanowen	5,200
Victory	13,300
Total	29,400

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Comment 20-41

Please see Response 20-40. The Court of Appeal commanded MTA to consider the alternative of multi Rapid Bus routes to the Project. Accordingly, the RB Alternatives must be subjected to CEQA review to adequately compare them with the Project.

Comment 20-42

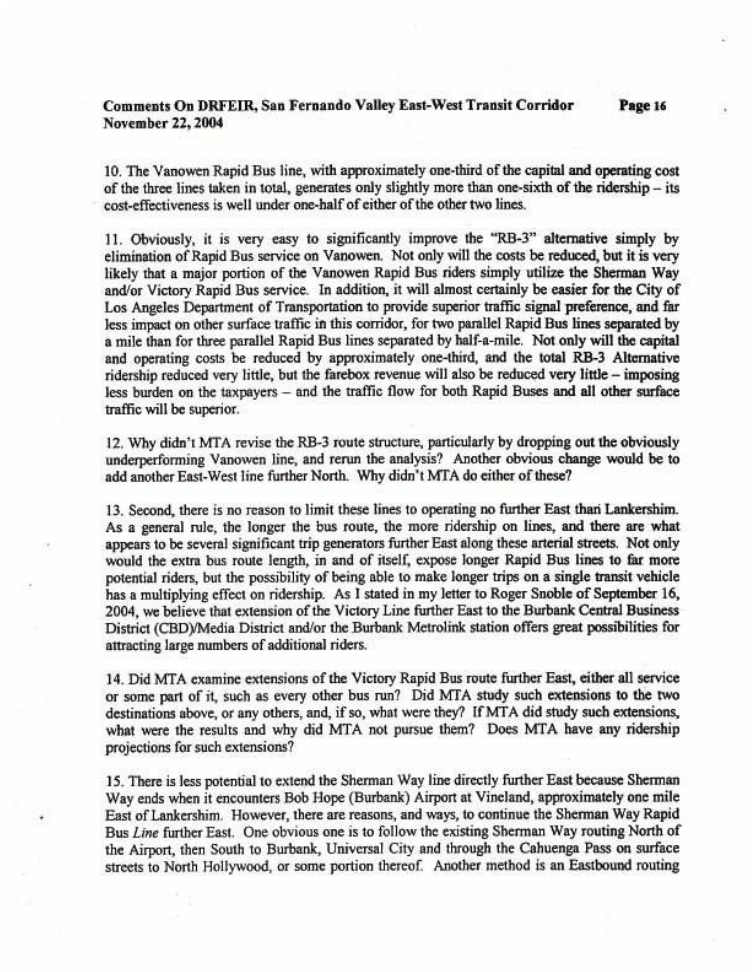
The RB Alternatives utilize the benefits of the Rapid Bus program. See pages 8-2-14 through 8-2-32 for a detailed discussion on the RB Alternatives use of these benefits. Please see Response 20-40.

Comment 20-43

See Response to Comment No. 4-2 for a discussion on MTA's reasoning for selecting the RB-3 Alternative to study in the Revised FEIR.

Comment 20-44

See response to Comment 4-2 for a discussion on MTA's reasoning for selecting the Vanowen route as part of the RB-3 Alternative. For a detailed discussion on how MTA's model considers walk distance for a rider to public transit, see the report entitled, "Service and Travel Forecasting Methodology Report," prepared by Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas in August 2002. A copy of this report is available for review at the MTA library. In addition, how walk time is further considered by the model is described in the report entitled, "Mode Choice Model Development Report," prepared by Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas dated September 2, 2002. A copy of this report is available for review in the MTA library.



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10. The Vanowen Rapid Bus line, with approximately one-third of the capital and operating cost of the three lines taken in total, generates only slightly more than one-sixth of the ridership – its cost-effectiveness is well under one-half of either of the other two lines.

11. Obviously, it is very easy to significantly improve the "RB-3" alternative simply by elimination of Rapid Bus service on Vanowen. Not only will the costs be reduced, but it is very likely that a major portion of the Vanowen Rapid Bus riders simply utilize the Sherman Way and/or Victory Rapid Bus service. In addition, it will almost certainly be easier for the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation to provide superior traffic signal preference, and far less impact on other surface traffic in this corridor, for two parallel Rapid Bus lines separated by a mile than for three parallel Rapid Bus lines separated by half-a-mile. Not only will the capital and operating costs be reduced by approximately one-third, and the total RB-3 Alternative ridership reduced very little, but the farebox revenue will also be reduced very little – imposing less burden on the taxpayers – and the traffic flow for both Rapid Buses and all other surface traffic will be superior.

12. Why didn't MTA revise the RB-3 route structure, particularly by dropping out the obviously underperforming Vanowen line, and rerun the analysis? Another obvious change would be to add another East-West line further North. Why didn't MTA do either of these?

13. Second, there is no reason to limit these lines to operating no further East than Lankershim. As a general rule, the longer the bus route, the more ridership on lines, and there are what appears to be several significant trip generators further East along these arterial streets. Not only would the extra bus route length, in and of itself, expose longer Rapid Bus lines to far more potential riders, but the possibility of being able to make longer trips on a single transit vehicle has a multiplying effect on ridership. As I stated in my letter to Roger Snoble of September 16, 2004, we believe that extension of the Victory Line further East to the Burbank Central Business District (CBD)/Media District and/or the Burbank Metrolink station offers great possibilities for attracting large numbers of additional riders.

14. Did MTA examine extensions of the Victory Rapid Bus route further East, either all service or some part of it, such as every other bus run? Did MTA study such extensions to the two destinations above, or any others, and, if so, what were they? If MTA did study such extensions, what were the results and why did MTA not pursue them? Does MTA have any ridership projections for such extensions?

15. There is less potential to extend the Sherman Way line directly further East because Sherman Way ends when it encounters Bob Hope (Burbank) Airport at Vineland, approximately one mile East of Lankershim. However, there are reasons, and ways, to continue the Sherman Way Rapid Bus *Line* further East. One obvious one is to follow the existing Sherman Way routing North of the Airport, then South to Burbank, Universal City and through the Cahuenga Pass on surface streets to North Hollywood, or some portion thereof. Another method is an Eastbound routing

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Comment 20-45

The suggestion of deleting the Vanowen route in the RB-3 Alternative is not considerable different from the RB-3 Alternative already studied in the revised FEIR. Moreover, the commenter does not provide facts that support that all the riders attributed to the Vanowen route would shift over to the remaining and farther away routes of the RB-3 Alternative. Accordingly, the cost effectiveness of this suggested variation of the RB-3 Alternative with two routes would still not be as cost effective as the single-route Orange Line.

Comment 20-46

The commenter suggests deleting the Vanowen route from the RB-3 Alternative and claims that it is likely that riders of the Vanowen route would simply walk further to the other routes. Removing the Vanowen route would not increase the ridership of the RB-3 Alternative. The Vanowen route contributes 5,200 daily transit boardings to the RB-3 Alternative. Moreover, MTA's model takes into account many more factors in determining ridership, which would not forecast ridership to remain the same. A detailed discussion how MTA's model functions is contained in the "Service and Travel Forecasting Methodology Report," prepared by Parson Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas in August 2002. A copy of this report is available for review upon request. The commenter suggests that removing the Vanowen route will allow DOT to increase priority. The ridership of the RB-3 Alternative was determined using full priority as a 20% speed improvement. (FEIR, § 8-3.3.1.3, p. 8-3-15.) Thus, the modeling results did not reflect a lower speed improvement and removing the Vanowen route would not change the speed improvement assumption in MTA's model. The suggested change to the RB-3

Alternative is a minor permutation. See Response to Comment No. 6-3 for a discussion on slight variations to the RB Alternatives. See Response to Comment No. 20-6 for a discussion on the reasons why finding the optimum mix of Rapid Bus routes is infeasible. Moreover, the three RB Alternatives are a good approximation of what multiple Rapid Bus routes can achieve in the Valley. See Response to Comment No. 4-2 for MTA's reasoning for selecting the RB Alternatives.

Eliminating the Vanowen Rapid Bus route in the RB-3 Alternative would likely result in operating cost savings and potentially some drop in total ridership as persons on Vanowen would need to walk one-half mile north to Sherman Way or one-half mile south to Victory Boulevard. It is unclear that it would improve the cost-per-new transit rider comparison to the BRT alternative.

Comment 20-47

The commenter questions why MTA did not analyze his suggested variant in Comment No. 20-46. See Response to Comment No. 20-46.

Comment 20-48

MTA does not agree with this conjecture based on the most recent ridership data, which shows passenger loads on the corridor line segments east to downtown Burbank of significantly under one-half of that from Lankershim west along the key corridors (notably Victory and Vanowen which is mentioned in the letter). As well, the heavy rail Metro Red Line at North Hollywood was noted as a major destination for Victory and Vanowen Metro Rapid travelers that would have been missed with an extension east or a deviation to do both (travel to the North Hollywood station and

continue east to Burbank) would have made the Metro Rapid travel times uncompetitive with the straight-through local service on these corridors for these riders.

Comment 20-49

MTA examined the entire Valley in determining the RB Alternatives. However, MTA did not perform a model run on the suggested variations to the Victory route. For a discussion on MTA's reasoning for selecting the RB Alternatives to study in the Revised FEIR, see response to Comment 4-2. See response to comment no. 6-3 for discussion on consideration of suggested variances that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-50

The commenter suggests extending the Sherman Way route of the RB-3 Alternative eastward. The commenter suggests following an existing route, presumably Line 163. Weekday Average Boardings for the segment of Line 163 as suggested by the commenter are as follows, which gives boarding based on direction of travel:

Line 163, Eastbound, Southbound from Burbank to Hollywood, 1996

Stops	Weekday Average Boardings
Sunland & San Fern	52
San Fern & Strathern	2
San Fern & Arminta	2
San Fern & Arvilla	9
San Fern & 7511 S Frn	1
Hllywd Way & San Fern	13
Hllywd Way & Pac Gt 119	1
Hllywd Way & Winona	6
Bbk Apt Rd & Lockhd Gt4	1
Hollywd &Thornton	59
Hllywd & Way Valhalla	4
Hllywd Way & Pacific	5
Hllywd Way & Victory	47
Hllywd Way & Jeffries	6
Hllywd Way & Burbank	41
Hllywd Way & Chandler	2
Hllywd Way & Magnolia	32
Hllywd Way & Clark	7
Hllywd Way & Verdugo	41
Hllywd Way & Oak	11

Hllywd Way & Alameda	9
Hllywd Way & Riverside	39
Olive & Maple	28
Olive & Franklin	18
Barham & Lakeside	18
Barham & Coyote	6
Barham &Lk Hllywd	3
Cahuenga & Barham	6
Cahuenga & Oakcrest	19
Cahuenga & Wdrow Wils	0
Cahuenga & 2775 Cahue	4
Cahuenga & 101 Fwy	0
Odin & Fairfield	2
Cahuenga & Iris	2
Cahuenga & Cerritos	1
Cahuenga & Franklin	7
Yucca & Cahuenga	0
Yucca & Vine	0
Hollywood & Vine	5
Hollywood & Ivar	3
Hollywood & Cahuenga	7
Hollywood & Wilcox	4
Hollywood & Whitley	2
Hollywood & Las Palmas	0
Highland & Hollywood	0
Hawthorn & Highland	0

Line 163, Northbound, Westbound From Hollywood To Burbank, 1996	
Stops	**Weekday Average Boardings**
Hawthorn & Highland	0
Hollywood & Orange	59
Hollywood & Highland	119
Hollywood & Las Palmas	14
Hollywood & Whitley	12
Hollywood & Wilcox	21
Hollywood & Cahuenga	34
Hollywood & Ivar	36
Vine & Hollywood	241
Yucca & Ivar	10
Yucca & Cahuenga	9
Cahuenga & Franklin	17
Cahuenga & Cerritos	5
Cahuenga & Iris	5
Cahuenga & J A Ford	1
Cahuenga & 2700 Cahue	2
Cahuenga & Lakeridge	1
Cahuenga & Oakcrest	9
Cahuenga & Barham	7
Barham & Lakehllywd	3
Barham & Coyote	14
Barham & Lakeside	6
Olive & Franklin	2
Olive & Maple	1
Hllywd Way & Riverside	31
Hllywd Way & Alameda	30
Hllywd Way & Oak	11
Hllywd Way & Verdugo	14

Hllywd Way & Clark	8
Hllywd Way & Magnolia	24
Hllywd Way &Chandler	2
Hllywd Way & Burbank	21
Hllywd Way & Jeffries	2
Hllywd Way & Victory	16
Hllywd Way & Pacific	12
Hllywd Way & Valhalla	4
Hllywd Way & Thornton	20
Hllywd Way & Winona	3
Hllywd Way & 2944 Lock	1
San Fern & Hllywd Way	5
San Fern & Opp. 7511	0
San Fern & Arvilla	18
San Fern & Armita	0
San Fern & Strathern	4
Vineland & Cantara Lo	24
Sum:	

Line 163, Eastbound Southbound from Burbank to Hollywood, 2004

Stops	Weekday Average Boardings
Vineland & Sherman	29
Vineland & Valerio	23
Vineland & Saticoy	39
Vineland & Stagg	13
Vineland & Strathern Vinstl	25
Vineland & Cantara Vincao – Eol	2

BRANFORD & Street Break DI – EOL	0
Sunland & San Fernando	47
San Fernando & Clybourn	1
San Fernando & Strathern	0
San Fernando & Arvilla	0
San Fernando & Arvilla	5
San Fernando & Lockheed	2
Minor Street & San Fernando	6
Hollywood & Tulare	2
Hollywood & Minor Street	5
Hollywood & Thornton Hlltho	52
Hollywood & Valhalla	28
Hollywood & Pacific	4
Hollywood & Victory	29
Hollywood & Jeffries	8
Hollywood & Burbank	23
Hollywood & Chandler	7
Hollywood & Magnolia Hllmag	36
Hollywood & Clark	16
Hollywood & Verdugo	30
Hollywood & Oak	11
Hollywood & Alameda	12
Hollywood & Riverside	55

Olive & Warner	15
Olive & Minor Street	33
Barham & Lakeside Plaza	12
Barham & Coyote Canyon	18
Barham & Lake Hollywood	13
Cahuenga & Barbara Cahbar	12
Cahuenga & Oakcrest	3
Cahuenga & Cahuenga	6
Cahuenga & Minor Street-1	8
Cahuenga & Off-Ramp	1
Odin & Fairfield	1
Cahuenga & Iris	4
Cahuenga & On-Ramp	0
Cahuenga & Franklin	0
Yucca & Cahuenga	6
Yucca & Vine	0
Argyle & Hollywood Holarg	7
Hollywood & Ivar	15
Hollywood & Cahuenga	4
Hollywood & Wilcox	8
Hollywood & Whitley	2
Hollywood & Las Palmas	1
Hawthorn & Highland Hawhig – Eol	0
Sum:	575

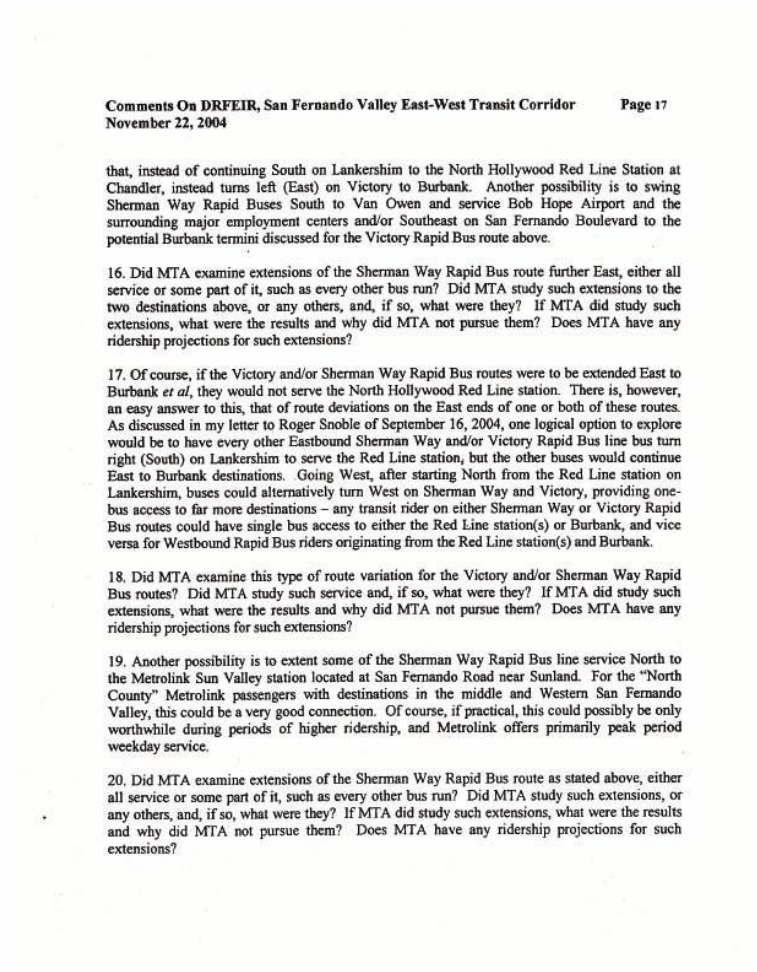
Line 163, Westbound, Northbound from Hollywood to Burbank, 2004	
Stops	**Weekday Average Boardings**
Hawthorn & Highland Hawhig	59
Hollywood & Highland	94
Hollywood & Las Palmas	17
Hollywood & Whitley	23
Hollywood & Wilcox	17
Hollywood & Cahuenga	19
Hollywood & Ivar	14
Hollywood & Argyle Holarg	282
Yucca & Ivar	4
Yucca & Cahuenga	14
Cahuenga & Franklin	16
Cahuenga & Off-Ramp	5
Cahuenga & Iris	4
Cahuenga & Pilgrimage	2
Cahuenga & Off-Ramp	1
Cahuenga & Lakeridge	0
Cahuenga & Benda	7
Cahuenga & Buddy Holly Cahbar	2
Barham & Lake Hollywood	6

Barham & Coyote Canyon	4
Barham & Lakeside Plaza	2
Olive & Minor Street	5
Olive & Warner	3
Hollywood & Riverside	31
Hollywood & Alameda	13
Hollywood & Oak	17
Hollywood & Verdugo	21
Hollywood & Clark	3
Hollywood & Magnolia Hllmag	19
Hollywood & Chandler	6
Hollywood & Burbank	16
Hollywood & Jeffries	8
Hollywood & Victory	21
Hollywood & Pacific	3
Hollywood & Valhalla	7
Hollywood & Minor Street Hllt	16
Hollywood & Minor Street	4
Hollywood & Tulare	1
San Fernando & Minor Street	8
San Fernando & Lockheed	0
San Fernando & Arvilla	12
San Fernando & Strathern	0
San Fernando & Strathern	1

Sunland & San Fernando	119
Branford & Street Break Div. 15	5
Sum:	931

This ridership data from 1996 and 2004 on the eastern portion of Line 163 is low and would not provide sufficient ridership to warrant extending the Sherman Way Rapid Bus route in the RB-3 Alternative. Moreover, part of the extension is outside the study area. The suggested extensions to the Sherman Way route are not considerably different from the RB-3 Alternative. See Response to Comment 6-3 for a discussion on variations that are not considerably different from those analyzed in the Revised FEIR.

Extending the Sherman Way Rapid Bus Route in the RB-3 Alternative to the Burbank Airport Metrolink station would add a significant amount of additional out-of-way travel circling the Burbank Airport via Vineland, San Fernando Road, Hollywood Way to get to the terminus station. It would make more sense to extend the Vanowen Rapid Bus route straight east on Vanowen to Empire Street to reach the Burbank Airport Metrolink Station. It is not clear however, that either of these alternatives would be more cost-effective than the BRT Alternative.



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that, instead of continuing South on Lankershim to the North Hollywood Red Line Station at Chandler, instead turns left (East) on Victory to Burbank. Another possibility is to swing Sherman Way Rapid Buses South to Van Owen and service Bob Hope Airport and the surrounding major employment centers and/or Southeast on San Fernando Boulevard to the potential Burbank termini discussed for the Victory Rapid Bus route above.

16. Did MTA examine extensions of the Sherman Way Rapid Bus route further East, either all service or some part of it, such as every other bus run? Did MTA study such extensions to the two destinations above, or any others, and, if so, what were they? If MTA did study such extensions, what were the results and why did MTA not pursue them? Does MTA have any ridership projections for such extensions?

17. Of course, if the Victory and/or Sherman Way Rapid Bus routes were to be extended East to Burbank *et al*, they would not serve the North Hollywood Red Line station. There is, however, an easy answer to this, that of route deviations on the East ends of one or both of these routes. As discussed in my letter to Roger Snoble of September 16, 2004, one logical option to explore would be to have every other Eastbound Sherman Way and/or Victory Rapid Bus line bus turn right (South) on Lankershim to serve the Red Line station, but the other buses would continue East to Burbank destinations. Going West, after starting North from the Red Line station on Lankershim, buses could alternatively turn West on Sherman Way and Victory, providing one-bus access to far more destinations – any transit rider on either Sherman Way or Victory Rapid Bus routes could have single bus access to either the Red Line station(s) or Burbank, and vice versa for Westbound Rapid Bus riders originating from the Red Line station(s) and Burbank.

18. Did MTA examine this type of route variation for the Victory and/or Sherman Way Rapid Bus routes? Did MTA study such service and, if so, what were they? If MTA did study such extensions, what were the results and why did MTA not pursue them? Does MTA have any ridership projections for such extensions?

19. Another possibility is to extent some of the Sherman Way Rapid Bus line service North to the Metrolink Sun Valley station located at San Fernando Road near Sunland. For the "North County" Metrolink passengers with destinations in the middle and Western San Fernando Valley, this could be a very good connection. Of course, if practical, this could possibly be only worthwhile during periods of higher ridership, and Metrolink offers primarily peak period weekday service.

20. Did MTA examine extensions of the Sherman Way Rapid Bus route as stated above, either all service or some part of it, such as every other bus run? Did MTA study such extensions, or any others, and, if so, what were they? If MTA did study such extensions, what were the results and why did MTA not pursue them? Does MTA have any ridership projections for such extensions?

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Comment 20-51

MTA examined the entire San Fernando Valley in determining the RB Alternatives. However, MTA did not perform model runs on the extensions to the Sherman Way route of the RB-3 Alternative that the commenter suggested in Comment No. 50. See Response to Comment No. 6-3 for a discussion on suggested variants that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-52

The commenter suggests another variation of the RB-3 Alternative to alternate service on both the Sherman Way and Victory routes to the North Hollywood Metro Red Line station. These suggestions are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives that MTA studied in the Revised FEIR. They are merely extensions of two routes to the east with an operational variation in routing buses on the extensions or to the North Hollywood station. See Response to Comment No. 6-3 for a discussion on suggested variants that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-53

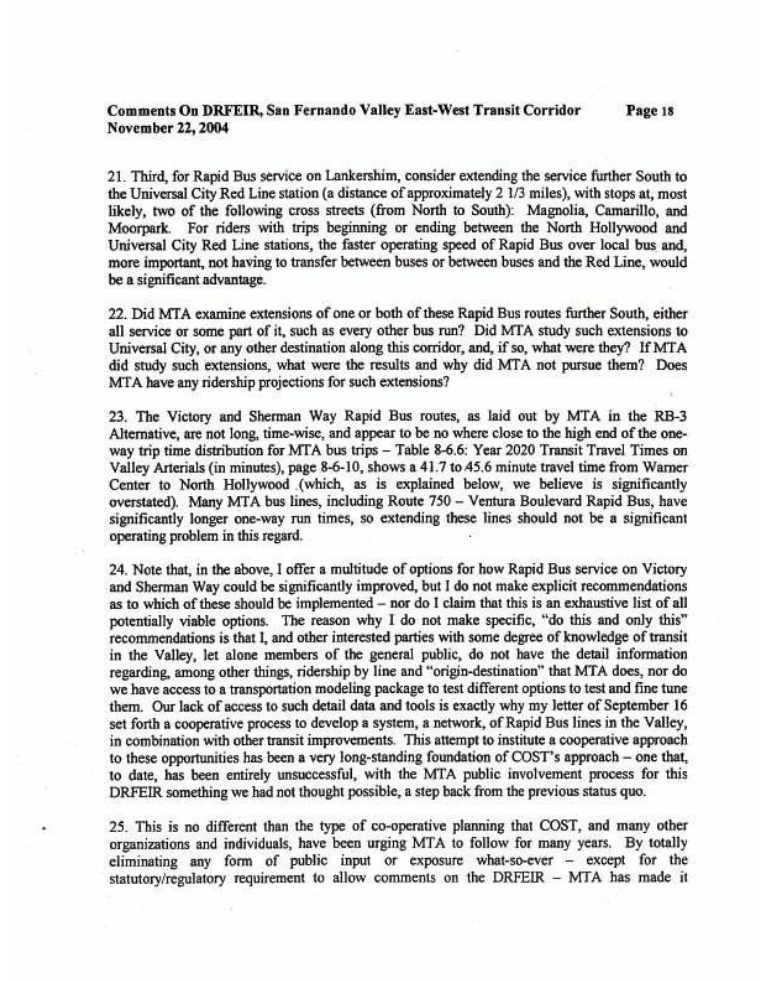
MTA examined the entire San Fernando Valley in determining the RB Alternatives. However, MTA did not perform model runs on the extensions to the Sherman Way or Victory routes of the RB-3 Alternative or the operational variation to route every other bus to the North Hollywood Station that the commenter suggested in Comment No. 52. See Response to Comment No. 6-3 for a discussion on suggested variants that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-54

The commenter suggests extending the Sherman Way route of the RB-3 Alternative to the Metrolink Sun Valley Station. This suggestion is not considerably different from the RB Alternatives that MTA studied in the Revised FEIR. See Response to Comment No. 6-3 for a discussion on suggested variants that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-55

MTA examined the entire San Fernando Valley in determining the RB Alternatives. However, MTA did not perform a model run on the extension to the Sherman Way route of the RB-3 Alternative that the commenter suggested in Comment No. 54. See Response to Comment No. 6-3 for a discussion on suggested variants that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.



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21. Third, for Rapid Bus service on Lankershim, consider extending the service further South to the Universal City Red Line station (a distance of approximately 2 1/3 miles), with stops at, most likely, two of the following cross streets (from North to South): Magnolia, Camarillo, and Moorpark. For riders with trips beginning or ending between the North Hollywood and Universal City Red Line stations, the faster operating speed of Rapid Bus over local bus and, more important, not having to transfer between buses or between buses and the Red Line, would be a significant advantage. **20-56**

22. Did MTA examine extensions of one or both of these Rapid Bus routes further South, either all service or some part of it, such as every other bus run? Did MTA study such extensions to Universal City, or any other destination along this corridor, and, if so, what were they? If MTA did study such extensions, what were the results and why did MTA not pursue them? Does MTA have any ridership projections for such extensions? **20-57** **20-58**

23. The Victory and Sherman Way Rapid Bus routes, as laid out by MTA in the RB-3 Alternative, are not long, time-wise, and appear to be no where close to the high end of the one-way trip time distribution for MTA bus trips – Table 8-6.6: Year 2020 Transit Travel Times on Valley Arterials (in minutes), page 8-6-10, shows a 41.7 to 45.6 minute travel time from Warner Center to North Hollywood (which, as is explained below, we believe is significantly overstated). Many MTA bus lines, including Route 750 – Ventura Boulevard Rapid Bus, have significantly longer one-way run times, so extending these lines should not be a significant operating problem in this regard. **20-59**

24. Note that, in the above, I offer a multitude of options for how Rapid Bus service on Victory and Sherman Way could be significantly improved, but I do not make explicit recommendations as to which of these should be implemented – nor do I claim that this is an exhaustive list of all potentially viable options. The reason why I do not make specific, "do this and only this" recommendations is that I, and other interested parties with some degree of knowledge of transit in the Valley, let alone members of the general public, do not have the detail information regarding, among other things, ridership by line and "origin-destination" that MTA does, nor do we have access to a transportation modeling package to test different options to test and fine tune them. Our lack of access to such detail data and tools is exactly why my letter of September 16 set forth a cooperative process to develop a system, a network, of Rapid Bus lines in the Valley, in combination with other transit improvements. This attempt to institute a cooperative approach to these opportunities has been a very long-standing foundation of COST's approach – one that, to date, has been entirely unsuccessful, with the MTA public involvement process for this DRFEIR something we had not thought possible, a step back from the previous status quo. **20-60**

25. This is no different than the type of co-operative planning that COST, and many other organizations and individuals, have been urging MTA to follow for many years. By totally eliminating any form of public input or exposure what-so-ever – except for the statutory/regulatory requirement to allow comments on the DRFEIR – MTA has made it **20-61**

Comment 20-56

The commenter suggests extending one of the routes of the RB-3 Alternative to Moorpark Street. This suggestion is not considerably different from the RB Alternatives that MTA studied in the Revised FEIR. See Response to Comment No. 6-3 for a discussion on suggested variants that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-57

MTA examined the entire San Fernando Valley in determining the RB Alternatives. However, MTA did not perform a model run on the suggested variation to a route of the RB-3 Alternative that the commenter suggested in Comment No. 56. See Response to Comment No. 6-3 for a discussion on suggested variants that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.

The logic of extending three Rapid Bus routes down Lankershim Boulevard to Moorpark Street is not clear, since there is no major destination at Lankershim/Moorpark that would justify this level of service, which would be running on the street directly above the Metro Red Line subway.

Comment 20-58

MTA did not model ridership projections for the suggested variation to the RB-3 Alternative made in Comment No. 25-56. See Response to Comment No. 6-3 for a discussion on suggested variants that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-59

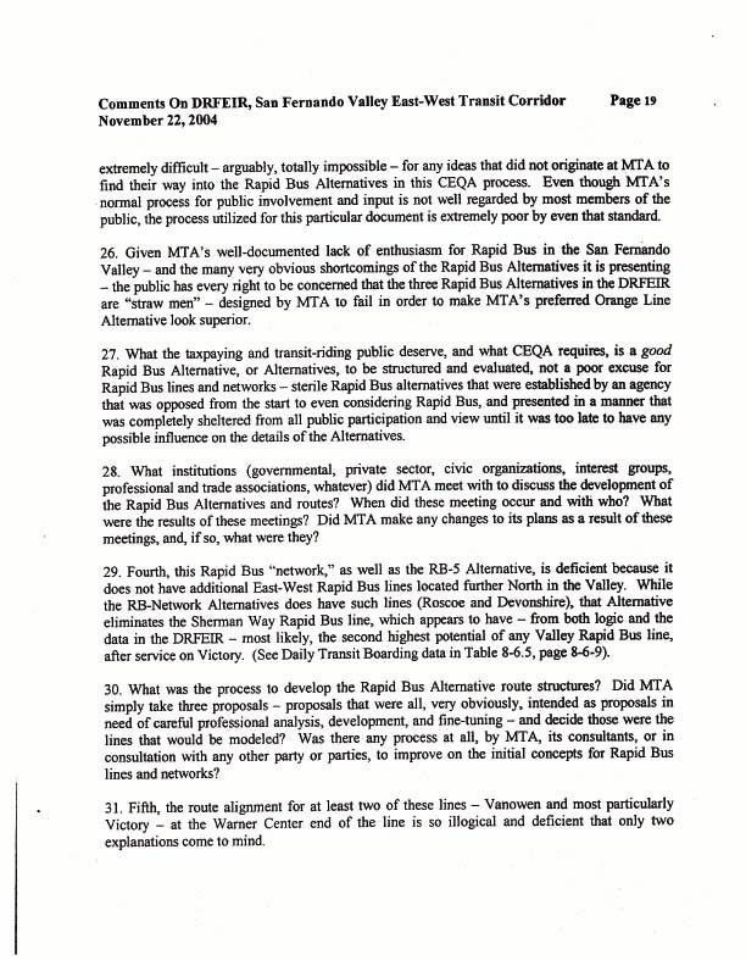
MTA chose the three RB Alternatives as a good approximation of what multiple Rapid Bus routes can do in the Valley. For a discussion on MTA's reasoning for selecting the RB Alternatives, see response to comment 4-2. Extensions of Victory and the Sherman Way routes on the RB 3 Alternatives are mere variations of the RB 3 Alternatives and are not considerably different than the RB 3 Alternatives. See response to comment no. 6-3 for discussion on consideration of suggested variances that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-60

See Response to Comment No. 4-2 for MTA's reasoning for selecting the three RB Alternatives that were analyzed in the Revised FEIR. See Response to Comment No. 6-3 for a discussion on suggested variants that are not considerably different from the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-61

See Response to Comment No. 14-10 regarding consultation with the public.



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extremely difficult – arguably, totally impossible – for any ideas that did not originate at MTA to find their way into the Rapid Bus Alternatives in this CEQA process. Even though MTA's normal process for public involvement and input is not well regarded by most members of the public, the process utilized for this particular document is extremely poor by even that standard.

20-61

26. Given MTA's well-documented lack of enthusiasm for Rapid Bus in the San Fernando Valley – and the many very obvious shortcomings of the Rapid Bus Alternatives it is presenting – the public has every right to be concerned that the three Rapid Bus Alternatives in the DRFEIR are "straw men" – designed by MTA to fail in order to make MTA's preferred Orange Line Alternative look superior.

20-62

27. What the taxpaying and transit-riding public deserve, and what CEQA requires, is a *good* Rapid Bus Alternative, or Alternatives, to be structured and evaluated, not a poor excuse for Rapid Bus lines and networks – sterile Rapid Bus alternatives that were established by an agency that was opposed from the start to even considering Rapid Bus, and presented in a manner that was completely sheltered from all public participation and view until it was too late to have any possible influence on the details of the Alternatives.

20-63

28. What institutions (governmental, private sector, civic organizations, interest groups, professional and trade associations, whatever) did MTA meet with to discuss the development of the Rapid Bus Alternatives and routes? When did these meeting occur and with who? What were the results of these meetings? Did MTA make any changes to its plans as a result of these meetings, and, if so, what were they?

20-64

29. Fourth, this Rapid Bus "network," as well as the RB-5 Alternative, is deficient because it does not have additional East-West Rapid Bus lines located further North in the Valley. While the RB-Network Alternatives does have such lines (Roscoe and Devonshire), that Alternative eliminates the Sherman Way Rapid Bus line, which appears to have – from both logic and the data in the DRFEIR – most likely, the second highest potential of any Valley Rapid Bus line, after service on Victory. (See Daily Transit Boarding data in Table 8-6.5, page 8-6-9).

20-65

30. What was the process to develop the Rapid Bus Alternative route structures? Did MTA simply take three proposals – proposals that were all, very obviously, intended as proposals in need of careful professional analysis, development, and fine-tuning – and decide those were the lines that would be modeled? Was there any process at all, by MTA, its consultants, or in consultation with any other party or parties, to improve on the initial concepts for Rapid Bus lines and networks?

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31. Fifth, the route alignment for at least two of these lines – Vanowen and most particularly Victory – at the Warner Center end of the line is so illogical and deficient that only two explanations come to mind.

20-67

Comment 20-62

See Response to Comment No. 4-2 for MTA's reasoning for selecting the three RB Alternatives that were analyzed in the Revised FEIR and found to be a good estimate of what multiple Rapid Bus routes can accomplish in the Valley.

Comment 20-63

See Response to Comment No. 4-2 for MTA's reasoning for selecting the three RB Alternatives that were analyzed in the Revised FEIR and found to be a good estimate of what multiple Rapid Bus routes can accomplish in the Valley.

Comment 20-64

See Response to Comment No. 14-5 for those consulted on developing the RB Alternatives.

Comment 20-65

See Response to Comment No. 6-1 regarding the suggestion to add northern Rapid Bus routes to the RB-3 Alternative and the RB-5 Alternative.

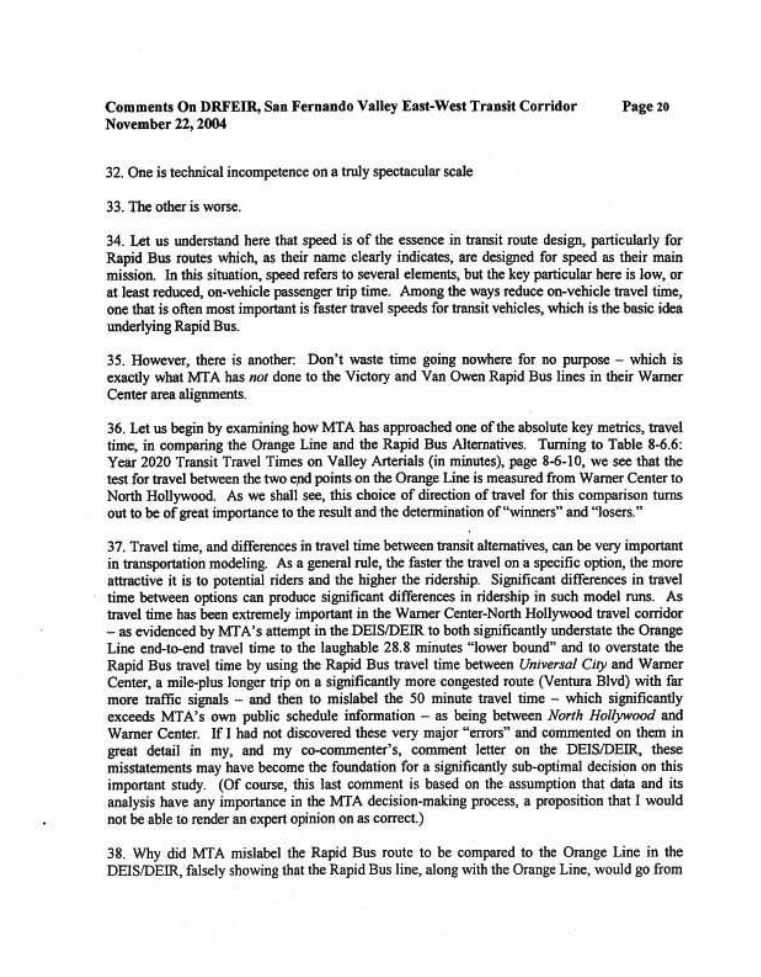
The RB Network was the network originally proposed by COST. It included a balanced network of Rapid Buses spaced approximately two-three miles apart across the San Fernando Valley. The addition of a Rapid Bus on Sherman Way would place three east-west routes with approximately one mile of each other. The addition of Rapid Buses on Sherman Way to the RB Network alternative would likely add some new transit riders, but it would also increase transit-operating costs. It is unclear that it would improve the cost-per-new transit rider.

Comment 20-66

See Response to Comment No. 4-2 for MTA's reasoning for selecting the three RB Alternatives that were analyzed in the Revised FEIR and found to be a good estimate of what multiple Rapid Bus routes can accomplish in the Valley.

Comment 20-67

The commenter's dissatisfaction is noted for the record.



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32. One is technical incompetence on a truly spectacular scale

33. The other is worse.

34. Let us understand here that speed is of the essence in transit route design, particularly for Rapid Bus routes which, as their name clearly indicates, are designed for speed as their main mission. In this situation, speed refers to several elements, but the key particular here is low, or at least reduced, on-vehicle passenger trip time. Among the ways reduce on-vehicle travel time, one that is often most important is faster travel speeds for transit vehicles, which is the basic idea underlying Rapid Bus. **20-68**

35. However, there is another: Don't waste time going nowhere for no purpose – which is exactly what MTA has *not* done to the Victory and Van Owen Rapid Bus lines in their Warner Center area alignments. **20-69**

36. Let us begin by examining how MTA has approached one of the absolute key metrics, travel time, in comparing the Orange Line and the Rapid Bus Alternatives. Turning to Table 8-6.6: Year 2020 Transit Travel Times on Valley Arterials (in minutes), page 8-6-10, we see that the test for travel between the two end points on the Orange Line is measured from Warner Center to North Hollywood. As we shall see, this choice of direction of travel for this comparison turns out to be of great importance to the result and the determination of "winners" and "losers." **20-70**

37. Travel time, and differences in travel time between transit alternatives, can be very important in transportation modeling. As a general rule, the faster the travel on a specific option, the more attractive it is to potential riders and the higher the ridership. Significant differences in travel time between options can produce significant differences in ridership in such model runs. As travel time has been extremely important in the Warner Center-North Hollywood travel corridor – as evidenced by MTA's attempt in the DEIS/DEIR to both significantly understate the Orange Line end-to-end travel time to the laughable 28.8 minutes "lower bound" and to overstate the Rapid Bus travel time by using the Rapid Bus travel time between *Universal City* and Warner Center, a mile-plus longer trip on a significantly more congested route (Ventura Blvd) with far more traffic signals – and then to mislabel the 50 minute travel time – which significantly exceeds MTA's own public schedule information – as being between *North Hollywood* and Warner Center. If I had not discovered these very major "errors" and commented on them in great detail in my, and my co-commenter's, comment letter on the DEIS/DEIR, these misstatements may have become the foundation for a significantly sub-optimal decision on this important study. (Of course, this last comment is based on the assumption that data and its analysis have any importance in the MTA decision-making process, a proposition that I would not be able to render an expert opinion on as correct.) **20-71**

38. Why did MTA mislabel the Rapid Bus route to be compared to the Orange Line in the DEIS/DEIR, falsely showing that the Rapid Bus line, along with the Orange Line, would go from **20-72**

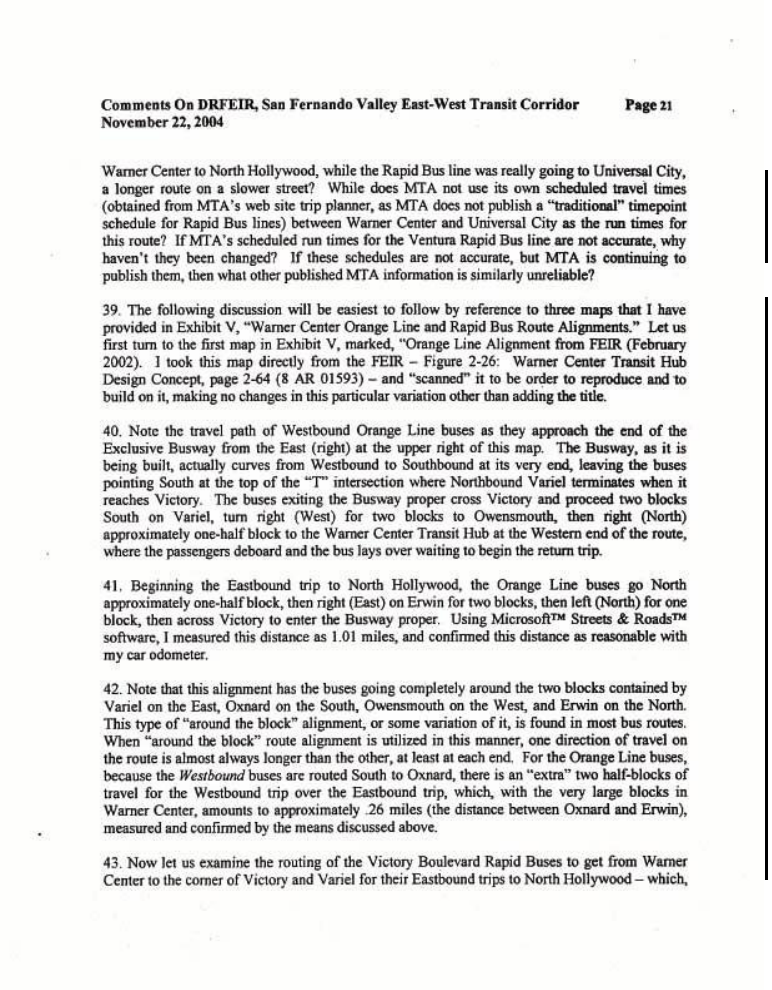
Comment 20-68
The comment suggests that speed is a key factor to Rapid Bus success. Travel time does not invoke a linear response in a rider's decision to choose public transit. See Response 24-3 for a discussion on how MTA's model forecasts a rider's choice to take public transit.

Comment 20-69
See Response to Comment No. 4-2 for MTA's reasoning for selecting the three RB Alternatives that were analyzed in the Revised FEIR and found to be a good estimate of what multiple Rapid Bus routes can accomplish in the Valley.

Comment 20-70
Please see Response 20-71.

Comment 20-71
The comment is acknowledged for the record.

Comment 20-72
Travel times as listed in Table 8-6.6 are based on the future year planning horizon of 2020, not the present year, so using existing schedules would not apply. The listed travel times are based on what was represented in the MTA's transportation demand model for the year 2020.



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Warner Center to North Hollywood, while the Rapid Bus line was really going to Universal City, a longer route on a slower street? While does MTA not use its own scheduled travel times (obtained from MTA's web site trip planner, as MTA does not publish a "traditional" timepoint schedule for Rapid Bus lines) between Warner Center and Universal City as the run times for this route? If MTA's scheduled run times for the Ventura Rapid Bus line are not accurate, why haven't they been changed? If these schedules are not accurate, but MTA is continuing to publish them, then what other published MTA information is similarly unreliable?

39. The following discussion will be easiest to follow by reference to three maps that I have provided in Exhibit V, "Warner Center Orange Line and Rapid Bus Route Alignments." Let us first turn to the first map in Exhibit V, marked, "Orange Line Alignment from FEIR (February 2002). I took this map directly from the FEIR – Figure 2-26: Warner Center Transit Hub Design Concept, page 2-64 (8 AR 01593) – and "scanned" it to be order to reproduce and to build on it, making no changes in this particular variation other than adding the title.

40. Note the travel path of Westbound Orange Line buses as they approach the end of the Exclusive Busway from the East (right) at the upper right of this map. The Busway, as it is being built, actually curves from Westbound to Southbound at its very end, leaving the buses pointing South at the top of the "T" intersection where Northbound Variel terminates when it reaches Victory. The buses exiting the Busway proper cross Victory and proceed two blocks South on Variel, turn right (West) for two blocks to Owensmouth, then right (North) approximately one-half block to the Warner Center Transit Hub at the Western end of the route, where the passengers deboard and the bus lays over waiting to begin the return trip.

41. Beginning the Eastbound trip to North Hollywood, the Orange Line buses go North approximately one-half block, then right (East) on Erwin for two blocks, then left (North) for one block, then across Victory to enter the Busway proper. Using Microsoft™ Streets & Roads™ software, I measured this distance as 1.01 miles, and confirmed this distance as reasonable with my car odometer.

42. Note that this alignment has the buses going completely around the two blocks contained by Variel on the East, Oxnard on the South, Owensmouth on the West, and Erwin on the North. This type of "around the block" alignment, or some variation of it, is found in most bus routes. When "around the block" route alignment is utilized in this manner, one direction of travel on the route is almost always longer than the other, at least at each end. For the Orange Line buses, because the *Westbound* buses are routed South to Oxnard, there is an "extra" two half-blocks of travel for the Westbound trip over the Eastbound trip, which, with the very large blocks in Warner Center, amounts to approximately .26 miles (the distance between Oxnard and Erwin), measured and confirmed by the means discussed above.

43. Now let us examine the routing of the Victory Boulevard Rapid Buses to get from Warner Center to the corner of Victory and Variel for their Eastbound trips to North Hollywood – which,

20-72

20-73

Comment 20-73

The commenter has spent a good deal of time describing the routes of the BRT and the Victory Rapid Bus, bus misstates the fact that the travel time comparisons in the Revised FEIR (Table 8-6.6) are for the eastbound direction on each alternative. The travel times reported are for the average of both directions, eastbound and westbound, which minimizes ant differences by direction due to one direction being slightly shorter than the other direction. The Victory Rapid Bus was taken all the way west to Topanga Canyon because that was the way it was shown on the COST proposed Enhanced TSM Network. It should also be noted that the travel demand model does not differentiate between right turns and left turns at intersections, so a bus route with more left turns is not penalized over one with only right turns in the model.

by happy coincidence, is located almost exactly at the Westbound entrance to the Orange Line busway. Because both the Orange Line and Victory Rapid Bus routes go through this intersection, the measurement of travel distance and time from the Warner Center Transit Hub to here is a very valid comparison.

44. Note that, for this "street-running" section of the trip from Warner Center to North Hollywood, there is no exclusive busway for the Orange Line, so this is, for the most part, a plain, my-bus-route-vs.-your-bus-route-running-on-the-street route alignment comparison[6].

45. Turning now to page 8-2.2 Alternatives Considered in the Revised FEIR, "Victory Boulevard," page 8-2-4, we have the Rapid Bus route alignment[7]. The relevant portion begins with the second "bullet:"

"□ Turn West on Victory Boulevard;
□ Turn south on Owensmouth Avenue; and
□ Layover at the Warner Center Transit Hub.
□ From the Warner Center Transit Hub layover stop the Rapid Bus would turn west on Oxnard Street,
□ Turn north on Topanga Canyon Boulevard;
□ Turn east on Erwin Street;
□ Turn north on Owensmouth Avenue;
□ Turn east on Victory Boulevard, ..."

46. This routing can be more easily understood by reference to the second map in Exhibit V, "Rapid Bus Alignment in DRFEIR Superimposed on Orange Line Alignment."

47. In comparing the Eastbound travel from Warner Center segments of the Orange Line and Victory Rapid Bus alignments, we note some very significant differences:

[6] There are at least two considerations other than the "non-dictated" route alignments (such as, all Orange Line buses *must* enter and exit the Busway at Victory/Variel and all Orange Line and Victory Rapid Bus buses *must* begin and end trips at the Warner Center Transit Hub) that do have a bearing on the comparative travel times: (a) the comparative speeds and rates of acceleration and braking of the 60-foot articulated CNG buses that will be utilized on the Orange Line vs. the 40/45-foot buses used on Rapid Bus lines, and (b) the difference between the Orange Line buses having to enter the busway by heading North from the intersection of Variel and Victory vs. the Rapid Buses heading West on Victory. While these do impact the time comparisons for this street-running section of the trips, the differences generated are relatively minor compared to the route alignments dictated by MTA for the Orange Line and the Victory Rapid Bus line.

[7] The Victory Rapid Bus routes for the RB-3 and the RB-Network Alternatives are identical, but for the RB-5 Alternative, the Victory Rapid Bus route does not turn right on Erwin, but continues North on Topanga Canyon to Victory, where it turns right.

20-73

A. While the Orange Line Eastbound trip begins with the bus pointed North, thereby shifting the .26 mile "round the block" extra route length to the Westbound trip; for the Victory Rapid Bus alignment, the Eastbound trip begins with the bus pointed *South*. While one direction of almost all bus routes with such "around the block" ends will almost always be longer at at least one end of the route, what is significant here is that MTA has arranged that the extra distance is added to the Orange Line on the Westbound trip – which is *not* used for time comparisons – while the extra distance is added to the Victory Rapid bus on the Eastbound trip – which *is* utilized for time comparison[8].

B. The Orange Line alignment has the Warner Center "round the block" element on the *East* side of the terminus, while the Victory Rapid Bus has it on the *West* side of the terminus. This lengthens the Victory Rapid Bus route by two blocks – two long blocks, or approximately another .44 mile (net of one other, minor adjustment)[9].

C. In setting up bus route alignments, it is almost always desirable to minimize the number of turns, where possible. Note that the Orange Line alignment from the Warner Center Transit Hub to the entrance of the Orange Line Busway proper has the absolute minimum number of turns on the street, two, one right turn and one left turn[10] (plus the relatively tight right turn from the Northbound entrance to the Busway to Eastbound on the Busway). The Victory Rapid Bus alignment, however, requires a total of five turns to get from the Warner Center Transit Hub to Eastbound on Victory, four right and one left. Turning a bus is a time-consuming process, requiring slowing, waiting for a safe interval to commence the turn, making the turn, and then

20-73

[8] For many bus routes, there are "around the block" issues at each end and, therefore, depending on how the route alignments in each direction are done, the two directions of travel could wind up approximately equivalent or one direction of travel could be double-penalized over the other. The way that the "turnback" is handled at the East, North Hollywood, end of the Orange Line Busway almost entirely eliminates the "around the block" routing (FEIR, Figure S-6a: Preferred North Hollywood Terminal Alternatives – Full BRT Alternative 2c, page S-19), therefore, having the Warner Center "around the block" extra distance assigned to the Victory Rapid Bus Eastbound direction of travel, but *not* to the Orange Line Eastbound direction of travel, is a definite disadvantage to the Victory Rapid Bus route travel time, compared to that of the Orange Line, without any offsetting factors or mitigation.

[9] This particular calculation is a slight oversimplification. Shifting the "around-the-block" movement to the West, vice the East, adds slightly more distance than the value indicated above, but Victory between Owensmouth and Conoga runs slightly North of East, thereby "cutting the corner" and reducing the overall travel distance by a small amount. The total Victory Rapid Bus route distance is 1.71 miles, compared to 1.01 miles for the Orange Line travel distance, a difference of .70 miles. .70 miles – .26 miles for the "round-the-block" movement on the Eastbound, vice Westbound, leg, leaves .44 miles, which I have attributed in full to this second effect for the instant purpose.

[10] There is one other not-illogical alignment for the Orange Line buses leaving Warner Center, North on Owensmouth to Victory, right (East) on Victory for two blocks, then left (North) into the West end of the Busway at Variel. While this is also one left and right turn on the street, it is less desirable than the alignment that MTA has chosen because it requires a left turn onto the Orange Line busway proper to be made from Victory Boulevard, a heavily-traveled street, rather than a left from Erwin onto Variel, at a much less heavily traveled intersection, which allows the Orange Line buses to proceed directly North on Variel to the busway entrance. MTA's routing from Warner Center to the Busway entrance does appear to be the superior option.

accelerating. I will add that making a "right turn on Red" in a bus is far more difficult than the same maneuver in an automobile and, as a practical matter, can be almost impossible at many heavily-traveled intersections, particularly during peak travel periods. These additional turns impose further time penalties on Rapid Bus, compared to the Orange Line buses[11].

D. Finally, the Orange Line alignment goes through four signalized intersections (Erwin/Owensmouth, Erwin/Conoga, Erwin/Variel, and Variel/Victory), while the Victory Rapid Bus alignment goes through seven (Owensmouth/Oxnard, Oxnard/AMC Place[12], Oxnard/Topanga, Topanga/Erwin, Erwin/Victory, Victory/Conoga, and Victory/Variel). There is no possible Orange Line routing from the Warner Center Transit Hub to the Orange Line Busway entrance that requires less than four signalized intersections, but there are several alignments that would reduce the Victory Rapid Bus alignment's count of signalized intersections.

49. Using the methodologies discussed above, I measured this distance as 1.71 miles – .70 miles longer than the Eastbound route of the Orange Line buses.

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[11] Interestingly, for the RB-5 version of Victory Rapid Bus (page 8-2-5), the routing has two less turns, one less right and one less left. The RB-5 alignment continues North on Topanga for a block further than the RB-3 alignment and turns directly onto Victory, a very obvious improvement that will both save time and expose buses to one fewer left turn, which can be a more dangerous, as well as time-consuming, maneuver.

However, when we review the end-to-end travel times that MTA has produced for these two different alignments, we find no differences. Table 8-6.6: Year 2020 Travel Times on Valley Arterials (in minutes), page 8-6-10, shows the identical 41.7-45.6 minute times from Warner Center – North Hollywood for the RB-5 alignment with the two fewer turns as the RB-3 and RB-Network alignments with the full five turns.

Identical travel times for these two different routings are illogical on its face. One suspects that a calculation was done for one of these two different routings and used for both – or the person, department, or firm that produced Table 8-6.6 did not realize that there were two different alignments, which is understandable, because there does not appear to be any reason for there to be two different alignments.

(MTA informed the California Supreme Court, in its *Petition for Review After a Decision by the Court of Appeal*, August 26, 2004, that, "It is estimated that it will take nine months to complete the study required by the Court of Appeal." If we take the day after the date of the Second Appellate Decision – July 19, 2004 – as the starting point for that nine month period (rather than nine months from the date of this MTA Petition), the date MTA was projecting for completion of the study would appear to be approximately April 19, 2005 – or 236 days after the date that MTA gave its nine month projection to the California Supreme Court. MTA is now scheduling taking action to approve the RFEIR on December 13, 2004, or 109 days after the day the Supreme Court time elapsed time projection was made that estimate was given. While we congratulate MTA in reducing its own projected elapsed time by well over half, we might observe that the type of obvious internal inconsistency in the routing above is the type of thing that can occur when an agency is more concerned with speed than with quality – and this is hardly the only example of such errors, omissions, and inconsistencies in this DRFEIR.)

Either the end-to-end travel times required for the RB-5 Victory route is overstated or the times required for the RB-3 and the RB-Network Victory routes are understated.

[12] AMC Place is located on Oxnard between Owensmouth and Topanga. It is perhaps better described as more of a parking lot entrance than a street, but there are traffic signals there and they do operate.

20-73

50. There is, of course, a very simple and easy way to make this a fair, head-to-head, apples-to-apples comparison – come up with a Victory Rapid Bus alignment that is designed to minimize the run time on the Eastbound trip, using the same techniques that were utilized – very effectively – to minimize the Orange Line Eastbound trip time. Let us refer to the third map in Exhibit V, "Superior Rapid Bus Alignment Superimposed on Orange Line Alignment."

51. Under this design philosophy, the Eastbound trip alignment is simplicity itself, North one-and-one-half blocks to Victory and right (East) on Victory[13]. One single right turn, four signalized intersections (the minimum possible and the same as the Orange Line alignment) and actually a shorter distance – .96 miles on this alignment, approximately .05 mile, or approximately 264 feet, shorter than the Orange Line alignment. Largely because the turns are minimized, buses on this alignment are likely to have greater successes in gaining "greens" at intersections because, as a general rule, traffic lights are often set up to be timed to be in sequence with the other traffic signals along the same alignment.

52. (Although the Westbound end of the trip to Warner Center is not shown on this map, the Victory Rapid Bus alignment would be set up, like the Orange Line alignment, to have the longer "round-the-block" alignment for the Westbound trip [in this case, most likely, West on Victory to Conoga, left {South} two blocks to Oxnard, right {West} one block to Owensmouth, and then right {North} one-half block to the Warner Center Transit Hub terminus.])

53. Had MTA utilized this alignment for Victory Rapid Bus in the three Rapid Bus Alternatives, then we would have had a fair and meaningful comparison – and a very significant time savings for the Eastbound Rapid Buses.

54. To be fair, there are many reasons why a particular bus route alignment is chosen over other options. However, if there are such reasons in this particular, I fail to note them. For example, if there was a Rapid Bus stop for the Victory Rapid Bus route on Topanga Canyon, then the Westbound jog, adding the two extra long blocks of travel, could have had a purpose. (The RB-3 Sherman Way route alignment does have a stop at the intersection of Topanga Canyon and Sherman Way and is a stop at this location, as shown on Figure RS-1 – Map of the RB-3 Alternative Including Routes and Stops, page RS-8.) However, there is no such stop shown for the Victory Rapid Bus route on any of the route maps for the three Rapid Bus alternatives shown on pages RS-8-10 (Nor is there a Rapid Bus stop on Topanga for the Vanowen Rapid Bus route). Nor does there appear to be any reason for such a bus stop, as MTA is routing most Topanga bus traffic into the Warner Center Transit Hub, where passengers can board the Victory Rapid Bus

[13] The improved Vanowen Rapid Bus line routing approaching and leaving the Warner Center Transit Hub – assuming that there was some reason to operate it, which appears extremely questionable – would be similar to that proposed for the Victory Rapid Bus line, namely, starting from Westbound on Vanowen, turn left (South) on Conoga, then right (West) on Oxnard, then right (North) on Owensmouth into the Transit Hub. The Eastbound trip would be due North on Owensmouth, then right (East) on Vanowen.

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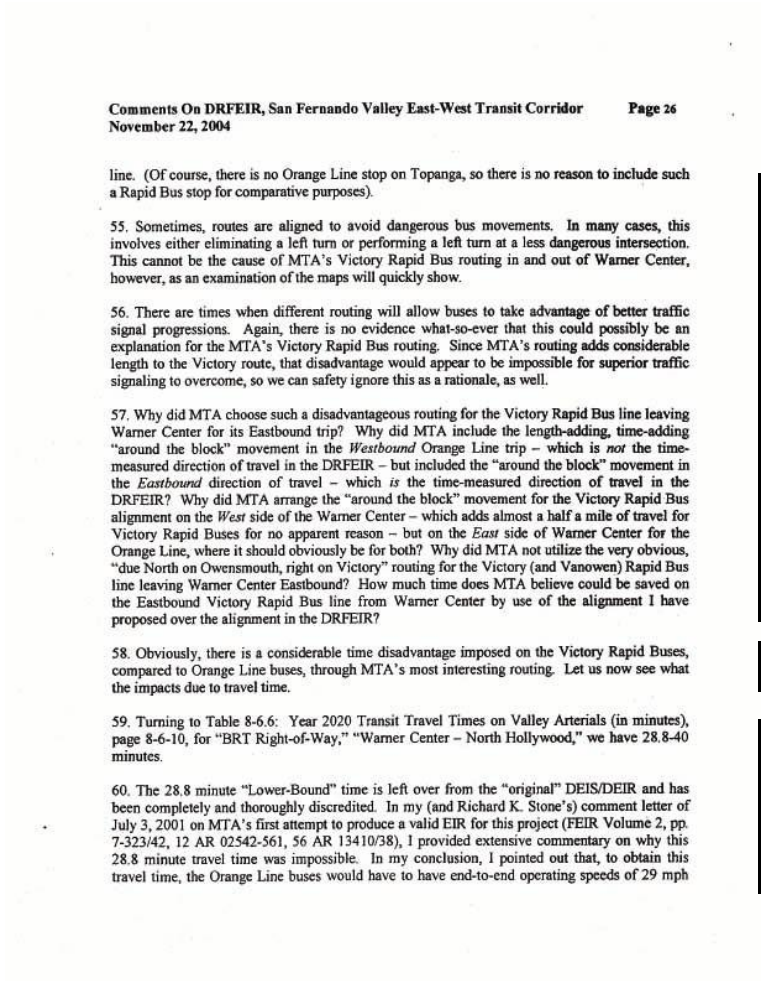

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line. (Of course, there is no Orange Line stop on Topanga, so there is no reason to include such a Rapid Bus stop for comparative purposes).

55. Sometimes, routes are aligned to avoid dangerous bus movements. In many cases, this involves either eliminating a left turn or performing a left turn at a less dangerous intersection. This cannot be the cause of MTA's Victory Rapid Bus routing in and out of Warner Center, however, as an examination of the maps will quickly show.

56. There are times when different routing will allow buses to take advantage of better traffic signal progressions. Again, there is no evidence what-so-ever that this could possibly be an explanation for the MTA's Victory Rapid Bus routing. Since MTA's routing adds considerable length to the Victory route, that disadvantage would appear to be impossible for superior traffic signaling to overcome, so we can safety ignore this as a rationale, as well.

57. Why did MTA choose such a disadvantageous routing for the Victory Rapid Bus line leaving Warner Center for its Eastbound trip? Why did MTA include the length-adding, time-adding "around the block" movement in the *Westbound* Orange Line trip – which is *not* the time-measured direction of travel in the DRFEIR – but included the "around the block" movement in the *Eastbound* direction of travel – which *is* the time-measured direction of travel in the DRFEIR? Why did MTA arrange the "around the block" movement for the Victory Rapid Bus alignment on the *West* side of the Warner Center – which adds almost a half a mile of travel for Victory Rapid Buses for no apparent reason – but on the *East* side of Warner Center for the Orange Line, where it should obviously be for both? Why did MTA not utilize the very obvious, "due North on Owensmouth, right on Victory" routing for the Victory (and Vanowen) Rapid Bus line leaving Warner Center Eastbound? How much time does MTA believe could be saved on the Eastbound Victory Rapid Bus line from Warner Center by use of the alignment I have proposed over the alignment in the DRFEIR?

58. Obviously, there is a considerable time disadvantage imposed on the Victory Rapid Buses, compared to Orange Line buses, through MTA's most interesting routing. Let us now see what the impacts due to travel time.

59. Turning to Table 8-6.6: Year 2020 Transit Travel Times on Valley Arterials (in minutes), page 8-6-10, for "BRT Right-of-Way," "Warner Center – North Hollywood," we have 28.8-40 minutes.

60. The 28.8 minute "Lower-Bound" time is left over from the "original" DEIS/DEIR and has been completely and thoroughly discredited. In my (and Richard K. Stone's) comment letter of July 3, 2001 on MTA's first attempt to produce a valid EIR for this project (FEIR Volume 2, pp. 7-323/42, 12 AR 02542-561, 56 AR 13410/38), I provided extensive commentary on why this 28.8 minute travel time was impossible. In my conclusion, I pointed out that, to obtain this travel time, the Orange Line buses would have to have end-to-end operating speeds of 29 mph

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20-75

Comment 20-74

The travel time as reflected in the MTA's transportation demand model and what is reported in Table 8-6.6 in the DRFEIR do not incorporate detailed routings at each end of the rapid bus routes.

Comment 20-75

The 28.8 minute run time calculated for the busway route is based on specific assumptions regarding distance between stations, maximum speeds given curvature and station spacing, and potential intersection delay. As stated earlier, because full transit pre-emption was the desired goal, no intersection delay between stations was counted. At stations, the LRT was assumed to have the capability of advancing or extending the traffic signal "green time" by up to 10 seconds.

While the MTA maintains that full transit pre-emption is the desired goal, as a practical matter it has also included analysis of LADOT's 40 minute run time calculation since any transit pre-emption or transit priority must be done in coordination with LADOT. The ability to achieve the 28.8 minute run time is physically possible; it is a matter of operating policy which potentially adds significant delays to this travel time. While the LADOT does not believe full transit pre-emption is achievable, future conditions may allow a re-visiting of the amount of priority/pre-emption that can be granted. Leaving in the analysis based on 28.8 minutes ensures the environmental impacts associated with the project's optimal speed are identified and addressed.

and the Red Line trains had 30 mph operating speeds from North Hollywood to Union Station, and then asked – and answered:

> "Here is the main question: How can this BRT alignment, which has a slower top speed than the Red Line; has four sections, totaling almost 30% of the total length, that have significant speed restrictions; has slower acceleration (approximately 2.0 mph/second vs. 3.0 for initial acceleration); and has several signalized intersections along the alignment, possibly achieve an average all-in operating speed almost as fast as the Red Line's?
>
> There is a simple answer – it can't. It is simply impossible. Not even close."

61. In its response to this comment (FEIR Volume 2, pages 7-332/3), MTA, while ignoring the impact of some my detailed comments[14], and even while continuing to maintain the laughable fiction, "This (28.8 minute) runtime is considered to be the lower bound of reasonable runtimes for environmental clearance purposes, and the BRT could potentially operating with this runtime," MTA did add the 40-minute "upper bound" end-to-end run time in the FEIR. (While I would like to claim credit for forcing this concession, it is clear that it was the actions of the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation in forcing MTA to understand that its traffic signal priority assumptions in the 28.8 minute run time model were fatally flawed, that led to the 40-minute "upper bound" run time.)

62. Why does MTA continue to pretend that the 28.8 minute end-to-end Orange Line travel time, making all station stops as this route was discussed in the FEIR, could actually somehow happen?

63. MTA appears determined to maintain that this is some possibility that the 28.8 minute end-to-end run time is not impossible, at least for purposes of CEQA. However, in the "real world," not even MTA believes it is current possible, as can be easily determined from the following excerpts from MTA press releases, showing the progression of Orange Line travel time estimates from the original DEIS/DEIR to the FEIR to the present day (these may be found in Exhibit VI, "MTA Press Releases"):

A. "MTA Releases Draft Environmental Report on Proposed San Fernando Valley East-West Busway," May 14, 2001 – "The travel time between North Hollywood and the

[14] For example, where I pointed out that there were speed restrictions on the Orange Line Busway – such as 35 mph on Chandler (which MTA had agreed to in an attempt to overcome one of the local residents' objections to BRT on the Chandler alignment), which MTA admits in its response was ignored in the 28.8 minute runtime estimate. Referencing the source of the 28.8 minute run time projections – Manuel Padron & Associates, Figure A-1: Run Time Estimate for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – 28.8 Minute, Lower Bound, 15 AR 03265 – we see "Max. Speed" of 50 and 55 on the Orange Line Guideway on Chandler East and West of Laurel Canyon, respectively. (Exhibit VII)

20-75

planned Warner Center Transit Hub would be approximately 30 minutes, including stops."

B. "MTA Board Approves Busway for San Fernando Valley East-West Corridor[15]," July 26, 2001 – "The dedicated right-of-way will produce a travel time between North Hollywood and the planned Warner Center Transit Hub of approximately 30 minutes, including stops."

C. "MTA Issues Final Environmental Report on San Fernando Valley East-West Busway," February 12, 2002 – "'When the busway opens, a commuter will be able to make the trip from the future Warner Center Transit Hub to North Hollywood in approximately 35 to 40 minutes, including stops,' said MTA Board Chair John Fasana."

D. "MTA Certifies Final Environmental Report on San Fernando Valley East-West Busway; Final Design to Get Underway," February 28, 2002 – "A trip from the Warner Center Transit Hub to North Hollywood will take approximately 35 to 40 minutes, including stops, ..."

E. "*MTA Busway Coming to the Valley* – MTA Kicks off Metro Rapid Transitway Project in San Fernando Valley," January 17, 2003 – Trips made between Warner Center and the North Hollywood Metro Red Line will now take about 35-40 minutes using Metro Rapid Buses, ..."

F. "Metro Raises Technology Bar with Super-Sized *Metro Line*; Bus Prototype Unveiled Today in North Hollywood," October 15, 2004 – "The Metro Orange Line will whisk passengers in approximately 40 minutes from Warner Center in the West San Fernando Valley to the line's future North Hollywood Station, ..."

64. Note the progression of end-to-end travel times – from "approximately 30 minutes" when the DEIS/DEIR was released and when the Locally Preferred Alternative was approved to "approximately 35 to 40 minutes" when the FEIR was approved to, most recently, "approximately 40 minutes" – the last *without* even the mention of the 35 minutes.

65. Why does MTA continue to discuss the clearly impossible 28.8 minute travel time in the DRFEIR, but show a far more realistic 35 to 40 minutes in its press releases? Why was the latest time estimate in the October 15 a straight 40 minutes, with no mention of 35 minutes? What changed that caused the people who do MTA's press releases to drop the 35 minutes?

66. I will, one last time, quote myself and my-co-commenter from my comment letter on the DEIS/DEIR – "In our opinion, buses on this BRT alignment will be doing *very* well if they achieve North Hollywood to Warner Center average operating speeds of the Blue Line – 24 mph.

[15] The action taken was the Board's adoption of what we now know as the Orange Line as the Locally Preferred Alternative, *not* the approval of the FEIR and the project, which was the subject of the February 28, 2002 press release following.

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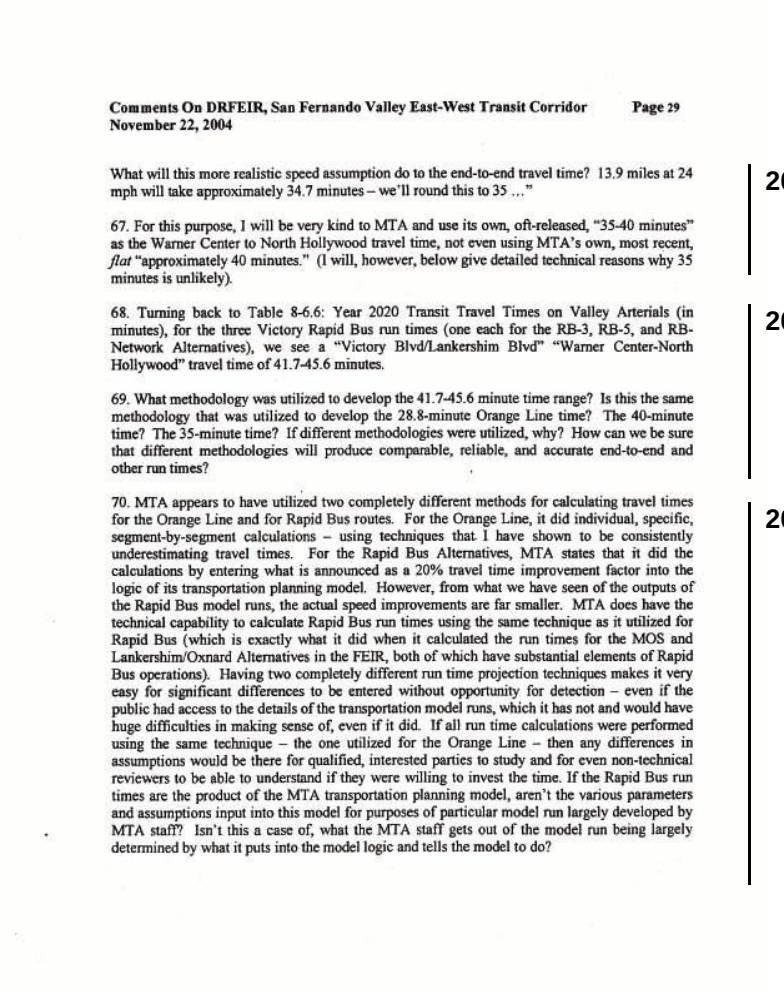

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What will this more realistic speed assumption do to the end-to-end travel time? 13.9 miles at 24 mph will take approximately 34.7 minutes – we'll round this to 35 …"

67. For this purpose, I will be very kind to MTA and use its own, oft-released, "35-40 minutes" as the Warner Center to North Hollywood travel time, not even using MTA's own, most recent, *flat* "approximately 40 minutes." (I will, however, below give detailed technical reasons why 35 minutes is unlikely).

68. Turning back to Table 8-6.6: Year 2020 Transit Travel Times on Valley Arterials (in minutes), for the three Victory Rapid Bus run times (one each for the RB-3, RB-5, and RB-Network Alternatives), we see a "Victory Blvd/Lankershim Blvd" "Warner Center-North Hollywood" travel time of 41.7-45.6 minutes.

69. What methodology was utilized to develop the 41.7-45.6 minute time range? Is this the same methodology that was utilized to develop the 28.8-minute Orange Line time? The 40-minute time? The 35-minute time? If different methodologies were utilized, why? How can we be sure that different methodologies will produce comparable, reliable, and accurate end-to-end and other run times?

70. MTA appears to have utilized two completely different methods for calculating travel times for the Orange Line and for Rapid Bus routes. For the Orange Line, it did individual, specific, segment-by-segment calculations – using techniques that I have shown to be consistently underestimating travel times. For the Rapid Bus Alternatives, MTA states that it did the calculations by entering what is announced as a 20% travel time improvement factor into the logic of its transportation planning model. However, from what we have seen of the outputs of the Rapid Bus model runs, the actual speed improvements are far smaller. MTA does have the technical capability to calculate Rapid Bus run times using the same technique as it utilized for Rapid Bus (which is exactly what it did when it calculated the run times for the MOS and Lankershim/Oxnard Alternatives in the FEIR, both of which have substantial elements of Rapid Bus operations). Having two completely different run time projection techniques makes it very easy for significant differences to be entered without opportunity for detection – even if the public had access to the details of the transportation model runs, which it has not and would have huge difficulties in making sense of, even if it did. If all run time calculations were performed using the same technique – the one utilized for the Orange Line – then any differences in assumptions would be there for qualified, interested parties to study and for even non-technical reviewers to be able to understand if they were willing to invest the time. If the Rapid Bus run times are the product of the MTA transportation planning model, aren't the various parameters and assumptions input into this model for purposes of particular model run largely developed by MTA staff? Isn't this a case of, what the MTA staff gets out of the model run being largely determined by what it puts into the model logic and tells the model to do?

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As already discussed, the lower-bound BRT run time was based on a run time model which accounts for station spacing, curvature, maximum speeds, potential intersection delay, and dwell time at stations in order to estimate a run time. The upper-bound BRT run time was provided by LADOT.

Lower-bound EIR Rapid Bus run times listed in Table 8-6.6 are based on the MTA's transportation demand model, which automatically accounts for run time of a route as a function of future traffic speeds. These are the travel times that are used as a basis for estimating ridership. The addition of upper-bound rapid bus run times are to acknowledge that there may not be the ability to grant the expected transit priority on so many arterials. The upper bound rapid bus run times represent what might be expected if there is about half the assumed transit priority. Once again, this range is provided as an acknowledgement that the amount of transit priority is variable. Transit priority is watered down as more parallel streets request it, since it becomes more difficult to maintain cross-traffic flows.

Comment 20-77

Calculating run times using different methodologies was necessary because of the different operating environments of rapid buses operating in mixed traffic, versus buses in an exclusive busway. Computing the run time for RB alternatives as if the RB lines were operating on exclusive right-of-ways, as suggested by the Commenter, would violate the common modeling practice and would not be acceptable to FTA. See also response to 20-28 and 20-29.