



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONSTRUCTION OF 14-MILE PROJECT COULD BEGIN IN 2003
MTA ISSUES FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT ON SAN FERNANDO
VALLEY EAST-WEST BUSWAY**

MTA has made available to the public the final environmental report for a planned 14-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, also called a "busway," that would speed the daily travel of thousands of commuters between the Warner Center Transit Hub in the west San Fernando Valley and the Metro Red Line subway station in North Hollywood.

The Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor Project includes responses to the public comments received following last year's release of the Draft EIS/EIR, and a refined project analysis. It also includes a detailed mitigation plan, which addresses community concerns regarding impacts during construction and operation of the busway project.

If the MTA Board on Feb. 28, 2002, votes to certify the Final EIR, MTA would initiate final design of the project.

Construction of the busway could begin in Spring 2003 and the busway could begin operations in Spring 2005.

Operating as an exclusive roadway for buses, the busway would speed travel across the San Fernando Valley, providing an attractive transit alternative for thousands of commuters.

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"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. "This amounts to a tremendous savings in time when compared to on-street bus service which today takes 55 minutes for the same trip, and which will only lengthen as congestion increases."

The busway would pass through communities including North Hollywood, Valley Glen, Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks, Encino, Tarzana and Woodland Hills.

The busway also would link activity centers such as Warner Center, Pierce College, the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area, the Van Nuys Government Center, Valley College and North Hollywood.

At the busway's North Hollywood terminus, the Metro Red Line subway will provide busway patrons with convenient access to Hollywood and downtown Los Angeles.

The 26-foot wide busway would be built in the median of the Burbank/Chandler right-of-way. Typically 100 feet in width, the right-of-way was purchased by the MTA from Southern Pacific in 1991.

Thirteen busway stations would be located at major cross streets and trip destinations, spaced approximately one mile apart along the route. While service frequencies would be adjusted as demand for service grows, initially during peak travel periods, the time between bus arrivals would vary between seven minutes to 10 minutes in each direction. A passenger information system at each station would inform travelers when the next bus is due to arrive.

More...

Page 3 of 4 SFV East-West Final EIR

Stations would have amenities typically associated with light rail transit, such as covered waiting platforms, art elements, security lighting, and an appealing design. Park-n-ride lots located at various locations along the route would provide parking for approximately 3,000 vehicles, augmenting existing parking spaces at the Metro Red Line North Hollywood Station and at the Balboa Blvd. Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) park and ride lot.

The LADOT will employ technology to briefly extend the duration of green signal lights to allow the smooth flow of buses operating on the busway, while not adversely impacting north-south traffic.

The busway will be fully landscaped with groundcover, trees and other plantings, including over 4,000 new trees.

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses and other clean fuel technologies are under consideration for deployment along the busway. The MTA currently operates the largest fleet of CNG-fueled buses in North America.

The project will include a cross-valley bikeway. The MTA will initiate the bikeway design as part of the busway design and is seeking funding so the two projects could be built concurrently.

The cost of the full BRT, including the busway, stations, landscaping, environmental mitigation, park-n-ride lots, new buses, and traffic signals is estimated at approximately \$329.5 million (escalated to year of expenditure dollars).

The Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) is available for public review at:

MTA Headquarters
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles (southwest corner, Cesar Chavez & Vignes)
15th Floor, MTA Library

More...

Page 4 of 4 SFV East-West Final EIR

Canoga Park Branch Library
7621 Owensmouth Avenue
Canoga Park, CA 91356

Encino Tarzana Branch Library
18231 Ventura Blvd.
Tarzana, CA 91601

North Hollywood Library
5211 Tujunga Avenue
North Hollywood, CA 91401

Valley Plaza Library
12311 Vanowen Street
North Hollywood, CA 91401

Van Nuys Branch Library
6250 Sylmar Avenue
Van Nuys, CA 91355

West Valley Regional Library
19036 Vanowen Street
Reseda, CA 91335

Central Library
630 West Fifth Street
Los Angeles, CA 90071

Northwest San Fernando Valley Library
11371 Tampa Avenue
Northridge, CA 91326

Granada Hills Branch
North-West San Fernando Valley Library
10640 Petit Avenue
Granada Hills, CA 91344

Mid-San Fernando Valley Branch Library
16244 Nordhoff Street
North Hills, CA 91343

Northridge West Valley Branch Library
9051 Darby Avenue
Northridge, CA 91325

West San Fernando Valley Branch Library
23680 Victory Boulevard
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Persons seeking information regarding the availability of copies of the Final EIR should contact Kathleen Sanchez at MTA at (213)922-2421, or visit the MTA web site at www.mta.net under the heading of Transportation Programs/Transit Corridor Studies/San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor.

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