

# E Street Corridor sbX BRT

## San Bernardino, California

(November 2009)

Omnitrans, the transit provider in San Bernardino County and the City of San Bernardino are proposing to construct a 15.7-mile bus rapid transit (BRT) project along E Street in San Bernardino. The proposed BRT project would provide a dedicated bus travel lane through the majority of the corridor from north of California State University at San Bernardino (CSUSB), generally following Kendall Drive south to E Street, through downtown San Bernardino, the City of Loma Linda, and through the Loma Linda University Medical Center to the VA Hospital, where the project would terminate. The project includes 16 new stations, improvements to E Street to accommodate exclusive BRT operations, and 14 new low-floor buses. Service would operate at 10-minute headways during weekday peak periods and 15 minute off-peak headways. The proposed E Street corridor project is the centerpiece for redevelopment plans for downtown San Bernardino and expansion plans for the Loma Linda University and Medical Center.

### Summary Description

<b>Proposed Project:</b>	Bus Rapid Transit 15.7 Miles 16 Stations
<b>Total Capital Cost (\$YOE):</b>	\$191.71 Million (Includes \$5 million in finance charges)
<b>Section 5309 Small Starts Share (\$YOE):</b>	\$75.00 Million (39.1%)
<b>Annual Operating Cost (\$YOE):</b>	\$4.41 Million
<b>Opening Year Ridership Forecast (2013):</b>	5,600 Average Weekday Boardings 1,002 Daily New Riders
<b>FY 2011 Local Financial Commitment Rating:</b>	<b>Medium-High</b>
<b>FY 2011 Project Justification Rating:</b>	<b>Medium</b>
<b>FY 2011 Overall Project Rating:</b>	<b>Medium-High</b>

### Project Development History and Current Status

The City of San Bernardino began an alternatives analysis in early 2004 to evaluate transportation options in a corridor served by Omnitrans Route 2, the highest performing bus route in the Omnitrans system. Omnitrans considered a variety of transit alternatives to serve the corridor from the CSUSB campus, through downtown San Bernardino, and south to Loma Linda. In December 2005, local stakeholders selected an exclusive guideway BRT as the locally preferred alternative (LPA). During 2005 and 2006, Omnitrans worked with local stakeholders to identify funding sources and station locations. FTA approved the project into project development in December 2007. FTA issued a Finding of No Significant Impact on September 4, 2009.

### Significant Changes Since FY 2010 Evaluation (November 2008)

The capital cost estimate increased from \$163.39 million to \$191.71 million to reflect a higher level of design, increased contingency, inflation, and finance costs.

**Project Justification Rating: Medium**

The project justification rating is based on the weighted average of the ratings assigned to each of the following criteria: the cost-effectiveness criterion is weighted 33 percent; the transit supportive land use criterion is weighted 33 percent and the economic development criterion is weighted 33 percent.

***Cost Effectiveness Rating: High***

The rating is based on the level of travel-time benefits (1,800 average weekday hours) relative to the project’s annualized capital and operating costs based on a comparison to a baseline alternative.

<b>Cost Effectiveness</b>	
	<b><u>New Start vs. Baseline</u></b>
Cost per Hour of Transportation System User Benefit	\$ 12.24
Incremental Cost per Incremental Trip	\$ 29.87

***Transit-Supportive Land Use Rating: Medium-Low***

The land use rating reflects the population and employment densities within ½-mile of proposed station areas.

- Total employment served by all stations along the BRT project is 37,000, including the small downtowns of San Bernardino and Loma Linda which contain approximately 8,500 and 2,300 jobs respectively. The average population density for all station areas is 4,400 persons per square mile. Parking is generally available for free or at low cost.
- The proposed project corridor traverses the most intensively developed portions of the Cities of San Bernardino and Loma Linda and the San Bernardino Valley. Land uses and densities are varied along the corridor, and include two major university and medical campuses, low to medium density residential development, the historic downtown core of San Bernardino, and office complexes surrounded by surface parking. Most of the corridor is pedestrian-accessible, with sidewalks, signalized crossings, and amenities such as street trees and landscaping.

***Economic Development Rating: Medium-Low***

The economic development rating is based upon the average of the ratings assigned to the subfactors below.

***Transit-Supportive Plans and Policies: Medium-Low***

- During the E Street Corridor planning process, Omnitrans worked closely with the cities and corridor stakeholders to locate the stations at major existing activity centers or in areas with potential for transit-supportive uses. In addition, the LPA report includes transit-supportive land use guidelines as well as conceptual plans for six station areas.
- San Bernardino adopted a new general plan in 2005 which includes transit-supportive principles, including mixed-use development and incentives for pedestrian amenities and shared parking. In general, the highest densities of development are targeted towards the sbX corridor. Loma Linda has drafted a general plan with transit-supportive principles.
- Some commercial zoning categories allow mixing of uses. Both cities in the corridor are developing revised zoning regulations consistent with their general plan updates.
- The City of San Bernardino has incentives in its General Plan, such as density bonuses, to promote transit supportive uses and design. Nearly all of the proposed stations are in areas in which tax increment financing and other development incentives can be utilized. However, no examples were provided of the application of these incentives to leverage transit-supportive development.

**Performance and Impacts of Policies: Medium-Low**

- While several recent examples of transit-supportive development have occurred in the Southern California region, none were noted within the E Street Corridor. A major mixed-use redevelopment project is planned for the site of an aging mall in downtown San Bernardino and a proposed intermodal transit center will include joint development opportunities.
- A large portion of the proposed station areas (4,000 acres) lies within designated redevelopment areas. Commercial or institutional buildout of these areas could result in close to 30 million square feet and over 45,000 housing units of new development. Portions of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties are expected to add more than one million residents in the next 20 years, seeing the greatest percentage of growth in population for period 2000 to 2025 in the Southern California region. However, to date, there is little evidence that local growth is transit-supportive.

**Local Financial Commitment Rating: Medium-High**

The project's operating cost would be greater than five percent of Omnitrans' operating budget, and was therefore subject to an assessment of its local financial commitment. The local financial commitment rating is based on the weighted average of the ratings assigned to each of the following criteria: the New Starts share of project costs is weighted 20 percent; the strength of the capital finance plan is weighted 50 percent; and the strength of the operating finance plan is weighted 30 percent.

***Section 5309 New Starts Share of Total Project Costs: 39.1%******Rating: Medium-High***

<b>Locally Proposed Financial Plan</b>		
<b><u>Source of Funds</u></b>	<b><u>Total Funds (\$million)</u></b>	<b><u>Percent of Total</u></b>
<b>Federal:</b>		
Section 5309 Small Starts	\$75.00	39.1%
FHWA Flexible Funds (CMAQ)	\$11.60	6.0%
Section 5307	\$40.93	21.3%
STIP Funds*	\$5.00	2.6%
<b>State:</b>		
Proposition 1B Funds	\$10.74	5.6%
Transit Assistance Fund	\$1.30	0.6%
<b>Local:</b>		
San Bernardino County Measure 1	\$23.64	12.3%
City of San Bernardino, City of Loma Linda	\$7.11	3.7%
Local Transportation Fund	\$8.40	4.3%
Omnitrans	\$7.00	3.6%
<b>Private Sector:</b>		
Developer Contributions	\$0.98	0.1%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$191.71</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**NOTE:** The financial plan reflected in this table has been developed by the project sponsor and does not reflect a commitment by DOT or FTA. The sum of figures may differ from total as listed due to rounding.

\*STIP funds are state-administered Federal flexible funds augmented by state gas tax and other revenues. These funds are passed from the state to local transportation agencies as STIP funds, but all Federal requirements apply.

**Capital Finance Plan Rating: Medium-High**

The capital finance plan rating is based upon the weighted average of the ratings assigned to each of the subfactors listed below. The agency capital condition is weighted 25 percent, the commitment of capital funds is weighted 25 percent, and the capital cost estimate, planning assumptions and capital funding capacity subfactor is weighted 50 percent.

**Agency Capital Condition: Medium**

- The average age of Omnitrans' bus fleet is seven years, which is in line with the industry average.
- Omnitrans has never issued bonds.

**Commitment of Capital Funds: High**

- The majority of capital funding sources is committed. Sources of funds include: Federal Section 5307, 5309 Bus, and proposition 1B; local transportation funds, Measure I sales tax revenues, and in-kind contributions.

**Capital Cost Estimate, Planning Assumptions and Financial Capacity: Medium-High**

- Assumptions in the capital plan are in line with historical trends. Measure I sales tax revenue assumptions are more conservative than recent historical experience.
- The project's cost estimate reflects a high level of design and includes adequate project contingency.

**Operating Finance Plan Rating: Medium-High**

The operating finance plan rating is based upon the weighted average of the ratings assigned to each of the subfactors listed below. The agency operating condition is weighted 25 percent, the commitment of operating funds is weighted 25 percent, and the operating cost estimates, planning assumptions and operating funding capacity subfactor is weighted 50 percent.

**Agency Operating Condition: Medium-High**

- Omnitrans' current ratio of assets to liabilities as reported in its most recent audited financial statement is 2.3.
- Omnitrans is in good operating condition, with positive cash balances in 2007 and 2008.

**Commitment of Operating Funds: High**

- All operating funds are committed. Sources of funds include local transportation funds, Measure I sales tax revenues, fare revenues, and advertising and investment income.

**Operating Cost Estimates, Planning Assumptions, and Financial Capacity: Medium**

- Operating cost assumptions are consistent with historical trends. Fare revenue assumptions are optimistic compared to historical experience. Other operating revenue assumptions including state and local subsidies are in line with historical trends.

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