

West Valley Connector BRT Project
San Bernardino, California
Small Starts Project Development
(Rating Assigned November 2020)

Summary Description	
Proposed Project:	Bus Rapid Transit 19.0 Miles, 21 Stations
Total Capital Cost (\$YOE):	\$262.67 Million <small>(Includes \$1.2 million in finance charges)</small>
Section 5309 CIG Share (\$YOE):	\$86.75 Million (33.0%)
Annual Operating Cost (opening year 2024):	\$5.86 Million
Current Year Ridership Forecast (2020):	3,900 Daily Linked Trips 984,800 Annual Linked Trips
Horizon Year Ridership Forecast (2040):	5,300 Daily Linked Trips 1,362,700 Annual Linked Trips
Overall Project Rating:	Medium-High
Project Justification Rating:	Medium
Local Financial Commitment Rating:	High

Project Description: The San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) proposes to implement the West Valley Connector Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service linking the City of Pomona in Los Angeles County with the cities of Montclair, Ontario, and Rancho Cucamonga in San Bernardino County. The alignment includes 3.5 miles of center-running, dedicated BRT lanes through central Ontario and 15.5 miles of curbside lane, mixed flow operation with transit-signal priority and queue jump lanes to bypass congestion at intersections. The project includes the purchase of 18 electric buses. The service plan includes buses operating every 10 minutes during peak periods and every 15 minutes during off-peak periods, 14 hours per day Monday through Friday.

Project Purpose: The project is intended to provide enhanced transit service in the most heavily traveled bus corridor in the area as well as connectivity with local bus services and two Metrolink commuter rail stations. The project serves activity centers including downtown Pomona, downtown Ontario, Ontario International Airport, Ontario Mills regional malls, the Terra Vista master-planned community, and the Victoria Gardens regional town center.

Project Development History, Status and Next Steps: SBCTA selected the locally preferred alternative (LPA) in January 2018. The project entered Small Starts Project Development in February 2018. The LPA was adopted into the region's fiscally constrained long-range transportation plan in November 2019. SBCTA completed an Environmental Assessment with receipt of a Finding of No Significant Impact from FTA in May 2020. SBCTA anticipates receiving a Small Starts Grant Agreement in September 2021, and the start of revenue service in summer 2024.

Locally Proposed Financial Plan

<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds (\$million)</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Federal:		
Section 5309 CIG	\$86.75	33.0%
Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program	\$20.74	7.9%
FHWA Flexible Funds (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program)	\$7.50	2.9%
State:		
State Transportation Improvement Program	\$39.74	15.1%
Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program Funds	\$15.00	5.7%
Transportation Development Act – State Transit Assistance Funds	\$13.79	5.3%
Low Carbon Transit Operations Program Funds	\$4.15	1.6%
Local:		
San Bernardino County Measure I Local Sales Tax	\$58.14	22.1%
City of Ontario In-Kind Contribution	\$9.30	3.5%
Omnitrans funds	\$5.02	1.9%
Transportation Development Act – Local Transportation Funds	\$2.54	1.0%
Total:	\$262.67	100.0%

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 the figures may differ from the total as listed due to rounding.

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LAND USE RATING: Medium

The land use rating reflects population density within one-half mile of proposed stations, employment served by the line, and the share of legally binding affordability restricted (LBAR) housing in the station areas compared to the share in the surrounding counties.

- The station areas have an average population density of 6,800 people per square mile, which corresponds to a Medium rating by FTA benchmarks. An estimated 70,200 jobs would be served by the project, corresponding to a Medium rating. Most parking is free, either in surface lots or on-street, corresponding to a Low rating. The ratio of station area to county LBAR housing is 1.62, corresponding to a Medium rating.
- Development directly along the project alignment is largely commercial, with some multi-family residential. Beyond the alignment, on the north side of the corridor, multi-family residential uses transition to single-family uses; on the south side, industrial uses are more prevalent. The western end of the alignment, in downtown Pomona, is relatively pedestrian-friendly with street-fronting buildings, but the character transitions to auto-oriented strip development and then to business parks and other planned developments moving eastward.
- Sidewalk availability is generally good but with some gaps.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RATING: Medium

Transit-Supportive Plans and Policies: Medium

- *Transit-Supportive Corridor Policies:* Of the four corridor cities, three have updated their general plans to include land use designations supporting higher-density, and in many cases mixed-use development around transit; the fourth is in the process of doing so. Plans for the cities of Pomona and Ontario are the most transit-supportive, with densities in transit-oriented and mixed-use districts typically rating Medium to High on FTA benchmarks. Specific plans of varying ages and transit-supportiveness also govern development in many of the station areas.
- *Supportive Zoning Regulations Near Transit Stations:* Ontario and Rancho Cucamonga have amended their development codes to reflect the adopted general plans' increased density within the station areas; Pomona is in the process of doing so, and Montclair will do so following its general plan update. The specific plans also set transit supportive development standards in many areas of the corridor. The most transit-supportive densities are found in Pomona and Ontario, where zoning typically permits densities ranging from Medium to High on FTA benchmarks, except for industrial and some single-family residential areas where densities rate Low to Medium-Low.
- *Tools to Implement Land Use Policies:* Transit-supportive land use planning has been a consideration in the public and stakeholder outreach for the corridor planning studies, as well as public outreach to support local general and specific plans. All four cities within the project area offer density bonuses to encourage higher-density development.

Performance and Impacts of Policies: Medium

- *Performance of Land Use Policies:* The corridor still overwhelmingly features auto-oriented residential and commercial development, but Pomona, Ontario, and Ranch Cucamonga have had some successes in redeveloping certain station areas with higher density transit-oriented development.
- *Potential Impact of Transit Investment on Regional Land Use:* All station areas have surface parking, vacant land, and/or underutilized areas adaptable for development. Plans and zoning ordinances support denser development in the station areas to varying degrees. Station areas are expected to grow in population and employment until 2040 at slightly higher growth rates than forecast for the region.

Tools to Maintain or Increase Share of Affordable Housing: Medium

- Consistent with state requirements, every jurisdiction in the project area has adopted targets for affordable housing provision, and each one is in the process of updating its codes to reflect recent changes in state law to increase density bonuses for affordable housing. State financing programs also support affordable housing.
- A transit-oriented development plan for the Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink station area includes affordable townhouses and flats. Two affordable housing developments are under construction in downtown Ontario.

West Valley Connector Phase I Project

Ontario, California

