

Memorandum

To: Chair and Commissioners

Date: May 7, 2008

From: JOHN F. BARNA, JR.

File: Book Item 2.2b(1)
Action

Ref: Draft Environmental Impact Report – Canoga Transportation Corridor Project, State Route 118 in San Fernando Valley – Extension of Transit Service and Construction of a Park and Ride Lot for the Metro Orange Line Extension

ISSUE: Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Canoga Transportation Corridor Project located in the Western San Fernando Valley area within the City of Los Angeles?

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Commission makes no comment regarding the environmental impact of the proposed alternatives. However, Metro and its partners should identify the funding sources and the likelihood of securing the funds needed to complete the alternative selected.

BACKGROUND: The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is the Lead Agency for compliance with CEQA and will take action on the Final EIR for the Canoga Transportation Corridor Project. This DEIR evaluates the environmental effects that may result from the Canoga Transportation Corridor Project, also known as the extension of the Metro Orange Line (MOL).

Four alternatives are assessed in the DEIR:

- No Project Alternative
- Transportation System Management (TSM)
- Canoga On-Street Dedicated Bus Lanes
- Canoga Busway (Dedicated ROW for Bus Lanes)

According to Metro, the project is estimated to begin construction in 2009. The project is included in Metro's 2008 Draft Long Range Plan. The plan identifies Proposition 1B, TCRP and sales tax as the funding sources for the estimated project cost of \$298.5 million.

The following is attached for additional information:

- Canoga Transportation Corridor Alternatives
- Project Description

DEIR – Canoga Transportation Corridor Alternatives

Summary of Project Alternatives

Four alternatives were screened and are now being considered for the Canoga Corridor. They include a No Project Alternative, a Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative, Canoga On-Street Dedicated Bus Lanes Alternative and a Canoga Busway Alternative. For each of the build alternatives, the alternatives screening analysis included the assessment of a potential connection to a park-and-ride lot at SR-118. This connection would allow automobile commuters coming from both directions on SR-118 to park close to the freeway off-ramp and connect via transit with destinations in the entire San Fernando Valley and beyond.

Alternative 1 -- No Project

The No Project Alternative reflects the condition anticipated for the year 2030, based on SCAG's growth forecast, if no major transit improvement investments are made in the western SFV. This scenario would mean that the Metro-owned ROW or Canoga Avenue would not be used for a transit project. This alternative is used as a baseline for comparison to the TSM, On-Street Dedicated Bus Lanes, and Busway Alternatives.

Alternative 2 -- Transportation Systems Management (TSM)

A Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative is designed to identify low-cost, easily implementable improvements as an alternative to the construction of more-expensive alternatives.

The TSM Alternative entails frequency improvements on existing Metro transit routes as well as providing a new local transit line for Canoga Avenue, though not including any transit priority measures (signal priority or dedicated lanes) for this corridor.

The implementation of the TSM Alternative would allow for a reduction in headways in comparison to the No Project Alternative. The TSM Alternative improvements would be applied for the full length of each route. If all suggested improvements were made, estimated increased fleet requirements would be up to 23 vehicles (excluding spares). These improvements would need to be prioritized and could be included with any selected alternative.

The TSM Alternative also includes the addition of a new Metro Local route along Canoga Avenue. The new local route (246) would extend from the Warner Center Transit Hub to the Chatsworth Metrolink Station, utilizing Owensmouth Street, Oxnard Street, Erwin Street, Canoga Avenue, Marilla Street, Owensmouth Street, and Lassen Street. The TSM Alternative's new local service on Canoga Avenue would include a terminal at Warner Center, a stop at the existing Canoga MOL station and stops on Canoga Avenue at Sherman Way, Saticoy, Roscoe Boulevard, Parthenia (Optional), Nordhoff, Plummer, and Lassen Streets in line with closer stop spacing provided by local service.

Alternative 3 – Canoga On-Street Dedicated Bus Lanes

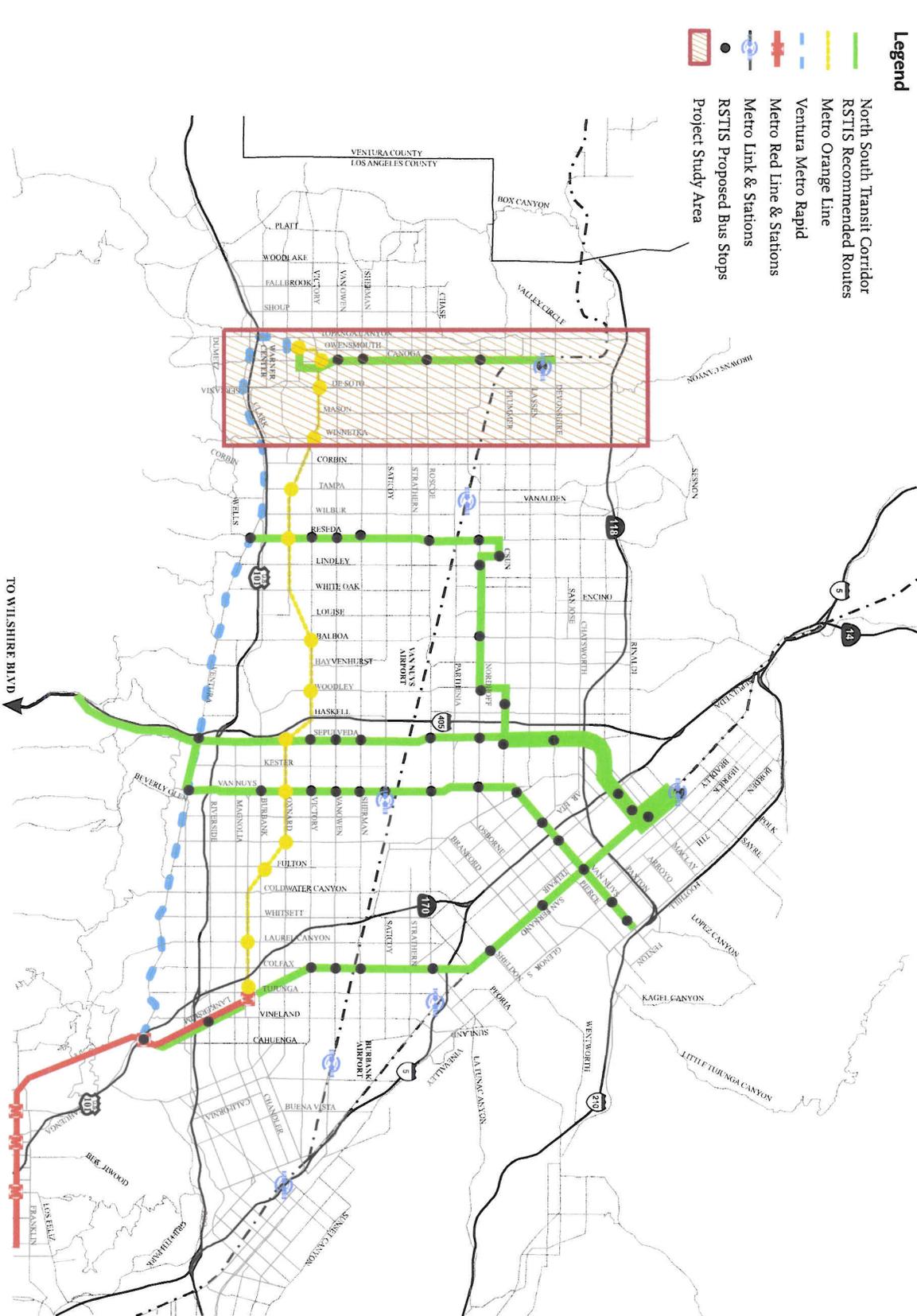
This alternative would operate similar to a Metro Rapid service, but with dedicated lanes. A southbound Bus-Only Lane along Canoga Avenue provided by prohibiting on-street parking; a northbound Bus-Only Lane would be provided by widening the street into the Metro-owned ROW that parallels Canoga Avenue. At intersections with east-west cross streets, Canoga Avenue will be further widened into the Metro ROW to provide right-turn-only lanes on Canoga Avenue, which would allow right-turning vehicles to merge across the bus-only lanes so that through buses are not blocked by right-turning vehicles at the intersections. The dedicated lanes would be paved in concrete at the stations and extend approximately 150 ft. north and south of the stations in each direction. On Canoga Avenue, north of the Canoga MOL Station, a landscaped median island would be provided as part of this alternative. This landscape median would not extend north of Plummer Street, where the roadway narrows to one lane in each direction.

Alternative 4 -- Canoga Busway

The Canoga Busway Alternative consists of a fixed busway extending BRT service north from the existing MOL Canoga Station along the Metro-owned railroad ROW paralleling Canoga Avenue, to the Chatsworth Metrolink Station. Some of the options for the northern portion of the alignment could potentially require some ROW purchases.

Where feasible, a Class I bikeway and pedestrian path would run from the Canoga MOL Station to the Chatsworth Metrolink Station and would occupy 10-17 ft of the ROW. Buses and Metro-authorized vehicles would be the only vehicles allowed within the busway. Signage would be posted listing restrictions on autos, trucks, motorcycles, bicycles and pedestrian within the busway lanes. Metro authorized emergency vehicles would only use the busway when responding to emergencies within or immediately adjacent to the ROW.

This new route would extend the existing MOL from the Canoga Station to the Chatsworth Metrolink Station. Departing the Warner Center Transit Hub, buses would utilize mixed-flow lanes on Owensmouth Avenue, Erwin Street, Canoga Avenue, and other streets if required, before entering the Canoga MOL Station. The buses would then enter the busway and travel north, crossing all east-west streets between the MOL Canoga Station and the Chatsworth Metrolink Station (except for Lassen Street on Northern Segment Option 1 discussed below), as well as the Los Angeles River and the Santa Susana Wash.



Legend

- North South Transit Corridor
- RSTIS Recommended Routes
- Metro Orange Line
- Ventura Metro Rapid
- Metro Red Line & Stations
- Metro Link & Stations
- RSTIS Proposed Bus Stops
- Project Study Area

Source: ITERIS



NOT TO SCALE



Canoga Transportation Corridor
Environmental Impact Report