

TRANSPORT INNOVATOR

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Welcome to *Transport Innovator*, a free newsletter dedicated to sharing information about innovative, cost-effective transportation solutions. We welcome comments and ideas for future stories. Please feel free to contact us – we look forward to hearing from you. Free subscriptions are available at www.gobrt.org

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Editorial

Orange Line Shows Great Promise of BRT for US Cities

The new Orange Line busway is showing that bus rapid transit can be a cost-effective transportation option for large, auto-oriented US cities. Opened in 2005, the Orange Line is a two-lane, 14-mile, dedicated busway connecting the Warner Center, a high-density employment center, to the North Hollywood terminus of the Red Line subway.

The Orange Line was originally projected to have between 5,000 and 7,500 average weekday boardings in its first year of operations and 22,000 average weekday boardings by 2020. Just eight months after opening, the Orange Line reached its goal for 2020, a truly remarkable achievement.

The Orange Line also is attracting people out of their cars. According to a recent survey, 18 percent of Orange Line riders previously drove their cars, and most of them drove alone. Nearly 80 percent of the former drivers previously used the adjacent US 101 freeway, and the California Center for Innovative Transportation at the University of California found that the Orange Line is reducing congestion on US 101.

The Orange Line cost roughly \$330 million to construct, including a network of pedestrian and bicycle paths. This was a bargain, particularly compared with other dedicated guideway options. For example, the Pasadena Gold Line light rail cost over twice as much to construct yet, three years after opening, carries fewer passengers than the Orange Line. The Gold Line runs east of the Orange Line and also connects with the Red Line.

Is the Orange Line perfect? Of course not. Orange Line vehicles have been involved in several collisions with cars at its 34 street crossings, largely because the car drivers were running red lights and illegally entering the Orange Line right-of-way. Operational changes were implemented which have reduced collisions, and Metro continues to educate the community about safely interacting with the busway.

The Orange Line appears to be a big success despite some early blemishes. It shows yet again that a BRT system operating on a dedicated right-of-way can be less expensive than light rail, carry more passengers, and attract drivers out of their cars. We need more Orange Lines.

Guest Column:

The Role of Tolls for Advancing SAFETEA-LU

New technologies make automated non-stop road pricing a practical matter, unlike past days when tolls meant getting stuck in backups waiting to throw your money out the window. Growing congestion, transportation funding shortfalls, new accounting standards, and the recent removal of most federal legal barriers to highway tolls make road pricing a compelling option in many regions. Indeed,

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and states across America, from Miami to Seattle and California to New York, are moving tolling into the mainstream of their planning and program implementation efforts. Recent federal planning requirements seem likely to spur this trend even further.

A new report from Environmental Defense, *No More Just Throwing Money Out the Window: Using Road Tolls to Cut Congestion, Protect the Environment, and Boost Access for All*, looks at recent experience, strategies, and criteria for evaluating different approaches to tolling, suggesting a new model that would integrate tolling with an array of tools, including improved transit service, to create high-performance corridors.

Some regions are using toll revenues to expand travel choices and relieve congestion, while others are focusing more on building new highways. San Diego's toll managed lanes save time for many and help pay for new express bus service. With an 80% public approval of the current project, plans are advancing for a regional transit-supportive toll lane network. In contrast, the proceeds from the \$3.8 billion lease of the Indiana Toll Road in 2006 are to be used to accelerate road construction across the state.



SR91, in California: congested lanes vs. free lanes Photo by Ed Sullivan

The 2005 federal transportation law, SAFETEA-LU, gives MPOs new opportunities and obligations to improve transportation system performance. SAFETEA-LU requires that MPOs adopt regional transportation plans that accomplish the four objectives stated in Section 134(a) of the law: maximize mobility, promote economic development, minimize fuel use and minimize air pollution. How can MPOs and states develop plans that accomplish all four of these objectives together? The answer increasingly given to this question by transportation experts is simple: Tolls.



San Diego's I-15 FasTrak HOT lanes Photo source: IBTTA

However, tolling can serve numerous purposes. Poorly designed toll projects could simply exacerbate existing problems, leading to more highways, more sprawl, more pollution and more traffic. On the other hand, well-designed toll projects in combination with other tools – such as improved bus rapid transit service, performance-based contracting, pay-as-you-drive insurance and complete streets design – have the potential to create high-performance corridors that maximize mobility and economic development while minimizing fuel use and air pollution.

Experience shows that MPOs have a tremendous opportunity to help shape what roles tolls will play in their own regions. The new SAFETEA-LU requirements are an invitation for regions struggling with traffic congestion and funding shortfalls to consider how high-performance corridor strategies – not just more toll roads – might be used to do a better job of moving people and goods around America.

For more information on high-performance corridors and access to our new report, please visit our website at:

www.environmentaldefense.org/go/highperformancenetworks.

Michael A. Replogle is transportation director of Environmental Defense and president and founder of the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy. He lives in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Transport Innovator welcomes guest columns on any topic related to sustainable transportation. Submissions should be no more than 1-2 pages in length and may include graphic materials. Although we may edit for length and style, we will obtain the author's permission to publish edited columns. Please send all guest columns to info@gobrt.org.

In the Spotlight:

Sustainable Transport for Latin American Cities

Latin America is home to many of the world's largest urban areas, including Mexico City (19 million people), Sao Paulo (18 million people), Buenos Aires (13.5 million), and Rio de Janeiro (11.6 million).

Like other developing regions, increasing motorization and inadequate fuel and emissions standards are causing substantial air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. To address these issues, we are pleased to announce the launching of our latest program, the Clean Air Institute.

The Clean Air Institute is chaired by Dr. Mario Molina, who won a Nobel Prize for his work in atmospheric chemistry. The Institute will manage the Clean Air Initiative for Latin American Cities (CAI-LAC), which was formerly managed by the World Bank.



Morning Smog in Sao Paulo, Brazil (July 2006)

CAI-LAC is a partnership between the largest cities in Latin America, international development agencies, NGO's active in regional environmental issues, and the private sector. CAI-LAC will facilitate the development of a regional framework for air quality and sustainable transportation, and will provide local governments with



Frederico Bussinger, Municipal Secretary of Transportation, Sao Paulo, addresses a plenary session of the 2006 CAI-LAC Conference.

the knowledge, tools, and access to resources they need to implement the framework.

In July 2006, the Clean Air Institute kicked off the new CAI-LAC program with a regional conference on sustainable transportation. Over 600 people registered for the three-day event, which featured presentations by government and industry leaders throughout the region.

CAI-LAC is open to anyone who shares our vision of better air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions in Latin America.

If you would like to learn more, to get involved, or to become a sponsor of the CAI-LAC program, please contact the Executive Director, Mr. Sergio Sanchez, at ssanchez@cleanairinstitute.org.

For CAI-LAC information, go to: www.cleanairnet.org/lac_en/1415/channel.html

BRT and Innovative Bus Service

Seattle Region Proposes Major New BRT and Enhanced Bus Services

King County, Washington has announced Transit Now, an ambitious proposal to expand bus service by more than 20 percent, including adding five BRT corridors and increasing bus frequencies on 35 popular routes. The King County region, which includes Washington's largest city, Seattle, is expected to add 250,000 jobs and 150,000 residents by 2016. Transit Now's goal is to attract 60,000 drivers out of their cars by 2016.

The proposed BRT service, RapidRide, will feature facility improvements to increase average bus speeds and provide faster, more reliable service. Improvements are expected to include traffic signal priority, increased distances between stops, dedicated bus lanes in some places, improved passenger stations, and real-time vehicle arrival information.

King County Metro will buy 75 hybrid-electric and 100 ultra low sulfur diesel buses using a biodiesel blend for the expanded bus services. Metro noted that it is proposing enhanced bus service because these services can be added much more quickly than building new rail lines or roads.



County Executive Ron Sims (seated) and Transit Now Supporters

Transit Now will be financed by a 0.1 percent sales tax increase, scheduled for voter consideration in November 2006. This would raise roughly \$50 million per year. King County residents currently pay a 0.8 percent sales tax to support public transportation. A survey conducted by King County Metro showed that 77 percent of the public support the proposed sales tax increase.

Additional information is available at: www.metrokc.gov/kcdot/transitnow/index.stm

BRT Best Option to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

A new analysis published in the Journal of Public Transportation found that, for most US cities, bus rapid transit is a better option than electric rail for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and fighting global warming. According to the study, most electric rail systems in the US rely extensively on power plants that burn fossil fuels, such as coal and natural gas. These plants emit large amounts of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming. Thus, electric rail systems that rely on these power plants emit a substantial amount of carbon dioxide per passenger mile.

Modern buses, however, emit lower amounts of carbon dioxide per passenger mile than fossil fuel-powered rail systems. Moreover, BRT systems are much less expensive to build, so more communities can be served with high quality transit for a given budget. This increases opportunities to shift travel from cars to transit, thus further reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

The analysis was prepared by the Breakthrough Technologies Institute, a Washington DC-based non-profit and the publisher of this newsletter. The analysis is available at: <http://www.nctr.usf.edu/jpt/journalfulltext.htm>

Mexico City's Metrobús BRT to Expand by 10 Lines

Mexico City's new mayor plans to extend the city's successful Metrobús BRT by 10 additional lines.

The first BRT corridor, which opened in June 2005, is a 12.5 mile dedicated median bus lane that operates along one of the city's main arteries, Av. Insurgentes. The line has already carried more than 50 million passengers. Transport officials also report that:

- Six percent of Metrobús passengers (about 15,000) were former drivers;
- Service frequency has increased from 60 to 84 trips per hour;
- Buses travel at a speed of 20 km/hour, an increase from the previous 16 to 17 km/hour;
- Average headways are 1.1 minutes on the northern half of the route and 3 minutes on the southern half.



Metrobús BRT Station: Courtesy Embarq

BRT systems are also being planned or considered in other areas, including Mexico State, Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Monterrey, Querétaro, and Zapopan.

Sources:

BNAmericas, 7/6/06

www.bnamericas.com/story.jsp?sector=5¬icia=359137&idioma=I

EMBARQ, 6/20/06

www.embarq.wri.org/en/Article.aspx?id=61

China's Cities Investing in BRT and Clean Fuel Buses

China is looking to BRT and clean fuel technologies to address air pollution, congestion and energy consumption problems caused in part by the skyrocketing growth in vehicle ownership – 513 percent over the last fifteen years.

A report by the National Bus Rapid Transit Institute (NBRTI) states that at least 12 Chinese cities are investing in or planning BRT systems. For example, Beijing launched its first BRT line in 2005. The 16.5-km route runs on a mostly exclusive median busway with 19 stations, and serves over 100,000 passengers per day. The city plans to open three more BRT lines by 2008 when it hosts the Olympic Games.

Hangzhou debuted a 28-km BRT route in April 2006, using a dedicated right lane, new articulated buses that accommodate 160 passengers, electronic signage and smartcards. The city plans to expand the system over the next 14 years.

Shenzhen recently announced it will start construction on a 120-km, five corridor BRT system in late 2006. The system, scheduled to open in 2010, will operate on dedicated median lanes with traffic signal priority, and will be served by 40 18-m buses with multiple doors and a 180-200 passenger capacity.

Shanghai installed 26 km of bus lanes downtown, increasing traffic speeds by 8-10%, and is planning traffic signal priority and passenger information systems. The city has also proposed a 250-km BRT system that it hopes will be ready for the 2010 World Expo. Kunming launched the first modern busway in China in 1999, and is looking to upgrade with additional BRT elements like intelligent transportation systems and passenger information.



DaimlerChrysler Fuel Cell Citaro bus

Source DaimlerChrysler

China is also introducing clean vehicle propulsion technologies. Beijing has an ambitious plan to transition 90 percent of public buses and 70 percent of taxis to environmentally-friendly fuels and technologies by the 2008 Olympics. As part of this effort, three DaimlerChrysler fuel cell buses were placed into service along an 18.2-km route in June, and additional fuel cell buses will be added to serve visitors to the Olympics. Shanghai will deploy three fuel cell buses, developed jointly by a Shanghai fuel cell company, a Chinese automaker, and Shanghai Jiaotong University, later this year.

Sources:

NBRTI China BRT report: www.nbrti.org

Business Standard, 7/10/06

www.business-standard.com/opinionanalysis/storypage.php?leftnm=lmnu5&subLeft=&autono=97227&tab=r
CRIEnglish.com, 6/20/2006
<http://en.chinabroadcast.cn/2946/2006/06/20/272@104857.htm>

China Clean Energy Program
www.chinacleanenergy.org/transportation.asp

Mercedes-Benz
www.mercedes-benz.de/content/germany/mpc/mpc_germany_website/de/home_mpc/buses/home/products/new_buses/fuel_cell_citaro/facts.html

The China Sustainable Energy Program
www.efchina.org/documents/2_WED2005-KangmingXu.pdf

XINHUA, 6/25/06
www.xinhuanet.com/english/2006-05/25/content_4597287.htm

Route 1 Outside Washington, DC to Have Dedicated Bus Lanes

Route 1, a heavily traveled federal highway spanning from Maine to Florida, was approved for a dedicated bus lane running through Alexandria and Arlington, Virginia, two suburbs of Washington, D.C.

The Alexandria City Council voted to locate the dedicated bus lanes on Jefferson Davis Highway for a bus service connecting the Braddock Road and Crystal City Metro stops. Officials said the lanes were needed to combat traffic congestion and to accommodate the future influx of people.

Arlington has already approved a similar system for its portion of the corridor. Initially the two systems will be independent of each other, but eventually they will be linked and merged into one seamless service.

Source:
Washington Post, 6/1/06
www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/30/AR2006053001700.html

Cambridge, UK Guided Bus Plan Funded

Cambridgeshire, U.K. has secured £92.5 million from the Department of Transport for its guided bus plan, with the balance of £23.7 million to be covered by developers building near the planned route. The guided bus network will be 25 miles long, operating along public roadways and a former railroad right-of-way.

Four bus operators will provide busway services. Each is required to purchase low emission, low floor vehicles that will allow level boarding from raised platform stations.



Conceptual image of Cambridge's guided busway

The buses will be fitted with small guide wheels that will be engaged while operating in the busway, but raised when the buses leave the guided route.

Construction will start in early 2007, with the guided busway expected to be operable by end of 2008.

Sources:

CEN News, 6/30/06 and 7/4/06

www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/region_wide/2006/07/04/99e833ed-ebc5-43d6-a150-d8609e01cade.lpf

www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/region_wide/2006/06/30/d19a5f55-e31f-4f9d-b5a4-0b6422618133.lpf

More information is available at the Cambridgeshire County Council website:

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/guided/

Cleveland Clinic Proposes Bus-Only Roadway

The Cleveland Clinic has developed a plan to divert cars from a 20-block section of Euclid Avenue and devote this section of roadway to Euclid Corridor BRT buses. The intent of the plan is to create an inviting, pedestrian-oriented green belt around the hospital and research facility. The clinic has hired a consultant to assess the impact of traffic diversion onto other nearby streets.

Construction of the Euclid Corridor median busway began in March 2006. BRT service is slated to start in 2008.

Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority General Manager Joe Calabrese applauded the plan, but expressed concern that the changes will require additional environmental studies and will lead to delays and increased costs for the BRT system.

Source:

<http://www.cleveland.com/news/plaindealer/index.ssf?/base/cuyahoga/1152865871318090.xml&coll=2>

Arizona Bus Agency Starts Supergrid Network

The Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) of Maricopa County, Arizona, will launch the first leg of its Supergrid bus system in July. The Supergrid will link transit routes of the various cities in the county, including Phoenix, and coordinate the previously independent bus systems. The enhancement of the regional bus system is enabled by the continuation of a half-cent sales tax originally used to fund freeway extensions. The tax will generate \$17.6 billion over the next 20 years, \$2.7 billion of which will fund 34 Supergrid routes, bus purchases, and ITS upgrades, as well as possible BRT routes.

Sources:

The Arizona Republic, 6/26/06

Rapid Bus Service Planned for the Nation's Capital

The District of Columbia is planning new rapid bus services on Georgia and Pennsylvania Avenues, two of the busiest bus corridors in the Washington region. Currently, local bus service has 22,000 and 24,000 daily boardings on Georgia and Pennsylvania Avenues, respectively. Up to one-third of buses are more than five minutes late in these corridors.

To address this problem, the District plans to supplement existing local bus service with rapid service that includes more frequent buses, increased stop spacing, and traffic signal priority. The service will operate on weekdays with 10 minute headways. It will be funded through a combination of federal (80%) and local funds.

For more information:

www.mwcog.org/uploads/committee-documents/vF1cVI420060621135142.pdf

St. Petersburg, Florida Studying BRT

St. Petersburg, Florida's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has allotted \$2.3 million for planning and engineering of a BRT system. A corridor will be developed between the city's downtown and Central Plaza, with an extension added later to the Gulf beaches. The system could be operational within three years. The cost of the project is estimated at \$20 million for the 10-mile system, with funding anticipated from the state and federal governments. The MPO decided to fund St. Petersburg's BRT project instead of a two-mile, \$60 million monorail project that was proposed in nearby Clearwater.

Sources:

Bay News 9, 3/19/06

www.baynews9.com/content/36/2006/3/19/148684.html

BRT Proposed for Colombo, Sri Lanka

The Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) proposed a BRT system for Colombo to mitigate its chronic traffic congestion. The first of its kind in Sri Lanka, the system will feature 200-passenger vehicles operating on a 6.5-km priority bus lane. Planners estimate the trip, which currently can take up to an hour, will take ten minutes. The BRT route is viewed as essential for handling a planned transfer of nearly 40,000 public servants into the area over the next three years. The project, estimated to cost Rs. 12 billion, is to be financed by JICA grants and will take three years to complete.

Source:

Colombo Page, 7/5/06

<http://www.colombopage.com/archive/July5133500SL.html>

Asian Tribune, 7/5/06

www.asiantribune.com/index.php?q=node/924

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam Studying BRT

Ho Chi Minh City officials have commissioned a BRT feasibility study. The consultant conducting the study has suggested that the first corridor be located between the An Suong crossroad and Ben Thanh Market. City officials and the World Bank have identified a second possible corridor, operating between the Mien Tay and Cho Lon bus stations.

Capital cost of the BRT is estimated at \$150-\$200 million (US). A Department of Transport and Public Works official anticipates that the BRT project could be operable within two years.

Source:
VietNamNet, 6/26/06
<http://english.vietnamnet.vn/social/2006/06/585067/>

Alternative Fuels

World's Largest Hydrogen Bus Fleet Planned

Shell Hydrogen, MAN Truck & Bus, and the Dutch public transport company, Connexxion, have formed a partnership to develop the world's largest hydrogen bus fleet, to be located in Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

Under the proposed project, Shell will construct the country's first publicly-accessible combined gas-hydrogen fueling station. MAN will provide 20 hydrogen-fueled, internal combustion engine buses for Connexxion to operate in public transit service.

The partner companies agreed to conduct economic and technical studies and to seek additional stakeholders before making an investment decision in 2007. The project could be operational by 2009.

Source:
Shell news release, 7/3/06
www.shell.com/home/Framework?siteId=hydrogen-en

RTC of Southern Nevada Purchases 50 "StreetCar" BRT Buses



Wrightbus StreetCar RTV
Source: The Wright Group

The Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (Las Vegas) recently awarded The Wright Group a contract for 50 of its Rapid Transit Vehicles, with the prospect of supplying 100 more. The StreetCar RTV model is a 62-ft. articulated bus, which can seat more than 100 passengers and operates on a diesel-hybrid drive system. The RTC stated that the combination of attractiveness, or "wow" factor, and environmentally friendly engines would appeal to their riders and was instrumental in the decision

making process. The buses are due to arrive in 2008 and will operate along two rapid transit corridors in the MAX system.

Sources:
ISE Corporation press release, June 23, 2006 www.isecorp.com/ise_news/ise_press_releases/june-23-2006-las-vegas-rtc.php

The Wright Group
www.wright-group.co.uk/streetcar/

Biodiesel and CNG Mandated for Jakarta Transit

In May 2006, Jakarta launched a pilot project requiring all Transjakarta buses and government vehicles to switch to compressed natural gas (CNG) or biodiesel fuel.

Other public transport vehicles, such as taxis and three-wheeled bajajs, will be gradually phased into the program. The program will eventually be extended to all vehicles in the city.

Jakarta's Mayor has instructed all gas stations to provide both CNG and biodiesel fuels. New fueling stations will be required to carry CNG in order to obtain a license.

Currently, only four of Jakarta's 264 gas stations offer biodiesel, which is supplied by state-owned oil and gas company, PT Pertamina. Each of the four stations will have a storage capacity of 10,000 liters and Pertamina will supply up to 40,000 liters of biodiesel per day, to be sold at a subsidized price of (US) 50 cents a gallon.



Transjakarta busway

Similarly, only eight of the city's 264 gas stations currently sell CNG, but city officials plan to refit seven PT Pertamina-owned CNG stations to meet the public transport demand. City officials are also asking the state government to subsidize the price of CNG in order to encourage drivers to convert their cars to accept the fuel.

The current clean fuel program is mandated by a 2005 Jakarta air pollution control bylaw, the first air quality law passed in Indonesia.

Sources:

The Jakarta Post, 5/19/06 and 6/12/06

Transjakarta web site:

<http://trans.jakarta.go.id/home/index.php>

Jakarta web site: <http://jakarta.tk/>

Hybrid-Electric Buses Added to San Francisco MUNI's Fleet

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (MUNI) received the first of 56 DaimlerChrysler Orion VII diesel-electric hybrid buses to be deployed in Fall 2006. The hybrids will constitute 11 percent of MUNI's fleet, making it the third largest hybrid bus fleet in the nation.

The hybrids will be replacing older diesel buses in MUNI's fleet. Although the hybrids cost about a third more than conventional diesel buses, DaimlerChrysler officials state that the expected operational savings through improved fuel economy and greater reliability will compensate for the extra cost.



San Francisco's DaimlerChrysler Orion VII diesel-electric hybrid bus

Source: DaimlerChrysler

Sources:

DaimlerChrysler press release, 6/1/06

www.daimlerchrysler.com/dccom/0-5-7145-1-617062-1-0-0-0-0-9-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0.html

Metro Magazine, 6/7/06

www.metro-magazine.com/t_newspick.cfm?id=9063531

Higher Gasoline Prices Affecting Consumer Attitudes

A recent poll by Consumer Reports magazine shows that more than one third of respondents are considering switching to a more fuel efficient vehicle, and roughly half of these people are considering a hybrid vehicle. Of the respondents considering a hybrid vehicle, 70 percent considered reducing US oil consumption important, while 64 percent considered the vehicle's environmental impact as important.

Although many respondents were considering new vehicles, relatively few were considering significant changes in behavior. Only 16 percent were considering walking or biking more, 13 percent were considering carpooling more, and just 10 percent were considering more public transport.

Source:
www.cnn.com/2006/AUTOS/05/22/cr_fuel_concerns/index.html

Transportation Policy and Trends

Future of Stockholm Congestion Charge Uncertain

Stockholm's trial with congestion charging to reduce traffic congestion ended on July 31, with the future of the charge expected to be decided by a referendum scheduled for September 17. The trial claims to have reduced traffic by 22 percent, although revenues are reported to have been less than expected. According to a local report, polls show support for the congestion charge within the city but less support in the suburbs, where many people use cars to access the city. Road signs regarding the charge are being taken down but the equipment will remain in place until the September vote.

Source:
The Local 7/31/06
<http://www.thelocal.se/article.php?ID=4476>

Transit Riders, Businesses Affected by LA Bus Lane Closure

In June 2006, Los Angeles closed one of the nation's oldest full-time bus-only lanes to add parking spaces and ease vehicle congestion. Thirteen bus lines were re-routed from the closed bus lane to new a rush hour-only bus lane and local streets.

Advocates for the change argued that eliminating the bus lane would reduce noise, encourage foot traffic, and attract more shoppers and businesses to the area. They also argued that the contra-flow bus lane was dangerous because buses were unable to drive around a disabled bus or emergency vehicle in the lane without entering oncoming traffic.

A bus riders group had argued that elimination of the lanes would be detrimental to transit users. The group also questioned the city's belief that converting a bus lane

to parking would help improve traffic flow. Since the closure, some local businesses have noted less foot traffic and expressed concern over losing bus riders as customers.

Source:

Los Angeles Times, 7/1/06

www.latimes.com/news/printedition/california/la-me-buses1jul01_1,2614923.story?coll=la-headlines-pe-california

Ealing Council Plans Closure of Two West London Bus Lanes

West London's Ealing borough council plans to close two bus lanes for 18 months to evaluate whether the dedicated lanes contribute to, rather than alleviate, traffic congestion. The closure is in response to a number of citizen complaints received by the Council.

Transport for London (TfL), the agency managing London's transport services, opposes Ealing's closures, calling it anti-commuter and anti-public transport. TfL said it must consider citywide transport implications of such a decision and opposes Ealing's piecemeal approach. London Mayor Ken Livingstone has threatened legal or financial action to restore the bus lanes.

According to the London government website, the city currently has 983 bus lanes spanning 250 kilometers, and the city plans to invest £325 million to triple the number of bus lanes by 2010. Several other London boroughs have closed sections of bus lanes where they are believed to contribute to congestion.

Sources:

BBC News, 6/29/06

news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/5128038.stm

Transport for London, 6/23/06

www.tfl.gov.uk/tfl/press-centre/press-releases/press-releases-content.asp?prID=834

This is London, 3/25/05

www.thisislondon.co.uk/news/londonnews/articles/17549312?source=Evening%20Standard

London government web site

www.london.gov.uk/mayor/transport/buses.jsp

San Diego's Transportation Plan Accused of Being Too Auto-Oriented

An independent panel of experts has criticized the San Diego Regional Transportation Plan for promoting auto-oriented development and sprawl. While the Plan is committed to transit-friendly smart growth, the panel says proposed highway improvements would undermine transit initiatives. For example, the panel said that creating reversible lanes in highway medians for HOVs would increase traffic capacity, which supports dispersed growth and makes transit less appealing. The panel also questioned the proposed trolley line from Old Town to UC San Diego, stating that the corridor may be better served by express buses.

Source:

San Diego Union-Tribune, June 19, 2006

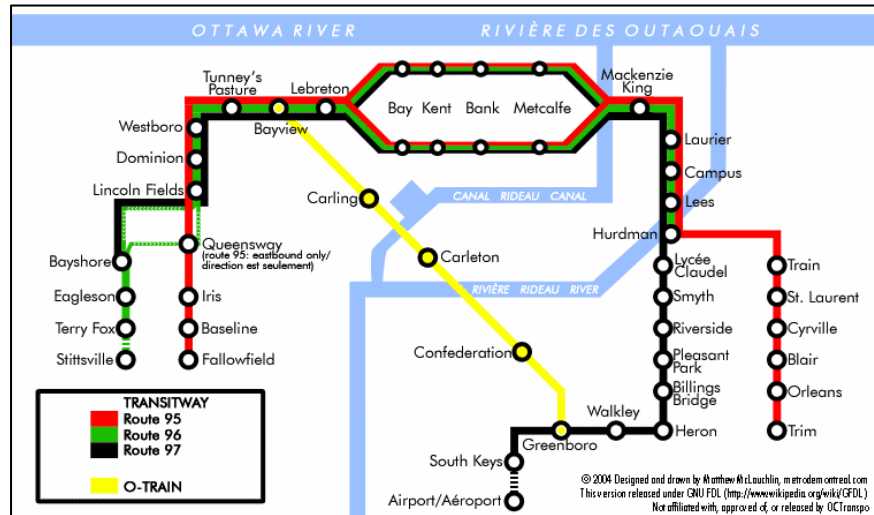
www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20060619/news_1m19sandag.html

Controversy Continues Over Ottawa Light Rail Project

In July, the Ottawa City Council voted to approve the north-south extension of the Ottawa O-train despite concerns that costs could increase from \$725 million to almost \$900 million. Construction is expected to begin in the fall.

The O-Train began in 2001 as a pilot project for light rail in Ottawa. It uses an existing rail right-of-way and low floor, diesel multiple unit trains. The north-south extension would replace much of the pilot project with an electric tram system and expand the system.

Much of the controversy over costs was spurred by Ottawa's highly successful bus rapid transit system, known as the Ottawa Transitway. Critics claim that ridership on the O-Train pilot project is around 450 passengers per hour during peak hours, a small fraction of the peak hour ridership on the Transitway. They also argue that the Transitway cost much less to build than the O-Train. The map shows the Transitway and O-Train pilot project routes.



Sources:
CFRA, 7/14/06
<http://www.cfra.com/headlines/index.asp?cat=1&nid=40870>

Ottawa Sun, June 1, 2006

CBC News, 6/29/06
www.cbc.ca/canada/ottawa/story/2006/06/29/lightrail-public.html?ref=rss

Columbus, Ohio Drops Light Rail Plan

The Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) has halted plans for a 13-mile light rail line between downtown Columbus and the populated northern corridor because the project was unable to meet federal cost effectiveness criteria. Federal funds had been expected to cover half of the project's costs, estimated at more than \$600 million. Instead, COTA is urging voters to pass a levy to allow an upgrade to the city's bus service.

Source:
Business First of Columbus, 7/11/06
www.bizjournals.com/columbus/stories/2006/07/10/daily12.html

Beijing Attempts 'No-Car Day'

To improve the air quality and traffic congestion in Beijing, residents were asked to leave their cars at home one day each month. Vehicle emissions are the leading cause of pollution in Beijing and are responsible for one third of the city's air pollution. Officials estimate that pollution can be reduced by 44,000 tons if every driver participated. Approximately 250,000 drivers complied with the voluntary request on the inaugural "No-Car Day," yet the effort had little impact on grid-lock and smog conditions. There are currently over 2.6 million cars in the city with government figures showing 1,000 additional cars every week.

Source:

AFP, 6/5/06

www.wbcsd.org/plugins/DocSearch/details.asp?type=DocDet&ObjectId=MTkzNjA

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

www.epa.gov/oia/airandclimate/byregion/