

# Prepared Remarks on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project for the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Member Day Hearing on the Surface Transportation Authorization Bill

## Congressman Brad Sherman

The reason the San Fernando Valley is so-called a “valley” is due to its famous separation from the westside of Los Angeles by the Santa Monica Mountain range.

And every day, over 400,000 commuters in some 383,500 cars make the drive between the Valley and the westside, by sharing a section of the 405-freeway as it runs for nine-miles along a low-mountain pass known as the Sepulveda Corridor.<sup>1</sup>

By comparison, the Golden Gate Bridge sees just 112,000 cars per day, less than a third of the cars in the Sepulveda Pass.<sup>2</sup>

For these unfortunate motorists, what should be a 12-minute drive during free-travel takes over 45-minutes at peak periods.<sup>3</sup>

The daily-commuter spends an average 56-hours of their lives per-year sitting in traffic in the Sepulveda Pass – that is 56 hours in addition to what their commute would take if there was no bottleneck<sup>4</sup>

Already listed among the nation’s top 10 most congested roadways (ninth),<sup>5</sup> the Sepulveda Pass Corridor serves a population that is expected to grow by 14% over the next two decades.<sup>6</sup>

As this happens, commuters are growing desperate for a transit alternative through the Sepulveda Corridor.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/tables/02.cfm>

Dept of Transportation, Federal Highway Data for 2019; Sepulveda Transit Corridor Feasibility Report, p. ES-6)

<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://www.goldengate.org/bridge/history-research/statistics-data/annual-vehicle-crossings-toll-revenues/>

<sup>3</sup> Source: I-405 Level 2 Traffic & Revenue Study Interstate 405 (Sepulveda Pass) ExpressLanes Intermediate (Level II) Traffic & Revenue Study <http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DPGTL/congestionpricing/2019-Metro-405-SepulvedaPass-ExpressLanes-Study.pdf> (p.27) Figure 3-12) INRIX Data for 2016.

<sup>4</sup> <https://inrix.com/press-releases/2019-traffic-scorecard-us/> INRIX Data for 2019.

<sup>5</sup> <https://inrix.com/press-releases/2019-traffic-scorecard-us/> INRIX Data for 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Source: Sepulveda Pass Transit Corridor Feasibility Report, Table 2-3

Gratefully, through the passage of measure M, Los Angeles voters have approved the initial financing for the development and construction of a three-phase capital project culminating in subway line through the Sepulveda Pass.

Los Angeles Metro is currently working to develop a heavy-rail concept that aims to provide a Valley-to-Westside trip in just under 20-minutes.

Metro past ridership forecasts for the Sepulveda rail line have estimated that the project would attract between 122,000 and 137,000 daily riders based on 2042 conditions.

By taking these would-be-subway-riders out of their cars, the Sepulveda Pass Project is estimated to reduce regional vehicle miles traveled by up to 1,039,000 miles per year and vehicle hours traveled by up to 72,000 hours per year.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to the time and cost saved by the commuter, the Sepulveda Pass Project offers an important opportunity to improve local air quality and to reduce automobile emissions through an expected to reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> by up to 156,000,000 pounds per year.<sup>8</sup>

The needed infrastructure will not be built overnight, and we cannot wait to immediately address the current congestions through the Sepulveda Pass. In addition to asking the Committee to support our efforts to establish a subway line, the Committee should also support efforts too increase the capacity of the 405 freeway. This includes a specific request being brought forward with the LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. We should convert the existing HOV lane into an Express Lane and possibly add a second Express Lane in each direction over the 10 miles between I-10 and US-101.

The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will be looking at hundreds of projects as it continues its work. Alleviating congestion in the Sepulveda Pass is a priority for the residents of the San Fernando Valley, Southern California, and our national infrastructure. I look forward to working with the Chair on this critical infrastructure.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Sepulveda Transit Corridor Feasibility Report, p. 59

<sup>8</sup> Based on VMT in Sepulveda Transit Corridor Feasibility Report, p. 59