



Bogota Part 2: Transmilenio Bus Rapid Transit

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Topic: [Environment/Sustainability](#)

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In part 2 of "what the rest of the world could learn from Bogota, Colombia", here is a good video that gives an overview of how their bus rapid transit system works. In part 1 we looked [Ciclovía](#), a weekly auto-free Sunday on main streets and boulevards opens them to cycling, skating and all sorts of public events. (much more discussion under the fold...)

The Bogota bus rapid transit system is fairly unique in the world. It leverages much of the same infrastructure that was in place for main roads and highways so there was no major investment in building new rights of way. The stations are pretty low cost, but highly functional. The main investment is in the rolling stock (buses).

This system bring mass transit access to almost every corner of a major sprawling city. It also serves to create transit oriented development along the major corridors instead of auto-centric development.

If a major city in the Developed or Developing is looking to quickly develop a mass transit system, but does not have the capital to invest in new heavy or light rail, bus rapid transit offers another option.

There are over 100 BRT projects in operation or in development all around the world. You can see a complete list at [Go BRT](#).



The Metro Orange Line, operated by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), is dedicated bus transitway located along an unused rail right-of-way. The Orange Line provides a rapid transit extension from the Metro Red Line and improves connectivity to the Metro Rapid bus system for San Fernando Valley transit riders. The system is also intended to reduce congestion on US 101, a major freeway that runs parallel to the Orange Line. The Orange Line debuted in October 2005.

Construction of the busway was briefly halted in 2004 following a court finding that Metro had not considered multiple Metro Rapid bus routes as an alternative to the busway. Following additional analysis, a revised Final Environmental Impact Report indicated that the Orange Line busway was still the preferred alternative since:

- The busway generated the greatest number of transit riders of all the alternatives--this would offset higher capital costs, making the busway alternative the most cost effective on a per passenger basis.
- Operating costs were anticipated to be lower than the Rapid Bus network alternative.
- The busway supported the city's land use plans to locate a mass transit project along the former railroad right-of-way and was consistent with local land use plans.
- The Orange Line would offer the most improved travel time, since the dedicated busway would not be impacted by increased traffic congestion.

The Orange Line's debut on the last weekend of October, 2005 drew about 83,000 riders who tried out the new system free-of-charge. Eleven additional buses were required to meet passenger demand. Regular fare service began the following Monday.

Ridership on the Metro Orange was expected to grow steadily, building to 22,000 average weekday boarding passengers by the year 2020. Initial ridership during the first year was predicted to be between 5,000-7,000 daily riders. However, the line has proven immensely popular - ridership soared to more than 21,000 daily riders within the first six months of opening.

A January 2006 rider survey found that riders overwhelmingly approve of Orange Line features and time-savings: 95% indicated that they like the Orange Line Metroliner vehicle, 91% like the pre-paid boarding system. 92% normally have a seat for the trip.

Additional findings were that:

- More than 50% of riders previously took a Metro Bus before the Orange Line opened.
- More than 1/3 of riders had a car available for the survey trip.
- 17% of all riders are new riders to Metro. 14% had been riding for less than a year.
- About half of respondents said they would connect to a Metro Bus or Rail line to complete their trip.
- 85% of respondents who made the same trip prior to the Orange Line indicated that the Orange Line has reduced their travel time.
- 18% of respondents had previously either driven alone or carpoled, with 79% previously using the 101 Freeway. Of the former 101 Freeway drivers, 68% indicated that their trip time had been reduced.

Information for this summary was gathered from the Metro website, federal documents (US Department of Transportation, Federal Transportation Administration) and news stories.



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