

Fresno Area Express (FAX) – Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Frequently Asked Questions

Will fares change or be different than on other existing routes?

There are no plans to change fares due to improved BRT service. However, FAX could adjust fares for all services over time, for instance when additional revenue is needed to address shortfalls in operating funds.

Will the costs for this project affect FAX service in other areas? How can FAX afford it without cutting back service elsewhere?

The improvements are to be funded from separate accounts – grants or other funds set aside for capital “construction” projects – and cannot be used for operations. So, these improvements will not affect operations.

What happens to my current local route?

BRT service essentially replaces your current route to offer express service. A “lifeline” local service could however remain in each corridor. Local service options are under study.

When will you make improvements in my area?

A detailed schedule is to be determined and depends on project approvals. We are hoping to begin construction in late 2010.

When will the improvements be completed?

The goal is to be operational in late 2011 or early 2012. Some segments could open earlier and some later than others.

What happens to traffic that gets diverted?

Vehicles will be diverted to other streets only if the chosen design includes lanes set aside for bus use only. This is proposed for the western segment of Ventura/Kings Canyon under one of the three design options under study. If this option is chosen, the number of vehicles diverted and its impact will be studied.

What about parking that may be removed? Will it be replaced?

If parking is limited and the project removes a large number of spaces, replacement parking will be sought. In most cases there are ample parking opportunities within immediate vicinity of the removed parking.

What are the hours of operation?

This still needs to be determined but likely the hours will be the same or longer than the current service.

(More Q&A on the back.)

What will be the frequency of the BRT service?

During morning and afternoon peak hours, the BRT service will be every 10 minutes and during the midday it will be 15 minutes. Early morning and later evening frequencies will typically range between 15 and 30 minutes.

Will the road be closed where we make major construction improvements – take a traffic lane, modify intersections, or improve station areas?

Only in areas where major roadway reconstruction is planned, affected intersections and roadway segments may be closed. Typically during construction, one lane in each direction or one roadway direction is open at all times; same with intersections. Sometimes, however, it is best to close an intersection for overnight or on weekends to complete the work quickly and minimize delays. Only limited segments of the road would ever be closed at one time, and alternative routes for through traffic, access to businesses, and residences would always be made available.

Will FAX compensate businesses that are affected by construction?

No, this is not allowed on a federally funded project, unless the business property must be used for the project. In this case, FAX would need to purchase and fully compensate the owners. Business or property displacements are not anticipated for this proposed project.

How does the queue jump work?

This is a short lane, next to the regular traffic lane, that lets the bus bypass cars backed up at an intersection for a red light. The lane could be combined with a right-turn lane. The bus can pull to the right around the traffic backup and move to the front of the queue jump lane, although it does not turn to the right when reaching the traffic light. The traffic light includes a special signal that allows the bus to proceed through the intersection 2 to 3 seconds ahead of the regular traffic. Once through the intersection, the bus returns to the regular traffic lane but has “jumped” ahead of the congestion. The queue jump is useful when the bus is likely to be backed up at a red light. It is not used if traffic is moving through the intersection and the bus can move without delay with the traffic.

Will park and ride lots be created along the BRT corridors (e.g. at Manchester Mall, near Francher Creek Developments, etc.)?

Options for park and ride lots along the BRT corridors will be studied.

Will the BRT buses be more environmentally friendly?

Yes! FAX buses now are pretty clean, powered by compressed natural gas to reduce pollutant emissions. However, technology is always improving and new buses have lower emissions than older ones. The exact type of fuel for BRT buses is to be determined, but there are clean diesel/electric hybrid or CNG/electric hybrid buses, fuel cell buses, and other types of vehicle propulsion that could be purchased for the proposed service.

What are the chances these improvements will really happen?

Very good! The cost of proposed improvements appears to be reasonable. There is federal government money available, and FAX has access to local (what are called “matching”) funds, such as Measure C, that are applied

to secure the federal funds. The Federal Transit Administration is FAX's proposed partner on this project and has expressed strong interest in seeing these improvements implemented soon.