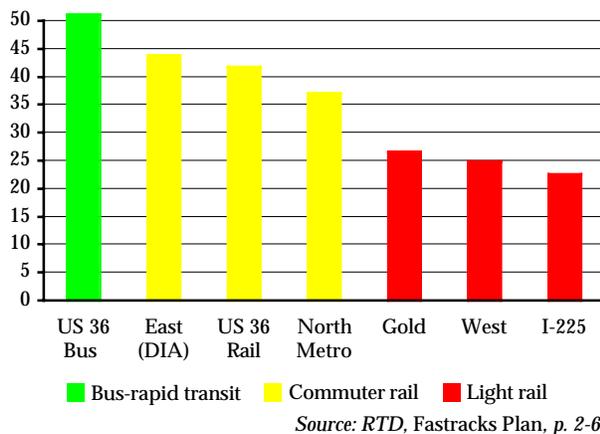


Why Rail When Bus Works Better?

FasTracks calls for building six new rail lines and one bus-rapid transit line. Yet RTD's own data show that the bus line will provide faster, better service at a lower cost. So why build rail when bus is better?

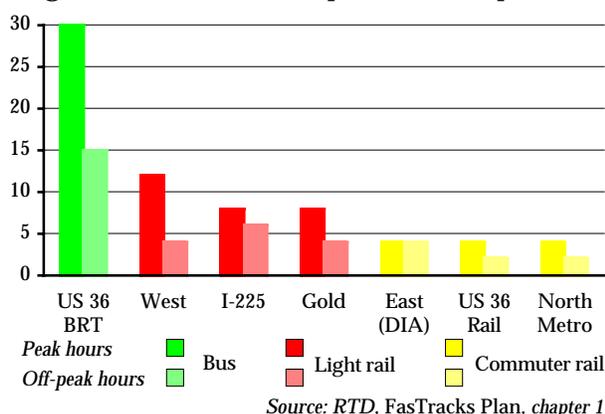
RTD's FasTracks plan calls for three new light-rail lines, three new commuter-rail lines, and one bus-rapid transit line. RTD's own data show that bus-rapid transit is faster, better, and less expensive than rail transit. Figure one shows buses will be faster than any of the rail lines.

Figure One: FasTrack Speeds in Miles Per Hour



Saving passengers even more time, RTD plans to operate buses much more frequently than the rail lines, as shown in figure two.

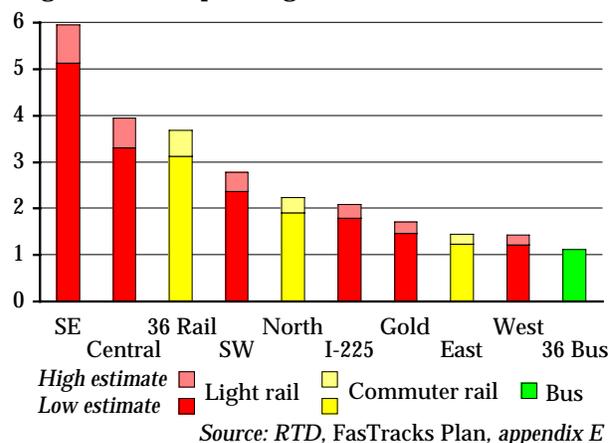
Figure Two: FasTrack Frequencies in Trips/Hour



Despite higher frequencies, the bus-rapid

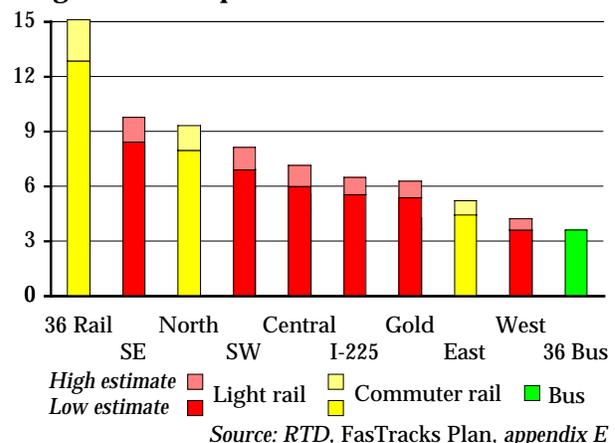
transit line costs less per rider to both build and operate, as shown in figures three and four.

Figure Three: Operating Cost in Dollars Per Rider



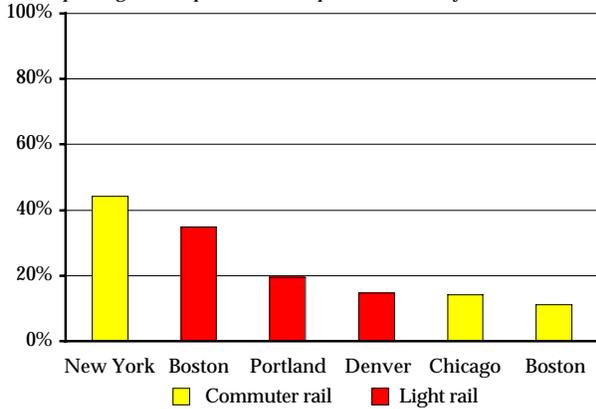
Freeway lanes typically carry far more passenger miles per hour than rail lines. In fact, the only rail transit line in American that carries more people than a freeway lane is the New

Figure Four: Capital Cost in Dollars Per Rider



York City subway. Figure five shows that one mile of Denver's light-rail line carries just 15 percent as many people as an average lane-mile

Figure Five: Rail Riders as Share of Freeway Lane
(passenger miles per rail mile as percent of freeway lane mile)



Source: 2002 National Transit Data Base

of Denver freeway. Except in New York, commuter rail lines are even less productive.

Buses running on high occupancy/toll (HOT) lanes can be especially productive. Allowing tolls to vary by the amount of congestion will keep traffic moving. New HOT lanes in California have been funded entirely out of tolls paid by drivers of low-occupancy vehicles.



DRCOG's analysis of FasTracks says that, without FasTracks, highway traffic will grow by 63 percent. The red stripe at the top of figure six shows transit's share of rush-hour travel. Figure seven shows DRCOG's predictions of what will happen if FasTracks is built. Can you see the difference? DRCOG says FasTracks will take 1.4 percent of cars off the road during rush hour. Is that worth the \$7.1 billion cost (including finance charges)?

RTD wants to spend \$932 million federal dollars, \$95 million municipal dollars, and \$3.69 billion in sales tax revenues to build FasTracks. Sales taxes will also pay interest on the \$2.35 billion RTD will borrow to build the project.

Why not leave the sales taxes in the taxpayers' pockets and let the local cities keep their

Figure Six: Peak Travel without FasTracks
(as percent of 2001)

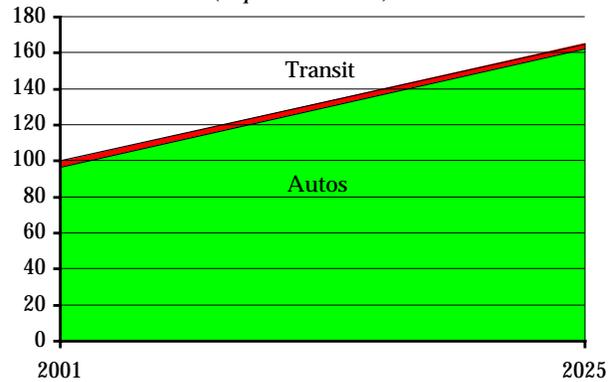
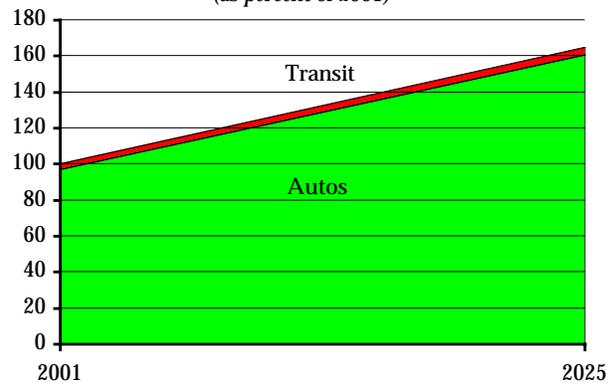


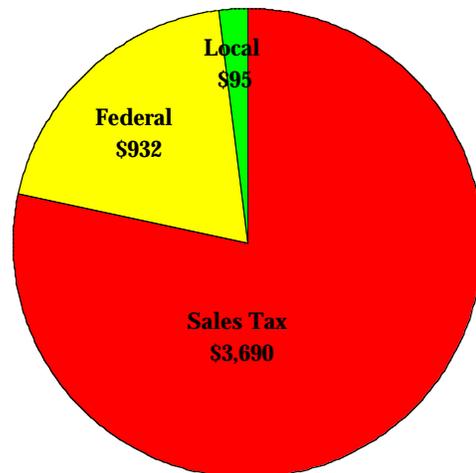
Figure Seven: Peak Travel with FasTracks
(as percent of 2001)



Source: DRCOG, Analysis of FasTracks, p. 23

\$95 million, and use the \$932 million federal dollars to do something that works? RTD could buy buses for bus-rapid transit on existing roads and CDOT could start a network of HOT lanes that RTD's buses will be able to run on at even higher speeds.

Figure Eight: Sources of Funds for FasTracks
(millions of dollars)



Source: RTD, FasTracks Financial Plan, p. 1