



For immediate release: March 29, 2012

Contact: Kate Slevin, Veronica Vanterpool, Tri-State Transportation Campaign

P: 212-268-7474

New York State's Tappan Zee Transit Numbers Fatally Flawed

Failure to Evaluate Transit Options May Violate National Environmental Policy

The state's elimination of transit from the Tappan Zee project has frustrated area residents and leaders who had worked with the New York State Department of Transportation over the past decade to create a project that would meet the region's mobility, air quality, and economic development needs. Today, Tri-State Transportation Campaign—which has worked with the state and local stakeholders throughout the planning process—is releasing its [comments](#) on the project's draft environment impact statement (DEIS). The public comment period ends on March 30th.

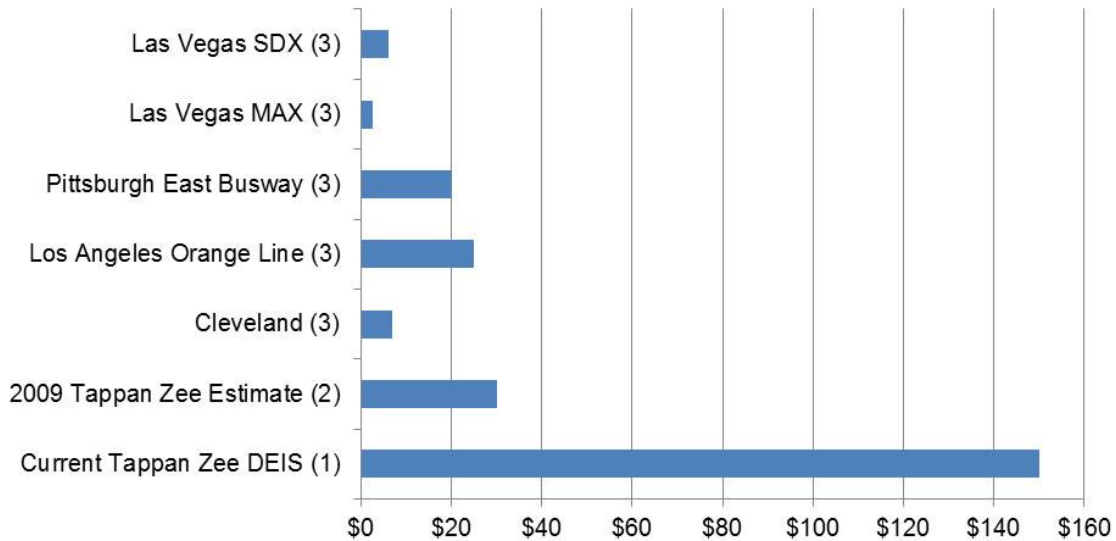
In their comments the Campaign asserts that by not including transit alternatives in the project's DEIS, the state and the Federal Highway Administration (now the lead agency on the project) may be in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Quality Review Act. TSTC is calling for a supplemental DEIS that would evaluate the real costs and benefits of transit.

The DEIS states that project alternatives that include public transit were not evaluated because they are too expensive. Both NEPA regulations and FHWA guidance state that **cost is not an acceptable justification for eliminating an alternative in a project like this one**, especially in a large urban area like the I-287 corridor. Accordingly, even if cost is prohibitive – and the state has not shown that it is – the state must still evaluate transit options.

Furthermore the cost of bus rapid transit offered in the DEIS is completely out of line with past state studies, other BRT projects, and the industry average. [According to the state](#), the cost of BRT in the corridor will be between \$4.5 and \$5.3 billion, but that

figure is four to five times as much as the [\\$897 million price](#) predicted by the state's 2009 study. The following chart is a cost per mile comparison with other BRT projects from around the nation, along with the state's 2009 cost projection: none of the completed BRT systems incurred costs of more than \$25 million per mile, yet the current DEIS estimates \$150 million per mile.

Cost Per Mile of Bus Rapid Transit, in Millions



Sources: (1) New York State Thruway Authority; (2) 2009 Tappan Zee Transit Mode Selection Report, Chapter 7; (3) Recapturing Global Leadership in BRT: A Survey of Select US Cities (2011 ITDP study). Las Vegas figures do not include rolling stock costs.

Tri-State Transportation Campaign is calling on the state and FHWA to provide a detailed, itemized breakdown of the DEIS' cost estimate for BRT, as well as to explore less expensive options to improve transit service as part of this Tappan Zee project in a supplemental DEIS.

###

Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit organization working toward a more balanced, transit-friendly and equitable transportation system in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.