

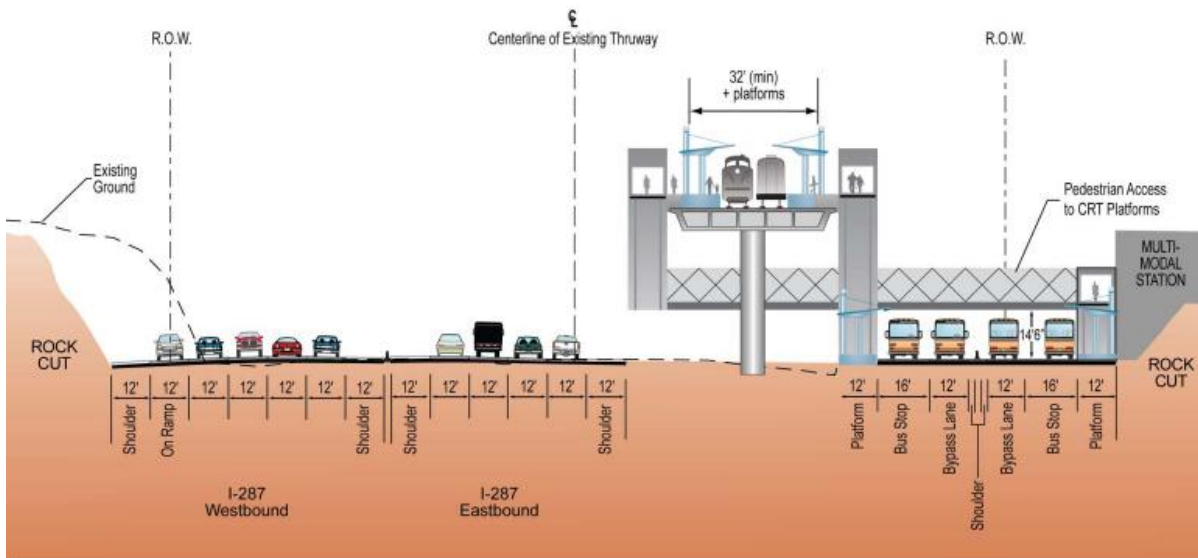


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Delayed State Documents Suggest Outsized Tappan Zee Transit Cost Estimates

Unprecedentedly Large Costs Mar Project

New York State never analyzed the price of a simple bus rapid transit (BRT) system for the new Tappan Zee Bridge and I-287 corridor, according to a preliminary Tri-State Transportation Campaign analysis of state documents. Documents obtained on June 18, 2012 in response to the Campaign’s Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request, indicate the state’s cost assumptions for BRT instead rely on projections for a more elaborate, fully built-out configuration.



A diagram showing an elaborate I-287 corridor from a May 2011 Transit Alignment Options Report

The Campaign sought the documents on the cost estimates after the state projected BRT costs between \$4.5-5.2 billion in the project’s draft environmental impact

statement. They were received 129 days after its Freedom of Information Law request and months after the closure of the project's public comment period on March 30, 2012.

The outsized transit cost estimate for the current Tappan Zee Bridge replacement project appears to be based on a significantly more robust I-287 project under consideration in an old project. The costs of climbing lanes for trucks, interchange additions, tunnels, and more are comingled into the costs of implementing a BRT system, making it impossible to solely ascertain the costs of simple bus enhancements throughout the corridor. The addition of bus rapid transit—a mode renowned for its low cost and flexibility—need not involve such elaborate infrastructure upgrades to the corridor.

A recently created [webpage](#) on the state's Tappan Zee project website bolsters this conclusion, as cost figures cited for highway and BRT improvements are not itemized or explained.

“If the state's BRT cost analysis only considered installing bus rapid transit in the context of a massive I-287 overhaul, it made a mistake. You don't need to dig a tunnel to paint a bus lane,” said Veronica Vanterpool, executive director of Tri-State Transportation Campaign.

The state's cost estimate for BRT appears to be based on figures from the old Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project, a study that was abruptly terminated when Governor Cuomo fast-tracked the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement in October of 2011. It appears that no new transit cost analysis was conducted for the new project.

State agencies involved in this project have an obligation to the taxpaying public to examine various cost scenarios for implementing transit—from the least built-out options to the fully built-out options. Instead, the state has provided cost estimates on the most expensive end of the spectrum without consideration for lower cost enhancements that can be made at the onset.

Adding BRT to the new Tappan Zee Bridge and I-287 corridor is essential to the economic and environmental sustainability of the Lower Hudson Valley and should not be omitted on the basis of nebulous cost estimates.

Tri-State Transportation Campaign calls on the state to complete a thoroughly-documented cost estimate for a bus rapid transit system in the corridor that includes simple bus improvements in the short term and more enhanced bus rapid transit in the future.

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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.