

## **Public Comments for Agenda Item No. 34**

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

**March 5, 2025**

**10:00 AM**

#### **Location:**

San Bernardino County Transportation Authority  
First Floor Lobby Board Room  
1170 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, San Bernardino, CA 92410

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **Transit**

#### **34. ONT Connector: Adopt Final Environmental Impact Report**

That the Board, acting as the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority:

A. Conduct a Public Hearing to consider the Ontario International Airport Connector Project and related Environmental Impact Report.

B. Adopt Resolution No. 25-061 making findings necessary to approve the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, adopting a Statement of Overriding Considerations, and certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report.

*Written public comments were received and are attached for your information.*

**From:** [Dominic Bendinelli](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#); [ONTconnector](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Public Comment - SBCTA Board of Directors Meeting on March 5 - Agenda Item 34: ONT Connector  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 1:46:08 PM

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The following public comment is for the SBCTA Board of Directors Meeting on Wednesday, March 5th - Agenda Item 34: ONT Connector

Dear Chair Marquez, SBCTA Board Members, and Staff,

My name is Dominic Bendinelli, and I am a resident of Buena Park, an ONT airport passenger, and a Metrolink rider. I would like to comment on the DEIR and express my strong opposition to the Ontario International Airport (ONT) Connector project *as proposed*. While the Boring Company's tunnel idea is neat, it is not practical for a high throughput area or compatible with the multiple large adjacent transit projects coming online in the next few years.

Key concerns about the ONT Connector's Build Alternative that must be addressed in the EIR:

- **Capacity:** The proposed project's peak throughput of 100 passengers per hour is inadequate compared to the project's own required capacity of 300 per hour and the 20,000-100,000 per hour achievable by BRT, light rail, or heavy rail, failing to address future demand at ONT and the Rancho Cucamonga/Brightline Station. According to ONT data published 11/18/2024 the airport was seeing on average 21,428 passengers per day in October 2024. The proposed project would move at best 7% of those passengers if moving at peak throughput rate for 16hr days.
- **VMT Projections:** This project will increase VMT and emissions during construction and will be ineffective in reducing long-term congestion, air pollution, or greenhouse gas compared to rail due to limited service capacity for mode shift. Provide an honest analysis of the proposed project vs rail alternatives with regards to VMT, congestion, and emissions.

SBCTA should pursue real rail alternatives, as recommended in prior studies in 2008, 2014, and 2018. Options such as a Metrolink Riverside Line extension West to ONT and a Brightline West/Metrolink San Bernardino Line extension South to ONT would be more competitive for state and federal transit funding and better suited for future demand.

I ask the board to prioritize high-capacity, reliable rail solutions to meet San Bernardino County's long-term transportation needs, and reject the low-capacity, high-risk, unreliable

model in the Build Alternative that fails to provide the transit service our region deserves.

Thank you,  
Dominic Bendinelli

**From:** [Maha Fathali](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on Ontario International Airport Connector Project  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 7:06:10 PM

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Dear Chair Marquez, SBCTA Board Members, and ONT Connector Project Staff,

My name is Maha Fathali, and I am a resident of Fontana, an ONT airport passenger, and a Metrolink rider. I would like to comment on the EIR and express my strong opposition to the Ontario International Airport (ONT) Connector project as proposed. As a proponent of effective and fiscally-responsible public transit in San Bernardino County, I am deeply concerned that the proposed model will not meet our region's needs for reliable, scalable, and safe transit between ONT and Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink/Future Brightline West Station.

Thank you,  
Maha Fathali, BS

**From:** [Yonatan Ahituv](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** ONT Connector Concerns  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 8:50:16 PM

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To whom it may concern,

The Ontario airport is an important destination and it is excellent the board is looking into connectivity options. However, the current plan for Tesla tunnels is simply put, a foolish and problematic waste of taxpayer money. Autonomous vehicle tunnels have been built and set up in Las Vegas, and have been highly unsuccessful, slow and inefficient. They can hardly carry the same amount of people as other options. Let's take the trivial exercise of analyzing how to improve this setup. Firstly, we deal with cars that must steer themselves through tight tunnels using autonomous technology. They also must use rubber tires which require maintenance. This is expensive and complex, lets built a rail that allows for easy traversal with steel tires improving reliability. The system also suffers from a capacity problem, only able to carry 100 people per hour. Let's chain the cars together and save cost by putting in only one motor. Gosh, this is exactly a train, it's most cost effective, efficient and capable of carrying more people. Please don't waste taxpayers money on this beyond flawed system that works worse than the existing shuttle system.

Thank you,  
Yonatan Ahituv  
UCLA Undergraduate

**From:** [Braeden Webb](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Urging SBCTA to Study Rail Alternatives for ONT Connector  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 12:43:23 AM

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Dear Clerk of the Board,

I'm deeply concerned that SBCTA is still pursuing the ONT Loop project despite its obvious shortcomings. Originally proposed by Elon Musk's Boring Company in 2019, this Tesla Tunnel concept has proven to be unreliable, low-capacity, and flawed—yet SBCTA continues pushing forward with an “on-demand” autonomous vehicle system that does little to meet our region's long-term transit needs.

As someone who cares about smart, effective transportation, I can't understand why SBCTA is ignoring proven rail alternatives. Studies dating back to 2008 have highlighted extensions of Metrolink and the Gold Line as viable options, and the 2024 State Rail Plan calls for multiple rail connections to ONT. Meanwhile, the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) itself admits the ONT Connector would only handle about 100 passengers per hour—a completely inadequate number compared to rail's ability to move tens of thousands. With airport traffic growing and Brightline West's high-speed rail on the horizon, we need serious solutions, not another underwhelming experiment.

I urge SBCTA to cancel the ONT Loop and commit to a real rail alternative, such as a Metrolink extension. This region deserves a transit system that actually meets demand. Please prioritize rail and invest in the future of transportation.

Sincerely,

Alex

**From:** [Faraz Aqil](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Item #34 - Against - March 5 2025 SBCTA BOD Meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 6:51:59 AM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello SBCTA. My name is Faraz Aqil, and I provided one of the public comments in the Final EIR for the ONT Connector project. I won't be available to attend in-person for the public hearing on Item 34 discussing the Final EIR, so I'm hoping my written comments below will be included in your consideration on the Final EIR discussion.

After reading the Final EIR, I'm more certain than ever that it's a big mistake for the ONT Connector to use autonomous cars as its mode of transportation for riders to/from Ontario Airport. And that instead, ONT Connector should reconsider using a rail alternative mode of transportation, or select the No Project Alternative and use the funds to increase the construction/bus frequencies on the BRT West Valley Connector Bus Rapid Project. Below are the reason found while reading the Final EIR:

**1) Over 85% (115 out of 134) of the Public Commenters in the Final EIR Are Against the ONT Connector** (as it currently is). Only a dismal low 9% (12 out of 134) of public commenters support the project. The vast majority of public commenters also proposed alternatives such as rail (example: LA Metro A/Gold Line extension) or using buses (example: West Valley Connector BRT). Note: Total Public Comments were 141, but duplicate comments from the same person & no comments provided were removed from the total. And the remaining 7 out of 134 commenters had other concerns/questions but remained neutral on the project.

**2) 100 Riders Per an Hour Per a Direction Issue Has Not Been Fully Addressed:** The Final EIR did not address my concern and many other commenters' concern about the 100 riders per an hour being inadequate. On page: 3-13, the Final EIR did state that "At Project opening, the transit service would provide a peak one-way passenger throughput of approximately 100 per hour. However, the fleet size and type of vehicles would be scalable to adjust to meet changes in future ridership demand." But even if somehow ONT Connector is able to double the amount of riders it can move to 200 per an hour, that still has a poorer performance in getting riders to/from the airport when compared to much better alternatives such as rail and the planned bus West Valley BRT frequencies. Also brought up in the Final EIR was how a similar autonomous car tunnel called the Las Vegas Loop has traffic congestion in its tunnels. So even if it was possible to scale up the amount of cars within the tunnels, ONT Connector is going to run into problems such as traffic congestion (which will make the queuing even worse). Speaking of queuing, a public commenter pointed out that a 100 riders is not enough to even fill 1 plane, so imagine the amount of wait time riders will need to wait (especially during rush hours) trying to get to an autonomous car before their plane leave, only to have to wait a long time (maybe even up to an hour) just to ride an autonomous car. And then they'll need time to load/unload luggage and more additional time is needed if a disabled rider needs help getting on/off the autonomous car. So I'm still worried that the 100 riders per an hour may even drop to a lower amount, but the Final EIR has still not addressed that concern. And as commenters also rightly pointed out, it should be mentioned that SBCTA has required a system capacity of 300 riders per an hour (pg: 5-9 Draft EIR). But with the autonomous cars, you're going to get only 100 riders per an hour (nowhere near the 300 riders requirement). **This reason alone should already disqualify the autonomous cars as ONT Connector's mode of transportation.**

**3) Reasons Given to Not Going with a Rail Alternative Make No Sense:** One of the reasons given for not going for a rail option was due to the cost (pg: 5-4 Draft EIR). But as public commenters pointed out, the proposed \$538 million is an estimated amount and is very likely to increase significantly due to building an underground tunnel specific for autonomous cars (which is not a well know/experienced built technology). Plus the Gold Line (now A Line) rail was estimated to cost as much as \$400 million (pg: 5-8 Draft EIR), so saying that rail was cost prohibitive but then siding with an underground tunnel for

autonomous cars around that price range appears to be confusing. And last point on rail, the capacity for rail is between 2,808 passengers to 4,860 passengers per hour, which fulfills the SBTCA requirement of 300 riders per hour per direction (something that the autonomous cars in this project can't do).

These are some of the valid reasons why I oppose the ONT Connector as it currently is. Ontario Airport is the fastest growing airport in the US and it's expecting to reach 36 million yearly passengers by 2050. SBTCA needs to plan transportation for the long term as this ONT Connector will need to accommodate those additional passengers. That's why Rancho Cucamonga, Ontario, and the Inland Empire as a whole deserves a more reliable transportation system to its main airport. I therefore ask that the SBTCA Board listens to the vast majority of public commenters by removing autonomous cars for consideration and that ONT Connector brings back the rail alternatives for consideration. But if that's not possible, then I ask that the SBTCA votes for the No Project Alternative option for the ONT Connector and moves ONT Connector's funds to speeding up the completion/improving the frequencies of the BRT West Valley Connector Bus Rapid Project.

Thank you for your time in reading this.

Sincerely,  
Faraz Aqil



**From:** [Erin Hoops](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 34 - study rail  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 7:48:55 AM

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Hi,

I'm writing to insist that rail is studied to connect to the Ontario airport. Tesla tunnels are a disaster in Los Vegas. Please don't let us get scammed into building something slow with low capacity. This is not what we need for the future.

Thank you,  
Erin Hoops

**From:** [Casey Law](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on March 5th meeting, Agenda item 34  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 9:58:40 AM

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Dear Board Members,

As a resident of Southern California, I am eager to use the Ontario International Airport and Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink Stations for my travel. Both are positioned to be major transportation centers and connecting them is smart. This will make Ontario into a gateway of the greater region. However, it must be done with proven technology at the capacity that supports that vision.

**SBCTA should commit to a real rail alternative between these high-demand travel centers instead of an unproven, low-capacity, and backup-prone Tesla Tunnel that duplicates existing bus service.** We shouldn't be wasting county transportation funding and resources on a boondoggle project that does not provide the service capacity this region and route deserves.

Please abandon the ONT Connector as a Tesla Tunnel. Move forward with proven, high-capacity technology, such as light or heavy rail. The investment will be paid back many times in the decades ahead, through reduced climate impact and increased economic development.

Sincerely,

Casey Law

**From:** [Zennon Ulyate-Crow](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 34  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 10:57:43 AM

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Dear Chair Marquez, SBCTA Board Members, and ONT Connector Project Staff,

My name is Zennon Ulyate-Crow and I would like to comment on the DEIR and express my strong opposition to the Ontario International Airport (ONT) Connector project as proposed. As a proponent of effective and fiscally-responsible public transit in San Bernardino County, I am deeply concerned that the proposed model will not meet our region's needs for reliable, scalable, and safe transit between ONT and Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink/Future Brightline West Station.

Key concerns about the ONT Connector's Build Alternative that must be addressed in the EIR:

**Limited Capacity:** The project's peak throughput of 100 passengers per hour is inadequate compared to the project's own required capacity of 300 per hour and the 20,000-100,000 per hour achievable by BRT, light rail, or heavy rail, failing to address future demand at ONT and the Rancho Cucamonga/Brightline Station.

**Safety & Emergency Concerns:** The Boring Company's Las Vegas Loop, a similar model that is privately operated, has been plagued by traffic, slowdowns, confusion among drivers, and serious safety and EMS concerns during construction and in operation.

**Costs & Funding Risks:** The \$490+ million estimate for this project is likely understated, given LA Metro light rail costs at similar project lengths ranging from \$1-7 billion. Address funding instability and sources, given that the project is severely uncompetitive, receiving \$0 from the most recent round of California TIRCP grants.

**Redundant Shuttle Service:** This project will duplicate above-ground ONT Connect shuttle service and West Valley Connector BRT without enhancing capacity. Is this project even necessary?

**Environmental Impacts:** This project will increase VMT and emissions during construction and will be ineffective in reducing long-term congestion, air pollution, or greenhouse gas compared to rail due to limited service capacity for mode shift. Provide an honest analysis of the proposed project vs rail alternatives with regards to VMT, congestion, and emissions.

SBCTA should pursue real rail alternatives, as recommended in prior studies in 2008, 2014, and 2018. Options such as a Metrolink Riverside Line extension West to ONT and a Brightline West/Metrolink San Bernardino Line extension South to ONT would be more competitive for state and federal transit funding and better suited for future demand.

I ask the board to prioritize high-capacity, reliable rail solutions to meet San Bernardino County's long-term transportation needs, and reject the low-capacity, high-risk, unreliable model in the Build Alternative that fails to provide the transit service our region deserves.

All the Best,

Zennon Ulyate-Crow

**From:** [David Burgis](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Ontario Connector Comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 11:00:54 AM

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Hello,

I live locally, and use the Ontario Airport, and want to strongly register my opposition to the underground transit connector under proposal. A rail alternative is needed to handle the capacity of passengers, and choosing a Tesla-style underground tunnel is a recipe for wasted money and choking traffic. Please consider rail, or any other option that could service the growing needs of the Inland Empire region.

Thank you,  
David Burgis



**From:** [Kurt Canfield](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Item 34 Public Comment - OPPOSE  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 11:45:16 AM

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Board,

Building car tunnels as mass transit is dumb. They're low-capacity, they're expensive to construct and operate, and they fundamentally don't work. The Las Vegas Loop is not a functional piece of public transit infrastructure. Not to mention that they are impassable in the event of a battery fire.

Abandon this quest and build something that will actually work. A rail connection to Rancho Cucamonga would be the best option, but even simply bus-only lanes would perform well as demand ramps up as BLW comes online.

Do not build this bad project.

Sincerely,

Kurt Canfield

**From:** [Brian Yanity](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Cc:** [ONTconnector](#) [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** SBCTA board meeting 3/5/2025, Agenda item #34, comment letter on ONT Connector  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 2:28:38 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)

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Dear Chair Marquez, SBCTA Board Members, and ONT Connector project staff,

My name is Brian Yanity, and I am Vice President-South of the Rail Passenger Association of California and Nevada (RailPAC), a 501c3 all-volunteer group of railroad professionals and advocates that has campaigned for improved personal mobility in California and the improvement of regional/commuter and intercity passenger rail service. I am also a regular rider of Metrolink, and an occasional passenger of ONT airport. Since its founding in 1978, RailPAC has taken a keen interest in leveraging the full potential of Southern California's rail network.

RailPAC is pleased to provide public comment to the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) on the environmental documents for the Ontario International Airport(ONT)connector project. RailPAC supports improved rail and bus transit to ONT, instead of the project proposed as "autonomous, on-demand vehicles", or basically rubber-tired cars on pavement, inside a narrow tunnel. The proposed 4.2-mile long system would "provide a peak one-way passenger throughput of approximately 100 per hour" (pg 2-15 of DEIR). This is an extremely low capacity for a project purported to cost close to half a billion dollars. A conventional two-track light rail line can move over 20,000 people per hour. As proposed, the ONT Connector project will duplicate above-ground ONT Connect shuttle service and West Valley Connector BRT without enhancing capacity.

The Boring Company's Las Vegas Loop, a similar model that is privately operated, has been plagued by traffic jams in the narrow tunnels, confusion among drivers, and serious safety and EMS concerns during construction and in operation. Tire dust particles inside the small tunnel present a health risk to riders<sup>[1]</sup>. Being that the ONT Connector takes the 'cars in a tunnel' concept even further by promising fully autonomous road vehicles (and not on a conventional fixed guideway). This means that what is being proposed is an entirely unproven concept. There is no track record of such a system operating anywhere in the world. This poses risks not only for safety and reliability, but also puts SBCTA at financial risk.

The EIR should expand its alternatives analysis to thoroughly evaluate conventional airport people mover, light rail or heavy rapid rail options for the ONT-Rancho Cucamonga corridor. These were not properly evaluated by the ONT Connector EIR. This should include an updated cost comparison and analysis of projected ridership levels to demonstrate cost-effectiveness over time, as well as VMT reduction on local highways. The EIR should have included an assessment of the benefits of a rail solution for both local commuters (e.g. ONT employees) and travelers from surrounding cities and regions.

SBCTA and partner agencies have been studying transit connections between ONT and Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink station for decades. Over the years there have been serious evaluations of bus connections and rail extensions (both light rail Gold Line and rail Metrolink regional/commuter rail) to link these two transportation hubs. Studies in 2008, 2014, and 2018 examined realistic rail options, including Metrolink Riverside Line extension west to ONT, and a Brightline West/Metrolink San Bernardino Line extension south to ONT. To quote from pgs. 2-3 of the Southern California Association of Governments' *Los Angeles and San Bernardino Inter-County Transit and Rail Connectivity Study, Final Report*, October 2018<sup>[2]</sup> [figures on attached pages to this letter- see below]:

- Commuter Rail Alternative (Commuter Rail Alt.) Phase 1: Increased commuter rail service on the Metrolink San Bernardino Line, double-tracking projects along the San Bernardino Line to accommodate the service increases, a commuter rail shuttle connecting Rancho Cucamonga to ONT, a new hybrid rail line connecting downtown Ontario to

the University of Redlands, and a new station on the Metrolink Riverside Line in Downtown Ontario... (See Figure 5)

- Commuter Rail Alternative (Commuter Rail Alt.) Phase 2: All projects in the Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 1, additional service enhancements to the Metrolink San Bernardino Line, converting existing Metrolink commuter rail to hybrid rail service, additional double-tracking projects to accommodate the service enhancements, a spur on the San Bernardino Line to connect to ONT, an extension of the Ontario-Redlands line west to the City of Industry, and a re-routing of the Metrolink Riverside Line via ONT.... (See Figure 6)
- Hybrid Rail Alternative (Hybrid Rail Alt.)1: Hybrid rail service added to the existing Metrolink San Bernardino Line, double-tracking projects to accommodate the service enhancements (the same double-tracking segments as in the Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 2), and a spur off the San Bernardino Line to connect to ONT. This alternative also includes Hybrid Rail to Cal Poly Pomona as an optional connection... (See Figure 7)

Such extensions of the existing Metrolink lines would be more competitive for state and federal transit funding and better suited for future demand. It would also build upon public investments made in the existing Metrolink lines and stations. Given the potential for future high-speed rail connections from Las Vegas to Rancho Cucamonga, the EIR should address how a rail-based solution could better integrate with the Brightline West project than the limited-capacity ONT Connector that is being proposed by SBCTA.

ONT airport has great potential for passenger growth. We ask the SBCTA board to prioritize high-capacity, reliable rail solutions to meet San Bernardino County's long-term transportation needs, and reject the low-capacity, high-risk, unreliable model in the Build Alternative that fails to provide the transit service our region deserves. On the ONT Connector project, we request that the SBCTA board:

- Reject certification of the Final EIR for the ONT Connector project
- Avoid putting any public funds towards the ONT Connector project, or
- Perform a full analysis of rail and bus alternatives (including projected cost per rider and cost per mile), in collaboration with Metrolink and Brightline West.

Sincerely,

Brian Yanity, Vice President-South  
Rail Passenger Association of California and Nevada (RailPAC)

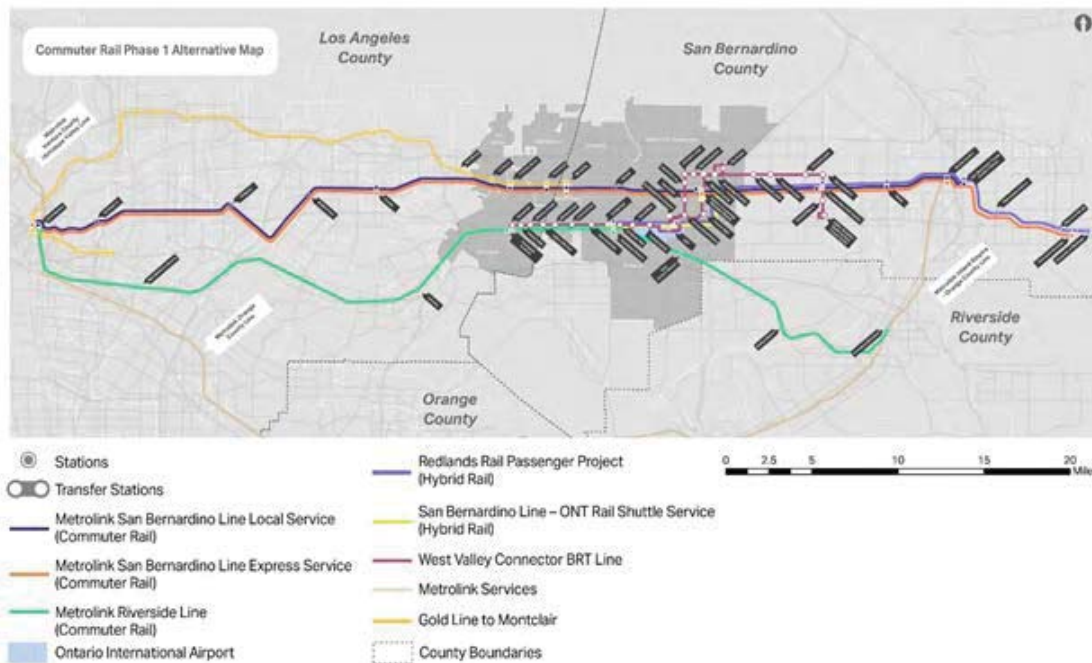
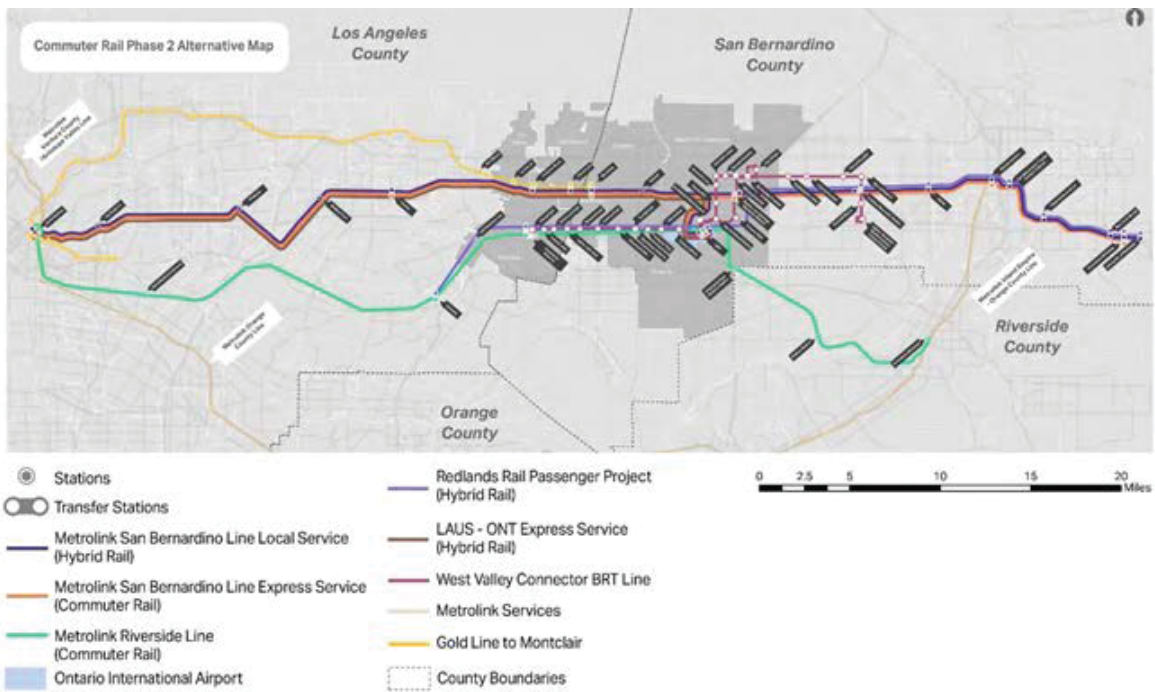
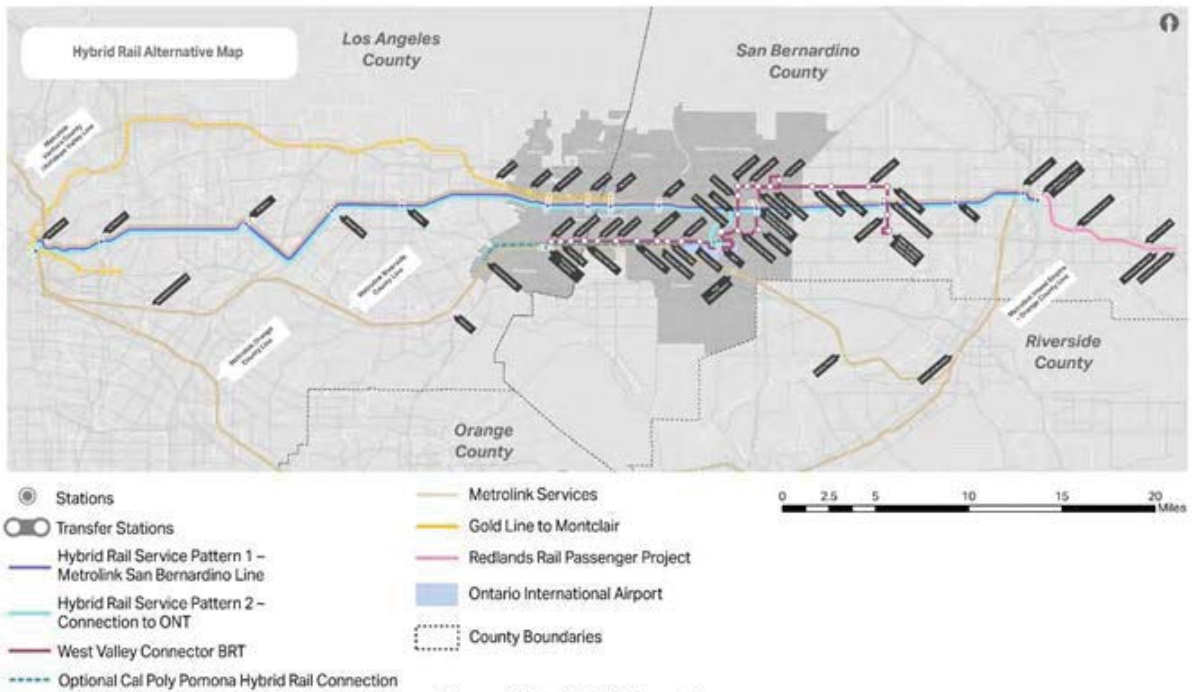


Figure 5 Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 1





**Figure 6 Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 2**



**Figure 7 Hybrid Rail Alternative**

[1] Auto rubber tire pollution poses health hazards primarily through the inhalation of tiny tire wear particles, which contain a mix of toxic chemicals like heavy metals (lead, zinc), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) like benzene, leading to respiratory issues, cardiovascular problems, and potential long-term health concerns, especially for vulnerable populations like children and the elderly.

[2] <https://www.gosbcta.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Los-Angeles-and-San-Bernardino-Inter-County-Transit-and-Rail-Connection-Study-2018.pdf>

**From:** [Brian Yanity](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Cc:** [ONTconnector](#)  
**Subject:** Re: SBCTA board meeting 3/5/2025, Agenda item #34, comment letter on ONT Connector  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 2:30:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)  
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[ONTconnector comment letter RailPAC 2025.03.04.pdf](#)

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Dear Chair Marquez, SBCTA Board Members, and ONT Connector project staff,

My name is Brian Yanity, and I am Vice President-South of the Rail Passenger Association of California and Nevada (RailPAC), a 501c3 all-volunteer group of railroad professionals and advocates that has campaigned for improved personal mobility in California and the improvement of regional/commuter and intercity passenger rail service. I am also a regular rider of Metrolink, and an occasional passenger of ONT airport. Since its founding in 1978, RailPAC has taken a keen interest in leveraging the full potential of Southern California's rail network.

RailPAC is pleased to provide public comment to the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) on the environmental documents for the Ontario International Airport(ONT)connector project. RailPAC supports improved rail and bus transit to ONT, instead of the project proposed as "autonomous, on-demand vehicles", or basically rubber-tired cars on pavement, inside a narrow tunnel. The proposed 4.2-mile long system would "provide a peak one-way passenger throughput of approximately 100 per hour" (pg 2-15 of DEIR). This is an extremely low capacity for a project purported to cost close to half a billion dollars. A conventional two-track light rail line can move over 20,000 people per hour. As proposed, the ONT Connector project will duplicate above-ground ONT Connect shuttle service and West Valley Connector BRT without enhancing capacity.

The Boring Company's Las Vegas Loop, a similar model that is privately operated, has been plagued by traffic jams in the narrow tunnels, confusion among drivers, and serious safety and EMS concerns during construction and in operation. Tire dust particles inside the small tunnel present a health risk to riders<sup>[1]</sup>. Being that the ONT Connector takes the 'cars in a tunnel' concept even further by promising fully autonomous road vehicles (and not on a conventional fixed guideway). This means that what is being proposed is an entirely unproven concept. There is no track record of such a system operating anywhere in the world. This poses risks not only for safety and reliability, but also puts SBCTA at financial risk.

The EIR should expand its alternatives analysis to thoroughly evaluate conventional airport people mover, light rail or heavy rapid rail options for the ONT-Rancho Cucamonga corridor. These were not properly evaluated by the ONT Connector EIR. This should include an updated cost comparison and analysis of projected ridership levels to demonstrate cost-effectiveness over time, as well as VMT reduction on local highways. The EIR should have included an assessment of the benefits of a rail solution for both local commuters (e.g. ONT employees) and travelers from surrounding cities and regions.

SBCTA and partner agencies have been studying transit connections between ONT and Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink station for decades. Over the years there have been serious evaluations of bus connections and rail extensions (both light rail Gold Line and rail Metrolink regional/commuter rail) to link these two transportation hubs. Studies in 2008, 2014, and 2018 examined realistic rail options, including Metrolink Riverside Line extension west to ONT, and a Brightline West/Metrolink San Bernardino Line extension south to ONT. To quote from pgs. 2-3 of the Southern California Association of Governments' *Los Angeles and San Bernardino Inter-County Transit and Rail Connectivity Study, Final Report*, October 2018<sup>[2]</sup> [figures on attached pages to this letter- see below]:

- Commuter Rail Alternative (Commuter Rail Alt.) Phase 1: Increased commuter rail service on the Metrolink San Bernardino Line, double-tracking projects along the San Bernardino Line to accommodate the service increases, a commuter rail shuttle connecting Rancho Cucamonga to ONT, a new hybrid rail line connecting downtown Ontario to the University of Redlands, and a new station on the Metrolink Riverside Line in Downtown Ontario...(See Figure 5)

- Commuter Rail Alternative (Commuter Rail Alt.) Phase 2: All projects in the Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 1, additional service enhancements to the Metrolink San Bernardino Line, converting existing Metrolink commuter rail to hybrid rail service, additional double-tracking projects to accommodate the service enhancements, a spur on the San Bernardino Line to connect to ONT, an extension of the Ontario-Redlands line west to the City of Industry, and a re-routing of the Metrolink Riverside Line via ONT.... (See Figure 6)
- Hybrid Rail Alternative (Hybrid Rail Alt.): Hybrid rail service added to the existing Metrolink San Bernardino Line, double-tracking projects to accommodate the service enhancements (the same double-tracking segments as in the Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 2), and a spur off the San Bernardino Line to connect to ONT. This alternative also includes Hybrid Rail to Cal Poly Pomona as an optional connection... (See Figure 7)

Such extensions of the existing Metrolink lines would be more competitive for state and federal transit funding and better suited for future demand. It would also build upon public investments made in the existing Metrolink lines and stations. Given the potential for future high-speed rail connections from Las Vegas to Rancho Cucamonga, the EIR should address how a rail-based solution could better integrate with the Brightline West project than the limited-capacity ONT Connector that is being proposed by SBCTA.

ONT airport has great potential for passenger growth. We ask the SBCTA board to prioritize high-capacity, reliable rail solutions to meet San Bernardino County’s long-term transportation needs, and reject the low-capacity, high-risk, unreliable model in the Build Alternative that fails to provide the transit service our region deserves. On the ONT Connector project, we request that the SBCTA board:

- Reject certification of the Final EIR for the ONT Connector project
- Avoid putting any public funds towards the ONT Connector project, or
- Perform a full analysis of rail and bus alternatives (including projected cost per rider and cost per mile), in collaboration with Metrolink and Brightline West.

Sincerely,

Brian Yanity, Vice President-South  
 Rail Passenger Association of California and Nevada (RailPAC)

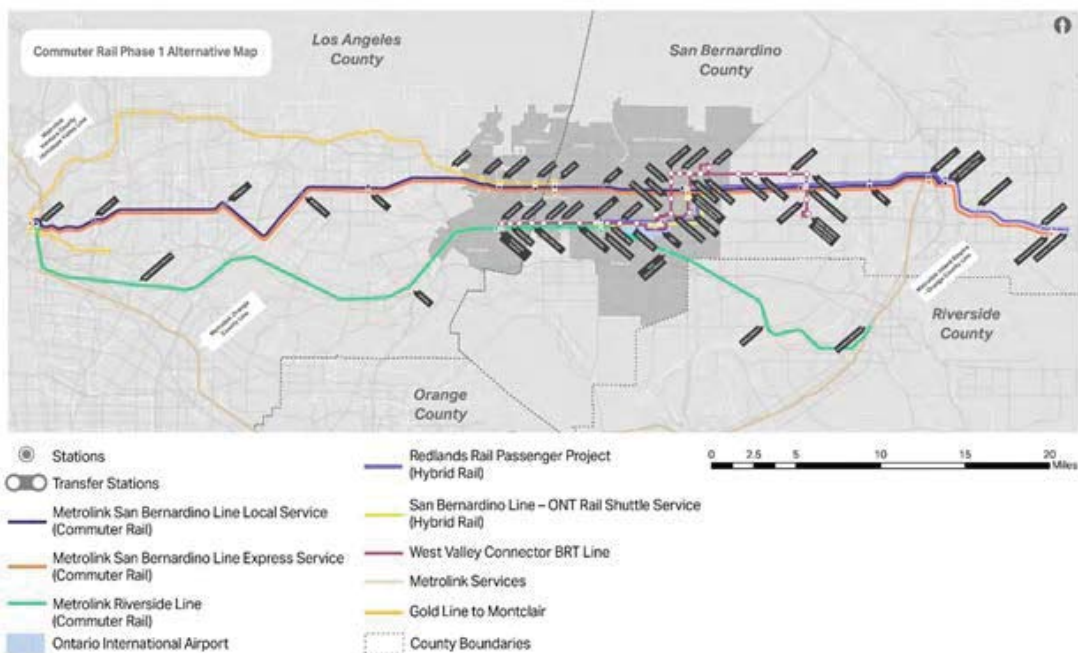
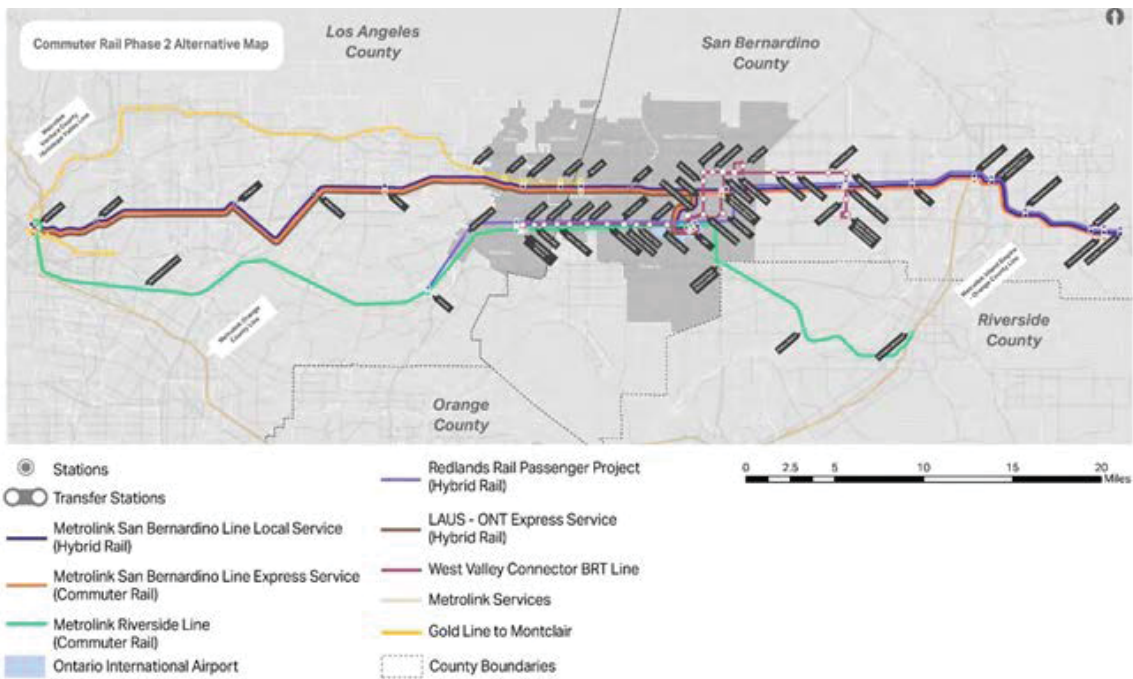
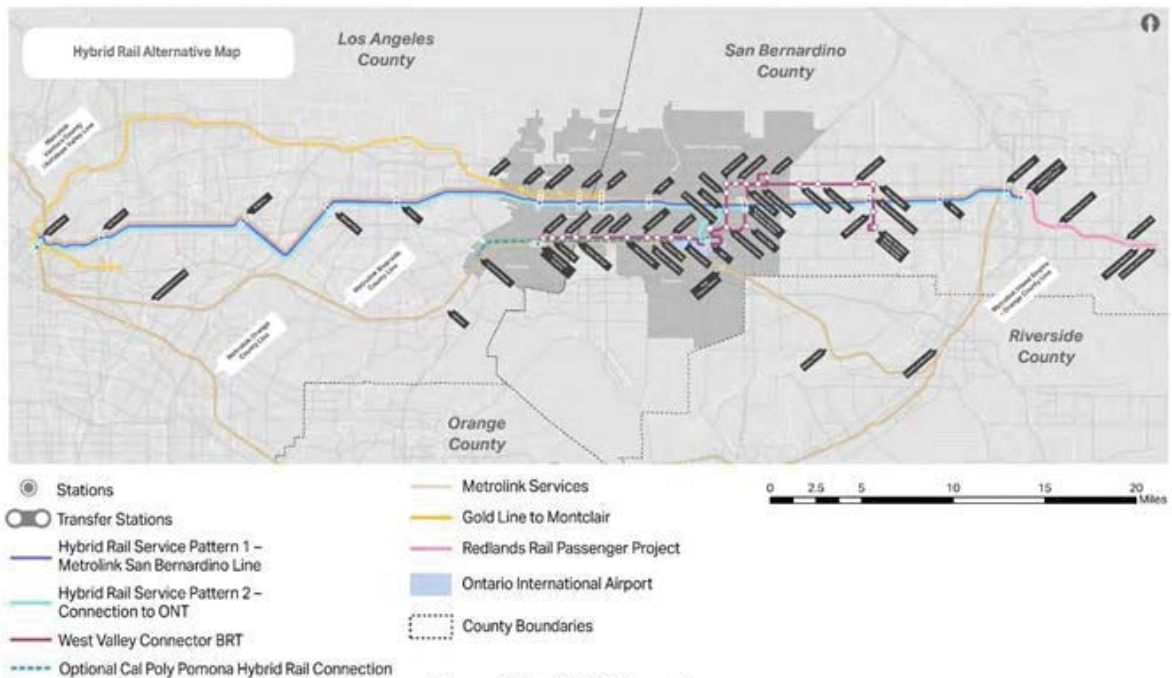


Figure 5 Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 1





**Figure 6 Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 2**



**Figure 7 Hybrid Rail Alternative**

[1] Auto rubber tire pollution poses health hazards primarily through the inhalation of tiny tire wear particles, which contain a mix of toxic chemicals like heavy metals (lead, zinc), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) like benzene, leading to respiratory issues, cardiovascular problems, and potential long-term health concerns, especially for vulnerable populations like children and the elderly.

[2] <https://www.gosbcta.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Los-Angeles-and-San-Bernardino-Inter-County-Transit-and-Rail-Connection-Study-2018.pdf>



**RailPAC**  
Rail Passenger Association  
of California and Nevada

P.O. Box 22344  
San Francisco CA 94122

[www.railpac.org](http://www.railpac.org)

San Bernardino County Transportation Authority  
1170 W 3rd Street  
San Bernardino, CA 92810

Email: [ONTconnector@gosbcta.com](mailto:ONTconnector@gosbcta.com)

CC: [clerkoftheboard@gosbcta.com](mailto:clerkoftheboard@gosbcta.com) [REDACTED]

March 4, 2025

**Subject: SBCTA board meeting 3/5/2025, Agenda item #34, comment letter on ONT Connector**

Dear Chair Marquez, SBCTA Board Members, and ONT Connector project staff,

My name is Brian Yanity, and I am Vice President-South of the Rail Passenger Association of California and Nevada (RailPAC), a 501c3 all-volunteer group of railroad professionals and advocates that has campaigned for improved personal mobility in California and the improvement of regional/commuter and intercity passenger rail service. I am also a regular rider of Metrolink, and an occasional passenger of ONT airport. Since its founding in 1978, RailPAC has taken a keen interest in leveraging the full potential of Southern California's rail network.

RailPAC is pleased to provide public comment to the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) on the environmental documents for the Ontario International Airport(ONT)connector project. RailPAC supports improved rail and bus transit to ONT, instead of the project proposed as "autonomous, on-demand vehicles", or basically rubber-tired cars on pavement, inside a narrow tunnel. The proposed 4.2-mile long system would "provide a peak one-way passenger throughput of approximately 100 per hour" (pg 2-15 of DEIR). This is an extremely low capacity for a project purported to cost close to half a billion dollars. A conventional two-track light rail line can move over 20,000 people per hour. As proposed, the ONT Connector project will duplicate above-ground ONT Connect shuttle service and West Valley Connector BRT without enhancing capacity.

The Boring Company's Las Vegas Loop, a similar model that is privately operated, has been plagued by traffic jams in the narrow tunnels, confusion among drivers, and serious safety and EMS concerns during construction and in operation. Tire dust particles inside the small tunnel present a health risk to riders<sup>1</sup>. Being that the ONT Connector takes the 'cars in a tunnel' concept even further by promising fully autonomous road vehicles (and not on a conventional fixed guideway). This means that what is being proposed is an entirely unproven concept. There is no track record of such a system operating anywhere in the world. This poses risks not only for safety and reliability, but also puts SBCTA at financial risk.

The EIR should expand its alternatives analysis to thoroughly evaluate conventional airport people mover, light rail or heavy rapid rail options for the ONT-Rancho Cucamonga corridor. These were not properly evaluated by the ONT Connector EIR. This should include an updated cost comparison and analysis of projected ridership levels to demonstrate cost-effectiveness over time, as well as VMT reduction on local highways. The EIR should have included an assessment of the benefits of a rail solution for both local commuters (e.g. ONT employees) and travelers from surrounding cities and regions.

---

<sup>1</sup> Auto rubber tire pollution poses health hazards primarily through the inhalation of tiny tire wear particles, which contain a mix of toxic chemicals like heavy metals (lead, zinc), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) like benzene, leading to respiratory issues, cardiovascular problems, and potential long-term health concerns, especially for vulnerable populations like children and the elderly.

SBCTA and partner agencies have been studying transit connections between ONT and Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink station for decades. Over the years there have been serious evaluations of bus connections and rail extensions (both light rail Gold Line and rail Metrolink regional/commuter rail) to link these two transportation hubs. Studies in 2008, 2014, and 2018 examined realistic rail options, including Metrolink Riverside Line extension west to ONT, and a Brightline West/Metrolink San Bernardino Line extension south to ONT. To quote from pgs. 2-3 of the Southern California Association of Governments' *Los Angeles and San Bernardino Inter-County Transit and Rail Connectivity Study, Final Report*, October 2018<sup>2</sup> [figures on attached pages to this letter- see below]:

- Commuter Rail Alternative (Commuter Rail Alt.) Phase 1: Increased commuter rail service on the Metrolink San Bernardino Line, double-tracking projects along the San Bernardino Line to accommodate the service increases, a commuter rail shuttle connecting Rancho Cucamonga to ONT, a new hybrid rail line connecting downtown Ontario to the University of Redlands, and a new station on the Metrolink Riverside Line in Downtown Ontario...(See Figure 5)
- Commuter Rail Alternative (Commuter Rail Alt.) Phase 2: All projects in the Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 1, additional service enhancements to the Metrolink San Bernardino Line, converting existing Metrolink commuter rail to hybrid rail service, additional double-tracking projects to accommodate the service enhancements, a spur on the San Bernardino Line to connect to ONT, an extension of the Ontario-Redlands line west to the City of Industry, and a re-routing of the Metrolink Riverside Line via ONT.... (See Figure 6)
- Hybrid Rail Alternative (Hybrid Rail Alt.)1: Hybrid rail service added to the existing Metrolink San Bernardino Line, double-tracking projects to accommodate the service enhancements (the same double-tracking segments as in the Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 2), and a spur off the San Bernardino Line to connect to ONT. This alternative also includes Hybrid Rail to Cal Poly Pomona as an optional connection... (See Figure 7)

Such extensions of the existing Metrolink lines would be more competitive for state and federal transit funding and better suited for future demand. It would also build upon public investments made in the existing Metrolink lines and stations. Given the potential for future high-speed rail connections from Las Vegas to Rancho Cucamonga, the EIR should address how a rail-based solution could better integrate with the Brightline West project than the limited-capacity ONT Connector that is being proposed by SBCTA.

ONT airport has great potential for passenger growth. We ask the SBCTA board to prioritize high-capacity, reliable rail solutions to meet San Bernardino County's long-term transportation needs, and reject the low-capacity, high-risk, unreliable model in the Build Alternative that fails to provide the transit service our region deserves. On the ONT Connector project, we request that the SBCTA board:

- Reject certification of the Final EIR for the ONT Connector project
- Avoid putting any public funds towards the ONT Connector project, or
- Perform a full analysis of rail and bus alternatives (including projected cost per rider and cost per mile), in collaboration with Metrolink and Brightline West.

Sincerely,

Brian Yanity, Vice President-South  
Rail Passenger Association of California and Nevada (RailPAC)

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gosbcta.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Los-Angeles-and-San-Bernardino-Inter-County-Transit-and-Rail-Connection-Study-2018.pdf>



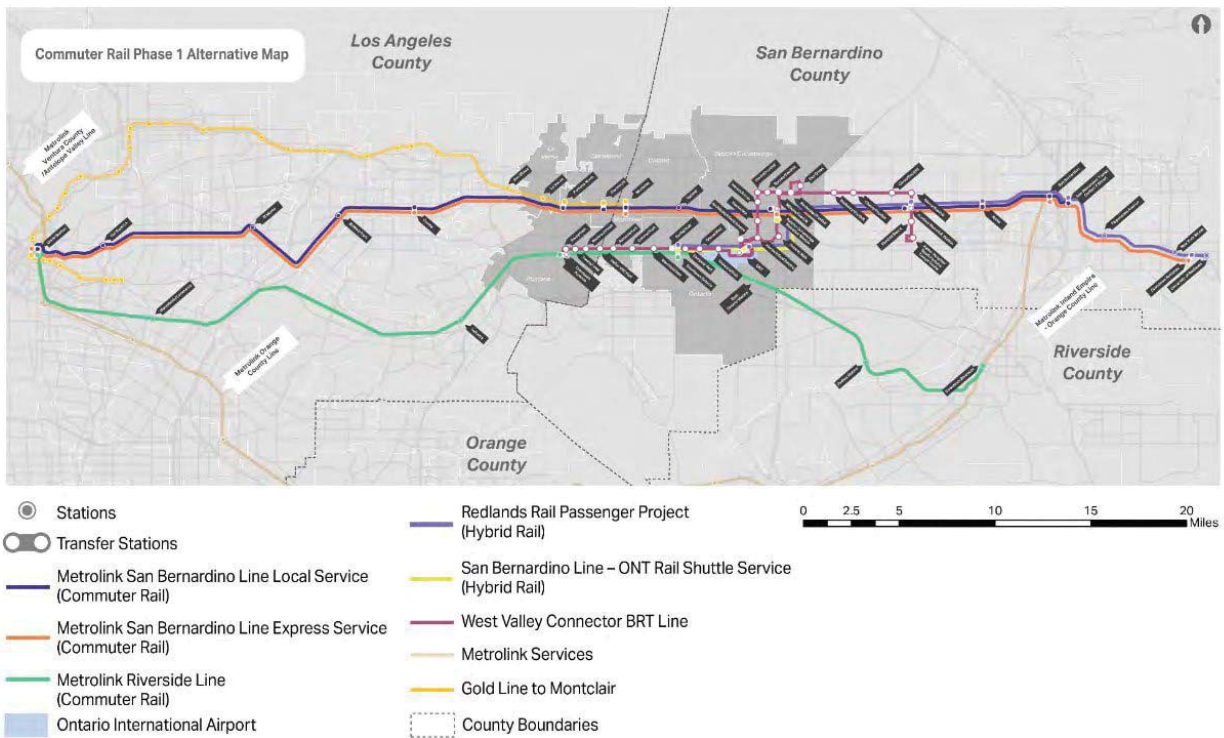


Figure 5 Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 1

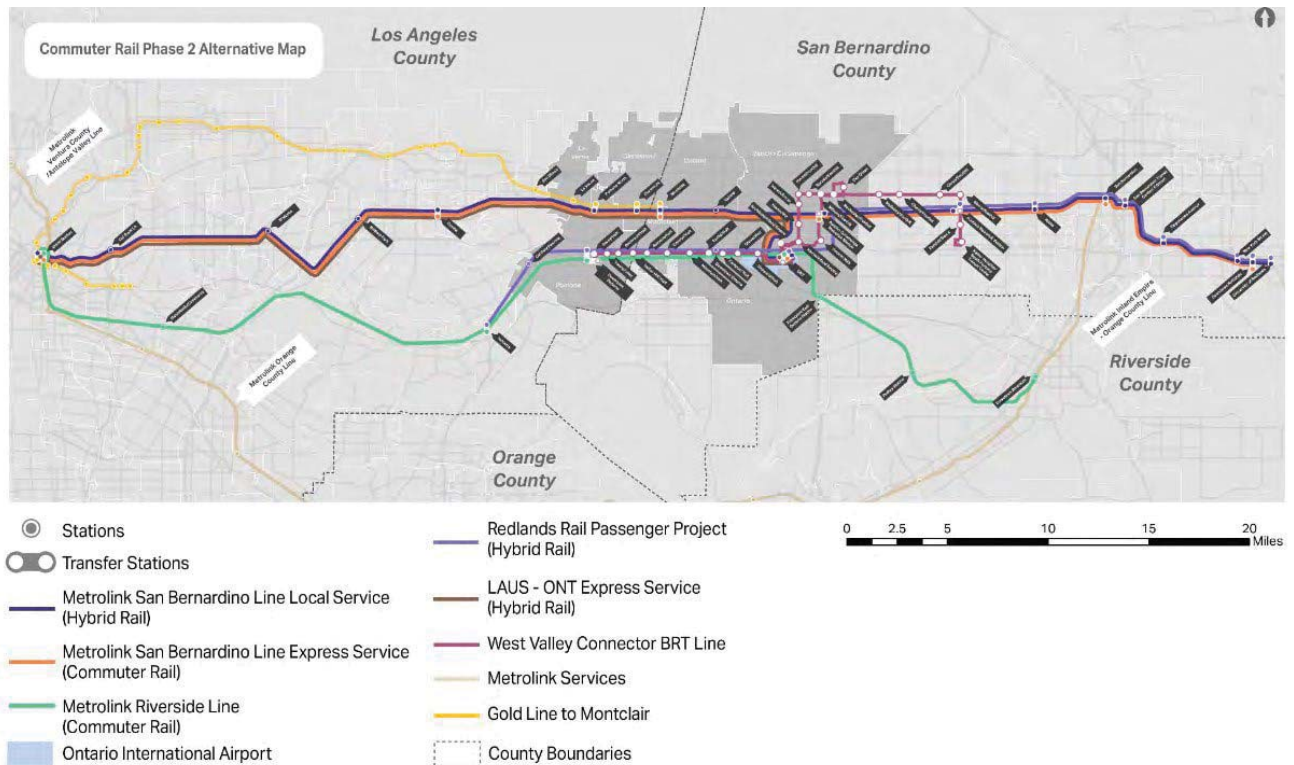
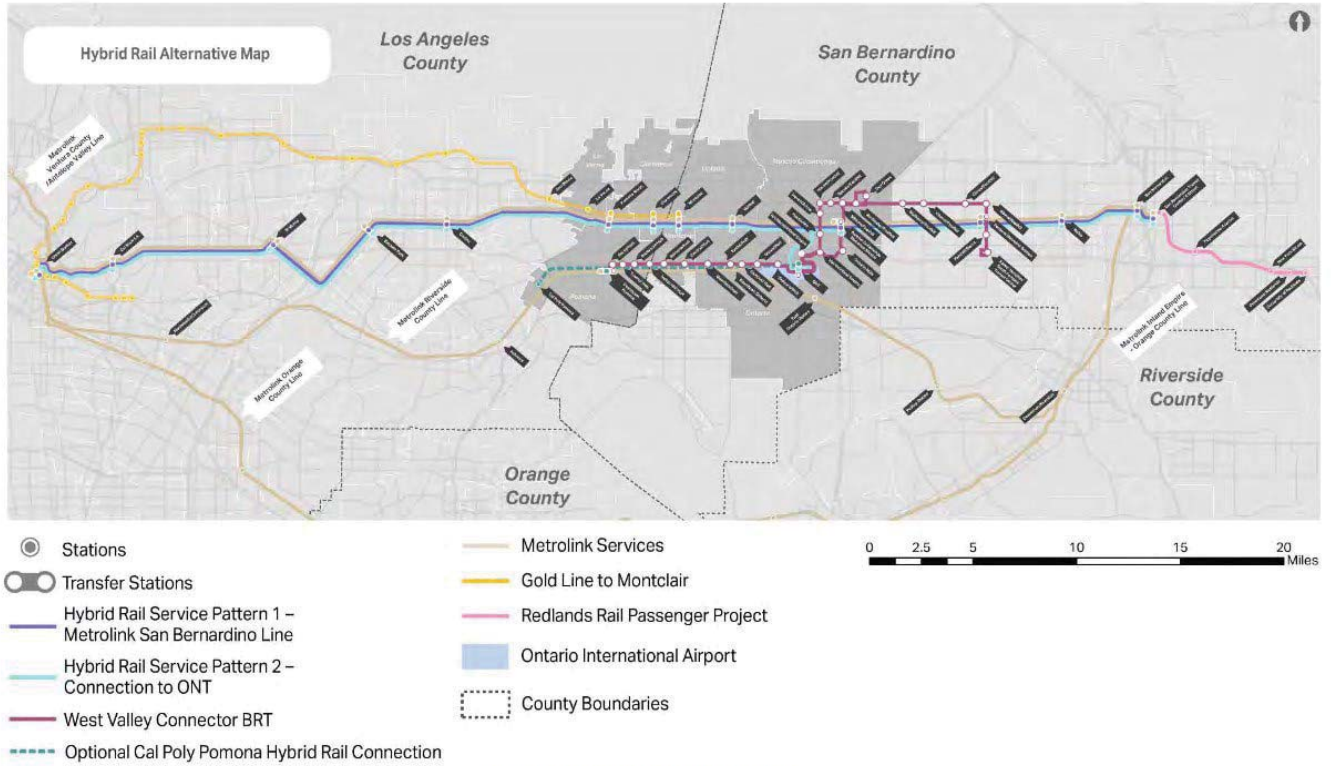


Figure 6 Commuter Rail Alternative Phase 2





**From:** [Cody Regester](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 34: ONT Connector  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 4:05:04 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chair Marquez, SBCTA Board Members, and ONT Connector Project Staff,

My name is Cody Regester, and I am a resident of Yucaipa, an ONT airport passenger, and a Metrolink rider. I would like to comment on the EIR and express my strong opposition to the Ontario International Airport (ONT) Connector project as proposed. As a proponent of effective and fiscally-responsible public transit in San Bernardino County, I am deeply concerned that the proposed model will not meet our region's needs for reliable, scalable, and safe transit between ONT and Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink/Future Brightline West Station.

Key concerns about the ONT Connector's Build Alternative that must be addressed:

- **Limited Capacity:** The project's peak throughput of 100 passengers per hour is inadequate compared to the project's own required capacity of 300 per hour and the 20,000-100,000 per hour achievable by BRT, light rail, or heavy rail, failing to address future demand at ONT and the Rancho Cucamonga/Brightline Station.
- **Safety & Emergency Concerns:** The Boring Company's Las Vegas Loop, a similar model that is privately operated, has been plagued by traffic, slowdowns, confusion among drivers, and serious safety and EMS concerns during construction and in operation.
- **Costs & Funding Risks:** The \$490+ million estimate for this project is likely understated, given LA Metro light rail costs at similar project lengths ranging from \$1-7 billion. Address funding instability and sources, given that the project is severely uncompetitive, receiving \$0 from the most recent round of California TIRCP grants.
- **Redundant Shuttle Service:** This project will duplicate above-ground ONT Connect shuttle service and West Valley Connector BRT without enhancing capacity. Is this project even necessary?
- **Environmental Impacts:** This project will increase VMT and emissions during construction and will be ineffective in reducing long-term congestion, air pollution, or greenhouse gas compared to rail due to limited service capacity for mode shift. Provide an honest analysis of the proposed project vs rail alternatives with regards to VMT, congestion, and emissions.

SBCTA should pursue real rail alternatives, as recommended in prior studies in 2008, 2014, and 2018. Options such as a Metrolink Riverside Line extension West to ONT and a Brightline West/Metrolink San Bernardino Line extension South to ONT would be more competitive for state and federal transit funding and better suited for future demand.

I ask the board to prioritize high-capacity, reliable rail solutions to meet San Bernardino

County's long-term transportation needs, and reject the low-capacity, high-risk, unreliable model in the Build Alternative that fails to provide the transit service our region deserves.

Sincerely,  
Cody Register  
Yuciapa, San Bernardino County

**From:** [Andrew Cobb](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** No to low capacity car tunnels as ONT connection  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 4:10:57 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi there! As someone who uses both public transit and ONT frequently I do not support a low capacity, high cost solution like the Tesla tunnels in Vegas, which I found to be slow and have long wait times. Light rail connections or bus rapid transit would be better, especially one to the LA Metro A line, if that was built I would fly ONT over Burbank every time I could!

Andrew Cobb

**From:** [Benjamin Hillman](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 34: No Tesla Tunnels  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 4:16:51 PM

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I am writing in opposition to these gadgetbahn tunnels and strongly encourage the board to look at proven rail based technologies instead.

**From:** [DAVID TRAN](#)  
**To:** [ONTconnector](#)  
**Cc:** [clerkoftheboard](#); [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** ONT Connector DEIR Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 4:33:53 PM

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Dear Chair Marquez, SBCTA Board Members, and ONT Connector Project Staff,

My name is David Tran, and I am a resident of Canoga Park, an ONT airport passenger, and a Metrolink rider. I would like to comment on the DEIR and express my strong opposition to the Ontario International Airport (ONT) Connector project as proposed. As a proponent of effective and fiscally-responsible public transit in San Bernardino County, I am deeply concerned that the proposed model will not meet our region's needs for reliable, scalable, and safe transit between ONT and Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink/Future Brightline West Station.

Key concerns about the ONT Connector's Build Alternative that must be addressed in the EIR:

- **Limited Capacity:** The project's peak throughput of 100 passengers per hour is inadequate compared to the project's own required capacity of 300 per hour and the 20,000-100,000 per hour achievable by BRT, light rail, or heavy rail, failing to address future demand at ONT and the Rancho Cucamonga/Brightline Station.
- **Safety & Emergency Concerns:** The Boring Company's Las Vegas Loop, a similar model that is privately operated, has been plagued by traffic, slowdowns, confusion among drivers, and serious safety and EMS concerns during construction and in operation.
- **Costs & Funding Risks:** The \$490+ million estimate for this project is likely understated, given LA Metro light rail costs at similar project lengths ranging from \$1-7 billion. Address funding instability and sources, given that the project is severely uncompetitive, receiving \$0 from the most recent round of California TIRCP grants.
- **Redundant Shuttle Service:** This project will duplicate above-ground ONT Connect shuttle service and West Valley Connector BRT without enhancing capacity. Is this project even necessary?
- **Environmental Impacts:** This project will increase VMT and emissions during

construction and will be ineffective in reducing long-term congestion, air pollution, or greenhouse gas compared to rail due to limited service capacity for mode shift. Provide an honest analysis of the proposed project vs rail alternatives with regards to VMT, congestion, and emissions.

SBCTA should pursue real rail alternatives, as recommended in prior studies in 2008, 2014, and 2018. Options such as a Metrolink Riverside Line extension West to ONT and a Brightline West/Metrolink San Bernardino Line extension South to ONT would be more competitive for state and federal transit funding and better suited for future demand.

I ask the board to prioritize high-capacity, reliable rail solutions to meet San Bernardino County's long-term transportation needs, and reject the low-capacity, high-risk, unreliable model in the Build Alternative that fails to provide the transit service our region deserves.

Furthermore, the prioritization of rail will assist California in achieving its transportation ambitions outlined in the California 2025 State Rail Plan and provide a seamless connection with many other rail lines across the state. If ONT is to become a major competing airport in the 21st century, rail is the only serious option that would come even close to meeting projected travel demands. Consider the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) Automated People Mover (APM) set to open early 2026: ridership projections are 30 million per year, resulting in 117,000 fewer vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per day. The ONT Connector comes nowhere close to this ridership, and even though LAX has much higher passenger volume currently, ONT is seeking to expand its presence into the 21st century. If approved in its current state, this ONT connector project would only highlight bureaucratic corruption and incompetence, as the Tesla tunnels being recommended in the DEIR would easily fail to alleviate current (and future projected) passenger traffic during peak hours.

Why spend billions of dollars if the passenger throughput of these Tesla tunnels is about equivalent to that of a bus? SBCTA should invest in the best option possible, even if costs are expensive right now. If current inflation trends continue, now is the best time to build infrastructure megaprojects that will meet and satisfy travel demands for the decades to come, as it may become even more cost-prohibitive in the future than it is currently.

I urge the selection of any future-proof, high-capacity rail option that will truly benefit travelers while saving our environment.

Sincerely,  
David L. Tran  
Canoga Park, Los Angeles County

====

**David Tran | B.S. in Aerospace Engineering from the University of California, Los Angeles | M.S. candidate in Aerospace Engineering at UCLA**



**From:** [Leo Shahbazian](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** March 5th Board Meeting, Agenda Item 34  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 4:34:40 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I oppose the ONT Connector in its current state.

The stated throughput capacity of 100 people per hour is not sufficient nor is it what the region deserves for our near and long term growth. If the airport is to become as popular as we hope, this ONT Connector will not be a contributing factor.

This project would be a waste of taxpayer funds and would only result in the region being set back for decades. LAX is only just now getting a rail connection in anticipation of the 2028 Olympics. Can you imagine a similar rush of traffic at ONT and how poorly this system would handle that?

I ask that you do not certify the Final Environmental Impact Report and do not approve the project as it is now. It is a waste of money, time, and an insult to our region.

Thank you,  
Leo Shahbazian  
92507



**From:** [Erik Griswold](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on Item Number 34 for the Board of Directors Meeting of March 5, 2025  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 4:38:38 PM

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To the Clerk of the Board,

I would like to enter the following comment on Agenda Item 34 for the Board of Directors Meeting of March 5, 2025 on the "ONT Connector: Adopt Final Environmental Impact Report"

To the Board,

Following on to my comment which I was grateful to see included in the Final Environmental Impact Report presented to you today by staff, I would encourage the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority to find another way to build a connection between the Rancho Cucamonga Station and the Ontario International Airport.

In comment I-38-1 shown on page 135 of the 512 page PDF version of the EIR, I gave you many options that would do the same job at much lower cost and with longer-term employment for local residents through non-automated operation.

Even in the places around the world which have adopted driverless mini-Metros such as Honolulu, Vancouver, Copenhagen and London's Docklands, we see that tunneling is only used where necessary. Surface or Elevated construction is so very much cheaper and allows for additional stations to be added or subtracted without enormous expense.

In the meantime, how about operating a better, low floor bus (not a van conversion), with luggage racks, for free (so as to avoid fare payment method issues or disputes) between Rancho Cucamonga and Ontario International Airport now, with a possible expansion to serve the Pomona-North Station on the A-line when it opens later this year.

If a fee must be charged, please make sure debit/credit cards are also accepted and that joint ticketing with Metrolink and/or Metro's TAP card system be allowed. Perhaps this is selfish of me as I am usually the only rider on the existing Omnitrans 380 ONT Connect Van, but I think it would help attract more riders.

Thank you for your time and consideration. There is a great future for the Ontario International Airport, but boring tunnels does not need to play a role.

-Erik Griswold

Resident in Claremont, Los Angeles County, but frequent user of San Bernardino's Transportation Infrastructure and Services.

**From:** [Dale Stoica](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** ONT Connector comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 4:45:07 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Don't do the Tesla Tunnel option. It is a silly idea. The Tesla Tunnel lacks capacity and without capacity to move people, this entire project is waste. A waste of money. A waste of opportunity. Don't waste this opportunity to build a meaningful connection that actually moves people.

- Dale Stoica  
Inland Empire Resident and Traffic Engineer

**From:** [Gaughan, Casey \(Student\)](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Please Do Not Approve Ontario Connector Project  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 4:57:21 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear SBCTA Board Members,

My name is Casey Gaughan, and I am a medical student at Loma Linda University.

**As a resident of San Bernardino living on a student's budget, I encourage you to reject the current tunnel-based ONT Connector Project and pursue the multi-stop rail alternative.**

When my car broke down last year, I found myself struggling to find public transit that met my needs, including travel to and from the Ontario Airport. Efficient, accessible public transportation with multiple stops San Bernardino and Ontario would have been a huge help to me. Now that I have a working car again, I frequently drive families from my church on basic errands because the current public transit system does not meet their needs. **If the SBCTA develops a rail option with multiple stops, the wider community, not just Ontario airport users, could benefit.** We need this as a city.

**As a healthcare professional, I urge you to pursue a multi-stop rail alternative as the best option for the health of San Bernardino County Residents.** Our region has the worst air

quality in the country and is known for being car dependent. This is hurting all of our lungs, especially children and the elderly, and we need a culture shift away from car dependency.

**More cars are not the solution.** We need to move towards a network of reliable public transportation, and this project presents an opportunity to take a step in the right direction.

Lastly, **a high-functioning rail project would be something for our city to be proud of.** I see this whenever I visit my dad in Chicago and ride the Blue Line from O'Hare to his apartment: he and I always go on and on about how convenient it is and how great it is to live in an accessible city. Given the hazardous working conditions, mishaps, and overall ineffectiveness of the autonomous vehicle tunnels in Las Vegas, it seems that an autonomous vehicle tunnel is likely to turn into an embarrassment rather than a point of pride for our city.

Given this, I ask the board to prioritize high-capacity, reliable rail solutions to meet San Bernardino County's long-term transportation needs, and reject the low-capacity, high-risk, unreliable model in the Build Alternative that fails to provide the transit service our region deserves.

Sincerely,

Casey Gaughan

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** This e-mail communication and any attachments may contain confidential and privileged information for the use of the designated recipients named above. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this communication in error and that any review, disclosure, dissemination, distribution or copying of it or its contents is prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify me immediately by replying to this message and destroy all copies of this communication and any attachments. Thank you.

**From:** [Franz Kieviet](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 34 Public Comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 4:59:17 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi,

Below is a public comment that I had for the item 34 on the ONT Connector. Thank you!

The current plans for the ONT Connector are extremely short sighted and are a poor use of tax dollars. As someone used to fly to OAK (Oakland's airport) regularly, I loved being able to take the automated people mover to and from the airport to the mass transit station. The ONT at the very least should be something similar, but should cancel the project as proposed and look to building out a full fledged rail option. This project relies on unproved technology, (the current version in Vegas is a total mess and it does not function as a public transportation option, not to mention that it struggles to move people efficiently because of how space inefficient it is). Please reject the current plans and consider a rail option.

**From:** [Brianna Egan](#)  
**To:** [clerkoftheboard](#); [REDACTED] [ONTconnector](#)  
**Subject:** SBCTA Board Meeting 3/5/25 - Agenda Item #34 Comment Letter  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 4:59:36 PM  
**Attachments:** [ONT Connector FEIR Coalition Letter.pdf](#)

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chair Marquez and Members of the SBCTA Board,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, I am submitting the attached comment letter on Agenda Item #34 for tomorrow's board meeting.

Thank you for considering our concerns and recommendations.

Brianna Egan  
Inland Empire Urbanists

**San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA)**

Ray Marquez, SBCTA Chair ( [REDACTED] )

SBCTA Board ([clerkoftheboard@gosbcta.com](mailto:clerkoftheboard@gosbcta.com))

ONT Connector Project Team ([ONTconnector@gosbcta.com](mailto:ONTconnector@gosbcta.com))

1170 W. Third Street, 2nd Floor

San Bernardino, CA 92410

**March 4, 2025**

**Subject:** Opposition to ONT Connector Project and Final EIR Certification (Agenda Item 34)

**Dear Chair Marquez and Members of the SBCTA Board,**

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed Ontario International Airport (ONT) Connector Project and to urge the Board to reject the certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

We echo the positions expressed in organization letters provided during the environmental review process by Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice, Inland Empire Urbanists, Californians for Electric Rail, The Transit Coalition, and Rail Passengers Association of California and Nevada.

The proposed tunnel system lacks the capacity, reliability, and scalability needed to serve this critical transportation corridor effectively. Furthermore, the Final EIR fails to adequately assess proven rail and bus alternatives that could better serve Ontario International Airport (ONT), the Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink Station, and the future Brightline West high-speed rail station.

Moving forward with this project would represent a wasteful misallocation of public funds and public trust toward an unproven, low-capacity transit system rather than investing in a long-term, high-ridership solution for San Bernardino County.

**Key Concerns:**

1. **Limited Capacity:** The project's estimated peak one-way throughput of 100 passengers per hour is significantly lower than that of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), light rail, and heavy rail systems, which can accommodate between 20,000 to 100,000 passengers per hour. This disparity indicates that the proposed project will not meet the anticipated demand and [ridership](#) at ONT and the Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink/Brightline West Station.
2. **Unproven Model and Lack of Technical Specifications:** The project relies on a concept with no precedent for high-capacity public transportation. The most comparable project is The Boring Company's Las Vegas Loop, which is a [private system](#) that has faced operational limitations, congestion issues, and [OSHA citations](#). The Final EIR lacks detailed technical specifications on vehicle automation, vehicle model, capacity, projected ridership, operating costs, system reliability, and emergency response protocols aside from exit shafts, raising serious doubts about its feasibility.
3. **Safety and Reliability Risks:** The reliance on individual vehicles in a confined tunnel system raises concerns about emergency evacuations, system breakdowns, and traffic

bottlenecks. The Las Vegas Loop has demonstrated serious safety risks during construction and operation, highlighting the potential hazards of this model. As revealed in [multiple investigations](#), the project has faced serious labor violations and operates with little oversight or safety regulation.

4. **Inadequate Alternatives Analysis:** The Draft and Final EIR fail to properly evaluate rail alternatives, despite previous SBCTA studies (2008, 2014, and 2018) recommending rail as the most effective mode for this corridor. The [2024 California State Rail Plan](#) calls for a passenger rail connection between ONT and Rancho Cucamonga, integrating Metrolink and future high-speed rail. In justifying withdrawal of rail options, the FEIR Master Response 1 states (FEIR 3-11): “the capacity of such a rail system would exceed projected ridership to the extent that such a service would no longer be feasible, and the cost of constructing it would not be justified.” Environmental documents did not fully develop bus and rail alternatives with updated routes, feasibility, and cost per mile and cost per rider estimates.
5. **High Costs and Financial Uncertainty:** The current project estimate exceeds \$490 million; however, comparable projects by LA Metro have ranged from \$1 to \$7 billion for similar lengths of projects involving underground tunneling. Actual costs could be significantly higher than projected. This project, with low projected ridership and unproven technology, received [zero dollars](#) during California TIRCP Cycle 7, lacks a viable funding pathway and risks burdening taxpayers with future cost overruns.
6. **Redundant with Existing Transit:** The project appears to duplicate existing above-ground bus services, such as the ONT Connect shuttle and the forthcoming West Valley Connector BRT, without offering improvements in service capacity. Public funds should not be spent on a redundant system that offers no significant service improvement. This corridor would be better served by investing SBCTA resources and funding into improving service frequencies for [Omnitrans Line 380](#) and the [West Valley Connector BRT](#).
7. **Environmental Impacts:** Construction is expected to increase Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), congestion, and adversely affect air quality. When built, the limited capacity and lack of integration with regional transit networks makes the project unlikely to reduce VMT, traffic congestion, or greenhouse gas emissions in an effective way, especially when compared to bus and rail alternatives. Environmental justice was cited as a reason to reject rail options, despite the proven benefits that rail and electrified rail provides to reduce air pollution and improve regional mobility for communities affected by environmental injustices.

The ONT Connector Project is fundamentally incompatible with the California State Rail Plan, which envisions a robust, interconnected rail network to support regional mobility and specifically calls for a heavy rail connection between Ontario International Airport (ONT), Rancho Cucamonga, San Bernardino, and Riverside, integrating Metrolink and future high-speed rail services

By investing in a redundant and inadequate solution, the ONT Connector diverts critical funding away from bus and rail alternatives that would better serve projected ridership, improve regional transit access and integration, and advance with the County’s and California’s goals of providing high-quality public transportation.

At this critical point, we urge the Board to reject certification of the Final EIR, refrain from allocating public funds to the project, and conduct a comprehensive and revised alternatives



analysis. In the short-term, we encourage the Board to focus on the Omnitrans Line 380 and West Valley Connector BRT and in the long-term, to develop and advance a passenger rail connection between ONT and Rancho Cucamonga Station in line with prior studies and the State Rail Plan.

**Recommendations:**

1. **Reject Certification of the Final EIR:** Given the concerns outlined, we urge the Board to reject the certification of the Final EIR for the ONT Connector project.
2. **Refrain from Allocating Public Funds:** We recommend that zero public funds be allocated to the ONT Connector Project, including County BRT funds. We recommend allocating these funds to Omnitrans Line 380 frequency improvements and West Valley Connector BRT infrastructure and service development.
3. **Conduct a Comprehensive Alternatives Analysis:** We request an addendum to the EIR that includes a full analysis of rail and bus alternatives, detailing updated routes, feasibility, and projected costs per rider and per mile. This analysis should revisit rail alternatives between these high-demand travel centers, as explored in the 2008, 2014, and 2018 studies. Potential options include DMU, EMU, or LRT extensions of Metrolink, High-Speed Rail, Arrow, or Metro Gold Line routes.

We believe that a thorough reassessment of the project's feasibility and alternatives is essential to ensure that San Bernardino County invests in a transportation solution that is safe, proven, and capable of meeting future demand.

Thank you for considering our concerns and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Brianna Egan, Inland Empire Urbanists  
Loma Linda, CA

Adriana Rizzo, Californians for Electric Rail  
Riverside, CA

Marc Vukceovich, Streets For All  
Statewide, California

Bart Reed, The Transit Coalition  
Los Angeles, CA



**From:** [Pall Kalmansson](#)  
**To:** [ONTconnector](#)  
**Cc:** [clerkoftheboard](#); [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** ONT Connector  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 5:00:03 PM

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Dear Chair Marquez, SBCTA Board Members, and ONT Connector Project Staff,

My name is Quinn, and I am a resident of Loma Linda, an ONT airport passenger, and a Metrolink rider. I would like to comment on the DEIR and express my strong opposition to the Ontario International Airport (ONT) Connector project as proposed. As a proponent of effective and fiscally-responsible public transit in San Bernardino County, I am deeply concerned that the proposed model will not meet our region's needs for reliable, scalable, and safe transit between ONT and Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink/Future Brightline West Station.

Key concerns about the ONT Connector's Build Alternative that must be addressed in the EIR:

- **Limited Capacity:** The project's peak throughput of 100 passengers per hour is inadequate compared to the project's own required capacity of 300 per hour and the 20,000-100,000 per hour achievable by BRT, light rail, or heavy rail, failing to address future demand at ONT and the Rancho Cucamonga/Brightline Station.
- **Safety & Emergency Concerns:** The Boring Company's Las Vegas Loop, a similar model that is privately operated, has been plagued by traffic, slowdowns, confusion among drivers, and serious safety and EMS concerns during construction and in operation.
- **Costs & Funding Risks:** The \$490+ million estimate for this project is likely understated, given LA Metro light rail costs at similar project lengths ranging from \$1-7 billion. Address funding instability and sources, given that the project is severely uncompetitive, receiving \$0 from the most recent round of California TIRCP grants.
- **Redundant Shuttle Service:** This project will duplicate above-ground ONT Connect shuttle service and West Valley Connector BRT without enhancing capacity. Is this project even necessary?
- **Environmental Impacts:** This project will increase VMT and emissions during

construction and will be ineffective in reducing long-term congestion, air pollution, or greenhouse gas compared to rail due to limited service capacity for mode shift.  
Provide an honest analysis of the proposed project vs rail alternatives with regards to VMT, congestion, and emissions.

SBCTA should pursue real rail alternatives, as recommended in prior studies in 2008, 2014, and 2018. Options such as a Metrolink Riverside Line extension West to ONT and a Brightline West/Metrolink San Bernardino Line extension South to ONT would be more competitive for state and federal transit funding and better suited for future demand.

I ask the board to prioritize high-capacity, reliable rail solutions to meet San Bernardino County's long-term transportation needs, and reject the low-capacity, high-risk, unreliable model in the Build Alternative that fails to provide the transit service our region deserves.

Sincerely,  
Quinn Kalmansson  
Loma Linda, San Bernardino County