

What is BRT?

BRT stands for Bus Rapid Transit. Bus Rapid Transit is a transportation system that combines the *efficiency* of trains with the *flexibility* of buses. It includes stations and stops, exclusive lanes and rapid transit vehicles. A network of BRT lines is analogous to a subway system running above ground on roads, highways, and – in some cases – its own right-of-way.

How is it different from regular buses?

Technological improvements allow BRT vehicles to travel faster, cleaner, and more reliably than regular buses. BRT vehicles can by-pass congested traffic signals, collect fares electronically, and provide real-time travel information to riders.

What will it do for me?

BRT has the ability to provide a mass transit option on many roads which do not carry transit or have only limited bus service. New mass transit options enable you to leave your car – or one or more of your family’s cars - at home. You can save the money you previously spent on insurance, gas and tolls, repairs, and the time and stress of driving.

Will BRT work in Bergen County?

Bergen County already has an extensive bus system and a proven track-record of high bus ridership. It has the mix of urban and suburban areas where BRT would work well. BRT can benefit current bus riders, but its main benefit is making mass transit more attractive to those who could or would not entertain this option before, by providing efficient, flexible, and premium service to key destinations.

Isn't that going to be expensive?

Bergen County, in cooperation with NJ Transit, has been working toward securing Federal transportation funding in the form of grants and earmarks for rapid transit technologies. Any BRT system would be designed to make the maximum use of existing resources and leverage existing transportation funding that the County and State receive.

Will it be good for the environment?

Yes. Greater use of mass transit means less driving and less congestion and therefore less emission of “greenhouse gases” such as carbon dioxide and other by-products of automobile use. BRT vehicles can be powered using clean fuels or built as hybrids.

Where is BRT being used already?

Hundreds of cities worldwide have BRT systems and hundreds more are being planned, including systems in New York, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, and Las Vegas, just to name a few.

What is the status of a Bergen County BRT?

The Department of Planning is working with NJ Transit on preliminary studies to identify appropriate routes and technologies for Bergen County and pursuing grant funding opportunities.

What will BRT look like?

The pictures in the next column are a sampling of BRT vehicles. More pictures and information can be found at the National Bus Rapid Transit Institute (<http://www.nbrti.org/>) and from the USDOT.

