

HighRoad vs. Bus Rapid Transit

(Based on estimated 64.5 mile system - Atlanta Region NW Quadrant)

	Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	HighRoad Rapid Transit
Public cost of start-up	Low. State provides \$100 million down, balance of \$1.573 billion from State Revenue Bonds.	Low. State provides \$100 million down, balance of \$1.84 billion from private investment and State Revenue Bonds.
Cost of operations	Much higher due to many drivers and support personnel needed with cost of salaries and benefits	Lowest due to automation, which offsets higher cost of construction and provides higher pay and benefits.
Public Budget subsidy requirement	Requires \$65 million State subsidy each year, every year, for system life	None required ever. Has profit potential for the State.
Route flexibility	Once established, substantial disruption and cost to change	Pre-cast segmented guideway and stations can be relocated. Flexible.
Interaction with traffic & pedestrians	People and buses at same level, more traffic hazards	None. Elevated, above congestion with controlled access. Safest.
Service frequency for rider	More frequent due to need for more buses to move passengers.	Provides faster trip to destination due to faster vehicle speed.
Commute time	Slower due to bus acceleration and delays loading and unloading.	Faster by 50% due to being above road and more efficient practices.
Capacity of system	Meets basic need, but has seriously limited growth potential in region.	Meets needs now, grows to capacity of heavy rail (MARTA) but at lower cost.
Average speed	Same as auto average, 27 mph	Higher than auto or BRT, 39 mph.
Station locations	Requires land adjacent to highway corridor, can be intrusive in neighborhoods and intersections.	Spans existing roadway and away from congested roads with elevated design.
Handicap accessibility	Compliant with ADA, but slow as driver must assist ADA passengers board and depart. Can clog system.	Compliant with ADA, faster with independent direct roll-on / roll-off access, no delays for ADA patrons..
Pollution – air	Substantial from fossil fuels, rubber particulates from tires, CO2, H2S.	None, since electric motors with steel wheels cannot pollute.
Pollution – noise	Substantial from fossil engines and tire noise on roadway	Very low with electric motors and quiet rail design.
Route maintenance disruption	Repaving for bus loads requires lengthy disruption and can impact adjacent lanes of traffic. Repaving not included.	Guideway maintenance is part of standard operation at night; does not affect service or road traffic below.
Vehicle control risks	Driver operation exposes passengers, pedestrians and traffic to risks from steering and braking. Not suitable for ice or flood conditions.	Automated (triple-redundant) and grade-separated operation offers less risk. Provides all-weather protected safe operation.

Fuel supply reliability	Fossil fuels are subject to world politics, weather and cost variables.	Electric supply is reliable and can be quickly re-routed on alternate circuits for weather or other interruptions
Fuel costs expectations	Fossil fuels are expected to increase in price as world-wide demand increases, raising costs of operation.	Electricity is a renewable "green" fuel supplied from wind, water, wood, gas, coal and nuclear sources.
Municipal budget impact	\$65 million State annual operation subsidy required with increases needed to expand operation; paid by users and non-users alike.	None. Private funding could add to State base funding, with operation covered by fares. (no subsidy, ever)
Market attraction	Low appeal to people who have alternative private autos, mundane bus image creates lower ridership and downward pressure on fares, requiring subsidy.	21st Century image more comparable to upscale air travel; Panoramic, elevated view at high speed attracts ALL riders with high commute speed and more value from faster service.
Regional commuter and intercity High Speed Rail potential	Minimal potential beyond metropolitan areas, since BRT's top speed is less than most cars. Increased need for subsidies not fiscally sound.	High potential; HighRoad interfaces easily with the affordable 214 mph high speed intercity and commuter rail version which uses the same guideway and stations design. Expands easily throughout region and nation.
Local jobs impact	Minimal; one-time highway lane and bus stop construction with vehicles manufactured elsewhere. Only operational positions would be available.	High; one-time construction of pre-cast concrete guideway and station components and vehicle assembly could be local. Worldwide growth would provide high skill local jobs..
Secondary budget impact	Negative impact from State payment of annual \$65 million operating subsidy, not sustainable if expanded.	Highly positive; avoids subsidies, creates global industry in Georgia, very sustainable and expandable.
State total cost:	\$100 million to start, plus \$65 million per year subsidy State: \$2.05 billion total (increasing).	\$100 million to start. No annual subsidy needed State: \$100 million total.