Critics of subways often argue, correctly, that they are very, very expensive. They argue much less correctly that they aren't worth it from a cost-benefit perspective. (I'll believe when they add in the subsidies for roads and automobiles, price auto traffic like they do with rail, and stop using tendentious examples to criticize high-speed rail). That said, if you could do mass transit at a much lower cost than rail, you'd have to consider it seriously.

In Los Angeles, the problem is that building more buses can't really solve the traffic problem because the buses would have to compete with the already existing traffic. Or would they?

Enter the straddling bus, which is being pioneered in China. You can see the concept: essentially, it goes over automobiles. Interesting.

But before we get all hot and bothered about this, I'd want to see first some evidence that it will work: all the images from the New York Times piece about it are renderings. The piece lists ***zero*** examples of it actually working, although it claims that the Chinese will start building them at the end of this month. Besides, I'd be very interested to see some of the traffic safety implication of this. For example: what happens when a motorist tries to turn left or right and then crashes into the straddling bus? Somebody must have thought about this, right? ***Right?***

Still, it's a really intriguing idea.