



NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

RCTC Seeking Consulting Support for Project Development of I-15 Express Lanes, Corona to Lake Elsinore

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) issued a Request for Qualifications to consulting firms yesterday morning to begin studies for a proposed extension of the Interstate 15 Express Lanes between Cajalco Road in Corona and State Route 74 (Central Avenue) in Lake Elsinore.

In March, the California Transportation Commission approved funding to study the I-15 Express Lanes Project Southern Extension, subject to the new gasoline tax remaining in place. California voters rejected Proposition 6 on November 6, which preserves the state transportation funding allocated for this project.

Once selected, the consultant will conduct preliminary engineering and environmental studies to support an Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for the proposed project. The 14.5-mile segment would extend from Corona, through the unincorporated Riverside County community of Temescal Valley, and into Lake Elsinore. The project proposes adding two Express Lanes in both directions within the I-15 median. The estimated five-year environmental process is lengthy, due to the complexity of the

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project corridor, which crosses multiple jurisdictions, widens 14 bridges, and may affect numerous waterways.

“This is a great first step in the process of removing the traffic bottlenecks in the Temescal Valley and throughout the 15 corridor,” said Riverside County Supervisor Kevin Jeffries.

“Local residents are begging for solutions, and while the project still has a long way to go, this is a nice show of good faith from RCTC and the California Transportation Commission.”

The project would expand Riverside County’s Express Lanes network and provide a new transportation option for motorists in southwestern Riverside County. After completion of the engineering and environmental studies, RCTC expects to use a design-build approach to expedite project delivery. Construction could start as early as 2025, and the new lanes could open in 2028, if funding is secured.

The total project cost is estimated to be \$544 million and is not fully funded. RCTC is exploring federal, state, and local sources, as well as future toll revenues, for funding.

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