



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **15 Express Lanes May Look Complete, but Riverside County Transportation Commission Urges Motorists, “Don’t Go There: Crews Still at Work”**

Miles of new pavement fill the median of Interstate 15 in Jurupa Valley, Eastvale, Norco, and Corona. Lanes are striped, sound walls are built, lights are up, and tolling equipment is in place. To most drivers, the new lanes look ready for customers – but they are not.

The Riverside County Transportation Commission, the lead agency for the design, construction, and operation of the 15 Express Lanes, is working with its construction contractor to complete remaining items along the 15-mile corridor. These “punch-list” items will take time to complete, and crews remain on site.

RCTC also began testing its tolling system August 17 with multiple vehicles traveling in the new lanes. Testing the equipment will take several months, followed by system adjustments to prepare for the lanes to open in December, schedule and weather permitting.

While these last few months of work are under way, RCTC is cautioning drivers, **“Don’t Go There: Crews Still at Work,”** using a public education campaign to keep drivers from the lanes before they officially open to customers.

“The 15 Express Lanes may look ready, but our essential workers are still hard at work, night and day,” said RCTC Chair Ben J. Benoit. “This is still an active construction site. Don’t place the lives of our crews in danger by illegally using these lanes before they are open.”

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## **“Don’t Go There” Campaign**

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Orange barrels currently separate the 15 Express Lanes from the general-purpose lanes, and multiple signs along the shoulder state that the lanes are closed. Drivers who trespass in the lanes can receive a CHP citation, and fines are doubled in construction zones.

As the lanes approach opening day toward the end of the year, RCTC will provide information about how to open an account, toll rate schedules, and where to enter and exit the 15 Express Lanes.

RCTC, in partnership with Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration, began construction of the \$472 million project in April 2018. The project has added two express lanes in both directions in the I-15 median from Route 60 to Cajalco Road, widened 11 bridges, and built six sound walls.

This project is one of several that RCTC has under construction, including the Route 60 Truck Lanes between Moreno Valley and Beaumont, the I-15 Railroad Canyon Interchange in Lake Elsinore, the Pachappa Underpass in Riverside, and a Metrolink Layover Facility at the Riverside-Downtown Station. In Perris, construction of the I-215 Placentia Avenue Interchange, the first contract of the Mid County Parkway, will begin later this summer. Construction will start in 2021 of the 15/91 Express Lanes Connector, which will link the new southbound 15 Express Lanes to the westbound 91 Express Lanes, and the eastbound 91 Express Lanes to the northbound 15 Express Lanes.

Combined, these projects provide close to 10,000 jobs and are generating economic activity to help with Riverside County’s recovery from the current recession.