



NEWS RELEASE

Date September 20, 2021

Contact John Standiford
Deputy Executive Director
951.453.8249 Cell 951.787.7141 Office
jstandiford@rctc.org

For immediate release

Coming Soon: New Lane on Southbound I-15 in Corona/Temescal Valley

Increased traffic congestion on southbound Interstate 15 between Corona and the Temescal Valley has prompted the Riverside County Transportation Commission, with support of agency partners, to approve adding a new lane between the Cajalco Road interchange and the Weirick Road southbound off-ramp, next to the I-15 outer shoulder.

An expedited schedule would allow construction of the [I-15 Interim Corridor Operations Project](#) (known as the 15 ICOP) to start next spring and potentially be open in late summer or early fall 2022.

“RCTC recognizes the difficulties that motorists face on a daily basis in this heavily traveled area, and we are expediting this project to help provide traffic relief,” said RCTC Chair Jan Harnik, who also serves as the Palm Desert Mayor Pro Tem. “This interim project may offer some relief, especially during the peak afternoon and evening hours on southbound I-15 through Jurupa Valley, Eastvale, Norco, Corona, and the Temescal Valley,” she said.

Since the opening of the 15 Express Lanes in April, traffic congestion has grown where the tolled lanes terminate at Cajalco Road in Corona, due to vehicles merging and weaving to the general-purpose lanes. During weekday afternoons and weekend peak hours, it can take 30 minutes for drivers to travel the five-mile stretch on southbound I-15 between the 91 and Cajalco Road.

The ICOP is the result of an agency task force led by staff from RCTC, Caltrans, the City of Corona, and the County of Riverside. The group began meeting in June to study alternatives and develop near-term improvements to help improve traffic flow. The CHP also has provided input regarding safety and vehicle pull-over locations.

-- MORE --

Coming Soon: New Southbound I-15 Lane

Page 2 of 2

To add the new lane, crews would strengthen the pavement of the outer and inner I-15 shoulders to handle traffic loads for an interim three-year period until RCTC's [15 Corridor Operations Project](#) could be completed. The interim project would provide three 11-foot wide lanes, one 12-foot wide lane, a varying 3 to 8-foot wide outer shoulder, and a varying 2 to 5-foot wide inner shoulder on southbound I-15 between the Cajalco Road and Weirick Road interchanges.

RCTC staff will immediately begin environmental studies and design for the project. An aggressive construction procurement schedule would allow staff to request Commission approval of the construction contract in early 2022. This approach will save time to allow the new lane to open and provide congestion relief as soon as possible. Funding for the \$5 million project would be provided by Measure A sales tax revenue bond proceeds anticipated to be available from the 15 Express Lanes Project financing completed in July 2017.

###