

## Corridor Newsletter: Winter 2011/2012

### End of the Road!

By **Gustavo Dallarda, Corridor Director**

Eight years ago, ground was broken for a remarkable new project: the construction of 20 miles of Express Lanes in the middle of Interstate 15 stretching from State Route 163 in San Diego to State Route 78 in Escondido.

It's wonderful to announce that the Express Lanes are done.

I'd like to thank all the engineers and workers who got the job done right and you for your patience.

Now we are finishing the elements of the Bus Rapid Transit system, the first of its kind in San Diego County. Set to begin in 2013, the BRT will replace and greatly enhance the bus system that now uses the Express Lanes.

The BRT will provide more frequent service and improved trip times because it will take full advantage of the expanded Express Lanes system. The service people will receive from the BRT will be much more reliable.

For the new BRT, transit stations in this corridor also are undergoing renovation. A parking garage able to accommodate 500 more vehicles will be built at the Sabre Springs / Rancho Penasquitos Transit Station. Improvements will also be made to the Rancho Bernardo and Del Lago station to handle more buses.

The fifth and final Direct Access Ramp (DAR) will open in Mira Mesa in 2014. These ramps allow buses and other Express Lanes users to access them without having to navigate through the I-15 main lanes.

Now with the Express Lanes complete, travelers are getting to their destinations faster and traffic has eased. We look forward to adding the complementary elements to bring you the new BRT system next. In the mean time, enjoy the new Express Lanes system. These newsletters will continue to provide you updates of the progress we are making.



*Grand Opening: Malcolm Dougherty, Acting Director of the Department of Transportation*

### Adopt-A-Highway Program to be Ramped-Up Along the I-15 Express Lanes



*Adopt a ramp in your community*

Many ramps along the recently completed I-15 Express Lanes could be yours to adopt through Caltrans' Adopt-A-Highway program.

Caltrans is expanding the program to include ramps along major freeways.

Adopting ramps is a win-win-win. Community groups and businesses get recognized. The neighborhoods benefit because they become more welcoming when ramps are clean. And the I-15 Express Lanes - a signature project that has garnered national attention - are kept clean and beautiful.

When you adopt a ramp, an Adopt-A-Highway sign with your name on it is placed at the site to let travelers know who's behind the effort. You can choose from a number of clean-up and beautification options:

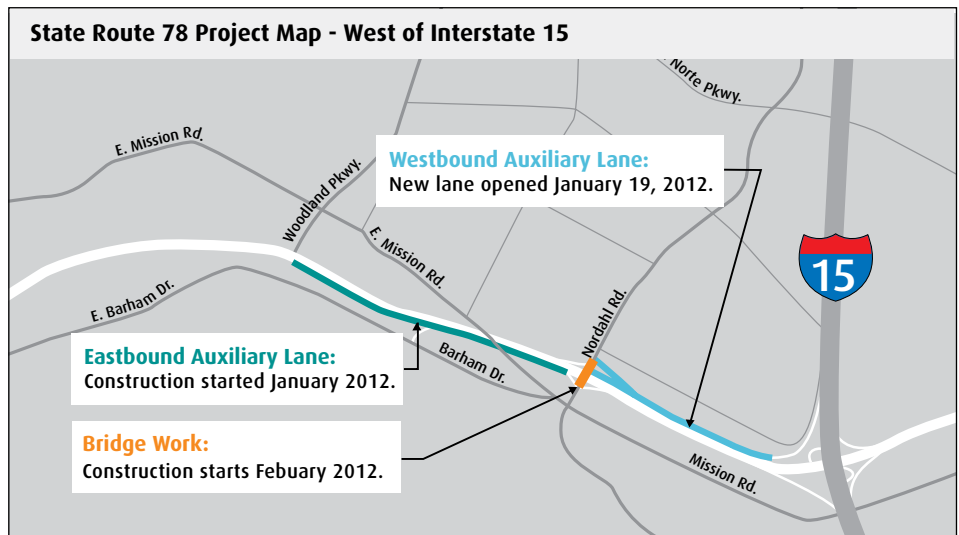
- ▶ Litter removal
- ▶ Vegetation control
- ▶ Tree and shrub planting
- ▶ Wildflower planting
- ▶ Graffiti removal

For more information, call Jose Estrada at (619) 688-3327.

## State Route 78 Update

State Route 78 (SR-78) will see three improvements in 2012: Two new auxiliary lanes and a new Nordahl Road bridge.

On westbound SR-78, a new auxiliary lane from the I-15 connector is now open and the project is nearly complete. Similarly, SR-78 eastbound is also adding an auxiliary lane. That work started in January. The Nordahl Road bridge replacement is anticipated to begin in February 2012. See the interview below with the person in charge of overseeing construction to learn more about this exciting project.



## Q & A with Faridun Javed: Senior Resident Engineer of the Nordahl Road Bridge Project



*Faridun Javed, Sr. Resident Engineer*

### Why is the project needed?

The project is needed to improve traffic conditions in the area, accommodate future demand and prepare for future express lanes on SR-78. These improvements will help traffic flow in this currently congested area and improve access to the nearby Interstate 15.

### What will be done at the Nordahl Road Bridge?

This project is a full bridge replacement. The new structure will be a lane wider than the current one to help motorists make left turns from the bridge onto the highway. It will be five feet higher from its center to improve clearance over SR-78. Also, the westbound and eastbound off-ramps to Nordahl Road will be widened to prevent vehicles from backing up onto the freeway.

### How familiar are you with this particular bridge and its traffic patterns?

We understand it very well. Our office is located less than one mile away, so I have driven and walked the bridge countless times during the day and at night to understand how motorists and pedestrians use it. This is a project that's close to home in more ways than one.

### What's being done to prevent travel inconvenience?

Construction will be a challenge because of the amount of car and pedestrian traffic the bridge carries. Throughout, we will maintain the current capacity of lanes and provide pedestrian access by building a temporary pedestrian bridge. Our goal is to keep closures to a minimum. Emergency responders will always have access to the bridge throughout construction.

### What do you like most about your job?

I feel it's an accomplishment that when a project is completed, we have helped get people where they need to go faster. Also, I enjoy knowing that the projects I undertake improve safety for everyone using the highway.



## Now that the Express Lanes are open, how can I use them?

Actually, you have a variety of ways. The Express Lanes are free to car and van poolers, public transit vehicles, motorcyclists and those driving permitted clean air vehicles. Solo drives can also take advantage of the Express Lanes by starting a FasTrak account. That's an electronic tolling system. You simply sign up and then mount an easy-to-use transponder on your windshield, which calculates your toll. To start an account, just go to [fastrak.511sd.com](http://fastrak.511sd.com) and sign up.

