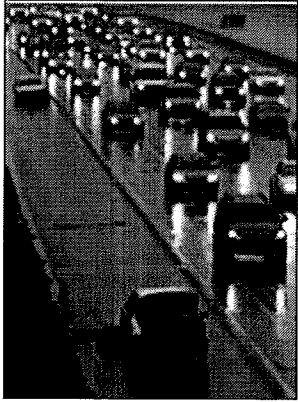


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## Local

### Officials: \$1B plan will improve drive to, from The City



Jason Goldman-Hall, The Examiner  
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**SAN FRANCISCO** - A new \$1 billion improvement project for one of the region's most congested freeways will improve the commute by adding carpool lanes and installing a network of sensors that will give commuters online information on traffic conditions, officials say.

Commuting on Interstate 580, a common route for people traveling between San Francisco and central California, regularly ranks as some of the worst driving in the Bay Area. In 2005, the morning commute toward San Francisco was named the third worst drive by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and the evening commute toward central California was named second worst.

(AP file photo)

Interstate 580 regularly ranks as one of the most congested routes in the Bay Area.

But after completion of the first phase of a long-running project, commuters will be able to quickly find out online how congested their commutes into or out of San Francisco will be. The information may later be translated into mobile alerts or text-based notices of changing traffic conditions.

"That Web site will be displaying a real-time image of where traffic is, to give the public a window into real-time issues, so people can really assess what their commutes look like," Alameda County Manager of Capital Projects Stefan Garcia said.

Today at 10 a.m., Congressman-elect Jay McNerney, D-Pleasanton, helps usher in the I-580 corridor improvement project. The first phase will provide commuters an up-to-date look at their commutes through a network of cameras and other sensors along I-580.

"The 11th District has the most congested highways in the state, and we want to help commuter traffic as much as we can," McNerney's press secretary, A.J. Carrillo, said.

The first phase, funded with \$10 million generated through bridge tolls, will install cameras and microwave sensors to count the speed and volume of traffic along 580.

The sensors will also provide more accurate information for 511.org, a Web site for Bay Area highway traffic that provides a color-coded indicator of congestion.

The second phase, which Garcia said could start in fall of 2007, will install new carpool lanes, improve existing road conditions and possibly extend bus lines into central California. Future work may also be influenced by the data collected by the new sensors. The entire corridor improvement project is expected to cost more than \$1 billion.

"These highways bisect several congressional districts, so they're all going to work together to secure funds," he said.

Drivers looking for information on the project can find it at [www.i580.info](http://www.i580.info).

*Examiner*