



For Immediate Release

Contact: Dave Hyams, Solem & Associates 415-296-2021

Cell: 415-260-9159

Brigetta Smith, Caltrans 501-286-5820

Cell: 510-715-7247

Congestion Relief – Work Begins on I-580 Carpool Lanes

First Northern California Project to Receive Prop 1B Bond Funds

(September 5, 2008) - The first shovel went into the ground today to build carpool lanes that will relieve congestion along Interstate 580 (I-580) in the Tri-Valley area of Alameda County, which is among the busiest stretches of highway in the state.

"This Proposition 1B funded project will decrease traffic congestion and help stimulate the area economy," said Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. "When the people of California voted in 2006 for Proposition 1B they wanted action - and this is part of that action."

The Alameda County Congestion Management Agency (CMA), in a joint program with Caltrans and local partners, began work on a fifth lane eastbound on I-580 from Hacienda Drive in Pleasanton to Greenville Road in Livermore. By the time the program is finished, there will be added express bus/carpool lanes eastbound and westbound along this 11-mile-long corridor. The project will also include fresh pavement across all lanes.

"At Caltrans we are working with our local partners across the state to relieve congestion and keep California moving" said Caltrans Director Will Kempton. "These partnership projects reach far beyond the project limits in terms of their impact. The benefits this project will bring to motorists are significant."

The \$153 million project in the Bay Area will be partially financed by funds from Proposition 1B, the \$20 billion bond measure approved by voters in November 2006 to relieve congestion. Funding was approved by the California Transportation Commission and disbursed through the state's Corridor Mobility Improvement Account.

"We are finally able to add a new lane to bring congestion relief in this corridor that is so important to the region and to the state," said Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty, chair of the CMA. "It is fitting that Interstate 580 is the first to receive corridor mobility improvement funding from Proposition 1B."

Director Will Kempton, Supervisor Scott Haggerty, U.S. Representative Jerry McNerney, State Senators Don Perata and Ellen Corbett, and Assembly members Guy Houston and Mary Hayashi were among the officials at today's groundbreaking.

The ceremony took place just east of the North Livermore exit, where a contractor's backhoe dug the first shovel-full of dirt from I-580's median. The new eastbound carpool lane is expected to open in 2010.

The I-580 corridor is one of the most congested in the Bay Area. The commute eastbound in the evening was the second worst in the Bay Area last year, and worst on a per-mile basis, according to a study released earlier this year by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, with more than 7,400 vehicle hours of delay every day. The westbound commute in the morning ranked third worst. Average daily traffic on I-580 east of I-680 is 205,000 vehicles. Daily traffic over the Altamont Pass is projected to increase 90% by the year 2030.

Pre-phases of this project began in late 2006 with the installation of traffic monitoring devices along I-580, I-680, and SR-84, as well as local arterials within the Tri-Valley.

"Each step we take is part of an overall plan to reduce (or manage) I-580's congestion," said Dennis Fay, Executive Director of the Congestion Management Agency. "The Agency is committed to working with federal, state and regional agencies to secure the necessary funding and implement improvements as quickly as practical."

Motorists can keep up-to-date on the I-580 Corridor improvements online at www.i580.info. The website has live camera views of traffic conditions as well as details on all aspects of the improvement projects.

"We're making sure all the pieces fit together," said Ray Akkawi, Deputy Director of the Congestion Management Agency. "Everything we are doing now is part of the long-range program to ensure that early improvements integrate seamlessly with future improvements."

###