



I-10 and I-15 Corridor Projects Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

General

1. When is construction for each of the projects anticipated to be completed?

Answer: Construction of the I-10 Corridor Project is expected to be completed in 2023. Construction of the I-15 Corridor Project, excluding the Cajon Pass segment, is expected to be completed in 2026.

Environmental

1. Why is it going to take 5 years for the San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) to complete the environmental review process for the I-10 Corridor Project?

Answer: The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and SANBAG are proceeding with an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the evaluation of the I-10 Corridor Project. More than 30 technical studies will be prepared to evaluate impacts to the communities within the I-10 corridor, including aesthetics, air quality/greenhouse gas emissions, water quality, community impact assessment, cultural/historical, cumulative effects, energy, growth, noise, parks/recreation, and traffic/circulation. The preparation of this draft environmental document is followed by public hearings, selection of a preferred alternative, and final project approval process.

2. When is the SANBAG Board anticipated to select an alternative for the I-10 Corridor Project?

Answer: The Draft EIR/EIS is expected to be released for public review by August 2015, with public hearings targeted for October 2015. The SANBAG Board will select an alternative following the public hearings, and the Final EIR/EIS is anticipated to be approved by Caltrans by August 2017.

3. When is the environmental process for the I-15 Corridor Project anticipated to start?

Answer: The environmental process for the I-15 Corridor Project would lag the I-10 Corridor Project environmental process by approximately 3 years, with an estimated start in 2015 and completion in 2020.

4. Is there sufficient right-of-way for both of the proposed projects? Are there significant or unavoidable right-of-way impacts?

Answer: One of the objectives of the project is to minimize right-of-way impacts to the properties adjacent to the freeway. Preliminary designs indicate that both the I-10 Corridor Project and the I-15 Corridor Project would require minimal right-of-way.



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High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes

1. Why aren't HOV lanes being considered for the I-15 Corridor Project?

Answer: SANBAG's Strategic Plan and 10-Year Delivery Plan financial analysis concluded that traditional transportation funds will not be adequate to construct additional lanes on the I-15 corridor without an additional source of funding, such as toll revenue.

2. Has SANBAG considered providing HOV lanes with continuous access?

Answer: Continuous access, where drivers can move in and out of the HOV lane at any point, is anticipated for the I-10 Corridor HOV Alternative.

3. Has SANBAG considered providing HOV lanes that limit access during peak hours only and opening access to all drivers during non-peak hours?

Answer: In addition to 2+ and 3+ occupancy requirements, peak-hour-only HOV requirements will be considered if allowed by State and Federal HOV policies.

4. What's the difference between HOV and Express Lanes?

Answer: HOV and Express Lanes are both considered to be managed lanes. HOV access is restricted by occupancy (number of people in the vehicle) only, and Express Lanes are restricted by occupancy and pricing.

5. What's the difference between Toll Lanes, High-Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes, Express Lanes, and Toll Roads?

Answer: Express Lanes were previously called toll lanes or HOT Lanes. Express Lanes are typically built as an addition to an existing roadway and offer motorists in single-occupant vehicles the choice to pay for access, while HOVs (i.e., carpools and vanpools) are offered access at no-cost or discounted rates. Toll Roads, however, are typically built as a separate road and charge all vehicles accessing the lanes a fee regardless of the number of occupants in the vehicle.

Express Lanes

1. How do Express Lanes improve traffic in the general purpose lanes?

Answer: During heavy congestion, general purpose lane throughput drops from 1,800 to 2,000 vehicles per lane per hour down to 1,000 or less. Express Lanes manage the traffic demand to maintain an optimal flow during congested periods of between 1,700 to 1,800 vehicles per hour per lane. By moving more vehicles at more efficient rates, the Express Lanes are able to draw more vehicles from the general purpose lanes, thereby improving the condition in the general purpose lanes.



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2. Why aren't the proposed I-15 Express Lanes extended north of US 395?

Answer: Preliminary financial studies have shown that Express Lanes would not generate sufficient usage to warrant the construction of the improvements beyond US 395. The studies are being reanalyzed to see if it warrants extending the Express Lanes.

3. What is the anticipated toll rate? How is pricing going to be configured?

Answer: Toll rates have not yet been established for the Express Lanes Alternative. Rates would be based on the amount of traffic traveling on the Express Lanes using congestion pricing. During peak periods, when there is more traffic, the toll would be higher to manage the number of drivers choosing to enter the lanes such that free-flow conditions would be maintained at all times. During off-peak periods, the toll would be lower because there would be less overall traffic demand. By changing the toll in response to the level of demand, Express Lanes are able to maintain optimal throughput and keep traffic flowing smoothly.

4. Will all drivers have to pay for access? Will there be access at no cost for carpoolers? If so, will the carpool requirement remain at 2+?

Answer: At this time, this policy issue has not been determined. However, it is likely that 3+ carpoolers would receive free or reduced-rate access into the Express Lanes. All other motorists would have to pay a toll based on the traffic congestion as described in the response to the question above.

5. What's the anticipated policy for energy-efficient vehicles? Will these vehicles have access at no-cost or reduced rates?

Answer: At this time, this policy issue has not been determined. However, it is unlikely that single-occupant "green" vehicles would receive free access into the Express Lanes.

6. Will there be toll booths? If not, how will users pay for access?

Answer: No, there would be no toll booths. Express Lane tolls would be collected via FasTrak transponder and/or Vehicle License Plate Recognition, which utilizes a camera to capture photographic video or images of license plates. The final toll collection method will be included in the operations policy to be developed at a later time.

7. If FasTrak transponders are required, will SANBAG be assessing a monthly maintenance fee?

Answer: Most, if not all, of the existing Express Lane facilities assess a monthly maintenance fee. For the two subject corridors, SANBAG has not made a determination on this policy issue.

8. How will Express Lanes be enforced?

Answer: Enforcement on the Express Lanes is a vital component to ensure that the lanes operate as planned. As such, a contract will be entered into with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to provide additional enforcement of the lanes.



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9. Will the Express Lanes offer continuous access or will there be designated ingress/egress points?

Answer: The Express Lanes will not have continuous access due to the need to manage the traffic utilizing the lanes by electronic tolling at the ingress and egress points. The Express Lanes would have designated ingress/egress points spaced approximately every 3 to 4 miles along the corridor.

10. How do out-of-state drivers pay for Express Lanes access?

Answer: The toll collection method has not been finalized, but it is anticipated that out-of-state drivers would be captured and billed by the Vehicle License Plate Recognition system.

11. How is the equity issue going to be addressed?

Answer: Equity of Express Lanes for low-income travelers is an issue that needs to be considered. For SANBAG to successfully implement tolling policies, those who are affected by the policies must believe that they have been treated fairly. To gain an understanding of this topic, an equity study has commenced. The scope of the study will be focused on low-income and transit-dependent populations. The study will determine if there is an equity issue and, if necessary, recommend means to mitigate the issue.

12. What funding sources have been identified for the proposed projects? Are there other funding sources available to cover the proposed improvements to the I-10 and I-15 corridors to avoid Express Lanes?

Answer: Funding of the projects will be a combination of Federal, State, and Measure I funds, and, if the Express Lane alternative is chosen, toll revenue. SANBAG's Strategic Plan and 10-Year Delivery Plan financial analysis concluded that traditional funding will only construct one additional lane on the I-10 corridor, but there is insufficient funding to construct two lanes without an additional source of funding, such as toll revenue. Traditional funds will not be available to construct one or two additional lanes on the I-15 corridor without an additional source of funding, such as toll revenue.

13. How will the toll revenue be spent and/or distributed to the impacted communities? Will revenue be used to fund mass transit improvements?

Answer: Express Lanes tolls will be used to pay for facility operations and maintenance and to retire debt incurred from bonds used to pay for the construction of each project. State legislation will dictate where any excess revenue can be spent. Typically, it needs to be spent on transportation improvements on or within a certain distance of the corridor where the tolls are collected. Mass transit may be included as an eligible expenditure.

14. Will tolling cease once the proposed Express Lanes have been paid back?

Answer: Tolling of the Express Lanes has two main purposes: (1) generate revenue, and (2) manage traffic at optimal throughput. Once the debt for the construction of the Express Lanes is



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retired, tolling is still expected to continue to manage the traffic at optimal levels in the Express Lanes.

15. Taxpayers have already paid for highways, so why should they be asked to pay again to use the Express Lanes? Is this not a form of double taxation?

Answer: Traditional taxes have paid for the existing freeways, but they are not adequate to construct the needed new lanes. According to the FHWA, vehicle miles traveled in this country have nearly doubled compared to the amount of new highway capacity added in the last 20 years. Even if traditional traffic funding sources were available, traffic demand cannot be accommodated by simply adding more lanes because of right-of-way constraints and high cost. Management of the added lanes is essential. Express Lanes provide a way to manage demand and optimize system performance while also providing additional revenue to construct the improvements.

16. Why isn't there enough gas tax revenue to fund the proposed I-10 and I-15 corridor projects?

Answer: The gasoline tax alone is not adequate to cover all needed freeway projects. The federal gas tax has not increased since 1993, and the California gas tax has not increased since 1994. Gas taxes have eroded due to inflation, and it is unlikely that our legislature will increase the tax in the near future. Adding to the problem, in the last 20 years, vehicles have become more fuel efficient, meaning less revenue for every mile driven for transportation improvements.

17. How is the addition of two Express Lanes in each direction going to affect the shoulder, which is used by first responders for emergency access?

Answer: To accommodate the Express Lanes, the freeway is going to be widened. The widened freeway will provide a 10-foot-wide outside shoulder for most of the length of the I-10 and I-15 corridor improvement projects.

Other Alternatives

1. Why isn't SANBAG considering a hybrid approach, which results in two additional lanes with one functioning as an HOV Lane and the other as an Express Lane?

Answer: Operating a single-lane HOV Lane next to a single-lane Express Lane presents several operational challenges, including reduced ability to enforce the HOV Lane, inability to pass slower-moving vehicles in the single HOV and single Express lanes, and complexities of signage. Furthermore, it would not be possible to present intermediate access points for the interior Express Lane, as it would be "blocked off" by the HOV Lane. It is worth noting that carpooling is a component of Express Lanes operation. The Express Lanes may have operation rules that would allow 3+ HOVs to ride for free or at a reduced rate, 2+ HOVs to ride for free or at a reduced rate, and single-occupant vehicles (SOVs) would pay a toll. In addition, revenue is not available to construct an HOV lane on both corridors.



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2. Why isn't there an alternative that proposes to add general purpose lanes?

Answer: Adding additional general purpose lanes is not compatible with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP proposes HOV improvements on I-10 within the project area, and it identifies a longer range aim of providing Express Lanes in the corridor. In addition, revenue is not available to construct general purpose lanes on both corridors.

3. Why isn't SANBAG considering truck lanes as an alternative?

Answer: Truck lanes are being studied under a separate project (East-West Freight Corridor) under the SCAG RTP. The SCAG plan has determined that, with the freight corridor in operation, additional capacity is needed on both I-10 and I-15.

4. Has SANBAG considered implementing reverse Express Lanes to address peak traffic demand?

Answer: SANBAG has considered and rejected reversible Express Lanes. Reversible Express Lanes would be suitable for corridors where the peak traffic demand is directional (e.g., heavy westbound demand in the morning rush hour and heavy eastbound demand in evening rush hour). Analysis of forecast traffic volumes on the I-10 and I-15 corridors indicates the peak traffic demand is not sufficiently directional to make reversible lanes suitable for this corridor. The exception to this is I-10 east of State Route (SR) 210, where the columns of the existing bridges are in conflict and would preclude reversible lanes, and I-15 through the Cajon Pass, where snow conditions make it difficult to operate a reversible lane system.

5. Why isn't SANBAG investing the available transportation funds on mass transit projects?

Answer: More frequent and new commuter rail and Express bus service is a critical part of future transportation plans for San Bernardino County. The reliable high speeds offered by Express Lanes would be an essential element in the success of any future Express bus service.

6. Have additional incentives been considered (e.g., carpooling, vanpooling, telecommuting)?

Answer: By providing a more reliable travel option, the HOV Lane and Express Lanes Alternatives would serve to encourage carpooling and vanpooling.