



THE I-10 & I-15 CORRIDOR PROJECTS



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

September 28, 2015

Purpose and Need

Why is SANBAG studying the I-10 and I-15 corridors?

The I-10 and I-15 corridors are major transportation arteries for travelers and goods throughout San Bernardino County and to neighboring counties. These corridors are already congested at peak commuting hours and will become worse as our county's population is expected to grow by 30 percent over the next 20 years.

How will SANBAG address the need for increased capacity?

With limited funding and land available to build out the I-10 and I-15, we must be creative in how we manage traffic as we grow. We cannot continue to build our way out of congestion by simply adding more General Purpose Lanes. We need to evaluate all of our options to make the best use of the space available on our freeways in order to most efficiently use limited public dollars. Managed Lanes, such as High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/Carpool Lanes or Express Lanes, are solutions that can improve traffic flow and give drivers a choice in how they travel on the freeway.

Why are Managed Lanes being considered?

Managed Lanes can improve traffic flow by managing either occupancy or pricing to give drivers a choice in how they travel on the freeway. Adding a HOV/Carpool Lane helps reduce the number of cars on the road by requiring a higher number of passengers in the vehicle. Studies show that this alternative provides limited relief in these two corridors as traffic is projected to become congested again in a HOV lane within a decade. These same studies are showing that adding Express Lanes, which manages congestion through pricing, can provide long-term congestion relief in all lanes.

Project Alternatives

What are the alternatives for the I-10 project?

There are three alternatives being considered on I-10 from the Los Angeles/San Bernardino County Line to Ford Street in Redlands: (1) No Build – looks at what might happen if no additional travel lanes or ramp improvements were to be built; (2) HOV Lane – the addition of a 25-mile extension of one HOV/Carpool Only Lane in each direction of I-10 between Haven Avenue in Ontario and Ford Street in Redlands; and (3) Express Lanes – the addition of 33 miles of Express Lanes in each direction between the Los Angeles/San Bernardino County line and Ford Street in Redlands. The number of General Purpose Lanes in any alternative would not be changed.

What are the alternatives for the I-15 project?

There are two alternatives being considered on the I-15 from SR 60 to US 395: (1) No Build – looks at what might happen if no additional travel lanes or ramp improvements were to be built; and (2) Express Lanes – the addition of 33 miles of Express Lanes in each direction between SR

60 and US 395. The number of General Purpose Lanes in both alternatives would not change.

Will the current freeway lanes be replaced with Express Lanes?

No. The current freeway lanes, also known as General Purpose Lanes, are for all types of vehicles at any time. These will not be removed, repurposed, or replaced as part of any alternative.

Are both freeways being analyzed together?

The I-10 and I-15 Corridors are being studied independently and have separate schedules.

What does having a Locally Preferred Alternative mean?

The LPA allows staff to advance the next phase of project development activities, focus on policy decisions, and facilitate coordination with neighboring counties and the financial community. While Express Lanes have been selected by the SANBAG Board as the LPA for I-10, it does not mean Express Lanes are the final decision.

Managed Lanes

How do Express Lanes work? How much will it cost to use Express Lanes?

Express Lanes can be used by motorists choosing to pay a toll. Toll rates are determined by traffic conditions and how many people are in the car. 3+ occupants and alternative fuel vehicles are being evaluated for eligibility for free or discounted rates through the project study process. The I-10 and I-15 Corridor Projects are also studying how to address accessibility concerns for all income levels through a technical analysis. It's important to note that Express Lanes have been shown to provide time savings to all freeway travelers as they help relieve congestion in all lanes.

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How will Express Lanes improve traffic in the General Purpose Lanes?

If Express Lanes are selected, the addition of new managed lanes will increase capacity and help improve overall travel times. According to traffic analyses, General Purpose Lane use drops from 1,800 to 2,000 vehicles per lane per hour down to 1,000 or less during heavy congestion. Express Lanes help manage the traffic demand in order to maintain an optimal flow during congested periods. By moving more vehicles at a more efficient flow, Express Lanes are able to draw more vehicles from the General Purpose Lanes, thereby improving the condition in the General Purpose Lanes.

If Express Lanes are selected, will multiple entrance and exit points along the corridor be offered?

The Express Lanes option would offer motorists the opportunity to enter and exit at designated points approximately every 3 to 4 miles along the corridor. This feature would help provide local access to residential communities, businesses, shopping centers, and other points of interest.

Funding and Operations

How much do these projects cost? How are they funded?

I-10 Corridor Project – The estimated construction cost is approximately \$650 million for the HOV

alternative and approximately \$1.8 billion for Express Lanes. The HOV project funding would come from traditional Federal, State and Measure I resources. Express Lanes project funding would come from those same traditional resources since the system allows for HOV use, as well as a federal loan and other bonds, to be repaid by toll revenue.

I-15 Corridor Project – The estimated construction cost is approximately \$1.3 billion for Express Lanes. Funding would come from a federal loan and other bonds, to be repaid by toll revenue, complemented by traditional Federal, State and Measure I funding resources since the system allows for HOV use.

Why is there limited funding when there is a current gas tax in place?

Gas taxes were originally implemented to help finance the building and maintenance of our state's transportation system. As cars become more fuel efficient, they fill up less often while total miles driven increase – which means less is being collected through gas taxes to maintain and expand the system even as usage grows. Today, gas taxes do not cover basic freeway maintenance needs, much less leave funding to build new freeways. To help fill the gap, options like Express Lanes are a new tool to help build and maintain new capacity on our freeways without increasing taxes overall.

To address long-term funding challenges statewide, the California Department of Transportation has developed a website for the California Road Charge Pilot Program, which is exploring an option for replacing California's gas tax in the future. To learn more, please go to www.dot.ca.gov/road_charge/.

What is the anticipated policy for Clean Air Vehicles (CAVs)? Will these vehicles have access at free or reduced rates?

Existing law provides that Express Lane facilities will offer free or discounted travel for specified CAVs. If the Express Lanes alternative is selected, the SANBAG Board of Directors will adopt a policy at the appropriate time that outlines the specific approach for these vehicles, consistent with applicable law.

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If Express Lanes are selected, how will toll revenues be spent throughout and/or distributed to the impacted communities? Will toll revenues be used to fund mass transit improvements?

Express Lane toll revenues would first be used to pay for facility operations and maintenance as well as to retire debt and establish appropriate reserves. Any remaining revenues will be used to reduce congestion or improve the flow of traffic in the corridors. This could include transit, highway, or local circulation improvements, to be determined by the SANBAG Board of Directors.

If Express Lanes are selected, who would be responsible for operations and maintenance of the facility?

SANBAG would manage the operation and maintenance of the Express Lanes facility. Caltrans would provide maintenance services and California Highway Patrol would provide law enforcement services under contracts with SANBAG.

Would toll rates for the Express Lanes change based on traffic conditions?

Toll rates would be based on the level of demand on the Express Lanes. During peak periods, the

toll rate would be higher to manage the number of vehicles to ensure free-flow conditions. During off-peak periods, the toll rate would be lower because there would be less overall traffic demand. By changing the toll rate in response to the level of demand, Express Lanes are able to maintain optimal throughput and keep traffic flowing smoothly.

Project Development and Public Involvement Process

What is the process?

Although each corridor is a separate project, the same process is followed. Highway engineers and planners evaluate and study options to best address the need for new capacity on the I-10 and I-15. These studies lead to the development of project alternatives that consider potential impacts to the environment, as well as other factors. Currently, the I-10 and I-15 projects are in the environmental phase, evaluating alternatives including High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes for I-10 and Express Lanes and No Build for both projects. Following the analysis, one alternative for each corridor will be recommended by the SANBAG Board of Directors for approval. Should managed lanes be selected, we estimate construction completion in 2024 for I-10 and 2030 for I-15.

How long have these projects been studied?

In October 2012, the environmental review process was initiated for the I-10 project. After completing initial studies, the SANBAG Board in July 2014 selected Express Lanes as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), but stipulated that a final alternative would not be selected until completion of the environmental analysis. In October 2014, the environmental review process was initiated for the I-15 project.

What happens next?

The I-10 project expects to release a Draft Environmental Document (DED) in November 2015. A public comment period will follow the release to allow for public review and comments on the document. The same process will occur for phase one of the I-15 project (SR 60 to SR 210), with the expected release of a DED in March 2017. Final alternatives for the I-15 project from SR 210 to I-215 (phase two) and I-215 to US 395 (phase three) will be selected in 2019 and 2023, respectively.

Does the public have a role in the decision-making process?

Absolutely. SANBAG is committed to ongoing, meaningful community involvement and input to ensure projects reflect the community values and priorities. Comments, questions, and suggestions from the public are welcome anytime via email or phone.

The environmental process has built-in timeframes for which public comments are documented and included in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Throughout the environmental process, public meetings are held to communicate updated information about the project. In addition to comment cards, public meetings often have court reporters that can take verbal statements from attendees to be incorporated into the environmental document. The I-10 and I-15 Corridor Projects have three established Community Advisory Groups (West Valley, East Valley, and High Desert) that meet quarterly or as needed. Members review project status updates and provide critical feedback to the project team. New members can be added as space is available. Applications are available on the website at www.1015projects.com. In addition, people are welcome to submit their comments or questions now via the website, by emailing INFO@1015projects.com, via Facebook at www.facebook.com/1015projects or by calling the project helpline at 877-SANBAG10.

Other Current Corridor Projects

There are already paving and interchange projects on the I-10 and I-15 corridors. Are those part of this project?

The current projects on both the I-10 and I-15 are separate projects from the corridor studies described in this FAQ. The current General Purpose Lanes on the corridors would not be affected as part of the I-10 and I-15 Corridor Projects; proposed managed lanes would be in addition to current General Purpose Lanes.

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