



NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RIBBON CUTTING CELEBRATES NEW I-80 SMART CORRIDOR

Project Brings Innovation and Technology Improvements to East Bay Area

ALAMEDA COUNTY/CONTRA COSTA COUNTY – The [I-80 SMART Corridor Project](#) has officially completed activation, marked by a ribbon cutting celebration in Emeryville today. This new integrated network brings technologically advanced tools, state-of-the-art signage and active traffic management to enhance safety and optimize operations of one of the most-heavily traveled corridors in Northern California.

“This project brings enhanced safety and freeway optimization to the 270,000 daily motorists in a corridor that badly needed help,” said Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty. “We did it using technology and collaboration, without adding more lanes of pavement and through project partnership, all while remaining under budget.”

Elements of the SMART Corridor, an Intelligent Transportation System (ITS), started to come online in July, with other elements phased in over the intervening weeks. The corridor between the Carquinez Bridge and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge is ranked one of the 10 worst commutes in the state, with an average of 25 lane-blocking collisions/incidents weekly.

“Today is a great day for celebrating sustainable solutions to transportation problems. Seeking innovative advances and turning to technology to optimize freeway performance are the best ways now to bring safety, mobility and travel time reliability for users. Everyone traveling I-80 between the Carquinez Bridge in Crockett and the Bay Bridge benefits,” continued Dougherty. “The partnerships that brought this project to fruition serve as a model for expanding on SMART Corridors in the future.”

Caltrans’ project partners are the United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, Alameda County Transportation Commission, Contra Costa Transportation Commission and West Contra Costa County Transportation Advisory Committee.

During this multi-year project, 159 new electronic signs were installed, with the ability to display variable graphical symbol messages to give emergency responders faster access routes and guide motorists and transit through areas of incident-related congestion. Adaptive ramp meters were activated at 43 ramps within the 20-mile corridor.

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System monitoring is centralized at the Caltrans Coastal Transportation Management Center in Oakland, where data and information is shared with local municipalities around-the-clock. Incident Management includes freeway lane management and response plans encompassing the state highways and local roads. Studies are planned to examine ramp metering effectiveness and corridor performance measures.

The project utilizes the most up-to-date energy-efficient LED sign technology. By focusing on energy sustainability, project designers reduced maintenance needs and energy consumption.

The project also brought \$20 million in improvements to State Route 123/San Pablo Avenue. Updating signal lights with new systems to allow for centralized control gives traffic managers the ability to “flush” the system during a collision-caused congestion crisis, giving better throughput for the overall corridor.

“We can’t build more freeways, but we can use technology to help us improve safety, the flow of traffic and empower travelers to make informed decisions,” said Contra Costa Transportation Authority Vice-Chair and Richmond Mayor Tom Butt. “Richmond is right at the center of dealing with regional transportation issues and is a key hub bisected by two major interstates and transcontinental rail lines. Along with launching ferry service from Richmond next year, we are very proud of this innovative solution to help drivers spend less time stuck in their cars.”

The \$79 million project received \$65 million from Proposition 1B, a 2006 voter-approved transportation bond. To date, more than \$19 billion in Proposition 1B funds have been used statewide for transportation purposes. The project was also funded by local voter-approved sales tax dollars from Measure B in Alameda County and Measure J in Contra Costa County.

“By making I-80 smarter, we are making it work better for everyone — commuters, goods movement, transit, carpools, and local road users,” said Alameda CTC Chair Rebecca Kaplan. “The commitment of local voters who passed both the Alameda and Contra Costa County sales tax measures, as well as the state bonds in 2006, is what made this critical work possible. We are proud to work together to bring these solutions to our communities to make sure people can reliably get where they need to go — to work, to education or to families.”

For more information on the I-80 SMART Corridor, and the hundreds of other ongoing transportation projects in California, visit <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4>. (Photos below.)

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I-80 SMART Corridor Ribbon Cutting – Emeryville, CA, September 19, 2016

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Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty



Ribbon Cutting Speakers