



NEWS RELEASE

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District: 12 – Orange County
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MOTORISTS CAN EXPECT IMPROVED COMMUTES AS NEW LANE OPENS ON ORANGE FREEWAY

IRVINE – Caltrans and the Orange County Transportation Authority today celebrated the completion of a wide range of transportation improvements on the Orange Freeway (State Route 57) that should make the daily commute easier, lessen vehicle emissions, and dampen freeway traffic noise.

“The completion of this project is good news for hundreds of thousands of commuters who travel the Orange Freeway every day. The new lane, along with improved bridges and ramps, will make driving less stressful and allow motorists more time to do things they enjoy rather than being stuck in traffic,” said Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty.

The centerpiece of the project is a new five-mile-long lane that opened today on the northbound Orange Freeway between Orangethorpe Avenue in Placentia and Lambert Road in Brea. The average daily traffic volume along this busy section can reach as high as 150,000 vehicles in the northbound direction.

The project includes an extensive range of additional improvements that will benefit motorists and also residents: a new five-mile-long soundwall will diminish freeway noise for nearby residents; and 12 freeway bridges and 12 ramps were widened to improve the flow of traffic in and around interchanges, making it easier and safer to get on and off the freeway.

The \$104 million project was primarily funded with \$82 million from Proposition 1B, a 2006 voter-approved bond. To date, more than \$17 billion in Proposition 1B funds have been put to work statewide for transportation purposes. Measure M, the county’s half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements, provided \$22 million in funding for the project.

“The 57 freeway is a vital link for drivers in Orange County, and we at OCTA are thrilled to see this addition open,” said OCTA chairman Shawn Nelson, also the chairman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors. “We’re putting Measure M money to good use by easing congestion and helping drivers get where they need to go more quickly.”

A second segment of northbound SR-57 is also currently being widened along a three-mile section from Katella Avenue to Lincoln Avenue. That project is scheduled to be completed this December and will connect with the new lane that opened today.

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