I-5 / ORTEGA HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

I-5/ORTEGA HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Keeping You Moving

BACKGROUND

The Ortega Highway Interchange Improvement Project, initiated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), will improve traffic congestion at the San Diego Freeway (I-5) and Ortega Highway (SR-74) interchange. The City of San Juan Capistrano also played a key role in the project's initiation by preparing the environmental document, from which the City Council approved the selected alternative in January 2009.

In its current state, the I-5 / Ortega Highway interchange experiences high levels of congestion during morning and evening peak traffic hours. To facilitate better traffic flows and ease these areas of congestion, the project will widen and reconstruct existing on- and off-ramps on the I-5 freeway and Ortega Highway interchange, reconstruct the Ortega Highway bridge over the freeway, as well as realign Ortega Highway west of the I-5.

THE PROJECT WILL:

- Construct a new traffic interchange that will replace the existing I-5 / Ortega Highway interchange
- Reconstruct the existing Ortega Highway bridge over the I-5
- Widen existing on- and off-ramps
- Construct a new northbound I-5 loop on-ramp from eastbound Ortega Highway
- Realign Ortega Highway to the west of the I-5 interchange to curve into Del Obispo instead of continuing straight into Camino Capistrano

PROJECT BENEFITS:

- Provide congestion relief to improve local traffic flow as well as ease regional commutes
- Relieve the existing traffic congestion chokepoint at the I-5 / Ortega Highway Interchange
- Improve traffic safety and operations at the I-5 / Ortega Highway interchange
- Eliminate existing geometric deficiencies
- Create consistency with existing and planned local development

CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

Start Date: Early 2013
Completion Date: Spring 2015

CLOSURES

Projected closures of the I-5 freeway, Ortega Highway and on-and off-ramps will take place intermittently throughout the duration of the project. Closures will take place at night between the hours of midnight and 7 a.m. Specific closure and detour information will be available on the project website once construction begins.

In addition to the intermittent closures, crews will perform several long-term full closures during construction. These long-term closures include:

- Northbound I-5 off-ramp to Ortega Highway (3 weeks)
- Southbound I-5 on-ramp from Ortega Highway (6 weeks)
- Ortega Highway between southbound I-5 ramps and Del Obispo (3 weeks)
- Ortega Highway between El Camino Real and Del Obispo (4 weeks)

ORTEGA HIGHWAY BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION

Crews will demolish and reconstruct the Ortega Highway bridge over the I-5 freeway one half at a time. The bridge will remain open to the traveling public except for intermittent nighttime activities including demolition and falsework construction.

PROJECT FUNDING

State Transportation Improvement Program	$47,014,000
Corridor Mobility Improvement Act	$30,926,000
Local	$4,200,000
County	$4,074,000
Total - $86,214,000	

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Ortega Interchange Project

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I-5/Ortega Highway Interchange Improvement Project
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Ortega Highway Interchange Improvement Project?

The Ortega Highway Interchange Improvement Project, initiated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) and the City of San Juan Capistrano, is the solution to the "choke point", where significant delay and congestion occur along the Ortega Highway (SR-74) at the San Diego Freeway (I-5) interchange.

The project will:

- Construct a new traffic interchange that will replace the existing I-5 / Ortega Highway interchange
- Reconstruct the existing Ortega Highway bridge over the I-5
- Widen existing on- and off-ramps
- Construct a new northbound I-5 loop on-ramp from Ortega Highway
- Realign Ortega Highway to the west of the I-5 interchange to curve into Del Obispo instead of continuing straight into Camino Capistrano

2. Did the City of San Juan Capistrano assist in the planning / initiation of the project?

The City of San Juan Capistrano was the responsible agency during the environmental phase of the project and prepared the environmental document. In January 2009, the City Council approved the selected alternative from the environmental document.

3. What are the benefits of this project?

- Provide congestion relief to improve local traffic flow as well as ease regional commutes
- Relieve the existing traffic congestion chokepoint at the I-5 / Ortega Highway interchange
- Improve traffic safety and operations at the I-5 / Ortega Highway interchange
- Eliminate existing geometric deficiencies
- Create consistency with existing and planned local development

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4. How will this project impact me?

Commuters who have normal travel routes through the I-5 / Ortega Highway interchange may encounter traffic delays. Caltrans partnered with the City of San Juan Capistrano to implement a comprehensive Transportation Management Plan (TMP) in order to keep traffic delays to a minimum. As part of the TMP, Caltrans will provide project outreach to ensure residents, commuters and businesses are well-aware of construction impacts. Some of the outreach strategies include:

- Project information such as brochures and fact sheets, door hangers and flyers
- Portable Changeable Message Signs (PCMS), and accurate detour signage for motorists
- Partnering with emergency service personnel to insure fastest response times as well as driver and pedestrian safety during construction
- Easy-to-read closure and detour maps as well as weekly closure alerts
- Community open houses prior to start of construction as well as presence at community events in the project area
- Developing collateral for local schools to engage children about construction, as well as inform parents of impacts
- Partnering with local businesses to provide information for patrons and employees as well as an opportunity to participate in a project coupon book

5. What steps were taken to commence this project?

Project studies were initiated in July 2000 to develop viable alternatives to relieve the "choke point" at the I-5 / Ortega Highway interchange. Initially, 16 possible alternatives were developed.

In 2003 the project recommenced, and a series of public and city governance meetings were held. As a result of community interaction, five potential interchange improvements were carried forward for a study and approved in a Project Study Report. The five alternatives studied in the Project Study Report were presented at a public meeting held in 2006. After a 2006 updated traffic analysis, it was determined that three alternatives were not viable.

After careful evaluation of all comments by the public and local agencies, the current project was selected as the preferred alternative for final design.

I-5/Ortega Highway Interchange Improvement Project
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6. When will construction on the project begin and end?

Construction is anticipated to begin in early 2013 and will be completed by spring 2015.

7. What structures will be temporarily closed during construction?

Projected closures of the I-5 freeway, Ortega Highway and on-and off-ramps will take place intermittently throughout the duration of the project. Closures will take place at night between the hours of midnight and 7 a.m. Specific closure and detour information will be available on the project website once construction begins.

In addition to the intermittent closures, crews will perform several long-term full closures during construction. These long-term closures include:

- Northbound I-5 off-ramp to Ortega Highway (3 weeks)
- Southbound I-5 on-ramp from Ortega Highway (6 weeks)
- Ortega Highway between southbound I-5 ramps and Del Obispo (3 weeks)
- Ortega Highway between El Camino Real and Del Obispo (4 weeks)

8. How is Caltrans planning to mitigate traffic during temporary closures?

Caltrans worked closely with the City of San Juan Capistrano to develop a thorough Traffic Management Plan (TMP) to manage detoured traffic during the closures. In addition to the TMP, Caltrans will continue to work closely with the City to monitor signal timing during construction. Adjustments to the timing and detours will be made as necessary.

9. Are you acquiring residential or personal property as part of this project?

As part of the project, there will be 11 full and partial right-of-way acquisitions of commercial properties. No residential properties will be acquired during this project. For more information about right-of-way acquisitions, the Caltrans Public Information Office at (949) 724-2000.

10. Will the Ortega Highway bridge over the I-5 freeway remain open during construction?

As part of the Ortega Highway Interchange Improvement Project, crews will demolish and reconstruct the Ortega Highway bridge over the I-5 one half at a time. The bridge will remain open to the traveling public except for intermittent nighttime activities including demolition and falsework construction.

During the first stage of reconstruction, the bridge will have a reduced lane configuration with a dedicated left-turn lane for each direction as well as an optional left turn / through lane for each direction.

During the second stage of reconstruction, traffic will be shifted to the newly constructed half of the bridge with the same lane configuration as the first phase of the bridge – one dedicated left-turn lane for each direction and an optional left / through lane for each direction.

The final lane configuration for the new bridge will be two through lanes and two left-turn lanes to the southbound I-5 on-ramp on the westbound direction, and three through lanes and one right turn lane to the northbound I-5 loop on-ramp on the east bound direction.

11. How will large trucks and trailers be impacted during construction?

During specific stages of the project, large trucks and trailers more than 40-feet long will not be able to maneuver through particular construction zones. While the Ortega Highway bridge is under construction, large trucks and trailers will be unable to exit the I-5 southbound off-ramp to eastbound Ortega Highway and will have to utilize alternate routes.

Caltrans will be communicating these impacts to the trucking industry as well as local businesses ahead of the closures. For a list of detailed truck detours, please visit ortega.dot.ca.gov.

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12. How is the I-5/SR-74 project being funded?

State Transportation Improvement Program	$47,014,000
Corridor Mobility Improvement Act	$30,926,000
Local (City and Measure)	$4,200,000
County	$4,074,000
TOTAL	**$86,214,000**

13. Who can I contact about questions on the project and how can I receive project updates?

To receive construction alerts for the Ortega Highway Interchange Improvement project, please sign up for the project database at ortega.dot.ca.gov or call the Caltrans Public Information Office at (949) 724-2000. You can also visit the project Facebook or Twitter pages at http://www.facebook.com/ortegainterchangeproject and @OrtegaHighway.

For additional information about the project, please email ortegainfo@dot.ca.gov or contact:

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NORTHBOUND I-5 OFF-RAMP FROM ORTEGA HIGHWAY (3 WEEK CLOSURE)

From the northbound I-5, exit ***Camino Capistrano***, turn left on to ***Valle Road***. Turn left on to ***San Juan Creek Road***, right on to ***Camino Capistrano***. Turn right on to ***Del Obispo Street*** and continue to Ortega Highway.

From the northbound I-5, exit ***Junipero Serra Road***, turn right on to ***Junipero Serra Road***. Turn right on to ***Rancho Viejo Road*** and continue to Ortega Highway.

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SOUTHBOUND I-5 ON-RAMP FROM ORTEGA HIGHWAY (6 WEEK CLOSURE)

Traveling eastbound on Ortega Highway:

- ★ Turn right on to ***La Novia Avenue***. Turn right on to ***San Juan Creek Road*** and turn left on to ***Camino Capistrano***. Continue to the southbound I-5 on-ramp.
- ■ Turn left on to ***Rancho Viejo Road***. Turn left on to ***Junipero Serra Road*** and continue to the southbound I-5 on-ramp.

Traveling westbound on Ortega Highway:

- ● Turn left on to ***La Novia Avenue*** and right on to ***San Juan Creek Road***. Turn left on to ***Camino Capistrano*** and continue to the southbound I-5 on-ramp.
- ▲ Turn right on to ***Rancho Viejo Road***. Turn left on to ***Junipero Serra Road*** and continue to the southbound I-5 on-ramp.

From Camino Capistrano, continue south to the southbound I-5 on-ramp.

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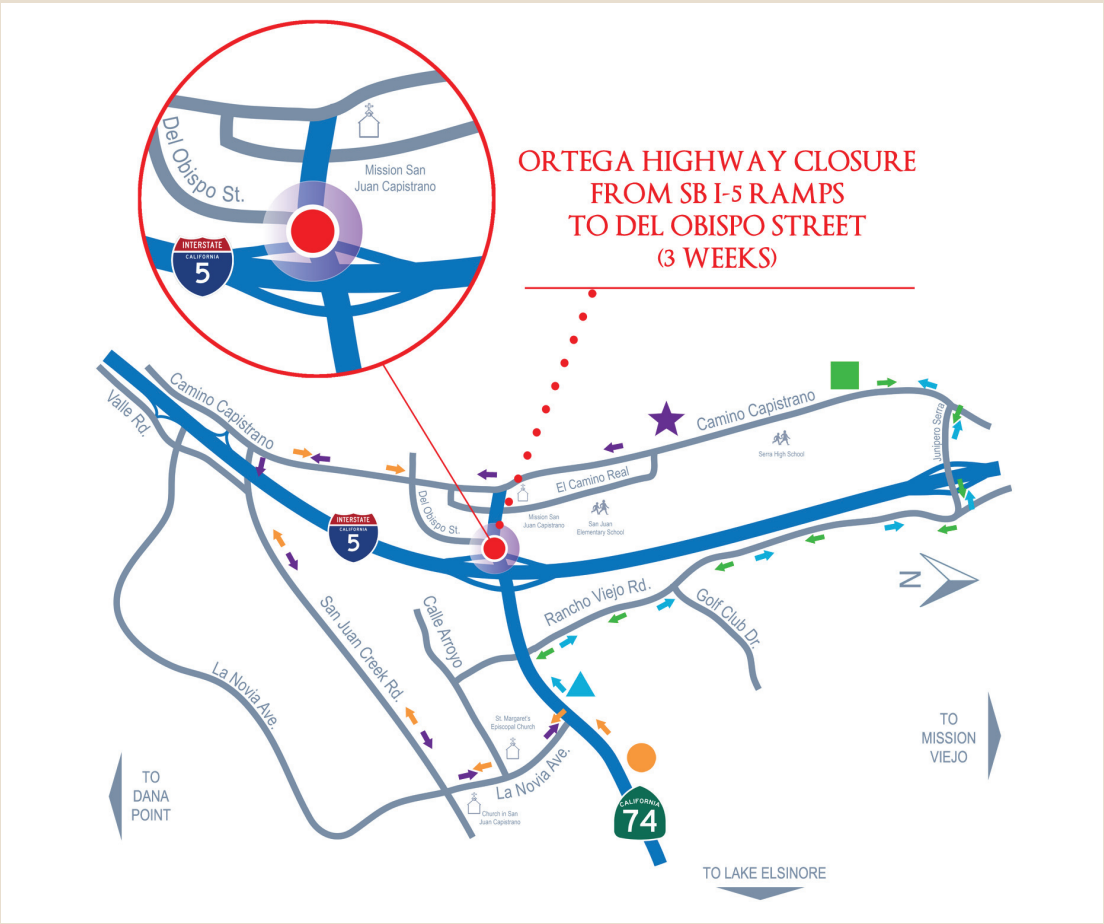
ORTEGA HIGHWAY CLOSURE FROM SOUTHBOUND I-5 RAMPS TO DEL OBISPO STREET (3 WEEK CLOSURE)



From Camino Capistrano:

- Proceed southbound on ***Camino Capistrano*** and turn left on to ***San Juan Creek Road***. Turn left on to ***La Novia Avenue*** and continue to Ortega Highway.
- Proceed northbound on ***Camino Capistrano*** and turn right on to ***Junipero Serra Road***. Turn right on ***Rancho Viejo Road*** and continue to Ortega Highway.

From westbound Ortega Highway:

- Turn left on to ***La Novia Avenue*** and right on to ***San Juan Creek Road***. Continue to ***Camino Capistrano***.
- Turn right on to ***Rancho Viejo Road*** and left on to ***Junipero Serra Road***. Continue to ***Camino Capistrano***.

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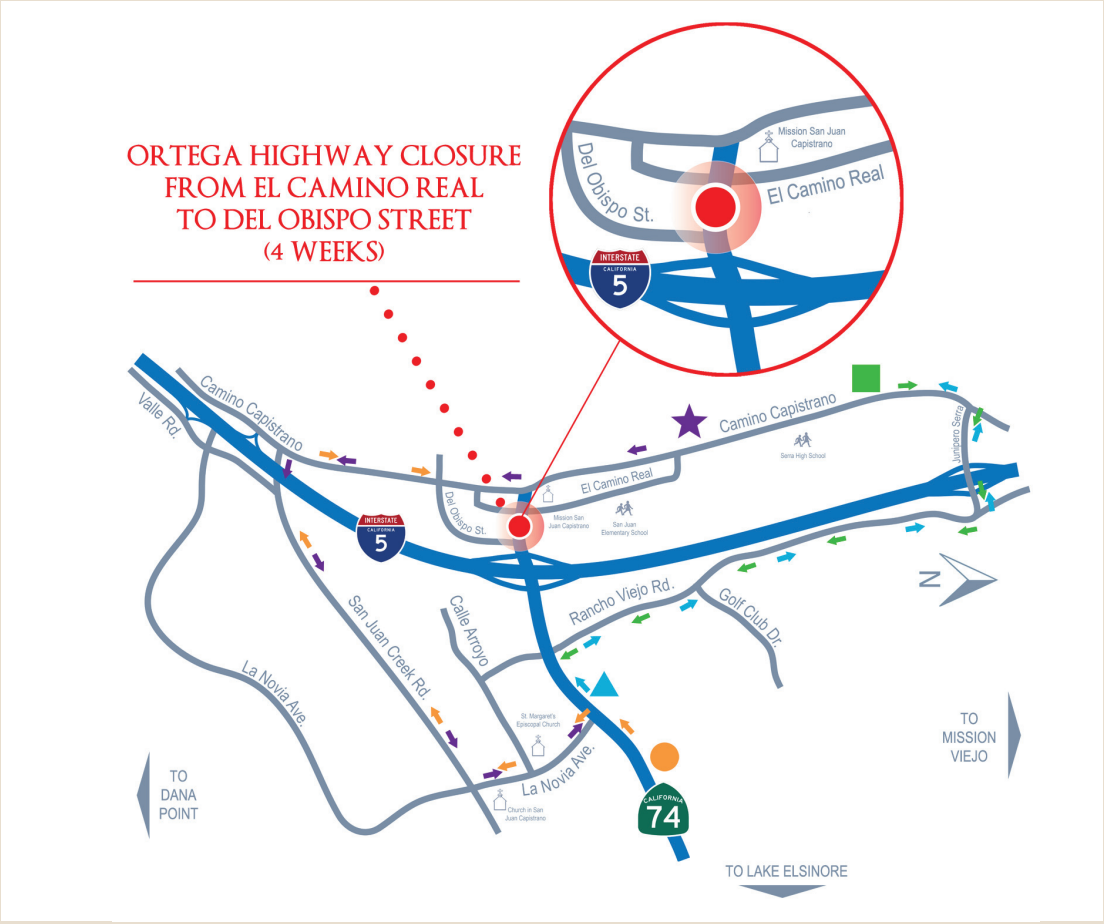
ORTEGA HIGHWAY CLOSURE FROM EL CAMINO REAL TO DEL OBISPO STREET (4 WEEK CLOSURE)



From Camino Capistrano:

- Proceed southbound on ***Camino Capistrano*** and turn left on to ***San Juan Creek Road***. Turn left on to ***La Novia Avenue*** and continue to Ortega Highway.
- Proceed northbound on ***Camino Capistrano*** and turn right on to ***Junipero Serra Road***. Turn right on ***Rancho Viejo Road*** and continue to Ortega Highway.

From westbound Ortega Highway:

- Turn left on to ***La Novia Avenue*** and right on to ***San Juan Creek Road***. Continue to ***Camino Capistrano***.
- Turn right on to ***Rancho Viejo Road*** and left on to ***Junipero Serra Road***. Continue to ***Camino Capistrano***.

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