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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Pedestrian/Bicycle Path Grand Opening on the George Miller, Jr. Bridge

Pedestrian/Bicycle Path set to open on Saturday

OAKLAND, Calif., August 29, 2009 – The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)/Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) and Caltrans will host a ribbon-cutting and opening ceremony on Saturday, August 29 on both ends of the George Miller, Jr. Memorial Bridge. The ribbon-cutting will begin at 8:30 a.m. at the foot of the bridge in Martinez and will include a first walk/ride across the bridge. The second portion of the event, an opening ceremony, is slated for 10 a.m. at Vista Point in Benicia. The opening ceremony will be followed by a bicycle rodeo, beginning at 10:45 a.m., at the nearby Amports lot in Benicia. The rodeo is sponsored by the City of Benicia.

“The opening of the pedestrian/bicycle path is an exciting milestone that signifies completion of the final improvements to both spans of the Benicia-Martinez Bridge,” explained Bijan Sartipi, Director of Caltrans District 4 and an MTC/BATA Commissioner. “We are thrilled that we now have safe and efficient travel across the Carquinez Strait for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.”

The Benicia-Martinez Bridge connects Contra Costa and Solano counties across the Carquinez Strait. It is comprised of two separate spans, named for father and son (the late Senator George Miller, Jr. and current Congressman George Miller III), making the bridge a unique landmark. The 2007 addition, the Congressman George Miller III Bridge, carries five lanes of northbound Interstate 680 traffic from Martinez to Benicia and includes the Bay Area’s debut of open-road tolling technology. The original George Miller, Jr. Memorial Bridge, built in 1962 to carry traffic in both directions, now carries four lanes of southbound Interstate 680 traffic with full shoulders and the new pedestrian/bicycle path.

“This is a milestone project that has been in the works a long time and we are all very excited to see its completion,” said Laura Thompson, Bay Trails project manager for the Association of Bay

Area Governments. “We are happy that we are making strides to close both the Bay and Ridge Trail gaps.”

Funded primarily through the Regional Measure 1 toll program approved by voters in 1988 and administered by BATA, the \$50 million Benicia-Martinez Bridge project encompassed reconfiguring the bridge and adding the new path. The completion of the construction on the pedestrian/bicycle path indicates the final phase of construction on both bridges.

Caltrans owns, operates and maintains the state highway system, including seven of the eight Bay Area toll bridges. BATA, which is directed by the same policy board as MTC, administers toll revenues from the region's state-owned toll bridges. MTC is the transportation planning, financing and coordinating agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

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GEORGE MILLER, JR. BRIDGE **PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE LANE FACT SHEET**

The new Benicia-Martinez pedestrian/bicycle lane on the Senator George Miller, Jr. Memorial Bridge will close a gap in the San Francisco Bay and Ridge Trails. This lane also serves as a link in the Carquinez Strait Scenic Loop Trail, which is a 50-mile trail that crosses both the Benicia-Martinez Bridge and Al Zampa Bridge spans over the Carquinez Strait. Bicyclists and pedestrians using this new path will be treated to stunning views of the Suisun Bay, as well as the Carquinez Bridge and the Mothball Fleet.

Official Name: George Miller, Jr. Memorial Bridge

Original Structure Opened: September 16, 1962

Location: Carquinez Strait linking Contra Costa and Solano counties

Roadway: Southbound Interstate 680 from Benicia to Martinez

Configuration: Originally, three northbound lanes and three southbound lanes. Now, four southbound lanes and one pedestrian/bicycle lane.

Length of Pedestrian/Bicycle Path: 11,800 feet or 2.2 miles

Width of Pedestrian/Bicycle Path: 12-feet, divided into two bidirectional lanes

Vertical Clearance of the Bridge: 138 feet

Type of Construction: Deck Truss

Project Cost: \$50 million to retrofit the bridge and add the pedestrian/bicycle path

Construction Funding: Regional Measure 1 funds: 76.64%

Federal funds: 21.32%

State funds: 2.04%

Seismic Safety: A “Lifeline” structure designed to remain in service following a maximum credible earthquake. The Interstate 680 corridor has been designated as a primary route for transporting emergency supplies into the Bay Area after a major earthquake.