February 2011

State Route 52

Sunny Side Gateway Project

FACT SHEET

FEATURES

The new SR-52 Sunny Side Gateway Project brings a number of construction features such as bridges, sound walls, ramp meters, and new on- and off-ramps at Fanita Drive, Cuyamaca Street and Magnolia Avenue. One of the most notable features is the new Cuyamaca Street Under-crossing and Intersection. Bike paths and pedestrian trails will run alongside Forester Creek, offering users a safe and scenic tour of the valley.

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WHAT'S COMING

The wait is nearly over for daily commuters and everyone else who wants a safe and efficient freeway connection between San Diego's inland corridor and the East County. The State Route 52 (SR-52) Sunny Side Gateway Project is on its way to becoming reality after two decades of planning.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) started construction in early 2008 on this vital piece of the transportation plan for the region. When this new four-lane freeway from Santo Road, east past SR-125 and on to SR-67 is completed in early 2011, it will reduce traffic congestion and dramatically improve your travel times during those peak periods.

The SR-52 Sunny Side Gateway Project is broken down into three construction segments. The ***West Segment*** from SR-125 east to Cuyamaca Street started construction in early 2008, and was followed by construction of the ***East Segment*** at the SR-52/SR-67 Interchange beginning May 2008. The final ***Middle Segment*** from Cuyamaca Street east to SR-67 broke ground in 2009. An additional project completed last year, added lanes to the existing freeway from Santo Road to Mast Boulevard.

SO, WHAT WILL IT COST?

The total price tag for the SR-52 Sunny Side Gateway Project is set at $520.5 million, which includes design, right of way capital and support and construction capital and support. It contains a variety of state, federal and local funding sources such as $133 million from the California voter-approved Proposition 1B Transportation Bond Fund and $35 million from the SANDAG half-cent sales tax measure known as TransNet. It's safe to say that without these latter two funding sources, this project and other transportation improvements in the county and across the state would still be on the design board.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

You, the Motorist

The completion of the SR-52 Sunny Side Gateway Project will play a critical role in helping relieve current and future traffic congestion in the region. The freeway carries about 75,000 vehicles a day, exceeding the intended level of service. By the year 2025, about 110,000 vehicles a day will use the corridor. This project will lift the burden on this road, connecting freeways and adjacent local roads, giving motorists a nearly 10-minute time savings during commutes to and from central San Diego. There may be a little dust along the way, but know that traffic relief is just over the horizon.

You, the Homeowner/Business Owner

Residents and business owners in East County will also benefit from the SR-52 Sunny Side Gateway Project. Improved access to and from the western and northern parts of San Diego, as well as east to SR-67, will add convenience to shopping trips near and far.

Sound walls and noise barriers on the freeway shoulder will be incorporated throughout the project to mitigate for excess noise, while berms will serve as natural sound barriers and screen views of traffic from nearby homes. In areas where sound walls are constructed at grade, landscaping may be planted on both sides of the walls to screen them from freeway and community viewers.

Retaining walls and structures such as the Cuyamaca Street Undercrossing, which will reach nearly 35 feet in height, will be enhanced with a cobblestone texture, arches, columns and other architectural details to minimize their apparent size and maintain consistence with the surrounding environment. Large trees and sidewalk planters will line Cuyamaca Street, providing a grand entrance to Santee's city center. Traffic may be delayed and re-routed for brief periods of time while the bridge is constructed.

You, the Pedestrian/Cyclist/Transit Rider

During construction of the Sunny Side Gateway Project, the city of Santee will be working concurrently on the Forester Creek Flood Control Channel. This includes the creation of a new walking/cycling path beneath the Forester Creek Bridge, linking Mission Gorge Road and Prospect Avenue. This project also realigns a bike path from Cuyamaca Street to the Forester Creek area, providing a safer and more scenic trip for bicycle users.

The height of the Cuyamaca Street Bridge will clear trolley lines below to accommodate existing trains and allow the system to operate as usual. A signalized intersection will provide riders with safe access to and from the trolley.

The Environment and You

Caltrans will offset identified environmental impacts of the SR-52 Sunny Side Gateway Project through the preservation of plant and animal species. For the West Segment, the clearing and grubbing of vegetation took place outside of bird breeding seasons, avoiding impacts to nests. Endangered San Diego Ambrosia plants will be preserved. Erosion control will be done near streams and native habitats, and equipment maintenance will be done off-site. Storm water runoff will be directed to filters before being released into Forester Creek in order to minimize water quality impacts.

Some locations along the Middle and East segments where the California gnatcatcher and coastal sage scrub live will be impacted. However, the U.S. Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service determined the project is not likely to adversely affect the general gnatcatcher species. Mitigation for the coastal sage scrub will be on-site.

Close coordination between Caltrans and the Lakeside River Conservancy Park allowed for the establishment of a riparian habitat adjacent to the river, in exchange for fill dirt for the project. This saved time and allowed for the better use of project funds.

LOOKING AHEAD

To accommodate even further expected growth along SR-52, Caltrans and SANDAG are preparing for an additional project to widen the corridor after the year 2020. One general-purpose freeway lane and two reversible managed lanes will be added from Interstate 15 to SR-125 – similar to what motorists are seeing along I-15.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Contact Project Manager Ron Caraet at (619) 220-5391 or by e-mail to Ron.Caraet@dot.ca.gov or contact the Caltrans Public Information Office at (619) 688-6670.

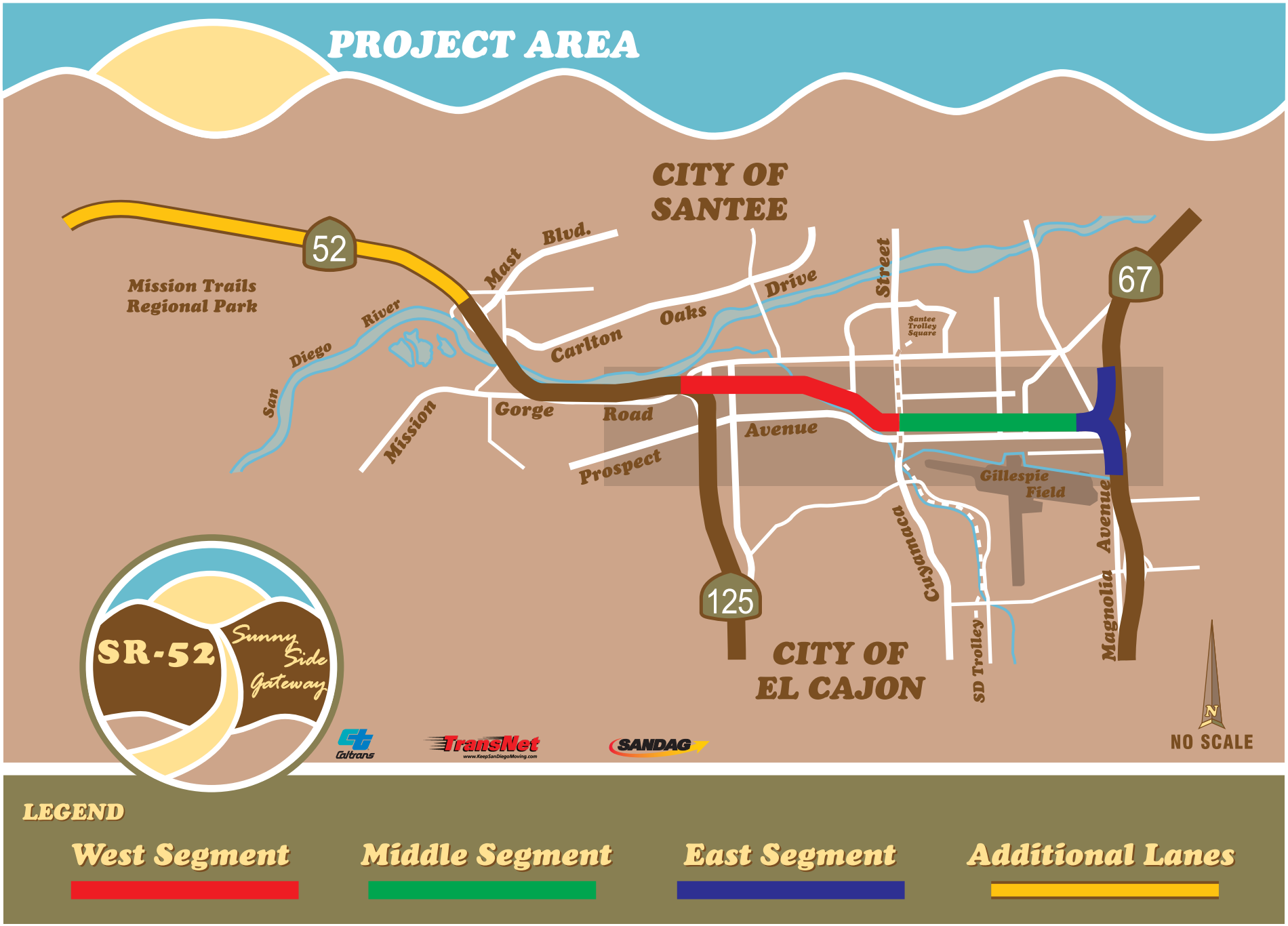
You may get additional copies of the project fact sheet and other state transportation information at the Caltrans website, www.dot.ca.gov/dist11.

Information about the project is also available at keepsandiegomoving.com.

Lakeside's River Park Conservancy trail project

Construction at SR-52/SR-125

State Route 52, San Diego County


PROJECT AREA
CITY OF SANTEE
52
67
125
Mission Trails Regional Park
San Diego River
Mast Blvd.
Carlton Oaks Drive
Street
Santee Trolley Square
Mission Gorge Road
Prospect Avenue
Gillespie Field
Cuyamaca
Magnolia Avenue
SD Trolley
CITY OF EL CAJON
SR-52
Sunny Side Gateway
Caltrans
TransNet
www.KeepSanDiegoMoving.com
SANDAG
N
NO SCALE
LEGEND
West Segment
Middle Segment
East Segment
Additional Lanes