



Interchange

News and updates from a coalition of community and business leaders focused on the health and vitality of California's transportation backbone — **Interstate 5**



Volume 6, No. 3

Summer 2008



Pennies Into Gold?



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**The MTA's Sales Tax Proposal
May Help Pave the Way for
Interstate 5 Improvements,
a Half-Penny at a Time.**

— Story, Page 4

From the
Executive Director

It's Our Money, Too!

By **Victor Lindenheim**
*Executive Director,
Golden State Gateway Coalition*

A recent Los Angeles Times article regarding the possibility of increasing the sales tax to fund transportation projects bore the headline: "Where's mine?" could sink tax vote." Making allowance for the need to create interest with an attention-getting headline, I think good questions were raised about the equity of the proposal at the July 24 MTA Board meeting.

Further, those questions needed to be asked, and still need to be answered to the satisfaction of two-thirds of the County's voting population.



Victor Lindenheim

Questions like: Where in the county will the tax revenues be generated? Where will the new revenue be invested? On which projects? When? The expenditure plan presented with the tax proposal provided specifics on priority projects, and left wiggle room on the rest.

OK, it's a complex process, and we're talking about an estimated \$40 billion to be invested over 30 years. And, a lot can happen in 30 years.

There is no argument that an infusion of cash is desperately needed to complete current and planned Los Angeles County trans-

See Lindenheim, page 9

The CTC: Who Are They and What Do They Do?

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) was established in 1978 to serve as a unified transportation policy-making body for California.

The CTC consists of 11 voting members and two non-voting ex-officio members who represent each house of the Legislature (usually the chairs of the Assembly and Senate transportation committees). Nine voting members are appointed by the Governor, one is appointed by the Senate Rules Committee and one by the Assembly Speaker.

The CTC's responsibilities include allocation and programming of construction funds for highways, passenger rail and transit throughout the state, and its five-year state transportation improvement program is commonly known as the STIP. The Commission also advises and assists the state's legislative and executive branches in formulating California's policies and plans for transportation programs.

Also, the Commission actively participates in seeking legislation — at both the state and federal levels — that promotes financial stability for California's transportation improvement efforts.

The CTC's mission is "to enhance the economic, social and environmental welfare of all California citizens by providing for a comprehensive, multimodal State Transportation System which is consistent and compatible with the orderly economic and social progress of the State."

Source: www.catc.ca.gov

Transportation Leader Profile

This issue:

The California Transportation Commission

CTC Roster

Chair: John Chalker, San Diego
Vice Chair: Bob Alvarado, Oakland

Members:

Lucetta Dunn, Coto de Caza
James Earp, Sacramento
Dario Frommer, Los Angeles
James Ghielmetti, Pleasanton
Carl Guardino, San Jose
R. Kirk Lindsey, Riverbank
Phillip H. Tagami, Oakland
Joseph Tavaglione, Riverside
Larry Zarian, Glendale

Ex-Officio Members:

Alan S. Lowenthal (Senate)
and **Mark DeSaulnier** (Assembly)

Schwarzenegger Names Dunn to CTC

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on June 4 announced the appointment of Lucetta Dunn, 55, of Coto de Caza, to the California Transportation Commission.

Since 2005, she has served as president and chief executive officer for the Orange County Business Council. From 2004 to 2005, Dunn served as director for the Department of Housing and Community Development. From 1998 to 2004, she was executive vice president for Hearthside Homes and, from 1992 to 1998, she worked for the Koll Company and Koll Real Estate Group as senior vice president.

From 1987 to 1992, Dunn worked as senior vice president, general counsel and as a member of the board at Signal Landmark. From 1981 to 1987, she maintained her own private practice of law, the Law Offices of Lucetta A. Dunn.

Dunn is a founding member of the Bolsa Chica Conservancy and the Foundation for Economic and Environmental Progress. She is former vice president of the California Building Industry Association, former director of the National Association of Home Builders and a former member of the Urban Land Institute.

Dunn is a Republican.

A Seamless Connection

Interchange Improvement Will Enable Drivers to Transfer from Route 14 to I-5 without Leaving the Carpool Lane

If you're a commuter who uses State Route 14, and you've lamented that the new Interstate 5 carpool lanes between SR 118 and SR 14 end just a little too soon, help is on the way.

The California Department of Transportation has begun construction on an interchange improvement project that will bring high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes into the Newhall Pass.

"This project is helping to provide a seamless transportation system — and will allow carpoolers a freeway-to-freeway transfer without leaving the carpool lane," said Jeanne Bonfilio, Public Information Officer for Caltrans.

The \$156 million project is part of Caltrans' effort to provide motorists with a seamless carpool lane network in California.

Once completed, the I-5/SR14 interchange improvement would complement the



Recently completed carpool lanes south of the Santa Clarita Valley (above, left) and new high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes under construction in the Newhall Pass will link Interstate 5 to State Route 14. The new lanes will also eventually link to the HOV lanes to be built as part of the I-5 Gateway improvement project in the SCV.

proposed I-5 Gateway improvements that would be made in the Santa Clarita Valley, with truck climbing lanes and HOV lanes between Calgrove Boulevard and Castaic.

"The north Los Angeles County area is seeing more and more improvements to the California freeway system — especially with the recent completion of the first carpool lane on I-5 in Los Angeles County from SR-118 to SR-14," Bonfilio said.

The interchange improvement project involves construction of an elevated two-lane direct HOV connector at the I-5 and State Route

14 interchange, and construction of HOV lanes in both the north and south direction of the I-5 at the interchange.

The direct HOV connector will allow motorists a freeway-to-freeway transfer without exiting the carpool lane.

Preliminary work on the interchange improvement began in July, and work is estimated to be complete in the fall of 2012.

The new lanes are all part of Caltrans' plans not only to improve the region's freeway system, but also to encourage carpooling.

According to a Caltrans summary of the project,

"Construction of this direct HOV connector and HOV lanes will relieve congestion, improve traffic flow, enhance safety and improve traffic operations of both freeways at the I-5/14 Interchange."

Bonfilio said motorists have responded favorably to Caltrans' efforts to add HOV lanes to the freeway system.

"Los Angeles has more carpool lanes than any county in California — and California has more carpool lanes than any state in the nation," Bonfilio said. "Caltrans has received so much positive feedback from these improvements."

A Slice of the Pie for I-5?



MTA, County Vote to Place Transportation Funding Initiative on November Ballot

By Victor Lindenheim
Executive Director,
Golden State Gateway
Coalition

On July 24, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) Board voted 9-2 to place a transportation funding proposal on the November ballot. The proposal, to add ½ cent to the County sales tax, would ostensibly raise \$40 billion over 30 years to pay

ANALYSIS: Should a Bridesmaid Help Pay for the Wedding? Well, Maybe.

for projects in Los Angeles County's long range transportation plan (LRTP).

Three billion dollars is committed to transit capital projects, the lion's share going to light rail and subway projects; \$1.2 billion is

reserved for highway projects, including a capacity enhancement to I-5 from SR-134 to SR-170. Another \$470 million is locked in for bus operations, Metrolink and local projects. In case you don't have

a calculator handy, that's \$4.7 billion already committed to be spent beginning in 2010.

The plan includes at least two funding elements in the highway projects category that are of interest to the Coalition and other I-5 Gateway Improvement project advocates and allies: a projected \$410 million allotment toward I-5 ("truck lanes to Kern County"); and inclusion of \$90.8 million allotment for
See Half-Cent, page 5

Half-Cent

Continued from page 4

the I-5/SR 14 interchange improvement.

The \$410 million allotment for “I-5 North Capacity Enhancements” is not a guaranteed up-front “minimum,” as specified for a select group of priority highway and transit projects. It is a soft promise that, after priorities are funded, I-5 project funding needs can be seriously considered. And when will MTA LRTP money for I-5 construction be there? The expenditure plan says: “as funds become available.”

It is assumed by MTA that the ½ cent sales tax will generate \$40 billion over 30 years. For simplicity’s sake, let’s generously assume that the revenue will flow evenly year-to-year. That would mean it would take just under five years to fund the priority projects specified in the expenditure plan.

So, if I understand the proposed ordinance and enabling legislative language as proposed, we’ll just have to wait and see on the other \$35 billion in potential and secondary projects, which currently includes north county’s priorities.

However, the ordinance language contains a small, but important silver lining that could be beneficial to I-5 advocates. It specifies (in Section 7 – “Use of Revenues”) that surplus funds for completed highway capital projects can be used for highway projects in the same subregion. And here’s why the \$90.8 million specified for the I-5/SR-14 Interchange Improvement is of interest: it is already funded from other sources. Anything remaining should be available for I-5 and/or other highway improvements in Northern Los Angeles County.

There are still some tall hurdles in the process before we see a sales tax increase and a new pot of money for transportation improvements in Los Angeles County. The County Board of Supervisors has authorized placement of the tax proposal on the ballot, while indicating their opposition to its passage; the state Legislature must

Coalition Remarks to MTA Board

Golden State Gateway Coalition Executive Director Victor Lindenheim presented the following comments to the board of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority on July 24 before the MTA board voted 9-2 in favor of placing a half-cent sales tax on the November ballot to fund transportation projects in Los Angeles County:

The Gateway Coalition’s mission is to improve roadway transportation, safety and goods movement in northern Los Angeles County. Our priority is the Interstate 5 corridor.

We have supported adoption of Metro’s Long Range Transportation Plan while emphasizing inclusion of projects to improve Interstate 5, SR-14 and SR-138.

We share the proposed Measure R goals of enhancing roadway safety, improving traffic flow and its stated intent to build more truck lanes.

The project we are advocating — an MTA sponsored project — would add truck lanes and carpool lanes to Interstate 5 in northern Los Angeles County. Our public sector partner, Caltrans, has demonstrated that the cost-benefit ratio of this project is the highest of any proposed highway project in the county. The private sector has invested heavily, and will continue to invest in this project, as our public sector leaders have asked us to do.

We are asking for reasonable assurance that this tax program will provide funding for north county’s priority transportation projects.

pass authorizing legislation; and the voters must pass the ordinance with a 2/3 majority in favor.

But, for all the uncertainties of passage and implementation, the possibility of having new resources on hand is appealing.

The bottom line: The proposal offers tangible transportation improvements to people who live, work and play in Los Angeles County, if not necessarily with an equitable distribution of costs and benefits. However, the proposal offers a possibility —

not a promise — of funding for the I-5 Gateway Improvement Project and improvements to SR-14 and SR-138.

The Gateway Coalition’s mission is to improve roadway transportation in northern Los Angeles County. Our priority is the Interstate 5 corridor. The Gateway Coalition’s position on this should, and will, reflect the needs and concerns of its members and the citizens of L.A. County.

More information about the MTA is available at: www.mta.net



The Case for I-5: Energy Conservation

It's Simple: Keep Traffic Moving, Save Gasoline

By **Tim Whyte**
InterChange Editor

Talk about a carbon footprint: It is estimated that Los Angeles residents waste more than 300 million gallons of gasoline every year as a result of being stuck in traffic.

At the new benchmark of \$4 per gallon — these days, a lowball price for gas — that translates into \$1.2 billion in traffic-related fuel costs.

Add in the trickle-down effects, like

longer operating hours for businesses waiting on deliveries from trucks battling congestion, and Los Angeles officials estimate traffic congestion costs the region \$9.3 billion per year.

Obviously, a vehicle idling while sitting in traffic is getting zero miles to the gallon. When you sit in traffic on the freeways and highways of Los Angeles County, you are losing even more than just the time you spend waiting — which by some estimates can reach as long as three full days per year.

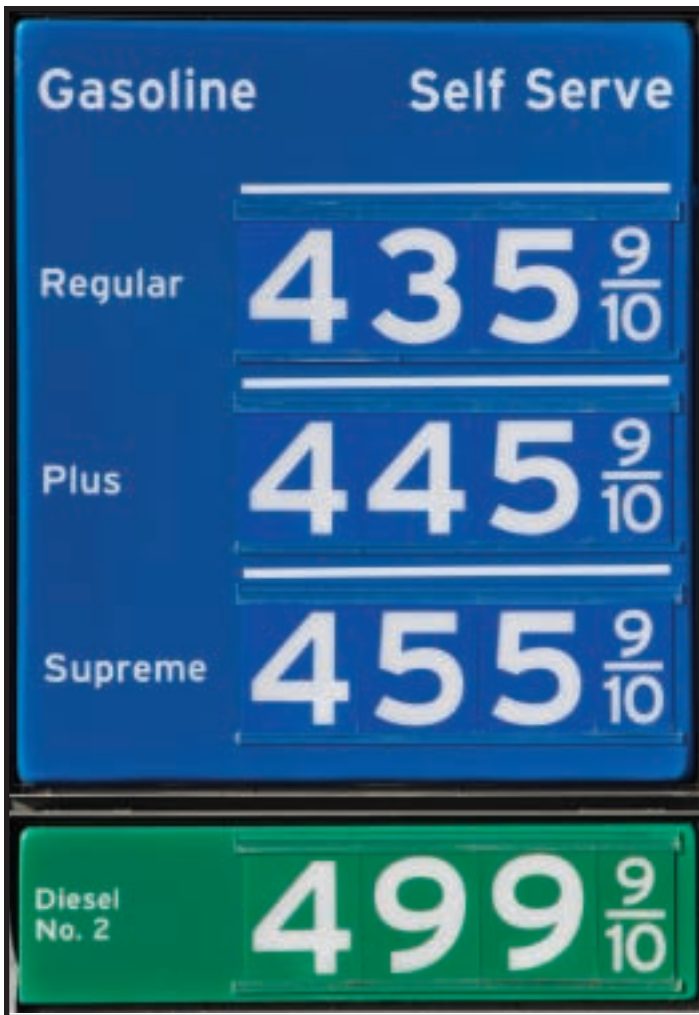
You're also pouring extra dollars into

your gas tank.

And it's not just extreme gridlock that has an impact on fuel consumption. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, vehicles driving on congested highways will experience an average 10.6 percent loss of fuel economy even if speeds are between 20 and 27 mph.

That's one reason why the Interstate 5 Gateway Improvement Project is so important. The addition of truck climbing lanes and high occupancy vehicle lanes

See Case, page 7



With gasoline prices hovering at — or above — \$4 per gallon, proposals like the Interstate 5 Improvement Project make more sense than ever. Motorists achieve higher fuel economy when traveling at reasonable freeway speeds rather than idling or sitting in stop-and-go traffic.

Case

Continued from page 6

between Calgrove Boulevard and Castaic will help the freeway better absorb the impact of traffic figures that are expected to continue increasing.

For example, at Valencia Boulevard it is estimated that I-5 currently carries 179,000 vehicle trips per day — and by the year 2030, that number is expected to increase to 305,000.

You don't have to be a traffic engineer to do that math: If 305,000 vehicles were to occupy the same stretch of highway that's already maxed out at times in accommodating 179,000 vehicles, it stands to reason congestion will increase, traffic speeds will drop and more gasoline will be burned as vehicles slog through the traffic.

Vehicles cruising at an optimal speed — not too fast, not too slow — burn less gaso-

line than those that are constantly stopping, starting, accelerating and decelerating.

If the freeway's capacity is insufficient to keep traffic flowing steadily, more fuel will be burned — and every motorist in the mix will end up with a bigger bill at the pump.

In the particular case of I-5 in northern Los Angeles County, more than 7 million trucks pass through each year.

So, the Gateway Improvement Project promises not only a better commute thanks to the addition of high occupancy vehicle lanes, but also better traffic flow for everyone with the addition of truck climbing lanes that will free up lane space for passenger vehicles.

It's simple: Better traffic flow equals better fuel economy. The Gateway Improvement Project will improve traffic flow — and, in the long run, help us all shrink that carbon footprint.

Top Ten Reasons to Support Improvements to Interstate 5

The Golden State Gateway Coalition believes there are many great reasons to favor I-5 improvements in Northern Los Angeles County, and these are the Top 10. We'll take a closer look at each of them in future newsletters and Web site updates:

1. Relieve congestion and improve mobility
2. Public safety
3. To facilitate goods movement
4. Jobs and economic development
5. To accommodate growth in commerce and population
6. Air quality and pollution abatement
7. **THIS ISSUE: Energy conservation**
8. Homeland security and strategic importance
9. Facilitate access to basic services: healthcare, education, police and fire department
10. Improve the quality of life for Californians and everyone who uses the I-5

'Why I-5 Is Important to Me'

Bringing Families Back Together

Improving roads and transportation in the Santa Clarita Valley had been a consistent theme in Laurie Ender's campaign leading up to her April City Council election victory. As a part of the City Council, she now "hopes to work closely with her fellow council members, City staff and other community leaders to preserve and improve the quality of life for Santa Clarita residents." Whether it's building parks and roads, improving health care options, or supporting essential efforts like graffiti removal and the Anti-Gang Task Force, Council Member Ender sees a bright future for the community.



Laurie Ender
Santa Clarita Councilwoman

In my house, and in thousands more just like mine, the I-5 means one thing above all else: "How long until Dad (or Mom) gets home?" While there is no argument that this important interstate freeway, which runs for nearly 1,400 miles, is a vital artery for goods movement, an essential access point during emergencies, and a key north-south route for vacationers, for thousands of residents in the Santa Clarita Valley the I-5 is the connection between home and work.

And, let's face it, as nice as the views are in the Newhall Pass, there's no place like home!

Hitting the evening crunch on the north-

bound I-5 has ruined more family events than I care to recall. Missed games, delayed parent-teacher conferences, coming in for the last few minutes of the class play, and missing trick-or-treating with the kids are a just a few instances.

It is not because one of us had to work late, but rather because we were stuck in

'Hitting the evening crunch on the north-bound I-5 has ruined more family events than I care to recall. Missed games, delayed parent-teacher conferences, coming in for the last few minutes of the class play, and missing trick-or-treating with the kids are a just a few instances.'

Testimonial

Readers are encouraged to submit their own testimonials, which can be as brief as a sentence or two or, if you are inclined, a more detailed guest commentary on the subject. Testimonials can be e-mailed to:

vlinden@goldenstategateway.org.

bumper-to-big-rig traffic in the Newhall Pass. Again.

During my campaign for a seat on the Santa Clarita City Council, I spent months talking to local residents in their homes and at neighborhood gatherings throughout our community. No matter where I went or who I spoke with, the concerns were generally the same — safety, health care, and traffic. Time and time again I heard the same question, "What can you do about the mess on the I-5?!" It's an issue that affects our local businesses and the statewide economy but, at the very heart of it, it's an issue that hits home.

As City leaders, we work to encourage shopping "locally" (and banking, using local health care, hiring local firms, etc.) We support the efforts of the Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Valley Industrial Association in promoting local businesses. We make economic development and outreach a priority and continue to create an environment where businesses want to do business. No matter how hard we work to maintain a 2 (jobs) to 1 (house) ratio, the fact remains that some people will always need to leave our valley to go to work.

The next time you're sitting on the I-5, slugging slowly through the Newhall Pass, take a look around you at the other vehicles. You'll see trucks filled with produce

See Ender, page 9

Newly Elected City Councilwoman Joins Coalition Leadership Council

Santa Clarita City Council Member Laurie Ender, elected in April 2008, has joined the Golden State Gateway Coalition.

Ender adds her support to a roster of approximately 20 current and past elected officials and other public sector partners that comprise the Coalition's Leadership Council.

Membership in the Council reflects a

commitment to, and support for roadway improvements in Northern Los Angeles County, with particular emphasis on the Interstate 5 corridor.

See the box at right for a complete list of Gateway Coalition Leadership Council members, and see page 8 for Laurie Ender's testimonial about the importance of Interstate 5 freeway improvements.

Lindenheim

Continued from page 2

portation projects. The MTA Board debate focused on equity — who pays, who benefits; what the County's transportation priorities are today and what they will be tomorrow.

At the end of the day, the MTA Board vote was 9 in favor; 2 opposed; 1 abstaining and 1 absent.

Little more than a week later, the County Board of Supervisors balked at putting it on the November ballot, on a 3-2 vote. However, shortly after that vote, Fourth District Supervisor Don Knabe announced he would change his vote, and agree to placing the measure on the ballot, while still opposing its ultimate passage.

The enabling state legislation (AB 2321) is wending its way through the process, and if it passes we will be voting on a ½-cent sales tax increase on the November ballot.

Now, and in November, we will, individually and collectively, have to make a decision. Is this proposal equitable and sufficiently beneficial to the residents of northern Los Angeles County to vote yes? Is there a greater good that can be accomplished for all of L.A. County that justifies paying out more than we are likely to get in direct return? Will any of the projected tax revenues actually become available for the I-5 Gateway Project and SR-14 and SR-138 improvements?

The Coalition will be considering these, and other questions as we consider our position. Stay tuned.

Ender

Continued from page 8

and livestock, tankers and 18-wheelers, City buses and motor homes. You'll also see moms and dads, college students and grandparents, friends and neighbors, all just trying to get home.

I am encouraged by the mission and the passion of the Golden State Gateway Coalition. The list of supporters and coalition members is impressive — and growing. Business leaders, elected officials and community supporters have come together to secure and ensure funding that will add much-needed truck lanes and carpool lanes to Interstate 5, which accommodates

more than 200,000 vehicles every day!

While this impressive group of influential businesspeople and organizations, including the City of Santa Clarita, is working tirelessly at the regional, state and federal level to bring these improvements to the Interstate 5 corridor, to many local residents, the issue at hand is simply quality of life.

Interstate 5 and the Golden State Gateway Coalition are all about goods movement, people movement, and most importantly, forward movement. Let's get everyone moving... let's bring families back together again.

Somewhere in Santa Clarita, dinner is on the table and a ball game is about to begin.

Golden State Gateway Coalition Leadership Council

Supporting Transportation Safety and Mobility Improvements in the Interstate 5 Corridor in Northern Los Angeles County

Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon

State Senator George Runner

Assembly Member Cameron Smyth

Former Assembly Member Keith Richman, M.D.

LA County Supervisor Michael Antonovich

Mayor Jim Ledford (Palmdale)

Ara Najarian, Mayor, City of Glendale & Metro Board Member

Bishop Henry Hearn (Mayor, City of Lancaster)

Frank Roberts (Former Mayor, City of Lancaster & Former Metro Board Chair)

Mayor Bob Kellar (Santa Clarita)

Council Member Frank Ferry (Santa Clarita)

Council Member Marsha McLean (Santa Clarita)

Council Member Laurene Weste (Santa Clarita)

Council Member Laurie Ender (Santa Clarita)

Former Council Member Tim Ben Boydston (Santa Clarita)

California Highway Patrol

Caltrans District 7

College of the Canyons

West Ranch Town Council

Membership Update

The Golden State Gateway Coalition is pleased to thank the following members for their renewed support:

- Building Industry Association Los Angeles/Ventura Chapter
- Dan Goetz (UVDI)
- Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital
- Quinn Company
- Remo, Inc.
- Southern California Edison



By the Numbers

■ **82** — the average number of hours each year that a typical California urban-area commuter is stuck in traffic.

— Auto Club of Southern California, "The Road Ahead"

■ **Seventy-six percent** of American commuters drive alone to work.

— USA Today

QuickTrips

A roundup of North Los Angeles County transportation issues and roadway project updates

Utility Relocation Wrapping Up on Magic Mountain Parkway Project

The city of Santa Clarita has provided the following update on progress for construction of the interchange improvements at Interstate 5 and Magic Mountain Parkway.

Major utility relocation work is complete along Magic Mountain Parkway and The Old Road. Construction activities will resume for the roadway widening for Magic Mountain Parkway and The Old Road realignment.

To facilitate this next phase of construction, expect relocation of traffic signals on the intersection of Magic Mountain Parkway and The Old Road as well as southbound and northbound ramps on Magic Mountain Parkway.

In an effort to minimize all traffic flow delays, most of this relocation work will be performed at night between the hours of 10 p.m. and 4 a.m.

Please be aware of the future traffic movement modification for all vehicles entering and exiting Six Flags Magic Mountain and Hurricane Harbor theme parks. Motorists will be diverted onto two lanes on the north side and one lane on the south side of the existing Magic Mountain Parkway. The traffic exiting the theme parks, headed in an easterly direction on Magic Mountain Parkway, will be detoured onto southbound lanes of newly paved road on The Old Road. This detour will lead directly to Valencia Boulevard and Interstate 5 on- and off-ramps.

The theme parks will remain open throughout the entire project construction.

The detour at the northbound Magic Mountain Parkway off-ramp and Interstate 5 will remain throughout the ramp widening and removal of utility lines to ensure that there will not be any additional detours needed throughout this construction. As a suggested alternative for access to the Valencia Industrial Center, please use the off-ramp at State Route 126 and Newhall Ranch Road.

Detours and signs are in place to assist the operational needs of the public in this area.

Updates and information about any ex-

tended lane closures are available at the City's website, www.santa-clarita.com, or by calling the project hotline, (661) 290-2297.

The city of Santa Clarita has also provided the following updates on roadway improvements in the Santa Clarita Valley:

● SIERRA HIGHWAY BRIDGE(S) OVER THE RAILROAD — NO. S3009

Sierra Highway Bridge over the Metrolink Railroad between Canyon Park Boulevard and Flying Tiger Drive

This project will provide the environmental clearance, design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction for the replacement of the northbound bridge and the rehabilitation of the southbound bridge on Sierra Highway crossing over the railroad to accommodate six lanes of traffic. Project Information Line (661) 290-2295.

Current Status: Construction is ongoing.

Traffic Impacts: Minimal impacts anticipated

● 2007-2008 OVERLAY & SLURRY PROJECT

Various Streets throughout City

Asphalt overlay and slurry seal of various streets.

Maps of designated areas can be found at <http://www.santa-clarita.com/cityhall/pw/cip>.

Current Status: Construction is ongoing.

Estimated Completion: 10/02/08

Traffic Impacts: Daily lane closure with flag men

● INCIDENT MANAGEMENT — TRAVELER INFORMATION SUBSYSTEM I0004

Citywide

The City received a \$950,000 grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) to install traveler information data collection, and to further integrate and disseminate.

See Roadways, page 9

House Passes Highway Trust Fund Restoration Act, 387-37; Coalition Seeks Legislator Support

The following was provided by Mobility 21, a Southern California transportation advocacy coalition that has urged its supporters to contact legislators to urge them to keep the Highway Trust Fund from becoming exhausted.

The U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved legislation (H.R. 6532) July 23 that would provide \$8 billion from the U.S. Treasury to avert a cash crisis facing the federal Highway Trust Fund.

The Trust Fund, which is financed through the 18.4 cents per-gallon federal gas tax, is expected to face a multi-billion-dollar shortfall later this year.

The White House promptly issued a veto threat. "This bill is both a gimmick and a dangerous precedent that shifts costs from users to taxpayers at large," read a White House statement.

The looming insolvency of the trust fund is of concern to Southern California transportation agencies and motorists because it would negatively impact projects and programs authorized under SAFETEA-LU.

H.R. 6532 was adopted with a veto-proof House majority of 387-37. Before adjourning for the August recess, the Senate had yet to approve the legislation that would provide a short-term fix to the Highway Trust Fund.

Recently, the Office of Management and Budget confirmed the account will be \$3.1 billion short of authorized program levels by the end of 2009. This means a short-term fix for the trust fund is not only critical, but also necessary to fulfill funding promised by SAFETEA-LU.

More information: <http://transportation.house.gov>

Dear Legislator...

The following is a copy of a letter from Victor Lindenheim, executive director of the Golden State Gateway Coalition, asking Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon, Sen. Barbara Boxer and Sen. Dianne Feinstein to support the Highway Trust Fund Restoration Act.

I am writing to express my concern about the federal Highway Trust Fund. It is my understanding that the fund, which was created by the Highway Revenue Act of 1956, is facing a shortfall of over \$3 billion during Fiscal Year 2009.

The looming insolvency of the federal Highway Trust Fund will, if not addressed by the 110th Congress, have a severe impact on efforts to improve the mobility of your constituents and the broader Southern California region.

Simply put, the shortfall in the fund will dramatically reduce the dollars needed to bring more mobility to our region. With our roadways already ranked as the most congested in the nation, the loss of federal transportation funds would mean that my family, my friends and my neighbors will be stuck in more and more traffic.

The fund is an indispensable source of financing for the national interstate highway system and as a source of funding for the Federal-aid Highway Program is essential for Southern California. I encourage you to take immediate action to ensure the solvency of the Federal Highway Trust Fund.

Again, I urge you to take immediate action to safeguard the financial health of the Federal Highway Trust Fund. I look forward to hearing from you on how you plan to avert the loss of million of dollars in federal transportation funds for our region.

Roadways

Continued from page 8

inate the information within the City.

Current Status: Preliminary construction items in progress.

Estimated Completion: 1/31/09

Traffic Impacts: Minimal impacts anticipated

● CROSS VALLEY CONNECTOR GAP CLOSURE (CVC) — PROJECT NO. S1001 — NEWHALL RANCH ROAD FROM I-5 TO COPPERHILL

Newhall Ranch Road at Copper Hill Drive to SR-126 at I-5

Current Status: Southern California Edison is installing street lights and electrical service

Traffic Impacts: Minimal impacts anticipated

Lindenheim and Sohikian Named to Goods Movement Feedback Panel

Gateway Coalition Executive Director Victor Lindenheim and consultant Arthur Sohikian have been appointed to serve on the Community Feedback Group for the Multi-County Goods Movement Action Plan. Lindenheim will represent the Gateway Coalition; Sohikian will represent the North County Transportation Coalition, covering the cities of Santa Clarita, Lancaster and Palmdale, and unincorporated northern Los Angeles County.

The MTA's Board of Directors

adopted the MCGMAP on May 22. Its partners include the transportation commissions of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties. Other partners include: San Diego Association of Governments, Southern California Association of Governments and four Caltrans offices (Los Angeles/Ventura, Orange, San Bernardino/Riverside and San Diego).

The Action Plan and supporting materials are posted on the project website: www.metro.net/mcgmap.

From the **Chairman**

One Speed: Fast Forward!

By **Tom DiPrima**

*Chairman,
Golden State Gateway Coalition*

Despite a challenging economic and political climate, the Gateway Coalition remains funded and focused, and is making considerable progress:

Our partnership with Caltrans is solid and productive. The agreement forged with Caltrans in May 2006 to move I-5 improvements forward, as a public/private partnership, remains in force.

The environmental studies (EIR/EIS) continue on schedule. Draft documents have been developed and are undergoing internal review at Caltrans, prior to publication for public input. Target completion: January 2009.

Private sector funding commitments are in place. Letters of intent have been sent to Caltrans regarding cost sharing on the truck lanes portion of the project. Private sector expenditures plus future commit-

ments cover most environmental costs and half of the truck lane construction costs.

Public sector funding options are being vigorously pursued at the County, State and Federal levels:

County – The MTA Board has proposed a ½-cent sales tax increase to raise \$40 billion to pay for transportation projects specified in its long-range (30 year) plan. Passage is not assured; however, a \$410 million allotment is indicated in the expenditure plan toward construction of truck lanes along the I-5 from SR-14 to the Kern county line.

State – County sales tax enabling legislation sponsored (AB 2321) by Los Angeles Assemblyman Mike Feuer is under consideration in Sacramento; CTC initial distribution of Prop 1B transportation funds for trade corridor improvements



**Tom
DiPrima**

have been made — the I-5 project, sponsored by MTA for CTC funding, remains on a “shelf” of alternate projects for funding consideration.

Federal – While the presidential election remains on page one, staff work in Congressional committees has begun on 2009 SAFETEA-LU reauthorization. The 2005 bill provided \$1.6 million for the I-5 Gateway Project, and that revenue is funding a portion of the EIR/EIS.

My thanks to the Directors and members of the Golden State Gateway Coalition, our colleagues at Caltrans and MTA, and other allies. I’d like to also thank Barbara Fortman, Greg Medeiros, Victor Lindenheimer and our consulting team for providing their dedication and expertise to move the environmental studies forward.

Your support and efforts allow us to continue to do what is required to see that the I-5 Gateway Improvement Project is funded and built for the benefit of more than 75 million motorists and truckers who will use it every year.

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