

Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers Authority
Alameda County Transportation Commission

I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane



Annual Report
FY 2017-18

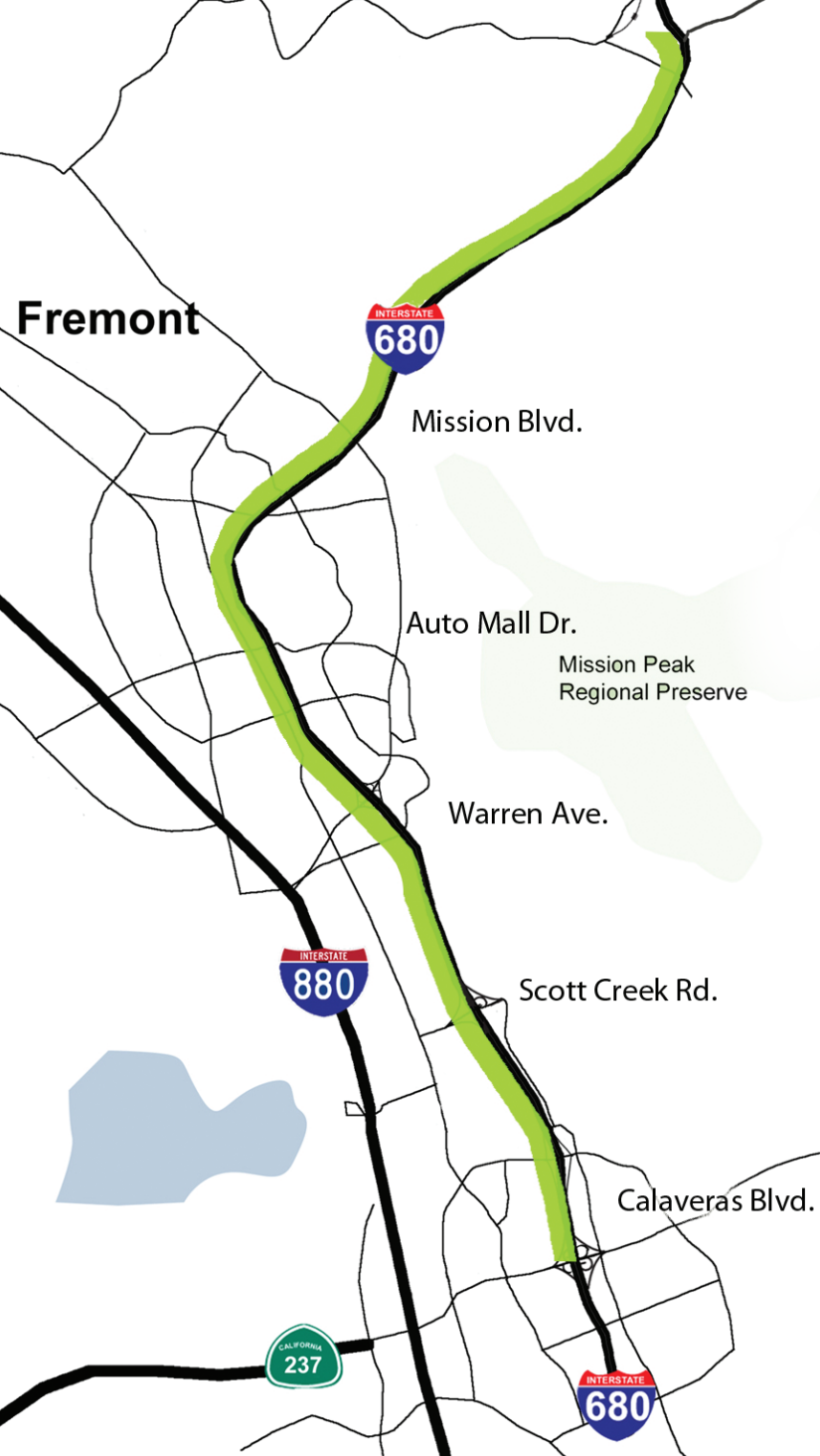


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Chairman's Message



September 20, 2018 marked the eight-year anniversary of the first express lane opening in Northern California. Since opening, more than 5.6 million solo drivers have chosen to use the I-680 Sunol Express Lane, reaching their destinations faster and with more reliable travel times than the general purpose lanes. During fiscal year 2017-18, more than 968,000 vehicles that would have used the general purpose lanes paid a toll to use the express lane, reducing congestion within the corridor while maintaining reliability within the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane.

The next step in the evolution of the corridor is the implementation of a new northbound express lane parallel to the existing southbound express lane along the Sunol Grade, and conversion of the existing I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane to a continuous access system. Construction of these projects began in early 2018.

— **Mayor Jerry Thorne,**
City of Pleasanton,
Chair, Sunol Smart Carpool
Lane Joint Powers Authority

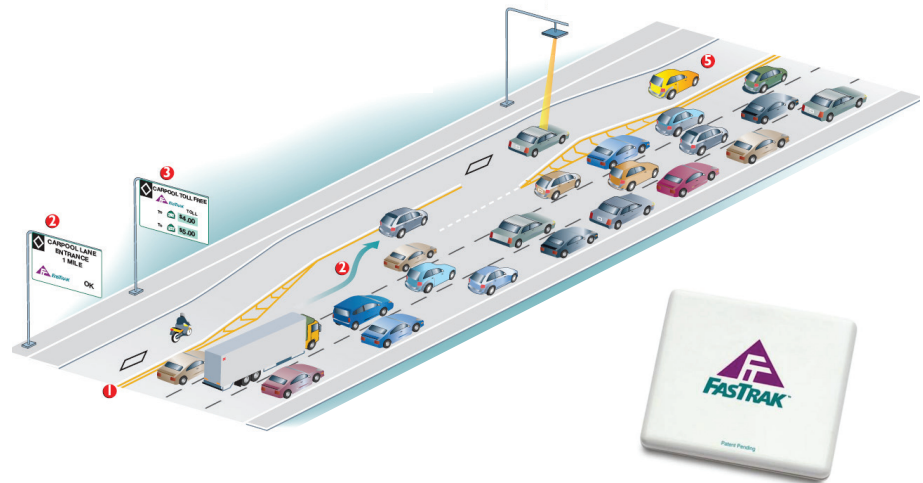
“I-680 is a backbone corridor of the region. The express lane provides more reliable travel times, encourages carpooling, reduces congestion and improves the quality-of-life for Bay Area residents.”

— **Arthur L. Dao,**
Executive Director,
Alameda County
Transportation Commission

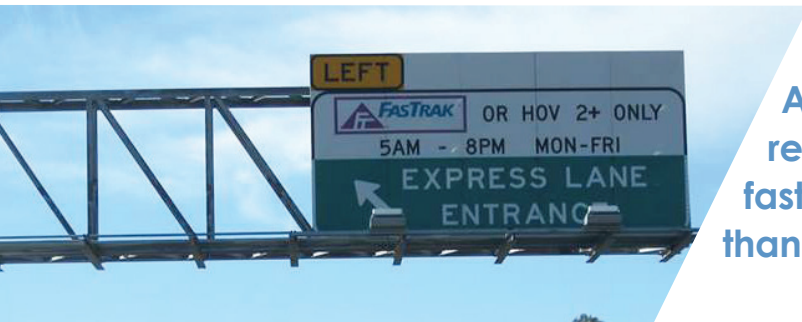


I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane

Since it opened in September 2010 as Northern California's first express lane facility, more than 5.6 million solo drivers have chosen to get to their destination faster by using the I-680 Sunol Express Lane. Located on a 14-mile stretch of southbound Interstate 680 (I-680) from State Route 84 (SR-84) south of Pleasanton to Highway 237 in Milpitas, the express lane was designed to manage growing traffic congestion on I-680 and to provide people with a new commute choice between the East Bay and Silicon Valley. It is governed by the Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers Authority (Sunol JPA).



Access to the lane by toll-paying users is regulated to ensure express lane users enjoy faster speeds and more reliable travel times than the general purpose lanes.



The I-680 Sunol Express Lane operates Monday through Friday from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. The operation is fully electronic, with no tollbooths, so customers do not need to slow down or stop to pay. Solo drivers who want to use the lane need a FasTrak® toll tag (a standard tag or the Flex tag that became available in mid-2015). Each time drivers use the express lane, the toll amount is deducted from their FasTrak account balance. Carpools, motorcycles, transit vehicles, and permitted zero- and low-emission vehicles with HOV-eligible stickers may currently use the express lane for free without a toll tag, with a standard FasTrak stored in its mylar bag, or with a FasTrak Flex toll tag set to 2 or 3+.

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) provides toll enforcement to prevent unlawful access and toll violations. In fiscal year (FY) 2017-18, CHP issued more than 1,300 citations for toll evasion violations.

Usage of the express lane has continually increased since opening. During FY 2017-18, more than 968,000 toll-payers used the express lane, a slight increase over the previous year. Assessed tolls averaged \$3.03 per trip. An estimated 27 percent of all express lane users this year were toll-paying. Access to the lane by toll-paying users is regulated to ensure express lane users enjoy faster speeds and more reliable travel times than the general purpose lanes.



Express Lane Performance



While daily express lane solo driver usage has remained level compared to prior years, express lane traffic volumes during morning commute hours have increased while afternoon usage has decreased. Despite this shift in express lane utilization, the express lanes still meet federal and state performance requirements.

Figures 1-4 (following pages) describe and illustrate how the existing I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane is performing, where corridor users are going, and how much it costs to use the express lane.

The I-680 Sunol Express Lane is part of the major commute route connecting the Tri-Valley area (Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton) with South Bay cities and Silicon Valley businesses.

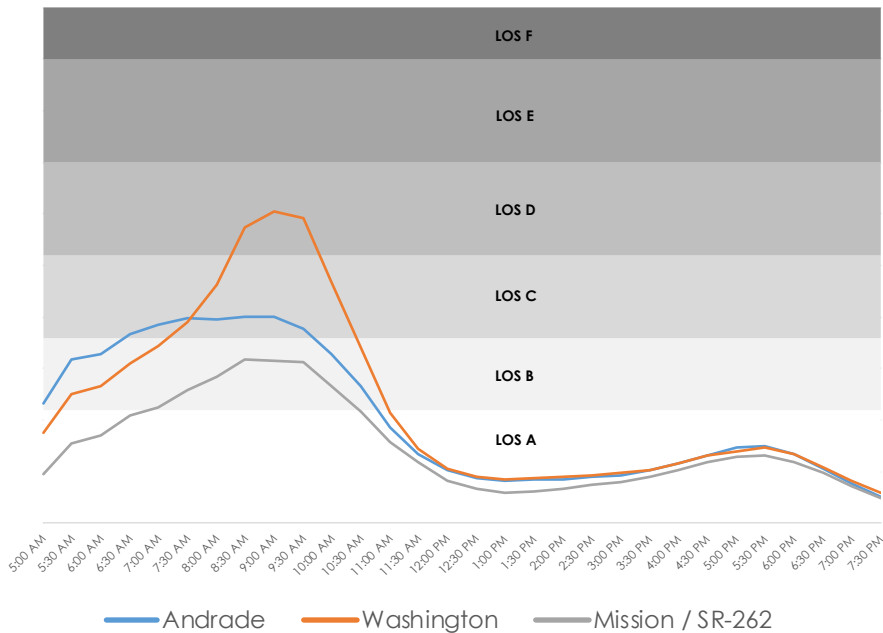


Figure 1

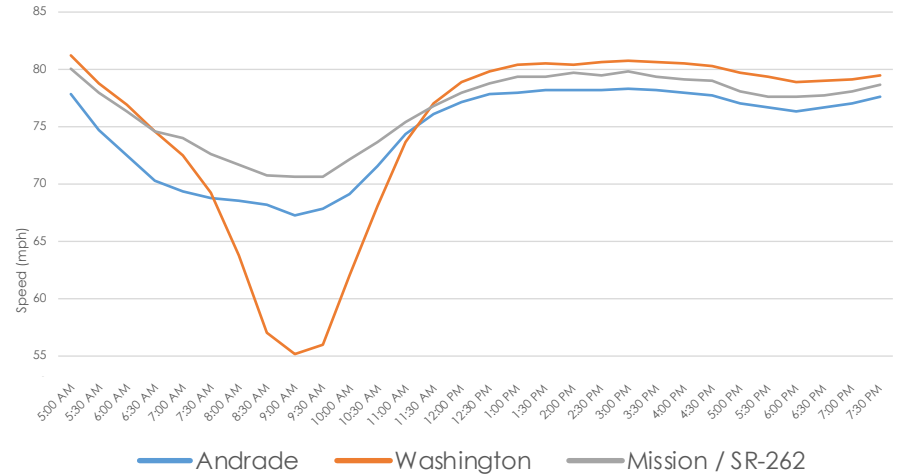
Speed, Volume, and Level of Service Charts – Monitoring the Corridor

These charts show the average speeds, volumes, and Level of Service (LOS) at the three toll points in the express lane throughout the day: just south of Andrade Road, south of Washington Avenue, and just north of Mission Boulevard (SR-262). LOS is a measure of freeway performance based on vehicle maneuverability and driver comfort levels, graded on a scale of A (best) through F (worst). Average speeds at the express lane toll points ranged from 55 to 70 mph during the morning commute hours (5 a.m. to 11 a.m.) with lower speeds occurring in the vicinity of Washington Boulevard; average speeds throughout the rest of the day exceeded 70 mph. The express lane operated at LOS C or better at all times, with LOS D occurring in the peak hour in between Washington Boulevard and Auto Mall Parkway. The slower speeds at the Washington toll point are attributed to a sharp curve in the freeway immediately preceding the toll point that causes all users to slow down even in moderately heavy traffic conditions.

Average Weekday Express Lane **Level of Service** (FY 2017-18)



Average Weekday Express Lane **Speed** (FY 2017-18)



Average Weekday Express Lane **Volume** (FY 2017-18)

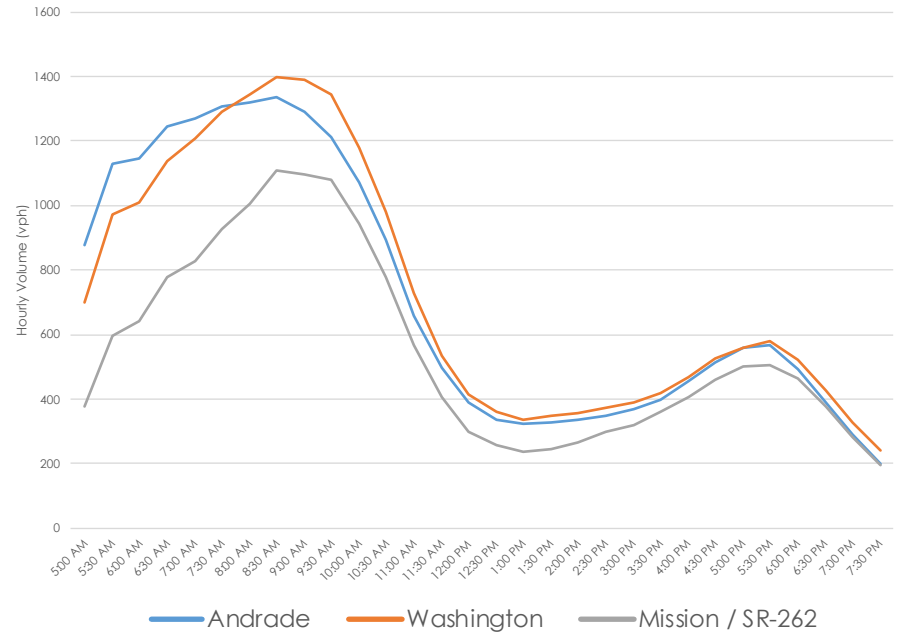
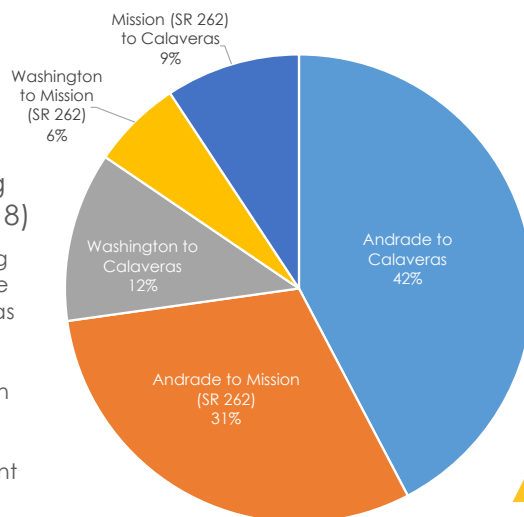


Figure 2**Destination Chart – Evaluating Express Lane Usage (FY 2017-18)**

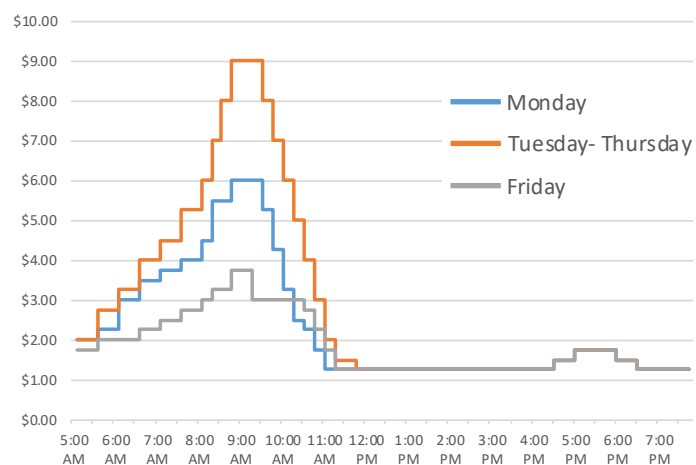
Approximately 42 percent of toll-paying users within the corridor travel the entire length from Andrade Road to Calaveras Boulevard, and 73 percent originate at the start of the express lane. Almost 91 percent travel the segment between Washington Boulevard and Mission Boulevard, and generally most congested, segment within the corridor.



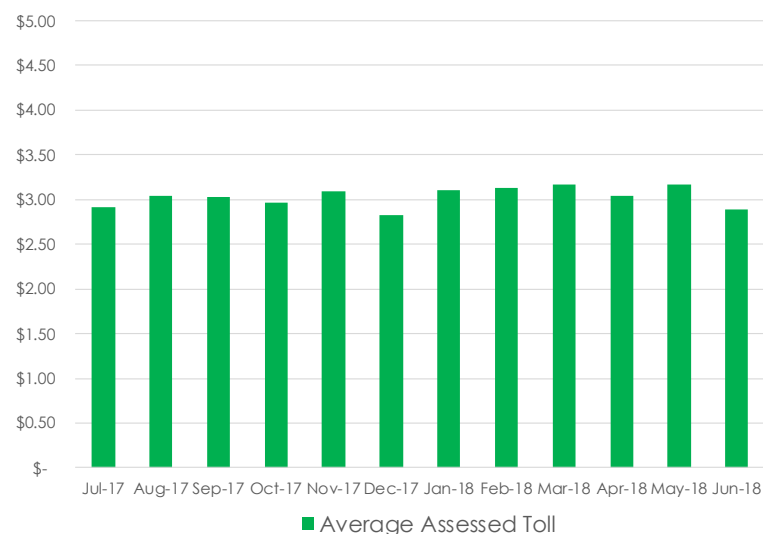
Between Washington Boulevard and Mission Boulevard is the most utilized, and generally most congested, segment within the corridor.

Figure 3**Static Time-of-Day Pricing**

While the I-680 Northbound Express Lane is under construction, the existing I-680 Southbound Express Lane is expected to remain in operation, but some lane shifts will be required. In anticipation of upcoming construction impacts, the existing southbound express lane deployed static time-of-day pricing in July 2017 until the new Express Lane goes live. The scheduled toll rates to travel the entire length of the express lane are shown in the step-chart, and lower tolls are posted for shorter trips.

**Figure 4****Toll Rates – Keeping Express Lanes Flowing**

During FY 2017-18, the average peak-period (5 a.m. to 11 a.m.) posted toll rate to travel the entire corridor was \$4.31, and to travel just the central segment from Washington Boulevard to Mission Boulevard (SR-262) was \$2.33. The average assessed toll for all tolled trips ranged from \$2.83 to \$3.17, depending on the month.



Financial Information, FY 2017-18

When the Sunol JPA was formed in 2010, it agreed to reinvest the net revenues derived from the express lanes directly back into the project corridor. Toll revenues are used to first pay for operating and maintaining the I-680 Express Lane, and then to fund additional transit and transportation projects in the corridor.

- Total net position increased by \$1.24 million or 26.3 percent from \$4.70 million to \$5.93 million as of June 30, 2018, compared to June 30, 2017. This increase is mostly due to an increase in cash and investments stemming from an increase in toll revenues and a decrease in expenses as a result of operating efficiencies realized during the fiscal year. Capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation, comprised \$1.47 million or 24.7 percent of the total net position at June 30, 2018.
- For the year ended June 30, 2018, cash and cash equivalents increased by \$1.28 million or 37.4 percent from \$3.43 million to \$4.72 million compared to FY 2016-17. This increase is mostly related to toll revenue collections, which were significantly more than operating expenses paid during the fiscal year.

- Operating revenue was \$2.87 million during FY 2017-18, an increase of \$0.79 million or 37.9 percent over FY 2016-17.
- The Sunol JPA's total operating expenses including depreciation were \$1.66 million during FY 2017-18, a decrease of \$0.28 million or 14.3 percent from FY 2016-17. This decrease is attributed to the realization of operating efficiencies implemented throughout the fiscal year. Operating expenses of \$1.66 million for FY 2017-18 were primarily comprised of program operations and maintenance costs.

Toll revenues are used to first pay for operating and maintaining the I-680 Express Lane, and then to fund additional transit and transportation projects in the corridor.



Coming Soon: I-680 Sunol Northbound Express Lane

The I-680 Sunol Express Lane is part of the growing Bay Area Express Lanes Network. On completion, the Bay Area will have over 600 miles of express lanes operated by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) and Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC). These agencies, as well as the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, the Solano Transportation Authority, and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority, are working together to close gaps in the express lane network.



Construction of the Sunol JPA's northbound I-680 Sunol Express Lane from Mission Boulevard (SR-262) to Vallecitos Road (SR-84) began in early 2018. The existing southbound lane will concurrently be converted from a restricted access to a continuous access facility, allowing for more users to take advantage of express lane benefits. The new northbound and southbound express lanes will open to traffic in late 2020. The next project to improve the I-680 corridor is the I-680/SR-84 Interchange widening project, which is currently in the environmental phase.



For more information about the I-680 Express Lane and future express lane projects, visit <https://www.alamedactc.org/programs-projects/expresslanes/>

Visit www.bayarearexpresslanes.org for more information about the envisioned regionwide express lane network.

Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers Authority

The Sunol JPA is an independent joint powers authority created to operate the I-680 Express Lane. Its board of directors consists of five elected officials, four voting members from Alameda County and one voting member from Santa Clara County. Voting rights were determined based on each county's share of road miles within the corridor (approximately one-fifth of corridor miles are within Santa Clara County).

The Sunol JPA meets monthly, and meetings are open to the public. Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the Alameda CTC website at <https://www.alamedactc.org/get-involved/upcoming-meetings/>

Partnerships

The Alameda County Transportation Commission, the California Department of Transportation and the California Highway Patrol provide services to the Sunol JPA contractually. For toll collection, the Sunol JPA has an agreement with the Bay Area Toll Authority to use its FasTrak® electronic toll-collection system.

2018 Sunol JPA Members

- Chair:** **Jerry Thorne**, *City of Pleasanton Mayor, Alameda CTC Commissioner*
- Vice Chair:** **Lily Mei**, *City of Fremont Mayor, Alameda CTC Commissioner*
- Members:** **Lan Diep**, *San Jose City Councilmember, VTA Board Member*
Scott Haggerty, *Alameda County Supervisor, District 1, Alameda CTC Commissioner*
David Haubert, *City of Dublin Mayor, Alameda CTC Commissioner*
- Staff Liaison:** **Arthur L. Dao**, *Alameda CTC Executive Director*
Liz Rutman, *Alameda CTC Director of Express Lanes Implementation and Operations*

Website: www.alamedactc.org/680Express

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AlamedaCountyExpressLanes

