



Memorandum

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DATE: July 6, 2020

TO: I-680 Sunol Express Lane Joint Powers Authority

FROM: Trinity Nguyen, Director of Project Delivery
Liz Rutman, Director of Express Lanes Implementation and Operations

SUBJECT: I-680 Sunol Express Lanes from SR 262 to SR 84 Construction Status Update

Recommendation

This item is to provide the Authority with an update on the status of I-680 Sunol Express Lanes – Phase 1 construction project. This item is for information only.

Summary

The Interstate 680 (I-680) Sunol Express Lanes (EL) Project will provide enhanced mobility for motorists in both the northbound and southbound directions as a combination of two projects, the I-680 Express Lanes (EL) project and the I-680 Southbound Conversion Project. The I-680 Sunol EL project will widen I-680 from SR 237 in Santa Clara County to SR 84 in Alameda County to construct a 14-mile long northbound High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/Express Lane in the corridor. The project is being implemented in a phased approach focused on providing immediate operational benefits based on funding availability. The I-680 Sunol Express Lane - Phase 1 project (Phase 1), constructs an initial 9-mile HOV/Express Lane segment on northbound I-680 between south of Auto Mall Parkway and SR 84. The I-680 Southbound Access Conversion project will convert the existing southbound controlled access tolling configuration to an open access configuration to provide consistency with the new northbound express lane. This conversion has been incorporated into the northbound Phase 1 project.

The purpose of this item is to provide the Commission with a status update on the project development and implementation activities which are either completed or planned for the Phase 1 project.

Background

The I-680 Sunol Express Lanes project will widen northbound I-680 from SR 237 in Santa Clara County to SR 84 in Alameda County to construct a 14-mile long northbound

HOV/Express Lane in the corridor. The project will provide a number of benefits including: 1) enhanced mobility by reducing traffic congestion; 2) reduced travel time and improved travel reliability; and 3) reduced congestion related accidents, thereby enhancing safety. The Express Lane facility will maximize available HOV lane capacity by offering solo drivers the choice to pay an electronic toll to access the lane, while regular carpool/carpool eligible users continue to use the lane at no cost. The Phase 1 project will provide an initial 9-mile segment of new HOV/Express Lane from south of Auto Mall Parkway to SR 84 to eliminate the bottlenecks and alleviate much of the daily traffic congestion.

The I-680 Southbound Express Lane was opened to traffic in September 2010 as a controlled access facility. To be consistent with the new northbound express lane and provide enhanced accessibility for users, the southbound direction will be converted to an open access configuration in conjunction with the Phase 1 project.

The Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA&ED) for the overall project was completed in July 2015. In December 2015, WMH Corporation was selected to prepare the civil design and will continue to provide design support during construction. In June 2016, Kapsch TrafficCom Transportation NA, Inc. was selected to provide Toll System Integration Services. In November 2017, Bay Cities Paving & Grading Inc. was awarded the civil construction contract.

Alameda CTC, in partnership with Caltrans, is the implementing agency for preliminary engineering, environmental studies, design, right-of-way acquisition, and utility relocation. For the construction phase, Alameda CTC is the project sponsor and Caltrans is the implementing agency to administer the construction of the Phase 1 project. Attachment A, I-680 Sunol Express Lanes Progress Update, provides the current implementation schedule and delivery milestones.

The approved PA&ED documents included studies and analysis for construction of both the full project limits (SR 237 to SR 84) and an initial segment (south of Auto Mall Parkway to SR 84). The initial segment (Phase 1 project) is focused on providing immediate operational benefits within currently available funding. During development of the Phase 1 project, staff identified and implemented several geometric refinements to reduce costs and minimize environmental impacts.

In the interest of expediting important improvements for the public, Alameda CTC and Caltrans have agreed to incorporate a pavement rehabilitation project into the Phase 1 project.

Civil construction began on March 5, 2018 after the approval of the required initial submittals. To date, the contractor has achieved 80% progress on various bid items at various locations. The following is a detailed discussion of work in progress and/or upcoming major tasks.

Recently Completed Project activities (June 2020):

- Drainage System near Sheridan is complete
- Retaining walls on I-680 NB near Paseo Padre Parkway and the Alameda Creek Bridge are complete.
- Barrier Rail in Segment C is complete.

Upcoming Project Activities:

- Visible work activities for the three months ahead will include:
 - Continue construction of PG&E connection
 - Continue installing electronic toll system cabinets
 - Paving in Segment C
- Traffic switch near Sheridan Bridge
- Demolition and reconstruction median barrier near Sheridan Bridge
- Precast concrete panel installation on I-680 NB
- Continue LED panel installation and toll equipment on Overhead Sign Structures
- Continue coordination between CM team and Toll System Integrator for construction staging/sequencing (on-going).
- Continue to coordinate with PG&E, AT&T and Telco regarding power and communication service connection needs (on-going).

Schedule: COVID-19 Discussion and Impacts:

A Shelter-In-Place Order (Order) has been in effect in Alameda County since March 16, 2020 and includes restrictions on the type of businesses that can operate and how the operations are to be conducted. The current SIP order is revised and effective June 18, 2020.

Caltrans is administering the civil work contract and has deemed this work as essential and has continued construction of the project under COVID-19 precautions. A COVID-19 Third-Party Jobsite Safety Accountability Supervisor has been brought on board to ensure as much as possible can be done to limit the risk of the spread of COVID-19 during construction.

There has been significant benefit to the paving operations, for which, due to lighter than usual volume of traffic, Caltrans allowed longer traffic closures. As a result, it is anticipated that the NB lane will be completed by late October 2020.

The Toll System Integrator commenced its field operations in early June and is continuing on while complying with the Order. The toll system integration testing work is the controlling activity for the start of toll operations and the tolling software is scheduled to be available in February 2021. The final testing and tuning will take two months to complete. Staff is working with Caltrans to develop an acceptable strategy to operate the lanes as HOV Only until toll collection begins.

With the current reduction in traffic along the corridor and usage of the SB Express Lane, there is an opportunity to advance the paving and striping necessary to convert the existing SB lane from controlled access to open access. Staff has initiated discussions with Caltrans to better understand the cost and traffic impact associated with the option of completing the SB paving and striping work in 2020.

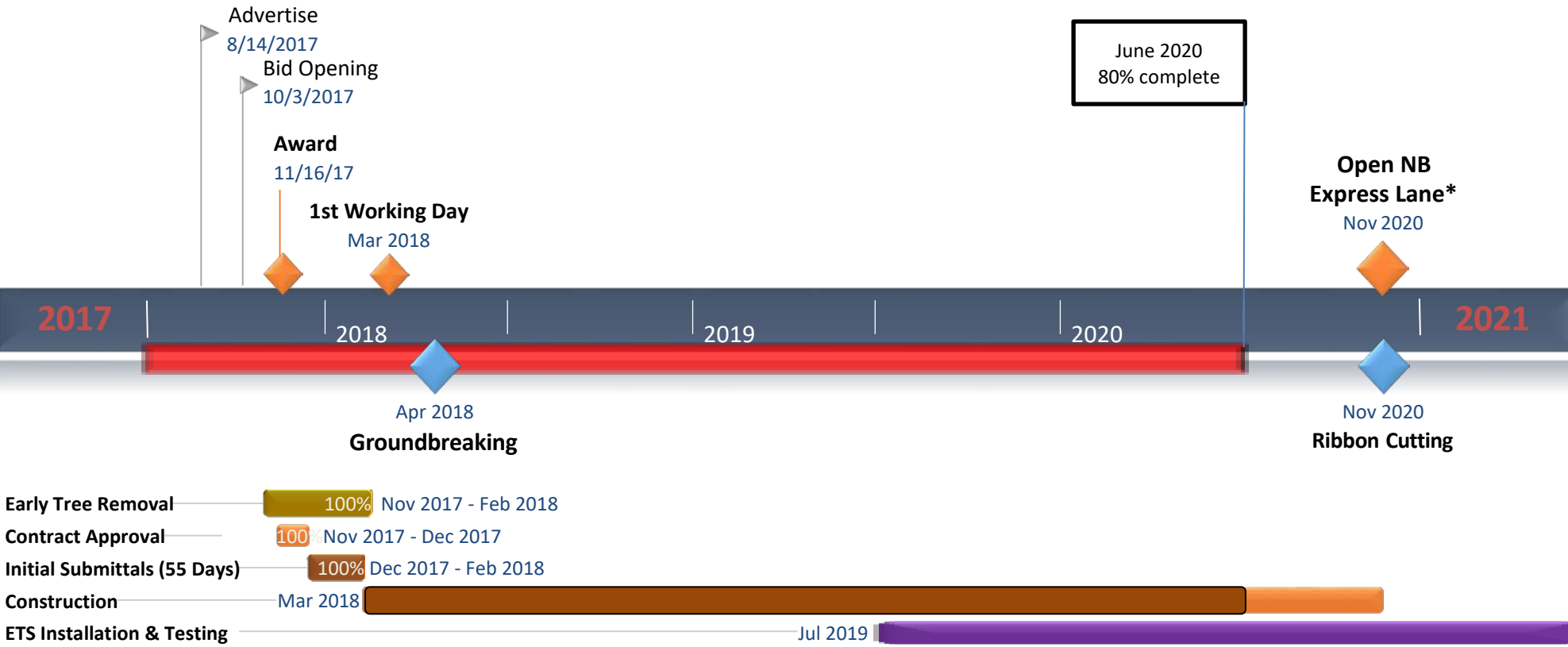
Fiscal Impact: There is no fiscal impact. This is an information item only.

Attachment:

- A. I-680 Sunol Express Lanes Progress Update

Sunol Express Lanes from SR 262 to SR 84

Progress Update: June 2020



* HOV Only Operations

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