



**DATE:** May 3, 2021

**TO:** I-680 Sunol Express Lane Joint Powers Authority

**FROM:** Liz Rutman, Director of Express Lanes Implementation and Operations

**SUBJECT:** I-680 Sunol Express Lanes Project Implementation Update

## Recommendation

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

## Summary

The Interstate 680 (I-680) Sunol Express Lanes (EL) Project (Phase 1) will provide enhanced mobility for motorists in both the northbound and southbound directions by providing a 9-mile express lane segment on northbound I-680 between south of Auto Mall Parkway and SR 84 and converting the existing southbound controlled-access express lane to an open-access facility between SR 84 and SR 262. A new toll system will be deployed for both directions of travel with new technology that will allow for implementation of all adopted toll policies.

The purpose of this item is to provide the Authority 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 Southbound Express Lane was opened to traffic in September 2010 as a controlled access HOV/Express Lane. Deemed a success, the next logical step was to develop a parallel northbound express lane. The I-680 Sunol Express Lanes Project (Phase 1) has widened northbound I-680 to provide a 9-mile Express Lane segment on northbound I-680 between south of Auto Mall Parkway and SR 84. To be consistent with the new northbound express lane and provide enhanced accessibility for users, the project has also converted the existing southbound controlled-access express lane to an open-access facility between SR 84 and SR 262. The project will provide a number of benefits to all motorists within the corridor. Motorists using the express lane will enjoy faster and more reliable travel times within the corridor, and all travel lanes will see reduced congestion. The express lane will optimize the

corridor capacity by providing a choice to drivers: single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) will have the option to pay an electronic toll to access the express lane, while carpools with two or more persons, motorcycles, and transit vehicles may use the lane at no cost and eligible clean air vehicles may receive a 50% toll discount for solo drivers. All users must have a valid FasTrak® account to use the express lanes.

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. (Kapsch) 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. Civil construction began on March 5, 2018. In order to complete the civil construction work, with Caltrans concurrence, the I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane ceased revenue operations and began operating in HOV ONLY mode beginning August 10, 2020, meaning that they are open for use only to HOV-eligible vehicles during the operating hours of 5 am – 8 pm, Monday – Friday, and open to all users during all other hours. On October 29, 2020, the new northbound express lane was opened for use, also in HOV ONLY mode, while construction and toll system development activities were completed. At this time, the new toll system is not yet ready to begin tolling operations. However, the civil construction work and is substantially complete and close-out of the civil construction contract is underway

Implementation of a new toll system requires the services of a Toll System Integrator (TSI), who provides very specialized services for toll system design, software development, equipment procurement and installation, testing, and opening the express lanes for revenue service. Only upon completion of system testing during live operations, is the toll system implementation considered complete. The Kapsch team has encountered delays in finalizing the toll system design and software development. To keep the project moving forward, Kapsch has installed the toll equipment at risk so that, once the software development and preliminary testing are completed, field testing can proceed immediately. Full toll operations are currently projected to begin in Fall 2021.

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