

# I-680

ANNUAL REPORT FY 2021-22



SUNOL SMART CARPOOL LANE JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY  
**I-680 Sunol Express Lanes**



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# Chair's Message

September 20, 2022 marked the twelve-year anniversary of the first express lane opening in Northern California. Since opening, more than 7.2 million solo drivers have chosen to use the I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane, reaching their destinations faster and

with more reliable travel times than the general purpose lanes. The Sunol Express Lanes project is now moving to its next phase: operations on both the southbound and northbound express lanes.

On October 29, 2020 the new northbound express lane parallel to the existing southbound express lane along the Sunol Grade opened to high-occupancy vehicle traffic, and the existing

I-680 Sunol southbound express lane opened to HOV traffic as a continuous access lane. Construction of these projects began in early 2018 and completed in 2022, and tolling operations on the new and improved facilities began on March 31, 2023.

— **Melissa Hernandez**

*Mayor of Dublin  
Chair, Sunol Smart Carpool Lane  
Joint Powers Authority*

**“The I-680 Sunol Express Lanes reduce congestion and improve the quality of life for more than 7.2 million people who traverse the corridor and for those who reside in communities adjacent to the corridor. These lanes, part of the planned 600-mile network of Bay Area Express Lanes, incorporate technology-based solutions to manage congestion along this 14-mile corridor.”**

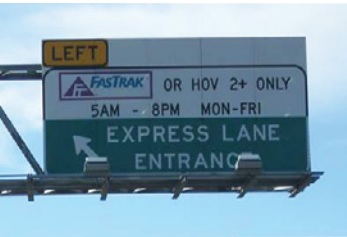
— **Tess Lengyel**

*Executive Director,  
Alameda County  
Transportation Commission*



# The I-680 Sunol Express Lanes

Since it opened in September 2010 as Northern California's first express lane facility, more than 7.2 million solo drivers have chosen to get to their destination faster by using the I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane. Located on a 14-mile stretch of southbound Interstate 680 (I-680) from State Route (SR) 84 south of Pleasanton to SR-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).



Beginning in 2018, work began to construct a new northbound express lane between Auto Mall Parkway and SR-84 and to change the access configuration of the southbound lane to allow drivers to enter and exit more freely. Tolling operations were suspended on the southbound lane in August 2020 so that construction of the new toll system could be completed. Both the new northbound and converted southbound express lane opened to high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) traffic in October 2020 and have operated as HOV lanes during the entirety of FY 2021-22.

**The existing I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane was converted from restricted to continuous access in October 2020 as part of the northbound construction project.**



# The I-680 Sunol Express Lanes



When tolling began in March 2023, the I-680 express lanes continued to allow vehicles with two or more occupants, and other HOV-eligible vehicles, to use the lanes for free. HOVs are required to use a FasTrak Flex® toll tag set to the 2 or 3+ setting. Eligible clean air vehicles (CAVs) with one occupant are eligible for a 50% toll discount with a FasTrak CAV toll tag. All other solo drivers are required to have a FasTrak toll tag. Each time drivers use the express lanes, the toll amount will be deducted from their FasTrak account balance.

**Tolling began on March 31, 2023.**  
**The express lanes extend southbound from SR-84 to SR-237 and northbound from Auto Mall Parkway to SR-84.**

Other features new to the I-680 express lanes when they opened on March 31, 2023 include enhanced enforcement technology and signage. The express lanes are equipped with license plate recognition cameras to detect vehicles without a FasTrak toll tag. Numeric displays at each toll point illuminate to display the switch setting detected in each vehicle, allowing California Highway Patrol (CHP) to make sure that drivers have their FasTrak Flex set in the appropriate setting. Lastly, message panels on the bottom of pricing signs are used to inform motorists of the express lanes' operational status and roadway incidents.



# Financial Information

When the Sunol JPA was formed in 2010, policies were advanced 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 Sunol Express Lanes, and any excess revenues are available for other transportation projects in the corridor.

- Total net position decreased by \$0.59 million or 10.3 percent from \$5.70 million to \$5.11 million as of June 30, 2022, compared to June 30, 2021. This decrease is mostly due to a decrease in cash and investments related to the suspension of revenue operations in August 2020 to allow for the transition to a new toll system and other construction activities on the express lanes. Capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation, comprised \$0.23 million or 4.4 percent of the total net position at June 30, 2022.
- For the year ended June 30, 2022, cash and cash equivalents decreased by \$0.61 million or 10.7 percent from \$5.67 million to \$5.07 million compared to June 30, 2021. This decrease is mostly related to the suspension of revenue operations to allow for construction activities.

- There was no operating revenue during fiscal year 2021-22, and there was very little operating revenue during fiscal year 2020-21 due to the suspension of revenue operations in August 2020 to allow for construction work on the I-680 express lane.
- The Authority's total operating expenses including depreciation were \$0.55 million during fiscal year 2021-22, a decrease of \$0.26 million or 32.1 percent from fiscal year 2020-21. This decrease is attributed to the suspension of revenue operations which resulted in a significant reduction in operations and maintenance expense. Operating expenses of \$0.52 million for fiscal year 2021-22 were primarily comprised of ongoing program operations and maintenance costs.

**Toll revenues are used to first pay for operating and maintaining the I-680 Sunol Express Lanes, and any excess revenues are available for other transportation projects in the corridor.**



# Projects Under Construction

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

The next project to improve the I-680 corridor is the **SR-84/I-680 Interchange Improvements project**, which began construction in spring 2021. The project will complete the modernization of SR-84 to four lanes, improve the interchange, and extend the southbound I-680 express lane to the north by two miles.

In February 2023, construction began to fill a gap extending the **I-680 Southbound Express Lane From SR-84 to Alcosta Boulevard**. This project will increase the efficiency of the transportation system on I-680, closing the gap between the existing southbound express lanes in Contra Costa and Alameda counties, resulting in a continuous southbound express lane spanning 50 miles from Marina Vista Avenue in Martinez to SR-237 in Milpitas.

**More I-680 Express Lane projects are under construction, following the I-680 Sunol Express Lanes completion.**



**The upcoming projects will close the gap between the existing southbound express lanes in Contra Costa and Alameda counties.**

For more information about the I-680 Sunol Express Lanes and future express lane projects, visit [www.AlamedaCTC.org/ExpressLanes](http://www.AlamedaCTC.org/ExpressLanes).

Visit [www.BayAreaExpressLanes.org](http://www.BayAreaExpressLanes.org) for more information about the envisioned regionwide express lane network.

## Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers Authority

The Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers Authority (Sunol JPA) is an independent joint powers authority created to operate the I-680 Sunol Express Lanes. 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 when the JPA was first established.

The Sunol JPA meetings are open to the public. Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the Alameda CTC website at [www.AlamedaCTC.org/all-meetings](http://www.AlamedaCTC.org/all-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.

## Sunol JPA Members

- Chair:** **Melissa Hernandez**, City of Dublin Mayor, Alameda CTC Commissioner
- Vice Chair:** **Karla Brown**, City of Pleasanton Mayor, Alameda CTC Commissioner
- Members:** **David Haubert**, Alameda County Supervisor, District 1, Alameda CTC Commissioner
- Sudhanshu “Suds” Jain**, City of Santa Clara Councilmember, VTA Board Member
- Lily Mei**, City of Fremont Mayor, Alameda CTC Commissioner
- Executive Director:** **Tess Lengyel**, Alameda CTC Executive Director
- Staff Liaisons:** **Gary Huisingh**, Alameda CTC Deputy Executive Director of Projects

**I-680 Express Lanes Website:**  
[www.AlamedaCTC.org/680Express](http://www.AlamedaCTC.org/680Express)



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[www.facebook.com/AlamedaCountyExpressLanes](https://www.facebook.com/AlamedaCountyExpressLanes)

[www.AlamedaCTC.org/ExpressLanesOps](http://www.AlamedaCTC.org/ExpressLanesOps)

[www.BayAreaExpressLanes.org](http://www.BayAreaExpressLanes.org)

All freeway photos courtesy of the California  
Department of Transportation

