

B. FACT SHEET – US 395 FREIGHT MOBILITY AND SAFETY PROJECT, I-15 TO SR-18

Project Scope

The US 395 Freight Mobility and Safety Project will address a critical freight bottleneck in the Victor Valley. It will convert the facility from 2 lanes to 4 lanes, with a raised median, between I-15 and SR-18, a distance of approximately 7 miles. It includes important community-focused elements such as: pedestrian and bicycle accommodations and safety features, and zero-emission charging/fueling infrastructure for heavy duty trucks at a site near the I-15/US 395 junction.

US 395 is designated as a “Priority Interregional Highway” in the Caltrans 2021 Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP) – the same designation as I-15 and SR-58. US 395 is widely recognized as a critical linkage for goods movement, supporting the economies of multiple inland counties and an important agricultural route to/from the Central Valley. With 30,000 vehicles per day, including approximately 17% trucks, this segment is almost twice the volume as the segment of US 395 immediately south of Kramer Junction (at SR-58) and is four times the volume of the four-lane segments north SR-14 – yet it remains as two lanes.

This is the highest priority project for jurisdictions in the Victor Valley, representing 400,000 in population, and improvement has been supported by Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties as well. This “gap closure” project is the second of a three-segment project between the US 395/I-15 junction and Adelanto. It is noteworthy that Brightline West High Speed Rail is planning its system to connect Las Vegas with Rancho Cucamonga, including a station on I-15 at Joshua Street in Hesperia, allowing commuters to take transit through the Cajon Pass. An improvement to US 395 will allow commuters unimpeded access to this station and the nearby park-and-ride lot, with restructured transit feeder services to provide a viable transit alternative to reach employment centers in the San Bernardino Valley below.



Northbound merge area on the far side of Bear Valley Rd. intersection.

The project will:

- Improve the efficiency and reliability of regional freight flows by closing a critical gap in US 395
- Improve safety for all users, both motorized and non-motorized
- Transition US 395 into a more community-centric facility that better accommodates bicycle, pedestrian, and transit travel

Nominating Agency:

- San Bernardino County Transportation Authority

Project Cost:

- PS&E - \$8,440,000
- Right-of-Way - \$13,934,000
- Construction - \$57,209,000
- Total - \$79,583,000

Project Schedule:

- End Environmental - 12/31/2009
- End Design/Ready-to-List - 12/27/2023
- End ROW Phase - 11/27/2023
- End Construction - 03/02/2027

Project Benefits: Outputs

- The new cross-section will be modified from the current 2-lane to four 12' travel lanes with raised median 14' in width and turn lanes plus two 8-foot shoulders throughout.
- Signal modifications will occur at eight intersections.
- Pedestrian signals, sidewalk accommodations, and transit stop provisions will be provided at those intersections in coordination with local jurisdictions and Victor Valley Transit Authority.
- Cyclists may use the 8' shoulders, but coordination will also occur with local jurisdictions on planned Class II facilities on parallel local streets.
- Conduit and junction boxes will be installed along the length for future cable and fiber optic installation.
- A contribution of \$5 million will be provided toward the implementation of zero-emission charging/fueling for heavy-duty trucks at the south end of the segment near I-15.

Project Benefits: Outcomes

1. How community input and Caltrans/SBCTA project decisions led to a better outcome:

To properly understand the history of the project, and how it has been adapted to address CAPTI principles and the needs of the community, one must understand the context of decision-making surrounding the project over the last 15 years. A US 395 Realignment Study and Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) were initiated in 2006. The purpose of the PEIR was to set the stage for a program to reserve right-of-way for a future realignment of US 395 to the west of the current alignment. There was great interest and participation from residents, land owners, commuters, businesses, and other interested parties, including an open house with some 500 attendees.

Based on the analysis up to that time and the community input received, the SBCTA Board of Directors voted to terminate the preparation of the PEIR in September 2007. Although traffic forecasts showed the need to realign US-395 to satisfy the Victor Valley's long-term circulation needs, the Board recommended to instead support Caltrans' efforts to address immediate safety, operational and throughput needs on the existing highway. In retrospect, this was one of the most significant VMT-reducing and GHG-reducing decisions in the history of the Victor Valley. The current project adds 14 lane-miles to address an existing freight bottleneck, compared to 100 lane-miles for the original concept. It was shortly after this decision that the

Project Report and the environmental process for improvement of the existing US 395 alignment were completed (December 2009).

2. Key benefits and metrics:

- Benefit/cost ratio of 6.2 over the 20-year analysis period
- Freight benefits represent 32% of the total benefit, even though trucks are only 17% of the traffic stream
- No takings of residential or commercial structures
- The Build scenario reduces GHGs by 471 tons per year on US 395 on an "equivalent volume" basis, relative to No-build. Cal-B/C analysis shows the Build scenario to be more efficient operationally, especially for trucks. When the Build scenario additional volume is added, the analysis shows an increase of 2900 tons of GHGs per year.
- This increase would be countered by the zero-emission truck charging/fueling strategy. On average, a Class 8 diesel truck generates 162 grams of CO₂ per ton-mile. Based on truck travel factors, a zero-emission truck would reduce GHG emissions by 320 tons per year. In other words, fueling of just 10 zero-emission trucks per day would cancel out the GHG increase cited in the prior bullet. This speaks to the power and importance of the zero-emission truck fueling strategy. The proposed site near the US 395/I-15 junction is the perfect location within the corridor to locate such a facility.

3. Equity:

- Victorville, through which US 395 passes, is a very diverse community, with 55% of the population being Hispanic and 15% being non-Hispanic Black, per the SCAG 2019 Local Profile. Hesperia is 57% and 5%, respectively.
- Housing affordability is one of the premier reasons for those in the lower income categories to locate in the Victor Valley, but this comes with a mobility burden. Travel time to work is 13% higher than for the county as a whole.
- Zero-emission investment, greater transit access/reliability for commuters (VVTA/Brightline), and improved mobility on US 395 will all benefit these disadvantaged communities.
- Hispanic truckers are over-represented in the trucking business. Hispanics are more than twice as likely to own trucking firms as they are to own other types of firms. Therefore, an investment in freight mobility will benefit the Hispanic minority community to a greater degree than average. The black community is also over-represented, but to a lesser extent.