

News and updates from a coalition of community and business leaders focused on the health and vitality of California's transportation backbone — **Interstate 5**

# Interchange



Volume 12, No. 1

Winter 2014

## What's Next?

**Cover Story: A Look Ahead  
at California Transportation Funding**

— Page 3 —



### Also Inside

**From the Executive  
Director: An Optimistic  
Look Ahead at Our  
Transportation Future —  
Page 2**

**Special Reprint of 'The  
Transportation Game'  
from the Auto Club —  
Page 5**

**A Look Back at the  
Mobility 21 Transportation  
Summit — Page 8**

**From the Chairman: How  
the I-5 Improvements Will  
Improve Quality of Life —  
Page 12**



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

Phone: 661.775.0455

Fax: 661.295.5908

25030 Avenue Tibbitts, Suite K  
Valencia, CA 91355

Or...?

From the **Executive Director**

# Working Together for Positive Change

By **Victor Lindenheim**

*Executive Director;  
Golden State Gateway Coalition*

**R**eal evidence of progress in improving roadway transportation infrastructure is all around us in our part of Los Angeles County. Just take a drive on the Interstate 5... or the 405... the 126... or the 138.

Substantial amounts of federal, state and local money — our tax dollars and fees — have been invested, and significant projects are now at the construction stage, soon adding new roadway capacity and improving existing facilities. As a result, jobs have been created, the local economy gets a boost, and we can look forward to reduced traffic congestion and improved safety on those routes.

But, there are clearly more challenges ahead that we will need to address: meeting future transportation infrastructure needs (both construction and maintenance) and how to pay for them.

In this issue of Interchange we take a look at funding options for future transportation infrastructure needs in north Los Angeles County and the surrounding region, offering viewpoints from thought leaders in the field, including the Auto Club and Metro.

Construction and impending completion of much-needed projects is good news. The other good news is that future projects and funding options are now on the table for consideration, discussion and debate.

Regional planning continues at SCAG



**Victor Lindenheim**

(Southern California Association of Governments); Metro and the County are working with L.A.'s cities to sort out transportation priorities; Caltrans and the California Transportation Commission, now both part of the new state umbrella California Transportation Agency, are building projects, allocating funds, and setting policy for what will be built and how it will be built. The San Fernando Council of Governments (of which Santa Clarita

is a member) has been planning to put together a "mobility matrix" for the local sub-region — an inventory of transportation needs and wants. And the federal government is working on the reauthorization of the national surface transportation act, due to expire in September 2014, while discussion in Washington also focuses on a national freight policy.

Change is almost certain. Together, let's make it change for the better. With your continued support and input, the Gateway Coalition will continue to educate and to advocate for I-5 corridor improvements.

We wish you and yours health, happiness and mobility in the New Year.

**'Construction and impending completion of much-needed projects is good news. The other good news is that future projects and funding options are now on the table for consideration, discussion and debate.'**

# Now What?

## A look at the future of transportation funding

**By Tim Whyte**  
*Interchange Editor*

**R**egional transportation systems, heal thyself. That just may be the de facto prescription for future transportation funding in the Southland as we turn a figurative corner in the next several years, as existing projects near completion and our leaders look to the next round of needed transportation improvements and collectively try to figure out exactly how to pay for them.

You could argue that road and highway improvements are going great guns — for now. The Golden State Gateway Coalition's top-priority project, the improvements to Interstate 5 in northern Los Angeles County, are deep into the construction of Phase 1 truck lanes, 67 percent complete at press time and scheduled to be finished in the coming year. Elsewhere in the region, improvements are under way on Interstate 405, State Route 126, SR 138 and more.

Federal, state and local funds have been invested in these projects, and they will accomplish a great deal toward adding roadway capacity and improving existing facilities.

But, just as Walt Disney said his

Anaheim theme park will never be finished, a road and highway network isn't "finished" just because any particular project is completed. It's like a living thing: It will continue to grow and will need routine maintenance to stay healthy.

So how will we pay for it? With the federal Highway Trust Fund expected to be insolvent this year, and Congress occupied frying bigger fish, the picture in terms of future federal transportation funds appears dim — leaving local transportation leaders analyzing the options absent any impending windfall of federal transportation funds.

"The Trust Fund has been broke for the last decade, basically," says David Grannis, of PointC Partners, a consultant for the Golden State Gateway Coalition. "There's been not only

a lack of action on money, but if you think about it, there's no real imperative anymore."

That, says Grannis, is because the federal interstate highway system — originally conceived by President Dwight Eisenhower as a key to national defense — is basically finished, and there's been no initiative to move toward "what's next" on a national scale.

"I see no national vision, literally from anyone, about what our future transportation system should look like," says Grannis. "We don't have a vision."

That, he says, leaves state, regional and local governments to fend for themselves, with particular emphasis on entities like Los Angeles County's Metro and the Orange County Trans-

**See COVER, page 4**

### Related:

Turn to page 5 for a special reprint of "The Transportation Game" courtesy of the Auto Club



Marsha McLean,  
Santa Clarita Councilwoman:

'The best way to gain  
the funds needed for  
vital projects is to  
advocate continuously,  
loudly and  
clearly.'

## Cover

Continued from page 3

portation Authority.

"They're the boots on the ground," says Grannis. "I think the trend line from here is really regionalizing transportation investments."

Grannis expects the years ahead to feature creativity and innovation in transportation funding — perhaps more public-private partnerships like the one involving the Gateway Coalition, Caltrans and Metro — and also new tools to shore up transportation funds, either providing new revenue sources or shoring up those that are drying up or have run their course, like the state's \$19 billion Proposition 1B.

For example, he says, Oregon is experimenting with a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) tax, which is assessed to motorists based on how many miles they travel rather than how many gallons of gas they buy. This, in turn, offsets the imbalance that would inevitably arise as electric and hybrid vehicles become more popular. After all, those vehicles utilize roads and highways just as much as gas-burning vehicles do.

Oregon's VMT program is a voluntary one involving 5,000 drivers of high-efficiency vehicles, but it's being closely watched as a potential model for future transportation revenue programs.

Also, says Grannis, here in California new revenue sources are being considered. Among them: The California Air Resources Board auctions carbon dioxide emissions allowances under its cap-and-trade

**See FUNDING, page 11**

## Metro's Perspective

*L.A. Metro provided the following analysis of the transportation funding landscape:*

When looking at options for future transportation funding, we must look comprehensively and not just for one solution. Here are a few options:

•**Another sales tax measure:** Measure J, the extension of Measure R, missed passing the two-thirds threshold to become law by less than 1 percent. The Metro Board will be considering another Los Angeles County ballot measure to either extend Measure R or seek a new sales tax in 2014 or 2016 because the need for new transit, street and highway projects to ease traffic today and meet future growth has far eclipsed available funding.



•**VMT:** Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) assesses fees based on the amount of miles driven by a user. Washington State is in the midst of a pilot program using VMT. Meanwhile, federal representatives recently introduced legislation in Congress to make this a nationwide practice.

•**Toll Lanes:** As you may have read in the Los Angeles Times' article, "O.C. officials vote to widen 405 Freeway without toll lanes," the board of the Orange County transportation planning agency voted to move forward with new capacity on the I-405 without tolling any of the new lanes including high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes. The article mentioned that state officials may override this decision and require the tolling of the new lanes in order to generate additional transportation funding.

•**P3s:** Public private partnerships, as the Golden State Gateway Coalition is acutely aware of, are a way of leveraging future programmed sales tax revenues to mobilize the private sector to share some of the financial and project development risk. Right now LA Metro is pursuing several projects through a P3 delivery method in order to deliver them to the public years earlier than planned.

•**Licensing Fees:** Raising vehicle licensing fees, as recently suggested by former Caltrans director Will Kempton, could raise up to \$3 billion of additional revenues.

As for how this all applies to the North County and what kind of decisions can be made, the residents of the North County can voice their opinions and preferences to their elected officials. Elected officials at all levels then need to consider how to move forward and address these needs.

One thing to keep in mind is that there are no shortcuts here; comprehensive solutions buttressed with hard work and quality program administration is vital to address our transportation challenges.



# The TRANSPORTATION Game

## Six ways to pay for transportation— and each one's chances for success

BY CRAIG SCOTT

**H**ow's your transportation system treating you these days? Hitting more potholes? Or are the roads you drive in decent shape? Is congestion getting worse? Do you have good public transit, biking, and walking options? Your answers may affect how much you pay in taxes or tolls in the future, and how California agencies spend those dollars.

Recent studies show a steady decline in the quality of our transportation networks. The typical commuter in the Los Angeles metropolitan area wastes 61 hours and 27 gallons of fuel annually while stuck in traffic, for a total "congestion cost" of \$1,300, according to the Texas Transportation Institute. Bad roads add hundreds more annually to tire and vehicle repairs and other operating costs.

Such findings often prompt calls for more transportation spending. Indeed, more investment is needed. But that's not enough. "Government agencies also must spend funds more wisely—cutting red tape to build projects faster and at lower cost, and making sure that money goes only to projects that best relieve congestion and improve safety," says Alice Bisno, Auto Club senior vice president of public affairs. The bottom line: If taxpayers are going to pay more for transportation, they must get value for their money—better and safer roads, good public transit, and less time in bumper-to-bumper traffic.

Governor Jerry Brown has directed the secretary of the new California State Transportation Agency to convene a working group of key transportation stakeholders—including the Auto Club—to review the state's transportation needs and recommend a funding strategy. The group is scheduled to submit its recommendations to the governor and the legislature by late 2013 for possible action in 2014.



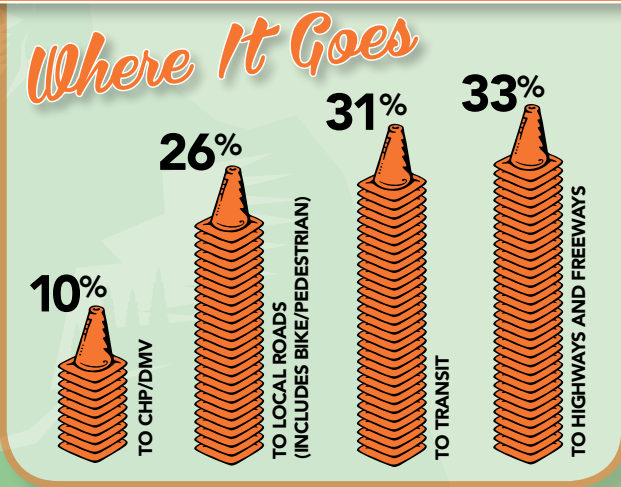
**Would you pay more**  
to fix roads and transit  
lines? How about for new or  
expanded facilities to reduce  
congestion and improve  
safety? Let us know  
what you think at  
[AAA.com/transportation](http://AAA.com/transportation).

As seen in Westways®. Copyright © 2013 Automobile Club of Southern California. All Rights Reserved. Reproduced by Permission.

Continued on page 6



2013 CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION FUNDING



The Auto Club has reviewed several approaches to investing more in transportation that various states are considering. Here's a brief analysis of each one's chances for success.

### Increase the Gas Tax

Traditionally, federal and state taxes on motor vehicle fuel have funded transportation projects. In California, motorists pay 39.5 cents a gallon in state gas taxes, 2 cents a gallon in state underground storage tank fees, plus 18.4 cents in federal gas taxes, generating more than \$10 billion a year for transportation. But most gas taxes haven't been raised for decades, and their buying power is declining because of inflation and newer cars that get better gas mileage. Each one-penny increase in the state gas tax would raise about \$160 million a year, costing the average California driver just \$7 annually.

**Could it be done?**  
Technically very easy, but publicly and politically unpopular.

**Would it raise enough money?**  
A significant increase could easily generate much of the needed near-term funding.

### Increase the Vehicle License Fee (VLF) or Registration Fee

The VLF (0.65 percent of a car's value—\$65 for a \$10,000 car) currently raises about \$2 billion a year to pay for local government services. Vehicle registration and other DMV fees raise about \$2.8 billion per year (about \$100 per registered vehicle) and pay for motorist services, such as the CHP and DMV.

**Could it be done?**  
Technically easy; publicly and politically extremely unpopular. California voters have repeatedly rejected this option.

**Would it raise enough money?**  
Only if the amount of increase is very high.

### Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Taxes

A VMT tax is based on the number of miles driven. Collecting such a tax would require a new reporting mechanism to determine the number of miles each motorist drives. No state has yet enacted a VMT tax, although some states are investigating the concept, and Oregon is conducting pilot tests.

**Could it be done?**  
Yes, but complex and costly to implement; fraud and privacy issues need to be addressed; not likely to happen in the near term.

**Would it raise enough money?**  
It could, if set at a high enough rate and regularly adjusted to meet fiscal needs or keep pace with inflation.

### Tolling and "Road Pricing"

It's becoming increasingly common to levy tolls on motorists who drive in special express lanes or on new toll roads.

**Could it be done?**  
Advances in electronic tolling make it easier to implement. But charging a fee to use existing regular lanes and streets—proposed by some officials—is very unpopular.

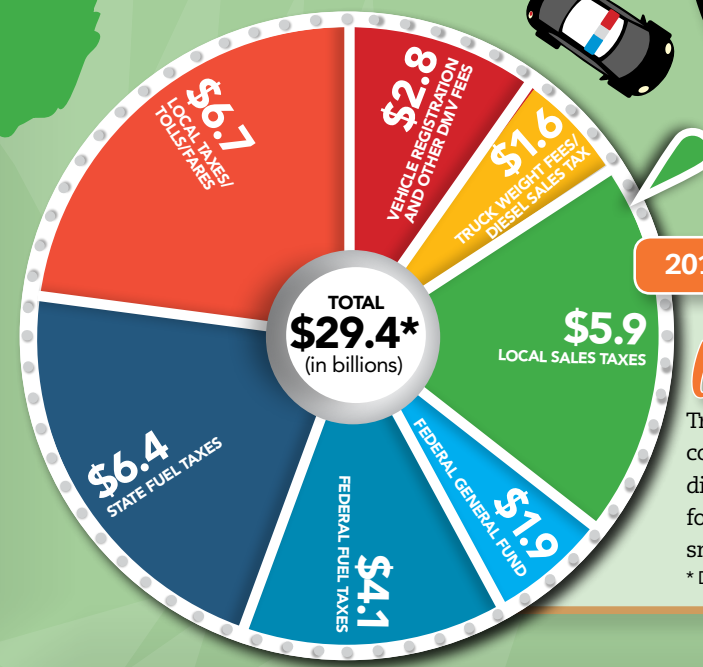
**Would it raise enough money?**  
Tolls could help build new roads, lanes, and related transit services, but they won't generate enough money to pay for the rest of the transportation system.

### Sales Taxes Specifically for Transportation

California voters have a long history of approving special sales taxes to fund specific transportation projects, usually in half-cent increments at the county level. A statewide sales tax could augment or replace the gas tax. A 1 percent tax would generate more than \$6 billion a year.

**Could it be done?**  
Popular because funds stay local and voters know how money will be used. A statewide option could be successful if it follows the same model.

**Would it raise enough money?**  
It could. Current local taxes generate over \$4 billion a year for roads and transit in the 19 counties that have them; revenue grows with the population, the economy, and inflation.



### Where It Comes From

Transportation funding is complicated. Much of the money comes from motorists and other system users, is put into different pots, and is then allocated according to complex formulas. The illustrations on these pages are a simplified snapshot of the current funding picture in California.

\* Does not include one-time state bonds.

### Infrastructure Bonds

Bonds are like taking out a mortgage. The government borrows money to build a road or rail line and uses future tax revenue to repay the money over time. California voters approved nearly \$20 billion in transportation bonds in 2006 to fund key projects that might not otherwise have been built—and created an ongoing debt for taxpayers.

**Could it be done?**  
Voters have to be willing to approve bonds for specific purposes.

**Would it raise enough money?**  
Probably not. Bonds usually build capital projects but don't address ongoing operations and maintenance needs. And some amount of future taxes would have to be set aside to repay the bonds.

Craig Scott is a transportation policy specialist at the Auto Club of Southern California.

### What You Pay Per Gallon in Taxes

FEDERAL GAS TAX	\$ 0.184
STATE GAS TAX*	\$ 0.415
STATE SALES TAX	\$ 0.088
LOCAL SALES TAX**	\$ 0.019
TOTAL TAXES	\$ 0.706
BASE GAS PRICE	\$ 3.294
PRICE AT THE PUMP***	\$ 4.000

\*Includes 2-cent/gallon state underground storage tank fee.

\*\*Most Southern California counties have a 0.5 percent local transportation sales tax program; in Los Angeles County it's 1.5 percent.

\*\*\*Price varies daily.

# Phase 1 Truck Lanes 67 Percent Complete

*Courtesy of Caltrans*

The Phase 1 truck lanes portion of the Interstate 5 North Los Angeles County Improvement Project is approximately 67 percent complete, with work scheduled to be completed in October.

As of press time:

**CURRENT WORK:** The order of work for a widening of this nature is to complete the structural support (retaining walls and median widening of bridge decks) followed by the roadway paving. Though crews are still working on this structural portion of the project,

they've also started mainline concrete paving. With regards to the structural supports portions, crews are working on:

- Retaining wall off the southbound I-5 shoulder just south of the Weldon Canyon overcrossing
- Median retaining walls along I-5 from the Weldon Canyon overcrossing through the Pico Canyon / Lyons Ave overcrossing
- Median bridge widening of Gavin Canyon underpass

**COMPLETED WORK:** The char-  
**See LANES, page 9**



**Construction of the Phase 1 truck lanes is on pace for completion in late 2014. Photo courtesy of Caltrans.**

## Mobility 21: Reviewing the 12th Annual Summit

**By Victor Lindenheim**

*Executive Director, Golden State Gateway Coalition*

Once again, Mobility 21 hosted Southern California's premier transportation conference, drawing elected, appointed and civic leadership from throughout the region and the state. More than 1,000 individuals attended, including private sector employees, consulting engineers, agency staff, nonprofits and assorted vendors of transportation-related equipment and services.

From where I sat, two themes permeated the conference. The main theme, as the conference was titled, was: "Connecting the Dots... Linking Infrastructure, Education & Healthcare." The idea of transportation infrastructure as more than miles of roads, buses and trains has been long embraced and promoted by the Golden State Gateway Coalition. To make the point that transportation needs and benefits are inextricably linked to efficiency and efficacy of essential services, Mobility 21 brought in speakers from the World Bank and Stanford



**This afternoon panel discussion at the Mobility 21 summit focused on creative ways to expedite transportation projects. Photo by Victor Lindenheim.**

University to talk about what developing nations are doing to address transportation-related quality-of-life issues, and applicability of those approaches in California.

The other mostly undeclared theme was closer to home: today, funding is flowing and projects are under way in California (\$11 billion plus, said Malcom Dougherty), but what about tomorrow?

I attended a morning breakout session focused on Sacramento — viewed sometimes as the problem and sometimes the solution to our transportation challenges. The panel-

ists had sterling credentials: moderator Will Kempton (former Caltrans Director); Andre Boutros (Executive Director, California Transportation Commission); Malcolm Dougherty (Current Caltrans Director); and Jeff Morales (CEO, California High-Speed Rail Authority).

There wasn't much disagreement about state trends: more self-help (self-imposed taxes dedicated to transportation) in counties; vehicle miles traveled up, gas tax revenues down; a growing backlog of needs.

Kempton, opening the ses-

sion, noted the radical shift in transportation funding sources. Where, two decades ago, there had traditionally been an 80/20 split in project funding between the feds and local or state government (the federal share being 80 percent), in California, we are now seeing a federal contribution of 12 percent. Today, the state kicks in 17 percent, and bonding provides 11 percent. The balance comes mostly from funds generated by self-imposed taxes in 19 counties (e.g. Metro's Measure R).

Boutros and Dougherty seemed to agree that investment in the right projects — those that are cost-effective — is the way to go, and that "formula distribution" of funds needs to give way to a more competitive approach, with performance-oriented vetting of new projects.

Kempton concluded the session with his vision of a likely future funding scenario: higher taxes and/or fees based on vehicle miles traveled.

The afternoon session I attended looked at creative ways to expedite projects: in-

**See SUMMIT, page 10**



# By the Numbers

- **20 years:** Amount of time that has elapsed since the last time the federal gas tax was increased, to 18.4 cents per gallon.
- **46,876:** Number of miles in the federal Interstate System.
- **\$128.9 billion:** Total cost of federal Interstate System.

Source:  
U.S. Department of  
Transportation



## Would you like more information about the Golden State Gateway Coalition?

If you are interested in supporting the Coalition's efforts to improve transportation in northern Los Angeles County, please visit our website:

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

# QuickTrips

A roundup of North Los Angeles County transportation issues and roadway project updates

## Commerce Center Project Progresses

The L.A. County Public Works Department provided the following update on the improvements to the intersection of Commerce Center Drive and State Route 126:

The project will reconfigure the intersection at SR-126 and Commerce Center Drive as a partial cloverleaf design to provide a grade-separated interchange with full traffic movements. Project components include:

- Construct a grade-separated interchange south of the existing intersection.
- Widen SR-126 to 3 lanes in each direction.
- Construct westbound diamond on- and off-ramps, and construct southbound Commerce Center Drive to eastbound SR-126 loop on-ramp, northbound Commerce Center Drive to eastbound diagonal on-ramp, and east-

bound hook off-ramp to Henry Mayo Drive.

- Widen Commerce Center Drive between the Castaic Creek Bridge and Henry Mayo Drive. Realign to the south, extend to the west, and widen, Henry Mayo Drive.

- Signalize the Henry Mayo Drive intersection, the entrance to Travel Village and east-bound ramp intersection.

The project construction cost is estimated at \$50 million and will be funded by a combination of funds from Metro Call for Projects and Westside B&T District funds.

The project will be constructed in six stages. Stage 1 involving utility relocations, construction of soil cement wall and sound walls is under construction. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2016.

## Governor Signs Transportation Bills

As the 2013 state legislative session drew to a close, Gov. Jerry Brown signed several bills relating to transportation, including:

- **AB 401 (Daly):** Authorizes broader use of design-build on the highway system by local agencies, and authorizes Caltrans to use design-build on up to 10 projects.
- **AB 417 (Frazier):** Establishes a CEQ exemption for bicycle transportation plans prepared by local agencies until 2018.
- **AB 466 (Quirk-Silva):** Requires that federal funds allocated under the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality and Improvement Program be based on a weighted formula

that considers population and pollution.

- **AB 1256 (Bocanegra):** Requires the California Energy Commission (CEC) to prepare a report that identifies strategies to maximize the benefits of natural gas.
- **SB 142 (DeSaulnier):** Authorizes a transit director, operator or agency to create special benefit assessments districts and issue bonds within the districts to fund rail and transit project construction.
- **SB 416 (Liu):** Provides a process for the sale of surplus properties along State Route 710 (North) and stipulates that the proceeds from the sale be used for property repairs and local transportation improvements.

## Lanes

### Continued from page 8

acter of a project of this nature is to work on many parts in unison. As a result, nothing is completed until practically everything is completed all at once. That said, several drainage lines have been completed, and the following items are nearing completion:

- The retaining wall from the Weldon Canyon overcrossing to the Gavin Canyon underpass
- Bridge widening activities at the Calgrove

Blvd. underpass

- Mainline concrete paving along the retaining wall from the Weldon Canyon overcrossing to Gavin Canyon underpass

**COMING SOON:** Mainline concrete paving began in September 2013. Once appropriate strength is achieved, we will be able to shift traffic on southbound I-5 inwards toward the new retaining wall. This will allow us to move to the following stages of construction, which includes another retaining wall just north of Weldon Canyon overcrossing.



# State Creates New Transportation Agency

*CalSTA Press Release*

SACRAMENTO — The new California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) has opened its doors, carrying out the Governor's government reorganization plan, which included replacing the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency (BTH) with a new state agen-



**Brian Kelly**

cy focused solely on transportation.

"The size and complexity of the state's transportation system, combined with the important policy challenges now facing this state, demand cabinet-level attention and focus," said Secretary Brian Kelly while testifying before the Little Hoover Commission in 2012 about the purpose of the new agency. "The mission of the California State Transportation Agency is to develop and coordinate the policies and programs of the state's transportation entities to achieve the state's mobility, safety and



air quality objectives from its transportation system," Kelly added.

As a result of these changes, CalSTA now consists of departments, boards and offices each with a focus on the safety and mobility of California's traveling public. The following transportation-related entities now fall under CalSTA:

- Board of Pilot Commissioners
- California Highway Patrol

- California Transportation Commission
- Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- Department of Motor Vehicles
- High-Speed Rail Authority
- New Motor Vehicle Board
- Office of Traffic Safety

BTH, in anticipation of CalSTA formation, had taken steps to coordinate policies and programs of the transportation-related entities with in the Agency's jurisdiction.

## Bowen Named Acting Director of Caltrans District 7

*Source: Caltrans*

After Caltrans District 7 Director Mike Miles retired last summer, Carrie Bowen was named the Acting Director of District 7 (Los Angeles and Ventura counties).

Most recently, Bowen was the District 10 Director (Stockton), appointed in January 2011, and

has worked for Caltrans for approximately 30 years. She began as an Associate Environmental Planner and rose to the position of Deputy District Director for the Central Region Environmental Division. During this time Caltrans prepared for implementation of NEPA delegation and Bowen was instrumental in its success.

Her vision for transportation is to build strong relationships with local partners; utilize the skills and knowledge acquired through 30 years of diverse experience; and continue to improve transportation systems, improve and enhance the environment and support smart growth and sustainable approaches to resolve infrastructure needs.



**Carrie Bowen**

## Summit

**Continued from page 8**

infrastructure corridors, express lanes, public-private partnerships (P3s) and CEQA modernization. Moderated by Brad Felker (HDR Engineering), panelists included Doug Failing (Metro), Paul Granillo (Inland Empire Economic Partnership), Neil Peterson (Transportation Corridor Agencies) and Charles Stoll (San Diego Association of Governments).

Failing presented an overview of two significant, innovative Metro projects: the six-project P3 highway improvement package known as ARTI (Accelerated Regional Transportation Improvements) and the High Desert Corridor (HDC).

The latter is a 63-mile east-west corridor project incorporating solar power generation along with transportation improvements. ARTI includes core capacity and roadway resurfacing improvements on Interstate 5 in north Los Angeles County.

Stoll described current and future I-5 corridor improvements in San Diego County: HOV/Express Lanes, bikeways, walkways and environmental upgrades, included in a \$6.5 billion program.

Peterson reviewed Orange County's groundbreaking achievements utilizing design/build authority, private capital, developer impact fees and toll revenues.

Granillo described the Inland Empire's interests in goods movement and logistics, manufacturing and healthcare —

and the need for CEQA modernization to facilitate economic growth and job creation in those sectors.

The closing plenary session featured Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom, who gave a charismatic "we are all in this together" speech. He noted U.S. spending on infrastructure as a percentage of GNP has gone from 12.5 percent in 1961 to a little over 2 percent today. Concern with the decline of the federal role in infrastructure investment was evident in his remarks, as well as others at the conference.

The lieutenant governor ended the conference by citing his "elements for California's success": education; infrastructure; R&D/private-public partnerships; and appropriate rulemaking.

---

## Funding

Continued from page 4

program, and a significant percentage of the resulting revenue is likely to be spent on transportation improvement projects. "There's a source nobody even knows about," says Grannis.

And, he adds, as the Southland and California move forward, increasingly there will be a need to not just find revenue for new transportation projects, but also to maintain the existing network.

"Inside California, there's an initiative in play to lockbox some maintenance money," he says. But, maintenance can be a tough sell because it's lot less sexy to political leaders. "Nobody wants to cut a ribbon on a repaving project."

Steve Finnegan, Manager of Government Affairs for the Automobile Club of Southern California, says taxpayers will inevitably face decisions on transportation funding.

"The transportation funding outlook for 2014 appears dim in terms of increasing the amount of money available for transportation investment. The need to better maintain repair, rebuild, and expand our roads and public transit systems is growing faster than available resources," Finnegan says.

"In the coming years voters will likely be asked to consider a number of tax and fee proposals," he adds. "Some of these proposals make sense in the near-term, like raising state or federal gasoline tax rates. AAA is supporting a measure to do

just that – to increase the federal fuel tax rate by 15 cents. Other ideas, like a 'vehicle miles traveled' tax, still need much more exploration and discussion."

And, Finnegan says, while there's of course work to do on the front end in terms of funding, that's only part of the equation.

"Government agencies and policy makers alike must think of ways to deliver projects faster and at lower costs to save money," he says. "Eliminating red tape, partnering with the private sector, and providing better routine maintenance are some reforms the Auto Club – and taxpayers – wants to see and that must be part of any effort to increase taxes and fees."

Fiscal prudence must be exercised regardless of which financing mechanisms are chosen for future transportation improvements, says 38th District Assemblyman Scott Wilk, who represents portions of northern Los Angeles County including Santa Clarita.

"Going forward, we all need to be vigilant to make sure our tax dollars are spent the right way, on the right projects," says Wilk, who in February 2013 called for an audit of the California High-Speed Rail Authority's oversight and management of private contractors for the initial 29-mile segment of the planned \$68.5-billion high-speed rail line connecting the Bay Area to Southern California.

Wilk, in response to a Los Angeles Times article about the ongoing legal maneuvering over the high-speed train, posted on his Facebook account in No-

vember: "The Bullet Train continues to be the 'Blank check to Nowhere.'"

"We can't just write blank checks," Wilk says. "We have to be smart about it."

Santa Clarita Councilwoman Marsha McLean, who serves on the Southern California Association of Governments' Transportation Policy Committee, says it will become more important than ever for regions like northern Los Angeles County to speak up and make sure their voices are heard when the transportation pie is being sliced.

"After aggressively making our needs known, we have been able to obtain funding for some much needed I-5/14 improvements. But the job is far from over," McLean says. "We deserve a lot more attention than we got from the Federal Highway Trust Fund and with this fund quickly becoming insolvent, there needs to be a huge push to make sure we get a fair share of whatever future funding does become available."

She adds: "The northern portion of Los Angeles County is the fastest-growing sub-region of the county, which includes the Santa Clarita and Antelope valleys. The best way to gain the funds needed for vital projects is to advocate continuously, loudly and clearly. I look forward to working closely with the Golden State Gateway Coalition to make sure Santa Clarita portions of the I-5 and Highway 14 are recognized as one of the most important corridors for goods movement in the nation."

---

## Chairman

Continued from page 12

of goods and services, class schedules, medical appointments, and so on. As important as those obligations are, there are personal commitments we make, that, once missed, can never be experienced again. A wedding, a spouse's surprise birthday party, your child's team finals.

If reducing traffic congestion can get us home in time to share priceless moments with family and friends, then the value of this project, in terms of quality of life, is priceless as well.

---

### A model for future public/private partnerships...

The I-5 truck lanes project is more than a freeway improvement project. It is a new and unique working model for a public/private partnership. With fewer resources available from government, it takes partnerships such as this to get more done, with less money, in a shorter amount of time.

This I-5 project shows what can be accomplished when the public and private sectors work as a team, get creative, and focus on a mutually beneficial goal. Working together, we can accomplish more.

---

### We're not done yet...

We have been able to celebrate the start of phase one of the I-5 North Capacity Enhancement Project — the truck lanes. We still have considerable work to do to ensure that phase 2 — the carpool lanes — are extended more than 12 miles north of the Newhall Pass interchange, as planned. The Golden State Gateway Coalition remains committed to seeing the entire project completed — further reducing the risk of missing that once-in-a-lifetime family event.

And speaking of family events, we wish everyone a happy holiday season and a safe and prosperous new year!

From the **Chairman**

# What I-5 Improvements REALLY Mean

By **Tom DiPrima**

*Chairman,  
Golden State Gateway Coalition*

- **I-5 Truck Lanes over the Newhall Pass:** \$72 million
- **Carpool Lanes from the I-5/SR 14 interchange to Castaic:** \$375 million
- **Getting home to your family without delay:** Priceless!

**I**t's that time again when one year comes to a close and a new one begins. We remember, we celebrate and we look ahead, together, with family and close friends. We take stock. We reflect on where we've been, where we are and where we want to be.



**Tom  
DiPrima**

When I think about the benefits of the project we have committed to, I think

about what it will mean to drivers who are, and will be, using Interstate 5 to get somewhere — home, a school, a job, a doctor, a delivery destination, a sales appointment. All of these destinations are important.

But to be stuck in traffic and unable to get to a rare and precious family event — a once-in-a-lifetime moment — is an issue that resonates with me. To be with your family to witness or participate in your son's ball game, your daughter's piano recital, college graduation, Thanksgiving dinner — is one quality-of-life issue that capacity improvements to a major thoroughfare such as Interstate 5 can help address.

## **More than a freeway project...**

As you have heard, the construction and completion of this project will provide many benefits: potentially thousands of jobs will be created. Reduced congestion. Improved safety. Expedited freight movement. Cleaner air. And, perhaps most importantly, improved

quality of life.

The ability to get from one place to another quickly and safely is a major quality-of-life issue that the I-5 project will help address. Why is it so important? It is important to fulfill our obligations — business appointments, delivery

**See CHAIRMAN, page 11**

**'To be stuck in traffic and unable to get to a rare and precious family event — a once-in-a-lifetime moment — is an issue that resonates with me.'**

---

**On the Web:** [www.goldenstategateway.org](http://www.goldenstategateway.org)

**Golden State Gateway Coalition**  
25030 Avenue Tibbitts, Suite K  
Valencia, CA 91355

For additions, deletions, change of address or to receive this publication via e-mail, please contact us at the address above or via e-mail at:  
**vlinden@goldenstategateway.org**



Content and design copyright by Golden State Gateway Coalition, Valencia, CA. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, in any form, without the prior written approval of the Coalition, 25030 Avenue Tibbitts, Suite K, Valencia, CA 91355. Phone: 661.775.0455. Fax: 661.295.5908