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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOS ANGELES OPENS NATION'S FIRST SMART TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR

Santa Monica Freeway, the nation's busiest, is getting smarter—and so are the streets that parallel it such as Olympic, Pico, Venice, Adams and Washington boulevards.

Thanks to the integration of new and existing computer systems, video cameras and roadway sensors, traffic operators at Caltrans, CHP and the LADOT, as well as millions of motorists who travel along the Santa Monica Corridor every week, now will get up-to-the-second information that should increase the average speed on the Santa Monica Freeway by 15 percent.

This \$48 million high-tech communications system has been installed between Centinela Avenue to the west of the 405 Freeway and Soto Street to the East of downtown Los Angeles along 17.3 miles of the Santa Monica Freeway as well as streets parallel and perpendicular to it.

When traffic is diverted off the freeway onto major bordering thoroughfares, signals on the service streets will be timed and controlled to keep traffic moving parallel to the freeway.

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"Traffic information is gathered through an automated network of closed-circuit cameras and thousands of roadway sensors," said Larry Zarian, MTA chairman. "We have termed the system the Smart Corridor because it will use all these electronic intelligence gathering devices to help keep traffic moving more quickly."

Information obtained by video cameras and roadway sensors will be integrated with other traffic management devices such as ramp meters, traffic lights and call boxes, giving those in Caltrans, CHP and LADOT control centers the latest traffic information. The same information will be forwarded to radio and television traffic reporters who can use it to update their listeners and viewers with the latest information about traffic conditions on the Santa Monica Corridor.

Motorists will receive Smart Corridor information through changeable message signs, cellular phones and on two radio stations. Traffic and incident information can be retrieved with a touch-tone phone by calling the automated Smart Corridor Road Information Line at (213) 89-SMART, 24-hours a day. Traffic advisories are broadcast on radio stations 1620 AM and 1510 AM. Also before leaving their home or office, motorists can check an Internet Web Page, which is updated every minute.

The automated information system is complemented by immediate response by traffic management agencies that will dispatch the CHP, city police or Freeway Service Patrol to help clear the cause of congestion. Once an incident is cleared the automated response is terminated and the message disappears from the changeable message signs as well as from the radio and phone systems.

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"The Smart Corridor applies the most modern technology available for the management of traffic conditions and speeds," said Joseph E. Drew, MTA's chief executive officer. "We anticipate an increase of 15 percent on the average speed of the Santa Monica Freeway and even greater gains along surface streets."

Expected benefits of the Smart Corridor will be faster traffic flow, improved travel time, improved air quality, reduced fuel consumption and fewer stops at traffic signals.

The Smart Corridor is a joint effort of the MTA, Caltrans, the California Highway Patrol, Los Angeles Department of Transportation and the cities of Culver City, Beverly Hills and Santa Monica. Funding has been provided as follows: 36% federal, 55% state and 9% local dollars.

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