

New 405 Carpool Lane a Hit; Dozens More in MTA Pipeline

- **Nearly 400 Lane Miles in Operation**

By ED SCANNELL

(Jan. 29, 2002) The new MTA-funded carpool lane on the southbound I-405 freeway in the Sepulveda Pass is proving to be quite a hit among ridesharing commuters traveling from the San Fernando Valley to L.A.'s Westside. That's the good news for LA County motorists.

And the even better news? With 396 lanes miles in the county currently in operation, the MTA has 352 more miles of carpool lanes in the pipeline.

Opened January 8, the 7.8-mile HOV lane, which runs between the 101/405 freeway interchange near Sherman Oaks and Waterford Street in West Los Angeles, is saving ridesharing commuters up to 15 minutes per trip, end-to-end.

"Just two days after it opened, the lane carried 3,200 ridesharing commuters per hour during the a.m. peak commute and brought welcome relief to those commuters on what had been a torturous drive," said MTA Board Chairman John Fasana. "Thanks to the new lane, those commuters have been traveling through the Sepulveda Pass at speeds between 30 to 50 miles per hour."

"Carpool lanes have proven themselves to be successful in encouraging more and more people to rideshare, and as a result, expanding the carpool lane system is one of the MTA's ongoing priorities," he added.

Largest carpool lane network

With the largest freeway carpool lane network in the nation already in operation, the MTA is on-target to bring congestion relief to many other areas of the county with 51 lane miles under construction, 104 lane miles in design and 197 lane miles in the planning phase.

The carpool lanes under construction and their estimated opening dates are:

- SR-14, Escondido Cyn. to Pearblossom Hwy., December 2002
- I-210, Foothill Blvd. to San Bernardino Co. (freeway gap), December 2002
- I-10, SR-57 to San Bernardino Co. Line, May 2003
- I-405, N/B auxiliary lane, Mulholland Dr. to Ventura Blvd., July 2003
- I-10, Baldwin Ave to I-605, August 2004
- Among the carpool lanes currently in design are:
- SR-14, Pearblossom Hwy. to Ave. P-8, July 2004
- I-5, SR-118 to SR-14, October 2004
- I-405, Century Blvd. to SR-90, March 2005

I-405, SR-90 to I-10, December 2005

- I-5, SR-170 to SR-118, July 2007

The new southbound I-405 carpool lane cost \$22.7 million to construct. Approximately 90 percent of the cost was funded by the MTA through the Los Angeles County half-cent sales tax measure Proposition C that was passed by voters in 1990.

Caltrans estimates that the lane currently is conveying approximately one-third of the total person-trips of all of the southbound lanes combined.

“This lane underscores the great efficiency of HOV lanes in moving people as opposed to simply moving more vehicles,” said Mayor James Hahn. “We can expect these kinds of results to multiply as we expand the HOV network.”

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