

Progressive RAILROADING

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Rail News: Maintenance Of Way

California Transportation Commission allocates funds for grade separations

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) on Tuesday voted in favor of providing \$104 million in state bond funds to the Alameda Corridor-East Construction Authority (ACE) to construct two grade separations at congested crossings in California's San Gabriel Valley.

State Proposition 1B Trade Corridor Improvement Funds will be used to help fund the construction of grade separations at Puente Avenue and Fairway Drive in the city of Industry and unincorporated Los Angeles County.

The Puente Avenue crossing is used daily by 31,110 motorists and 22 trains, and train traffic is projected to increase to 49 by 2035. The \$96 million project calls for lowering under a Union Pacific Railroad line, constructing rail bridges and building a new loop road connecting Puente Avenue/Workman Mill Road to Valley Boulevard.

The Fairway Drive crossing is used daily by 24,820 motorists and 24 trains, and train traffic is projected to increase to 53 by 2035. The \$119.4 million project involves lowering the road under two UP and Metrolink tracks immediately north of the 60 Freeway and building a rail bridge spanning the underpass.

Design work for both projects is nearly complete and construction contracts are scheduled to be awarded in fall or winter 2014, ACE officials said in a press release.

The projects "will eliminate traffic congestion, collision hazards, vehicle emissions and train horns at two crossing chokepoints," said El Monte Mayor Pro Tem and ACE Chairperson Norma Macias.

The projects are part of ACE's program that involves the construction of 22 grade separations in the San Gabriel Valley along the Alameda Corridor-East Trade Corridor used to move goods to and from San Pedro Bay ports.

Meanwhile, the CTC also allocated funds for other grade separations as part of \$487 million recently approved for 82 transportation projects in the state.

The commission will provide:

- \$39.5 million to the Orange County Transportation Authority for the Lakeview Avenue grade separation in Placentia, which calls for building a bridge over a BNSF Railway Co. mainline tracks and a connection road;
- \$10.9 million to the California Department of Transportation for an at-grade rail connector between BNSF lines in San Pablo and Richmond; and
- \$8.9 million to the San Bernardino Associated Governments for a BNSF grade separation project at Lenwood Road in Barstow.

In addition, the CTC allocated \$40 million for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority to help advance the first phase of the BART Warm Springs extension from Fremont to Berryessa (San Jose).