



# PROJECT BACKGROUND



In February 2014, OCTA and Caltrans broke ground on the I-5 South County Improvements Project, a four-year, \$230 million freeway construction project that spans the cities of San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point and San Clemente. With its completion, the project:

- Improves traffic flow by extending the carpool lane in each direction on I-5 from Avenida Pico to San Juan Creek Road.
- Improves the sight distance on the southbound curve north of PCH.
- Improves Avenida Pico by adding dual left-turn lanes to both on-ramps, widening the northbound on-ramp to three lanes, and adding dedicated bicycle lanes.

The 5.7-mile project was funded by OC Go (formerly Measure M), Orange County's voter-approved, half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements, as well as state and federal funds.





# WIDENING AVENIDA PICO



Avenida Pico was widened to reduce congestion, and to improve traffic flow on the roadway and for motorists getting on the freeway. Improvements include adding dual left-turn lanes from Avenida Pico to northbound and southbound I-5 on-ramps, adding a third lane for eastbound traffic, and dedicated bicycle lanes to enhance safety for bicyclists. The geometry of Avenida Pico also was improved to remove reversing curves that caused congestion.





# REPLACING AVENIDA PICO INTERCHANGE



As part of the project, the Avenida Pico interchange was reconstructed to improve traffic flow on I-5 and on the heavily traveled roadway below, which serves as a gateway to the City of San Clemente. Improvements include replacing and widening the bridge over Avenida Pico to accommodate the new carpool lanes, adding a lane to the northbound on-ramp and realigning all ramps, adding dedicated bicycle lanes and planting primarily drought-friendly landscaping.





# DEMOLISHING AVENIDA PICO BRIDGE



To minimize impacts to motorists, crews widened the Avenida Pico bridge one half at a time. In mid-2015, crews demolished the west side of the bridge and began rebuilding it. During this time, eight lanes of freeway traffic were shifted to the east side of the freeway. In mid-2016, once the new west side of the bridge was completed, traffic lanes were shifted onto it. Crews then demolished and began reconstructing the east half of the bridge. When that was completed in fall 2017, traffic was shifted to the outside freeway lanes, allowing crews to construct the new carpool lanes in the median.





# AVENIDA PICO INTERCHANGE



**Before**



**After**





# CREWS AT WORK



Our crews worked for four years to complete the I-5 South County Improvements Project. While an average of 250,000 motorists traveled through the project area daily, crew members worked day and night to widen bridges, realign freeway ramps, and construct the new carpool lanes. This crew is testing a ground anchor being installed as part of the new retaining wall along the on-ramp to southbound I-5 in Dana Point. Ground anchors add strength to a retaining wall, helping with the load of supporting the soil behind it.





# SOUNDWALLS AND RETAINING WALLS



As part of the I-5 South County Improvements Project, nearly 12,000 linear feet of sound walls and retaining walls were constructed along the freeway, as outlined in the approved environmental document. This wall, one of the larger retaining walls on the project, runs adjacent to the on-ramp from Pacific Coast Highway/Camino Las Ramblas to southbound I-5. It is 1,315 feet long and more than 25 feet high at its tallest point. The City of Dana Point was involved in the design of the wall, which depicts pelicans and crashing waves.





# OUTREACH IN THE COMMUNITY



The I-5 South County Improvements Project outreach team attended community events, visited businesses throughout the project area, and shared project presentations throughout San Clemente, Dana Point, and San Juan Capistrano to ensure local residents and businesses were always up to date on construction activities.







# PURCHASE ON PICO



OCTA is committed to assisting local businesses during construction projects. The I-5 South County Improvements Project team took an innovative approach in partnering with the community and local businesses on or adjacent to Avenida Pico through its *Purchase on Pico* program. The program was developed under the leadership of OCTA Director and San Clemente City Council Member Lori Donchak. *Purchase on Pico* highlighted participating local businesses on the project's website and via social media channels. The businesses offered discounts or promotions during *Purchase on Pico* Wednesdays to encourage patrons to shop or dine in the area during construction.





# OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS



**Text Alerts Sent**  
**210**



**Construction Alerts Emailed**  
**278**



**Facebook Followers**  
**5,217**



**Tweets**  
**1,350**



**Facebook Live Events**  
**2**

**Facebook Posts**

**1,325**



**Facebook Post Likes**

**10,414**



**Presentations**

**40**



**Construction Fliers**

**114**





# COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

"I was skeptical of the project and how it was going to alleviate traffic but I would like to tell you that it is great. The traffic on the northbound side has never been better. Since opening up the final lane, the normal traffic jams are gone. You guys hear a lot of negativity and anger from people so I wanted take a moment to send over something positive."

*Scott Kirkwood*

"Hats off to the construction company for rebuilding this intersection while keeping traffic flowing."

*Brian Bang*

"That new carpool lane looks great with the new striping and pavement."

*Bruce Lane*

"Hey there! Whomever is responsible for replying to comments to your posts is doing an amazing job. There's often a lot of anger and frustration and a LOT of sarcasm thrown your way, and the response is consistently professional, patient, and kind. I just want to say thank you. And thanks for improving our freeway, it's looking great!"

*Juliette Steel*

"We moved away for a few years and all this construction has helped soooo much already. Thanks for all the hard work!"

*Krissy Gore Bradley*





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