



Federal, State and Local Officials Join Together in Dedicating Puente Avenue Grade Separation

New roadway underpass eliminates crossing collisions, traffic delays, locomotive horns and reduces emissions

Officials gathered for a ceremony on April 6 to mark the opening to traffic of a new four-lane roadway underpass on Puente Avenue in the City of Industry and Avocado Heights which replaces a congested railroad crossing.

The Puente Avenue grade separation project features new bridges for rail traffic and for vehicles on Valley Boulevard as well as a loop connector road to re-establish the connection between Puente Avenue/Workman Mill Road and Valley Boulevard. Major construction of the \$97.4 million grade separation project in the City of Industry and unincorporated community of Avocado Heights was completed in just over two years. The project was funded by state transportation bonds, Los Angeles County Metro funds provided from Proposition C and Measure R local sales taxes and contributions from Union Pacific Railroad.

Located on the high-volume transcontinental Alameda Corridor-East (ACE) Trade Corridor, five collisions have been recorded at the Puente Avenue crossing over a recent 10-year period, with one bicyclist killed and two pedestrians and one motorist injured. By 2025, rail traffic at the crossing is projected to more than double from 20 trains to 42 trains per day, with 31,073 daily vehicles increasing to 33,196 vehicles. ○



Trains Permanently Diverted from Rail Crossings near Cal Poly Pomona

New freight train diversion route spells end to blocked crossings, collisions and train horn noise at city's busiest street, campus gateway.

Government and Cal Poly Pomona officials gathered in early July to celebrate the debut of a new freight railroad diversion route across university farmland that will bring an end to blocked crossings, collisions and train horn noise at two existing crossings in the City of Pomona. The crossings are at Pomona Boulevard and at Temple Avenue, the busiest thoroughfare in Pomona with 33,800 daily vehicles and which serves as a campus gateway for 27,000 students and employees.

"We thank our partner agencies for providing the support to make the Temple Avenue Train Diversion Project possible," said San Gabriel Councilwoman Juli Costanzo, Chair of the Capital Projects and Construction Committee of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, which oversaw the project as part of the Alameda Corridor-East (ACE) program. "Investment in the ACE projects highlights our commitment to improving safety and mobility along rail corridors and we are pleased to announce the opening of the diversion route to rail traffic."

The Temple Avenue crossing has had two train-vehicle collisions over the past 10 years. The total cost of the 2.3-mile rail diversion route was \$94.8 million, funded from federal (52%), Los Angeles Metro (40%), Union Pacific Railroad (7%) and state (1%) sources.

"The safety of motorists, cyclists and pedestrians is a top priority for the City of Pomona and by eliminating at-grade rail crossings, we take a significant step forward in ensuring public safety, air quality and congestion relief for our residents and visitors," said Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval, a member of the Capital Projects and Construction Committee.

"The completion of the Temple Avenue crossing is a significant gamechanger for Cal Poly Pomona," said Cal Poly Pomona President Soraya Coley. "By eliminating collision hazards and blocked crossings, the train diversion makes it safer and easier to get to campus, and the end of the locomotive horn blasts will greatly improve the quality of life at the nearby student residences and for those who work in the area."

"I am pleased to have been a champion of this train diversion project," said Congresswoman Grace Napolitano, the ranking Californian on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. "The ACE grade separations are a priority because they help sustain goods movement along a nationally significant trade corridor while addressing the community impacts of growing freight train traffic."

"Pomona is growing by leaps and bounds, and this project will make our community an even better place to call home. More and more jobs are coming to Pomona and the train diversion project prepares our communities for the growth that will follow," said Congresswoman Norma Torres, who represents the City of Pomona in the U.S. House of Representatives. "I am proud to be a supporter of this project, and will continue to fight for more infrastructure improvements throughout the Inland Empire."

"Investment in freight projects is critical to our country's economic vitality but must be accompanied by projects that mitigate the negative impacts of freight movement on our communities in Southern California. The train diversion project and the other ACE projects accomplish both goals and I am proud to be a supporter of the ACE Program," said Congresswoman Judy Chu, who represents the City of San Gabriel where the largest ACE project, the San Gabriel Trench, is nearing completion. ○



A Union Pacific train travels through the San Gabriel Trench.

"No longer are motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians forced to wait at crossings for long and slow freight trains..."

Juli Costanzo
Chair, Capital Projects and Construction Committee

San Gabriel Trench Project a Pinnacle Achievement

By the Hon. Juli Costanzo

Chair, Capital Projects and Construction Committee
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
Councilmember, City of San Gabriel

On September 10, we held a dedication ceremony for the San Gabriel Trench project. The trench is the single largest project in the Alameda Corridor-East (ACE) program and we are very proud to have delivered the project on time and under budget.



Juli Costanzo

Workers labored since 2012 to construct the 30-foot-deep, 65-foot-wide concrete walled railroad trench stretching for 1.4 miles through the City of San Gabriel and spanned by four roadway bridges. After trains began service in the trench last summer, four busy and hazardous at-grade crossings in the City of San Gabriel were able to be decommissioned. No longer are 90,000 daily motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians forced to wait at crossings for long and slow freight trains to pass by. Emergency responders can more quickly respond to calls on both sides of the tracks.

Gone are the disruptive locomotive horn blasts and the constant threat of deadly crossing collisions.

As we wrap up work on the \$293.7 million San Gabriel Trench project, we are proud that the project was delivered under budget. Project cost savings totaling nearly \$99 million have already been recycled into other ACE grade separation projects in the San Gabriel Valley. Additional cost savings are anticipated as the project draws to a close. These savings, too, will be put toward completing the comprehensive ACE program of crossing improvements and roadway grade separations.

The ACE projects have been critical to enhancing mobility, quality of life and rail crossing safety and protecting jobs throughout the San Gabriel Valley – one of the most vital and nationally significant freight gateways in the United States. While we are celebrating the completion of the San Gabriel Trench project, our work on the ACE program is not finished. With the completion of the Trench, 14 ACE grade separations – where the road goes over or under the railroad – will have opened to traffic. And another roadway underpass project in the City of Pico Rivera is anticipated to begin construction this winter.

We were happy that two ACE projects in the final design stage, located on Montebello Boulevard in the City of Montebello and another on Turnbull Canyon Road straddling the City of Industry and community of Rowland Heights, were awarded a total of \$78 million in construction funding this spring. However, those funds are from the new California SB 1 gas tax revenues and a statewide ballot measure this fall threatens to rescind the new revenues. I am pleased to report that the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments voted in July to oppose the repeal measure and preserve these much-needed transportation revenues. As with the San Gabriel Trench project, the remaining ACE projects to be funded from SB 1 are worthy investments of public funds that will deliver long-term safety, mobility, air quality and community benefits to our region, state and nation. ○

Juli Costanzo is a Councilmember in the City of San Gabriel and Chair of the Capital Projects and Construction Committee of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, which is responsible for the Alameda Corridor-East program. For more information about the ACE projects, please visit www.theaceproject.org or call the ACE Helpline at (888) ACE-1426.