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## **SOUTH BAY EXPRESSWAY – SAN DIEGO’S FIRST TOLL ROAD OPENS**

*State-of-the-Art Expressway Completes Missing Link in San Diego Highway System and is Hailed as a Model for Public-Private Partnerships*

**(San Diego, Calif. – November 16, 2007)** – U.S. Deputy Secretary of Transportation Vice Admiral Thomas Barrett, San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders and hundreds of elected officials, local community leaders and transportation industry professionals from across the nation turned out today to celebrate the highly anticipated opening of San Diego’s first toll road, South Bay Expressway. The project has been hailed as a model for how private enterprise can assist local communities develop badly needed public infrastructure projects and it is expected to serve as a catalyst for economic development in one of the fastest growing regions in the nation.

“This is a great day for residents across San Diego. They’ve waited a long time for this road and we’re excited about putting the fun back in driving by providing a fast, reliable, scenic commute,” said South Bay Expressway CEO Greg Hulsizer.

Officially opening Monday, November 19, the 10-mile state-of-the-art toll road extends from SR 54 in Spring Valley to Otay Mesa Road/SR 905 near the International border crossing. The Expressway is four lanes and has seven interchanges but may be expanded to meet future growth. Motorists traveling the new toll highway will be able to take advantage of the latest in high-tech toll collection, which allows for tolls to be paid while driving at highway speeds using a FasTrak® electronic transponder mounted on their vehicle.

**To celebrate its opening, South Bay Expressway is offering free travel for everyone until December 2. FasTrak customers will drive free through January 13, 2008. To sign up for FasTrak, go to [www.southbayexpressway.com](http://www.southbayexpressway.com)**

### **Commitment to the Community**

South Bay Expressway has made a commitment to both the surrounding community and the environment. Its unparalleled \$20 million environmental program includes the purchase of more than 1,000 acres of native habitat that is now permanent open space preserve, and a comprehensive program to preserve natural wildlife habitat and corridors. The Expressway has won several awards for its environmental commitments, most recently receiving recognition by the Federal Highway Transportation Association as “Outstanding Ecosystem Initiative” and was named “Environmental Enhancement Project of the Year” by the California Transportation Foundation.

South Bay Expressway demonstrated its commitment to the community by building six, new state-of-the-art Little League fields, making improvements to area parks and trails and sponsoring numerous community and youth organizations.

“This Expressway belongs to the community,” said Hulsizer. “We want to offer the best value for our customers and that means giving them a first class road. We look forward to giving our customers something they can’t get today – peace of mind.”

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The highlight of today's ribbon cutting ceremony was the keynote speech presented by U.S. Deputy Secretary of Transportation Vice Admiral Thomas Barrett who addressed the nearly 300 guests on the significance of the public-private partnership responsible for delivering the project years ahead of when it might have been available under conventional means.

"California can and should lead the nation," said Deputy Secretary Barrett. "Connecting this road to many more like it and showing commuters across the country that you can successfully cut congestion."

### **The Missing Link**

South Bay Expressway (the southern extension of SR 125) has been part of California's planned freeway system since 1959, and part of SANDAG's Regional Transportation Plan, since 1989. Without the public-private partnership, this important transportation corridor would not have been built for at least a decade.

The Expressway has been hailed as a missing link in San Diego's freeway network and its completion provides a new transportation corridor that connects the South Bay and surrounding communities. Forecasts show that drivers traveling on South Bay Expressway may reduce their drive time by as much as 75 percent.

"The success of this unique partnership means a better quality of life for residents in our region," said Lemon Grove Mayor Mary Sessom, chair of SANDAG. "This new expressway will significantly cut commutes and allow people to have more time for family and friends."

Developed and operated by Macquarie Infrastructure Group and Macquarie Infrastructure Partners at a cost of \$635 million, South Bay Expressway was made possible through a unique public-private partnership among the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), Federal Highways Administration and South Bay Expressway.

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Funding for the widening of State Route 54 and construction of a connector to the toll road (\$138 million) came from SANDAG and its highly successful TransNet local transportation sales tax revenues, a half-cent local sales tax that generated \$32 million alone for the project, and federal TIFIA (Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 1998) loans provided \$140 million toward the cost of constructing the toll road.

"South Bay Expressway is a real life example of the power of public-private partnerships and the role that private investment can play in accelerating the delivery of needed infrastructure to communities," said Macquarie Infrastructure Group Chief Executive Officer Stephen Allen.

### **South Bay Expressway – Economic Engine**

Because of its proximity to the border, the Expressway has international significance as part of the network designed to support increased trade resulting from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The Expressway will improve regional mobility and boost national and international



commerce, providing increased access for residents and businesses to the employment centers on both sides of the U.S./Mexico border.

Because of its significance, South Bay Expressway was one of the first five projects selected for credit assistance through TIFIA, which was authorized under the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and it is the first TIFIA funded project to open. TIFIA is designed to provide federal credit assistance to major transportation infrastructure projects that address critical national needs, such as intermodal facilities, border crossing infrastructure, highway trade corridors, and transit and passenger rail facilities with regional and national benefits.

Over the course of construction, the Expressway has created more than 500 jobs and provided more than 59 minority-owned businesses with projects totaling more than \$60 million, exceeding the project's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal. Once open, the Expressway will employ more than 50 full and part time staff who live in the surrounding communities.

For more information or to receive photos of the Expressway, please contact Brendi Rawlin at 619-549-3066 or [brendi@thelimeightpr.com](mailto:brendi@thelimeightpr.com).

#### **About South Bay Expressway**

South Bay Expressway is a 10-mile express toll road that will run from SR 54 in Spring Valley to SR 905 near the International Border Crossing. This exciting, new transportation alternative promises a fast, reliable and scenic drive, every time. The new connection will connect the growing communities across Southeast San Diego County and provide convenient access to Downtown, Sorrento Valley, I-8, I-15 North, Otay Mesa and Mexico. The construction of this first class express toll road is being made possible through an innovative public/private partnership, and is one of the first roads of its kind in California and the U.S. For more information, visit [www.southbayexpressway.com](http://www.southbayexpressway.com).

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