



Perris Press Release

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Dedication of Improvements to the Ramona Expressway Interchange

Perris officials joined with partner agencies this week to officially dedicate improvements to the Ramona Expressway interchange at Interstate 215—upgrades that will improve traffic flow, enhance public safety, facilitates future road projects and show off the City's new monument logo.

The \$9-million project included adding additional lanes to the off-ramps from I-215 to Ramona Expressway and widening the Ramona Bridge over the freeway. Those improvements have reduced significantly backups on the north and south-bound freeway off-ramps. Work on the year-long improvements wrapped up in December but Perris officials wanted to mark the milestone with a separate dedication ceremony.

Funding for the project came from developer fees and monies from the City of Perris and Riverside County. In addition to those partners, Perris also worked with the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG), Caltrans and the Riverside County Transportation Commission. Perris Mayor Daryl Busch said the road improvements exemplify what can happen when agencies come together to solve a common problem. "This project resulted from a joint venture that worked really well," Busch said. "It just goes to show you the power of teamwork."

Busch said that in recent years, the Ramona/I-215 interchange evolved from a rural roadway to a major urban corridor. The interchange links north Perris to Moreno Valley, Corona, Riverside, Mead Valley, Hemet and San Jacinto. The population of Perris alone has almost doubled in the last 15 years and nearby cities and unincorporated communities have also experienced spikes in population, making the old interchange inadequate to the thousands of vehicles that every day exit at Ramona Expressway. "It's been overlooked,"

Busch said. Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough said he is delighted that Perris continues to upgrade and improve its infrastructure, noting that Ramona Expressway is well-known throughout the Inland Empire. "This is a huge accomplishment," Yarbrough said. "The City Council is focused on identifying and meeting the needs of Perris residents. This is an investment that benefits Perris and the region beyond." Yarbrough said the monument tower on the northeast corner of the Ramona-I-215 interchange adds an artistic touch to the brick-and-mortar project.

The tower includes the City logo and is modeled after the bell tower on the City Hall Campus. Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers said she has seen first-hand the growth of the Ramona Expressway corridor through and around the City. She brought her children to Lake Perris after moving to the City from New York in a time when the thoroughfare was little more than a country road. Rogers called the dedication a "great occasion" further exemplifying the "terrific progress the City of Perris continues to improving the lives of our residents." "As always, Perris continues to be on the front edge of achievements and milestones," she said.

Perris City Councilman Julio Rodriguez, who was elected last year as work on the Ramona Expressway improvements wrapped up, thanked his predecessors for their vision and commitment to upgrading Perris' infrastructure. "I know the people who live in the north side of Perris are ecstatic," Rodriguez said. "They are happy to see these improvements. I am pleased that the City's priority and commitment is to improving the lives of our residents."

Perris City Councilman Al Landers said the City is committed to maintaining its reputation as a "progressive and aggressive" community that finds creative ways to get things done. The team forged to complete the Ramona Expressway project is a perfect example of Perris' ability to partner for the good of not only the City but the entire Inland Empire during this difficult economy. "We don't see obstacles, we see opportunities," Landers said. "That is what separates Perris from other cities."

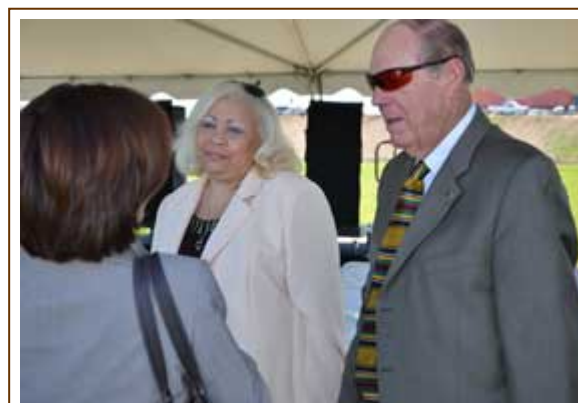
Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley said that Perris recently has completed or is in the midst of completing several major projects, including an aquatic center, the Big League Dreams sports complex, the Mercado Apartments, Perris Station Apartments and major improvements to D Street, Perris Boulevard and I-215 through the City. "It's hard to believe we have been in a recession," Ashley said. "If you left this area a few years ago and returned to see all the improvements, you'd swear we were in a boom."



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and City Councilman Julio Rodriguez chat prior to the dedication ceremony of the new Interstate 215/Ramona Expressway interchange.



The improvements at the Interstate 215/Ramona Expressway interchange also include the creation of a decorative tower featuring Perris' logo.



Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers and Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley work the crowd at this week's dedication of the Ramona Expressway/Interstate 215 improvements.