



Perris News

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May 18: 74/215 Interchange Reconstruction Public Meeting

Work is set to begin in June on a new bridge and freeway interchange at the I-215/Highway 74 intersection in Perris that City officials say will spur commercial development, improve traffic flow, upgrade access to the Downtown business district and enhance the quality of life for residents.

The \$25 million project replaces an existing two-lane bridge with a new four-lane structure over Highway 74, which is known as Fourth Street in Perris.

The new bridge structure will provide dual turn lanes leading to widened and realigned on ramps to I-215. It will replace 12 existing stop signs with signalized ramps to improve traffic flow through a Downtown Perris undergoing major renovations.

Work on the project is expected to take two years.

"We have been trying to improve this intersection for a decade," said Perris Mayor Daryl Busch. "We are finally at the go point. It will alleviate the congestion that we have throughout our central core area."

Busch said a developer is moving along with plans for a shopping center adjacent to the off-ramp at northbound I-215 and Fourth Street. Work on the bridge coincides with the commercial development and construction is expected to be completed by the time stores open for business.

Busch said he is ecstatic that a major entrance to Downtown Perris is moving from the blueprint to concrete and steel phase.

"After 10 years, you bet I am," he said.

City staff worked closely with Caltrans to design the new Fourth Street Bridge and much of the funding will come from federal stimulus money. Perris Planning Manager Brad Eckhardt said the project will be aesthetically pleasing as well as functional. The exterior fascia includes a pattern of wrought-iron fencing and brickwork similar in color to that of the historic Depot Building. Decorative Victorian-era lights will illuminate the bridge and add to the historic feel the City is trying to create in its Downtown.

Already several businesses along D Street have undergone transformations with new exterior facades. Dad's Auto and the Perris Theatre have been renovated as the art deco buildings they were originally designed as in the 1930s.

"We are trying to use the bridge as a signal into our Downtown," Eckhardt said. "It's going to be a major upgrade." Perris elected representatives said they welcome the construction project.

"Our merchants have waited a long time for this, and I can't wait for the work to begin," said City Councilman Al Landers. "This is not just another construction project. It will remake the face of Perris."

Landers and City Councilman Mark Yarbrough commended City staff members who worked on the project.

Yarbrough said the new overcrossing will improve public safety in Perris. The new bridge will allow police, firefighters and paramedics quicker and easier access between the west and east sides of Perris.

"That interchange should have been upgraded 20 years ago," he said. "It is so ugly and traffic backs up there all the time. When I see traffic backed up at an intersection, I don't get off. I just keep driving. Fourth Street is a major traffic arterial between Perris and Lake Elsinore and Corona. People expect a nice, clean fast corridor—and that's what they will get when the job is finished."

City Councilwoman Joanne Evans said the completed project will open up Downtown Perris and spur economic activity in the historic district.

"It's really, really good that this is happening for our City," she said. "It will open up a lot of doors for Perris."

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) is hosting a public meeting from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on May 18 to discuss the Highway 74/215 Interchange Project. The meeting will take place at the Holiday Inn Express at 480 South Redlands Avenue. Public input is welcome.



 [See the official Public Meeting Notice](#)

 Project site: www.74-215project.info