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Construction Comes to Perris Boulevard

Construction is underway to widen and improve a 1.25-mile stretch of Perris Boulevard that links businesses, schools, residences and government services along a route that cuts through the heart of Downtown Perris.

Work began in mid-August on the \$4 million improvement project, which will widen Perris Boulevard to two lanes in both directions, remove obstructions now hindering traffic, create new turning lanes to reduce rush-hour congestion and provide a stretch for bicyclists to peddle their way in safety.



Construction work along Perris Boulevard is underway to widen the traffic arterial that cuts through Downtown Perris.

"Perris Boulevard runs through the heart of Downtown Perris," said Project Engineer Brad Brophy. "The roadway generates lots of motor traffic, lots of pedestrian traffic and growing amounts of bicycle traffic. While construction is going on, things will be hectic. But the end results will be worth the minor traffic delays."

Work is expected to be completed by June 2018. Funding for the Perris Boulevard improvements comes from development impact fees, transportation mitigation fees and grants.

Perris Mayor Michael Vargas called the improvements "a much-awaited project" that will significantly improve the flow of traffic through the City's Downtown. Although just over a mile in length, the improvement-zone includes Perris City Hall, the Perris Police Department, Cesar Chavez Public Library, the Perris Valley Cemetery, Perris High School, the Stater Bros. Shopping Center and private homes.

"When it's completed, it will definitely be an added benefit to our City," Vargas said. "It's a win-win for everybody."

The ongoing construction along Perris Boulevard is one of several major road projects undertaken and completed in recent years. Work is underway to widen Ethanac Avenue in the City's south end and earlier this year, construction wrapped on improvements to the Nuevo Road interchange with Interstate 215. New interchanges at I-215 and Ramona Expressway and Fourth Street have improved the flow of freeway traffic through Perris.

"It's all part of a big plan to improve our City," Vargas said. "Perris is on the move both in terms of infrastructure and economic growth. This City continues to improve—that's what we're all about."

Perris Mayor Pro-Tem David Starr Rabb said plans to upgrade Perris Boulevard began in 2015.

"The Perris Boulevard widening project is a much-needed project that will help reduce traffic in the area," he said.

"After over two years of planning, it's nice to see the project come to fruition."

Perris City Councilwoman Tonya Burke said the improvements to Perris Boulevard represent a commitment to

"Making Perris a better place for our residents to live and our businesses to thrive." The Perris Boulevard project will make the arterial a better place for "drivers, walkers and bicyclists," Burke said.

"Our City Council is committed to moving this City in the right direction," she said. "We are moving in the right direction."

For Perris City Councilman Malcolm Corona the demolition of the building known as The Boulevard was personal. His parents ran a video store in the single story building at First Street and San Jacinto Avenue when he was a kid. But the improvements to Perris Boulevard outweigh those sentiments.

"These improvements are necessary, very necessary," he said. "Perris Boulevard has long been a major street and it's also significant because it's named after our City. Traffic has increased significantly in recent years and having one lane in each direction is not sufficient for our growing City. The expansion will get people faster and safer where they need to go."

City Councilwoman Rita Rogers called Perris Boulevard "a major arterial street that is very vital to our transportation flow."

"It will mean less traffic congestion and improved traffic flow," Rogers said of the upgrades. "The addition of the bicycle lanes fits in with our Live Well Perris program, encourages exercise as a way to keep fit. It's very important that we can help improve the City and the lives of our residents."



A building known as "The Boulevard" is taken down to make way for a new lane along Perris Boulevard.

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