

Thomas Roads Improvement Program

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SR 178/Fairfax Road Interchange Ahead of Schedule

Security Paving Company poured concrete for the north abutment of the new Fairfax Road bridge over State Route (SR) 178 today, completing the overcrossing's structural base. The south abutment and bridge columns have been constructed in recent weeks, and Thomas Roads Improvement Program (TRIP) officials say the project is currently two months ahead of schedule.

Already completed are the eastbound ramps, which currently carry SR 178 traffic through the construction site, a 958-foot retaining wall on the south side of the project adjacent to Bakersfield Country Club, and installed more than 4,000 feet of drainage pipe on the south side of the highway.

To build the interchange, 592,501 cubic yards of earth must be removed from the site. Approximately 425,084 cubic yards have been moved off site to date, and the contractor anticipates all of the earthwork will be completed within the next month. About half the dirt was trucked to the old landfill site off North Fairfax to be used in the final cap; the remainder is headed to the SR 99/7th Standard Road Interchange site for fill on that project. During earthwork operations, up to 56 trucks per day have been utilized to haul material from the site.

Activity remains steady at the construction site as excavators remove the old roadbed. An onsite crusher is processing the material into Class II aggregate base for the new road bed. The contractor has recycled all of the old roadbed, keeping approximately 60,000 tons of material out of the landfill. Metal materials, from the old culverts and drainage inlets, are also being recycled as scrap metal.

Over the next few months, passersby will see the construction of the bridge deck, three westbound ramps, two retaining walls, a sound wall that extends about three-quarters of a mile along the north side of SR 178, and landscaping work beginning on the south side of SR 178.

The SR 178/Fairfax Road Interchange was the first TRIP project to begin construction. TRIP is a unique collaboration between the City of Bakersfield, County of Kern, Caltrans and Kern COG, and was created to manage the freeway-type projects designated for funding in the 2005 Transportation Act. The organization was named in honor of former Congressman William M. Thomas, who successfully earmarked \$630 million in federal transportation funds for the greater Bakersfield area.

The project is scheduled for completion in summer 2009. For additional information, please contact Janet Wheeler at (661) 326-3491 or visit the BakersfieldFreeways.us website.

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