

FHWA's Livable Communities Case Study Series



I-215 in San Bernardino - Use of Highway Operational Improvements to Support Livability.

Highway widening projects enhance a highway's capacity and operations. These types of improvement projects are designed to reduce traffic congestion, improve freeway operations, and to contribute to the region's economic vitality. I-215 runs through the cities Riverside and San Bernardino. Part of a \$437 million project for widening I-215 in San Bernardino City is funded with \$128 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment (ARRA) funds and \$250 million in state bonds. The total \$800 million dollar widening of I-215 is the country's largest ARRA funded highway project. This project will improve the livability in San Bernardino with:

- Enhance access to both the east and west sides of the city
- Reduce noise with new sound walls
- Improve air quality by reducing congestion
- Increase mobility
- Eliminate fast-lane entrances and exits
- Widen freeway bridges
- Aid traffic merging by adding auxiliary lanes

This project involves adding a mixed-flow lane and a carpool lane both northbound and southbound from just north of Interstate 10 to State Route 210 (SR-210). Flyover connectors from I-215 to SR-210 also will be constructed, as well as auxiliary lanes, sound walls and retaining walls. Widening and realigning of the freeway will improve access to the west side of I-215 and enhance safety with the removal of entrances and exits from the fast lane and the addition of more conventional diamond interchanges. Right-of-way will be required for the project along the corridor.

The project has a total of four phases. Construction began on the project's first two phases in 2007, and the two phases include bridge replacement and road widening along the southern end of the corridor in the economically distressed downtown San Bernardino. The City of San Bernardino has been struggling with severe economic and social problems since the closure of the Norton Air Force Base in 1994.

When completed in 2013, all four phases of the \$800 million project will help revitalize one of America's most economically distressed communities. It will also relieve congestion along a congested corridor.

Creating more livable communities through transportation choices

