

Caltrans photos by Thomas Ritter



As part of its I-5 Rosecrans Avenue/Bloomfield Interchange Project, Caltrans elevated the interstate and constructed this new undercrossing at Bloomfield that rejoins parts of Norwalk that had been cut off by the original I-5 construction in 1954. This photo was taken in 2016.

Key Piece of I-5 Makeover in L.A. Complete

Project Widens Freeway, Reworks Interchange, and Reconnects City of Norwalk

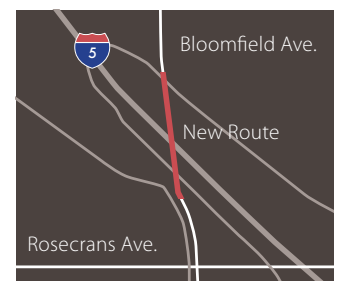
Caltrans and its partners recently celebrated the completion of another critical link in a multi-stage Interstate 5 corridor project in Southern California.

During the ribbon cutting ceremony, community members and local leaders gathered under the I-5 (Santa Ana Freeway) [Rosecrans Avenue / Bloomfield Interchange Project](#) that features numerous improvements to that highway segment, and also rejoins two sections of the city of Norwalk that were separated by I-5's construction in 1954.

Reconstruction of this interchange is a key part of the \$1.9 billion I-5 South Corridor joint project to widen I-5 between I-605 (San Gabriel River Freeway) and the Orange County line. This stretch of interstate traverses, intersects, and impacts the cities of Norwalk, Santa Fe Springs, Downey, Cerritos and La Mirada. Caltrans is working with federal and Los Angeles transportation agencies to improve the corridor.

"I-5 is the backbone of our interstate system in California and it carries the goods and services that

Project Spotlight



support our economy," said Caltrans Director Laurie Berman. "Expanding I-5 and adding HOV lanes in a densely populated area like Southern California allows us to improve mobility and air quality. This project also reflects our commitment to reconnect community routes when rebuilding our freeway interchanges."

This is the third of six segments along the I-5 South Corridor widening project to reach comple-

tion. Funded by federal, state and local sources, this \$180 million segment reconnects two sections of Norwalk east and west of I-5 and Santa Fe Springs by re-establishing through access on Bloomfield Avenue under I-5.

In 1954, the construction of I-5 through this neighborhood blocked local traffic on Bloomfield at the interstate. By elevating lanes of I-5 in the new interchange, local traffic on Bloomfield can now cross under I-5 in both directions, creating a significant local alternate route that will alleviate congestion on parallel city streets.

Bloomfield Avenue under I-5 was reconstructed with two lanes in each direction, adding a median, traffic signals and a colorful sunrise tile mural, which the Interstate 5 Consortium Cities Joint Powers Authority commissioned from a local artist, on the walls of the undercrossing.

Rosecrans Avenue was rebuilt and reconfigured to accommodate easier and safer access at the wider on- and off-ramps connecting Rosecrans to I-5, with a matching tile mural along the undercrossing walls. Drivers can access on- and off-ramps to northbound and southbound I-5 from either direction of Rosecrans Avenue with traffic signals. They can also exit from either northbound or southbound I-5 to either direction of Rosecrans Avenue.

The project also widens one mile of I-5 from Shoemaker Avenue to Silverbow Avenue and adds one High Occupancy Vehicle Lane (HOV or car pool lane) and one general purpose lane in each direction. The Shoemaker, Rosecrans, and Bloomfield Avenues bridges at I-5 were reconstructed to accommodate the widened freeway, and a new pedestrian overcrossing was built at Silverbow Avenue.

“Our transportation network doesn’t just move Angelenos from place to place — it powers our economy forward, connects our communities and gives our region a shared sense of identity,” said L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti, Metro’s Board Chair.

Completion of this interchange from groundbreaking to the ribbon cutting ceremony took almost five years.

The project also includes wider freeway shoulders, concrete median barriers, improved ramp designs, realignment to Firestone Boulevard, and interchange modifications at the Rosecrans and Bloomfield Avenue undercrossings.



A rebuilt Rosecrans Avenue crosses under Interstate 5 in Norwalk. Also reconstructed, Bloomfield Avenue, at top, intersects Rosecrans.

Another special feature of this project is the construction of an underground Austin Vault sand filter, which removes pollutants from runoff water. Other benefits of the reconstructed interchange and bridges include:

- Improving the overall traffic circulation along the I-5 South Corridor
- Reduced emissions through use of HOV lanes
- Improving traffic flow on nearby frontage roads
- Enhancing safety
- Accommodating future traffic demands and increasing capacity

Along with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), the Joint Powers Authority and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Caltrans has worked closely with all five of the local community governments along this corridor to minimize construction impact and maximize integration of Caltrans interchanges with local roadways and traffic.

Working together, Caltrans and FHWA have made it a priority to reconnect local communities in this manner whenever possible as freeway interchanges are rebuilt.

The lead contractor on this project was Flatiron Corporation, and the project was completed on time and on budget. **MM**

Source: Marc Bischoff, public information officer, Caltrans District 7