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# Barger Applauds Metro Board's Approval Of I-5 Enhancement Project

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## Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger commends the Los Angeles Metro Board's approval of the I-5 North Enhancement Project as well as the Light Rail Vehicle Overhaul Contract.

In an announcement Friday, the Los Angeles Metro Board of Directors approved a \$679.4 million total budget for the I-5 North County Enhancement Project in the Santa Clarita Valley, moving the project into the construction phase.

"I am happy to see these critical mobility improvements moving forward and want to thank our local Santa Clarita Valley stakeholders who have advocated for these enhancements," said Supervisor Barger. "The I-5 is the backbone for trade in the western U.S. and our federal and state partners recognized the importance of this project by providing significant funding."

The I-5 North County Enhancement Project is designed to improve the operations and safety of the freeway, improve the movement of freight and passenger vehicles, and accommodate expected growth between Santa Clarita and Castaic.

Improvements are set to include an additional carpool lane in each direction, a two-mile extension of truck lanes, improvements to auxiliary lanes, and upgrades to seven bridges, including the replacement of the Weldon Canyon Bridge.

These enhancements are set to be enacted from the Newhall Pass to just south of Parker Road in Castaic.

### **See Related: I-5 Freeway Expansion Under Consideration For Santa Clarita Valley**

Santa Clarita, which is now the third-largest city in L.A. County, is expected to increase its population by more than 25,000 people by 2035, according to the City of Santa Clarita's website.

These improvements plan to enhance safety on the freeway by removing trucks from the general-purpose lanes, increasing access for merging, and provide a much faster and smoother driving experience, according to Metro officials.

The concluded design for the freeway extensions were finalized in 2019, with a scheduled goal of construction completion by 2026.

The I-5 North Enhancement Project has been brought to fruition from the combined efforts of Golden State Gateway Coalition, North County Coalition and Metro.

The Metro Board also approved a \$170.3 million light rail vehicle overhaul contract with Palmdale's Kinkisharyo, LLC, for four and half years that is set to ensure that more than 100 jobs remain in the Antelope Valley at the company's plant in Palmdale.

"Anytime we can keep high quality jobs in our region, it's a good day," Supervisor Barger said.

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