

FREMONT

Groundbreaking for I-680 toll lane

Saturday, November 1, 2008

A coalition of transportation agencies broke ground Friday on Northern California's first toll lane.

Crews will construct what's being called the I-680 Express Lane - a new southbound lane on Interstate 680 - from Highway 84 in Sunol to Highway 237 in Milpitas. The 14-mile-long lane will be free for carpools and buses but solo drivers will be allowed to buy their way in by paying a toll. Tolls will be collected electronically with drivers using FasTrak transponders.

Known as hot lanes, toll lanes are being built in a number of areas around the country. Toll lanes exist on Highway 97 in Orange and Riverside counties and on Interstate 15 in San Diego. The 680 Express Lanes are expected to take about three years to build. Tolls will be collected round-the-clock with the amount rising and falling with congestion in the regular traffic lanes.

The cost of building the toll lane is about \$37.6 million. It is expected to bring in about \$5 million in tolls per year.

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