

San Ysidro - Tijuana LPOE transition fact sheet











THE SAN YSIDRO - TIJUANA BORDER:

The U.S. – Mexican border along San Ysidro and Tijuana is the busiest land border crossing in the Western Hemisphere. The smooth flow of goods and people plays a key role in binational commerce. However, the existing infrastructure now requires extensive expansion to accommodate existing and future traffic. To match that growth, both nations are working closely to execute coordinated expansion, realignment and construction projects at their respective facilities.

STATUS OF U.S. AND MEXICAN PROJECTS:

Currently, the San Ysidro Land Port of Entry (LPOE) is undergoing a major expansion project which will increase the number of northbound inspection booths to 63 and relocate pedestrian crossing to the east side of the port. The U.S. project consists of three phases. Phase 1 includes a major expansion of northbound inspection lanes for privately owned vehicles (POVs). Once funded, Phases 2 and 3 will include improvements to northbound pedestrian processing, and the realignment of Interstate 5 to the new southbound station at the site of the former cargo border crossing known as El Chaparral. Mexico is planning to complete construction at their facility and start operations by November 1, 2012. Consequently, all southbound operations at the current inspection station at Puerta Mexico will be permanently relocated to El Chaparral, which will significantly increase total southbound POV processing capacity from 8 inspection lanes to 22.

THE I-5 AND TEMPORARY CONNECTION TO EL CHAPARRAL:

Pending funds to construct Phase 3 of the U.S. project and realign the I-5 freeway to connect to El Chaparral, American government agencies have been working closely with their Mexican counterparts to develop a plan for a temporary connection. According to traffic studies by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) and Mexico's Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes (SCT), the newly constructed Mexican inspection facilities at El Chaparral will significantly improve overall capacity over the existing conditions in Puerta Mexico and both countries expect reduced southbound wait times during peak travel hours. The traveling public can expect new traffic patterns for southbound POV and pedestrians crossing the border to Tijuana. Drivers on the I-5 freeway will notice that the lanes taper from six to five lanes after the Camino De La Plaza on-ramp. Furthermore, as drivers approach the international border, they will follow a curve which routes southbound I-5 POV traffic to El Chaparral via a temporary roadway which will have four POV lanes plus a dedicated lane for busses and other large vehicles.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

GSA, in consultation with CALTRANS and the Federal Highway Administration, has begun construction of the temporary connection project in the U.S., which will include posted signs and other traffic calming measures to reduce vehicular speed at the curve to 15 mph. On October 24, the new facility entered an operational testing phase with southbound POV lanes being rerouted to El Chaparral. The timing and number of lanes diverted to El Chaparral will vary as directed by Mexican law enforcement officials. During this test period, drivers are advised that they may be routed to El Chaparral for inspection and are directed to follow posted traffic signs, instructions of law enforcement officials and plan their travel accordingly. A final non-peak hour partial lane closure is expected on October 31 from 10 PM to November 1 at 6 AM, at which point all southbound inspection operations at Puerta Mexico will permanently shift to El Chaparral on five continuous lanes of traffic, consisting of four POV lanes and one dedicated bus lane.