

NEWS RELEASE



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Planning • Streets and Highways • Public Transportation

Metropolitan Planning Organization

For Immediate Release

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KEY PERMIT ISSUED FOR SOUTHEAST CONNECTOR PROJECT

Reno, NV (April 16, 2015) – The United States Army Corps of Engineers has approved and issued a key permit needed under section 404 of the Clean Water Act for completion of the SouthEast Connector project. The approval means the next phase of construction may move forward.

As anticipated, the permit requires some conditions, which RTC will comply with. The Corps did not require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), realign the path of the roadway or make any alterations to the project, which is a validation of the solid design, engineering and environmental work that has been done by RTC.

“The SouthEast Connector is much more than a needed roadway; it provides numerous benefits to the environment. I’m pleased the Corps has recognized those benefits in approving RTC’s application,” RTC Executive Director Lee Gibson said.

The Corps noted RTC’s innovative plan to help stop the spread of historic mercury within the SouthEast Connector Corridor. The plan calls for soil with higher concentrations of mercury to be permanently stored under the roadway and removed from exposure to ground water and the human environment. Currently, mercury is being spread by any flood events. Advanced modeling shows this plan will remove 22,000 pounds of mercury from further exposure to the environment. The permit review found that RTC’s mercury mitigation plan is “protective of human health and the environment.”

Additionally, RTC is planning habitat restoration and other efforts to improve water quality and reduce erosion. The project will help the area return to a more natural floodplain. The project has been shown to reduce flood water elevations near homes and other buildings.

The SouthEast Connector will also help improve air quality. Modeling shows the roadway is needed to accommodate future growth and growth that has already occurred in the region. The project will reduce traffic congestion and the amount of idling vehicles, preventing pollution. A paved, multi-use path will also parallel the entire roadway, enabling people to make green trips, such as walking and biking while enjoying the natural environment and scenic views.

The first phase of the SouthEast Connector was substantially completed in July – ahead of schedule and under budget. The next phase will begin in the coming weeks and be marked by a community groundbreaking event. Full completion of the project is expected in late 2017. The remainder of the road to be constructed is about four and a half miles of the overall five and a half mile roadway. When completed, the SouthEast Connector will be dubbed Veterans Parkway, and will link Sparks to south Reno. The complete permit application and permit conditions will be available at: <http://SouthEastConnector.com> and <http://RTCwashoe.com>.

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***About RTC:** The Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, Nevada serves the citizens of Reno, Sparks and unincorporated areas of Washoe County. As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region, the RTC provides leadership in planning, public policy development and implementation of quality transportation systems through a commitment to excellence and stewardship to meet the community’s present and future transportation needs. For more information about RTC projects visit rtcwashoe.com and sign up for free email updates using MyRTC or call (775) 348-0400.*

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