

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 13, 2025

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City of Oxnard Hosts Groundbreaking Ceremony for \$134.5 Million Rice Ave. and Fifth St./State Route 34 Grade Separation Project

OXNARD, Calif. – The City of Oxnard will host a groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, Feb. 21, 2025 at 10 a.m. at the site of the future \$134.5 million project, located at the southeast corner of Rice Ave. and Fifth St./State Route 34 in Oxnard. Construction is expected to begin March 2025 and be completed by 2029.

“The importance of this project to our City cannot be overstated, as it plays a crucial role in enhancing public safety. We sincerely appreciate the continued efforts of our state legislature and agency partners, who are committed to collaborating on these important improvements in Oxnard,” said Mayor Luis Mc Arthur.

The City, in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the County of Ventura, will construct a new six-lane bridge on Rice Ave. to grade-separate it from the Fifth St./State Route 34 intersection and Union Pacific railroad crossing. This project will improve commuter safety as motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians will no longer cross over the railroad tracks in an intersection designated by the state as the fourth most dangerous crossing. This project will also relieve traffic congestion, reduce vehicle emissions, stimulate commerce by facilitating access to the Port of Hueneme and benefit railroad operations.

“Since I came into the Assembly, the Rice Avenue intersection has been a priority. There were far too many accidents and, unfortunately, fatalities due to the dangerous railroad crossing. When the opportunity arose to advocate to bring over \$100 million in state transportation funding to address this, I jumped at the opportunity. I want to thank the City of Oxnard, Ventura County, Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC), and Caltrans for working hard over the past decade to get this project to construction. Today marks the beginning of long-awaited improvements that will eliminate conflicts between rail and vehicular traffic, ultimately saving lives and preventing future injuries,” said Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin.

“This groundbreaking celebrates over ten years of collaborative efforts complying with federal and state requirements to deliver on the City’s commitment of eliminating conflicts between



trains, vehicles, truck traffic, and pedestrians at this intersection,” said Debbie O’Leary, City of Oxnard Transportation Planner, who has led the project since 2018.

The \$134.5 million investment is funded by State and Federal grants aimed at enhancing safety, infrastructure and transportation, including approximately \$107 million from the Trade Corridor Enhancement Program; \$15 million from the Port and Freight Infrastructure Program; and an additional \$12.5 million combined from the Surface Transportation Program, Grade Separation Program Section 190, Department of Water Resources, Safe Transportation of Energy Products, and Development Impact Fees.

The City extends its gratitude to key officials and agencies who worked to make the project possible including Congresswoman Julia Brownley, Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, Caltrans District 7, Ventura County Public Works Agency, Ventura County Transportation Commission, and the Union Pacific Railroad. For more information about this project, visit oxnard.gov/ricefifthproject.

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