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Vital Link Under Way

California Transportation Ventures Inc. began construction on the south end of a new stretch of State Route 125 between SR 54 in Bonita and SR 905 in Otay Mesa.

CTV started work in Bonita last year.

The contractor and various public officials kicked off construction near the end of the 9.3-mile section of road with a groundbreaking ceremony in Chula Vista on Sept. 12.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta was on hand for the event.

South County residents and developers have been looking forward to the extension of SR 125 for many years. It will provide a third link — aside from Interstates 5 and 805 — from the South Bay to the rest of the county. Planners expect the toll road to reduce the length of commutes from the area by 75 percent.

The new section of SR 125 is a partnership between CTV, the California Department of Transportation, and the San Diego Association of Governments.

CTV is a California corporation owned by New York-based engineering firm Parsons Brinckerhoff and France-based Egis Projects, an engineering, development, and project management company.

Last year, Macquarie Infrastructure Group, an Australian road construction firm, paid \$54.8 million for a majority interest in the project.

The \$138.58 million Phase 1 of SR 125 is financed by federal and local funds. It includes the northern 1.5 miles of the highway and the interchange between SR 54 and SR 125.

The \$400 million privately funded second phase is the toll road portion of the highway, which is set to open in 2006.