

# IN THE NEWS



## Opinion: One simple solution can get I-80 moving again

By REPS. MIKE THOMPSON AND MARK DESAULNIER | June 2, 2017

Let's get I-80 moving!

East Bay commuters head out the door every day only to come to a grinding halt on Interstate 80. It is consistently ranked the most congested transportation corridor in the Bay Area. Commuters are held hostage during rush hour in both directions, as well as during off-peak hours and weekends.

The impact of congestion on our quality of life and our economy is incalculable, but we all know it is significant.



An Amtrak train passes over cars traveling on Macdonald Ave. as it departs the station in Richmond, Calif. on Monday, March 24, 2014. The tracks that carry Amtrak Capitol Corridor trains through more than a dozen East Bay and South Bay cities could become a rail superhighway for crude oil transports under a plan by Phillips 66. (Kristopher Skinner/Bay Area News Group)

I-80 is the primary route for commuters travelling north and south between Oakland and Sacramento. And our commute along the corridor is expected to increase 23 percent by 2040. We must implement practical and affordable solutions to get I-80 moving. Here is one of those solutions.

Adding a train stop in Hercules on the existing Capitol Corridor line is a near-term, relatively low-cost project that would provide another option to driving on I-80. The train already goes up and down the I-80 corridor; it just doesn't stop where most of the congestion starts, particularly in the morning and afternoon peak periods.

The city of Hercules is working to create the Regional Intermodal Transportation Center, a federal, state and locally supported transportation hub that would connect this new train stop with bicycle, pedestrian, bus, and carpool service, and provide ferry service in the future.

The center would also be located within walking distance to both jobs and housing.

This project would significantly improve transportation options for commuters at the junction of I-80 and Highway 4, where commute congestion often begins. Construction to date has been completed with federal, state and local funds.

In addition to serving as a stop on the Capitol Corridor and San Joaquin routes, the transportation center will act as a central point for many vital transit options, including: More than 30 trains daily linking West Contra Costa County to the rest of the Bay Area and the Sacramento/Central Valley region; connections with local and regional buses; interconnection between the extensive San Francisco Bay Trail and Ridge Trail; potential ferry connection to San Francisco; connectivity to Richmond BART and AMTRAK; and park-and-ride carpool programs.

The project also would provide an environmentally sustainable solution to addressing congestion on I-80. By reducing the number of cars and trucks on the road, it would contribute less air pollution, energy use, and fuel consumption.

The decision to add a train stop in Hercules is up to the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA), as well as the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA).

The CCJPA is made up of elected officials from throughout the region, including as far away as Placer and Yolo Counties, with SJJPA elected officials located in the Bay Area and as far away as Fresno and Bakersfield.

With your help, the frustration of I-80 travelers will be heard. Sign-up today at [HerculesTrainStop.com](http://HerculesTrainStop.com) to join the Let's Get I-80 Moving Coalition!

*Reps. Mike Thompson and Mark DeSaulnier are member of the U.S. House of Representatives and represent the area that would be most served by the new station. Also signing on to this piece are Contra Costa Supervisor Federal Glover, Richmond Mayor Tom Butt and Hercules Mayor Myrna de Vera.*