

## New SJ River crossing

*First since 1960s could open this year*

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Executive Editor

The first new crossing of the San Joaquin River in the Northern San Joaquin Valley since Interstate 5 was built in the 1960s could be open to traffic by the end of the year.

The twin spans of Bradshaw Crossing —built more than four years ago by Cambay Group west of the Manthey Road bridge — will have approaches completed so River Islands can be accessed from the Mossdale Crossing portion of West Lathrop.

Project Manager Susan Dell’Osso said the bridge definitely will open either later this year or early 2017 at the latest. That will allow traffic to start flowing on the River Islands Parkway — and extension of Louise Avenue — into its namesake planned community.

At the same time Cambay Group is working with Caltrans to enhance traffic movements at the Manthey Road onramps to Interstate 5. It may involve installing ramp metering lights. River Islands promised Caltrans the bridge will open before the 800th home is built. At that time Manthey Road access to River Islands would be cut off.

“The bridge is actually on schedule to open well ahead of the 800th home,” Dell’Osso said.

In working with Caltrans, the state agency believes the Manthey Road access can stay in place longer due to current traffic conditions as almost all of the merge traffic stays in right hand lanes either to head toward Tracy and the Bay Area or the 120 Bypass.

The bridge decks were put in place in 2012. Part of the reason was to take advantage of lower construction costs due to the recession but what really drove the decision was federal and state permits that had been obtained were nearing expiration dates. The approaches were not put in place at the time to avoid people from accessing the bridge. It essentially created twin canopies over the river.

River Islands Parkway will become the main entrance to the planned community of 11,000 homes. The bridge’s cost was covered 100 percent by Cambay Group.

River Islands has secured permits for a second bridge connecting the planned community with the Mossdale Crossing neighborhood north of the river. That bridge will connect to River Island’s planned town square via Golden Valley Parkway that runs just west of the Target store and intersects with Louise Avenue.