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and businesses.

This will help fill a long-standing gap that has been recognized by the city. In May 2006, the city initiated eminent domain proceedings, City Attorney Jeff Epp said. A Vista Superior Court judge gave Escondido the right to take the property in the fall of 2006.

In December that year, the city cleared the site for the \$5 million construction of Station 6.

In April 2007, the city put \$1.9 million in escrow with the court to buy the land. But the city still has to return to court in May or June, to argue the price of the property with the owner. The 7,360-square-foot Station 6 should be completed by summer. Once the station is ready, the Fire Department can reduce its response time to surround-

ing neighborhoods by two to three minutes, Fire Chief Victor Reed said.

Station 6 will take up 1.75 acres at the Del Dios Road site. That leaves about 3 acres for the community center and park.

More Freeway Woes: Northbound I-15 express lanes to close on weekends

As of last Friday, the Interstate 15 express lanes will be open only to southbound traffic over the next four weekends.

According to a Caltrans official the agency needs to shift direction on the express lane in order to accommodate construction.

The southbound-only hours will run from 8 pm. on Fridays to Mondays at 1 p.m. The two lanes are for car pools, express buses and toll-paying drivers.

Local transportation officials

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have broken ground on a \$467 million project to expand the number of express lanes to four from two, between state Route 163 and Route 56.

Tri-City Health District Nixes Third Attempt on Bond Measure

After voters voted down two previous hospital bond measures in 2006, the Tri-City Healthcare District is delaying placing a third one before voters in June, opting instead to spend more time on reaching out to voters.

Consultants yesterday told the district board that a June election, with a filing deadline of March 7 to place the measure on the ballot, is too soon to return to voters.

At issue is a \$778 million plan to upgrade and expand the Tri-City Medical Center that it oversees in Oceanside. It is now working to secure funding.

Similar funding was secured two years ago for the Palomar Pomerado Health District and critics are pointing to cost overruns and what appears to be broken promises to induce voters to pass that bond issue, which was for \$469 million.

One poll of 1,200 likely voters found that about two-thirds supported a bond measure, according to one research firm. Such a bond issue would require a two-thirds voter approval. Given the critical climate facing bond issues in the immediate past and potentially in the future, officials are wary of pro-

ceeding without first embarking on an education campaign, followed by a survey to determine voter support as to various bond sizes. The previous measures would have raised property taxes \$23.40 per \$100,000 of assessed property values to pay for the improvements.

Officials said a poll is being conducted in Vista's Shadowridge neighborhood to determine if voters there would support a measure. Most of the neighborhood is outside the district's boundaries, and Tri-City is moving toward possibly annexing the area.

The Tri-City district includes most of Oceanside, Carlsbad, and Vista.

The consultants also said the number of undecided voters appears to be lower because of the previous two attempts. In an interview, Moss said she also wants to determine when enough money and resources could be gathered for a third bond campaign.

Board Chairman Larry Schallock said he doubts the district would try another bond measure if a third try fails. "We're going to have to bear consequences if we cannot get this bond passed," he said.

Tri-City, like other hospitals in the state, is faced with a 2013 deadline to meet earthquake standards. Hospital officials say they also hope to expand the facility to keep up with population growth. These are similar arguments raised by Palomar Pomerado Health District for their bond proposal.

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