The Project
North County Transit District (NCTD) Route 350 is a six-mile local bus route serving major activity centers in the City of Escondido. Fifteen-minute service runs from the Escondido Transit Center, along the Escondido Boulevard business corridor to Bear Valley Parkway and Westfield North County Shopping Mall, terminating at the future Interstate 15 Del Lago Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Station. San Pasqual High School and Bear Valley Middle School are located along the corridor. The route carries more than 2,500 passengers each weekday.

The Escondido Rapid Bus Transit Priority Concept Study was approved by NCTD, SANDAG, and the City of Escondido in 2006. The study evaluated implementing the Rapid Bus concept into Route 350 in order to improve travel time and reliability issues caused by traffic congestion, bunching of buses due to congestion, missed transfers, lack of bus stop amenities, heavy school boardings, and roadway network constraints.

Improvements
The Route 350 service has now been rebranded as BREEZE Rapid. Based on the initial concept study, three improvement projects are now completed:

» Queue Jumpers: A queue jump is a special bus lane that is used prior to an intersection, allowing the bus to bypass traffic delayed or stacked up at the intersection. A queue jump lane along Valley Parkway at Centre City Parkway is now open. Additional queue jump lanes are envisioned at Bear Valley Parkway and Las Palmas Avenue.

» Signal Priority: Signal priority allows buses running behind schedule to receive a slight extension of a green light or a shortening of a red light by adjusting signal timing/phasing. Signal priority equipment has been installed on all Route 350 buses and at each intersection along the route on Valley Parkway, 2nd Avenue, Escondido Boulevard, and Bear Valley Parkway. This corridor is the region’s first fully operational signal priority route.

» Bus Stop Improvements: Bus stops were consolidated from the existing 31 stops to 25 stops, decreasing bus dwell times. New benches, shelters, and electronic signage indicating the arrival of the next BREEZE Rapid bus have been installed at key locations. Many of the new shelters are lighted using solar power. And BREEZE Rapid buses have a unique look so riders can identify them as they approach.

Project Benefits
Implementation will improve travel times, reliability, and operations. A 16 percent time savings from the initial improvements is expected. Vehicular traffic will not incur negative impacts as a result. This will provide an overall enhanced transit rider experience and create a blueprint for future Rapid Bus projects throughout the region.

(Continued on reverse)