

## **Ben Maddox Overcrossing To Break Ground Jan. 8**

The Ben Maddox Way Overcrossing Improvement Project, a Measure R regional project, will break ground on Friday, Jan. 8 in Visalia.

A short groundbreaking ceremony for the Ben Maddox Way Overcrossing Improvement Project will take place at 10 a.m. on the northeast corner of Ben Maddox Way and Noble Avenue. In the event of rain, a ceremony will take place at Visalia Ford, 1300 E. Mineral King Ave.

The project was originally fully funded as a Measure R regional project slated for construction in 2012. However, the city of Visalia has moved this project up two years thanks to \$6.4 million in stimulus funds and a \$1.6 million federal earmark of SAFETEA-LU funding secured by Congressman Devin Nunes, R-Visalia. Local funding, including Measure R funds, will fill in any funding gaps. To date, the project will be the largest project funded by stimulus funds in Tulare County.

"This is a perfect example of being able to leverage Measure R funding," said Adam Ennis, engineering services manager for the city of Visalia. "This

project is not only needed to improve Ben Maddox, it will be a good shot in the arm for our local economy."

The project, which is slated to begin construction in January, will take the overcrossing from four to eight lanes, relieving traffic congestion in one of the county's highest volume intersections, Ennis said. Three existing traffic signals will also be upgraded. The project is estimated to be complete in 2011.

Last week, the city of Visalia awarded construction of the project to Emmett's Excavation of Clovis. The company was the low-bidder at \$4.8 million. Two of the company's subcontractors are from Visalia (AC Electric and KRC Safety Co. Inc.).

Measure R, the one-half-cent sales tax passed in 2006, funds transportation, transit and environmental improvements in Tulare County. The Tulare County Association of Governments, acting as the Tulare County Transportation Authority, administers the Measure R program. For more information, call Ted Smalley at 624-7274 or visit [TCMeasureR.com](http://TCMeasureR.com).