



Memorandum

TO: BUILDING BETTER
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

FROM: James R. Helmer

SUBJECT: CALTRANS REPORT

DATE: 10-25-06

Approved

Date

RECOMMENDATION

1. Accept staff report on current Caltrans achievements and issues.
2. Receive a presentation from Bijan Sartipi, State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District Director, on Caltrans perspectives.
3. Discuss significant Caltrans issues of interest to the City of San José.

BACKGROUND

On November 4, 2006, Caltrans District Director Bijan Sartipi and Caltrans senior management staff are scheduled to attend the meeting of the Building Better Transportation (BBT) Committee, to discuss Caltrans efforts to maintain, operate, and improve State freeway and highway facilities in the San José area. These meetings have occurred semi-annually since October 2004 and have provided a productive opportunity to regularly share and discuss key transportation issues and interests between the City and State.

ANALYSIS

Recent Caltrans/State Accomplishments

Over the past year, Caltrans has led or supported various activities related to enhancing the State Highway system in the San José area. Among these include the following:

- Participation with the City and VTA to develop a freeway litter clean up pilot program in Santa Clara County on sections of Route 101 and Route 880.
- Opening of the Route 880/Coleman Avenue Interchange; a ceremony was held on September 18, 2006.

- Continued progress on completing Route 87 improvements from Julian Street to Branham Lane (near Route 85); scheduled for completion in 2007.
- Approval of environmental clearance (in December 2005) for Route 101 improvements from Story Road to Yerba Buena Road, including upgrades to the 101/Tully, 101/Capitol and 101/Yerba Buena interchanges.
- Completion of a pavement resurfacing project on Route 280 from 101 to 87; and initiation of pavement projects on Route 280 from 87 to 880 and on Route 101 from Brokaw Road to the North County area.

Other significant recent State transportation accomplishments include the State initiated ballot measures Proposition 1A (Prop 42 Protections) and Proposition 1B (\$19.9 Billion Transportation Bonds) that if approved by State voters (on November 7th) will substantially increase funding resources to support Statewide transportation improvements.

Caltrans Issues of Significant Concern

San José and Caltrans have had a history of positive collaboration on enhancing the State Highway system in the San José region. At this time, and as described below, there are three significant issues of local concern that warrant special efforts to address.

- ***State Freeway/Highway Pavement Conditions*** – In early October 2006, a national transportation research organization (TRIP) released their annual report on roadway conditions and ranked San José as having the “worst roads in the nation”. The data in the report is based on information from 2004 and primarily relates to freeways and State Highways in Santa Clara County (San José Metro Area). The San José area topped the list with 66% of roads rated as in poor condition. Other California regions also were reported to have poor roads: Los Angeles (65%), San Francisco/Oakland (58%), San Diego (54%) and Sacramento (50%). It is acknowledged that since 2004, Caltrans is working to repave State Routes in the San José area, however many State Highway segments are in a significant need of repair, particularly along Route 101 (880 to Capitol) and Route 82 (The Alameda).
- ***Advanced Traffic Management Systems*** – The deployment of advanced traffic management technologies such as video cameras allows the public to monitor traffic conditions in “real time” and help with the planning of travel modes, times and routes. Caltrans District 4 has a system of streaming video cameras on their website; however, San José receives a inequitable level of service as compared to the San Francisco/Oakland area. Information is available at 34 locations: 10 in San Francisco; 8 in Oakland/Berkeley/Emeryville; 1 in San José.
- ***Delivery of Freeway Projects Associated with San José Economic Development*** – Over the past few years, San José has developed major plans to guide land use and

transportation development for Downtown San José, North San José, BART Station Areas, Major Retail Districts, Evergreen and Edenvale. These plans include the implementation of freeway improvement projects at 17 locations and have local funding commitments in excess of \$200 million. City staff is concerned about the capacity of Caltrans to provide timely support of local interest projects, particularly if significant new projects are funded by the possible State Transportation Bond program.

A related concern is that Caltrans no longer has a local San José Project Development office, and thereby coordination is required with Caltrans staff based in Oakland. The San José office was closed after completion of design work for the Route 87 (Julian to 101) project. Reopening a Caltrans Project Development office in San José would streamline communications, coordination, and delivery for future projects in the San José area.

In summary, the above issues represent concerns from San José about the equity of Caltrans resource allocations within the State as a whole and within the Bay Area Caltrans District (District 4). It is recommended that the City and Caltrans work to address these issues over the coming months.

JAMES R. HELMER
Director of Transportation