

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Letter to Caltrans District 5 Regarding Highway 101 Traffic Cameras

MEETING DATE: April 15, 2010

AGENDA ITEM: 6K

STAFF CONTACT: Scott Spaulding

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the board chair to send a letter to Caltrans requesting that five previously installed traffic cameras on the South Coast be made available via the internet as soon as possible so that live traffic conditions on Highway 101 can be easily accessible by the public.

DISCUSSION:

Caltrans District 5 currently maintains nine video cameras on Highway 101 on the South Coast between Storke Rd. in Goleta and Milpas St. in Santa Barbara. Of the nine cameras installed, four have been made available on the internet for public viewing and can be accessed through the SBCAG website. The remaining five are monitored in the District 5 Traffic Management Center but have not yet been made available on the internet for public viewing. A tenth camera is scheduled for installation next year at the Cabrillo/101 interchange.

Live video streams of traffic conditions on Highway 101 are extremely beneficial to the traveling public. SBCAG is currently developing a Traveler Information website that will include links to Caltrans highway cameras and other information useful to regional travelers. Because traffic conditions can be highly localized, our region would benefit greatly from having as many cameras available through the internet as possible. SBCAG staff has inquired with Caltrans District 5 about making the five cameras available for internet viewing. Staff's counterparts at the District have expressed a variety of reasons they have not accomplished this including the potential on-going cost and equipment that might be needed. Although the cost of bringing the installed cameras online is modest, if it is necessary SBCAG can provide some funding to facilitate and accelerate the process of making the offline Caltrans cameras available to the public. But first we need an official response from District management as to whether Caltrans can bring the cameras on-line in the near term or not, and if not why, before we can offer effective assistance.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter to Caltrans Dist. 5

ATTACHMENT 1 - DRAFT

(Item 6K)

April 15, 2010

Mr. Rich Krumholz
Caltrans District 5
50 Higuera Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-5415

Subject: Caltrans Cameras on Highway 101 in Goleta and Santa Barbara

Dear Mr. Krumholz:

With the assistance of two federal Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) earmarks secured by Rep. Lois Capps, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments is currently developing a South Coast Traveler Information Website that will feature real-time traffic conditions, CHP-reported traffic incidents, information about construction projects and road closures, freeway camera video feeds, and estimated travel times between key city pairs. During SBCAG's outreach process to determine what local agencies wanted to see included in the new website, stakeholder after stakeholder mentioned the ability to view live video from all the freeway cameras Caltrans currently maintains on the South Coast. Unfortunately, only four of the nine cameras Caltrans has installed in our region are available to the public.

Web Cameras on Highway 101 (South Coast)

Location	Status	Online
Milpas St.	Installed	Yes
Garden St.	Installed	No
Carrillo St.	Installed	Yes
Las Positas	Installed	Yes
Turnpike	Installed	No
Patterson	Installed	Yes
Fairview	Installed	No
Los Carneros	Installed	No
Storke	Installed	No

SBCAG requests that District 5 take the steps necessary to make all currently installed cameras available to the public so they can be included on the SBCAG Traveler Information Website, expected to launch this fall. Please notify us of the schedule for when the cameras will be brought on-line, the challenges you would face in bringing them on-line before the end of this calendar year, and if there is anything SBCAG can do to facilitate the process.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Supervisor Salud Carbajal
Chair
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments