UC SANTA BARBARA

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UC Santa Barbara Staff

Caltrans representative answers questions about the impending construction project on Highway 217

As Caltrans readies to begin a bridge replacement project on Highway 217, which runs between Henley Gate on campus and the U.S. 101 freeway, The Current asked a few questions of the agency's Alexa Bertola. Here she provides details about everything from the project's timing, to traffic impacts, to why it's necessary.

The Current: What is the 217 Caltrans project and why is it needed?

Alexa Bertola: The project will replace the State Route 217 bridge over San Jose Creek. The existing four-lane highway bridge was constructed in 1963. The new bridges have been designed to current standards and flood elevations.

TC: Approximately how long is the project expected to take?

AB: The project is expected to take roughly two years. Construction is expected to begin in mid-April of this year and is expected to be complete in summer 2025. A follow up plant establishment project will be complete in fall 2027.

TC: What impacts can people coming to campus expect such as road or exit closures?

AB: The traveling public can expect one westbound lane and two eastbound lanes open once construction begins. This will change over time as construction progresses but there will always be at least one lane open in each direction on Highway 217.

The westbound onramp to Highway 217 at Sandspit Road (going to UCSB) and the eastbound offramp from 217 at Sandspit Road (coming from UCSB) will be open except for temporary closures. The eastbound 217 onramp from Sandspit Road will be closed long term throughout the project. The 217 westbound offramp to Sandspit Road will be closed during certain phases of the project but will remain open for the majority of the work.

Bicycles will be able to use a detour through the construction site.

Exact dates and times of closures will be available closer to the start of construction. April 19 is the expected start date.

TC: Will this impact airport or Goleta Beach traffic?

AB: Sandspit Road (westbound 217 offramp) will be open with closures later in construction as noted above. During that time, traffic will continue past the offramp, turn at the roundabout at UCSB, and take the eastbound 217 offramp for the airport.

Goleta Beach will remain accessible during construction. The Goleta Beach onramp to E/B 217 will be closed soon after construction begins and will stay closed for the remainder of the project.

TC: Is there a way to keep updated on progress and any expected changes to traffic patterns?

AB: Follow us on social media.

Twitter: @CaltransD5, Instagram: @caltrans_d5, Facebook: Caltrans Central Coast (District 5)

Download our QuickMap app on your smartphone or visit our QuickMap website: QuickMap.dot.ca.gov for real-time traffic information including road and lane closures.

Visit our lane closure chart which lists current closures up to a week in advance: https://lcswebreports.dot.ca.gov/searchdistricts?district=5

TC: For additional questions about the project, where can folks get answers?

AB: Subscribe to our email distribution list to receive press releases on the latest road updates in Santa Barbara County by emailing Alexa.Bertola@dot.ca.gov

Media Contact

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