

✓ Construction to close Highway 1 temporarily

By KEITH MURAOKA

Sentinel Staff Writer

SANTA CRUZ — The first and only full closure of Highway 1 during the the \$3.3 million Soquel Avenue-Highway 1 interchange project will be tonight and Thursday night.

The project is said to be on schedule, with completion set for next summer.

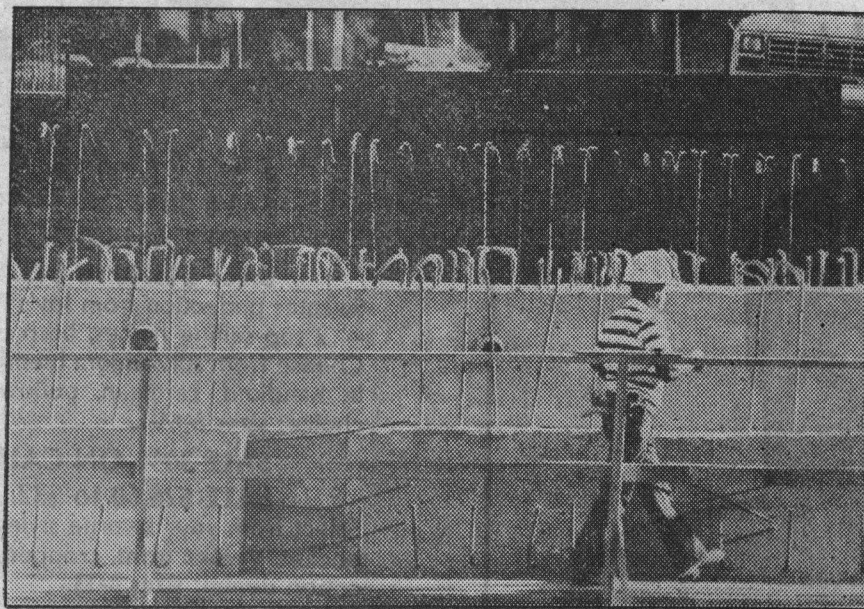
This week's closure is needed to raise the girders for the new overpass, according to Caltrans resident engineer John Buthenuth. Each of the cement girders is 109 feet long.

Northbound lanes will be closed between 9 tonight and 7 a.m., with detours via Commercial Way and Morrissey Boulevard. Southbound Highway 1 will close the same hours Thursday, with detours via Morrissey Boulevard and Soquel Avenue.

Additional one-lane and ramp closures also will be required, said Buthenuth.

One northbound lane will be closed next week because of grading of the new northbound on-ramp at Soquel Avenue. Also, both existing southbound on and off-ramps will be closed next week for reconstruction. Detours will be via 41st Avenue and Morrissey Boulevard.

The long-awaited project is expected to



Worker walks along new overpass

alleviate the bottleneck at the overpass near Dominican Hospital, where four lanes of traffic on either side of the crossing must funnel into two. The overpass will be widened to four lanes and a northbound on-ramp added. Also, a signal light

will be installed at the three-way intersection at Soquel Avenue and Highway 1.

Buthenuth said completion is targeted for early summer. He cautioned, however, the timeline depended on the winter season.

"If it rains a lot, it could put us back to late summer," he said.

The only change in project plans involve the addition of a six-foot-high, 300-foot-long redwood sound wall to be built along the new northbound ramp to protect ad-

joining residences.

Project designer Jim Smith said vegetation was cleared along the highway to make room for the on-ramp, exposing the back yards of the residences. He said landscaping will be re-planted, but the wall was deemed necessary to provide soundproofing until vegetation is big enough.

Local motorists will be seeing a lot of Caltrans crews in the future. More than \$7.3 million in road improvements for the county, including the widening of the 41st Avenue-Highway 1 overcrossing in fiscal year 1986-87, has been approved by the state.

Additional turn lanes at the intersection of Highways 1 and 9, estimated at \$547,000, are scheduled this year. Ramp improvements and signals at Highway 1 and Park Avenue, estimated at \$500,000, are scheduled in the next two years.

Widening of the Highway 9 bridge in Ben Lomond at a cost of \$1.2 million this year and installation of \$1.6 million more in median barriers on Highway 17 are also scheduled.

In south county, the state has approved widening to four lanes along Highway 152 from Green Valley Road to Pennsylvania Avenue at \$1.5 million in 1987. Other work this year will include reconstructing Highway 129 from Salsipudes Creek to Carlton Road.

The 41st Avenue project is estimated at \$2 million. Motorists have the same problems there as with the Soquel Avenue overcrossing.