Ben Lomond adjusts to life with a fast lane

Ben Lomond

Number of signals doubles ... to two

By STETT HOLBROOK

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SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

BEN LOMOND — The number of traffic signals in this mountain town is about to double. From one to two.

Caltrans plans to install a three-way traffic light at the intersection of Highway 9 and lower Glen Arbor Road, a dicey intersection for motorists trying to turn onto the highway.

The $223,000 project has been on the drawing board for years and is scheduled to begin this fall, said Brian Murnahan, Caltrans spokesman.

It's not a moment too soon for Masood

Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

Ben Lomond hasn't been a sleepy mountain hamlet for quite some time, and traffic planners have affirmed that fact with plans to install a three-way traffic signal at the busy intersection of Highway 9 and lower Glen Arbor Road.

Fast lane

Madani.

"It's been five years we've been waiting for a light," said Madani, owner of Ben Lomond Mini Market and Liquors.

Madani works just down the road from the intersection, which he said is the scene of several accidents each year.

"It will make a lot of difference," he said.

He urged Caltrans to vary the timing of the light between commute and noncommute hours to avoid unnecessary backups. When traffic stacks up, few people pull out of the queue to shop at his store, he said.

Caltrans had planned to install the light sooner, but storm damage to the highway delayed the project.

At the Plant Works nursery on Highway 9, manager Jan Nelson hoped the light will slow motorists a bit. Some drivers speed on the straight section of highway, she said.

She said the new light signals Ben Lomond's increasing population.

"It is growing," she said. "They're so many people doing that commute."

At Quail Hollow Elementary School, off Glen Arbor Road, one official hoped the stop light didn't herald more growth.

"We're going to be another Scotts Valley," she said.

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