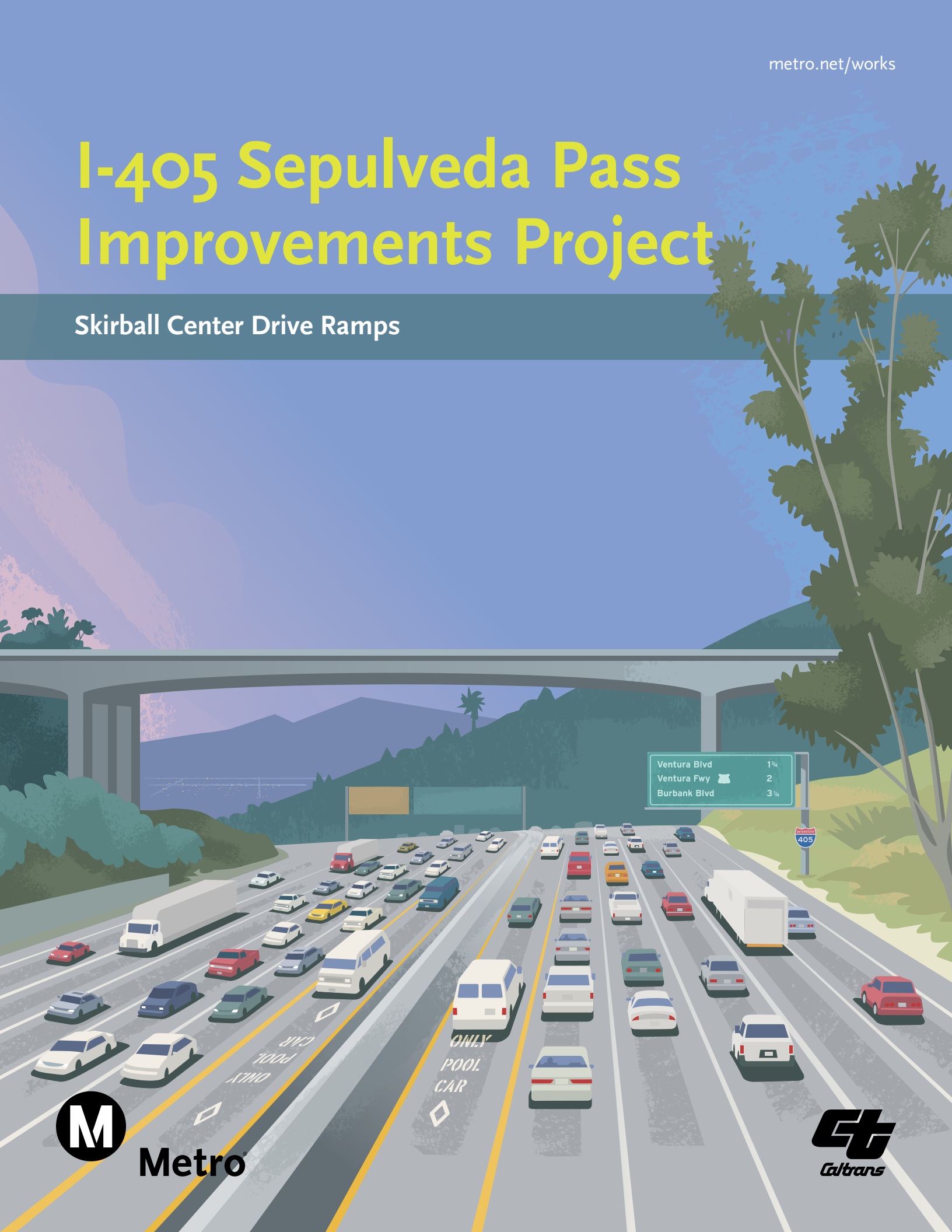
metro.net/works

I-405 Sepulveda Pass Improvements Project

Skirball Center Drive Ramps



Metro

Caltrans

Overview

To reduce congestion, improve mobility and increase safety, the I-405 Sepulveda Pass Improvements Project will add a high-occupancy vehicle lane, standardize traffic lanes, rebuild overpasses and improve on- and off-ramps along a 10-mile-long stretch of the freeway between the I-10 (Santa Monica Freeway) and US-101 (Ventura Freeway).

As part of this project, the southbound Skirball Center Drive on- and off-ramps will be relocated approximately 2,000 feet south of their current location. Relocation of these ramps will reduce congestion and improve traffic flow in the street network around Skirball Center Dr, both now and in years to come.

Some of the features of the relocated southbound Skirball Center Dr on- and off-ramps include:

> Greater ramp storage capacity for vehicles entering and exiting the I-405 freeway

> Dedicated turn-lanes on Sepulveda Bl for vehicles entering and exiting the freeway

> New bike routes on Sepulveda Bl between Skirball Center Dr and the new southbound on- and off-ramps

> New signage directing visitors to the Skirball Cultural Center

> Simpler design of the Sepulveda Bl/Skirball Center Dr intersection, resulting in a safer intersection

> Shorter traffic-signal cycles, enabling improved traffic signal synchronization to expedite travel throughout the Sepulveda Pass corridor's local street network

Frequently Asked Questions

How will drivers in the vicinity of Sepulveda Bl and Skirball Center Dr benefit from the relocation of the ramps?

Looking at the entire network of signalized intersections in this area and considering all trips that move through the network, commuters will reduce their drive time when the ramps are relocated. The revised interchange layout provides capacity for an additional 306 cars during the morning peak hour (7-8am) and an additional 229 cars during the evening peak hour (4-5pm).

When compared to the current ramp location, morning commuters are expected to reduce their peak-hour drive time by an average of more than 16,000 hours per year when the ramps are moved. Similarly, evening peak-hour commuters are expected to reduce their drive time by an annual average of over 2,100 hours. This reduction in vehicle hours translates into reduced emissions and improved air quality.

What is the current Level of Service (LOS) for the intersections in the vicinity of Sepulveda Bl and Skirball Center Dr?

First a definition. LOS measures the average amount of delay that drivers experience at a given intersection. LOS is measured much like a report card with an A-F scale (including a grade of E). The intersections around Sepulveda Bl and Skirball Center Dr currently range from grades B-E during the morning peak hour and grades B-D during the evening peak hour. As with a report card, there can be a range of delay times within each letter grade.

Will LOS improve when the Skirball Center Dr on- and off-ramps are relocated?

Yes. After relocation, the LOS for area intersections are anticipated to be grades B and C. This means that drivers in the Sepulveda Bl/Skirball Center Dr area will experience less delay than they do today. The biggest improvement will be at the ramps themselves. Currently, the southbound ramps function at LOS E during morning rush hour. When the ramps are moved, the new Sepulveda Bl/southbound ramp intersection will function at LOS B.

How will ramp relocation affect signal synchronization along Sepulveda Bl?

The relocation of the southbound Skirball Center Dr ramps will actually improve signal synchronization along Sepulveda Bl. The current Sepulveda Bl/Skirball Center Dr intersection features a complex signal that controls not only the movement of traffic along surface streets but also vehicles going to and from the southbound freeway via the Skirball ramps. As a result, this intersection currently operates on a three-minute signal cycle. This lengthy signal cycle has a negative impact on the local street network because it increases the wait time experienced at all other signalized intersections on this stretch of Sepulveda Bl.

Once the ramps are relocated, the Sepulveda Bl/Skirball Center Dr intersection will be simplified, controlling only surface street traffic. As a consequence, the signal cycle will be reduced by 60-90 seconds, allowing traffic to move through the local street network more quickly and efficiently. Other intersections in this part of Sepulveda Bl will be synchronized with the new, shorter cycle at Skirball Center Dr, reducing average wait times at all signals.

Frequently Asked Questions (CONT.)

There is a noticeable difference in elevation between Sepulveda Bl and the I-405 freeway in the location of the new ramps. Can the ramps be designed to safely handle this grade?

Yes. The ramps will be designed to meet Caltrans standards, which allow for ramp grades of up to 8 percent. The maximum slope of the new southbound on-ramp will be a 6 percent upgrade. The maximum slope of the new off-ramp will be an 8 percent downgrade. By comparison, the grades of the current on- and off-ramps are 6 percent and 4.5 percent, respectively. The grades of the relocated ramps will be similar to the grades of other local streets in the Sepulveda Pass area, such as Mountaingate Dr, Mulholland Dr and the current northbound Skirball Center Dr on- and off-ramps.

Sepulveda Bl is constricted in this area by the hillside to the west and the freeway to the east. How will the widening of Sepulveda Bl be accomplished?

The construction contractor for the I-405 Sepulveda Pass Improvements Project will widen Sepulveda Bl in this area by cutting into the hillside and constructing retaining walls along the west side of the street.

When will construction begin on the new southbound Skirball Center Dr on-and off-ramps and when will it end?

Construction of the new southbound Skirball Center Dr on-ramp is anticipated to begin in February 2011 and last approximately eight months. The construction of the new southbound Skirball Center Dr off-ramp will follow and is anticipated to last another eight months.

Will the existing Skirball Center Dr on-and off-ramps remain open until the new ramps are complete?

Yes. The existing Skirball Center Dr on-and off-ramps will remain open until the construction of the new corresponding on-and off-ramps are completed. Once the new Skirball Center Dr on-and off-ramps are completely constructed and opened, the existing corresponding Skirball Center Dr ramp will be closed.

How will drivers on Sepulveda Bl be impacted by the construction of the new ramps?

Drivers along Sepulveda Bl should not be impacted by the construction of the new on-and off-ramps because the new ramps will be constructed within the Caltrans right-of-way between Sepulveda Bl and the southbound I-405 freeway.

How will Sepulveda Bl be improved to accommodate the new ramps?

As part of the ramp relocation project, Sepulveda Bl will be widened and the following features will be added in this section:

> Signalized intersection where the new Skirball ramps meet Sepulveda Bl

> Pending Metro Board approval, a third northbound lane between the new southbound ramps and the Skirball Bridge. At Skirball Center Dr this lane becomes a dedicated right-turn lane

> Dedicated double left-turn pocket for traffic entering the southbound I-405 freeway from southbound Sepulveda Bl

> Dedicated right-turn pocket for traffic entering the southbound I-405 freeway from northbound Sepulveda Bl

> Protected merging pocket for vehicles exiting southbound I-405 and turning left onto southbound Sepulveda Bl

> Northbound bike lane on Sepulveda Bl between the new ramps and the Skirball Bridge

> Wider shoulders on southbound Sepulveda to accommodate a new bike route between the Skirball Bridge and the new ramps

How to reach us and stay involved

Do you have a question about the freeway improvements, want more information or wish to be added to our mailing list? Here's how you can reach us:

EMAIL

I405@metro.net

PHONE

You can also leave your questions or comments on our project phone line by calling **213.922.3665**. Phone messages are retrieved at least once every business day.

FACEBOOK

Be sure to visit us on Facebook at *facebook.com/405project*

TWITTER

twitter.com/I_405